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**TOURISM AS A POTENTIAL CATALYST OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN: A STUDY OF KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK**

**A thesis submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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January 2013

Abstract

Women's empowerment is a process of change that involves a growing ability to make choices that affect a woman's wellbeing, life path, and her capacity for self-determination (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 688; Malhotra, Shuler, and Bowender 5). Definitions of women empowerment include control over assets (Goetz and Sen Gupta 48-50); women's relative physical mobility, economic security, freedom from domination, political and legal awareness and participation in public protests and political campaigns (Hashemi *et al.* 638-39; develop capacity to reduce socio economic vulnerability and dependency (Banu 31; Mustafa *et al.* 302); opportunity to generate income and control over income (Varghese 37); and participation in household decision-making (Mizanur *et al.* 123; Kabeer *et al.* 10). Women empowerment is a multi dimensional process. Its aim is to enable women or a group of women to realize their full identity and power in all spheres of life. It consists of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making to enable them to have greater ability to plan their lives. The World Bank has identified empowerment as one of the key constituent elements of poverty reduction, and as a primary development assistance goal. The Bank has also made gender mainstreaming a priority in development assistance, and the promotion of women's empowerment as a development goal (Malhotra *et al.* 3).

Women empowerment is not only greater external control but also growing inner capability as greater self confidence and inner transformation of one's consciousness that enable one to overcome external barriers to access resources and changing the traditional ideology for social, economic and political development of women (Ahmed 347).

Many factors such as educational level, micro finance, formation of Self Help Groups etc. can enhance women empowerment. Tourism is also an area where women can work for their economic empowerment. The Tourism industry has witnessed an unprecedented growth in recent years. Bezbaruah (124-25), suggested that tourism can be a tool to fight the biggest challenge of today, poverty. As the world's largest employer with 231million employees generating 10.4% of the world GDP, the tourism

industry is rapidly expanding and is estimated to employ approximately 269.5 million people by the year 2015 (World Tourism & Travel Council). It may provide avenue for women employment and participation. According to Ghodsee (1) tourism is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities.

The UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) declared the theme of World Tourism Day for the year 2007 as 'Tourism Opens Doors for Women'. UNWTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli's message for the Day reflected the positive note of the theme with an affirmative statement that 'Tourism is a sector of the economy that not only employs significant numbers of women, but provides enormous opportunities for their advancement'. UNWTO and UNIFEM (now UN women) have signed the initial cooperation agreement in 2008. The aim of which was to harness tourism's potentials to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment (UNWTO). Worldwide, tourism is particularly important sector for women; they make up to 46% of the tourism labour force. This percentage is higher than in the workforce in general, where 34-40% are women (Vagus and Aguilar).

There are many studies on women and the tourism industry both at international and national levels. However, studies reconciling demand of tourists and supply are not available. Furthermore, studies with respect to the North East India in general and Assam in particular are almost non-existent. To find out the scope of improving economic empowerment of women through such activities and develop a sustainable livelihood method, this study is proposed with the following objectives.

1. To study the current socio-economic status of the women in the study area.
2. To find out the level of involvement of women in tourism related activities in the study area.
3. To study the relationship between involvements of women in tourism related activities and their socio-economic status.
4. To formulate strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities.

A multistage methodology was followed in the study. Women Survey was conducted in 10 sample villages surrounding Kaziranga National Park for finding out the

socioeconomic status of local women and their perception about tourism. Tourists Survey helped to find out the opinion, preference and buying interests of tourists about various tourism services, souvenir and consumable items in Kaziranga National Park area. Thirdly, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for women for determining existing skills of local women. Stakeholder Analysis was done for finding out avenues for women to get involved in TRA in the study area. The next step was formulation of strategies for Economic Empowerment (EE) of women through TRA. Suggestions by stakeholders, Skills of local women and demand of tourists were synthesized to formulate strategies for local women to enter in TRA. Final stage was the practicability study of the formulated strategies. Formulated strategies were tested by expert opinion survey for practicability.

Results of the study showed that more than half (60.8%) women fall under Low Socio Economic Status (SES), 38.1% are in middle SES and only 1.1% fall in high SES group. The SES of women in the study area is studied according to different demographic variables such as age, locality, caste, community and religion. Women from the villages of Golaghat district and the villages in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP have the highest SES. Hindu Assamese women belonging to OBC caste revealed higher SES irrespective of their age.

Women survey revealed that only 23.6% of women are involved in TRA in study area. This percentage is very low in comparison to the Global figure, which is 46% (Sherpa 5-6). Assamese Hindu OBC women belonging to villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora Range of KNP have highest involvement irrespective of their Age.

The above results showed that Assamese Hindu women belonging to 'Other Backward Class' from villages of Golaghat district that are located in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP have higher SES scores and also are highly involved in TRA in the study area. Independent sample 't' tests was done to find out statistical significance. Results showed that there is a statistically significant ($p=0.000$) difference in SES score of women and their involvement in TRA.

The results of perception about tourism and women empowerment showed that, OBC Hindu women of Assamese community belonging to villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora range of KNP have significantly higher positive perception about

tourism and women empowerment. PRA results showed that 844 women are skilled in weaving and 472 women have expertise in cooking traditional food. Apart from weaving and cooking a number of village women are expert in embroidery, knitting, crocheting, cutting and tailoring. Few women are trained in beautician course, decorative item making, jute work and bamboo work, singing and tour guidance.

Tourists buying interests of all the services, souvenir and consumable items are positive and all scores lie within 0.20 to 1.18. Traditional food, cultural programme, traditional crafts, visit to tea gardens, visit to Assamese tribal village, visit to Assamese non-tribal village and local fruits and vegetables got highest interest scores. Exhibition of traditional loom, service of tour guide, home stay and availability of local condiments and spices and traditional clothing got medium interests value and lowest interests were shown to traditional ornaments, herbal medicine and packaged traditional processed food.

Stakeholders suggested different areas of tourism where local women can join in TRA for their economic empowerment. After the process of strategy formulation and practicability study training, finance and infrastructure facilities were suggested in various areas of tourism. Following areas of tourism were considered for entry of local women for their economic empowerment- Gastronomy, Local Cultural Programme, Souvenir, Visit to tea garden, Visit to Assamese tribal and non tribal village, Local fruits and vegetables, Transport and guidance sector, Accommodation and Basic amenities for tourists.

For economic empowerment of women, only tangible inputs are not sufficient, some intangible inputs in the form of sensitization motivation and awareness are essential to bring women to the forefront of tourism industry. To begin the process of empowerment, proper motivation among the target group is required. To generate motivation among the rural women Government and Non Government Organizations can take up various activities for sensitization, creation of awareness and motivation (SAM) regarding TRA. For that purpose, they can take help from the group of local women that has been identified during the study as having highest involvement in tourism and scoring highest SES score. It has also been found during the study that this particular group has the most positive perception regarding tourism and women empowerment.

Declaration by the Candidate

I, Ms. Rita Borkotoky, Research Scholar in the Department of Business Administration, School of Management Sciences of Tezpur University, Assam, hereby declare that the research work entitled "Tourism as a Potential Catalyst of Economic Empowerment of Women: A Study of Kaziranga National Park" is a bona fide work carried out by me under supervision of Dr. Chandan Goswami. This work has not been submitted elsewhere for any other purposes.

Date: 14/05/2013

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Tourism as a Potential Catalyst of Economic Empowerment of Women: A Study of Kaziranga National Park", submitted to the School of Management Sciences, Tezpur University in part fulfillment for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration is a record of research work carried out by Ms Rita Borkotoky under my supervision and guidance.

All help received by her from various sources have been duly acknowledged.

No part of this thesis has been submitted elsewhere for award of any other degree.

Signature of Supervisor:

Name: Dr. Chandan Goswami

Designation: Associate Professor

School: Management Sciences

Department: Business Administration

Acknowledgement

I offer my sincere thanks to Tezpur University for offering me the opportunity to pursue Ph D. I thank Prof. M. K. Sarma, Prof. Chandana Goswami and all the DRC members and faculty members of the Department of Business Administration, Tezpur University for their support, valuable comments and suggestions during my study.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Chandan Goswami, Associate Professor, Department of Business Administration, for giving me guidance, and encouragement throughout the period of research and writing the thesis.

I am thankful to all the women and tourists who responded to questionnaires of the study and all the women who attended the workshops for Participatory Rural Appraisal. Thanks to Anganwadi workers and helpers of respective villages who successfully organised the workshops for Participatory Rural Appraisal. My heartfelt thanks go to Babu, Trishna and Sabita who were like shadows to me in my early days of data collection at Kaziranga National Park. I am also thankful to the local people of the villages around Kaziranga National Park who supported me in conducting the research.

I offer my thanks to all the stakeholders and the experts who provided me valuable information and suggestions in spite of their busy schedule.

I am thankful to my family members, colleagues and friends for their moral support. I also thank my husband Prasanta and son Shounak for their sacrifices, forbearance and valuable logistics support towards completion of my thesis.

Date: 14/05/2013

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SEWA: Self-Employed Women's Association
SFLCP: Small Farmers and Landless Credit Project
SHG: Self Help Group
STF: Small Tourism Firm
STH: Scheduled Tribes Hills
STP: Scheduled Tribes Plains
TRA: Tourism Related Activities
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNED-UK: United Nations Environment and Development- United Kingdom
UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF: United Nations Children's Educational Fund
UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
WE: Women Empowerment
WHC: World Heritage Centre

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ANOVA: Analysis of Variance
- BRAC: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
- CBNRM: Community Based Natural Resource Management
- CBO: Community Based Organization
- CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
- CLT: Chinese Luxury Tourists
- DFID: Department for International Development
- EE: Economic Empowerment
- FWPR: Female Workforce Participation Rate
- HDR: Human Development Report
- IIE: Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
- ILO: International Labor Organization
- KNP: Kaziranga National Park
- LED: Local Economic Development
- MDG: Millennium Development Goals
- MFI: Micro Finance Institution
- NABARD: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
- NEDFi: North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd.
- NEWEA: North East Women Entrepreneurs' Association)
- NGO: Non Governmental Organization
- OBC: Other Backward Castes
- OTOP: One Tambon One Product
- PAMP: Poverty Alleviation Micro Finance Project
- PLA: Participatory Learning Approach
- PPT: Pro Poor Tourism
- PRA: Participatory Rural Appraisal
- RDCP: Regional Development in the Copa'n Valley' Project
- SAM: Sensitivity Awareness and Motivation
- SC: Scheduled Castes
- SES: Socio Economic Status

CHAPTER-I

1. INTRODUCTION

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Empowerment denotes the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives (Narayan vi). According to Mhlon (13) empowerment refers broadly to expansion of freedom of choice and action to shape one's life. It implies control over resources and decisions. In cases of poor people, that freedom is severely curtailed by their powerlessness in relation to a range of institutions, both formal and informal. World Bank's World Development Report (11-12) emphasized empowerment as it is the need for increasing poor people's access to opportunity, security, and empowerment for economic growth and poverty reduction. Batliwala (128) defined empowerment as the amount of influence people have over external actions that matter to their welfare.

Women's empowerment is a process of change that involves a growing ability to make choices that affect a woman's wellbeing, life path, and her capacity for self-determination (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 688; Malhotra, Schuler, and Bowender 5). Definitions of women empowerment include control over assets (Goetz and Sen Gupta 48-50); women's relative physical mobility, economic security, freedom from domination, political and legal awareness and participation in public protests and political campaigns (Hashemi et al. 638-9); develop capacity to reduce socio economic vulnerability and dependency (Banu 31; Pourezzat et al. 302); opportunity to generate income and control over income (Varghese 37); and participation in household decision-making (Rahman et.al. 123; Kabeer et.al.10; Ashraf et al. 8). Women empowerment is a multi dimensional process. Its aim is to enable women or a group of women to realize their full identity and power in all spheres of life. It consists of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making to enable them to have greater ability to plan their lives. It allows them to have greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives. Empowerment also makes women free from shackles imposed on them by custom, belief and practice of the traditional societies (Pithadia and Sharma).

Sen defines empowerment as “altering relations of power, which constrain women’s options and autonomy and adversely affect health and well-being”.

Popular women movements in Latin America and Caribbean considered empowerment as an improvement of self-esteem and self-confidence as well as the ability to choose what direction individual life should take for collectively changing gender relations in the economic, political, legal and socio-cultural spheres (Dooren 9).

According to Luttrell & Quiroz (1) empowerment has four dimensions, namely, economic, human and social, political and cultural empowerment. Economic empowerment seeks to ensure that people have the appropriate skills, capabilities and resources and access to secure and sustainable incomes and livelihoods. Economic empowerment of women is economic change, material gain plus increased bargaining power and/or structural change which enables women to secure economic gains on an on-going and sustained basis (Sudarshan 370).

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to:

- Build strong economies;
- Establish more stable and just societies;
- Achieve internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability and human rights;
- Improve quality of life for women, men, families and communities; and
- Propel businesses’ operations and goals.

Yet, ensuring the inclusion of women’s talents, skills, experience and energies requires intentional actions and deliberate policies. The women’s empowerment principles provide a set of considerations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community (United Nations Global Compact and UNIFEM 1-9).

The World Bank has identified empowerment as one of the key constituent elements of poverty reduction, and as a primary development assistance goal. The Bank has also made gender mainstreaming a priority in development assistance, and the promotion of women's empowerment as a development goal (Malhotra and Mather 610).

Since women constitute nearly half of the population, they can become a great resource in the development process if they are properly mobilized and organized (Acker 936). According to Negash importance of women empowerment is felt everywhere. Presently, it is the aim of many Government and Non Governmental Organization to minimize gender disparity in the society. To discriminate and prevent half of humanity from reaching its full potential is an economic folly. He also mentioned that, denying women and girls equality and fairness not only hurts them, but also hinders the rest of society. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said "To awaken the people, it is women who must be awakened; once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves" as quoted by Pillai (32). Nobel Laureate Sen Amartya (25) also stated that the empowerment of women is one of the main issues in the process of development. The empowerment of women is a key topic of contemporary global political discourse (MacMillan et.al. 189).

According to Bhatia (125-26) one of the powerful approaches to women empowerment and rural entrepreneurship is the formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) especially among women. An SHG is a small group of about 20 persons from a homogeneous class, who come together voluntarily to attain certain collective goals, social or economic. The group is democratically formed and elects its own leader. The essential features of SHGs include members belonging to the same social strata and sharing a common ideology. Their aims should include economic welfare of all members. The concept of SHGs is predominantly used in the case of economically poor people, generally women, who come together to pool their small savings and then use it among themselves. Receiving finance is also easy for Self Help Groups as the mechanism of lending through Self Help Groups has gained wide

popularity during the last few years and has been adopted as an important strategy by banks for lending to the poor. A member can generate social capital in the form of personal empowerment through participation in self-help group. It can facilitate his/her goal of benefiting as much as possible from the group for effective coping and handling of the problem through group activities (Mok and Leung 12). The strategy had fetched noticeable results not only in India and Bangladesh but world over. Women SHGs are increasingly being used as tool for various developmental interventions (Wale and Deshmukh). In Assam 90% of total members of SHGs are women. SHG run by women are found to be of high grade in comparison to the groups run by men (Rao 13). According to Reddy & Manak (35) it is vitally important that both government and NGOs should bear the costs of interventions to make SHGs sustainable. Otherwise the SHGs will be overburdened and destined to failure.

In the context of the 'shrinking of development space', the growing international focus on tourism as a development strategy particularly in relation to poverty reduction had a significant impact in Central America (Ferguson 2). Tourism development has been seen as a positive agent of change for many areas because of its potential for job creation, income generation, improvements in the balance of payments and the acquisition of hard currency (Andriotis and Vaughan 66).

The Tourism industry has witnessed an unprecedented growth in recent years. Bezbaruah (124-25) suggested that tourism can be a tool to fight the biggest challenge of today, poverty. As the world's largest employer with 231 million employees generating 10.4% of the world GDP, the tourism industry is rapidly expanding and is estimated to employ approximately 269.5 million people by the year 2015 (World Travel and Tourism Council). It may provide avenue for women employment and participation. According to Ghodsee (1) tourism is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities.

The UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) declared the theme of World Tourism Day for the year 2007 as 'Tourism Opens Doors for Women'. UNWTO

Secretary General Francesco Frangialli's message for the Day reflected the positive note of the theme with an affirmative statement that "Tourism is a sector of the economy that not only employs significant numbers of women, but provides enormous opportunities for their advancement". UNWTO and UNIFEM (now UN women) have signed the initial cooperation agreement in 2008. The aim of this was to harness tourism's potentials to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment (UNWTO). Worldwide, tourism is an important sector for women as they make up to 46% of the tourism labour force. This percentage is higher than in the workforce in general, where 34-40% is women (Vagus and Aguilar). According to recent ILO (15) data women make up between 60 and 70 per cent of the labour force in the tourism industry. Most of the jobs for women are in unskilled or semi-skilled work and they are often employed in the informal sector with poor wages and working conditions. Women are therefore vulnerable in the industry and face precarious types of jobs, inequality, and violence at work, stress and sexual harassment. ILO has also reported that women workers earn up to 25 per cent less than male colleagues performing equal work. The low level of women's participation in workers' organizations, with even fewer women at higher levels of representation, often puts them in a weaker bargaining position. Gender issues, such as workplace safety, including workplace violence, are often insufficiently addressed.

Kaziranga National Park (KNP), a name known worldwide for its success in the conservation history of one horned Indian Rhinoceros, provides habitat for a number of threatened species and migratory birds. It is spread over civil jurisdictions of Nagaon and Golaghat districts in Assam with mighty Brahmaputra river on the north and verdant Karbi Anglong hills on the south between Longitude 92°50'E & 93° 41'E and Latitude 26° 30'N and 26° 50'N. Kaziranga National Park is an outstanding example representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of wet land ecosystem and communities of plants and animals. Kaziranga contains the most important and significant natural habitat for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation. The above mentioned values and criteria made Kaziranga National Park to get inscribed on the world heritage list of "Convention

concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage” in the year 1985 (Environment and Forest Department, Govt. of Assam 2).

Kaziranga National Park is a major tourism destination in Northeast India. At present, Kaziranga is the most popular tourist destination of Assam. A substantial number of tourists visit Kaziranga National Park every year. The tourist density is highest in KNP in comparison to other destinations of Assam.

According to the Department of Forest the destination attracted 1,19,839 tourists during the year 2010-2011, out of which 1,12,392 were domestic tourists and 7,447, foreign tourists. The revenue collection from the tourists was INR. 1,36,73,482 during the period. Figure 1.1 represents the number of Indian and Foreigner tourists at KNP from 1997-2011.

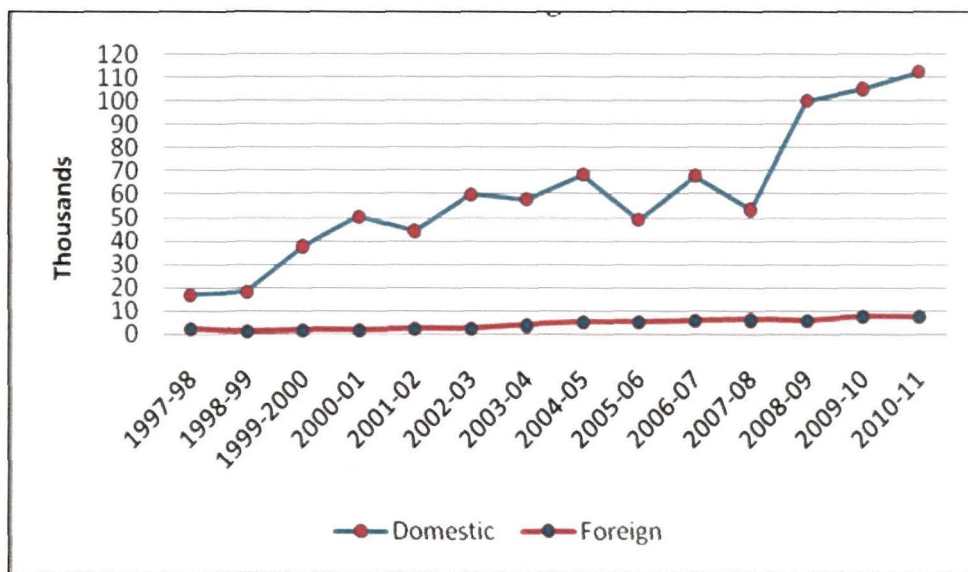


Fig. 1.1-Number of Domestic and Foreigner Tourists at KNP (1997-2011)*

*Source-Department of Tourism, Government of Assam.

Assam has the longest concentration of weavers in India. Handloom weaving and its vast range of design reflect the sartorial taste of multi faceted composite culture and tradition of Assam. There is hardly any village in Assam where one will not hear the rhythmic sound of the looms and shuttle. Designed dress materials produced by weavers of Sualkuchi are highly

claimed for its uniqueness and quality standards. The famous *Vriundavani vastra* now preserved in London museum was woven under supervision of Sri Sankaradeva, the great religious and social leader of the 16th Century. (Ministry of Tourism and Culture 16-18).

Assamese women are known for their expertise in handicrafts. Weaving is one of the traditional crafts that every Assamese woman takes pride in. The Assamese women produce silk and cotton clothes of exquisite designs in their looms. Assam is renowned for its exquisite silks namely *Eri*, *Pat* (silk) and the world famous *Muga* (*Antheraea Assamensis*) which is available only in Assam (Government of Assam). Mahatma Gandhi complimented the weaving skill of the women of Assam as artists who could weave dreams in their looms. Every woman in Assam is by nature an artist. This particular aspect can be utilized in tourism. Apart from this, involvement in tourism activities can be seen as a complementary activity to the main occupational activity of the household so that the economic conditions improve. Government of Assam also has emphasized on local art and crafts for properly designed souvenir shops in each major tourist destinations of Assam. Tourism Policy of Assam-2008 planned to encourage and assist local entrepreneurs to produce authentic designs of local art and craft forms in a way that the tourists can easily carry them as mementoes (Tourism Policy of Assam 20).

The present study was mainly aimed to formulate strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities (TRA). To formulate the objectives and the methodology of the study an extensive review of literature was done which is presented in chapter II. A six phase methodology was designed for achieving the objectives. Methodology included a women survey, tourists' survey, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for skill mapping of local women, stakeholder analysis, formulation of strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities and practicability study of formulated strategies.

Women survey was conducted among women belonging to the villages in the periphery of KNP. 10 villages were selected by judgmental basis. Number of sample for the study was 645. Women survey gave the socio-economic status

of women and their involvement in tourism related activities in the study area. It also provided information about perception of local women about tourism and women empowerment. Tourists' survey was conducted to find out demands of tourists about various services, souvenir and consumable items in the study area. 514 duly filled questionnaires formed the database for analysis of tourists' demand, of which 400 were domestic and 114 foreign tourists. Period of survey was 2010-2011. PRA methodology was used for interacting with villagers, understanding them, and learning from them. Main purpose of PRA method was skill mapping of village women in the study area. The latent purpose was to sensitize and motivate village women to utilize their capability to get involved in tourism related activities for their economic empowerment. PRA was conducted in all 10 villages selected for women survey. Workshops were organized with the help of Anganwadi (Scheme of Social Welfare Department, Government of Assam) workers of the concerned village. Local women drew the map of their villages showing different skills of women.

To gain qualitative information, semi-structured interviews were taken of stakeholders. The chosen stakeholders were tourism officials, forests officials, academicians, administrative officers, tourism entrepreneurs and official from Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati. Information on opportunities for women to get involved in tourism was obtained from the stakeholders.

Information gained from stakeholder analysis, women survey, PRA and tourists' survey was utilized to develop strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities in the study area. The suggested strategies were circulated among experts in three rounds to find out the feasibility of the same. Expert suggestions and modifications were incorporated in the strategies so that these can be practically implemented. Chapter III describes the methodology of the study comprehensively.

Results of the study are described in details in chapter IV. This chapter also includes the stakeholders' suggestions and strategies formulated for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities. Chapter V is the concluding chapter of the thesis. This chapter gives an overview of the research.

The study documented the present socioeconomic status of women in the fringe villages of Kaziranga National Park. It revealed the perception scenario of local women regarding tourism, and women empowerment. Formulation of 'Skill maps' showing different skills of rural women through Participatory Rural Appraisal method is the most vital contribution of the study. Most studies look into any one aspect of women getting involved in tourism related activities. This study made analyses of the skill levels of the women in the study area, demand pattern of the tourists, society's perception towards women getting involved in tourism related activities and ultimately attempted at developing local level strategies for socio-economic upliftment of women. Convergence of all the aspects attempted in the study is its contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

The results of the study will be beneficial to policy makers. They can utilize the findings of the study for future tourism planning and local area development. Local tourism entrepreneurs also can exploit the results of skill mapping and formulate strategies for establishing new and expansion of their existing tourism businesses. They can provide employment to skilled women of the locality. Finally, the findings will be beneficial to the local women as well as the local people residing in the periphery of KNP.

CHAPTER:-II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Women Empowerment - Its Necessity:

2.2. Tourism and Local Community Development:

2.3. Tourism and Women Empowerment:

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CHAPTER: II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1. Women Empowerment - Its Necessity:

Women's empowerment is particularly important for determining a country's demographic trends. Demographic trends in turn affect its economic success and environmental sustainability. The status of any given section of population in a society is ultimately connected with its economic position, which (itself) depends on rights, roles and opportunities for participation in economic activities. The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development (Singh 32). Naz and Choudhury (20), enumerate that socio-political, economic, and religious constraints exist to a greater extent in women's empowerment and gender development. Their study suggested that proper policy making; implementation, education to both genders and equal socialization and the role of government would promisingly increase gender development and women's empowerment in society.

Women's economic empowerment is not only a question of rights. When women are given economic opportunity, the benefit are also large for their families, their communities, and ultimately for national development efforts. Opening economic opportunities for women puts poverty reduction on a faster track and steps up progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The aim of MDG includes the eradication of poverty and hunger by 2015 (World Bank). For empowerment of women action is required at multiple levels to change gendered norms, from individuals and families to communities, through programmes, policy, and legislation (Keleher and Franklin 43). Economic empowerment of women is very important for the society as women are more likely to spend their income on the health and education of their children than men (Cox and Healey 26).

Sen (35) made a compelling case for the notion that societies need to see women less as passive recipients of help, and more as dynamic promoters of social transformation, a view strongly buttressed by a body of evidence suggesting that the education, employment and ownership rights of women

have a powerful influence on their ability to control their environment and contribute to economic development. Economic participation concerns not only the actual number of women participating in the labor force, but also their remuneration on an equal basis. Worldwide, excluding the agricultural sector, in both developed and developing countries, women are still averaging slightly less than 78% of the wages given to men for the same work, a gap which refuses to close even in the most developed countries (Billitteri 48). Aggarwal (2) commented that economic participation of women is very important. Their presence in the workforce in quantitative terms is important not only for lowering the disproportionate levels of poverty among women, but also as an important step towards raising household income and encouraging economic development as a whole.

Yumkella, the Director-General of UNIDO, expressed that Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, especially in developing countries, is ever more important in light of the current mega trends and challenges the world is facing. Empowering women translates into greater prosperity for families, communities and economies, ultimately leading to sustainable development. He commented on economic empowerment of women as the economic participation of women, and their presence in the workforce in quantitative terms. This is important not only for lowering the disproportionate levels of poverty among women but also encouraging economic development in countries. In their report, Hosni and Lundberg (78), advised the Nepal Government to incorporate women's development in its poverty reduction plan. They commented in the report that women should become an urgent priority in the government's poverty reduction plans. Only then could Nepal be in a position to effectively address its other problems, including gender gaps, and achieve self-sustained development.

Despite worldwide evidence of the low levels of female participation in social, educational, economic and political spheres, there is still a tendency to see it as a real problem only in a limited number of countries. Yet, as noted above, the reality is that no country in the world, no matter how advanced, has achieved true gender equality, as measured by comparable decision-making

power, equal opportunity for education and advancement, and equal participation and status in all walks of human endeavor. Gender disparities exist even in countries without glaring male-domination. Measuring these disparities is a necessary step towards implementing corrective policies (World Economic Forum 2). Tesoriero (330) mentioned that in India, there are fewer women in the paid workforce than men. Women are under-represented in governance and decision-making positions. Most women do not have any autonomy in decision making in their personal lives.

Research has revealed that women join the workforce because economic productivity enhances their self-esteem, even at the cost of dual pressure and additional stress. However, this stress often results in detrimental effects on satisfaction with life and work and adjustment in general (Desai et al.441). The working women's status at their workplace reflect their vulnerability as they are typically paid less and have less financial and social security than men (Usher and Morais 516; Nyaupane, et. al. 1380). Their jobs are characterized by inadequate earnings, low productivity and substandard working conditions, especially in Western Asia and Northern Africa, where paid employment opportunities for women are the lowest. Globally, only one quarter of senior officials or managers is women. In Western Asia, Southern Asia and Northern Africa, women hold less than 10 per cent of top-level positions (MDG-3).

Assam Human Development Report (125) threw light on inequality in the achievement between men and women of Assam in different spheres of life. The report viewed that poverty, violence and lack of political participation were the main issues of concern for South Asian Women, and Assam was no exception. Assam's overall Female Workforce Participation Rate (FWPR) is 20.8%. It is lower than the national average of 25.7%. The majority of women workers are either unpaid or poorly paid and belong to the category of unskilled labour. Female work participation rates (FWPR) in Karbi aglong, Golaghat and Nagaon are 33.36%, 31.59%, 19.08% and their respective ranks are 3, 5 and 15. Nayak and Mahanta (12) revealed that development process in Assam is not gender neutral; women enjoy quite inferior status as compared to

the average women in India. Percentage of women in the government services and their political participation is quite low and does not show any sign of significant improvement.

A number of authors (Mitchell and Eagles; Mitra 329; Jurajda 220) highlight long term discrimination between gender in terms of occupation, earnings and promotion prospect. There are many factors that may affect women's empowerment such as age, education, assets etc. Rahman et. al. (296-301) observed that the age of female has negative effects on empowerment. That implies that younger females are more empowered. They further observed that assets are positively related to women's empowerment. On the other hand, Kabeer, et. al. (38-9) studied paid work as pathway to women's empowerment, but the study reflected a different picture. The result shows that not only economic but other two factors cognitive and relational are also important to bring sustainable and transformative changes in women's lives leading to empowerment.

Hughes (112-13) studied how motivations are linked to the types of businesses women build and the economic rewards they receive among Canadian women. The findings suggest diversity in the motivations and success of women entrepreneurs. The most commonly reported motivator is a desire for independence, freedom, and to be one's own boss (cited by 24% of women). However, other "classic" motivators—such as challenge and financial opportunity—are somewhat less important, and superseded by work-family balance (13.3%) and flexible hours (10.2%). Close behind these is another factor often associated with work-family balance, the ability to work from home (8.4%). Several other "classic" factors are also important. Challenge (10.0%) is the most commonly cited, followed down the list by opportunities for earning more money (6.4%) and control (4.6%). The gender differences in motivations are statistically significant. It is interesting to see that "work-family" factors are far less salient for men. Just 7.9% of men cite any of the work-family factors as a primary motivator (that is, balance, flexible hours, and work from home).

Effectiveness of education is reflected over time, particularly in employment and income data (UNICEF 28-29). Girls' education has significant economic benefits. Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1) estimate that every year of schooling lost represents a 10% reduction in girls' future incomes. In a 72-country analysis, as well as country studies in Uganda, Kenya, and Zambia, reductions in HIV/AIDS infection rates are found to be related to literacy and girls' education. In a 63-country study, gains in women's education contributed more than any other intervention to reduce malnutrition, between 1970 and 1995, due to more productive farming (Smith and Haddad 62). Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a non-formal education programme. Village women joined this low-paid teaching work outside their home for the benefit of deprived community members and in turn it enhanced their social standing in both society and at home (Sperandio 134). Studies have shown that an extra year of girls' education can reduce infant mortality by 5-10%, especially in low income countries. In Africa, children of mothers who receive 5 years of primary education are 40% more likely to live beyond 5 years of age (Herz and Sperling 2). Multi-country data show that educated mothers are 50% more likely to immunize their children than uneducated mothers (Gage et al. 307). According to Mukhopadhyay (222-23) women empowerment through education has emerged as the only way to put an end to the horrors of dowry in India. While education may not be an adequate base for empowerment, exclusion from education reinforces powerlessness (Jayaweera 421). In India, the adult literacy rate of female was found to be 54.16% which is much lower than the male literacy rate of 75.85%. In Assam also literacy rate of female (56.03%) is lower than the male literacy rate, which is 71.93% (Census of India).

Presently Micro Finance Institutions are assisting women for their empowerment. The RDCP (Regional Development in the Copan Valley Project) is being promoted as a success story by the World Bank in terms of economic opportunities for 'vulnerable groups'. The use of microenterprise funding as one of the foundations of the World Bank's 'Gender Plan' is problematic (Ferguson 20). According to her RDCP lacks in clear guidelines about what a 'gender component' actually means. It leads to confusion and

contradiction at the levels of national policy-making, programme design and project implementation. Although indigenous women's groups were to be given 'priority' in the RDCP, the ambiguous and vague ways in which 'gender' was presented at the national and project level meant that in practice these were not the highest priorities of the RDCP.

According to Cheston and Kuhn (5) microfinance programme when properly designed can make an important contribution to women's empowerment. In recent years, governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in developing countries have introduced microfinance programmes offering financial services to low income households, specifically targeting women. This was based on the premise that women in poor households are more likely to be credit constrained, and hence less able to undertake income-earning activities.

According to Nai (46), micro-credit is helping in economic empowerment of women. With the aim to meet the Millennium Development Goals and microfinance programmes' role in supporting it, there has been an increasing expectation on their impact on women's empowerment. Contribution of microfinance to women's empowerment is widely recognised. Almost all rural financial institutions in Sri Lanka have provided easy access to women, particularly in the villages, estates and among fishing communities. Small Farmers and Landless Credit Project (SFLCP), Poverty Alleviation Micro Finance Project (PAMP). Thrift and Credit Societies have been successful in providing loan facilities up to 93% for women (Jayamaya 7).

According to the Harris (27) of the 106.6 million poorest clients reached by microfinance, at the end of 2007, 83.2 percent or 88.7 million were women. The growth in the number of very poor women reached has gone from 10.3 million at the end of 1999 to 104.7 million at the end of 2009. This is a 919 percent increase in the number of poorest women reached from December 31, 1999 to December 31, 2009. The increase represents an additional 94.4 million poorest women receiving microloans in the last 10 years. The report also reveals that MFI's coverage is maximum (64.2%) in Asia.

Government of India introduced the first goal of National Policy for the Empowerment of Women as to create an environment for positive economic and social policies for full development of women. The aim of the policy was to enable women to realize their full potential (Ministry for women and Child Development). In spite of all these Claros and Zahidi (9), found Gender Gap Rank of India as 53 with an overall score of 3.27 (scores are reported on a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 representing maximum gender equality). In 2010 the gender inequality index value of India was reduced further to 0.748 and ranked 122 (HDR-2010, 158).

Involvement of women in business world is increasing in recent years (Cave and Kilic 280). Worldwide various organizations are working for women empowerment through different programmes. PROGRESA- Oportunidades is a nationwide anti-poverty programme in Mexico, involving the disbursement of cash transfers and incentives to improve health, nutrition, and education. The programme has had a significant impact on women's empowerment and status, access to appropriate health services, and school enrolment, particularly among poor families (Adato et al. 90).

The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India is a trade union reaching a vast number of poor self-employed women. Since the foundation in 1972, SEWA has emerged as one of the leading organizations of poor working women in the third world (Spodek 193). SEWA's approach is multi-level, from the micro levels of skill building to institutional and legal reform and capacity building, to enable local organizations to increase their effectiveness and sustainability. SEWA have been effective in improving women's economic status because they have started with the premise that women are fundamental to the process of economic development (Mehra 146). The achievements of SEWA have been remarkable, utilizing social protections and innovative services with rapid growth of 25-35% per year (Grown, Gupta and Pande 542). In North East India, NEWEA (North East Women Entrepreneurs' Association) is working for the benefit of women entrepreneurs in this area (Gohain 5).

2.2. Tourism and Local Community Development:

Tourism is a major economic activity in terms of income generation, employment creation, foreign exchange earnings, and interchange of cultures and people (Ige and Odularu 71). According to Andriotis and Vaughan (66-67) tourism has potential to generate economic activity in areas where there are typically few alternative sources of economic diversification. It has been realized by many governments and, as a result, tourism has been identified as an important aspect in many development and regeneration strategies.

According to Aref and Redzuan (208) tourism plays an increasingly important role in the development of communities. The benefits of tourism can either be tangible (e.g. job creation, state and local tax revenue, etc.) or less tangible (e.g. social structure, quality of life, etc.). Mitchell and Eagles compared the differences in the level of community integration in the respective tourism sectors of the Andean communities of Taquile Island and Chiquian, Peru. Data were collected through survey of key-informant interviews, and participatory observation. Integration was primarily defined by percentage of local people employed, type and degree of participation, decision-making power, and ownership in the local tourism sector. It was found that higher levels of integration would lead to enhanced socioeconomic benefits for the community.

Studies have revealed that tourism increases employment opportunities for the local people, contributes to income and standard of living (Dyer et.al. 415; Gu & Rayn 642), brings in new business and improves investment opportunities (Kwan & McCartney 430).

According to Binns and Nel (236) the emergence of tourism as a leading economic activity in recent decades is undisputed. Williams (1) argues, it is now seen as a catalyst for modernization, economic development and prosperity in emerging nations in the Third World. In South Africa, the potential of tourism to revitalize local economies at a crucial time in the country's history has been seized upon by many local authorities and stakeholder groups. They wished to use tourism as a Local Economic

Development (LED) strategy to create jobs and refocus their local economies. Hampton (753) suggested that the nature of small-scale locally owned tourism businesses, particularly their minimal capital requirements, might be seen as a form of 'pro-poor tourism'. It may provide a useful component of local economic development strategies for poor communities. Further. Small-scale tourism development may also be seen as an effective local response to some of the effects of globalization, specifically, increasing flows of international tourists to developing countries.

The potential role of tourism in providing economic opportunities for communities living adjacent to natural heritage has long been recognized (Goodwin 355). Tourism brings development to the locality. For the development of the locality, involvement of local community in tourism activities is important. Bowman (270) suggested that sustainable tourism programmes should be designed locally and based on local area. Sustainable tourism helps in developing the tourism in rural areas based on local natural, social and cultural resources (David 211). Sustainable tourism is possible only when local community is economically benefited. It should help in retaining the tourism revenue and development of the destinations. Tourism is the only international industry where the customer travels to the product and lack of modern development can be an asset (Ashley 8). Therefore, it is one of the few industries that are actually suited to more remote rural areas lacking infrastructure, where job opportunities are meager. It also has the potential to be more sustainable than other industries (Dhakal 3).

Ateljevic examined the entrepreneurial behaviour of small tourism businesses and their ability to contribute to regional development. The research, by combining in-depth interviews and a survey, reports on a case study of Wairarapa, a region of New Zealand that has recently seen a large expansion in the tourism sector. The study identified a number of perceived constraints to Small Tourism Firms' (STFs') growth and their success as well as the regional socio-economic prosperity. Competition, particularly from other small businesses (44.5 per cent), labour costs (22 per cent), lack of demand (36.7 per cent), limited access to finance (16.6 per cent), high operational costs

associated with regulatory and financial obligations, followed by high interest rates, lack of skilled workers, and competition from larger businesses, were the main concerns for owner/managers. According to him, the success of both the small tourism sector and the Wairarapa region at large depends on how well they respond to the changing circumstances. Wairarapa has not only emerged from a traditional rural area to a dynamic region because of its geography that fits into the framework of "new tourism", but also because of economic necessity that has pushed local communities to yield their entrepreneurial capabilities. Policy coordination and integration is required across the breadth of government agencies either directly (e.g. regulation, compliance) or indirectly (e.g. interest rates, regional tourism marketing) involved in small firm development. Given that, the small firm is multifaceted by its very nature. There is an imperative for research to demonstrate not only the issues affecting development within the sector but also the benefits that the sector contributes to wider processes of regional economic development.

Ashley has indicated that there is a potential of community-based tourism to generate financial and social benefits for communities in Namibia, and hence to achieve objectives of development and conservation. In Namibia tourism contributes approximately 5% to Gross Domestic Product and 12% to foreign exchange earnings. According to her, there is potential for further expansion of community benefits from tourism in Namibia. For example, income earned by local workers and communities from tourism enterprises could increase three-fold in the communal areas of Caprivi, Bushmanland, and Kunene; even without any increase in the natural resource base or decrease in agricultural land-use. By raising local incomes and developing skills, this expansion can contribute to sustainable local development and community based conservation. At the same time, involvement of local people in the industry improves the tourism product and enhances popular support for the industry. Wages paid to local staff by private operations, such as up-market lodges, will continue to account for the bulk of local incomes from tourism. However, income that is earned and controlled by the community is probably more significant at boosting local development and conservation. It can be distributed more widely, linked more visibly to wildlife conservation, and can

involve development of local skills, institutions and decision-making. This income can be earned from campsites, crafts and other community enterprises (N\$2-20,000 per year), voluntary revenue-sharing by lodges (N\$10-15,000 per year), and joint ventures between communities and investors (N\$20-80,000 per year). Ashley's estimate of potential tourism activities in Caprivi, Bushmanland and Kunene indicates that income from crafts could double and other community-enterprises expand five-fold. Much has already been done, at both local and policy level, to promote community based tourism. However, many constraints remain. The report pointed out that communities need more information, skills, and rights over land and wildlife to engage equally with tourists and private operators. Private operators also need information and incentives. So there is much that Government can do to set a favorable policy environment, facilitate communication, ensure government procedures and regulations, and accommodate needs of community-based tourism. In 2003 the total estimated direct income and benefits to conservancies and community members amounted to nearly \$1.764 million. Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) supported enterprises (i.e., joint-venture lodges, trophy hunting concessions, thatching grass industry, community-based tourism enterprises, crafts, and live game sales) resulted in the employment of 542 full-time and 2,933 part-time employees in Namibia (USAID).

Huttasin investigated the impacts of tourism development at Baan Tawai, the first OTOP (One Tambon One Product) Tourism Village in Thailand, and examined the relationship between demographic factors and Baan Tawai residents' perceptions of the social impacts of tourism development. Data collection tool for the investigation was questionnaires. The finding was that the residents positively perceived the social impacts of tourism in terms of job creation for women in the village. More than 90% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statements that tourism offers women in the village additional job opportunities, reduces unemployment, increases the pride of villagers, increases family income and increases the standard of living. However, more than 90% of the respondents also agreed or strongly agreed with the negative impacts that tourism brings into their village, for example,

dramatically and rapidly increasing prices of land and houses, and changing of villagers' vocations from farming to tourism-related careers. Additionally, more than 80% mention that tourism has increased the number of people moving from other areas to the village, and has increased litter and garbage in the village. It is interesting that more than 60% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements that tourism increases prostitution, drug abuse, vandalism and burglary in their village. Furthermore, more than 50% did not believe that tourism benefited only a few people in their village and felt that prices of goods and services increased because of tourism.

The development of tourism in Okavango has led to the establishment of community-based tourism initiatives (Mbaiwa). These have resulted in income generation, and employment of the local people. The Tawana Land Board has allocated land on joint venture partnerships with tour operators. Through this local communities in Okavango have been able to generate revenue for themselves through hunting and photographic tourism activities. But when the researcher informally interviewed the community-based organization's (CBOs) Board members they pointed out that benefits (e.g. revenue) that local communities obtain from community-based tourism are insignificant when compared to those obtained by the private tour operators or by government. For example, local communities sell a single elephant to a safari operator at US\$ 8000, the same elephant is sold to an overseas safari hunter by the operator at US\$ 80,000. This means tourism in the Okavango Delta does not have substantial and meaningful economic benefits to the local people. Hence, its sustainability in terms of socio-economic benefits becomes questionable.

A key challenge in sustainable tourism is to develop economically viable enterprises that provide livelihood benefits to local communities while protecting indigenous cultures and environments. Such ventures are difficult to assess due to a general lack of effective assessment and monitoring methods, a lack of consensus about methodology and the inability of some monitoring systems to incorporate all elements of tourism impacts (Simpson). He formulated a structured integrated assessment approach to assess the impacts of initiatives that purport to deliver net livelihood benefits to communities

living adjacent to or within the tourism destination. The approach included a survey of household and tourists, Participatory Rural Appraisal for the villagers and interview of stakeholders. The approach has been developed to enable generic use in different geographical contexts taking into account a variety of aspects including ownership structure, levels of employment, infrastructure, governance, and sustainable livelihoods (SL). Two pilot case studies were also conducted in Maputaland, South Africa, to reflect on the implementation and theoretical underpinnings of the protocol.

Simpson showed that the tourism initiatives had affected community development and the communities' livelihoods and assets in both positive and negative ways, the positive impacts generally seem to be outweighing the negative ones. The financial benefits are limited to a select few households who have members directly employed in tourism sector. Other livelihood assets such as physical assets (e.g. infrastructure) have improved only marginally and these improvements have not met the expectations of the community or the tourism industry stakeholder. Improvements in human resource assets are also limited to those few who have been trained for work in lodges. Some gender empowerment took place in the Mathenjwa community as a result of the curio shop being built and a group of women taking on the manufacturing of products to sell there.

According to Panigrahi the ethnic communities should be encouraged to enrich their ethnic heritage and skills so as to make their traditions more attractive rather than less in the face of change. Eco-tourism (inclusive of its ethno component) should provide an opportunity for these tribal communities to generate more income from the tourism business in a dignified manner. He also mentioned that the fabric of native culture reflected through folklore, folk music, folk dance, and customs should be promoted through required value addition.

According to Cengiz et.al. (3840) tourism brings in socio-economic and socio-cultural benefits, it can also bring along some costs. For this reason implementing ecologic tourism in areas that are ecologically sensitive will minimize such problems. They also stated that for the sake of the principle of

sustainability, an understanding of a participatory tourism that does not harm natural and cultural sources and environment, that protects recreational tourism sources, and that aims development should be adopted. The matter of tourism, which has a sensitive ecology, need to be solved together with the local community on protecting-using basis and on environment sensible ecologic tourism basis.

2.3. Tourism and Women Empowerment:

In most developing countries, gender inequality is a major obstacle for development. In order to achieve the millennium development goals in 2015 one of the most important aspects will be, to try to diminish the gap between women and men in terms of capacities, increase access to resources and opportunities, and reduce vulnerability to violence and conflict. One of the aspects in which gender (inequalities) issues can play an important role is tourism development. In changing the lives of poor women, enhancing incomes and increasing their self-esteem, there are more and more tourism projects to support women empowerment. Not much attention has been given to research about women empowerment through tourism yet (Ampumuza et. al.7)

The tourism industry represents a huge economic factor and its environmental and social impacts are obvious and have been well documented. In addition, integrating gender perspectives into the discussion of tourism is particularly important as the tourism industry is one major employer of women, offers various opportunities for independent income generating activities, and at the same time affects women's lives in destination communities (UNED-UK).

Ong (7) interestingly commented on tourism as the key which, if innovatively applied, can surely unlock doors of empowerment for women. According to Bansal and Kumar (9) local women of Kullu valley in India are empowered by handicraft business in tourism. Panda (32) mentioned that women of Assam can get engaged in Eco-tourism sector, either as self employed or private and public servant for their empowerment.

Tourism is more labour intensive and employs a higher proportion of women. Unlike many other traded-good industries, it has potential in poor countries and areas with few other competitive exports. Tourism products can be built on natural resources and culture which are assets that some of the poor have (DFID).

The overarching vision for the Global Report on Women in Tourism (42-3) is to promote women's empowerment and protect women's rights through better tourism work. There are five goals: to promote equal opportunities for women working in tourism; to inspire increased entrepreneurship for women in tourism; to advance women through education and training; to encourage women to lead in tourism; and to protect vulnerable women and those working in home-based tourism enterprises. This report aimed at monitoring how well tourism was inspiring women as employers and entrepreneurs. Overall women are much better represented as employers in the hospitality industry. The key overall findings of the report are:

- Women's pay appears to be closer to men's in tourism than in other sectors.
- Women are much more likely to be employers/ self-employed in the H&R (Human resource) sector than in other sectors.
- Women are slightly more likely to hold leadership positions in tourism than in other sectors.
- Women are more likely to work from home in the H&R sector than in other sectors.

According to Ghodsee (474) tourism can be considered as one of the important sectors for women empowerment; it is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities. In another study in Bulgaria, Ghodsee found that although only 29 percent of managers and administrators in Bulgaria are female (UNDP), 71 percent of managers and administrators in tourism are women. Women dominate middle and the high-level management positions. Out of 42 hotels and villas in the resort of Albena, 32 had women hotel managers at the beginning of the summer of 2000. She prepared a survey of 24 questions for women and men working in the tourism sector. 850 questionnaires were

distributed and 787 were received back. Of these, 91.5 percent of the respondents worked in hotels; 4 percent were employed in free-standing restaurants; and 4.5 percent came from other tourist establishments in the resorts (i.e. shops, bars, etc.). Of the 787 responses, 489 were from women and 297 were from men.

Hazel (101) conducted a longitudinal research to study the processes of tourism and socio-cultural change in a Turkish village context by exploring how gender identities and gendered spaces are being reconstituted through tourism-related work. As tourism has developed in the region surrounding the World Heritage Site of Goreme in central Turkey, men have become tourism entrepreneurs and gained tourism employment whilst women have remained largely excluded from tourism work. This is because in Goreme society tourism work is considered a man's activity as it is inappropriate for women to work in the 'public' sphere. During the past five years, however, there has been a marked increase both in women's paid employment in local tourism small businesses and in women's micro scale entrepreneurial activity associated with tourism. He considered some of the broader influential aspects of social change, and also looked at how the spatial and moral boundaries have shifted in order to allow women to work in the tourism domain. The women's relationship with tourism space and work has added insight into how, as tourism has developed, women have negotiated the spatial and moral boundaries of tourism in order to find a 'place' for themselves in the tourism economic realm. As the more successful pansiyons (Guest house) have grown and formalized their employment structure, female spaces have been included within the overall hegemonic male space of the establishment. Particularly for the young women in Goreme, the spatial boundaries and the boundaries of shame are gradually shifting and being stretched out. Some older women, too, are 'crafting new selves' through their entrepreneurial activities; activities which are working to reconfigure 'domestic' space in its use for economic gain and also to challenge the ways that gender identities are performed within that space.

Ferguson (20) argued that while tourism development may, in theory, contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment, a substantive reframing of policies is required in order to be able to maximize this potential. She also pointed out that the broad overview of the relationship between tourism and the MDG-3 has highlighted some of the tensions and complexities of this issue.

In Guatemala, men hold most technical and higher paying jobs in Tourism (Usher and Morais 516). On contrary to this women hold occupations consistent with their traditional roles as family caretakers. These occupations include cooking food, producing and selling crafts, and cleaning in tourism and lodging facilities.

Balasubramanian carried out a study to find out different measure to strengthen rural livelihoods through the tourism process. He argued that the art and craft skills of the rural population and tourists' interest in endogenous tourism can help in income generation and enhancement of basic qualities of life in rural areas. He observed that tourism is being used as a vanguard area for testing new livelihood possibilities, particularly for women and other disadvantaged groups.

Gentry examined Belizean women's employment experience in alternative, mass, and non tourism businesses to determine whether the alternative sector addresses criticism attributed to mass tourism employment. Data were gathered using anthropological research methods including semi structured interview and participant observation. The research highlighted the diversity of experiences in various employment sectors. This case study showed that employment is exploiting traditional belief, particularly in reference to sex-based segregation, housewifization of labour, double workday, low wages, and low education levels. However, in terms of household economic decision making, social interaction, business ownership, and level of autonomy, employment seems to be offering opportunities to challenge the norm.

According to Scheyvens (235-46) women and girls have greater interaction with the natural environment than men do. Women's cooperation is needed if

that natural resource base, the resource upon which the ecotourism trade is dependent, is to be sustained. Four dimensions of empowerment of women, which are involved with ecotourism ventures discussed by her are: economic, social, psychological, and political. It is essential to consider issues such as whether a community has control over an ecotourism initiative (political empowerment), whether it provides opportunities for people to develop new skill, gain respect within the communities and thus improves their self-esteem (psychological empowerment), and whether it enhances community cohesion (social empowerment). The study highlighted both disempowering and empowering impacts of involvement in ecotourism for women. One key finding is that women are not simply victims of inappropriate ecotourism development, rather they have benefited greatly from some well-planned initiatives.

Wikinson & Pratiwi found that tourism development in Pangandaran has influenced gender roles and relations especially among the lower-class local people, in social (e.g., child-rearing practices) and economic terms. Despite the problem of double or even triple work responsibilities, more women have become self-employed by engaging in the informal sector, particularly in informal trading. This has led to more control over their lives, as they can be at least economically partially independent. This economic improvement has the potential to empower them to have more control over their own lives and their family's survival in a community with a significant predominance of poverty.

Tourism has demonstrated its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income-generating activities to benefit local communities in destination areas. The tourism sector provides various entry points for women employment in small and medium sized income generating activities, thus creating paths towards the elimination of poverty of women and local communities in developing countries (Hemmati). According to her the general picture suggests that the tourism industry seems to be a particularly important sector for women (46% of the workforce are women) as their percentages of employment in most countries are higher than in the workforce in general (34

- 40 % are women, ILO data). The number of women and their percentage of the workforce in tourism vary greatly between countries from 2 % up to over 80 %. Although there were few obvious regional trends it would appear that in those countries where tourism is a more mature industry women generally account for around 50 % of the workforce. It appears that there has been a broad increase in the participation of women for tourism industry at a global level. The majority of this increase in female participation may be driven by the growth in the industry for specific countries, such as Puerto Rico, Chile and Turkey. For the industrially developed countries, there has been little change in the actual participation of women in the tourism industry.

Hemmati also highlighted the gender disparity in tourism work and wage structures. The proportion of women's to men's working hours available for 39 countries is 89 %, which means that women work 89 hours when men work 100 hours. The proportion of women's to men's wages is 79 %. Regarding the disproportionate relation between women's and men's working hours and their respective wages, there is a divide between the developed world, which employs females on an average weekly wage equivalent to 80% of a male's wage, and the less developed world, where average female wages fall by another 10% to 70% of male wages. However, there are significant variations within these groups. Women's position in tourism industry in terms of hierarchical levels is also not equal to men. Horizontally, women and men are placed in different occupations. Women are being employed as waitresses, chambermaids, cleaners, sales persons in travel agencies, flight attendants, etc., whereas men are being employed as barmen, gardeners, construction workers, drivers, pilots, etc. Vertically, the typical "gender pyramid" is prevalent in the tourism sector. Lower levels and occupations with few career development opportunities are being dominated by women, and key managerial positions being dominated by men.

Research by Nyaupane et.al. (1379) found that tourism development in the Annapurna region of Nepal has resulted in the empowerment of women. They argue that tourism has improved the quality of life for local inhabitants and has revived the traditional culture of the region. Impact of tourism on

mountain women are also studied by Sherpa in terms of economic opportunities, extension of household work, empowerment and bringing market to the mountains. Though in Nepal the percentage of women employment in tourism is 50% or even more, their role in decision making with respect to resource management is less compared to men. Migration of men, commoditization of women, and loss of indigenous culture are challenges for mountain tourism. These challenges can be addressed by bringing together stakeholders through social mobilization. Capacity enhancement, skills training and providing access to credit to mountain women are some ways through which the role of mountain women in tourism can be optimized. Above all, the leading role of mountain women in natural resource management and their roles as preservers of culture and indigenous wisdom have to be acknowledged and the Government ought to take appropriate protective steps if it is actually committed to protecting and enhancing one of the leading industries of Nepal. McMillan et.al. studied how commercial hospitality has catalyzed sustainable social change in Nepal through empowering women. Utilizing a new framework, developed by combining existing theories, empowerment of women teahouse owners/managers was assessed. Primary research consisting of interviews and participant observation was undertaken over a three-month period in the central region of Nepal. The study revealed that involvement in the hospitality industry improved the livelihoods of the women tea house owners/managers; it also has the potential to facilitate sustainable empowerment for future generations, providing them with education, choice, control and opportunities.

In many cases, tourism is considered to have negative impact on women. However, studies have shown that tourism is not the only reason for that. The study conducted by Losinski & Waldorf in San Cristobal, Galapagos Island, shows that alcoholism, abuse, prostitution and machismo culture are all themes of women's rights that existed on the island long before tourism did, and still continue to exist. The quantity and ways in which these factors affect women's lives and opportunities have changed over time. However, an attitude of gender equality is more widespread in younger generations. Even the mindsets of older generations are also changing. Factors responsible for

this change include media, foreign and local activism, foreign students and volunteers, and tourism.

Due to the continuous need for full time, part time, casual and seasonal staff, the tourism industry is often considered as ideal for women who need to accommodate paid work around their various traditional gender related roles and responsibilities (Parrett). Tourism industry has tremendous opportunities for women. To make women successful in tourism industry, few changes or improvements are to be made (Frangialli). According to Green (104) there are four broad areas for improvement that would serve to enhance women's employment opportunities and skills. These include: Skills development and training, Flexible working, Childcare and Information dissemination.

According to Haladi tourism is an industry that has an impact on economic, social, environmental and political conditions and on gender relations. For any economic activity to be considered as important and meaningful, an assessment of its impact on the lives of people needs to be carried out. During the course of her research 'Tourism and its Impact on Gender: A Case Study of Goa, India', she has observed the following:

- The number of women in the hotel industry is significantly lower than men.
- Women are mostly employed in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs and have lesser opportunities than men to find employment in the tourism sector in Goa.
- Women are mostly employed in the front office and housekeeping departments, are employed on a contractual basis and consequently receive lower wages than men.
- There are 146 travel agencies and 91 tour operators in Goa. However, even cursory observation reveals that most of the jobs in travel agencies are occupied by men.
- The number of women in managerial positions is insignificant and those who do find jobs here are employed as front office or secretarial assistants.
- The transport sector is totally dominated by men.

- Even in tourism related businesses like shops, shacks, cafes, and restaurants etc. that are mostly owned and operated by men, women are employed in lower end jobs where their wages are lower than men.
- Tourism continues to attract young girls and boys who often drop out of high school to work in low paid jobs in this sector.
- Today only a very small percentage of the students consider obtaining training/education in tourism related skills as an option before seeking employment. Even if they consider tourism as an employment option, they prefer to begin in semi-skilled/unskilled jobs.
- Tourism does not provide steady employment. The maximum numbers of tourists visit only four out of the eleven talukas (administrative divisions of the state) and so the benefits are concentrated in these areas.

She commented that even if tourism bestows economic benefits by way of generating employment, it is evident from the data and findings mentioned above that the total number of job opportunities for women in the tourism sector is very low and is characterized by gender stereotyping and discrimination. Therefore, the net benefits to women from tourism are extremely low.

According to Munshi (22), tourism processes, like other processes and relations in society, are gendered. The gender bias is built into the discourse of tourism practices, images, and activities. As the tourism processes are expanding rapidly in the globalizing world, there is a need to strengthen the voices against the hegemonic male view of tourism both at the local and global levels. For a start, the agenda of women's movements everywhere must include the demand for greater participation of local people in tourism planning and development, especially if rights and interests of people in tourist destinations in the third world are to be protected. Only then can they share equitably in the benefits that result from tourism.

Petridou and Glaveli (270) examined the effects of training support on rural women's entrepreneurial skills and attitude, co-operatives' viability and growth prospects, and work-family balance. Questionnaires were used to collect data

on participants' perceptions of the effects of the training intervention. The data illustrate participants' perceived benefit in terms of skill improvements i.e. identification and capturing of business opportunities, effective co-operation and flexibility in decision making, and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship. In addition, perceptions related to the development and growth prospects of the co-operative and work-family balance have also been positively affected.

According to UNWTO, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in tourism matters for two reasons. First, national governments and international organizations are committed to gender equality through a series of commitments: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 3. Gender equality and women's empowerment are fundamental components of just, equitable societies. UNWTO believes that tourism can provide pathways to empowerment, and that the opportunity for tourism to make a difference in this area should be maximized.

Second, due to women's concentration in the lower status and lower paid jobs in tourism, their potential to contribute fully is currently untapped. Empowering women to participate fully in economic life is essential for building strong economies; creating more stable and just societies; achieving internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability and human rights; and improving the quality of life of women, and consequently, that of communities. For the tourism industry, the impact of greater gender equality and women's empowerment would be highly beneficial, because diverse and gender equitable organizations perform better.

2.4: Community Attitudes towards Tourism:

Community acceptance of tourism is a very important aspect for tourism development. It was found that attitudes varied according to people's level of dependency on tourism and certain demographic variables. Interestingly, it was found that less educated people have a more positive perception of

tourism than those who are more highly educated (Alhasanat 379-80). He conducted the study in Petra, Jordan and found that a positive socio-cultural impact of tourism on the people was far exceeding its negative consequences. Brida et. al. (373) conducted a study in the mountain community of Folgaria in Northern Italy, for finding out how the impacts of tourism are perceived by a local population. The results showed that the host population considered 'tourism brings to the destination much more advantages than disadvantages'.

According to Sharma and Dyer (208) positive attitude towards tourism impacts among communities will result in more successful tourism development. Gursoy & Rutherford (495) suggested that tourism developers need to consider the perception and attitude of residents before they could start a new venture. Moreover, understanding of community perception towards tourism impacts can also help to identify types of tourism, which have the potential for building community capacity (Moscardo 86). Studies have indicated that without residents' support it is impossible to develop sustainable tourism, but residents only support further development if the balance of tourists' impacts is favourable for them (Ratz 18). Attitude towards tourism is significantly different between those dependent upon tourism and those not. Residents those who are dependent on tourism have more positive tourism attitudes. According to Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (980) a host population is influenced by the perceived positive benefits of the industry.

Sekhar (345) mentioned that there appears to be correlation between benefits obtained by local people from wildlife tourism and other sources, and support for protected area existence. Therefore, benefits impact people's attitudes towards conservation. According to him some of the main problems of tourism development are the unequal distribution of tourism benefits, lack of locals' involvement in tourism and development. There is a need to clearly address these issues, so that protected areas may get the support of local people, which may lead to sustainable development.

Rural ideology theory argues that women are more likely to be involved in community organizations (Petrzelka, at. el. 1130). They revealed that, similar

levels of involvement were found with both male and female in community organizations in tourism in the United States.

Wang, Bickle and Harrill (332) studied residents' attitudes towards tourism development in Shandong, China. The data confirms that residents in most destinations, whether undeveloped, developed or developing, can identify both positive and negative impacts of tourism development. Many residents enjoy the added shopping amenities and the economic benefits that accrue from tourism. The results also showed that the tourism impact on the economy as positive. However, income level was not a significant predictor of attitudes towards tourism development in Shandong, China.

Tourism is a nebulous concept that manifests its impact differently across communities (Fredline et. al. 1). Husbands (250) found a significant difference between residents' perception of tourism and with respect to social status and social class. Gu and Wong (268) also reported association between perception regarding impact of tourism and demographics of people. Perdue et al (174) found an interesting result which indicates that the perceived impacts of tourism, both positive and negative, increase with increasing levels of tourism. The results suggest that resident attitudes initially increase favourably with increasing tourism development, but achieve a threshold level of development beyond which attitudes become less favorable.

Walpole and Goodwin conducted a study in Komodo National Park to find out attitudes of local people towards conservation and tourism around Komodo National Park, Indonesia. Overall, respondents held a positive attitude towards tourism. Most would be happy to see more tourists (92.7%) and for their children to work in tourism (88.9%). Few respondents felt that tourism was eroding traditional customs (18.5%), around one-third felt that tourism was damaging their culture, and half did not like the way that tourists dress. There were mixed feelings regarding the distribution of benefits from tourism. Although some respondents felt that only outsiders benefited from tourism (24.1%), half felt that the whole community benefited from tourism. A similar proportion felt that only rich people benefited (47.4%), and few respondents felt that tourism benefited their family or increased their income (27.3%) and

23.0%). Half of the sample felt that tourism had caused prices of goods and transport services to rise. The mean score on the 11 point attitude scale was 6.6, indicating an overall positive attitude towards tourism.

Farahani and Musa examined the residents' profile, attitudes, and perception towards tourism development in Masooleh, a protected national heritage town of Iran which is characterized by its unique architecture. Number of sample for the study was 250. A questionnaire designed to examine a bigger study of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Masooleh was used for the study. Attitudes and perception of local people towards tourism development were measured using the five point Likert Scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The study was carried out over a four-week period in October 2006. It has been found that majority of the population (83.6%) are in favor of tourism. Residents expressed their intention to support future tourism development of the area (81.6%) together with the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities (77.2%). Tourism is also seen as a major contributing factor to the development of Masooleh by 79.6% of the sampled population. Concerning the residents' perception of rate of tourism development in the area, their opinions are not favorable. Only 32% of them agree that the regional tourism authorities have done excellent job in their decision-making, and 25.6% agree that the regional bodies plan and manage tourism development well. The majority of respondents (55.6%) agree that the public sector has given a lot of attention to promote tourism of the area. However, pertaining to marketing and advertising, 44.0% of the respondents disagree that they have been managed properly, while 20.8% are undecided. Resident also have the perception that tourism is not well promoted during off-season (64.4%). Over half of the sample disagrees with the statement that tourism develops too fast in the region while 17.2% are undecided. The overwhelming majority of respondents (66.8%) disagree with the statement that public authorities always consult local people in tourism development process in this area.

Gursoy et. al. (724-25) found that if local communities perceive that the impact of tourism is positive, they support tourism development in the area

and vice versa. Residents who see tourism as creating positive economic impacts were found to support both mass tourism and alternative tourism development. However, support for alternative tourism development was found to be higher. However, residents who see tourism as having positive cultural impacts on the local community were found to support alternative tourism while they neither were found to support nor oppose mass tourism development. Positive social impact perceptions were found to have no significant relationship with either mass tourism or alternative tourism. This findings suggested that respondents neither opposed nor supported either form of development even though they indicated that both form of tourism is likely to generate positive social impact for their community. While residents with negative socio-economic impact perceptions were found to strongly oppose mass tourism development, they indicated neither support nor opposition for alternative tourism development. On the other hand, residents with negative social impacts perceptions indicated a strong opposition for alternative tourism development while neither support nor opposition was indicated for mass tourism development.

According to Williams and Lawson (269) tourism may be regarded as consisting of tourists, a business, and an environment or community in which this industry operates. If one is to understand the impact of tourism on residents, the inter-relationships between various elements in the system must be studied. In the study conducted in towns of New Zealand, they observed that people who are most cynical about tourism rate community issues more highly than others (and more importantly), people who are most positive toward tourism rate community issues lowest.

Cortez (138) studied the strategies being adopted by the Government of the State of Bolivia to develop sustainable tourism both as a means of protecting the Bolivian Amazon and a mechanism for the realization of the "Living Well" vision of the national government. The findings confirmed that in the case of Bolivia, tourism is a high political ideal, and not merely a force that is at the mercy and direction of market forces and private entities. Tourism

development is organically linked with concepts of community self-actualization

2.5: Tourism Products:

Medlik and Middleton (201) conceptualized tourism products as a bundle of activities, services, and benefits that constitute the entire tourism experience. According to Smith (592-93) the structure of the tourism product is complex and it is the result of a complicated production process. Production of a tourism commodity begins with the physical plant, which is tangible and controlled to a high degree by the planning and management process. Then, in successive phases, the elements of service, hospitality, freedom of choice, and finally, personal involvement by the consumer are added to the emerging product. In the final analysis, tourism product and process are inseparable.

According to Yavari (16) it can be seen that every country have discovered, both in theory and practice, that handicrafts are one of the most effective factors in attracting tourists in domestic, regional, and international levels. In spite of many possible linkages, the World Tourism Organization is convinced that the synergy between tourism and handicrafts is still, in most countries, far from its full potential (Yunis 2). A good quality handicraft taken home from an enjoyable holiday has continuing power to evoke wonderful memories, and indeed to arouse the interest of others who see it and to encourage them to visit the destination. But the linkage between tourism and handicrafts has not yet been fully explored, understood or developed, with a resultant loss of valuable revenue and job creation opportunities (WTO ix). Tourists want to shop and buy presents. Even the business tourist is not expected to return home empty handed. Buying souvenirs and curios can substantially increase the amount of money that stays in the local economy, and particularly with women. Thus ensuring that poor people can take advantage of these customers, and that tourists have ample opportunity to spend their money, is a critical part of Pro Poor Tourism (PPT). Tourism souvenirs hold strong symbolic value related to pleasurable travel experiences in people's lives (Litirell et.al. 3).

Tourist expectations are based on inter-correlations among several factors (i.e. past experience, external communication, word-of-mouth communication and destination image). In addition, image can be considered as the main factor generating expectations of a destination (Bosque et. al. 144).

Baruah and Sarma (64-65) has shown that tourists' expenditures can be divided into two broad components of categorised and uncategorised expenditures. It might be easier to increase visitors' uncategorised form of expenditures (e.g. commonly on souvenir items) rather than categorised expenditure such as transportation, lodging, food and beverages. They also stated that uncategorised expenditures of tourists cannot be neglected because of its economic significance particularly with reference to local economy. According to Law and Au (241) shopping as a major leisure activity has become an important element in tourism. Many tourists visit Hong Kong for attractive shopping items. According to Wong and Law (401) tourist shopping is the primary source of income for the tourism industry in Hong Kong. In 2000, shopping accounted for more than HK\$30 billion (50.2%) of total tourism receipts. The shopping expenditure of tourists, therefore, has a great impact on the local economy of Hong Kong. Their study provides useful information about tourists' shopping preferences and patterns, which can be used for future tourism planning and control. The findings of this study indicate that there is a great deal of difference between the Asian and Western travelers' expectations and perceptions towards the shopping attributes. The effect of hedonic shopping value on approach is greater than that of utilitarian value (Yuksel 66)

Studies have revealed that various factors affect tourists' purchasing behavior. According to Zieba (46) personal connections to the item and background knowledge about it greatly increase the propensity to purchase. Knowledge that an item was made locally also increases value, however, relative originality and uniqueness is more important. This study also revealed that four fifths of the respondents bring gifts and art item home from their trips at least sometimes. According to Kim and Littrell (648-49) with respect to

demographic characteristics, only marital status was significantly associated with purchase intention of tourists.

Women are involved in handicraft business in many countries. Maya women of Guatemala sell woven crafts to the foreign tourists and they are known for their techniques to sell handicrafts to tourists. Maya women who sell handicrafts to tourists are public figure in Guatemala. Their images are featured in hotels, restaurants, airports, and other places frequented by tourists. Often they are the only indigenous persons whom tourists travelling to Guatemala and Yucatan and Chiapas meet (Little 44).

Tosun et. al. (96) has examined the tourist shopping experience in the Turkish region of Cappadocia. The answers were general souvenirs (78.3%), pottery (53%), clothes (19.8%), carpets (17.7%), jewelry (15.6%) and leather (4.8%). However, in response to one of the open-ended questions most respondents noted that despite the fact that carpets were the most attractive items to buy, prices were higher than they had expected.

Handicrafts are offering an important avenue for women, the poor and indigenous communities to earn income from tourism. According to research, in Lalibela, the main cultural site visited by 90% of the tourists in Ethiopia, craft sellers earn only 1% of tourist revenue due to a variety of reasons including limited sales outlets, limited variety of handicrafts, difficulty in using credit cards etc (Rowley).

Tourism is an industry driven primarily by commercial interests. While this means there may be limits to its pro-poor potential, it does have a number of characteristics and advantages over other sectors. A marginal improvement in tourism industry could generate substantial benefits. Because the customer comes to the 'product', there are opportunities to make additional sales (DFID).

Burke et. al. (512) found that, there is a difference in the work and experiences of female and male managers and supervisors in the hospitality and tourism sector in Turkey, and found that very few women occupy the senior executive positions. The number of men who are employed (2202) far exceeds the

number of women (306) in the hotel industry in Goa. Some 86.8% of those employed in this industry are men compared to women who are just 13.14% of the total (Haladi).

Cultural tourism could be a subject of interest to tourist destinations with cultural amenities, heritage sites, arts centers, historical museums and natural resources, if these destinations could combine culture and leisure in the tourist product (Marciszewska 77). Cultural tourists spend more money while on vacation; they're more likely to stay at hotels or motels; they're more likely to shop; and they spend more time in an area while on vacation. Survey reports of the Travel Association of America revealed that of the 46% of American travelers who included a cultural activity while on a trip, a third of them added extra time to their trip to accommodate more cultural activity. This translated to 26.8 million adults adding some 14 million additional nights. (Lord 8).

Rural tourism has been developing rapidly in China in recent years. But it is insufficient in many aspects. Ju (139) studied the expectations of tourists regarding rural tourism in Yunan province of China. Based on a systematic review of rural tourism, he focused on tourists' experience. He applied a two-column questionnaire composed of 17 important factors considering rural tourism. This questionnaire has been formulated according to expectation of tourists and actual situation. The study revealed that many facilities cannot meet the tourists' demands, such as sanitary condition and public security, etc. for lack of regulated management. The study suggested construction of infrastructural facilities and developing smooth communication system to meet the expectations of tourists.

Gopal et.al. studied rural tourism with special reference to agri-tourism development in Maharashtra, India. The research methodology involved both desk research and field research, which was widely used to understand the concept of Agri tourism and the various aspects that are involved in the successful development of agri tourism. For the field research, a questionnaire was used comprising of both open-ended questions as well as close ended questions. Additionally discussions were also held with the officials of the district and other *taluka* levels to understand the government policies etc.

According to the findings development of agri-tourism in rural areas of Maharashtra is still in its nascent stage.

Gastronomy means assigning cultural value to foods or the way in which they are prepared in a given place or social group. It is one of the elements, which have close links to the new concept of cultural heritage and one of the most highly valued tourism resources in recent years due to its ability to meet the new consumer needs associated with the demand for cultural tourism (Lopez & Martin168). Gastronomy study is related to the production of food, and the means by which foods are produced; the treatment of foods, their storage and transport and processing; their preparation and cooking; meals and manner; the chemistry of food, digestion and the physiological effects of food; food choices and customs and traditions (Santich 2). The gastronomy tourism and its impact on communities have many points in common with cultural tourism. The underpinning position is that gastronomy is culture and definitively a medium of cultural tourism. In tourism context, this statement may sound unconventional because, whilst art, music and history are commonly seen as cultural tourism resources, gastronomy, together with other areas such as religion, industrial heritage, events, festivals, architecture are considered 'grey zones' of cultural tourism (Symons 101). Josiam et. al. (29) showed that the most important factors for the tourists in terms of restaurant characteristics were quality of food, cleanliness of restrooms, general hygiene and cleanliness, atmosphere, employees' friendliness and price/value for money in descending order of importance. In terms of food attributes, the most important attributes were taste of food, price, spicy food, personal preference and appearance of food, while availability of vegetarian choices, availability of new items, and *halaal* (permissible according to Islamic Law) certification were the less important factors for the whole sample.

RESEARCH GAP:

The above literature review has revealed that many studies have been carried out in the field of local community and women empowerment through tourism. There are many studies on women and the tourism industry both at international and national levels. However, such studies reconciling demand of

tourists and supply are not available. Furthermore, studies with respect to the North East India in general and Assam in particular are almost non-existent. Tourism can be considered as one of the important sectors for women empowerment (Ghodsee 465; Balasubramonian). Scheyvens (246) revealed that local community could achieve economic empowerment through ecotourism. Dey (19) commented that there is uniqueness in the traditional handicrafts and textiles of Northeast India. It can be utilized for future marketing efforts as they may serve as an added attraction for many leisure travelers. From these findings, it is evident that, women of Assam may have definite entry in tourism for employment and opportunities for creating self-employment. This can help eliminating economic backwardness of women and local communities in Assam.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

As tourism offers various opportunities for women to get involved in Tourism Related Activities (TRA), tourism can be considered as catalyst for economic empowerment of women. The present study is aimed to benefit local women of tourism destination through their involvement in TRA. To involve local women in tourism activities it is important to match the preferences of tourists with the available infrastructure and skill of the local women.

At present, Kaziranga is the most popular tourist destination of Assam. The tourist density is highest in this particular destination. Moreover, it is believed that the tribes of Assam are rich in handloom and handicraft products and as the social system goes, more women are involved in such activities compared to men. This particular aspect can be utilised in tourism. Apart from this, involvement in tourism activities can be seen as a complementary activity to the main occupational activity of the household so that the economic conditions improve. Here also, the women can get involved ultimately leading to their economic empowerment. To find out the scope of economic empowerment of women through such activities and develop a sustainable livelihood method, this study is proposed with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the current socio-economic status of the women in the study area.
2. To find out the level of involvement of women in tourism related activities in the study area.
3. To study the relationship between involvements of women in tourism related activities and their socio-economic status.
4. To formulate strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the study can be noted in regards of the geographical area, time of the study and the population. The study was conducted in the villages situated in the periphery of four ranges of Kaziranga National Park. The time period of the study was 2010 to 2011. The population of the study was women in the age group of 15 to 45 years.

PERCEIVED LIMITATION:

The perceived limitation of the study was that the study area was confined to nature based tourism destination only.

CHAPTER-III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Study Area:

3.2. Women Survey:

3.2. Tourists Survey:

3.3. Participatory Rural Appraisal:

3.4. Stakeholder Analysis:

3.5. Formulating Strategies for Economic Empowerment of Women:

3.6. Practicability Study of Suggested Strategies:

CHAPTER: III.

3. METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the study were to find out Socio Economic Status (SES) of women in the study area, involvement of women in tourism related activities, to find out relationship between SES of women and their involvement in TRA and finally to formulate strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities. For fulfilling all four objectives the methodology of the study was divided into six phases. The phases are:

1. Women Survey
2. Tourists Survey
3. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for women
4. Stakeholder Analysis
5. Strategy formulation for Economic Empowerment (EE) of women
6. Practicability study of the strategies

To fulfill the first three objectives of the study, women survey was carried out in the study area. Tourists' survey was done simultaneously with the women survey to find out demands of tourists. In the third stage PRA was done in ten selected villages in the study area for assessing perceived skills of local women.

The fourth stage of the study method was Stakeholder Analysis. Stakeholder from different tourism related fields were selected for the survey. They provided valuable information about the opportunities for women to get involved in tourism related activities. This was considered as major input for strategy formulation.

With the information acquired from Tourists survey, PRA and Stakeholder Analysis, strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities were framed. Last stage was practicability study of these strategies. To finalise the chosen strategies, an expert opinion survey was conducted. The expert opinion survey finally assisted in achieving the fourth

objective of the study. The period of the study was 2010-2011. Fig. 3.1 represents a diagrammatic view of the methodology of the study.

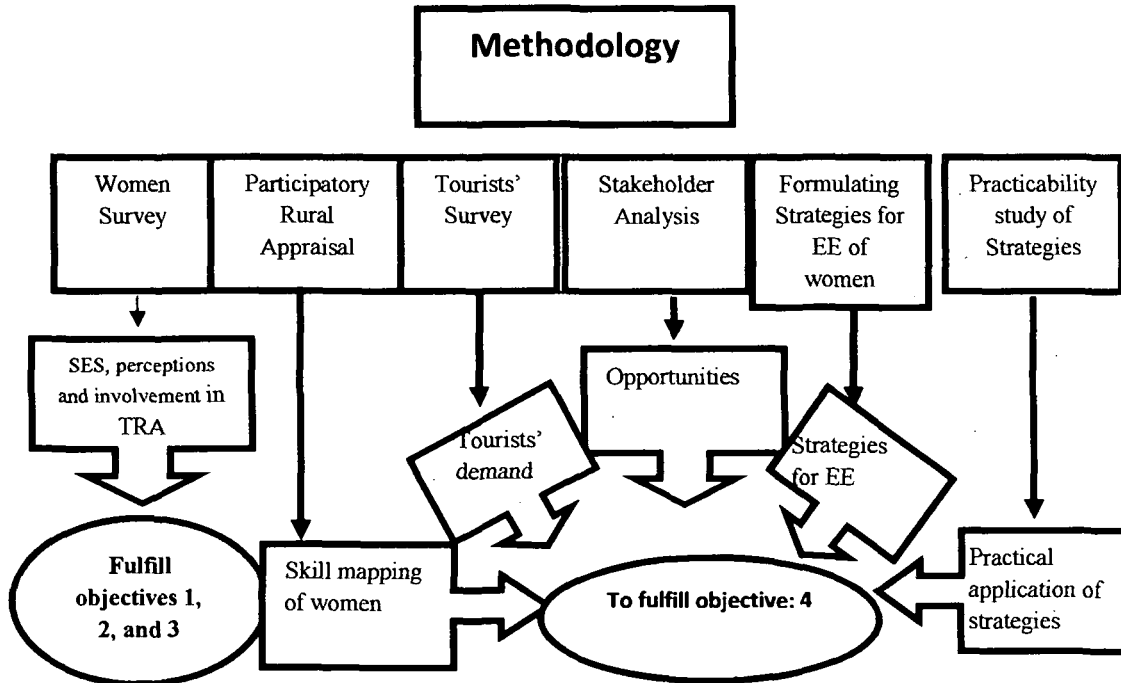


Fig. 3.1: Diagrammatic Representation of the Methodology of the Study

3.1. THE STUDY AREA:

The study was conducted among the inhabitants of the villages situated in the periphery of Kaziranga National Park (KNP). Kaziranga National Park a name known worldwide for its success in the conservation history of one horned Indian Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and hosting the largest population of wild Indian one-horned Rhinoceros in the world. It provides habitat for a number of threatened species and migratory birds. A symbol of dedication for the conservation of animals and their habitat, Kaziranga, with a National Park status represents single largest established protected area within the Burma Monsoon Forest Bio-geographical Province to provide long term viable conservation (Environment and Forest Department 2).

KNP was notified as a national park on 11 February 1974, following the first notification in 1969. It was originally established as a reserved forest in 1908, a game sanctuary in 1916 and a wildlife sanctuary in 1950 and lastly designated as a World Heritage site in December 1985 (UNESCO).

At present, Kaziranga is one of the popular tourist destinations of Assam. KNP is surrounded by three districts, namely, Golaghat, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong, presently known as Dima Hasao District Autonomous Council (DHDAC). KNP is divided into four Ranges¹ i.e. Kohora (Central Kaziranga), Bagori, Burapahar (Ghurakati) and Agoratoli. Each Range has one entry point for exploring. There is provision for elephant safari and jeep safari for exploring the park in each entry point.

There are 113 villages surrounding Kaziranga National Park, having a population of 81,957 out of which 43,558 are male and 38,399 are female (Data from Block offices of Jakhalbandha, Bokakhat and Rongbangway). The population consists of tribal and non tribal communities. The communities are Karbi, Nepali, Mishing, Adibasi, Ahom and Koch. The population of the villages mentioned above is mainly involved in three different economic activities, viz., agriculture, employment in private business houses and the government sector (Goswami 13-14).

3.2. WOMEN SURVEY:

The objectives of carrying out the women's survey were to find out the current socioeconomic status (SES) of the women in the study area, their involvement in tourism related activities (TRA) and to test existence of relationship between involvement in TRA and the SES of the respondents. The following methodology was followed for carrying out the women survey.

1. Range: A forest range is a term used to signify an area containing one or more (usually) demarcated and (usually) protected or resource-managed forests, for administrative purposes. The term was in use in British India, and hence India, Pakistan and Bangladesh use this term for administrative purposes (ed.wikipedia.org/wiki/forest_range)

Sampling Technique: Quota sampling method was used for selection of sample. Age and locality were the quotas for the study. Women belonging to 15-45 years of age are the population for the study. Sample was almost equally distributed in three age groups 15-25 years, 25-35 years and 36-45 years. These three women groups have been considered as women below and above these may not be able to actively participate in tourism related activities.

Total 10 Villages (Table-3.1) were selected from the populated area surrounding KNP for sampling. Four villages from Golaghat district and three villages each from Nagaon and Karbi Anglong (DHDAC) districts were selected by judgmental method. Judgment was based on extent of tourism activity in the area and covering all four tourist entry points of KNP. Based on number of population, sample was drawn proportionately from each district.

Table.3.1: List of Villages for Sampling

Sl.no	Name of the Village and Range	District *
1	Kohora No 1: Kohora range	Golaghat (18,790)
2	Sepenakubua: Kohora range	
3	Bosagaon: Kohora range	
4	Bohikhuwa: Agoratoli range	
5	Kuthori: Bagori range	Nagoan (16,504)
6	Baghmari: Bagori range:	
7	Baghjan: Burapahar range	
8	Chandrasing Rongpi: Kohora range	Karbi Anglong (3,105)
9	Englepothar: Kohora range	
10	Holiram Terang: Bagori range	

*Figure in parentheses indicate the total female population of the district

Sample Size: For determining sample size the sample size determination formula by Krejcie and Morgan (607-10) was used. Hanagriff and Murova (2); Ahmed, Yusof and Saids (179); Nwabude (10); Albritton et. al. (5); Mansur and Abidin (728) used the same sample size determination method.

The sample size determined formula by Krejcie and Morgan is as follows-

$$n = \chi^2 NP (1 - P) \div ME (N-1) + \chi^2 P (1 - P)$$

n = Sample size

χ^2 = Chi-square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom (6.64)

N = Population size (38,399)

P = Population proportion (.50 for this study)

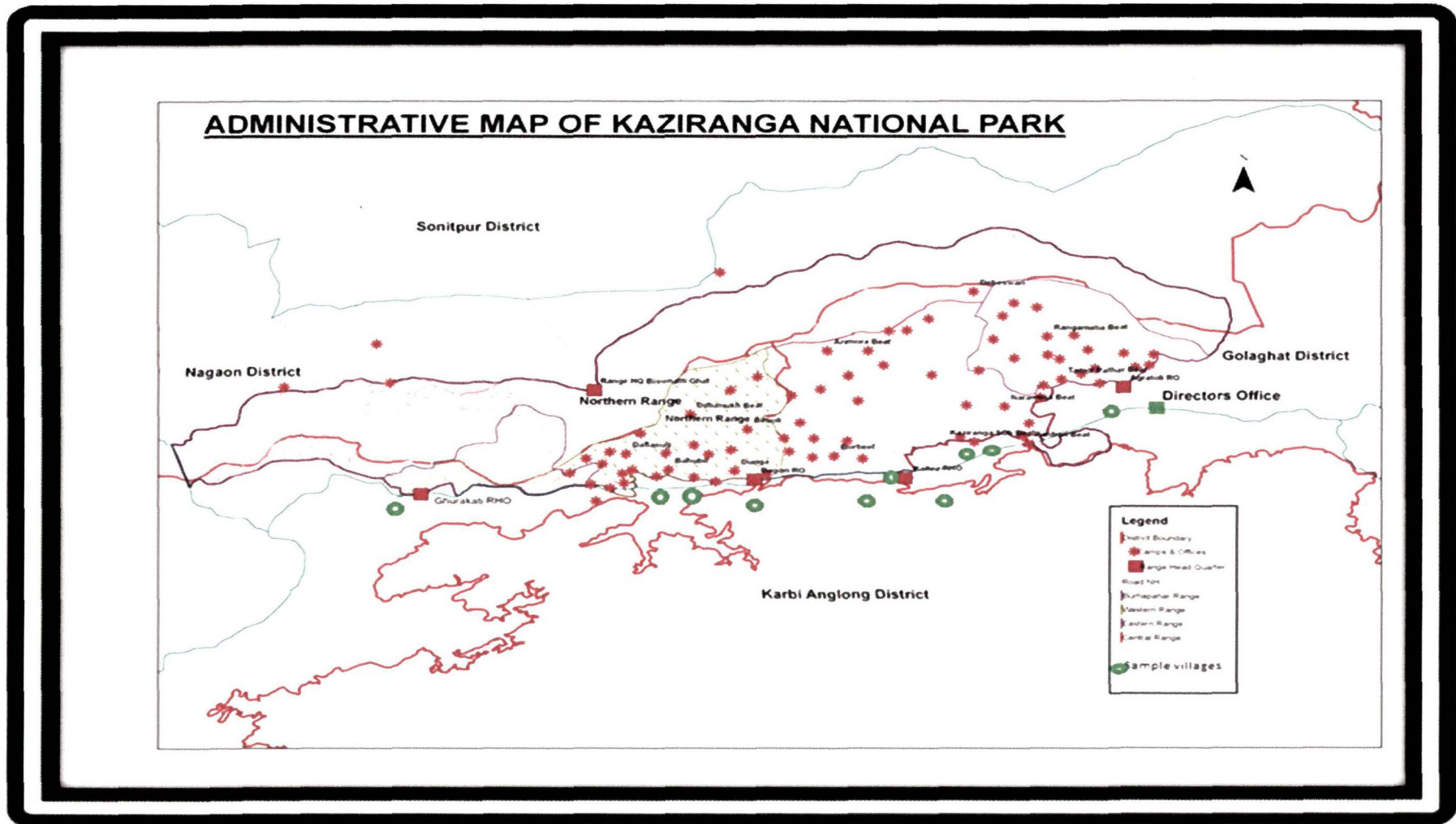
ME= Desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion=.05)

Confidence level was taken as 99% and margin of error (degree of accuracy) was taken as 0.05. The calculated sample size was 652. Number of samples from Golaghat district was 320, from Nagoan district 280 and from Karbi Anglong (DHDAC) was 52. Seven samples were eliminated due to non-response and remaining 645 samples were considered as final.

Tools for Data Collection: A close-ended questionnaire was prepared and tested by a pilot survey of 40 samples. After slight modification, the pre-tested questionnaire was used for data collection.

To measure socio economic status (SES), SES scale developed by Kuppaswami and modified by Ghosh and Ghosh (1104-5), SES scale of all India coordinated research project on Home Science; Bharadwaj Socio Economic Status Scale (BSES) by Bharadwaj; SES Scale by Singh, Shyam and Kumar; and Adolescent Girls' Empowerment (AGE) Scale developed by Sisodia and Singh were referred to formulate SES scale suited for the study. SES Scores 10-40 was considered as lower, 41-70 as middle and 71-100 was considered as upper class. For determining involvement in tourism related activities, dichotomous question was used in the tool. Level of involvement and type of involvement was also measured with the help of close-ended questions. Women's perceptions about tourism were studied using five point likert scale (Annexure: One).

Analysis Tool: Various statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, chi-square, t-test, ANOVA were used for analysis.



Map:3.1-Map of the Study Area

3.2. TOURISTS SURVEY:

To develop strategies for involving local women in TRA, it is necessary to find out the demand pattern of the tourists visiting the destination. To achieve this goal, a survey of the tourists visiting KNP was carried out using the following methodology.

Sampling Technique: Data was collected from both domestic and foreign tourists who stayed in KNP for at least one night. To maintain the randomness of the sample, the method adopted for selecting sampling units was to pick every fifth registered tourists from the accommodation houses. Selection of accommodation houses was selected on judgmental basis. The judgment criteria were tariff rate and frequency of being chosen by both domestic and foreign tourists. The type of survey was exit survey. Survey was conducted according to the spare time available to the tourists.

Sample Size: The calculated sample size using the formula by Krejcie and Morgan (607-10) is 660. But other similar studies (Kozak 790; Malta Environment and Planning Authority; Frew and Shaw 195; Yu & Ko 83; Alhasanah 21-21) have taken 500 as the sample size. Hence, the sample size for this research was taken as 500. Total 514 tourists, of which 400 domestic and 114 foreigner were the samples of the study. Period of survey was 2010-2011.

Tools for Data Collection: Data collection tool was a pre tested close ended self administered questionnaire. A pilot survey of 40 tourists was done for testing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided in two halves. First half dealt with respondents' personal information such as place of origin, place of stay etc. The second half was about demand of tourists. Tourists' opinion, preference and buying interests about various souvenir items, consumable items, and tourism facilities were taken as variables for tourists survey. Variables were measured using a five point Likert scale ranging from (+2) strongly agree to (-2) strongly disagree (Annexure-Two).

Analysis Tool: Frequency, percentage, mean, chi square, t test and ANOVA were used for analysis.

3.3. PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL:

Participatory Rural Appraisal methodology is used for interacting with villagers, understanding them, and learning from them. It involves a set of principles, a process of communication, and a menu of methods for seeking villagers' participation (Mukharjee 15). According to Bhandari (9) in PRA outsiders help local people in analyzing information, practicing critical self awareness, taking responsibility and sharing their knowledge of life and conditions to plan and to act.

Participatory Rural Appraisal method can be considered as most suitable method for women empowerment. Women empowerment is a process. This can be facilitated by Government's policies and programmes but can be achieved only when the women themselves realize the issue and strive for it (Pillai 25). Clift & Freimuth (289) mentioned that participatory rural appraise have the potential to raise the status of women. According to Ramanjananeyulu (54) the impact of women empowerment would occur by the use of Participatory Learning Approach (PLA) for integrating women's own priorities and strategies in the mainstream of development. Hemmati also mentioned that, participatory processes and setting up community based tourism initiatives benefit greatly from having information available about which areas of planning and management most urgently need for women's participation.

Main purpose of Participatory Rural Appraisal method was skill mapping of women villagers in the study area. The latent purpose was to sensitize and motivate village women to utilize their capability to get involved in tourism related activities for their economic empowerment.

PRA was conducted in all 10 villages selected for women survey. Workshops were organized with the help of *Angawadi* (Scheme of Social Welfare Department, Government of Assam) workers of the concerned village. Local women drew the map of their villages showing different skills of women. In the workshop, the researcher acted as facilitator. She took the opportunity of

the gathering to awaken village women about their economic empowerment through involvement in tourism related activities.

3.4. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS:

To gain qualitative information, semi-structured interviews were taken of stakeholders. The chosen stakeholders were tourism officials, forests officials, academicians, administrative officers, entrepreneurs, accommodation facility provider, gypsy (used for safari inside KNP) owner, tour guide and official from Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati. The group of stakeholders has been formulated keeping in mind the members' knowledge of the area, of tourism, and the entrepreneurship aspect. Total 11 stakeholders were interviewed for the purpose. The information regarding opportunities of women to get involved in tourism was achieved from the stakeholders. This provided the base around which strategies for economic empowerment of women were formulated.

3.5. FORMULATING STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

According to Chambers and Conway (9) a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks. It should be capable of maintaining or enhancing its potentials and assets both now and in the future. At the same time, there should not be any deflation of the natural resource base. While formulating strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities this concept of sustainability was taken into consideration. Information gained from literature review, stakeholder analysis, women survey, PRA and tourists' survey were utilized to develop strategies for economic empowerment of women through tourism related activities in the study area. Figure: 3.2 gives a diagrammatic view of strategy formulation process.

Literature review and Stakeholder Analysis provided knowledge of different Government schemes and opportunities for possible entry of women in

tourism related activities. Tourists' survey gave a clear picture of their opinions, preferences and buying interests about various souvenir, consumable items and tourism facilities. Women survey and PRA showed the present scenario of women in tourism related activities and potentials of other women who can join the tourism work force. Thus potentials and possibilities of women are synthesized to formulate livelihood strategies for present and future women in tourism industry.

3.6. PRACTICABILITY STUDY OF SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

An expert panel was formulated among the stakeholders for studying the practicability of the suggested strategies. The experts were selected on the basis of their contribution to the tourism industry in Assam with special reference to KNP. The selected experts were-

- Assistant Director, Tourism, Assam;
- Director, Kaziranga National Park;
- Two renowned academicians;
- Assistant Director, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati; and
- A women entrepreneur from KNP.

The suggested strategies were circulated among them in three rounds to find out the whether the strategies were feasible and could be sustained over a long period of time (Annexure-Three). Expert suggestions and modifications were incorporated in the strategies so that these can be practically implemented.

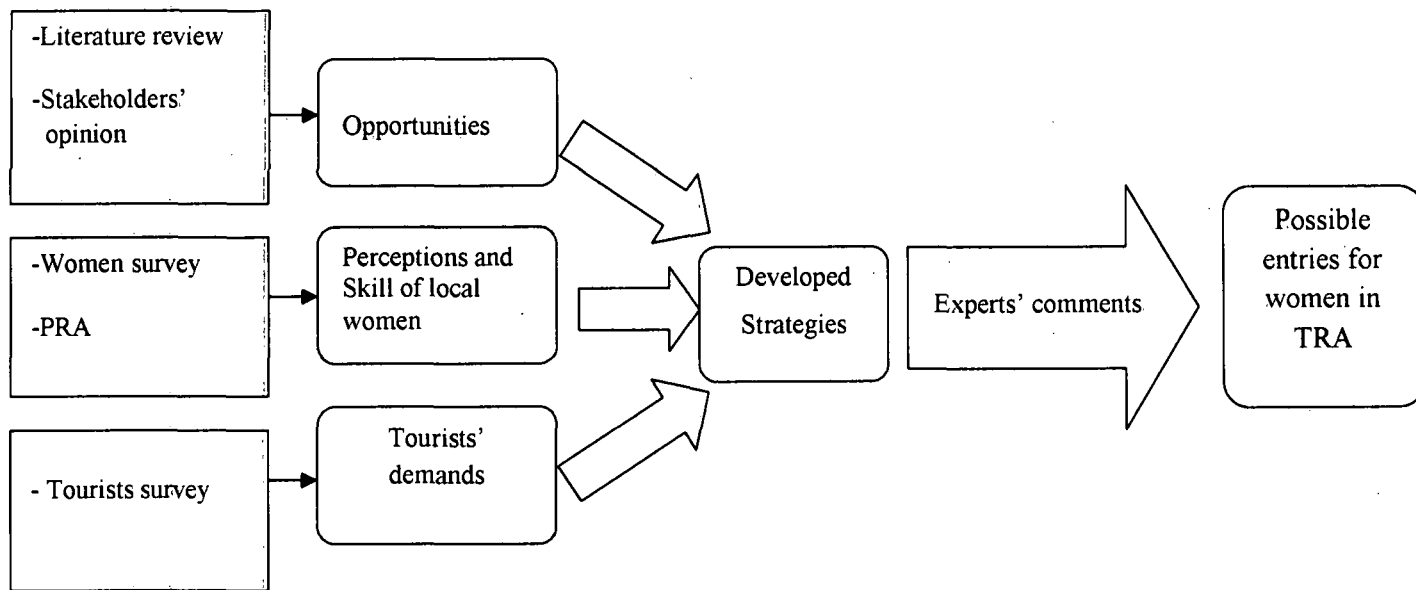


Fig.: 3.2. Development of Strategies for Economic Empowerment of Women

CHAPTER-IV

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1. SES Scores of women:

4.2. Involvement of Women in Tourism Related Activities (TRA):

4.3. Perception of Women about Tourism:

4.4. Perception of Women about Women Empowerment:

4.5: Skills of Local Women to Get Involved in TRA:

**4.6. Tourists Opinion, Preferences and Buying Interests on Various
Services, Souvenir and Consumable Items in KNP:**

4.7. Stakeholders Suggestions:

4.8. Strategy Formulation:

4.9. Other Activities:

4.10: Major Findings of the Study:

CHAPTER: IV

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS:

Women survey was conducted in the study area for finding Socio Economic Status, involvement in Tourism Related Activities (TRA) and their perceptions about tourism and women empowerment. Annexure: Four gives the demographic profile of the sample.

4.1. SES Scores of women:

To fulfill the first objective, socio-economic status (SES) of the women were studied. The SES of women in the study area is not satisfactory. Table.4.1 depicts the SES of women in the study area. More than half (60.8%) fall under low SES and only 1.1% fall in high SES group.

Table.4.1 SES of Women in the Study Area

SES Group	Frequency	Percentage
Low (10-40)	392	60.8%
Middle (41-70)	246	38.1%
High (71- 100)	07	1.1%

The SES of women in the study area has been studied according to different demographic variables such as age, locality, caste, community and religion, with the intention of identifying the groups that are to be given more importance while developing measures to improve SES of women. This will also help in identifying the group that has the potential to be used for community development.

4.1.1. SES Score of Women According to District:

The study was conducted in three districts surrounding KNP, namely, Golaghat, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong. It has been found that (Table.4.2) the SES scores of women belonging to Golaghat district has the highest mean SES score (39.97) followed by Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts.

Table.4.2. Mean SES Score of Women According to their Districts

District	Mean SES Score	SD
Golaghat	39.97	± 11.382
Nagaon	38.00	±11.471
Karbi Anglong	31.45	±8.924

At the first stage, it has been tried to find out whether SES of women is dependent on the locality from which they hail. Hence, ANOVA has been done taking following hypothesis-

H_0 : There is no significant difference in mean SES scores among women from Nagaon, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong districts.

$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3$

H_a : There is significant difference in mean SES scores among women from Nagaon, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong districts.

$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \neq \mu_3$

The Null Hypothesis was tested with one way ANOVA. The results (Table.4.3) showed that there is significant difference in mean SES scores among the women of three different districts ($p=0.00$) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it is proved that, there is significant difference in mean SES scores among women from Nagaon, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong districts surrounding KNP.

Table.4.3. ANOVA Test for SES Scores among Women of Three Different Districts

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4047.019	2	2023.509	16.156	.00
Within Groups	80408.305	642	125.247		
Total	84455.324	644			

Post-Hoc analysis (Table.4.4) shows that socio economic status scores of women of Golaghat district are significantly higher than women of Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts in the study area surrounding Kaziranga National Park. Again, socio economic status scores of women of Karbi Anglong district are significantly lower than the women of other two districts.

Table-4.4 Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and their Districts

(I) District code	(J) District code	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Golaghat	Nagaon	1.975*	.935	.035
	Karbi Anglong	8.524*	1.506	.000
Nagaon	Golaghat	-1.975*	.935	.035
	Karbi Anglong	6.548*	1.531	.000
Karbi Anglong	Golaghat	-8.524*	1.506	.000
	Nagaon	-6.548*	1.531	.000

4.1.2. SES Score of Women According to Villages in the Periphery of four Ranges of KNP:

Table 4.5 shows the mean SES scores of women according to their villages surrounding ranges of KNP. Sample villages surrounding central range Kohora are Chepenakubua, Bosagaon, Kohora No-1, Chandrasing Rongpi and Engle Pathar. Three sample villages surrounding western range Bagori are Baghmari, Kuthori and Haliram Engleng. Respective sample villages in the periphery of Burapahar and Agoratoli ranges are Baghjan and Bohikhuwa.

Table: 4.5. Mean SES Score of Women According to Ranges

Range	Mean SES Score	SD
Kohora	49.24	± 12.021
Bagori	36.10	± 11.561
Burapahar	35.46	± 10.413
Agoratoli	35.55	± 8.997

The Socio Economic Status scores reveal that women in the periphery of Kohora range have highest score. Women from Burapahar range showed the

lowest mean SES score (Table-4.5). ANOVA test was done to find out statistical significance in these differences in SES scores. Statistics proves that there is significant difference in the mean SES scores of women according to the range of KNP, in the periphery of which they live (Table-4.6).

Table 4.6. ANOVA test for SES Scores among Women of Different Ranges

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1627.019	3	542.340	4.197	.006
Within Groups	82828.305	641	129.217		
Total	84455.324	644			

The Post-Hoc analysis and descriptive statistics showed that the SES scores of women of Kohora range are significantly higher than other ranges of KNP (Annexure-Six).

4.1.3. SES Score of Women According to Age group:

Mean SES score of women belonging to 36-45 years (42.16) is higher than other two age groups of women (Table-4.7). One way ANOVA was done to find out the significance of this difference among different age groups.

Table-4.7. Mean SES Score of Women According to their Age-groups

Age-group	Mean SES Score	SD
15-25 years	35.22	± 8.78
26-35 years	37.71	± 11.112
36-45 years	42.16	± 13.14

Result reveals that though there is difference in the SES scores of women according to their age groups these differences are not statistically significant ($p=.109$). Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis i.e. 'there is no significant difference in mean SES score of women according to their age' cannot be rejected. Hence, it is proved that there is no significance difference in SES score of women according to their age groups (Table-4.8).

Table 4.8. ANOVA Test for SES Scores of Women among Different Age-groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5125.640	2	2562.820	2.220	.109
Within Groups	79329.684	642	123.556		
Total	84455.324	644			

4.1.4. SES Score of Women According to their Caste:

The study revealed that SES Scores of women differ according to their caste. Table-4.9 shows the mean SES scores of women according to their castes. Women belonging to OBC are socio-economically higher than women belonging to other caste.

Table-4.9. SES Scores of Women According to their Caste

Caste	Mean SES Score	SD
General	40.77	± 10.941
Other Backward Classes	41.79	± 10.981
Scheduled Castes	36.57	± 10.924
Scheduled Tribes Hills	30.98	± 7.993
Scheduled Tribes Plains	31.56	± 10.144

Hypothesis that there is significant difference in SES of among women of various castes was tested with one way ANOVA (Table-4.10).

Table-4.10. ANOVA test for SES Scores among Women of Different Castes

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13180.183	4	3295.046	20.740	.000
Within Groups	71275.141	640	123.556		
Total	84455.324	644			

There is significant difference in SES Scores of women according to their caste ($p=0.00$). Therefore, the null Hypothesis i.e., there is no significance

difference in SES among women of various castes can be rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive Statistics revealed that SES Scores of women belonging to Other Backward Classes are significantly higher than women belonging to General, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes Hills (STH) and Scheduled Tribes Plains (STP). SES of women belonging to Scheduled Tribes Hills is significantly lower than General, Other Backward Classes and Scheduled Tribes Plains (Annexure: Seven).

4.1.5. SES Score of Women According to their Community:

Seven communities were considered for comparison of SES. All Assamese non tribal communities are considered as Assamese for convenience of the study. Table-4.11 revealed the mean SES score of women according to their community. Assamese (Non-tribal) women have the highest mean SES (42.35) followed by Assamese (Mishing), Assamese (Karbi), Bengali, Bihari and Nepali women. Women of Tea Tribe community shows the lowest mean SES score which is 28.53.

Table-4.11. Mean SES Score of Women According to their Community

Community	Mean SES Score	SD
Assamese (Non-tribal)	42.35	±11.550
Bengali	36.82	±9.120
Bihari	34.87	±5.527
Tea Tribe	28.53	±10.426
Nepali	37.75	±8.414
Assamese (Karbi)	31.02	±7.95
Assamese (Mishing)	34.83	±8.937

To find out relationship between SES of women and their community relationship-testing hypothesis was formulated and tested with one way ANOVA. From Table-4.12 it is evident that there is significant difference in mean SES Scores among women from different communities at 0.05 level of significance ($p=0.00$).

Table-4.12. ANOVA between SES Scores of Women and their Community

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15797.529	6	2632.921	24.466	.000
Within Groups	68657.795	638	107.614		
Total	84455.324	644			

From descriptive statistics, it is clear that SES Score of Assamese (Non-tribal) women are significantly higher than women belonging to Bengali, Bihari, Tea Tribe, Nepali and Assamese (Karbi) communities, whereas the difference with Assamese (Mishing) women is not significant. Mean SES score of women of Tea Tribe community is significantly lower than the Assamese (Non-tribal), Bengali, Nepali, Assamese (Karbi) and Assamese (Mishing) women. Though, mean SES scores of Tea Tribe women are lower than Bihari women, this difference is not statistically significant (Annexure: Eight).

4.1.6. SES Score of Women According to their Religion:

Mean SES scores of women according to their religion is depicted in Table-4.13. Hindu women showed highest mean SES score (38.91), followed by Muslim (33.92) and Christian (32.92) women.

Table-4.13. Mean SES Score of Women According to their Religion

Religion	Mean SES Score
Hindu	38.91
Muslim	33.92
Christian	32.92

To find out relationship between SES Scores and religion of women hypothesis was tested with one way ANOVA. The result ($p=0.00$) was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance (Table-4.14). Therefore, the null Hypothesis i.e., there is no significance difference in mean SES scores among women of various religion can be rejected. SES varies according to the religion of women from the study area.

Table-4.14. ANOVA between SES Scores of Women and their Religion

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1991.730	2	995.865	7.753	.000
Within Groups	82463.594	642	128.448		
Total	84455.324	644			

Descriptive statistics revealed that the SES scores of Hindu women was significantly higher than Christian and Muslim women. It was statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (Annexure: Nine).

From the above findings, it is evident that SES of women in the study area was unsatisfactory. It also revealed that SES score of women are dependent on place of residence, caste, community and religion of women. **Assamese (Non-tribal) Hindu women belonging to OBC caste from the villages of Golaghat district that are located in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP have the highest SES.**

4.2. Involvement of Women in Tourism Related Activities (TRA):

The results of women survey in the study area gave a clear picture of involvement of women in Tourism Related Activities (TRA). Involvement is studied in general and in terms of various demographic variables such as their districts, Village, Age Group, Caste, Community and Religion. To find out relationship between involvement of women in TRA and various demographic variables Chi-square test was carried out. Type of involvement of women in TRA and their monthly income from these activities also studied. Findings are represented in following figures.

Women survey revealed that only 23.6% of women are involved in TRA in study area. This percentage is very low in comparison to the Global figure, which is 46% (Sherpa 5-6) as mentioned in Chapter I.

4.2.1. Involvement of Women in TRA According to District:

Figure-4.1 explains the distribution of women who are involved in TRA in three different districts surrounding Kaziranga National Park. Involvement of women in TRA is highest in Golaghat district (78%). Women of Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts are far behind in this regard.

The result of Chi-square test showed significant association between number of women involved in TRA and their resident districts (chi square=71.717 and $p = .000$) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, it can be said that there is significant difference in numbers of women involvement in TRA in three different villages surrounding KNP.

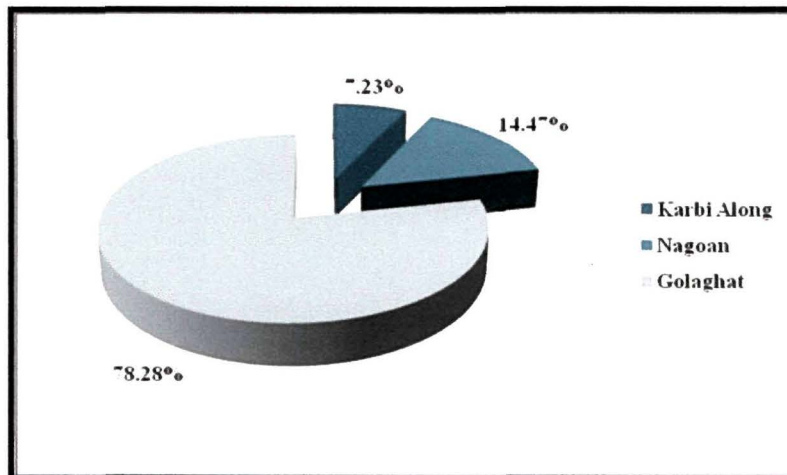


Fig.4.1: Involvement of Women in TRA According to District

4.2.2. Involvement of Women in TRA According to Range around Which their Villages Situated:

Involvement of women in TRA was studied according to the range area around which their villages are situated. Figure-4.2 depicts the percentage of women involved in TRA according to the four ranges of KNP around which their villages are located namely, Kohora, Bagori, Burapahar and Agoratoli. Involvement of women in TRA according to range near their villages show that highest share of women in TRA is from the villages surrounding Kohora range (70.39%). Women from villages surrounding Bagori range take the

second position with 19.07%. 9.21% women belong to Agoratoli range area and negligible 1.31% women are from Burapahar range area are involved in TRA.

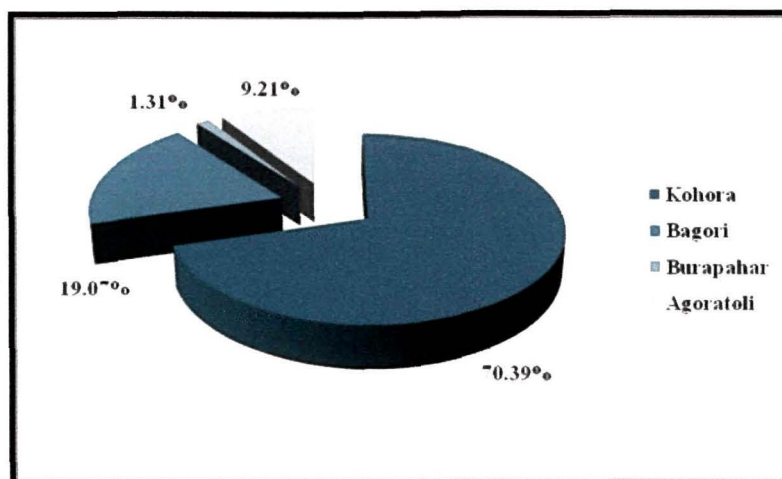


Fig-4.2: Involvement of Women in TRA According to Range around which their Villages are Situated

This can be because of higher touristic activities in the Kohora range area. The touristic activities in the other ranges are not yet satisfactory. Most of the tourist lodges (both Government and private) and utilities are located in Kohora range. Moreover, Kohora was established first and named as Central range of KNP.

To find out association between involvement of women in TRA and the range near their villages, Chi-square test was done. Result shows that there is significant association between number of women involved in TRA and their resident villages (Chi-square=58.278 and $p=.000$) at 0.05 level of significance.

4.2.3. Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Age:

Distribution of women who are involved in TRA according to their age group is shown on Figure-4.3. Women belonging to high age group are more in TRA than women of lower age groups. Association between involvement of women and their age was tested with the help of Chi-square test. The Chi-square test

result shows that there is no significant association between involvement of women in TRA and their age group (Chi-square=4.425 and $p=.109$).

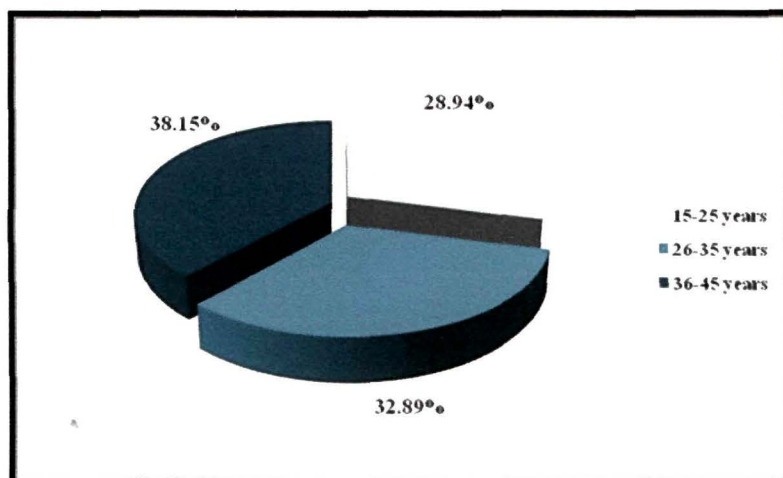


Fig-4.3: Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Age-group

4.2.4. Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Caste:

The study tried to find out involvement of women in TRA and according to their caste. Five different castes, which are prominent in the study area namely, General caste, Other Backward Class (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes Hills (STH) and Scheduled Tribes Plains (STP) were studied.

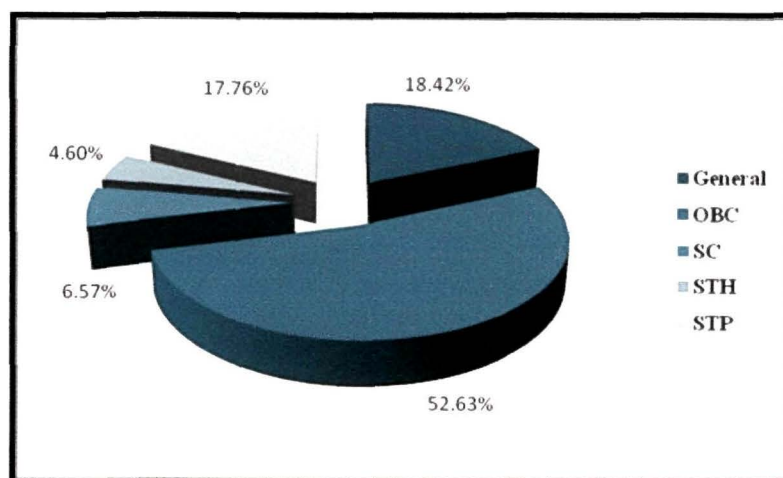


Fig- 4.4: Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Caste.

Figure-4.4 depicts the percentage of involved women in TRA according to their caste. OBC women lead the workforce in TRA with 52.63% involvement, which is followed by General caste (18.42) and STP (17.76%). Number of SC (6.57%) and STH (4.60%) are at the bottom. To find out association between involvement in TRA and caste of women Chi-square test was done. Result shows that there is significant association between women's involvement in TRA and their caste (Chi-square=11.863 and $p=.018$) at 0.05 level of significance.

4.2.5. Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Community:

Involvement of women in TRA was also studied according to their community. Women belonging to seven different communities were studied for this purpose. Figure-4.5 shows the proportion of women in TRA according to their communities.

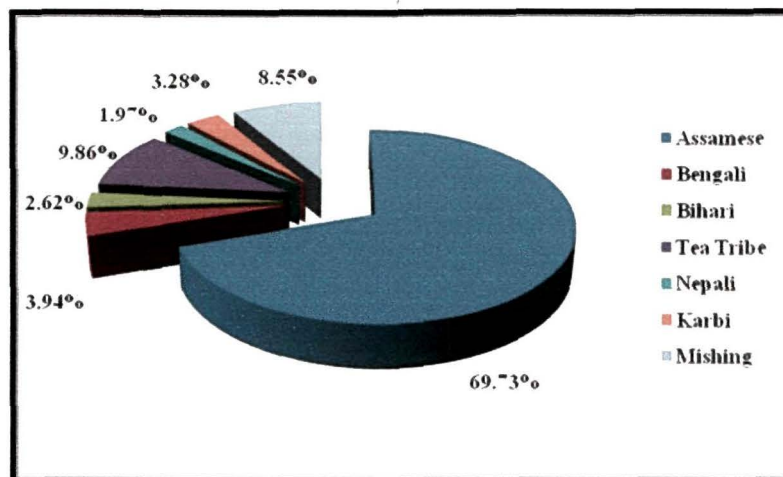


Fig-4.5: Involvement of Women in TRA According to their Community

Assamese (Non-tribal) women lead the workforce with 69.73% involvement in TRA. Nepali women have the lowest involvement with only 1.97% representation. Chi-square test shows that there is significant association (Chi-square=32.052 and $p=.000$) between women's involvement in TRA and their community at .05 level of significance.

Results (4.2.1 - 4.2.5) shows that **Assamese (Non-tribal) women of OBC caste and belonging to the villages in the periphery of Kohora range area of Golaghat district show significantly high level of involvement in TRA**

in the study area. The above results showed that Assamese Hindu women belonging to ‘Other Backward Castes’ from villages of Golaghat district that are located in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP have higher SES scores and also are highly involved in TRA in the study area. Independent sample ‘t’ tests was done to find out statistical significance of this relationship. Results showed that there is a statistically significant (sig=.000) difference in SES score of women according to their involvement in TRA.

4.2.6. Type of involvement of Women in TRA:

Involvement of Women in TRA is categorized in direct and indirect categories. Those who work or run a business in tourism industry in KNP are considered as directly involved. Those women who work as a supplier of commodities to the resorts and those who work as weaver for production of handicrafts and perform in cultural programmes are termed as indirectly involved.

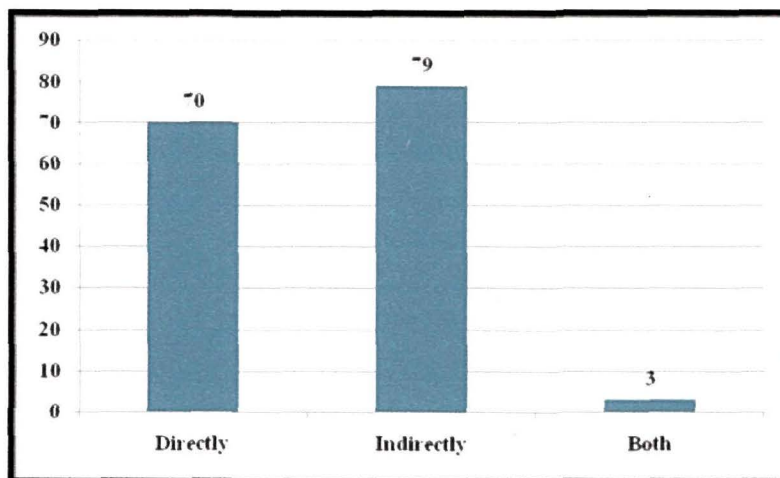


Fig-4.6: Type of Involvement of Women in TRA

Fig.-4.6 showed that 70 women were directly, 79 women were indirectly and three women were involved both directly and indirectly in TRA. Types of direct and indirect involvement are studied further. Fig.-4.7. showed the number of women in different direct involvement avenues in TRA. Most women (53) who were involved in tourism were employed in different tourism business establishments. 12 were in family business, three in partnership

business and only two women had sole ownership of business in the study area.

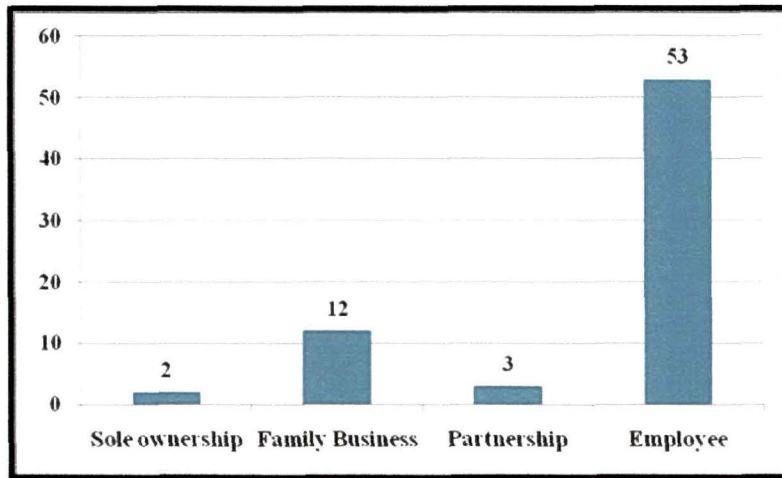


Fig-4.7: Type of Direct Involvement of Women in TRA

Status of women who were in family business or employed in tourism industry is shown in Fig-4.8. Women were mainly involved as worker (43). Few worked as staff (11) and Supervisors (09) and only two were in the position of executive. Therefore, it is prominent from the study that involvement of women in TRA was not only poor in terms of number but also in terms of the status.

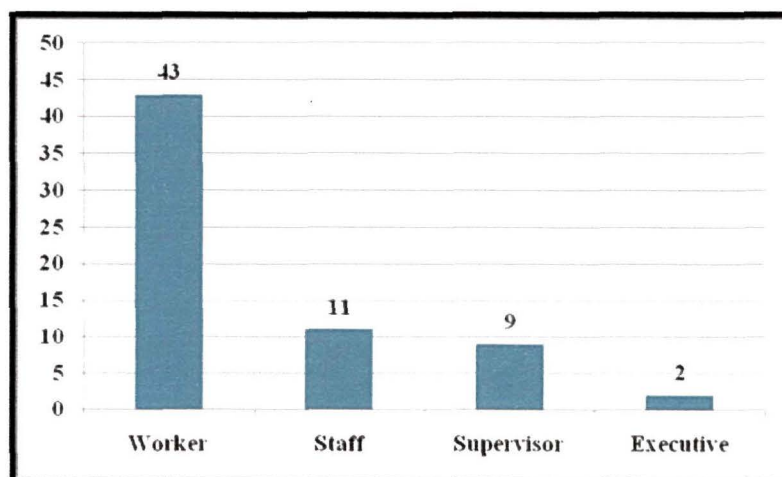


Fig-4.8: Status of Women in Family Business and Employment in TRA

Fig.-4.9 shows the type of indirect involvement of women in TRA. 30 women supplied food and food products to the resorts in KNP. 40 women earned from tourism through weaving, five women were involved in TRA as both supplier of food and also worked as weaver. In the category of 'Others', six women performed traditional 'bihu dance' in the resorts and one woman worked as shop keeper.

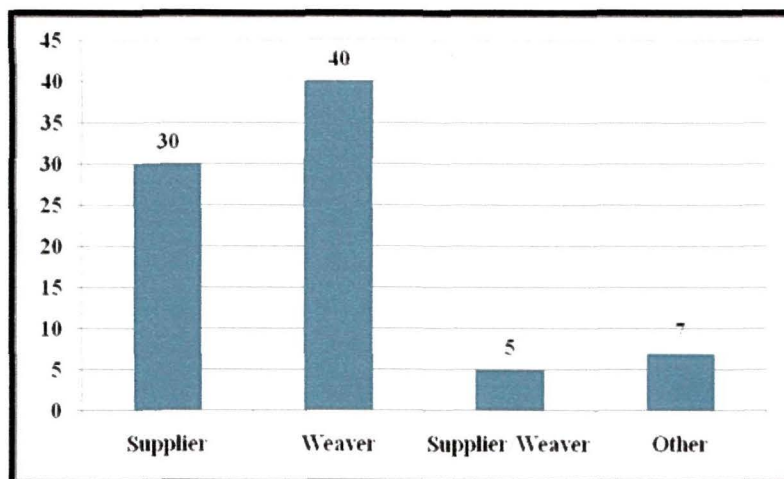


Fig-4.9: Type of Indirect Involvement of Women in TRA

4.2.8. Monthly Income of Women from TRA:

Income of women from TRA is depicted in Figure-4.10. 79% of involved women earned below INR 3000 and only 6.57% earned above INR 10,000 per month during tourism season (November – April).

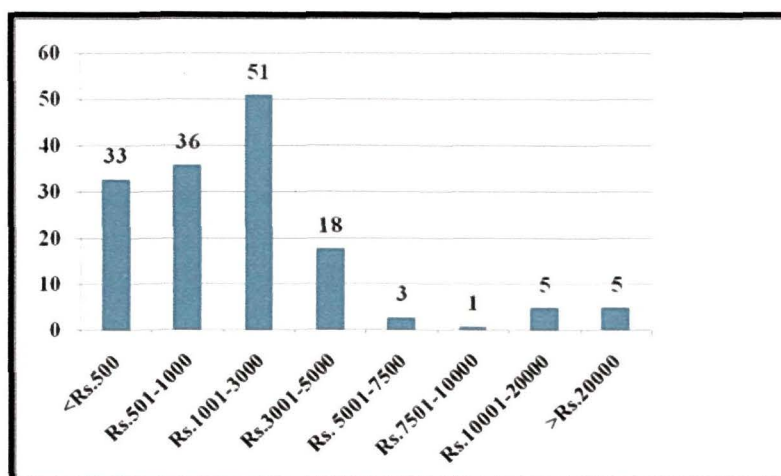


Fig-4.10: Income of Women from TRA

Study revealed that involvement of women in TRA was not only poor in terms of number but also in terms of status. Economic gain from these activities was also very less.

4.3. Perception of Women about Tourism:

Perceptions of women regarding tourism was studied in general and also in comparison with various demographic variables. Respondents were asked to comment on statements (Table-4.15) regarding tourism.

Table-4.15: Perceptions of Women about Tourism (Statements)

Perceptions regarding tourism
1. TRA have avenues for women (P ₁)
2. TRA are suitable for women (P ₂)
3. TRA are safe for women (P ₃)
4. Government policies are helping women to get into TRA (P ₄)
5. Women empowerment is possible through TRA (P ₅)

Result showed that the perceptions of local women about tourism were positive (Fig.-4.11). As already mentioned in chapter II, according to Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (984) a positive perception is beneficial to the local community; the present study also showed a hope for local women to get involved in TRA for their benefit. TRA have avenues for women (P₁) got the highest mean score (1.23) and the statement (P₄), i.e., Government policies helping women to get into TRA, got the lowest mean score (0.51).

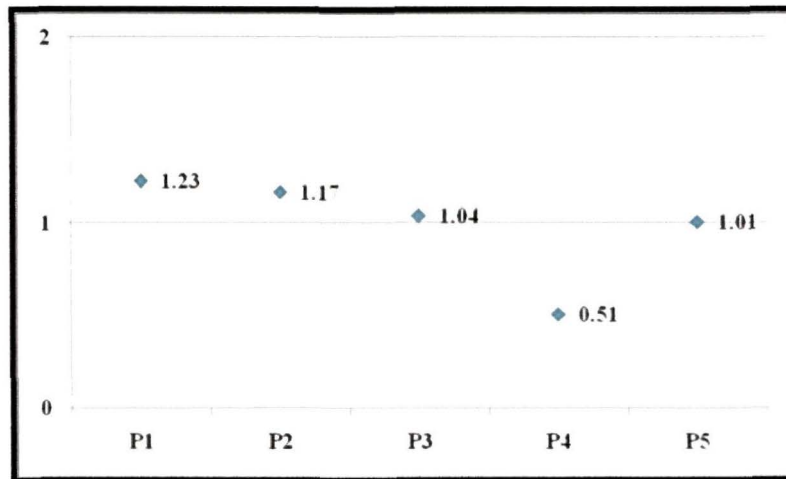


Fig-4.11: Perceptions of Women about Tourism

This proved that though women were realising the opportunities, they were not aware of Government's and NGO's policies to involve women in TRA. In contrary to the results of this study, Zamani and Musa (1235) found that residents of Masooleh, Iran, were aware of different policies of Government for promoting tourism in their localities. Women's perceptions about tourism were studied according to various demographic variables. Figures and tables below represent the results.

4.3.1. Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their District:

Perceptions of women about tourism was studied according to their resident districts. Women of Golaghat district showed the highest mean scores in perceptions about tourism and women of Karbi Anglong showed the lowest perceptions (Fig-4.12). Women from all three districts showed lower mean perception scores of P4, i.e. Government policies are helping women to get into TRA.

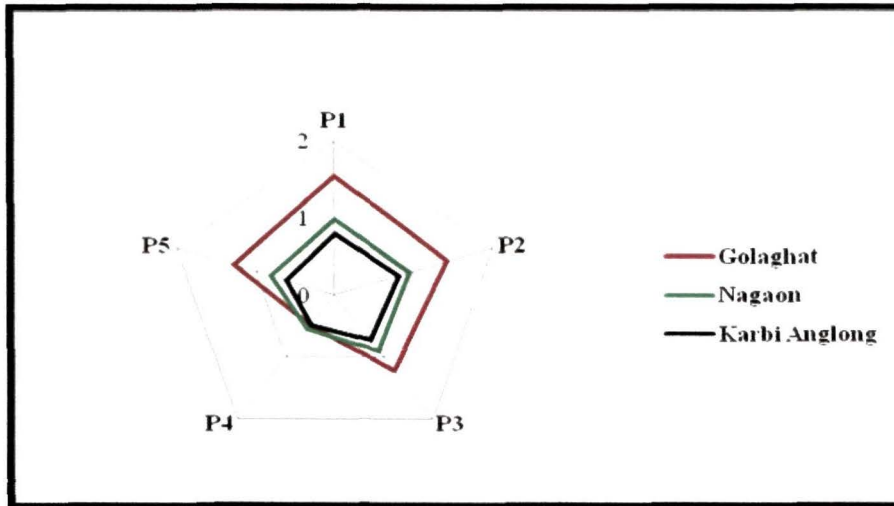


Fig-4.12: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their Districts

One way ANOVA was done to find out association between perceptions and resident districts of women (Table-4.16). Result shows that mean perceptions scores about the statements P1, P2, P3 and P5 were significantly different among women of different districts of the study area. There was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of women about statement P4 according to their districts ($p=.737$).

Table-4.16. ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and their Districts

		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	61.351	2	30.676	53.550	.000
	Within Groups	367.765	642	.573		
P2	Between Groups	41.993	2	20.996	31.208	.000
	Within Groups	431.924	642	.673		
P3	Between Groups	21.407	2	10.704	12.600	.000
	Within Groups	545.377	642	.849		
P4	Between Groups	.568	2	.284	.305	.737
	Within Groups	596.306	641	.930		
P5	Between Groups	42.386	2	21.193	26.196	.000
	Within Groups	518.576	641	.809		

Descriptive statistics showed that mean perception values about statement P1, P2, P3 and P5 by the women of Golaghat district were significantly higher than the mean perception values by women of Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts. Therefore, it was concluded that perception about tourism is significantly higher among women of Golaghat district.

4.3.2. Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to Range around which their Villages Situated:

Perceptions of women about tourism were studied according to the range around which their villages situated. The results of perceptions according to four range areas are represented in Fig.-4.13.

It is prominent that women from villages surrounding Kohora range had higher positive perceptions about tourism than women from villages surrounding other ranges. Regarding P3, i.e., 'TRA are safe for women', women from Agoratoli range area showed the highest mean perception score. Women from villages surrounding Burapahar range showed lowest perceptions about tourism. Perception about statement P4 was lowest in all the women irrespective of their locality.

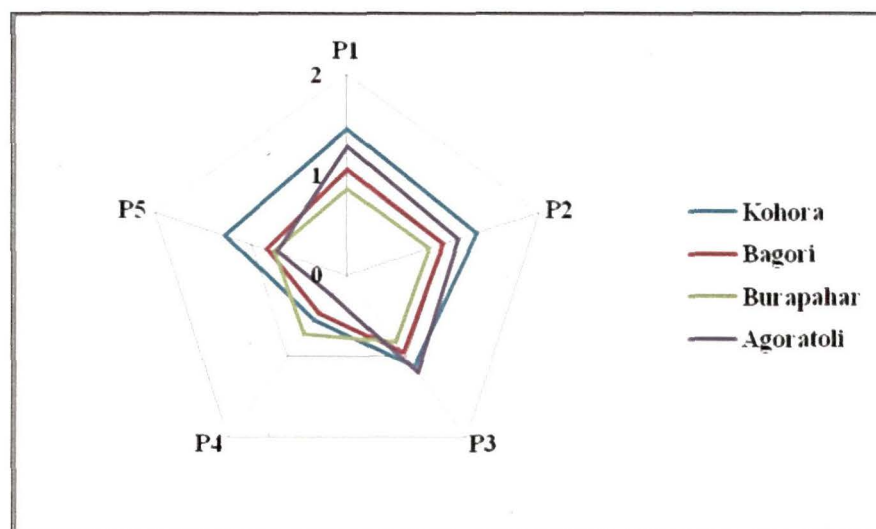


Fig-4.13: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to the Ranges around which their Villages are Situated

One way ANOVA test was done to see the significance of the differences in perceptions of women about tourism according to the range around which their village is located. The mean differences of all the perceptions (P1-P5) of women from different ranges were statistically significant (Table-4.17) at 0.05 level of significance.

Table-4.17: ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and Range

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	33.397	3	11.132	18.033	.000
	Within Groups	395.719	641	.617		
P2	Between Groups	24.501	3	8.167	11.648	.000
	Within Groups	449.416	641	.701		
P3	Between Groups	9.109	3	3.036	3.490	.016
	Within Groups	557.675	641	.870		
P4	Between Groups	9.728	3	3.243	3.534	.015
	Within Groups	587.147	640	.917		
P5	Between Groups	36.577	3	12.192	14.881	.000
	Within Groups	524.384	640	.819		

Post-Hoc analysis and descriptive statistics showed that perception of women belonging to the villages surrounding Kohora and Agoratoli range, about P1 was significantly higher than women from other areas. Women from village near Burapahar range showed significantly lowest perception about statement P1. About statements P2 and P3 women from Kohora and Agoratoli area were showing significant higher positive perceptions than Bagori and Burapahar ranges. Women from Kohora range area were showing significantly high positive perception about P5 than other women.

4.3.3. Perception of Women about Tourism According to their Age group:

Fig-4.14 depicts the perceptions of women about tourism according to their age group. It was clear that there was not much difference in the mean

perception scores about tourism according to the age of the respondents. Women showed lower perception about statement P4 irrespective of their age.

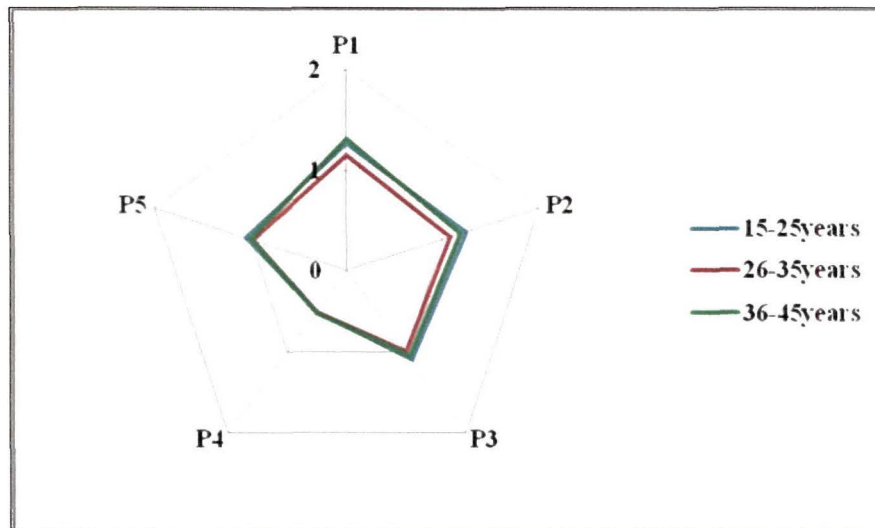


Fig-4.14: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their Age group

Result of one way ANOVA showed that there was no significant difference (at .05 level of significance) in the mean values of perceptions (P1-P5) of women about tourism according to their age groups (Table-4.18). Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in perceptions about tourism among women of different age groups.

Table-4.18. ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and their Age groups

		Sum of sq.	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	2.947	2	1.473	2.220	.109
	Within Groups	426.170	642	.664		
P2	Between Groups	2.905	2	1.453	1.980	.139
	Within Groups	471.011	642	.734		
P3	Between Groups	1.088	2	.544	.617	.540
	Within Groups	565.697	642	.881		
P4	Between Groups	.010	2	.005	.005	.995
	Within Groups	596.864	641	.931		
P5	Between Groups	.643	2	.322	.368	.692
	Within Groups	560.318	641	.874		

4.3.4. Perception of Women about Tourism According to their Caste:

Women's perception about tourism was studied according to their castes. The result showed that Other Backward Caste women had the highest positive perception and Scheduled Tribes (Hill) women had the lowest perception about tourism (Fig.-4.15).

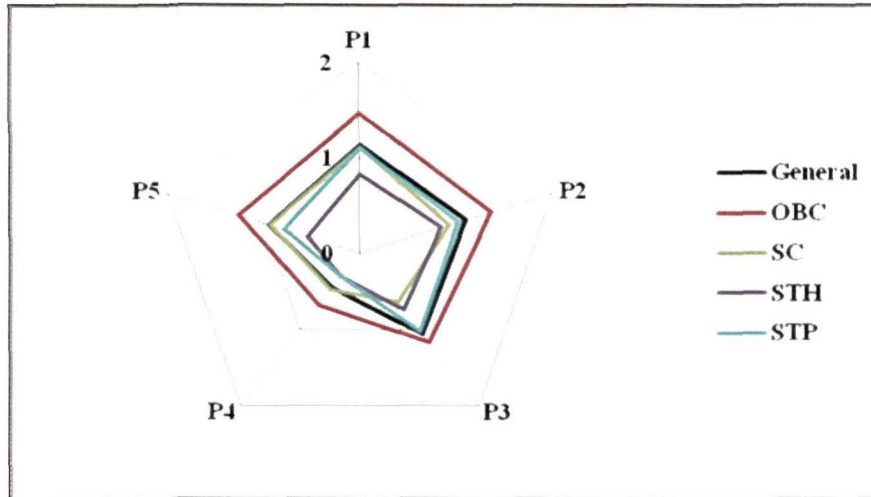


Fig-4.15: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their Caste

Table-4.19: ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and their Caste

		Sum of sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	30.377	4	7.594	12.189	.000
	Within Groups	398.739	640	.623		
P2	Between Groups	22.906	4	5.726	8.126	.000
	Within Groups	451.011	640	.705		
P3	Between Groups	17.478	4	4.370	5.091	.000
	Within Groups	549.306	640	.858		
P4	Between Groups	15.560	4	3.890	4.276	.002
	Within Groups	581.314	639	.910		
P5	Between Groups	39.650	4	9.912	12.150	.000
	Within Groups	521.311	639	.816		

To find out relationship between perceptions about tourism and caste of women Hypothesis was tested with one way ANOVA. The ‘*p*’ values for all the five statements were significant at 0.05 level of significance (Table-4.19).

Descriptive statistics revealed that perception of women belonging to OBC castes regarding tourism was significantly high compared to that of women belonging to other castes. Again women belonging to SC castes had lower perception about tourism.

4.3.5. Perception of Women about Tourism According to their Community:

Fig.-4.16 depicts the mean perception scores about tourism by the women according to their community. Women belonging to Assamese (Non tribal) community showed the highest perception scores about tourism. Here again it was seen that Assamese Mishing women showed highest mean perception about P3. Women belonging to Assamese Karbi, Bihari and Nepali communities showed lowest perceptions about tourism. All communities showed a lower perception score for statement P4.

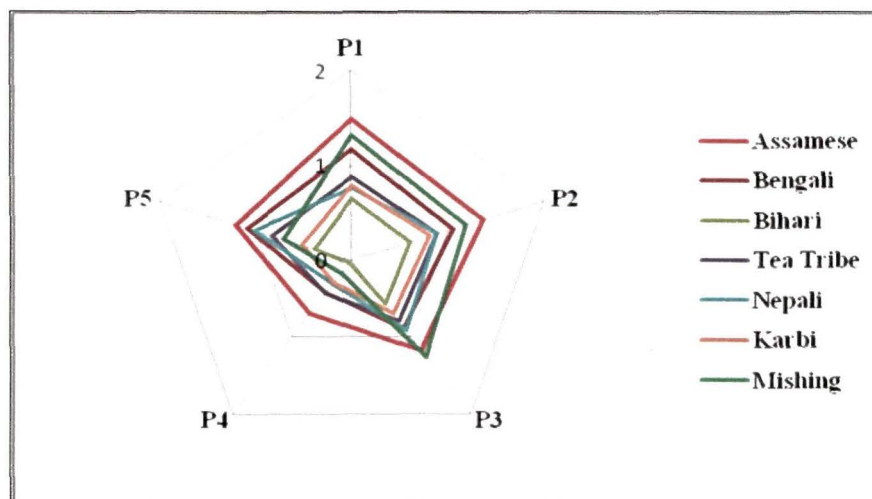


Fig-4.16: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their Communities

Hypothesis testing was done for relationship testing. One way ANOVA was used for this purpose (Table-4.20).

Table-4.20: ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and their Community

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	60.957	6	10.159	17.606	.000
	Within Groups	368.159	638	.577		
P2	Between Groups	39.497	6	6.583	9.668	.000
	Within Groups	434.419	638	.681		
P3	Between Groups	27.446	6	4.574	5.411	.000
	Within Groups	539.339	638	.845		
P4	Between Groups	28.921	6	4.820	5.406	.000
	Within Groups	567.953	637	.892		
P5	Between Groups	44.399	6	7.400	9.125	.000
	Within Groups	516.562	637	.811		

Result showed that the differences in mean scores of perceptions of women according to their community were significant at 0.05 level of significance. Post-Hoc analysis showed that perceptions about tourism of Assamese women were significantly higher than women from other communities.

4.3.6. Perception of Women about Tourism According to their Religion:

While analysing differences in perception according to religion of the respondents it was found that Hindu women's perceptions about tourism were higher than Muslim and Christian women (Fig.-4.17).

Christian women showed lowest perception about tourism. The differences in perceptions about tourism were statistically significant at .05 level of significance (Table-4.21).

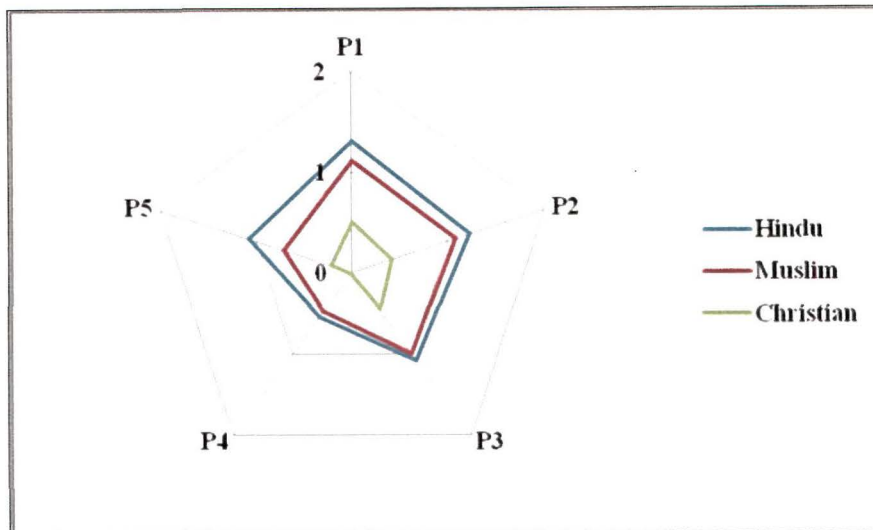


Fig-4.17: Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to Their Religion

Post-Hoc analysis showed that perceptions of Christian women about tourism (Statements P1-P5) were significantly lower than Hindu and Muslim women. In P4 (Women empowerment is possible through Tourism Related Activities), Hindu women scored significantly higher than Muslim and Christian women.

Table-4.21: ANOVA between Women's Perception about Tourism and their Religion

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	28.460	2	14.230	22.802	.000
	Within Groups	400.656	642	.624		
P2	Between Groups	19.145	2	9.573	13.514	.000
	Within Groups	454.771	642	.708		
P3	Between Groups	13.827	2	6.914	8.027	.000
	Within Groups	552.957	642	.861		
P4	Between Groups	9.344	2	4.672	5.097	.006
	Within Groups	587.530	641	.917		
P5	Between Groups	29.177	2	14.589	17.585	.000
	Within Groups	531.784	641	.830		

The results of perception about tourism showed that, OBC Hindu women of Assamese (Non-tribal) community belonging to villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora range of KNP had significantly higher positive perception about tourism. Women of the villages surrounding Kohora range were well versed about tourism industry of KNP. Therefore, it was a very encouraging to see their high positive perception about tourism.

To measure association between perception of women about tourism and their involvement in TRA, independence sample t test was carried out (Table-4.22).

Table-4.22: Mean, SD, N and 't' Values of Perceptions of Women about Tourism According to their Involvement in TRA.

Perceptions	Involvement in TRA	Mean	SD	N	T-values	Remarks
TRA have avenues for women	Yes	1.61	.564	152	8.330	P<0.01
	No	1.12	.846	493		
TRA are suitable for women	Yes	1.53	.754	152	6.179	P<0.01
	No	1.05	.857	493		
TRA are safe for women	Yes	1.39	.943	152	5.395	P<0.01
	No	.94	.911	493		
Govt. policies are helping women to get into TRA	Yes	.76	.976	152	3.584	P<0.01
	No	.44	.950	493		
Women empowerment is possible through TRA	Yes	1.41	.801	152	6.326	P<0.01
	No	.88	.937	493		

Perceptions about tourism (P1-P5) and involvement in TRA was statistically significant at 0.01 level of significance. Women who were involved in TRA had more positive perceptions about tourism.

4.4. Perception of Women about Women Empowerment:

The study tried to find out perception of women about women empowerment by asking them to comment on five statements related to women

empowerment. Five statements (Table-4.23) were given for their response in five point likert scale (-2 to +2).

The perception about women empowerment is an important aspect of this study. Women who are well aware of the concepts of women empowerment can only march ahead for economic empowerment through TRA.

Table-4.23: Perceptions about Women Empowerment (Statements)

Perceptions regarding Women Empowerment (WE)
1. WE is important for the society (P ₁)
2. WE is necessary for the family (P ₂)
3. WE helps in proper implementation of Government policies (P ₃)
4. Government and NGO should have policies for WE (P ₄)
5. Women empowerment helps women to be independent (P ₅)

Women showed high positive perception about women empowerment statements P₁, P₂ and P₅. They showed a slight depressed score for P₃ and P₄ (Fig-4.18). The respondents realized the importance of women empowerment for their families and societies.

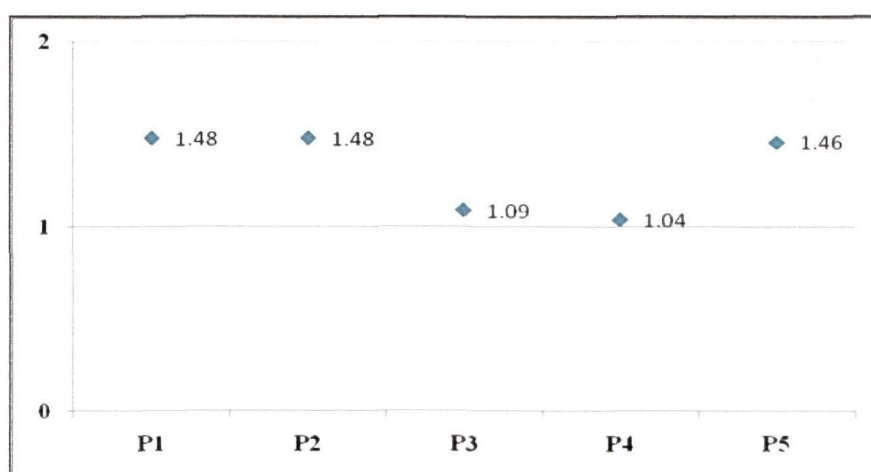


Fig 4.18: Perception of Women about Women Empowerment

Perception about women empowerment was studied further. It has was tried to find the existence of relationship between different demographic variables

with perception regarding women empowerment. The results of these analysis are represented below.

4.4.1. Perception of Women about Women Empowerment (WE) according to their Districts:

Perception of women about WE according to their district is shown by the Raddar diagram (Fig.-4.19). Perception about WE was not uniform in all three districts.

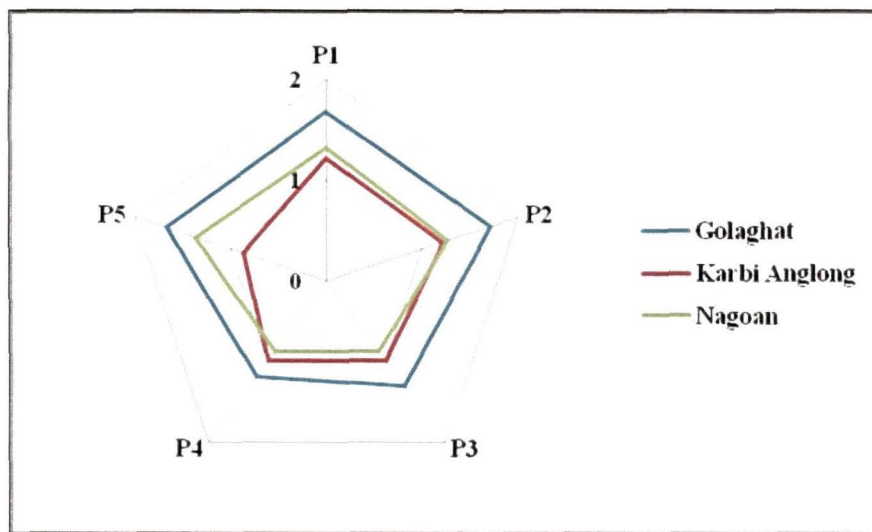


Fig.4.19: Perception of Women about Women Empowerment According to their District

Women of Golaghat districts showed higher perception about statements P1, P2, P3, and P5 compared to women of the other two districts. Women from Nagoan and Karbi Anglong district showed an overall lower perception about WE.

One way ANOVA was done to find out statistical significance in these differences. ANOVA table (Table-4.24) depicts that differences in mean scores of perceptions about all the statements (P1-P5) were statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (all 'p' = 0.00).

Table-4.24. ANOVA between Women's Perception about WE and Districts

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1 Between Groups	22.642	2	11.321	23.579	.000
Within Groups	308.236	642	.480		
P2 Between Groups	36.472	2	18.236	42.952	.000
Within Groups	272.572	642	.425		
P3 Between Groups	26.288	2	13.144	19.564	.000
Within Groups	431.315	642	.672		
P4 Between Groups	14.202	2	7.101	9.054	.000
Within Groups	503.495	642	.784		
P5 Between Groups	39.806	2	19.903	38.669	.000
Within Groups	330.436	642	.515		

4.4.2. Perceptions of Women about Women Empowerment According to Range around which their Villages are Situated:

Perceptions of women about tourism according to the range around which their villages are situated are represented in Figure-4.20. Women belonging to three villages surrounding Kohora range showed higher positive perceptions about women empowerment than other range areas. Women belonging to Burapahar range area showed lowest perception about WE. Women from Bagori and Agoratoli range area showed low perceptions about P3 and P4 than other perception statements.

Relationship testing between perception about WE and villages of women was done with the help of one way ANOVA. Table-4.25 showed that the differences in perception about women empowerment according to their villages was significant at 0.05 level of significance ($p=0.00$).

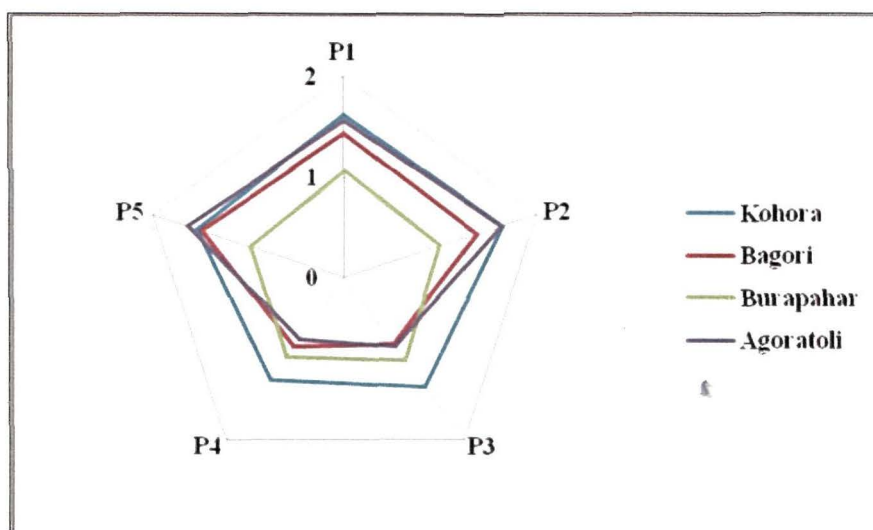


Fig.4.20: Perception of Women about WE According to the Range around Which their Villages are Situated

Table-4.25: ANOVA between Women's Perception about WE and Range around Which their Villages are Situated

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	20.796	3	6.932	14.330	.000
	Within Groups	310.081	641	.484		
P2	Between Groups	32.914	3	10.971	25.468	.000
	Within Groups	276.131	641	.431		
P3	Between Groups	36.904	3	12.301	18.743	.000
	Within Groups	420.699	641	.656		
P4	Between Groups	26.466	3	8.822	11.512	.000
	Within Groups	491.230	641	.766		
P5	Between Groups	23.729	3	7.910	14.632	.000
	Within Groups	346.513	641	.541		

Post-Hoc analysis showed that women from Kohora range area have significantly high perceptions about P1-P4. Women from Burapahar range area showed significantly low perceptions about statements P1, P2, P3 and P5

then women from other range areas. Lowest perception about statement P3 was shown by women from Agoratoli range area.

4.4.3. Perception of women about Women Empowerment (WE) according to their Age:

Mean perceptions of respondents about women empowerment according to their age are shown in Figure-4.2.

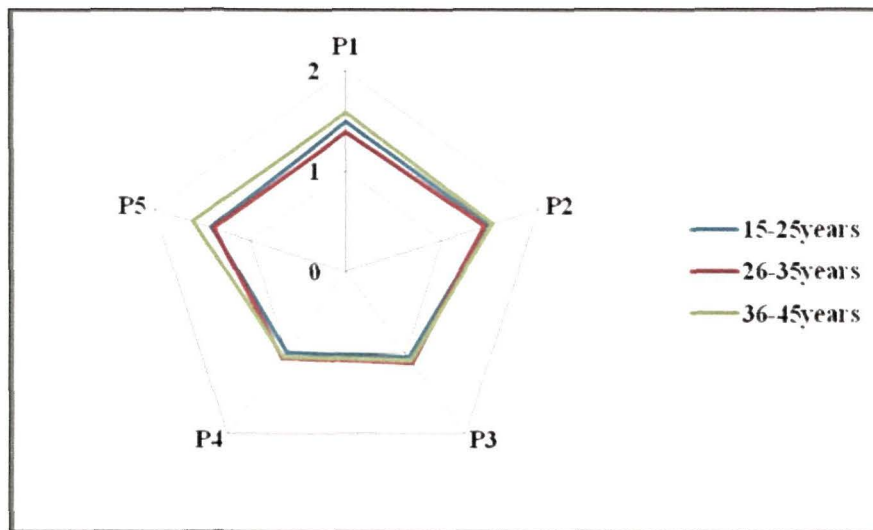


Fig.4.21: Perception of Women about Women Empowerment According to Their Age group

Though there is not much difference, perception of 36 to 45 years old women were slightly higher than other age groups.

To find out statistical significance of these differences Hypothesis was formulated and tested with one way ANOVA. Results of ANOVA (Table-4.26) showed that the differences in perceptions of women according to their age was not significant for P2, P3 and P4. The respective ' p ' values .372, .669 and .724 were not significant. Women's perceptions about P1 ($p = .019$) and P5 ($p = .007$) were significantly different among women belonging to various age groups (at .05 level of significance).

Post Hoc analysis showed that average perception of 36-45 years old women about P1 was significantly higher than that of 26-35 years old women.

Regarding perceptions about P5, women belonging to 36-45 years group showed significantly higher score than other two age groups.

Table-4.26. ANOVA between Women's Perception about WE and their Age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	4.078	2	2.039	4.006	.019
	Within Groups	326.799	642	.509		
P2	Between Groups	.950	2	.475	.990	.372
	Within Groups	308.095	642	.480		
P3	Between Groups	.572	2	.286	.402	.669
	Within Groups	457.031	642	.712		
P4	Between Groups	.520	2	.260	.323	.724
	Within Groups	517.176	642	.806		
P5	Between Groups	5.726	2	2.863	5.042	.007
	Within Groups	364.516	642	.568		

4.4.4. Perception of women about Women Empowerment (WE) according to their Castes:

Perceptions of women about WE was studied according to their caste.

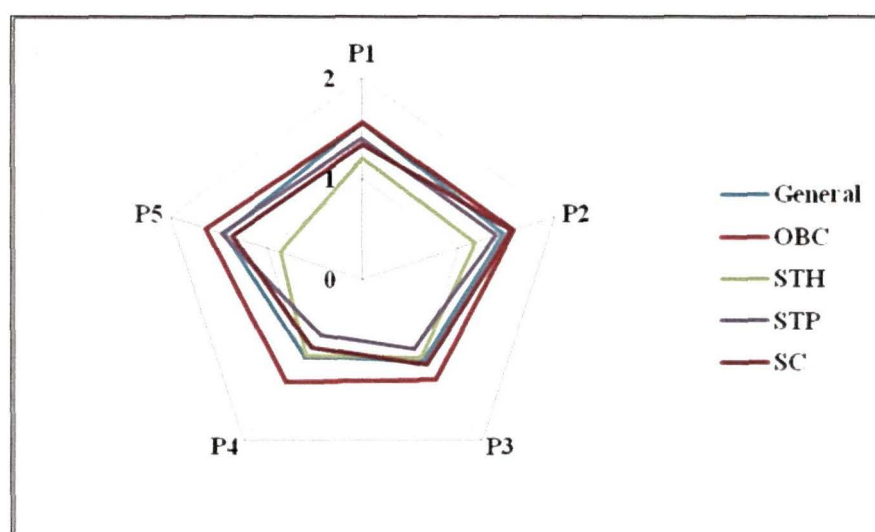


Fig.4.22: Perception of Women about Women Empowerment According to their Castes

Result showed that women belonging to OBC had highest perceptions about WE followed by women of General caste. Women belonging to STH had the lowest perceptions about WE (Fig-4.22).

To find out statistical significance of these differences one way ANOVA was done and results of which are represented in Table-4.27. Results showed the 'p' values are significant at .05 level of significance for all five statements i.e. P1 to P5. Therefore, it can be concluded that the differences of perceptions about WE according to the caste of women were statistically significant at .05 level of significance.

Table-4.27. ANOVA between Women's Perception about WE and their Caste

		Sum of Sq.	Df	Mean Sq.	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	9.742	4	2.435	4.854	.001
	Within Groups	321.136	640	.502		
P2	Between Groups	9.918	4	2.480	5.305	.000
	Within Groups	299.127	640	.467		
P3	Between Groups	13.576	4	3.394	4.892	.001
	Within Groups	444.027	640	.694		
P4	Between Groups	32.387	4	8.097	10.678	.000
	Within Groups	485.309	640	.758		
P5	Between Groups	32.164	4	8.041	15.222	.000
	Within Groups	338.078	640	.528		

Post Hoc analysis showed that STH women had significantly lower perception about statements P1, P2 and P5. Women belonging to OBC had significantly high perceptions about all the statements than women belonging to other castes.

3.4.5. Perception of Women about Women Empowerment (WE) According to their Communities:

Women belonging to Assamese (Non-tribal) community showed the highest perception about WE. They were followed by Assamese (Mishing) and

Bengali women in this aspect. Perception about WE was lower among women of Assamese (Karbi) and Nepali communities (Figure-3.24).

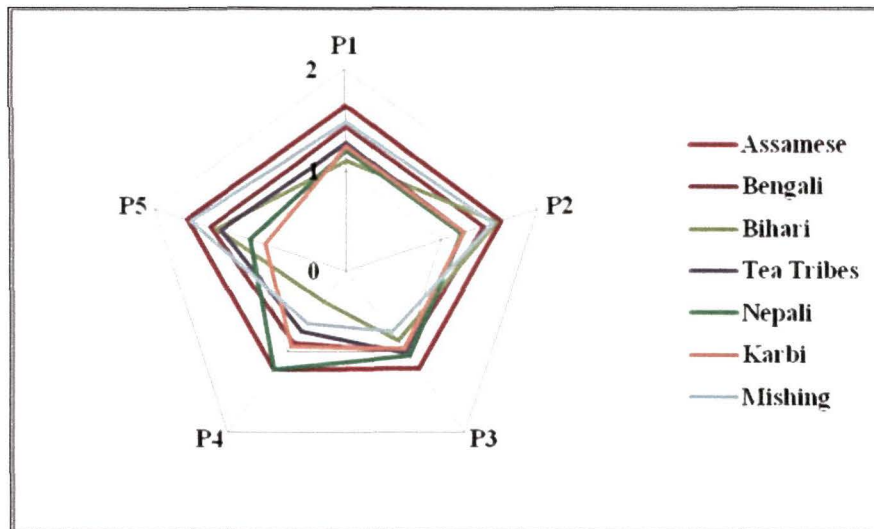


Fig-4.23: Perception of Women about W E According to their Communities

To find out statistical significance in the differences of perceptions among women belonging to different communities were analysed by one way ANOVA. Results showed that the differences in perceptions of women about WE according to their communities were statistically significant at .05 level of significance (Table-4.28).

Post Hoc results showed that Assamese (Non-tribal) women had significantly higher perceptions about WE than women belonging to other communities. About statement P1 Assamese (Non-tribal) women perceived significantly higher than women belonging to Bihari, Tea Tribe and Nepali communities. Perception of Assamese (Non-tribal) women was significantly higher about statement P2 than women belonging to Tea Tribe, Nepali and Assamese (Karbi) communities. Assamese (Non-tribal) women also showed highest perception about statements P3, P4 and P5 than women belonging to other communities.

Table-4.28. ANOVA between Women’s Perception about WE and their Communities

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	21.993	6	3.665	7.571	.000
	Within Groups	308.885	638	.484		
P2	Between Groups	18.727	6	3.121	6.859	.000
	Within Groups	290.318	638	.455		
P3	Between Groups	14.456	6	2.409	3.469	.002
	Within Groups	443.147	638	.695		
P4	Between Groups	37.812	6	6.302	8.379	.000
	Within Groups	479.884	638	.752		
P5	Between Groups	51.715	6	8.619	17.264	.000
	Within Groups	318.527	638	.499		

4.4.6. Perception of Women about Women Empowerment (WE)

According to their Religion:

Hindu women showed highest perception about WE. They were followed by Muslim women and Christian women trailed the race (Figure-4.24).

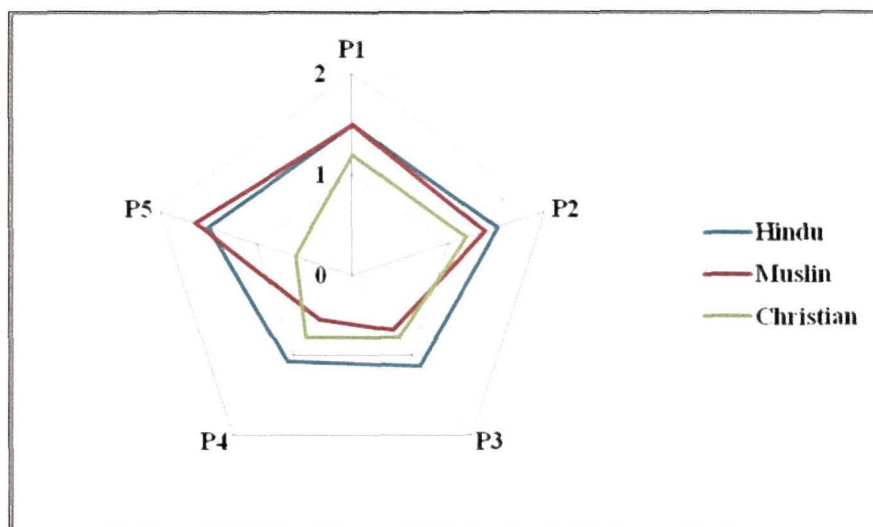


Fig-4.24: Perception of Women about WE According to Their Religion

Difference in perceptions of women about WE according to their religion was statistically analysed. (Table-4.29).

Table-4.29. ANOVA between Perception about WE and their Religions

		Sum of		Mean		
		Squares	Df	Square	F	Sig.
P1	Between Groups	3.230	2	1.615	3.165	.043
	Within Groups	327.647	642	.510		
P2	Between Groups	3.952	2	1.976	4.158	.016
	Within Groups	305.093	642	.475		
P3	Between Groups	11.155	2	5.577	8.020	.000
	Within Groups	446.448	642	.695		
P4	Between Groups	13.343	2	6.672	8.493	.000
	Within Groups	504.353	642	.786		
P5	Between Groups	30.469	2	15.234	28.785	.000
	Within Groups	339.773	642	.529		

One way ANOVA showed that the differences in mean perceptions of women about women empowerment according to their religion were statistically significant at .05 level of significance. Post Hoc analysis showed that perceptions of women belonging to Hindu religion were significantly higher than Muslim and Christian women.

The above discussed results of perception about women empowerment showed that, **OBC Hindu women of Assamese (Non-tribal) community belonging to the villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora range of KNP had significantly higher positive perception about Women Empowerment.** Women of all these three villages showed higher perceptions about tourism also. These results will be beneficial for strategy formulation in the later stage of the study.

4.5: Skills of Local Women to Get Involved in TRA:

Participatory Rural Appraisal method was used for identifying existing skills of local women and creating awareness and motivating them to enter into the tourism workforce for their economic empowerment.

Workshops were organized in ten villages in the periphery of KNP (Annexure: Ten). The researcher acted as facilitator in the workshop. Local women participated and drew their village map to identify the existing skills of village women. Map-4.1 to Map-4.10 show the results of skill mapping. Table 4.30 shows the number of women that attended the workshops in each village.

Table-4.30: Number of Women Who Attended the PRA Workshops

Sl. No.	Name of the Village	Number of Women
1	Baghjan	40
2	Baghmari	34
3	Bohikhuwa	55
4	Bosagaon	23
5	Chandrasing Rongpi	17
6	Chepenakubua	25
7	Engle Pothar	18
8	Holiram Engleng	18
9	Kohora No1	30
10	Kuthori	25
	Total	285

12 different skills were found to be prevalent among the village women. They were weaving, cooking traditional dishes, knitting, beauty culture, embroidery, crocheting, cutting & tailoring, decorative item making, jute work, bamboo work, singing and guiding tour. These skills can be utilised for formulation of strategies for involvement of women in TRA in the study area.

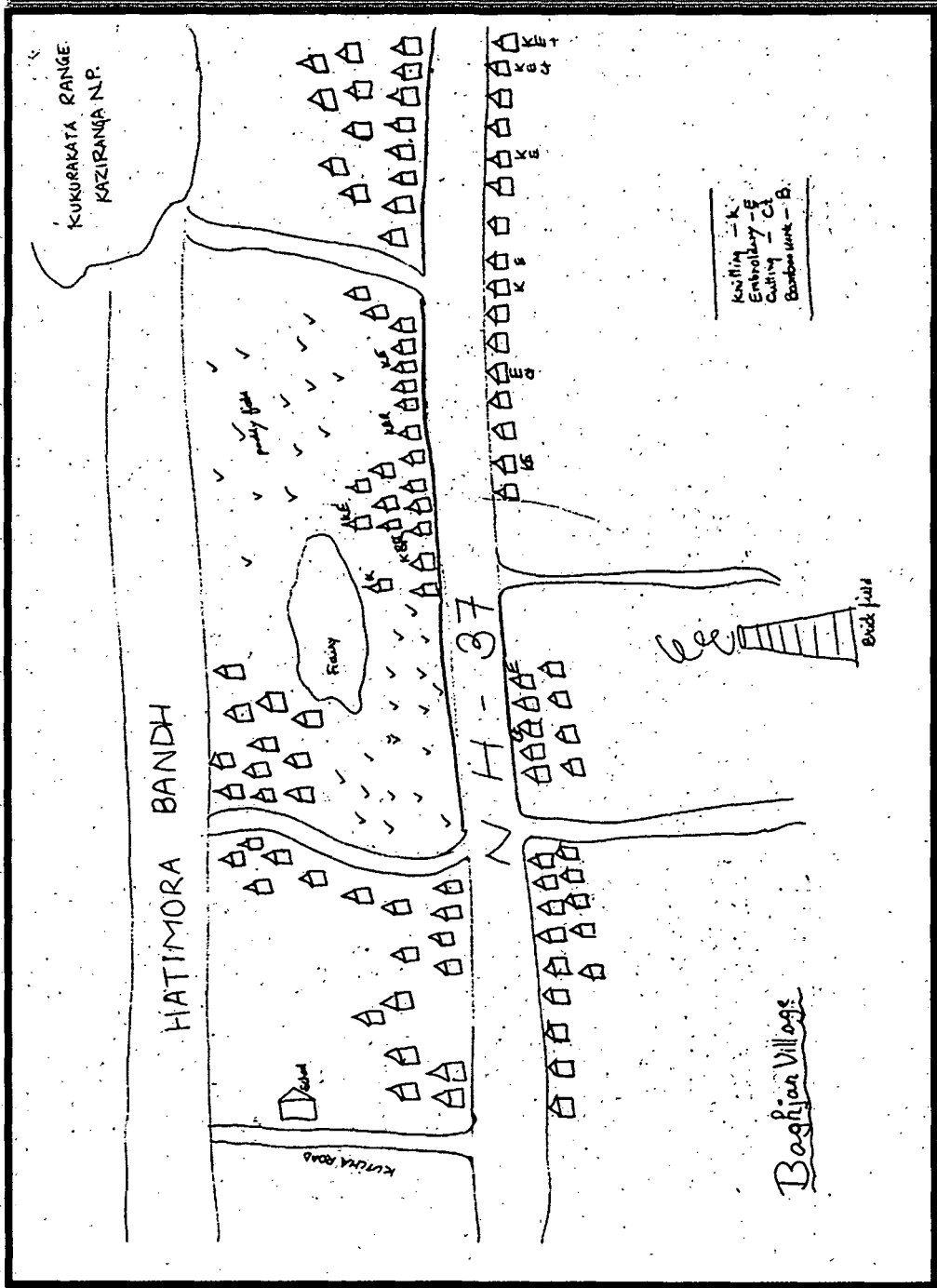
The summarized result of the PRA is represented in Table-4.31.

Table-4.31: Existing Skills of Local Women

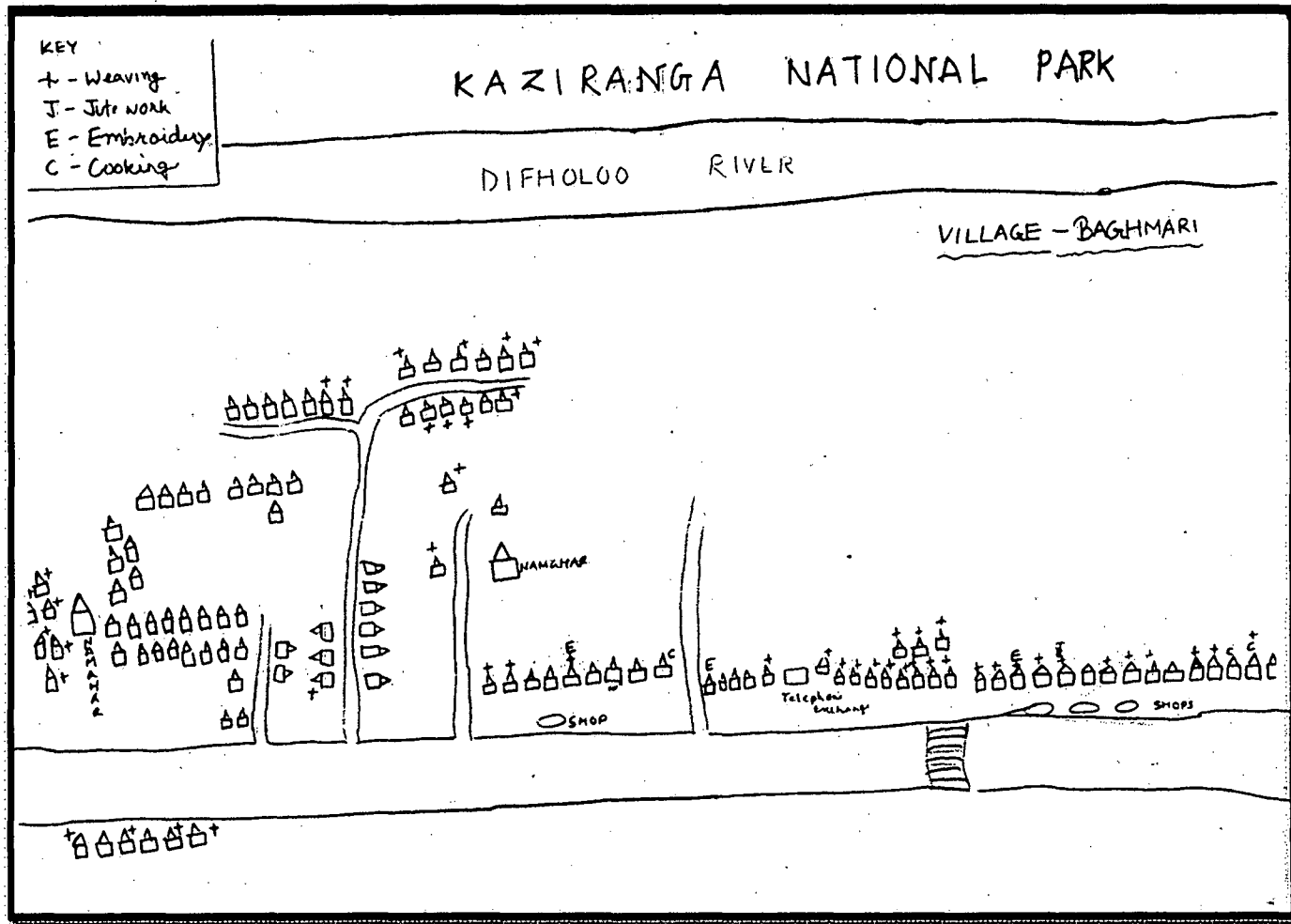
Name of the Village	Skills of women*											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Baghjan	2	-	10	-	9	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Baghmari	38	3	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Bahikhuwa	445	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bosagaon	132	1	2	-	31	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Chandrasing Rongpi	46	34	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chepenakubua	80	7	6	-	7	15	1	-	-	-	-	-
Engle Pathar	47	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Holiram Engleng	16	1	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kohora No 1	16	9	-	4	6	15	-	12	4	2	-	-
Kuthori	23	14	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	845	473	26	4	73	31	1	15	4	4	2	3

*1=weaving, 2=cooking, 3=knitting, 4=beauty culture, 5=embroidery, 6=crochet, 7=guiding tour, 8=cutting & tailoring, 9=decorative item making, 10=singing, 11=jute work, 12=bamboo work

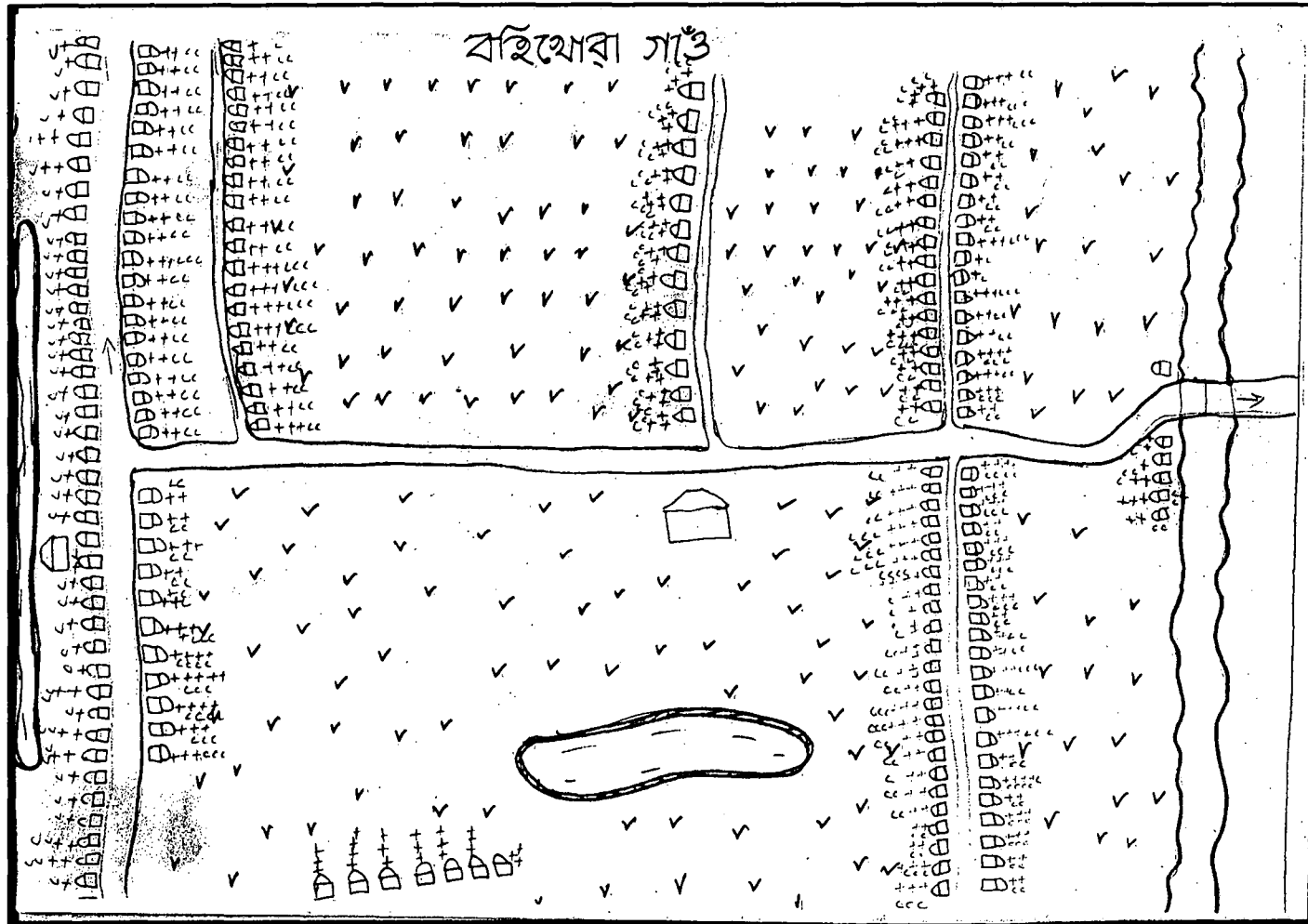
The results showed that, 845 women know weaving and 473 women had expertise in cooking traditional food. These numbers were highest in Bohikhuwa village of Golaghat district. The population of this village is mainly from the Mishing community of Assam. As tradition of Mishing community, it is compulsory for girls to learn weaving and cooking at a young age. Almost all women of this village know traditional weaving and cooking. Apart from weaving and cooking, a number of village women were expert in embroidery, knitting, crocheting, and cutting and tailoring. Few women were trained in beauty culture, decorative item making, jute work and bamboo work. Four women had expertise in singing and one had training in tour guidance. From the results it was found that local women were skilled enough to get involve in tourism activities for their economic empowerment.



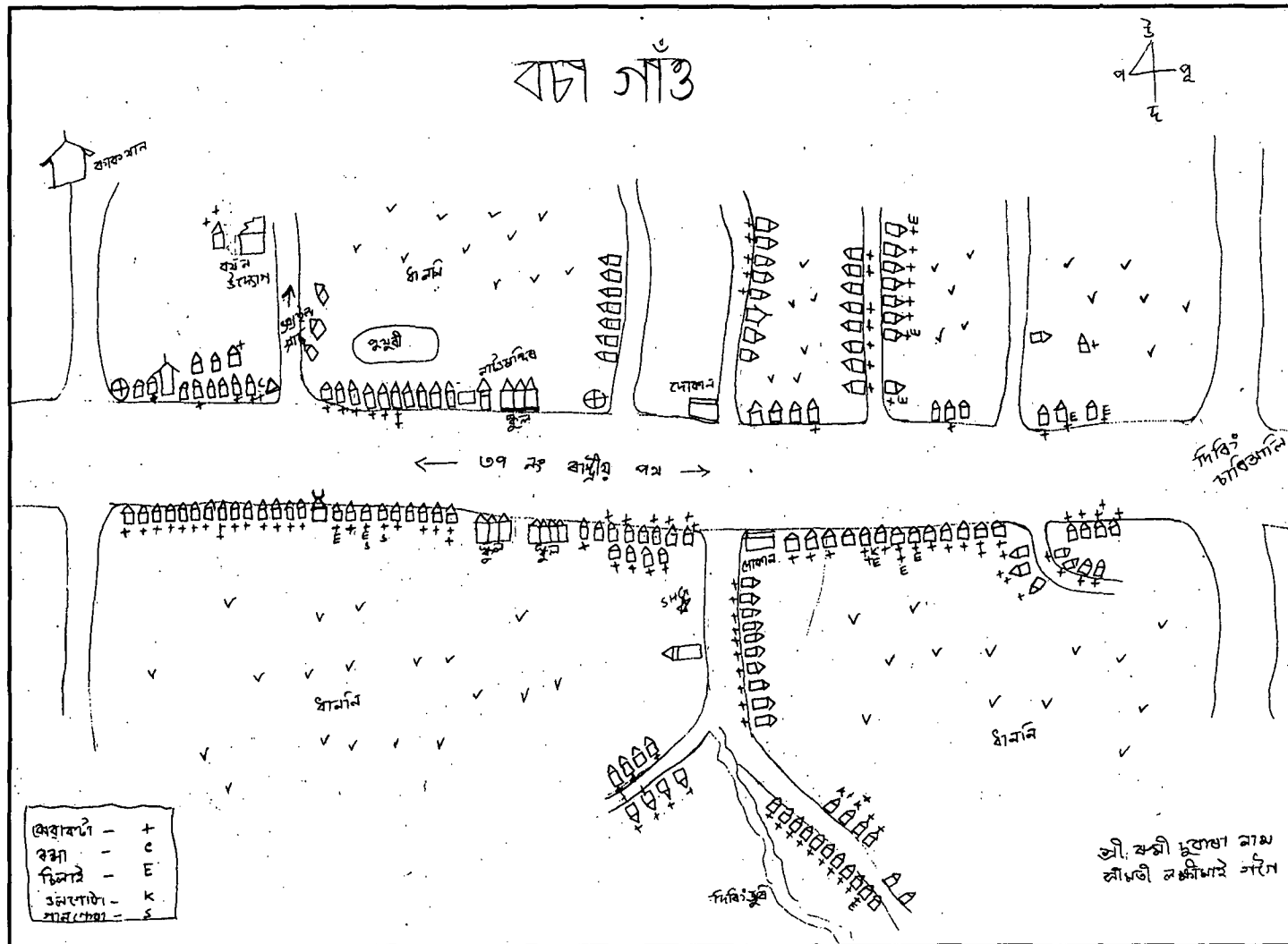
Map 4.1: Skill map of Baghjan Village.



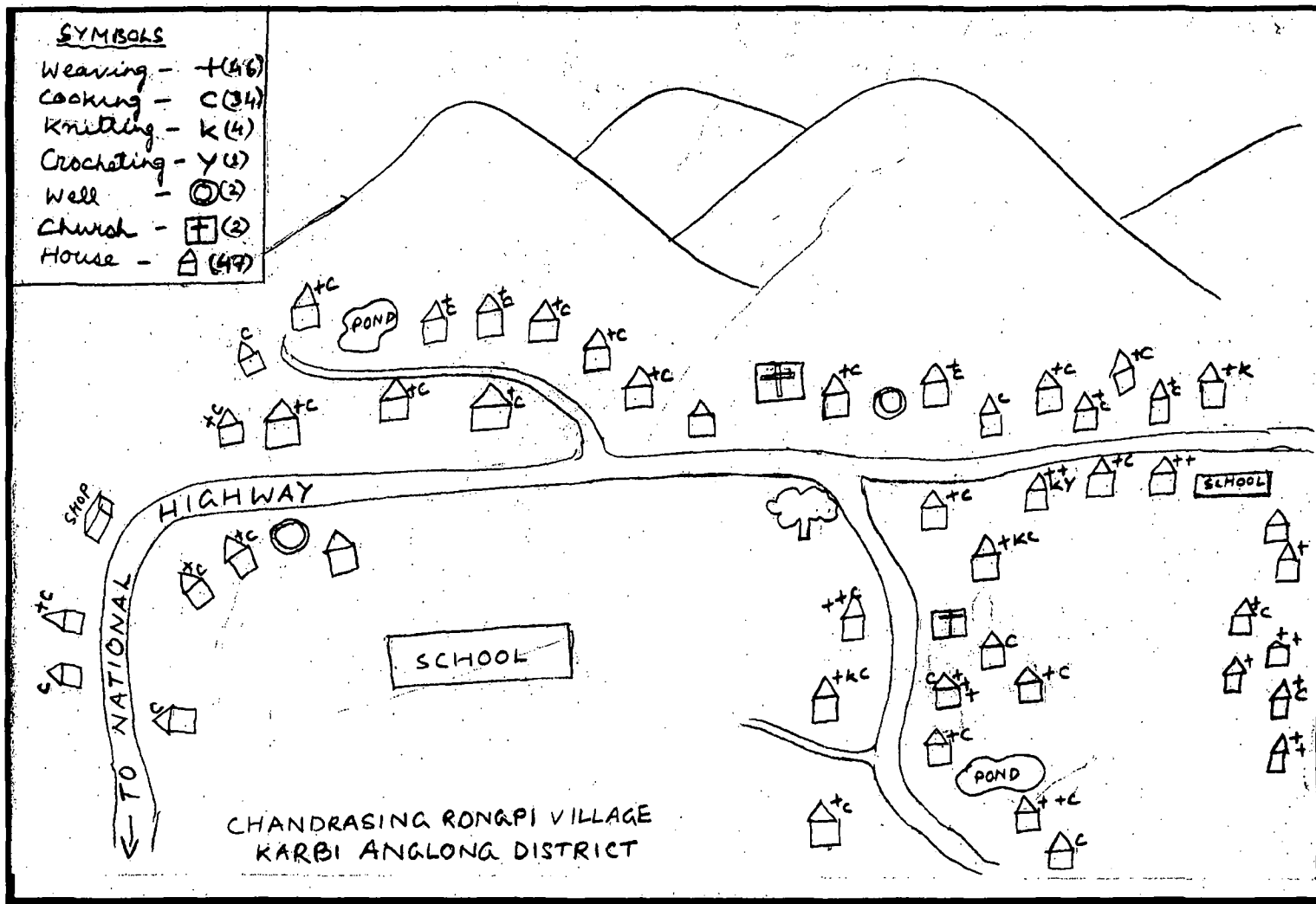
Map 4.2: Skill map of Baghmari Village.



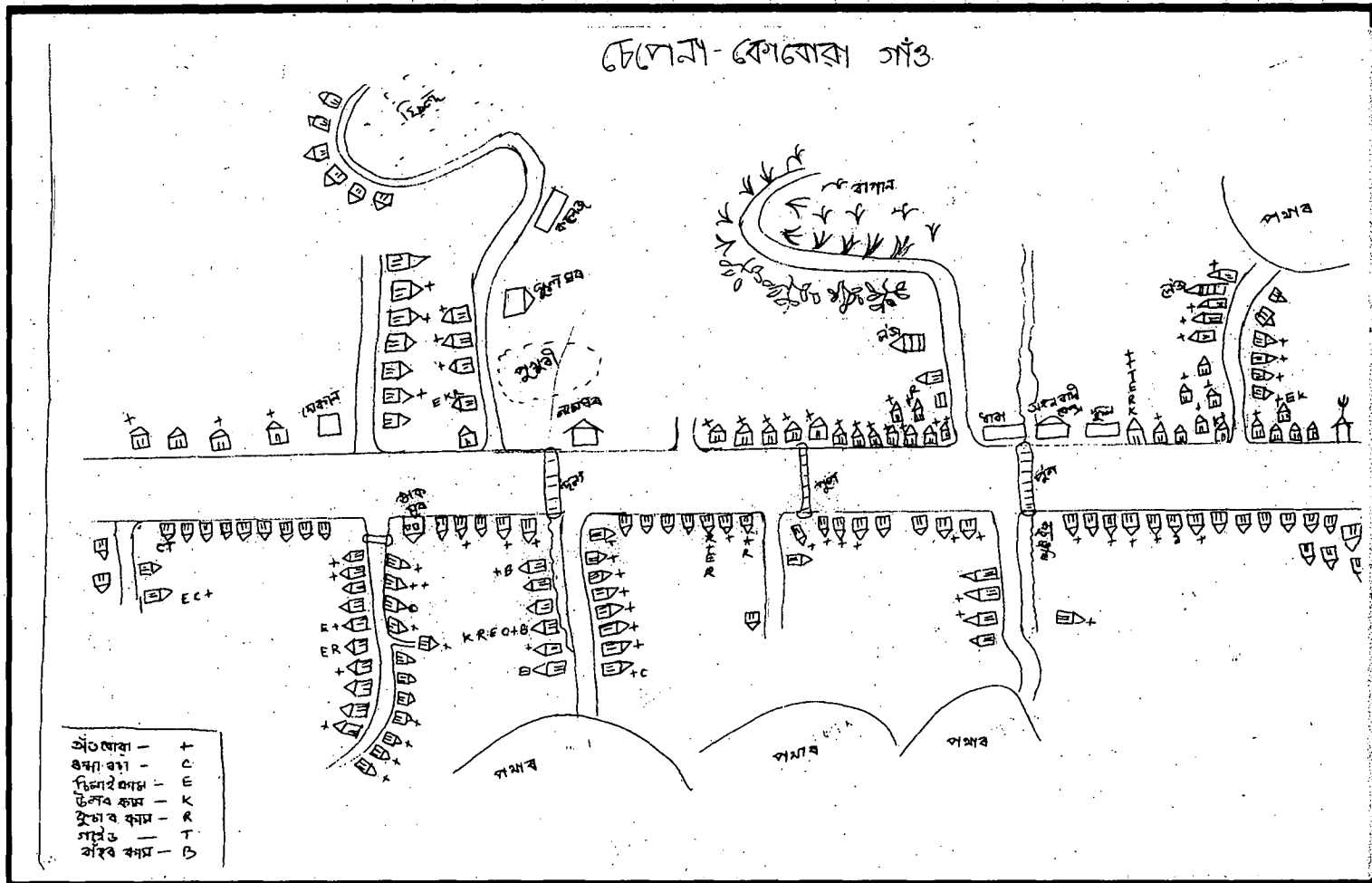
Map 4.3: Skill Map of Bahikhuwa Village.
 + - Weaving, C-Cooking



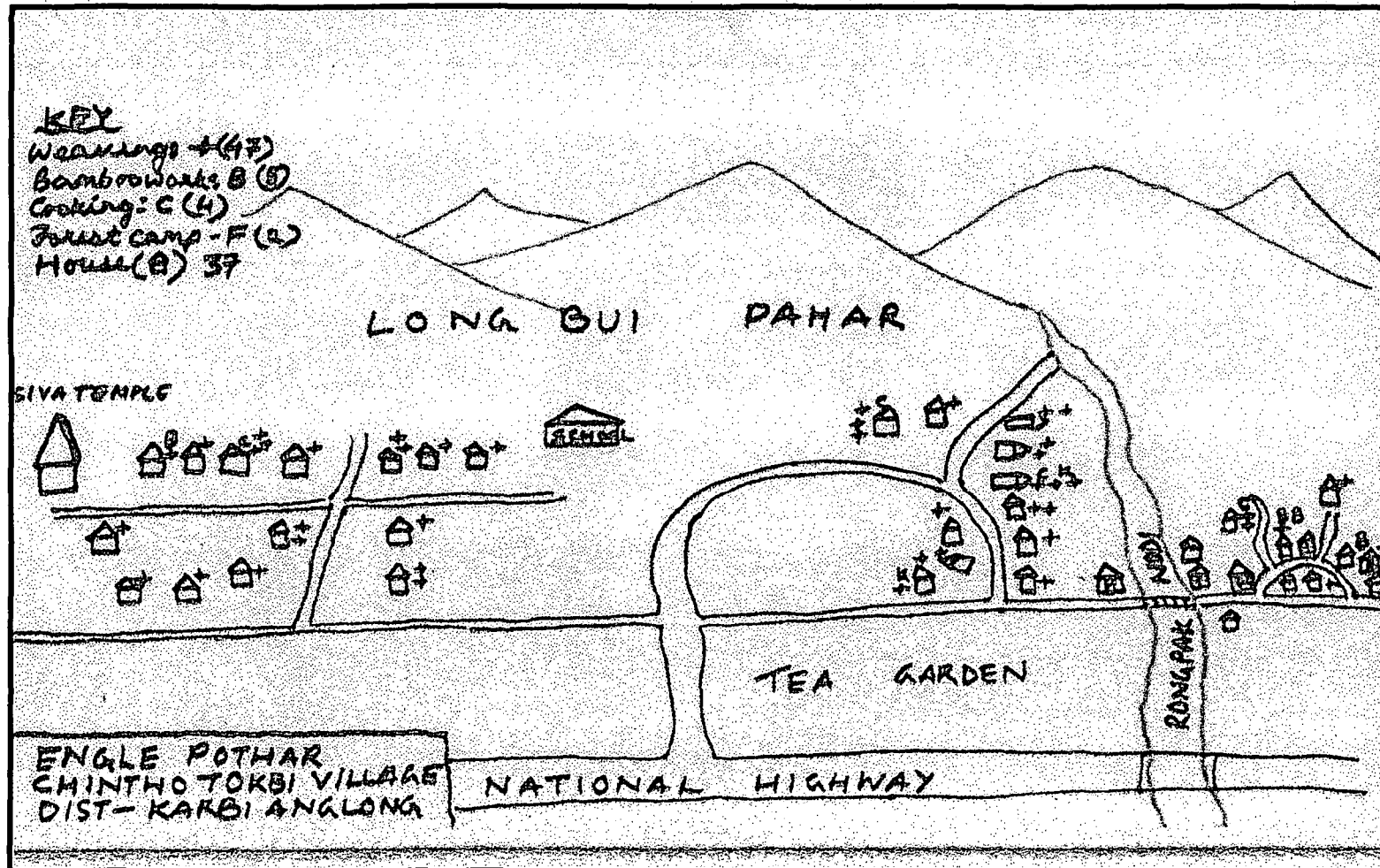
Map. 4.4: Skill Map of Bosagaon Village.
 + -weaving, C-cooking, E-embroidery, K-knitting, S-singing



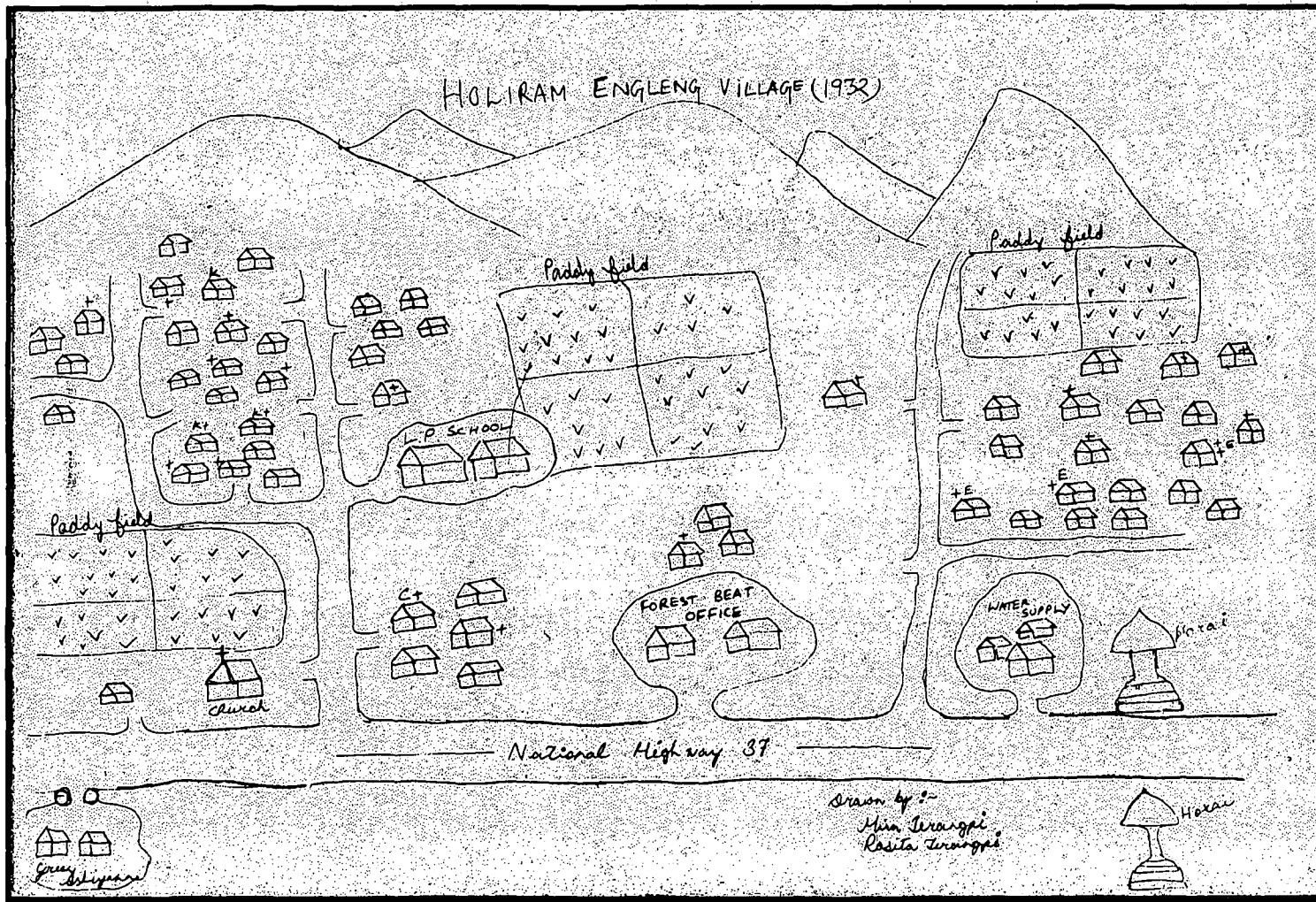
Map. 4.5: Skill Map of Chandrasing Rongpi Village.



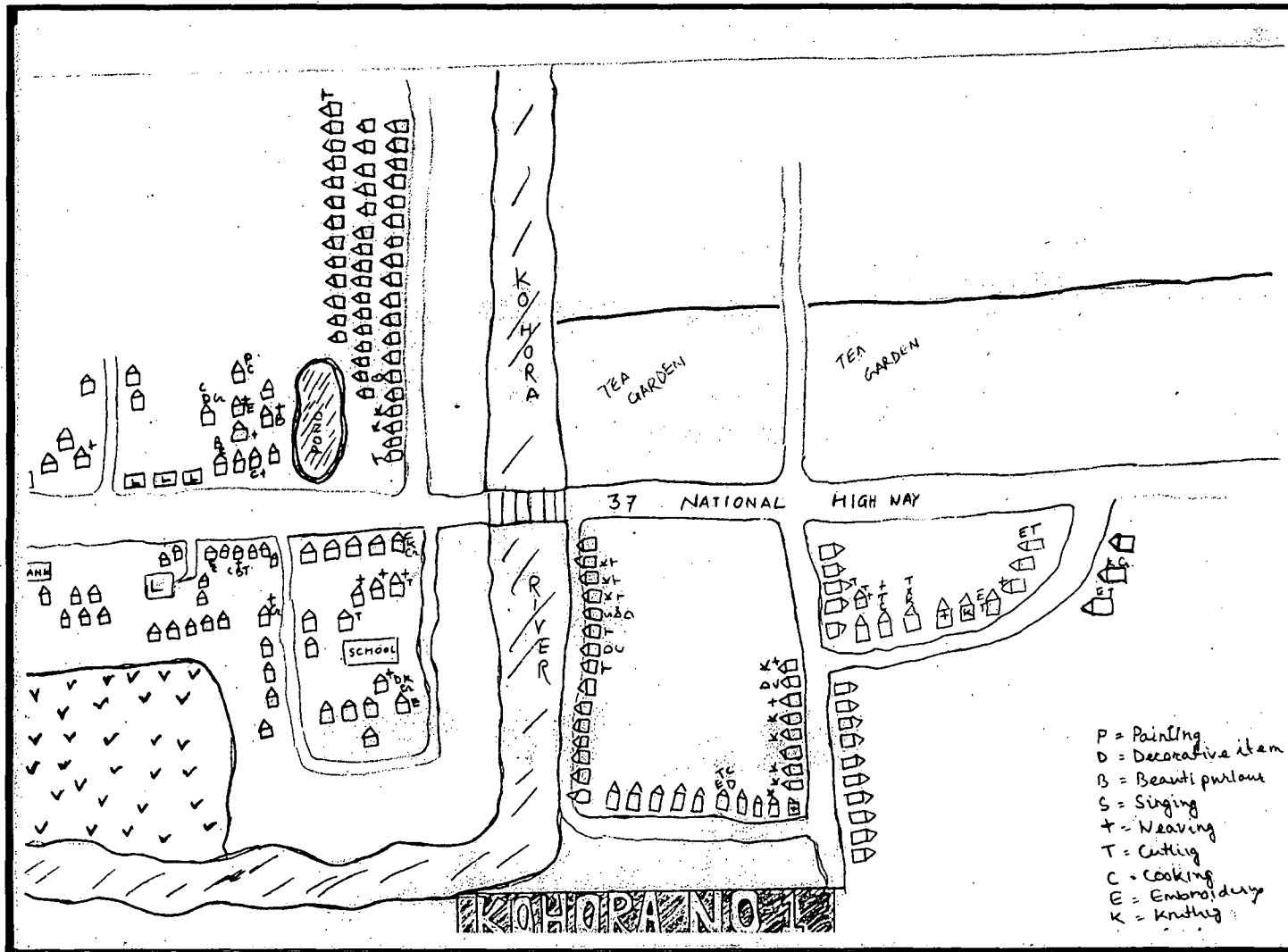
Map. 4.6: Skill Map of Chepenakubua Village.
 + -weaving, C -cooking, E-embroidery, K-knitting, R-crocheting, T-tour guiding, B-bamboo work.



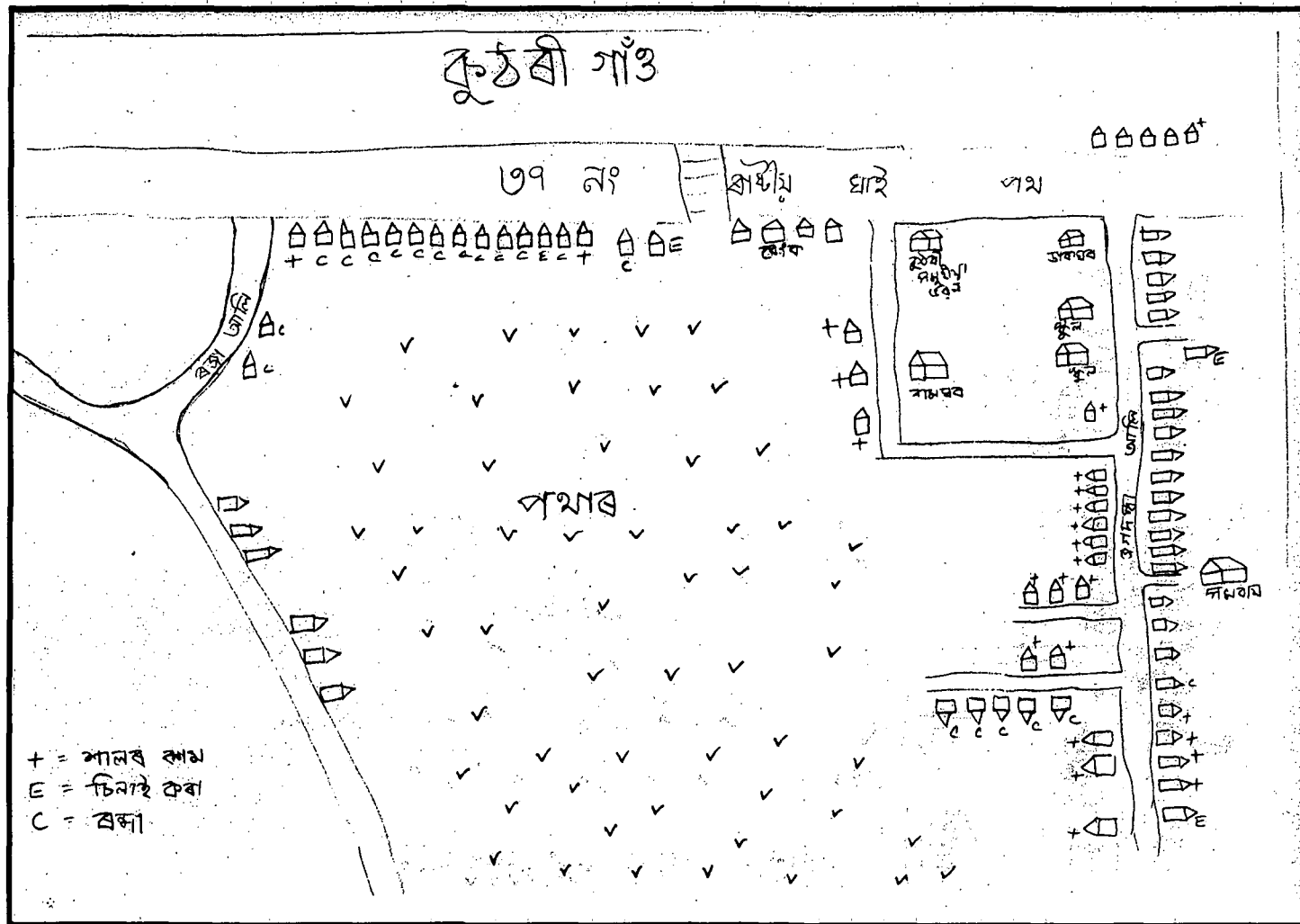
Map. 4.7: Skill Map of Engle Pothar Village.



Map. 4.8: Skill Map of Holiram Engleng Village.
+ -weaving, C -cooking, E-embroidery, K-knitting.



Map 4.9: Skill Map of Kohora No. 1 Village.



Map. 4.10: Skill Map of Kuthori Village.
 + -weaving, C -cooking, E-embroidery.

4.6. Tourists' Opinion, Preferences and Buying Interests on Various Services, Souvenir and Consumable Items in KNP:

Collected data from tourists' survey was analysed to find out the buying intentions of tourists with suitable statistical tools. Relationships between different variables are represented in following tables. Table-4.32 shows the demographic profile of the sample of the tourists' survey.

Table-4.32: Demographic Profile of the Tourists

Demographic profile of Tourists		
Place of origin	Domestic	400 (77.8%)
	Foreign	114 (22.2%)
Age	15-30 years	150 (29.2%)
	31-45 years	150 (29.2%)
	46-60 years	139 (27%)
	61-75 years	75 (14.6%)
Gender	Female	232 (45.1%)
	Male	282 (54.9%)
Category of resort	Category one (Starting tariff above INR 3000)	70 (13.6%)
	Category two (Starting tariff INR 1500- INR 3000)	166 (32.3%)
	Category three (Starting tariff below INR 1500)	278 (54.1%)

According to place of origin, major share was represented by domestic tourists. Almost 78 percent of sample was domestic tourists. Age group wise tourists were classified into four categories. The break-up of sample according to age group is shown in Table 4.32. Gender wise male tourists 54.9% and female tourists 45.1% formulated the total sample. According to place of stay tourists were classified into three groups. This was done to classify the tourists as per their economic condition.

Tourists were asked to comment on their opinion about existing state, preferences and buying interests of various tourism services, souvenir and consumable items in

KNP. Opinion about existing services, souvenir and consumable items were measured with a five point scale. The scale comprised of (+2) for very good, (+1) for good, (0) for undecided, (-1) for poor and (-2) for very poor. For measuring preferences and buying interests of the tourists about services, souvenir and consumable items a five point scale comprising of (2) for definitely yes, (1) for yes, (0) for undecided, (-1) for no and (-2) for definitely no was used. Total 16 services, souvenir and consumable items were measured by the survey. Services regarding gastronomy, rural tourism, tea tourism, accommodation and guidance were measured. Tourists were asked to comment about souvenir items such as handicraft, traditional clothing, ornaments and food items.

Table-4.33: Opinion about Existing State, Preferences and Buying Interests of Tourists about Services, Souvenirs and Consumable Items in KNP

Services/ Souvenir/Consumable	Mean opinion*	Mean preference**	Mean buying interests**
Traditional Food	.67	1.18	1.18
Local Cultural Program	.93	1.02	1.16
Traditional handicrafts	.78	.96	1.15
Visit to Tea Garden	.84	1.04	1.15
Visit to Tribal Village	.74	.99	1.13
Visit to Non Tribal Village	.75	1.03	1.12
Fruits & Vegetables	.64	.95	1.1
See Traditional Loom	.73	.85	.97
Tour Guide	.95	1.17	.95
Green & Organic tea	.89	.96	.91
Condiments & Spices	.5	.81	.65
Traditional clothing	.45	.65	.58
Home Stay	.92	.88	.53
Traditional Ornaments	.34	.41	.38
Herbal Medicine	.42	.52	.29
Packaged Traditional processed food	.46	.5	.2

* (+2) = very good, (+1) = good, (0) = undecided, (-1) = poor, (-2) = very poor

** (+2) = definitely yes, (+1) = yes, (0) = undecided, (-1) = no, (-2) = definitely no

Mean values were found out to compare opinion about existing state, preferences and buying interests about different souvenir, consumable items and tourism services. Results showed that there is difference in preferences and buying interests of tourists about various services, souvenir and consumable items (Table-4.33).

Tourists' opinion about existing state of services, souvenir and consumable items showed that all scores are below 1.00. According to the results, among the existing products and services qualities of tour guide, home stay programme and local cultural programme are better compared to the others. Traditional ornaments, herbal medicine, traditional clothing and packaged traditional processed food were placed at the end of the opinion values.

Traditional food was ranked one (mean=1.18) in the preference among these services, souvenir and consumable items. It was followed by tour guide service, visit to tea garden, visit to non tribal village and watching local cultural program. Traditional ornaments, packaged traditional processed food and herbal medicines got the lowest preference values.

The buying interests of tourists about various services, souvenir and consumable items were required to formulate strategies for women entering in tourism activities. The buying interests of all the items are positive and all scores lie within 0.20 to 1.18. Traditional food, cultural programme, traditional crafts, visit to tea gardens, visit to Assamese tribal village, visit to Assamese non tribal village and local fruits and vegetables got highest interest scores. Exhibition of traditional loom, service of tour guide, home stay and availability of local condiments and spices, and traditional clothing got medium interests value and lowest interests were shown to traditional ornaments, herbal medicine and packaged traditional processed food. Maximum preference (1.18) was given to traditional food by the tourists. Tourists' interests in buying services, souvenir and consumable items showed slight deviation from their preferences. Preference and buying interests of traditional food remained the same (mean=1.18).

For further analysis only highly preferred (mean interest value ≥ 1) services, souvenir and consumable items were taken into considerations. Traditional food, cultural programme, traditional Handicrafts, visit to tea gardens, visit to Assamese tribal village, visit to Assamese non tribal village and local fruits and vegetables are analysed to find out relationship with types of tourists. ANOVA and *t* tests were done for testing Hypotheses at 0.05 significance level (Annexure: Eleven).

4.6.1. Traditional Food:

Traditional food was the most preferred item among the tourists. To find out association between mean buying interests of a traditional food and age of tourists One Way ANOVA was carried out. The result shows $p=.011$ (Table-4.34), which is less than .05 and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It proves that mean buying interests of traditional food varies according to the age of tourists (at 0.05 level of significance).

Table-4.34: ANOVA between Buying Interests of Traditional Food and Age of Tourists

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	8.586	3	2.862	3.766	.011
Within Groups	387.587	510	.760		
Total	396.173	513			

Post Hoc analysis and the study of the descriptive statistics revealed that there is significant difference in the buying interests of traditional food among the tourists of the age group 15-30 and all the age groups above 30. Preference of traditional food is lowest in case of tourists of 15-30 years age group. The analysis of the descriptive statistics clearly revealed that the buying interest of traditional food is significantly high among the tourists who are above 30 years of age.

To find out relationship between buying interests of traditional food and gender 't' test was conducted. The result is not significant ($p = .108$). Therefore, the null hypothesis- 'there is no significant difference in buying interest on traditional food between male and female tourists' cannot be rejected. The mean preference of traditional food is same in male and female tourists.

Result of 't' test conducted to find out relationship between buying interest of traditional food and tourists' place of origin (domestic/foreign) shows significant differences at 0.05 level of significance ($p = 0.00$). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean buying interest of traditional food is different between domestic and foreign tourists. Foreign tourists are more (mean =1.46) interested in buying

traditional food than domestic tourists (mean =1.10). From the findings it can be concluded that though, traditional food got highest preference score in general; foreign tourists above 30 years are mostly interested in buying them.

4.6.2. Local Cultural Programme:

The average interests of tourists to witness cultural programme is high (1.16). The interests of tourists in local cultural programme and its relation to their different demographic variables such as age group, place of origin and gender has been studied statistically. To find out relations with age group One Way ANOVA test was done. The resultant p value ($p=.368$) is not significant at .05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in interests on local cultural programme among tourists belonging to three different age groups. Gender also does not play a role in the interests in local cultural programme ($p=.730$). Whereas, association between place of origin and interests in local cultural programme is significant ($p=.000$). Descriptive statistics showed domestic tourists (mean=1.26) are more interested in enjoying local cultural programme than foreign tourists (mean=.82).

4.6.3. Traditional Handicraft:

The mean interest in buying traditional handicraft among tourists visiting KNP was found to be 1.15. Relationship testing showed that interests in purchase of traditional handicrafts is not significantly associated with age ($p=.071$) and gender ($p=.842$) of tourists. Only place of origin of tourist is significantly associated ($p=.000$) with interests in buying traditional handicraft. Group statistics data reveals that domestic tourists (mean=1.23) are more interested in buying traditional handicrafts than foreign tourists (mean=.88).

According to Nomura (95) female tourists were more likely to show strong concern about souvenir shopping activity during travel. Therefore females have higher possibility of visiting in souvenir shops than males. But the present study shows a different picture, there is no significant difference between males and females in buying interest of souvenir and other consumable items.

4.6.4. Visit to Tea Garden:

Visit to tea garden got same interest score as traditional handicrafts (mean=1.15). Gender of tourists is not significantly associated ($p= .934$), but place of origin of tourists is significantly associated ($p=.000$) with interests in visiting tea garden. Domestic tourists show higher interests (mean=1.24) in visiting tea garden than foreign tourists (mean=.86).

Age group of tourists and interests in visiting tea garden have statistically significant association ($p=.000$). Descriptive statistics revealed that younger tourists (15-30 years) showed significantly higher interests in visiting tea garden than other age groups.

4.6.5. Visit to Assamese Tribal Village:

The tourists' interest in visiting Assamese tribal village was found to be 1.13. The interests and gender of tourists are not significantly associated ($p=.096$). Whereas, place of origin is highly associated ($p=.007$) with interests in visit to Assamese tribal village. From the Group statistics data it is found that domestic tourists (mean=1.19) are more interested than foreign tourists (mean=.94) in visiting tribal village.

Results of ANOVA show a significant association between age groups of tourists and interests in visiting tribal village ($p=.002$). Descriptive statistics shows that tourists of 60-75 years age group revealed significantly less interest in visiting tribal village (mean=.80). Other two groups are almost equally interested in visiting tribal villages.

4.6.6. Visit to Assamese Non tribal Village:

Interests of tourists in visiting non tribal Assamese village (1.12) are slightly lower than interests in visiting tribal Assamese village (1.13). Gender is not significantly associated ($p= .247$), but place of origin of tourists is significantly associated ($p=.003$) with interests in visiting non tribal Assamese village. Domestic tourists show higher interests (mean=1.18) in comparison to foreign tourists (mean=.91).

Age group of tourists and interests in visiting non tribal Assamese village have statistically significant association ($p=.006$). As in interest in visiting tribal village,

higher age group tourists (60-75 years of age) showed lowest interests (mean=.88). Descriptive statistics showed significant difference in interest in visiting non tribal Assamese villages among tourists of 60-75 years age group and other two age groups at .05 level of significance.

4.6.7. Local Fruits and Vegetables:

Interest in buying local fruits and vegetables is high among tourists (mean=1.1). Statistical analysis shows that none of the variables are statistically associated with buying interests of local fruits and vegetables. Therefore it is evident that all tourists have same level of interest in buying local fruits and vegetables.

The target population of tourists for traditional food, local cultural programme, traditional handicrafts, visit to tea garden, visit to tribal and non-tribal Assamese village and local fruits and vegetables are presented in Table. 4.35.

Table-4.35: Target Population of Tourists for Different Services, Souvenir and Consumables in the Study Area.

Sl.No	Services, Souvenir and consumables	Target Population of tourists
1	Traditional food	Foreign tourists above 30 years (irrespective of their gender)
2	Local cultural programme	Domestic tourists (irrespective of their age and gender)
3	Traditional handicrafts	Domestic tourists (irrespective of their age and gender)
4	Visit to tea garden	15-30 years, old domestic tourist (irrespective of their gender)
5	Visit to tribal and non-tribal Assamese village	Domestic tourists below 60 years (irrespective of their gender)
6	Local fruits and vegetables	All (irrespective of their locality, age and gender)

Other services, souvenirs and consumables which got a lower score in buying interests (mean= < 1.00) of tourists are:

- observing traditional weaving process (.97)
- tour guide (.95)
- green and organic tea (.91)
- local condiments and spices (.65)
- traditional clothing (.58)
- home stay (.53)
- traditional ornaments (.38)
- herbal medicine (.29) and
- packaged traditional processed food (.2)

As all these items got positive buying interests scores, they can also be considered for strategy formulation for women's involvement in TRA.

The women survey showed that though the involvement of women in TRA is low their perceptions about tourism and women empowerment is positive. Therefore, if motivated, the women of the study area may show eagerness to join the tourism work force for their economic benefit. PRA results also showed that women of the area have expertise in various skills. There is also demand from tourists for souvenir, services and consumable items (Table:4.33).

The above findings give a picture of demand and supply in tourism industry. Skills of local women, women's acceptance of tourism and women empowerment are the strengths and tourists' demand can be considered as opportunity.

Lower economic condition.(family income) of women and lack of ownership of land, machinery etc. (only 15.34%) can be considered as the weakness of the situation. Most souvenir shops found in the study area, sell machine made low cost products brought from other parts of the country. This is a serious threat to the local entrepreneurs wishing to enter the tourism business.

Now strategies are to be developed which will use existing strength to exploit the opportunities and convert the threat into opportunities. Strategies are also to be developed to overcome the weaknesses of women and to facilitate their entry in

TRA. For this, existing Government policies can be utilized or new region centric policies may be suggested to the Government. To develop these strategies stakeholder interviews were taken. An expert opinion survey was also undertaken for testing the practicability of the formulated strategies. Both, the stakeholder interview and the expert opinion survey have been discussed in detail in Chapter:III.

4.7. Stakeholders Suggestions:

Stakeholders suggested various opportunities for local women to get engaged in TRA for economic empowerment. Most of the stakeholders suggested that women produce and sell handicrafts as souvenir, work as tour guide, work as cultural activist such as dancer and singer, establishing home stay, work in front office jobs at restaurants and hotels etc. These suggestions are broadly presented in Table-4.36.

Table-4.36: Opportunities Identified by the Stakeholders

Sl No	Opportunities
1.	Production and selling of handicrafts as souvenir
2.	Supply of traditional food and work as caterer
3.	Work in front office
4.	Work in Housekeeping sector
5.	Work as tour guide
6.	Establishing 'Home Stay' facility
7.	Exhibiting indigenous activities as spinning, weaving etc.
8.	Exhibiting Rural (Villages) Assam
9.	Establishing museum of traditional equipments of Assam
10	Fishery, piggery, floriculture
11.	Establishing library with books related to culture and wild life of Assam
12.	Cultural activities, such as traditional dancing, singing etc.
13.	Photography and news reporting
14.	Providing basic facilities such as Internet, Computer typing, Fax, Health club, Beauty salon,
15.	Providing transport facilities

4.8. Strategy Formulation:

Overall, a gap can be observed between perceived industry needs and the outcomes of training. The tourism sector depends heavily on soft skills including language and communication skills, courtesy, ethics, friendliness, good behaviour, discipline, conscientiousness, self-confidence, adaptability, creativity and punctuality. Some of these skills can be enhanced through training, along with other more specific technical and occupational skills (ILO 62). Required training and infrastructures were also suggested for successful involvement of women in tourism related activities.

The sixth stage of the methodology was establishing practicability of the formulated strategies. Strategies were formulated with the help of suggestions by stakeholders, based on demands of tourists and skills of local women. Formulated strategies were circulated among a panel of experts in three rounds. The experts' opinions helped in finding out functional possibilities through which women can sustainably join the tourism workforce. The study finally formulated following probable areas of entry for women in TRA in the study area.

4.8.1. Gastronomy:

Traditional food is found to be the most preferred item for buying. Assamese cuisine is famous for its nutritive value and simplicity. The cuisine is characterized by very little use of spices, little cooking over fire, mainly boiled or grilled, and strong flavors due mainly to the use of endemic exotic herbs and vegetables that are either fresh, dried or fermented. Fish is widely used, and meat of birds like duck, pigeon, chicken etc. are very popular, which are often paired with a specific vegetable or ingredient. Preparations are rarely elaborate, the practice of *bhuna*, the gentle frying of spices before adding to the main ingredients so common in Indian cooking, is absent in the cuisine of Assam. A traditional meal in Assam begins with a *khar*, a class of alkali based dishes named after the main ingredient, and ends with a *tenga*, a sour dish. These two dishes characterize a traditional meal in Assam. The food is usually served in bell metal utensils made by an indigenous community called *Mariya*. *Tamul pan* (betel nut and leaf combined with lime) generally offered after the meal.

Study showed that women of the locality are mainly skilled in traditional cooking. They should grab the opportunity to market their expertise of cooking traditional food for their economic empowerment. The skill of cooking can be utilized for preparation of traditional food of different local communities such as, Assamese (non-tribal), Assamese (Mishing) and Assamese (Karbi). Government can take the initiative to train local women for commercial production of traditional food. Training on packaging of food items and other related matters also required in this regards. The most important aspect of food industry is to maintain cleanliness and hygiene. For selling traditional food, the target segment of tourist would be foreigners above 30 years.

Possible area of entries for women in tourism through gastronomy:

1. Work as caterer
2. Supply traditional foods to resorts and lodges
3. Supply of processed local foods e.g. Pickle made of bamboo shoot, king chili, olive, plum, *amla* (Indian gooseberry) etc., Jam/jelly/juice of pineapple, orange etc., *amla* (Indian gooseberry) powder.
4. Cultivation and supply of local vegetables and fresh or dried local fruits.
5. Fishery, piggery, cattle and poultry farming for supply of meat, fish, milk and egg.
6. Cultivation and supply of exotic herbs and spices like *brahmi*, black pepper, cinnamon, cumin etc.
7. Breed/collect and supply special delicacies of Assam like food variety of *eri polu* (*Samia cynthia ricini*), eggs of *amroli poruwa* (a variety of ant), local honey, mushroom etc.
8. Manufacturing and supplying packaging materials made of locally available substances like bamboo (leaves & pole), tree barks, beetle nut leaves & barks, etc.

To work in gastronomy, tourism specific training for women and also some infrastructure facilities are required.

Required training for local women to work in gastronomy:

1. Processing and cooking for commercial purposes
2. Food presentation skill
3. Health and Nutritive value of food
4. Preservation and food safety
5. Quality management and hygiene
6. Entrepreneurship development and innovativeness

Infrastructure to be provided:

1. To make clean and healthy traditional food available to the tourists 'Food Haats' should be opened. 'Food fest' can be organized during tourism season in the study area.
2. Tourist amenity centers, road side amenity centers along the length of KNP with traditional food courts with all tribal cuisines of Assam.

4.8.2. Local Cultural Programme:

Domestic tourists irrespective of their age and gender showed significant interests in local cultural programme (1.16). The *Bihu* songs and dances, and other colorful ethnic dances of the region *Gumrag* or *Mishing Bihu* of the *Mishings* have become very popular these days (Boro 16). Stakeholders also have suggested various art forms which can be included in cultural programmes organised at KNP. Local women can take part in these programmes and can achieve economic empowerment.

Possible entries for women in tourism through Local Cultural Programme

1. Taking part in *Ankia Bhawna* (a traditional form of mythological drama of Assam).
2. *Satriya* dance performance (a form of traditional Assamese dance).
3. Traditional dances such as *Bihu*, *Gumrag* or *Mishing Bihu* of the *Mishings*, *Deori Bihu*, *Jhumur* Dance by Tea Community etc. can be performed by women in cultural programmes.
4. Singing traditional songs women can perform in cultural functions.

Required training for local women to perform in cultural programmes:

Training on traditional dancing, singing and acting in *Ankia Bhawna* should be imparted to the local women. Department of Tourism can take initiative to organize workshops and training programme by experts from different regions of the state.

Infrastructure facilities required for organizing cultural programmes:

It was found that most of the Category One resorts organise cultural programmes for entertainment of tourists. Other two categories of resorts do not organise such programmes. Therefore, cultural programme can be organized centrally by Department of Tourism during the tourist season, so that all tourists can enjoy. The cultural programmes should be priced reasonably. Local women can take part in these programmes and earn a financial benefit. For cultural programmes, infrastructure like a central auditorium with proper acoustics and light system has to be created.

4.8.3. Souvenir:

As already mentioned, today most of the tourists prefer handicrafts created by local craftspeople rather than mass-produced in a factory as earlier (Asplet and Cooper, 311). Goodwin also revealed the same and suggested that local women produce local woven and knitted handicraft items adapted to suit tourists' tastes. The present study also revealed that tourists gave high preference to buying handicrafts as souvenir. Local women from the villages surrounding KNP are skilled in weaving, embroidery, crocheting and cutting & tailoring. These skills of women can be utilized to produce various souvenir items. Traditional woven design can be used and modified without distortion of culture to make it suitable to the need of different categories of tourists. Skill of embroidery, bamboo and cane work also can be utilized for making souvenir items giving a traditional touch to it. Possible souvenir items suggested by stakeholders and recommended by experts are mentioned below:

1. Traditional handicraft and handloom products such as woven textile, bamboo and cane decorative articles.
2. Traditional woven fabric used for making utility items such as bag, purse, table mat, napkins, bottle covers etc.

3. Traditional woven fabric can be designed to make modern apparels such as shirt, jacket, kurta, stole, cap, tie etc.
4. Focus on modified handloom products like furnishings (bed sheets, curtains, blinds, woven carpets, cushion covers).
5. Some innovative raw materials that are found in abundance in the area such as water hyacinth, jute, banana fiber, pineapple fiber etc also can be utilized for making low cost handicraft items.
6. Picture post cards and photographs of Kaziranga National Park also would be a suitable souvenir for the tourists.
7. Making of handmade paper with local raw materials.
8. Dried wild flowers preserved in wax as gift items.
9. Instant photography and packing photographs inside handmade paper envelope with information about Kaziranga.
10. Models of *Nangol* (plough), looms, tribal huts made from wood, bamboo, hard board etc.
11. Badge with picture of wildlife in Kaziranga

Suggested training required for successful women entrepreneurship in TRA:

1. Modern advanced weaving such as draw-by looms and jacquard looms.
2. Dress and textile designing
3. Handicrafts made of local products
4. Photography
5. Training on handmade paper manufacturing
6. Gift wrapping and
7. Preservation techniques of biological samples

Required infrastructural facilities for production and selling of souvenirs are:

1. Establishing cottage industry in each village by identifying a prominent skill of women of the village
2. Establishing souvenir shops in central location of KNP

4.8.4. Proposed Structure for Promoting Gastronomy, Cultural programme and Souvenir:

For promoting Gastronomy, Cultural programme and Souvenir, an integrated

approach is required. After looking at the demand pattern of the tourists with respect to these three tourism products and their current status, this study proposes that there should be a central facility offering these three products jointly. It is proposed that a central infrastructure is created in the public private partnership (PPP) mode where there is an auditorium and stalls for traditional food, and production and marketing of souvenirs. As there is cost involved in the process of creating such an infrastructure, the facilities offered should be priced. But it is also proposed that the infrastructure is provided to new entrepreneurs at a subsidized rate so as to provide incubation facility to them. Authority (Tourism Ministry) should develop norms of operation with respect to hygiene, waste disposal and quality management and norms should be strictly monitored.

It was found in the study that most of the Category One (high priced) resorts organise their own cultural programmes. But other two categories of resorts do not have such programmes. Domestic tourists are the target population for cultural programme in the study area (Table-4:35) and majority of them stay in Category Two and Three resorts. Therefore, a centrally organised cultural programme will be fascinating for the target population. The study also revealed that tourists are willing to pay for local cultural programmes (Table-4:33).

For providing traditional food and selling souvenirs, there should be road side food courts to provide traditional food and souvenirs of different communities. For this, infrastructure should be developed in the form of building to be leased out to private parties. This is line with the Prashanti Lodges of the Assam Tourism Development Corporation. The difference is that Prashanti lodges provide accommodation facilities, and the proposed food courts will provide food and souvenirs.

After jeep safari in KNP, tourists should be brought to the central amenity centre or to the road side food courts/souvenir shops where they can have lunch and can buy souvenirs of their choice. In the evening there should be pre announced cultural programmes. To and fro transportations to the auditorium should be provided to the tourists. The programmes should be arranged in such a way that tourists can have dinner in the amenity center after completion of cultural show or during the show.

4.9. Other Activities:

4.9.1. Visit to Tea Garden:

Younger domestic tourists (15-30 years) showed significantly high interests in visiting tea garden. KNP is surrounded by 11 numbers of tea gardens. They are Burapahar Tea Estate, Hatikhuli Tea Estate, Rangajan Tea Estate, Diring Tea Estate, Siljuri Tea Estate, Methoni Tea Estate, Borjuri Tea Estate, Naharjan Tea Estate, Diffolloo Tea Estate, Ikorajan Tea Estate and Bihora Tea Estate. Visit to tea garden can be included in the tour (safari) for demonstration of manufacturing of tea. As tourists showed high interest in green tea and organic tea (0.91), there can be a provision for selling of garden fresh packed and brewed tea to the tourists for refreshment. Local women can take initiative in establishing tea stalls in the study area in the line of Nepalese women (Sherpa 6).

4.9.2. Visit to Assamese Tribal and Non-tribal Villages:

Rural tourism is considered as panacea for increasing the economic viability of marginalized areas of less developed countries. It stimulates social regeneration and improves the living conditions of rural communities (Briedenhann & Wickens 71, Sharpley 234). According to Wilson et al. (134) another aspect of rural tourism is that it is less costly to develop and easier to establish as compared to other economic development strategies. The present study also showed tourists' interests in visiting tribal traditional Assamese village (1.13) and non-tribal traditional Assamese villages (1.12). Tourists' interests to observe traditional weaving process is also high (.97). Assamese local women with their traditional skills can take active part as demonstrator in all these village activities.

Suggested areas of Rural tourism:

1. Exhibit Assamese tribal and non-tribal villages to the tourists
2. Establishing museum of traditional equipments of Assamese culture i.e. *Dheki* (traditional pounding equipment made of wood), *Nangol-juwali* (traditional plough), traditional Loom, *Sarai* (bell metal item), *Dunari* (a traditional bell metal item used to house a light specially in wedding ceremony), Fishing equipments etc.
3. Exhibit traditional way of cultivation and include participatory programs for tourists to enjoy village life

4. Exhibit different processes of traditional textile production with a selling counter.
5. Establishing a botanical garden for local medicinal plants with a selling counter.

Training required for rural tourism development are:

1. English language training for proper demonstration
2. Hospitality and soft skill training
3. Knowledge Herbal medicine

Infrastructure to be developed for successful rural tourism

Infrastructure to be developed for successful rural tourism in the study are developing existing Assamese tribal and non-tribal village for exhibiting in the form of 'Chokhi dhani'* in Rajasthan, with all traditional activities. The village should have good facilities for tourists.

4.9.3. Local Fruits and Vegetables:

Buying interest of local fruits and vegetables was found high among tourists (mean=1.1). Statistical analysis showed that none of the demographic variables of tourists was statistically associated with buying interests of local fruits and vegetables. Therefore, all tourists have same level of interest in buying local fruits and vegetables. Agri-tourism stimulates economic activity and spread benefits to various communities (Lobo et al. 20). Interests of tourists to taste local fruits and vegetables offer a scope for local women to enter into tourism activity for their economic benefit.

Assam's local fruits and vegetables such as, Wood apple, Plum, Myrobalan, Olive, Garcinia cowa roxb, Flacourtia, Carambola, Baccurea sapida, *Amla*, Areca nut, Dillemia indica linn vera, Assam Lemon, an edible variety of Fern (*Dhekia*) etc. are found in abundance in almost every household and even in the forest. For a larger market, cultivation of these shrubs, bushes and trees would be required.

* Chokhi Dhani Village has been the mirror of Rajasthani culture since 1989. Started as part of ambiance for a restaurant, over the years it has evolved as a tasteful and authentic symbol of ethnic village life of this most colorful state in the country. Today, the name of Chokhi Dhani is synonymous with Rajasthani culture throughout the country.

Most of these fruits have medicinal value and they are rich in nutrition. Tourists should be made aware of all these facts for popularization of local fruits and vegetables.

Collecting, cleaning, processing and packaging these fruits and vegetables in a hygienic and attractive way will definitely capture the tourists market.

4.9.4. Transport and guidance sector:

This is an important area of tourism where women can easily join for their economic empowerment. Women can have ownership of vehicle or can work as tour/travel agent and tour guide. For ownership of vehicle, easy loan facilities are to be provided to local women. Women can apply for Chief Minister's Assam Bikash Yojana or the Rural Connectivity Scheme to get vehicles. To be an effective tour agent or guide training on following areas are required:

1. English and other foreign language
2. Driving skill
3. Soft skill
4. Tour guidance
5. Knowledge of local history, customs etc.
6. First aid
7. Training to save tourists from immediate dangers

4.9.5. Accommodation facility:

Accommodation is an integral part of tourism. It has many avenues for women to get involved.

The suggested avenues for local women in the accommodation sector are as follows:

1. Providing 'Home stay' facility.
2. Working at resorts in different capacities e.g. managerial, front office, restaurant, kitchen and housekeeping jobs.
3. Interior and exterior designing.
4. Garden maintenance in nearby hotels & resorts

Training required for women to work in accommodation sector:

1. Degree or certificate courses for occupation in tourism in nearby colleges.
2. Housekeeping
3. Interior and exterior designing and floriculture.
4. Soft skill.

There should be finance facilities for women at subsidized rate for starting home stay facility or resorts.

4.9.6. Basic amenities for Tourists:

Some basic amenities as listed below are important for tourists. In the study area women can provide these facilities to the tourists. Training on respective field should be given to the local women. Concerned authority should establish a 'Utility Complex' at central location of KNP for benefit of tourists. Suggested activities where women can work for their economic empowerment in TRA are discussed below.

Women can take up training of 'First Aid' for providing medical help to the tourists at the time of emergencies. A library having books on wild life, culture and history of Assam will be useful to the tourists. Therefore, establishing a well furnished library at central place of KNP can be an entry point for women in TRA. Few stakeholders suggested establishing beauty parlor and health club with all modern facilities which will be beneficial to the tourists who stay at KNP for a longer period of time. In this regard proper training and infrastructures in respective fields will be required. Other areas of basic amenities for tourists included establishing internet café, DTP, and Fax centers and providing laundry facility.

4.10: Brief Description of Findings and Proposals:

- The Socio economic status (SES) of women in the study area is not satisfactory. More than half (60.8%) lie in the Low SES, 38.1% are in middle SES and only 1.1% lies in high SES group. The SES of women in the study area is studied according to different demographic variables such as age, locality, caste, community and religion. Women from the villages of Golaghat district and the villages in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP

have the highest SES. Hindu Assamese women belonging to OBC caste had higher SES irrespective of their age.

- Women survey revealed that only 23.6% of women are involved in TRA in study area. This percentage is very low in comparison to the Global figure, which is 46% (Sherpa, 2007). The level of involvement was also found to be at lower level, where, out of 151 respondents 137 (90.72%) earn less than INR 5000.00 per month during the tourist season. Assamese Hindu OBC women belonging to villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora Range of KNP have highest involvement irrespective of their age.
- The above results showed that Assamese Hindu women belonging to 'Other Backward Castes' from villages of Golaghat district that are located in the periphery of Kohora range of KNP have higher SES scores and are also highly involved in TRA in the study area.
- OBC Hindu women of Assamese (Non-tribal) community belonging to villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora range of KNP have significantly higher positive perception about tourism. 'Tourism Related Activities have avenues for women (P1)' gets the highest mean score (1.23) and the statement (P4), i.e., 'Government policies helping women to get into TRA', gets the lowest mean score (0.51).
- Women showed high positive perception about women empowerment statements. They realized the importance of women empowerment for their families and societies. OBC Hindu women of Assamese (Non-tribal) community belonging to the villages of Golaghat district surrounding Kohora range of KNP have significantly higher positive perception about Women Empowerment.
- PRA results showed that 844 women are skilled in weaving and 472 women have expertise in cooking traditional food. Apart from weaving and cooking a number of village women are expert in embroidery, knitting, crocheting, cutting and tailoring. Few women are trained in beauty culture, decorative item making, jute work and bamboo work, singing, and guiding tourists (Table-4.31).

- The buying interests of all the services, souvenir and consumable items are positive and all scores lie within 0.20 to 1.18. Traditional food, cultural programme, traditional crafts, visit to tea gardens, visit to Assamese tribal and non tribal villages and local fruits and vegetables got highest interest scores. Exhibition of traditional loom and weaving process, service of tour guide, home stay and availability of local condiments and spices and traditional clothing got medium interests value and lowest interests were shown to traditional ornaments, herbal medicine and packaged traditional processed food.
- Stakeholders suggested various opportunities for local women to get engaged in TRA for economic empowerment. Most of the stakeholders suggested that women produce and sell handicrafts as souvenir, work as tour guide, organise cultural programmes and work as cultural activist such as dancer and singer, establishing home stay, work in front office jobs at restaurants and hotels, provide basic amenities like first aid, beauty parlour, health club, transport facility etc.
- After practicability study by experts the study finally formulated probable entries for women in TRA in the study area. The broad areas are- Gastronomy, Local cultural programme, Souvenir and other activities. Other activities included visit to tea garden, visit to Assamese tribal and non-tribal villages, supply of fruits and vegetables, transport and guidance, accommodation, basic amenities for tourists. In each area specific training and required infrastructures are suggested for sustainability.

CHAPTER-V

5. CONCLUSION

Chapter: V

5. CONCLUSION:

The main objective of the study was to find out methods for improving SES of women by involving them in TRA. For this a study on existing skills of the women in the study area, their perceptions on tourism and the demand scenario of tourists has been carried out and results thereof have been discussed in the previous chapter.

The following discussion is on developing a mechanism for organised synthesis of the three core areas i.e. existing skills, willingness of women in the study area and tourists requirements.

Involvement of women in TRA can be enhanced by forming Self Help Groups (SHGs). SHGs can facilitate the members for effective coping and handling of the problem through group activities (Mok, Cheung and Cheung, 100). SHG activities can empower members to cope with problems and stress, and to establish stronger relations with the organizations that serve them and with the community where they live (Chesler 764; Mok and Leung 13-4). Receiving finance is also easy for SHGs as the mechanism of lending through SHGs has gained wide popularity during the last few years and has been adopted as an important strategy by banks for lending to the poor (Bhatia 130). In Assam, SHGs run by women are found to be of high grade in comparison to the groups run by men (Rao 13).

From the above discussion, it is evident that SHGs can be a proper media for women in the study area to get involved in TRA. SHGs should get necessary training, finance and infrastructure so that they can take up appropriate activities to get involved in TRA.

Providing necessary training depending on the prominent skill of the villagers by identifying clusters of villages having unique craft, ethnic art form for development as Tourism Products in the study area is necessary. Selecting most prevalent skill of the village women and providing training on that skill will be beneficial in this regards. This method is termed as one village one product policy (OTOP in Thailand). The Planning Commission also suggested this strategy for the 12th plan period. Different Government Organizations, Departments and Non Governmental Organizations can help women SHGs in this regard. Indian Institute of

Entrepreneurship (IIE), North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi), Department of Forest and Department of Tourism can provide training for skill development. Besides product development training in respective areas of tourism, other special kind of trainings are also required for sustainability. There should be training for entrepreneurship development and managerial (including home management) skill advancement, soft skill development, training of English and other foreign languages, personality development etc. This kind of skill development trainings will be beneficial for women to work successfully in TRA. Managerial skill advancement training will help women to maintain balance between home and the workplace.

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), "*Sabala*", is being implemented with assistance of the Central Government in 8 selected districts of Assam. Karbi Anglong is also included in the list. This scheme provides vocational training for girls of 16 years and above under National Skill Development Programme (NSDP). Therefore, this scheme may be useful for adolescent girls of Karbi Anglong district for their skill development and work in tourism sector for their economic empowerment.

Social Welfare department of Assam has introduced a new scheme namely *Mukhya Mantrir Mahila Samridhi Achari* (Chief Minister Women's Welfare Scheme). This scheme is for economic upliftment of women through capacity building of women weavers of the state of Assam. Vocational Training cum Rehabilitation Centre (VTRC) concept was adopted by Government of Assam for making women skilful and eligible for job. These schemes can be implemented in the study area for empowerment of women through TRA.

For manufacturing and marketing of products, infrastructural facilities are of utmost importance. Infrastructure includes water, electricity, sewage disposal, gas, land, taxation policies and other social facilities and institutions that improve the quality of life like construction, transport, networks, communication facilities, judicial facilities and public security, law and order, education and training (Chauhan 22). As already discussed in Chapter-IV, various infrastructure facilities have to be established in the fringe area of KNP for development of tourism and marketing of tourism products.

Beside infrastructure required for tourism, some women specific infrastructures and some basic facilities are required for woman to be a successful entrepreneur. Planning Commission of India considered lack of sufficient and safe drinking water, women-friendly toilets, child care support services and safe shelters, enforcement, protection and legal services, an agency to enable them to reach out to all basic services, and transportation as infrastructural barriers of women empowerment (Hameed, 31). Therefore, safe drinking water, women friendly toilets, crèche for young children and transportation facilities should be provided in KNP for encouraging women to join the tourism workforce.

Department of Forest and Department of Tourism can take initiative in providing infrastructural facilities to the SHGs. For infrastructure development, various Government schemes can be utilized by local women. Rural Tourism Schemes for Infrastructure Development, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (revised on 2011) can be useful for women in the study area. The Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations for tourism projects identified in consultation with them for the improvement of existing tourism products and also for developing new ones. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Product / Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits, 100% Central Assistance is given for development of destinations/ circuits including International standard mega projects and also for rural tourism infrastructure development. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance up to Rs. 5.00 crore (50 Million) for the development of Destinations and Rs. 8.00 crore (80 Million) for Circuits. The upper limit of financial assistance has been increased to Rs. 25 crore (250 Million) and Rs. 50 crore (500 Million) for development of identified mega destinations and circuits respectively. Under the schemes to promote rural tourism in the country, the thrust is for development of tourism infrastructure at the identified rural tourism sites so that socio-economic benefits percolate down to the rural community. A maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakh (5 Million) is sanctioned for each project under this scheme for development of tourism related infrastructure. Ministry of Tourism also provides financial assistance to State Governments and Union Territory Administration for organising Fair and Festivals in tourism related events.

NABARD's (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) scheme for Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization, 2008 encourages rapid development of infrastructure projects in agriculture and allied sectors including dairy, meat, fisheries and minor forest produce. In case of NE States investment subsidy is 33.33% of the capital cost up to Rs. 60 lakhs (6 Millions). This scheme provides financial assistance for infrastructure for marketing and processing units, mobile infrastructure for post harvest operations i.e. grading, packaging and quality testing. Reefer vans, or any other vans used for transporting agricultural produce which are essential for maintaining cold supply chain gets financial aid through this scheme.

Department of Women & Child Development has introduced 'Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers'. This scheme will be beneficial to the women of study area. This scheme provides assistance to NGOs for running crèche for babies (0-6years). It provides assistance for sleeping facilities, health care, supplementary nutrition and immunisation of children of working mothers.

Department of Tourism, Government of Assam planned a framework for Public Private Partnership (PPP) for public capabilities and private enterprise to join hands for maximizing tourism development in Assam (Tourism Policy of Assam). The framework can be implemented successfully in the study area to facilitate private participation in the tourism development activities.

The results of the study showed that, local women have positive perceptions about tourism and women empowerment. But unfortunately involvement of women in tourism in the study area is low. Those scant numbers of women, who are working in TRA in study area, are also poorly paid. Thus, at present impact of tourism on economic empowerment of women in the study is negligible.

Interactions with local women during PRA showed that many of them are also not aware of the fact that tourism can act as potential catalyst for their economic empowerment. During the PRA workshops it was found that women from Baghjan, Baghmari, Kuthori, Holiram Terang, Englepathar, Bohikhuwa were ignorant about their potential role in tourism industry. Women from Kohora No 1, Chandrasing Rongpi, Bosagaon and Chepenakubua have a little awareness about it and showed higher rate of involvement in TRA too. Thus, it calls for special efforts for creating

greater involvement of women in TRA. There should be effort as sensitizing women about their role in TRA and TRA as a catalyst for their economic empowerment.

For economic empowerment of women through TRA, tangible inputs are not sufficient, some intangible inputs in the form of sensitivity awareness and motivation are essential to bring women to the forefront of tourism industry. To begin the process of empowerment, proper motivation among the target group is required. To generate motivation among the rural women, Government, Non Government Organizations and local people can take up various activities for sensitization, creation of awareness and motivation regarding TRA.

Women who are successfully involved in TRA in the study area can act as 'role models'. Taking into consideration the findings that women involvement in tourism related activities is more among Assamese (Non-tribal) Hindu women of Other Backward Castes from villages of Golaghat districts situated in the periphery of Kohora Range of KNP, the other women groups should also be encouraged to participate in TRA. Sensitization programs can be undertaken for creating awareness among women belonging to other groups. For this purpose Assamese (Non-tribal) Hindu, OBC women belonging to the villages of Golaghat district situated in the periphery of Kohora Range can act as role models. They can be encouraged to take initiative for sensitizing the of other women groups.

Depending on the response during the sensitization programmes and feedback, training programs on various activities related to tourism can be organized in the next stage with the help of Government and Non-government organizations.

Diagram-5.1 represents the model of economic empowerment of women through TRA. Diagram shows how tangible inputs such as training, infrastructure, finance, facilities and formation of self help groups can add strength to identified skilled women of the locality. On the other hand, intangible inputs in the form of sensitivity, awareness about tourism activities and finally motivation will lead them to join TRA.

The requirements of tourists are placed at higher level while selecting touristic activities for economic empowerment of women. Depending on the interests of tourists, skills of local women, and stakeholder's suggestions, five areas of tourism were planned for women to join in TRA. They are gastronomy, cultural programs,

souvenirs, rural tourism and providing local produce to tourists in the study area (Annexure-Twelve shows some possible tourism products of Assam). Other three basic areas such as accommodation, transportation and basic amenities are also considered as suitable for local women to join tourism in KNP.

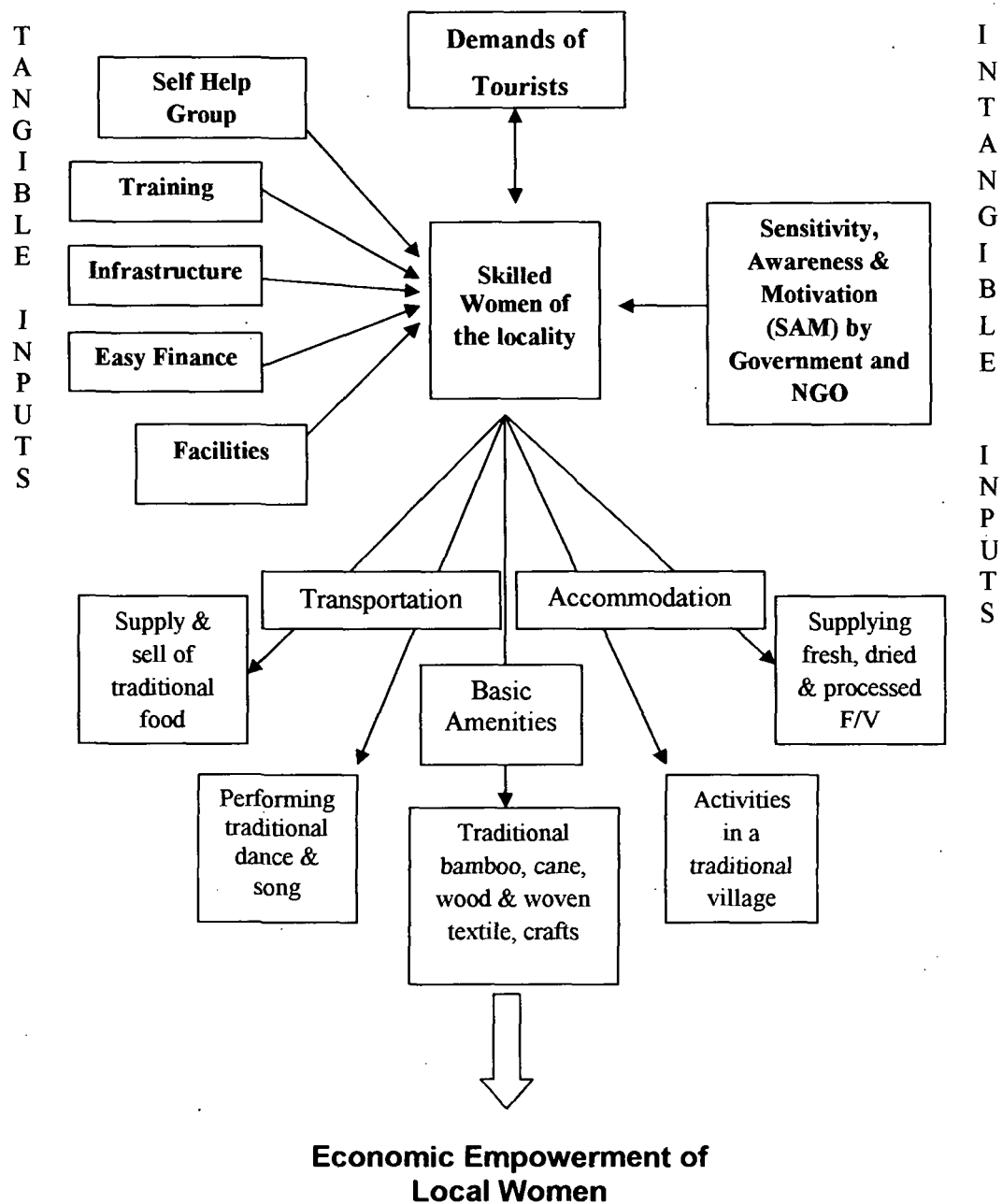


Fig-5.1: Economic Empowerment of Women through TRA

To make avenues of TRA sustainable, women should follow certain norms. They must realize the importance of tourists' satisfaction rather than their own economic gain. They must always try to reflect local tradition and culture in tourism products. At the same time, there is a need for fictionalization and modernization of the products for acceptability of tourists.

An integrated approach is required for increasing the number of women in higher levels of TRA in the study area. For involvement in higher level of tourism activities specific training is important for local women. Women should be motivated and provided scholarship for attaining qualifications in institutions like Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), Tezpur University etc. Government, NGOs, academic institutions, different organizations and the local bodies and local women should unite to work towards successful achievement of the goal. Their effort should not only be for economic empowerment of women and the community but also for development of tourism in the study area.

Government and NGOs should provide tangible inputs in the form of training, infrastructure and finance to the local women for involvement in tourism industry. However, without the intangible inputs such as sensitization, awareness and motivation the process will not be successful. Therefore, both tangible and intangible inputs together will make tourism a catalyst for economic empowerment of local women.

Contributions of the study to the body of knowledge can be considered as follows: The study showed the present socioeconomic status of women in the fringe villages of Kaziranga National Park. Study revealed the perception scenario of local women regarding tourism and also regarding women empowerment. Formulation of 'Skill maps' showing different skills of rural women through Participatory Rural Appraisal method is the most useful contribution of the study. Identifying each woman with specific skill and enhancing these skills by proper training will be beneficial for the women. They can work as independent entrepreneur or can take up employment in Tourism Related Activities (TRA) in the study area.

The study finally formulated various practical strategies for local women to enter into tourism sector for their economic empowerment. The essence of the study was

that, it synthesized the demand of tourists with possible supply of tourism product by skilled women of the locality while formulating the strategies.

Policy makers can utilize the findings of the study for tourism development in the area. Local entrepreneurs can take initiative for establishing and upgrading their business ventures by using the sustainable strategies formulated in the study. Skill maps of the villages will be useful for entrepreneurs for selecting their employees and for government agencies and NGOs for providing higher level of training in the area. As a final point, the findings will be mostly beneficial to the local women as well as the local people residing in the periphery of KNP.

The present study tried to sensitize local women through PRA about avenues for women to join tourism work. The study also attempted to find out their potentiality to take up career in TRA for achieving economic empowerment. Various strategies formulated by the study if implemented properly women of the study area will be benefited and tourism development is also obvious. For increasing involvement of women in tourism further studies can be taken up on motivating factors for women to enter in tourism industry. Study on analysis of Government schemes for rural development, entrepreneurship development, women empowerment etc. and readdressing them for expansion of tourism in the study area can be beneficial to local women. To advance the understanding of tourists' requirements studies on tourists' preferences about type and pattern of specific tourism products also can be taken up. It was felt during the study that, there is a need of researching the souvenir market of KNP. There can be functional or aesthetic value addition to the traditional products to make them acceptable to tourists. Over and above, in Assam the area of 'women and tourism' is under researched. Systematic research is required in understanding the possibilities and also the complexities of women empowerment through tourism related activities in other tourism destinations of Assam.

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ANNEXURE

Annexure-One
Questionnaire for Women Survey

Dear Respondent,

A study is being carried out to find out strategies for economic empowerment of women. Your co-operation in this regard is solicited.

Thanking you,

Rita Borkotoky (Research scholar), Tezpur University.

<i>Name:</i>	
<i>Age:</i>	
<i>Village:</i>	<i>District:</i>
<i>Marital status:</i> Married <input type="radio"/> / Unmarried <input type="radio"/> / Divorcee <input type="radio"/> / Widow <input type="radio"/>	
<i>Caste:</i> General <input type="radio"/> / OBC <input type="radio"/> / SC <input type="radio"/> / STH <input type="radio"/> / STP <input type="radio"/>	
<i>Community:</i> Assamese (Non-tribal) <input type="radio"/> / Assamese (Karbi) <input type="radio"/> / Assamese (Mising) <input type="radio"/> / Bengali <input type="radio"/> / Bihari <input type="radio"/> / Tea tribe <input type="radio"/> / Nepali <input type="radio"/> / Other (Please specify) <input type="radio"/>	
<i>Religion:</i> Hindu <input type="radio"/> / Muslim <input type="radio"/> / Christian <input type="radio"/> / Other <input type="radio"/> (Please specify)	

Please tick (✓) the right answer.

1. Socioeconomic Status

a. Educational qualification

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Professional or Honours | <input type="radio"/> |
| Graduate or Post-Graduate | <input type="radio"/> |
| Intermediate or Post-High-School Diploma | <input type="radio"/> |
| High School Certificate | <input type="radio"/> |
| Middle School Certificate | <input type="radio"/> |
| Primary School or Literate | <input type="radio"/> |
| Illiterate | <input type="radio"/> |

b. Occupation Score

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Profession | <input type="radio"/> |
| Semi-Profession | <input type="radio"/> |
| Clerical, Shop-owner, Farmer | <input type="radio"/> |
| Skilled worker | <input type="radio"/> |
| Semi-skilled worker | <input type="radio"/> |
| Unemployed | <input type="radio"/> |

c. Family Income per Month During tourism season (in Rs.)

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| >20000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10001 – 20000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7501 – 10000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5001 – 7500 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3001 – 5000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 1001 – 3000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| ≤1000 | <input type="radio"/> |

2. a. Have you ever been a member of any social institution/ organization? Yes No
 If yes what is the level of involvement:
 Authority / Managerial / Supervisory / Clerical / Casual
- b. Have you ever been a member of any political party? Yes No
 If yes what is your level of involvement:
 Very active / Active / Average / Little / Never
- c. Have you ever been a member of local bodies / Gram panchayat? Yes No
 If yes what is your level of involvement:
 Very active / Active / Average / Little / Never
- d. Have you ever been a member of religious bodies (Namghar, Church)? Yes No
 If yes what is your level of involvement:
 Very active / Active / Average / Little / Never
- e. Have you ever been a member of any government or non government educational association / society / body? Yes No
 If yes what is your level of involvement:
 Very active / Active / Average / Little / Never
- f. Have you ever participated in academic/ social/ religious/ cultural Conferences / Seminars / meetings etc.? Yes No
 If yes what is your level of involvement:
 Decision making / Organising / Supervising / Worker / Participant
3. Ownership of your house:
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Own house | <input type="radio"/> |
| Rented house | <input type="radio"/> |
| Govt. or employer's accommodation | <input type="radio"/> |
| Any other | <input type="radio"/> |
4. Type of house:
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Thatched | <input type="radio"/> |
| Kucha (Tin roof) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mixed | <input type="radio"/> |
| Pucca (Assam type) | <input type="radio"/> |
| RCC | <input type="radio"/> |
5. Size of your house:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Very big (with 6 or more rooms) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Big House (3-5 rooms) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Small House (2 rooms) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Very small House (1 room) | <input type="radio"/> |
6. Material possession of your family:
- Radio, T.V, DVD, Cable /DTH connection , Music system, Cycle, Two wheeler, Car, Table, Chair, Cot, Cupboard, Sewing Machine, Fan, Telephone (landline), Telephone (mobile), Refrigerator, Electrical Stove, Gas Stove, Gobar Gas, Kerosene stove, Mixer Grinder, Cooker, Gypsy, High powered binocular, Any other (Specify)

7. Drinking water facility:
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| At home | <input type="radio"/> |
| In front yard/well | <input type="radio"/> |
| Community tape / bore well | <input type="radio"/> |
| Open tank | <input type="radio"/> |
8. Do you have Electricity facility: Yes No
9. Sanitation: Kucha Pucca
10. Are you involved in any tourism related activity? Yes No
- a. If yes what is the type of involvement? Directly /Indirectly / Both
- b. If you are directly involved what is your type of involvement?
Sole ownership / Family business / Partnership / Employee
- c. If you are an employee/ family business holder.
- i. Define your status:
- | | |
|------------|-----------------------|
| Executive | <input type="radio"/> |
| Staff | <input type="radio"/> |
| Supervisor | <input type="radio"/> |
| Worker | <input type="radio"/> |
- ii. What is your type of employment?
Permanent / Temporary
Part time / Full time
- d. If you are indirectly involved, mention your type of involvement.
Supplier / Craftsman / Weaver / Any other (Please specify)
- e. What is your monthly income from Tourism Related Activity during tourist season?
- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| >20000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10001- 20000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7501- 10000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5001 – 7500 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3001- 5000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 1001 – 3000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 501 - 1000 | <input type="radio"/> |
| ≤ 500 | <input type="radio"/> |
11. Give your comment on the following statements about involvement of women in Tourism Industry:
- a. Tourism related activities have avenues for women.
Strongly agree / Agree / Undecided / Disagree / Strongly disagree
- b. Tourism related activities are suitable for women.
Strongly agree / Agree / Undecided / Disagree / Strongly disagree
- c. Tourism related activities are safe for women.
Strongly agree / Agree / Undecided / Disagree / Strongly disagree

d. Policies of Government are helping women to enter into the tourism industry.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

e. Women empowerment is possible through tourism related activities.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

12. Give your comment on the following statements about empowerment of women:

a. Women empowerment is important for the society.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

b. Women empowerment is necessary for the family.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

c. Women empowerment helps in proper implementation of Govt. policies.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

d. Government should have policies for women empowerment.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

e. Women empowerment helps women to be independent.
Strongly agree O / Agree O / Undecided O / Disagree O / Strongly disagree O

13. Do you have infrastructural facilities for starting a business in Tourism industry?

Land O / Building O / Machinery O / Any other(Specify) O

Annexure-Two
Questionnaire for Tourists Survey

Dear Respondent,

A study is being carried out to find out the need of the tourists coming to Kaziranga National Park. Your kind cooperation in this regard is solicited.

Rita Borkotoky (Research Scholar),
Department of Business Administration,
Tezpur University. Tezpur. Assam.

1. Name: _____
2. Place of Origin: _____
3. Address(optional): _____
4. What is your opinion on following facilities in Kaziranga National Park:-
[Please tick (√)the right answer]

Sl. No	Qualities of	Poor	Average	OK	Good	V.Good
1	Traditional food					
2	Packaged traditional Processed food					
3	Visit to traditional village					
4	Visit to tribal village					
5	Visit to tea garden					
6	Cultural show					
7	Exposure to traditional craft					
8	Exposure to traditional loom					
9	Local fruits and vegetables					
10	Herbal medicine					
11	Herbal beauty care					
12	Green tea/organic tea					
13	Agricultural products					
14	Tourist Guide					
15	Home Stay					

5. Give your preference regarding following facilities (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest preference)

Sl. No	Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
1	Traditional food					
2	Packaged traditional Processed food					
3	Visit to traditional village					
4	Visit to tribal village					
5	Visit to tea garden					
6	Cultural show					
7	Exposure to traditional craft					
8	Exposure to traditional loom					
9	Local fruits and vegetables					
10	Herbal medicine					
11	Herbal beauty care					
12	Green tea/organic tea					
13	Agricultural products					
14	Tourist Guide					
15	Home Stay					

6. Would you like to buy traditional clothing?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
7. Would you buy packaged traditional processed food?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
8. Would you buy traditional ornaments?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
9. Would you like to visits traditional villages?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
10. Would you like to visit a tribal village?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
11. Would you like to visit a tea garden?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
12. Would you like to enjoy local cultural programs during your stay?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
13. Would you like to see traditional crafts?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
14. Would you like to see traditional loom?
 Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no

15. Would you like to taste local fruits and vegetables?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
16. Would you like to take traditional herbal treatment?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
17. Would you like to take herbal beauty treatment?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
18. Would you like to stay in local resident's house as 'Home Stay' program?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
19. Would you like to hire a tourist guide to visit Kaziranga National Park?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no
20. Would you like to buy green tea and organic tea?
Definitely yes Yes Undecided No Definitely no

Would you please furnish the following personal details

Age: 20-30 30-45 45-60 above 60

Gender: Male Female

Occupation:

Income:

Annexure-Three
Experts Opinion Questionnaire

Respected Madam/Sir,

This is to request you to act as an expert for formulating strategies for Economic Empowerment of Women through Tourism Related Activities in Kaziranga National Park. This is an integral part of my Ph D work entitled *"Tourism as a Potential Catalyst for Economic Empowerment of Women: A Study of Kaziranga National Park"*. I request you kindly to go through the following opportunities identified on the basis of Literature Review, Participatory Rural Appraisal (for women), tourists survey and Stakeholder Analysis. Your expert comments and suggestions are solicited.

With regards,

Rita Borkotoky (Research Scholar)

Department of Business Administration, Tezpur University.

Type of activity/training/infrastructure		Remark/Comment
Gastronomy		
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can work as caterer 2. Supply traditional food to resorts and lodges 3. Supply processed food eg. Pickle made of bamboo shoot, king chilli, olive, plum, amla. etc. Jam/ jelly/juice of pineapple, orange etc. Amla powder 4. Supply of local vegetables and fresh or dried local fruits eg. Amla, 5. Fishery, piggery, cattle and poultry farming for supply of meat, fish, milk and egg. 	
Training on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality management, hygiene and presentation 2. Cooking and processing 3. Fishery, piggery, cattle farming 	
Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing 'food haats' like 'Vishala' in Ahmedabad and organizing 'food fest' 2. Supply of pure drinking water 3. Distribution network system 	
Souvenir		
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traditional handicraft and handlooms such as woven textile, bamboo and cane work 2. Traditional woven fabric used for making utility items such as bag, purse, table mat, napkins, bottle covers, 3. Traditional woven fabric designed to modern apparels such as shirt, jacket, kurta, stole, cap, tie 4. Making of handicrafts with innovative materials such as water hyacinth, jute 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> etc. 5. Postcards and photographs 	
Training on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modern advance weaving 2. Dress and textile designing 3. Handicrafts 4. Photography 	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing cottage industry in each village by identifying a prominent skill of women of the village 2. Souvenir shops 3. Distribution Network system 	
Cultural Programme		
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ankia Bhawna, Satriya dance, 2. Bihu Bagrumba, and Bardwisikla of the Bodos, Gumrag or Mishing Bihu of the Mishings 3. Singing traditional songs 	
Training on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traditional dances, songs, ankia bhawna 	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing a central auditorium for cultural programme with proper acoustics and light system 	
Rural Tourism		
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exhibit Assamese tribal village to the tourists 2. Exhibit Assamese non tribal village to the tourists 3. Establishing museum of traditional equipments of Assamese culture i.e. <i>Dheki, nangol-juwali, loom</i> etc. 4. Establishing a botanical garden for local medicinal plants with a selling counter 	
Training on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English language training for proper demonstration 2. Hospitality and behavior training 3. Herbal medicine 4. Soft skill 	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing functional villages in the form of 'chokhi dhani' in Rajasthan, with all traditional activities. 2. Developing existing Assamese tribal and non-tribal village for exhibiting 	
Transport and Guidance Sector		
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourist guide 2. Travel agent 3. Ownership of vehicle 	
Training on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourist guide 2. Speaking English and other foreign languages 3. Soft skill 	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vehicle on subsidized loan 	

Accommodation facility		
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing 'Home stay' facility 2. Owning Resort 3. Working at resorts in different capacities eg. managerial, front office, restaurant, kitchen and housekeeping jobs 4. Interior and exterior designing 	
Training on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing degree or certificate courses for occupation in tourism sector 2. Housekeeping 3. Interior and exterior designing and floriculture 4. Soft skill 	
Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance for starting home stay or resorts 	
Basic Facilities for Tourists		
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical help to the tourists 2. Beauty parlor with all modern facilities 3. Health club 4. Library 5. Internet café 6. DTP, Xerox and Fax 	
Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training on respective field 	
Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing a 'Utility Complex' at central location of KNP 	
General requirements for women to join Tourism Related Activities		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing a training institute 2. Easy financial assistance 3. Crèche for young babies 4. Guidelines for operation 	

Annexure -Four
Demographic profile of the sample

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age	15-25 years	214	33.2
	26-35 years	229	35.5
	36-45 years	202	31.3
District	Golaghat	314	48.7
	Nagaon	264	40.9
	Karbi Anglong	67	10.4
Village	Baghjan	84	13
	Baghmari	89	13.8
	Bohikhuwa	75	11.6
	Bosagaon	74	11.5
	Chepenakubua	77	11.9
	Chandrasing Rongpi	35	5.4
	Engle Pathar	17	2.6
	Haliram Terang	15	2.3
	Kohora No 1	88	13.6
	Kuthori	91	14.7
Caste	General	144	22.3
	Other Backward Classes	277	42.9
	Scheduled Class	42	6.5
	Scheduled Tribe Hills	66	10.2
	Scheduled Tribe plains	116	18.0
Community	Assamese	342	53.6
	Bengali	44	6.8
	Bihari	23	3.6
	Tea Tribe	59	9.1
	Nepai	51	7.9
	Karbi	64	9.9
Religion	Hindu	568	88.1
	Muslim	37	5.7
	Christian	40	6.2

Annexure-Five
Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and their Villages

Socio economic status score

(I) Village Code	(J) Village Code	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Baghjan	Baghmari	-.824	.469	.079
	Bohikhua	-.882	.489	.072
	Bosagaon	-1.410*	.491	.004
	Chepenakubua	-2.259*	.486	.000
	Chondrasing Rongpi	-.698	.620	.261
	Engle Pathar	-1.046	.819	.202
	Haliram Terang	-1.202	.864	.164
	Kohora No1	-2.721*	.470	.000
	Kuthori	-.803	.466	.085
Baghmari	Baghjan	.824	.469	.079
	Bohikhua	-.058	.483	.904
	Bosagaon	-.585	.485	.227
	Chepenakubua	-1.435*	.479	.003
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.126	.615	.837
	Engle Pathar	-.221	.815	.786
	Haliram Terang	-.378	.860	.660
	Kohora No1	-1.897*	.463	.000
	Kuthori	.021	.459	.964
Bohikhua	Baghjan	.882	.489	.072
	Baghmari	.058	.483	.904
	Bosagaon	-.527	.505	.297
	Chepenakubua	-1.376*	.500	.006
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.185	.631	.770
	Engle Pathar	-.163	.828	.844
	Haliram Terang	-.320	.871	.714
	Kohora No1	-1.839*	.484	.000
	Kuthori	.079	.480	.869
Bosagaon	Baghjan	1.410*	.491	.004
	Baghmari	.585	.485	.227
	Bohikhua	.527	.505	.297
	Chepenakubua	-.849	.502	.091
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.712	.632	.260
	Engle Pathar	.364	.829	.661
	Haliram Terang	.207	.872	.812
	Kohora No1	-1.312*	.486	.007
	Kuthori	.606	.482	.209
Chepenakubua	Baghjan	2.259*	.486	.000
	Baghmari	1.435*	.479	.003
	Bohikhua	1.376*	.500	.006
	Bosagaon	.849	.502	.091
	Chondrasing Rongpi	1.561*	.628	.013
	Engle Pathar	1.213	.826	.142
	Haliram Terang	1.056	.869	.225
	Kohora No1	-.463	.481	.336
	Kuthori	1.456*	.477	.002

Chondrasing Rongpi	Baghjan	.698	.620	.261
	Baghmari	-.126	.615	.837
	Bohikhua	-.185	.631	.770
	Bosagaon	-.712	.632	.260
	Chepenakubua	-1.561*	.628	.013
	Engle Pathar	-.348	.911	.703
	Haliram Terang	-.505	.951	.596
	Kohora No1	-2.024*	.616	.001
	Kuthori	-.105	.613	.863
Engle Pathar	Baghjan	1.046	.819	.202
	Baghmari	.221	.815	.786
	Bohikhua	.163	.828	.844
	Bosagaon	-.364	.829	.661
	Chepenakubua	-1.213	.826	.142
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.348	.911	.703
	Haliram Terang	-.157	1.091	.886
	Kohora No1	-1.676*	.816	.040
	Kuthori	.242	.814	.766
Haliram Terang	Baghjan	1.202	.864	.164
	Baghmari	.378	.860	.660
	Bohikhua	.320	.871	.714
	Bosagaon	-.207	.872	.812
	Chepenakubua	-1.056	.869	.225
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.505	.951	.596
	Engle Pathar	.157	1.091	.886
	Kohora No1	-1.519	.861	.078
	Kuthori	.399	.858	.642
Kohora No1	Baghjan	2.721*	.470	.000
	Baghmari	1.897*	.463	.000
	Bohikhua	1.839*	.484	.000
	Bosagaon	1.312*	.486	.007
	Chepenakubua	.463	.481	.336
	Chondrasing Rongpi	2.024*	.616	.001
	Engle Pathar	1.676*	.816	.040
	Haliram Terang	1.519	.861	.078
	Kuthori	1.918*	.461	.000
Kuthori	Baghjan	.803	.466	.085
	Baghmari	-.021	.459	.964
	Bohikhua	-.079	.480	.869
	Bosagaon	-.606	.482	.209
	Chepenakubua	-1.456*	.477	.002
	Chondrasing Rongpi	.105	.613	.863
	Engle Pathar	-.242	.814	.766
	Haliram Terang	-.399	.858	.642
	Kohora No1	-1.918*	.461	.000

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Annexure-Six

Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and Ranges around which their Villages are situated

SES LSD

(I) Names	(J) Names	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Kohora	Bagori	13.137*	4.086	.003
	Burapahar	13.777*	4.086	.002
	Agoratoli	13.687*	4.086	.002
Bagori	Kohora	-13.137*	4.086	.003
	Burapahar	.640	4.086	.877
	Agoratoli	.550	4.086	.894
Burapahar	Kohora	-13.777*	4.086	.002
	Bagori	-.640	4.086	.877
	Agoratoli	-.090	4.086	.983
Agoratoli	Kohora	-13.687*	4.086	.002
	Bagori	-.550	4.086	.894
	Burapahar	.090	4.086	.983

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Annexure-Seven
Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and their Caste

Socio economic status score
LSD

(I) Caste code	(J) Caste code	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
General	OBC	-.956*	.318	.003
	SC	.231	.542	.670
	STH	.039	.460	.933
	STP	1.082*	.386	.005
OBC	General	.956*	.318	.003
	SC	1.187*	.512	.021
	STH	.994*	.423	.019
	STP	2.038*	.342	.000
SC	General	-.231	.542	.670
	OBC	-1.187*	.512	.021
	STH	-.193	.610	.752
	STP	.851	.557	.127
STH	General	-.039	.460	.933
	OBC	-.994*	.423	.019
	SC	.193	.610	.752
	STP	1.044*	.477	.029
STP	General	-1.082*	.386	.005
	OBC	-2.038*	.342	.000
	SC	-.851	.557	.127
	STH	-1.044*	.477	.029

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Annexure-Eight
Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and their Community

(I) community score	(J) community score	Mean Diff. (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Assamese	Bengali	1.642*	.486	.001	.69	2.60
	Bihari	1.641*	.654	.012	.36	2.93
	Tea tribe	3.017*	.428	.000	2.18	3.86
	Nepali	1.668*	.456	.000	.77	2.56
	Karbi	1.119*	.414	.007	.31	1.93
	Mishing	.826	.431	.056	-.02	1.67
Bengali	Assamese	-1.642*	.486	.001	-2.60	-.69
	Bihari	.000	.782	.999	-1.54	1.53
	Tea tribe	1.376*	.605	.023	.19	2.56
	Nepali	.026	.625	.966	-1.20	1.25
	Karbi	-.523	.595	.380	-1.69	.65
	Mishing	-.816	.607	.180	-2.01	.38
Bihari	Assamese	-1.641*	.654	.012	-2.93	-.36
	Bengali	.001	.782	.999	-1.53	1.54
	Tea tribe	1.377	.747	.066	-.09	2.84
	Nepali	.027	.763	.971	-1.47	1.53
	Karbi	-.522	.739	.480	-1.97	.93
	Mishing	-.815	.749	.277	-2.28	.66
Tea tribe	Assamese	-3.017*	.428	.000	-3.86	-2.18
	Bengali	-1.376*	.605	.023	-2.56	-.19
	Bihari	-1.377	.747	.066	-2.84	.09
	Nepali	-1.349*	.581	.021	-2.49	-.21
	Karbi	-1.898*	.548	.001	-2.98	-.82
	Mishing	-2.191*	.562	.000	-3.29	-1.09
Nepali	Assamese	-1.668*	.456	.000	-2.56	-.77
	Bengali	-.026	.625	.966	-1.25	1.20
	Bihari	-.027	.763	.971	-1.53	1.47
	Tea tribe	1.349*	.581	.021	.21	2.49
	Karbi	-.549	.570	.336	-1.67	.57
	Mishing	-.842	.583	.149	-1.99	.30
Karbi	Assamese	-1.119*	.414	.007	-1.93	-.31
	Bengali	.523	.595	.380	-.65	1.69
	Bihari	.522	.739	.480	-.93	1.97
	Tea tribe	1.898*	.548	.001	.82	2.98
	Nepali	.549	.570	.336	-.57	1.67
	Mishing	-.293	.551	.595	-1.37	.79
Mishing	Assamese	-.826	.431	.056	-1.67	.02
	Bengali	.816	.607	.180	-.38	2.01
	Bihari	.815	.749	.277	-.66	2.28
	Tea tribe	2.191*	.562	.000	1.09	3.29
	Nepali	.842	.583	.149	-.30	1.99
	Karbi	.293	.551	.595	-.79	1.37

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Annexure-Nine
Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for SES Score of Women and their Religion

Multiple Comparisons

Socio economic status score

LSD

(I) Religion Score	(J) Religion Score	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Hindu	Muslim	1.786*	.534	.001	.74	2.84
	Christian	.516	.534	.335	-.53	1.56
Muslim	Hindu	-1.786*	.534	.001	-2.84	-.74
	Christian	-1.270	.732	.083	-2.71	.17
Christian	Hindu	-.516	.534	.335	-1.56	.53
	Muslim	1.270	.732	.083	-.17	2.71

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Annexure-Ten
Photographs of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Workshops



Picture: 10.1: Participants of PRA workshop at Baghjan village



Picture: 10.2: Participants of PRA workshop at Baghmari village.



Picture: 10.3: Participants of PRA workshop at Bohikhuwa village.



Picture: 10.4: Participants of PRA workshop at Bosagaon village.



Picture: 10.5: Participants of PRA workshop at Chandrasing Rongpi village.



Picture: 10.6: Participants of PRA workshop at Chepenakubua village.



Picture: 10.7: Participants of PRA workshop at Engle Pathar village.



Picture: 10.8: Participants of PRA workshop at Holiram Engleng village.



Picture: 10.9: Participants of PRA workshop at Kohora No. 1 village.



Picture: 10.10: Participants of PRA workshop at Kuthori village.

Annexure-Eleven
Post Hoc analysis (LSD) for Buying Interests of Tourists and their Age group

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig
Buy traditional food	15-30	30-45	-.293*	.101	.004
		45-60	-.272*	.103	.008
		60-75	-.287*	.123	.020
	30-45	15-30	.293*	.101	.004
		45-60	.022	.103	.834
		60-75	.007	.123	.957
	45-60	15-30	.272*	.103	.008
		30-45	-.022	.103	.834
		60-75	-.015	.125	.905
	60-75	15-30	.287*	.123	.020
		30-45	-.007	.123	.957
		45-60	.015	.125	.905
Visit to Assamese tribal village	15-30	30-45	.060	.096	.531
		45-60	.054	.098	.581
		60-75	.427*	.117	.000
	30-45	15-30	-.060	.096	.531
		45-60	-.006	.098	.951
		60-75	.367*	.117	.002
	45-60	15-30	-.054	.098	.581
		30-45	.006	.098	.951
		60-75	.373*	.119	.002
	60-75	15-30	-.427*	.117	.000
		30-45	-.367*	.117	.002
		45-60	-.373*	.119	.002
Visit to Assamese non-tribal Village	15-30	30-45	.053	.095	.576
		45-60	-.043	.097	.658
		60-75	.353*	.117	.003
	30-45	15-30	-.053	.095	.576
		45-60	-.096	.097	.322
		60-75	.300*	.117	.010
	45-60	15-30	.043	.097	.658
		30-45	.096	.097	.322
		60-75	.396*	.118	.001
	60-75	15-30	-.353*	.117	.003
		30-45	-.300*	.117	.010
		45-60	-.396*	.118	.001
Visit to Tea garden	15-30	30-45	.930*	.048	.000
		45-60	.850*	.046	.000
		60-75	.900*	.046	.000
	30-45	15-30	-.930*	.048	.000
		45-60	-.080	.046	.097
		60-75	-.030	.040	.526
	45-60	15-30	-.850*	.046	.000
		30-45	.080	.047	.097
		60-75	.050	.047	.294
	60-75	15-30	-.900*	.046	.000
		30-45	.030	.047	.526
		45-60	-.050	.047	.294

Annexure-Twelve
Pictures of various tourism prospects of Assam



Picture: 12.1- Assamese meal served in bell metal utensils



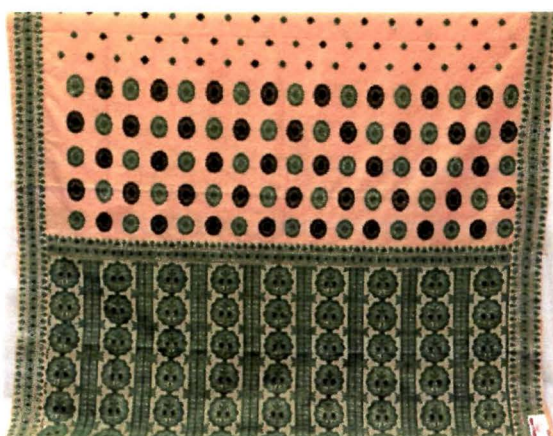
Picture: 12.2- Assamese food served in banana leaf



Picture: 12.3- Assamese (Mishing) women roasting meat



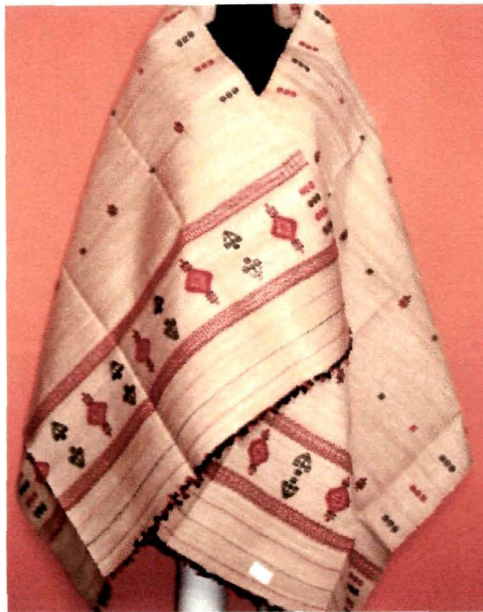
Picture: 12.4- Assamese (Non-tribal) preparing *pitha* a snack made from rice flour, sesame and molasses



Picture: 12.5- Assamese woven textile (Assam silk)



Picture: 12.6- *Muga* silk fabric with the thread and the Shuttle



Picture:12.7- Assamese stole made from *eri* silk



Picture: 12.8- Assamese traditional Jewellery designs



Picture: 12.9- Cushion cover made from traditional woven textile of Assam



Picture:12.10- Clutch made from traditional woven textile of Assam



Picture: 12.11- Assamese women with her colourful bobbins for weaving



Picture: 12.12- Assamese *Bihu* dancers

PUBLISHED PAPERS

Volume 47
Series III
July 2012

ISSN: 2231-2447

INDIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL-SCIENCE AND SCIENCES

**A HALF -YEARLY MULTIDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH JOURNAL**



**KALANCHUPAR RESEARCH INSTITUTE
FOURTH EDITION -2012**



WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY: A STUDY OF KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Rita Borkotoky, Chandan Goswami

ABSTRACT

The present paper tries to bring together Women Empowerment and the tourism industry. The objective of this paper was to assess the involvement of women in Tourism Related Activities in Kaziranga National Park. The Study was conducted in the villages surrounding the park. This paper studied the Demographic profile of women in the study area with special emphasis on how tourism is influencing the social and economic status of women. Women involvement in Tourism and various demographic variables were analysed to find out if there is any relation between them. The findings of the study will be useful in formulating strategies so that more and more women can be involved in tourism industry for betterment of their Socio-economic status.

Key words : Women, tourism, involvement.

INTRODUCTION :

Women Empowerment denotes the expansion of assets and capabilities of women to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives (Narayan 2002). According to Luttrell & Quiroz (2009), empowerment has four dimensions, namely, economic empowerment, human and social empowerment, political empowerment and cultural empowerment. Economic empowerment seeks to ensure that people have the appropriate skills, capabilities and resources and access to secure and sustainable incomes and livelihoods.

Tourism is the study of man away from his usual habitat. of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts that both he and the industry have on the host's socio-cultural, economic and physical environments (Jafari, 1977). Tourism industry has witnessed an unprecedented growth in recent years is providing avenue for women employment and participation. According to Ghodsee (2000), tourism is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities.

Though tourism industry in Assam is not yet mature, there is tremendous scope in near future (Bhattacharya, 2004). According to Dey and Sarma (2010), North-East India is a region with tremendous tourism potential that has not been aggressively marketed so far. According to Panda (2006), women of Assam can get engaged in Eco-tourism sector, either as self employed or private and public servant for their

empowerment.

The present study will try to bring together Women Empowerment and the tourism industry. It will try to find out avenues for Women Empowerment through involving them in the tourism industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW :

A review of available literature was done to study the present scenario regarding involvement of Women in Tourism related activities.

Sherpa (2007) revealed that, though in Nepal the percentage of women employment in tourism is around 50%, more than the global tourism workforce (46%), their role in decision making with respect to resource management is less. Women's involvement in informal trading has led to more control over their lives as they can be at least economically partially independent. This has the potential to empower them with a significant predominance of poverty (Wikinson & Pratiwi 1995). According to Green (2001), there are four broad areas for improvement that would serve to enhance women's employment opportunities and skills. These include: Skills development and training, Flexible working, Childcare and Information dissemination.

A number of authors (Mitchell, 2000; Mitra, 2003; Jurajda, 2003.) highlight long term discrimination between gender in terms of occupation, earnings and promotion prospect. Mitra (2003) stated that educational attainment has opened up more possibilities for female employees and higher pay in large establishments, and women are getting involved in tourism industry for their economic development. Balasubramanian (2008) argued that the art and craft skills of the rural population and tourists' interest in endogenous tourism can help in income generation and enhancement of basic qualities of life in rural areas.

According to Kashyap (2006), the status of women in Assam is satisfactory for a selected group. This group belongs to the middle class or upper middle class. Tourism can be considered as one of the important sectors for women empowerment (Ghodsee 2000; Païda, 2006; Sherpa, 2007; Balasubramonian, 2008;). Scheyvens, 2000, revealed that women can achieve economic empowerment through ecotourism.

The UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

declared the theme of World Tourism Day for the year 2007 as 'Tourism opens doors for women'. UNWTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli's (2007) message for the Day reflected the positive note of the theme with an affirmative statement that 'Tourism is a sector of the economy that not only employs significant numbers of women, but provides enormous opportunities for their advancement.' To make women successful in tourism industry, few changes or improvements are to be made.

At present, Kaziranga is the most popular tourist destination of Assam. The tourist density is highest in this particular destination. Moreover, it is believed that the tribes of Assam are rich in handloom and handicraft products and as the social system goes, more women are involved in such activities compared to men. This particular aspect can be used in tourism. Apart from this, involvement in tourism activities can be seen as a complementary activity to the main occupational activity of the household so that the economic conditions improve. Here also, the women can get involved ultimately leading to their economic empowerment. To find out the scope of economic empowerment of women through such activities and develop a sustainable livelihood method, this study is proposed with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

1. To find out the level of involvement of women in tourism related activities in the study area.

METHODOLOGY :

Survey method was used for the study. To find out socio economic status, a women survey (Entrepreneurs and non entrepreneurs) was carried out.

AREA OF STUDY :

The study area included villages surrounding Kaziranga National Park. There are 53 villages and four tea gardens bordering Kaziranga. The total population in the study area is approximately 70,000.

POPULATION :

Women of 15 to 45 years of age.

Sample Size : 200 from villages surrounding Kaziranga National Park.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION :

Interview and questionnaire method. Response format of the questionnaire was both closed and open ended.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

The demographic profile of the sample is represented in Appendix: I. Appendix: II gives a clear picture of the involvement of women in tourism related activities and the variation within the different demographic variables.

The study revealed that only 31.5% women were involved in tourism related activities in the study area. This figure is much lower than the Global Tourism Workforce of 46% (Sherpa, 2007).

Table : 1
Type of involvement in TAR

Directly	24	(38.10%)
Indirectly	38	(60.31%)
Both	1	(1.59%)
Total	63	(100%)

Table 1 shows that, 38.10% women were involved directly while 60.31% were indirectly involved and only 1.59% were involved in both ways. The categories of direct involvement in tourism are shown in table 2. 60% worked as employees in tourism sector while 20% were involved in their own family business.

Table : 2
Types of direct involvement in TAR

Sole Ownership	1	(4%)
Family Business	5	(20%)
Partnership	4	(16%)
Employee	15	(60%)
Total	25	

When studied the working status of women in tourism sector it revealed a very disappointing picture. Only 5% worked as an executive and most of them work at the lower level (Table -3). In the status of worker and supervisor, equal number of women are involved i.e., 35%. It has been found out of 20 women working as employees, 5 women i.e. 25% are working as Office staff.

Table: 3
Status of employee and in family business

	Frequency	Percentage
Worker	7	35
Office Staff	5	25
Supervisor	7	35
Executive	1	5
Total	20	100

It is interesting to look into the nature of employment in different tourism related activities. Only 2% of the sample work as a permanent employee while the rest are on temporary basis.

Table: 4
Type of Indirect Involvement

	Number	Percentage
Indirect Supplier	21	53.85
Craftswoman	2	5.13
Weaver	15	38.46
Others	1	2.56

In case of indirect involvement in tourism related activities, majority i.e. 53.85% of the women are suppliers to different tourism related industry. 38.46% women earned their livelihood by weaving. Some women get involved in other activities such as dancing in cultural programmes.

Table : 5

Monthly income from tourism related activities		
	Frequency	Percentage
<500	9	14.29
501-1000	15	23.81
1001-3000	25	39.68
3001-5000	11	17.46
10001-20000	1	1.59
>20000	2	3.17
Total	63	100

Although 31.5% women are involved in tourism related activities, the monetary gain is very less. Most of them belong to lower income level. 77.78% women earn below Rs. 3000 from tourism related activities. Therefore from the study it is evident that though there is involvement of women in tourism industry, their economic gain from such activities is very disappointing.

Table : 6

Variables	Involvement in TAR
Age group	0.004**
Marital Status	0.26
Education	0.228
Family income	0.064
Socio Economic status	0.134

** Significant association at 0.05 level of significance.

To find out if there is any significant association between different demographic variables and involvement in tourism related activities, chi-square test was carried out. Table 6 shows the 'p' value for the different relations. Thus there exist an association between age group and involvement in tourism. When one-way ANNOVA was carried out between age group and involvement in tourism related activities, the 'p' value was found out to be 0.00, showing that there exist difference between the different age groups. From Appendix II, it is evident that out of 31.5% involvement, 25% are more than 25 years old.

To summarize the finding, it can be said that the rate of involvement of women in TRA was less compared to the Global scenario. The level of involvement was also found to be at the bottom of the pyramid. Moreover most of them (69.31%) were indirectly involved, where 77.80% of the women earned less than Rs. 3000 from tourism related activities. Thus it calls for creating awareness for greater involvement of women in tourism and also the direct involvement of women should be given more importance. This

can be done by encouraging women entrepreneurship in the area. To start off, motivation for empowerment is required. Government and NGO's can take up various activities for creation of awareness as well as for providing necessary training and incubation facilities. Taking into consideration the finding that women involvement in tourism related activities is more among the age group of 25 years & above, sensitization programs should aim at creating awareness among women belonging to other age groups. The process of developing more women entrepreneurship should follow the process of sensitizing, training and providing incubation facilities. To start with, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship can start with sensitization programs in the study area aiming at younger women with the objective of motivating them to take up entrepreneurship as a career option. Depending on the response during the sensitization programs and feedback, training programs on various activities related to tourism can be organized with the help of NEDFi and other Government and Non-government organizations. The specific area of training can be decided on the basis of interest of the trainees. To facilitate success, incubation facilities can be provided to the new entrepreneurs in the form of 'industrial estates' with infrastructure at subsidized rates. This will reduce the rate of failure of the new entrepreneurs and will motivate more women entrepreneurs to come up.

CONCLUSION :

Kaziranga is the busiest tourist destination in Assam. It provides ample opportunity for enhancing women empowerment through involving them in tourism related activities. The study has revealed that the degree of involvement of women in tourism related activities is not encouraging at the moment. Proper policy formulation and implementation will go a long way in empowering women, which is the need of the hour.

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM Issues and Challenges

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Women in Tourism Related Activities: A Tool for Sustainable Tourism Development

Rita Borkotoky and Chandan Goswami

ABSTRACT

The study was to find out the possibilities of economic empowerment of women by involving them in souvenir and consumable items related business in nature based tourism destinations for its sustainability. Data was collected with the help of pre tested self administered questionnaire from 25 resorts of three different categories, based on tariff rates. Total 514 duly filled questionnaires formed the data base for analysis of tourists' demand, of which 400 were domestic and 114 were foreign tourists. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique was used for skill mapping of local women. For the PRA 10 villages were selected from three different districts surrounding Kaziranga National Park. Study revealed that tourists' demand is highest for traditional food, cultural programme, traditional crafts, visit to tribal and traditional Assamese village and local fruits and vegetables. PRA result also showed existing expertise of women mostly in the field of weaving and cooking. The study was conducted in KNP, which is a nature based tourism destination with fringe villages. Therefore the findings of the study are to be adjusted accordingly if applied to other similar destinations.

Keywords: Women, Tourist, Services, Souvenir and Consumable Items, Sustainable Tourism

INTRODUCTION

The potential role of tourism in providing economic opportunities for communities living adjacent to natural heritage has long been recognized (Goodwin, 2008). Tourism brings development to the locality. For the development of the locality, involvement of local community in tourism activities is important. Bowman (2011) suggested that sustainable tourism programmes should be designed locally and based on local area. Sustainable tourism helps in developing the tourism in rural areas based on local natural, social and cultural resources (David, 2011). Tourism development is organically linked with concepts of community self-actualization. Sustainable tourism is possible only when local community is economically benefited

(Cortez, 2010). It should help in retaining the tourism revenue and development of the destinations. Tourism is the only international industry where the customer travels to the product and lack of modern development can be an asset. So it is one of the few industries that are actually suited to more remote rural areas lacking infrastructure, where job opportunities are meager. It also has the potential to be more sustainable than other industries. Tourism has demonstrated its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income generating activities to benefit local communities in destination areas (Ashley, 1995). United Nation World Tourism Organisation has commented on sustainability principles of tourism as the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. It should ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders. Sustainable tourism also includes stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributes to poverty alleviation (UNWTO, 2004).

The tourism sector provides various entry points for women employment in small and medium sized income generating activities, thus creating paths towards the elimination of poverty of women and local communities in developing countries (Hemmati, 2006). According to Ghodsee, 2000, tourism can be considered as one of the important sectors for women empowerment; it is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities. Women represent up to 70% of the tourism workforce in the United Kingdom. Tourism industry allows its workforce a relatively high degree of flexibility, geographic mobility and choice of a wide range of working patterns. Due to the continuous need for full time, part time, casual and seasonal staff, the tourism industry is often considered as ideal for women who need to accommodate paid work around their various traditional gender related roles and responsibilities (Parrett, 2004, Lickorish and Jenkins, 2002). To involve local women in tourism activities it is important to match the preferences of tourists with the available infrastructure and skill of the local women. Initially most community based tourism (CBT) were related to rural communities through ecotourism, now the concept has been extended to a range of different tourism products such as traditional handicrafts, local culture and folklore, gastronomy (Zapata, et al. 2011). Morworth and Munt (2002), found the change of souvenir purchasing behavior of tourists. Today most of the tourists prefer handicrafts created by local craftspeople rather than mass produced in a factory as earlier. Goodwin also revealed the same and suggested local women to produce local woven and knitted handicraft items adapted to suit tourists tastes. Women are involved in handicraft business in many countries. Maya women of Guatemala sell woven crafts to the foreign tourists and they are known for their techniques to sell handicrafts to tourists (Little, 2004).

Travel Industry Association of America (2002) has reported that interest in historic and cultural travel tourism is increasing among adult Americans. In

Thailand One Tambon One Product (OTOP) villages are doing extremely well. Local people also positively perceive social impacts of rural or village tourism as it creates job for women in the village itself (Huttasin, 2008). 'Chokhi Dhani' in Rajasthan and 'Vishalla' in Ahmedabad is becoming a popular destinations for rural and gastronomy tourism in India.

The Study Area

Kaziranga National Park is one of the most popular Nature based tourism destination in North East India. The park is divided into 4 ranges namely Burapahar, Bagori, Kohora and Agoratali, each having one entry point for tourists. A forest range is a term used to signify an area containing one or more demarcated and protected or resource managed forests, for administrative purposes. Each range controls the protected areas and managed resources under its jurisdiction and is presided over by a Forest Range Officer appointed from the corresponding State Forest Service. A sizable number of both domestic and foreign tourists visit the park every year. According to the Department of Forests, 1,19,839 tourists, out of which 1,12,392 domestic and 7,447 foreign tourists visited this place during 2010-11 and collection of revenue from the tourists were INR 1,36,73,482. KNP is surrounded by 4 districts comprising of 115 villages having a population of 82,768 (Data from Block Development offices of Bokakhat, Jakkhalabandha and Rongmongway).

Women of Assam are traditionally skilled in various handicrafts products. Mahatma Gandhi (1921) had praised the weaving skill of the women of Assam. There is a possibility of utilizing this skill for production of souvenir items that suits to the demand of the tourists. To analyse these possibilities, this study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To map the skill of local women.
2. To find out the preferences and buying interests of tourists regarding different types of souvenir and consumable items at Kaziranga National park.
3. To link existing local skill with preference of tourists for sustainability of the destination.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in two steps. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique was used for skill mapping of local women and a tourists' survey for finding out their preference and buying interests regarding different types of services, souvenir and consumable items.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodology is used for interacting with village women, understanding them and learning from them. PRA is a process of

participation with the villagers in which rapport-building paves the way for them to perform their own analysis and to express themselves whether by means of 'verbals' like narration or 'visuals' such as map (Mukharjee, 1989). In this study visual expressions in the form of map were taken from rural women about their various skills. For the PRA 10 villages were selected from three different districts. Four villages from Golaghat district and three villages each from Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts were selected by judgmental method. Judgment was based on extent of tourism activity in the area and covering all four tourist entry points of KNP. Workshops were organized with the help of Anganwadi workers of the concerned villages. Local women drew the map of their locality showing different skills of women. In the workshops the researcher conveyed the message how women can get economic benefit from Tourism Related Activities (TRA).

Quota sampling method was used for tourists' survey. 50% quota was determined for category three resorts as category three represents the major part of tourists. 30% was assigned to category two and 20% to category one to make a proper representation of the sample. Sampling units from different categories of resorts were selected on judgmental basis and the type of survey was exit survey. Data was collected with the help of pre tested self administered questionnaire from 25 resorts of three different categories based on the starting tariff rates. The starting tariff rate below INR 1500 was considered as category three, INR 1501 to INR 3000 as category two and above INR 3000 was considered as category one resorts. Total 514 duly filled questionnaires formed the data base for analysis of tourists' demand, of which 400 were domestic and 114 foreign tourists. Period of survey was 2010-11.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PRA was done at ten fringe villages of KNP. In the workshop organised for PRA, researcher communicated with the village women and discussed about their potentials in this field. As the method was a participatory, village women realized the importance of TRA for their economic empowerment. Finally they drew their village maps showing different skills of the village women. All 10 village skill maps are summarized in Table 1. It shows the existing skill of local women according to their villages.

Results shows that 844 women know weaving and 472 women have expertise in cooking traditional food. These numbers are highest in Bohikhuwa village of Golaghat district. The population of this village is mainly Mishing community of Assam. As tradition of Mishing community, it is compulsory for girls to learn weaving and cooking at a young age, almost all women of this village know traditional weaving and cooking. From the results it is found that skills of local women can fulfill most of the demands of the tourists.

Table 1. Existing Skill of Local Women

Name of the Village	Skills of women*											
	Wv	Co	Kn	Be	Em	Cr	TG	Cut	Dc	Sin	Jw	Bw
Baghjan	2	-	10	-	9	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Baghmari	38	3	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Bahikhuwa	445	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bosagaon	132	1	2	-	31	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Chandrasing rongpi	46	34	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chepenakubua	80	7	6	-	7	15	1	-	-	-	-	-
Engle pathar	46	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Holiram terang	16	1	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kohora no 1	16	9	-	4	6	15	-	12	4	2	-	-
Kuthori	23	14	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	844	472	26	4	73	31	1	15	4	4	2	3

*Wv = weaving, Co = cooking, Kn = knitting, Be = Beautician, Em = embroidery, Cr = crochet, TG = tour guide, Cut = cutting & tailoring, Dc = decorative item making, Sin = singing, Jw = jute work, Bw=bamboo work.

Collected data from tourists' survey was analysed to find out the buying intentions of tourists with suitable statistical tools. Relationships between different variables are represented in following tables. Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the sample of the tourists' survey.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Tourists

Place of origin	Domestic	400 (77.8%)
	Foreign	114 (22.2%)
Age	15-30	150 (29.2%)
	31-45	150 (29.2%)
	46-60	139 (27%)
	Above 60	75 (14.6%)
Gender	Female	232 (45.1%)
	Male	282 (54.9%)
Category of resort	Category one	70 (13.6%)
	Category two	166 (32.3%)
	Category three	278 (54.1%)

Tourists were asked to comment about their interests of various tourism services, souvenir and consumable items in KNP. Preferences of tourists were measured with the help of a five point scale comprising of (2) for definitely yes, (1) for yes, (0) for undecided, (-1) for no and (-2) for definitely no. Mean interest

Table 4. ANOVA between Buying Interests of Traditional Food and Age of Tourists

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	8.586	3	2.862	3.766	.011
Within Groups	387.587	510	.760		
Total	396.173	513			

The result shows $p = .011$ (Table 4), which is less than .05 and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It proves (at 0.05 level of significance) that mean buying interests of traditional food varies according to the age of tourists.

Post Hoc analysis and the study of the descriptive statistics revealed that there is significance difference in the buying interests of traditional food among the tourists of the age group 15-30 and all the age groups above 30. Preference of traditional food is highest in case of tourists of 15-30 years age group. The analysis of the descriptive statistics (Annexure-I) clearly revealed that the buying interest of traditional food is also present among the tourists who are above 30 years of age.

To find out relationship between buying interests of traditional food and gender 't' test was conducted. The result is not significant ($p = .108$). Therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The mean preference of traditional food is same in male and female tourists.

Result of 't' test conducted to find out relationship between buying interest of traditional food and tourists' place of origin (domestic/foreign) shows significant differences at 0.05 level of significance ($p = 0.00$). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean buying interest of traditional food is different in domestic and foreign tourists. Foreign tourists are more ($\mu = 1.46$) interested in buying traditional food than domestic tourists ($\mu = 1.10$). From the findings it can be concluded though, traditional food got highest preference score in general; foreign tourists of 15-30 years are mostly interested in buying them.

As traditional food is found to be the most preferred item for buying, women of the locality should grab the opportunity to market their expertise of cooking traditional food for their economic empowerment. The skill of cooking can be utilized for preparation of traditional food of different local communities such as, Assamese, Mishing and Karbi. Food can be supplied to the resorts or can be sold at specific stalls made for traditional food. For selling traditional food, the target segment of tourist would be foreigners of 15-30 years age. Government can take the initiative to train local women for commercial production of traditional food. Training on packaging of food item and other related matters also required in this regards. The most important aspect of food industry is to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

Provision of pure drinking water is also an important aspect in food industry. To make clean and healthy traditional food available to the tourists 'Food Haats' can be opened and 'Food fest' can be organized during tourism season in the study area.

To study tourists' buying interests of other services, souvenir and consumable items same method was used. Results are shown separately for different services, souvenirs and consumable items.

Local Cultural Programme

To study the relationship between interests of tourists in local cultural programme and their age One Way ANOVA test was done. The resulted p value ($p = .368$) is not significant at .05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. There is no significance difference of interests in local cultural programme according to the age group of tourists. Gender also does not play role in creating interests in local cultural programme ($p = .730$). Whereas, association between place of origin and interests in local cultural programme is highly significant ($p = .000$). Descriptive statistics showed domestic tourists (mean = 1.26) are more interested in enjoying local cultural programme than foreign tourists (mean = .82).

Though skill of local women is less in this regards, Government can take initiative to organize training programme by experts from different regions of the state. Cultural programme can be organized centrally during the tourist season, so that local women can take part in it and earn a financial benefit. Bihu songs and dance of Assamese, Gumrag or Mishing Bihu can be performed in those cultural programmes. Bihu songs have emerged as a very popular art form throughout Northeast India and in the rest of the country. The modern day Bihu songs and dances, and other colorful ethnic dances of the region like Bagrumba, and Bardwisikla of the Bodos, Gumrag or Mishing Bihu of the Mishings have become very popular these days (Boro, 2006).

Traditional Handicraft

Buying interest of traditional handicraft according to age ($p = .071$) and gender ($p = .842$) of tourists is statistically not significant. Only place of origin of tourist is significantly associated ($p = .000$) with buying interests of traditional handicraft. Group statistics data reveals that domestic tourists (mean = 1.23) are more interested in buying traditional handicrafts than foreign tourists (mean = .88). According to Nomura, 2000, female tourists were more likely to show strong concern about souvenir shopping activity during travel. Therefore females have more potential to visit and look around in souvenir shops than males. But present study shows a different picture, there is no significant difference in buying interest of souvenir and other consumable items according to the gender of tourists.

Weaving and cutting and tailoring skill of women can be utilized to produce suitable clothing or handicraft items. Traditional woven design can be used and modified without distortion of culture to make it suitable to the need of different categories of tourists. Skill of embroidery, jute work, bamboo work, cane work also can be utilized for making souvenir items giving a traditional touch to it.

Visit to Tribal Village

Mean interests of visit to tribal village and gender of tourists are not significantly associated ($p = .096$). Whereas, place of origin is highly associated ($p = .007$) with interests in visit to tribal village. From the Group statistics data it is found that domestic tourists (mean = 1.19) are more interested than foreign tourists (mean = .94) in visiting tribal village.

Results of ANOVA shows a significant association between age groups of tourists and interests in visiting tribal village ($p = .002$). Descriptive statistics and Post Hoc analysis (Annexure-I) shows that age group 60-75 is the most reluctant group (mean = .80) about visit to tribal village. Other groups are almost equally interested in visiting. Target population for visiting tribal village can be considered as domestic tourists below 60 years.

Visit to Traditional Assamese Village

Gender is not significantly associated ($p = .247$), but place of origin is significantly associated ($p = .003$) with interests in visiting traditional Assamese village. Domestic tourists show higher interests (mean = 1.18) in comparison with foreign tourists (mean = .91).

Age group of tourists and interests in visiting traditional Assamese village have statistically significant association ($p = .006$). As in interests in visiting tribal village, higher age group tourists (60-75 years of age) showed lowest interests (mean = .88). Post Hoc analysis (Annexure-I) shows its significant difference with values of other age groups at .05 level of significance.

Rural tourism is considered as panacea for increasing the economic viability of marginalized areas of less developed countries. It stimulates social regeneration and improves the living conditions of rural communities (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004, Sharpley, 2002). According to Wilson et al. (2001), another aspect of rural tourism is that it is less costly to develop and easier to establish as compared to other economic development strategies. The present study also showed tourists' interests in visiting tribal and traditional Assamese villages. Local women with their traditional skills can take active part in it.

Local Fruits and Vegetables

Buying interest of local fruits and vegetables is high among tourists (mean=1.1). Statistical analysis shows that none of the variables are statistically associated with buying interests of local fruits and vegetables. Therefore all tourists have same level of interest in buying local fruits and vegetables. Agri-tourism stimulate economic activity and spread benefits to various communities (Lobo et al. 1999). Interests of tourists to taste local fruits and vegetables offer a scope for local women to enter into tourism activity for their economic benefit. Assam's local fruits and vegetables such as, Wood apple, Plum, Myrobalan, Olive, Garcinia cowa roxb, Flacourtia, Carambolá, Baccurea sapida, Anola, Areca nut, Dillemia indica linn vera, Assam Lemon, Fern (Dhekia) etc. are found in abundance in almost every household and even in the forest. For a larger market, cultivation of these trees may require. Collecting, cleaning, processing (if required making jam, jelly and pickle), and packaging these fruits and vegetables in a hygienic way will definitely capture the tourists market.

Table 5 gives a summary of the target group, recommendations and requirements for different services, souvenir and consumables in the study area.

Table 5. Target Group, Recommendation and Requirements

<i>Services/Souvenir/Consumables</i>	<i>Target Group</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Traditional Food	Foreigners of 15-30 years age	Establishing food Haats and food fests	Land, infrastructure, training and finance
Cultural programme	Domestic tourists	Centrally organized traditional cultural programme by local people	Training and infrastructure
Traditional handicrafts	Domestic tourists	Souvenir made with traditional woven design	Training, infrastructure and finance
Visit to tribal village	Domestic tourists below 60 years of age	Upgrading existing two villages (Karbi and Mishing) and developing traditional Assamese village	Infrastructure and finance
Visit to traditional Assamese village			
Local fruits and vegetables	All	To make available different local fruits and vegetables in fresh, dry and processed form	Training, infrastructure, finance and cultivation

Though, for targeting the consumer hypothesis testing was done for only six highly preferred services, souvenir and consumable items, other seven services, souvenir and consumable cannot be eliminated from the preference list.

At this juncture Government and NGOs can take up programme for identifying skilled women and providing them necessary training for making quality products, suited to the need of tourists. Artisans may also be provided with financial and marketing help. In some specific cases incubation facility also may required. For fulfilling the demands of tourists by utilizing the skills of local women, Government and NGOs must play a vital role. Figure 1, gives a diagrammatic representation of the same.

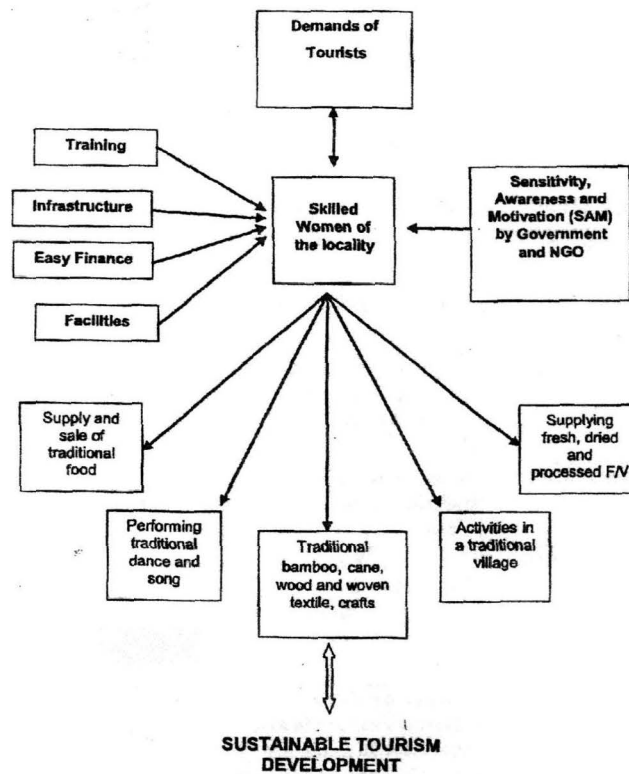


Fig. 1. Sustainable Tourism Development Strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study was intended to assist local women entrepreneurs, artists and craftswomen in deciding what type of services; souvenir and consumable items are to be made available to the tourists. There lie ample opportunities for the economic empowerment of local women and thus sustainable tourism development in the study area. Encouragement from Government and NGOs in the form of training, providing infrastructure for production as well as for marketing, availability of easy finance and some special facilities for women, such as, clean toilets, crèche or day care centers are required. Before going to these tangible inputs some intangible inputs in the form of sensitization, awareness and motivation is required owing to the ignorance of the local women of the study area.

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GLOBAL ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

Opportunities and Challenges

PART-2

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Tourism and Women: A Community Approach

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Introduction

The tourism industry has witnessed an unprecedented growth in recent years. It is the world's largest employer with 231 million employees and generating 10.4 per cent of the world GDP. The tourism industry is rapidly expanding and is estimated to employ approximately 269.5 million people by the year 2015 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2006). According to Aref and Redzuan (2009) tourism plays an increasingly important role in the development of communities. The benefits of tourism include both tangible (e.g. job creation, state and local tax revenue, etc.) and less tangible (e.g. social structure, quality of life, etc.).

Higher levels of integration would lead to enhanced socio-economic benefits for the community. Mitchell and Eagles (2001), in their study conducted in Peru, defined integration by percentage of local people employed, type and degree of participation, decision-making power, and ownership in the local tourism sector. Worldwide, tourism is particularly important sector for women; they make up to 46 per cent of the tourism labour force. This percentage is higher than in the workforce in general, where 34-40 per cent is women (Vagus and Aguilar, 2004). According to Ghodsee (2000), tourism can be considered as one of the important sectors for women empowerment; it is a labour intensive industry and tends to employ many economically disadvantaged groups, such as, women and ethnic minorities. Tourism has demonstrated its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income generating activities to benefit local communities in destination areas. The tourism sector provides various entry points for women with small and medium sized income generating activities. Thus it is creating paths towards the elimination of poverty of women and local communities in developing countries (Hemmati, 2006).

The UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) declared the theme of World Tourism Day for the year 2007 as 'Tourism Opens Doors for Women'. UNWTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli's (2007) message for the Day reflected the positive note of the theme with an affirmative statement that—tourism is a sector of the economy that not only employs significant number of women, but provides enormous opportunities for their advancement. To make women successful in tourism industry, few changes or improvements are to be made. Tourism industry allows its workforce a relatively high degree of flexibility, geographic mobility and choice of a wide range of working patterns. Due to the continuous need for full time, part time, casual and seasonal staff, the tourism industry is often considered as ideal for women who need to accommodate paid work around their various traditional gender related roles and responsibilities. But employment in the tourism industry is characterized by low pay, low status, and low skill jobs offering for women (Parrett, 2004, Lickorish and Jenkins, 2002). Ong (2009) interestingly commented on tourism as the key which, if innovatively applied, can surely unlock doors for women. Chawla (2006) also stated that women find flexibility in work in tourism sector which help them to maintain balance between their homes with children and dependent elders and the workplace.

According to Panda (2006), women of Assam can get engaged in Eco-tourism sector, either as self employed, or private and public servant for their empowerment. Moreover, it is believed that people of Assam are traditionally skilled in various handicrafts and handloom products and as the social system goes, more women are involved in such activities compared to men. Mahatma Gandhi (1921) had praised the weaving skill of the women of Assam. Every woman in Assam is by nature an artist. This particular aspect can be utilised in tourism. Apart from this, involvement in tourism activities can be seen as a complementary activity to the main occupational activity of the household so that the economic conditions improve. Here also, the women can get involved ultimately leading to their economic empowerment. Government of Assam also has emphasized on local art and crafts for properly designed souvenir shops in each major tourists destinations of Assam. Tourism Policy of Assam (2008), planned to encourage and assist local entrepreneurs to authentic designs of local art and craft forms in a way that the tourists can easily carry them as mementoes (Tourism Policy of Assam, 2008).

Community acceptance of tourism is a very important aspect for tourism development. It was found that attitudes varied according to people's level of dependency on tourism and certain demographic variables. Interestingly, it was found that less educated people have a more positive perception of tourism than those who are more highly educated. The study conducted in Petra, Jordan showed that a positive socio-cultural impact of tourism on the people was far exceeding its negative consequences (Alhasanat, 2010). According to Sharma (2004), positive attitudes towards tourism impacts among communities will result in more successful tourism development. Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) suggested that tourism developers need to consider the perception and attitude of residents before they could start a new venture. Moreover, understanding of community perception towards tourism impacts can also help to identify types of tourism which have the potential for building community

capacity (Moscardo, 2008). Studies have also indicated that people who have an economic gain from tourism perceive more positive impact from it (Chon, 2000). According to Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011) a host population is influenced by the perceived positive benefits of the industry. Studies have revealed that tourism increases employment opportunities for the local people (Dyer, Gursoy & Carter, 2007; Gu & Rayn, 2008), contributes to income and standard of living (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Lie & Vat, 1986; Pizam, 1978), brings in new business and improves investment opportunities (Dyer et al., 2007; Kwan & McCartney, 2005).

World Tourism Organization (WTO) forecasts that the number of international visitor arrivals will grow five times more rapidly in developing countries than in more established destinations such as Europe and North America (WTO 2004). Dey & Sarma (2010) commented that North-East India is a region with tremendous tourism potential that has not been aggressively marketed so far. Assam in specific has every scope of being chosen destination of tourists in India because of its natural beauty and unexplored mysteries (Bhuyan, 2007). A sizable number of tourists visit Kaziranga National Park every year. At present, Kaziranga is one of the popular tourist destinations of Assam. The tourist density is highest in this destination. According to the Department of Forest the destination attracted 1,19,839 tourists during the year 2010-11, out of which 1,12,392 are domestic and are 7,447 foreign tourists. The revenue collection from the tourists was INR. 1,36,73,482. Keeping the above discussion in the background, the present study aims to find out the community acceptance level of tourism in the fringe area of KNP and analyse whether tourism is helping in improving the SES of women of the study area. The term community in this study is defined as the local women community of the study area. The study is designed to fulfill following objectives:

- To study the acceptance level of tourism.
- To measure the level of involvement of women in tourism related activities in the study area.
- To find out the relationship of community acceptance, involvement in Tourism Related Activities and Socio Economic Status of women in the study area.

Methodology

The study was conducted in the villages surrounding Kaziranga National Park (KNP). Total 10 villages were selected for sampling. Four villages from Golaghat district and three villages each from Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts were selected by judgmental method. Judgment was based on extent of tourism activity in the area and covering all four tourist entry points of KNP. The number of sample was 645 women of 15-45 years of age. Quota sampling method was used for selection of sample. Age and locality was considered as quotas for sampling. Sample was drawn equally from three different age groups i.e. 15-25 years, 26-35 years and 36-45 years and proportionately from the total population of each district.

The demographic profile of the sample was presented in the form of district, village, caste, community and socio-economic status group. A pre-tested questionnaire was used

for data collection. To measure socio-economic status, Kuppaswami's (1981) socio-economic status scale (modified by Ghosh and Ghosh, 2009) was used. Socio Economic Status (SES) Scores <5 was considered as lower lower, 5-10 as upper lower, 11-15 as middle, 16-25 as upper middle, 26-29 is considered as upper class. Measurement of acceptance was based on a five point Likert scale ranging from (+2) strongly agree to (-2) strongly disagree. Associations between variables were found out by statistical methods such as t test, ANOVA, and Chi square.

Results and Discussion

The study analyzed the demographic profile of the sample to get background information about the women community of the locality. It measured the rate of involvement of women in TRA. Type and level of involvement was also measured in the study. Finally, community acceptance of tourism and perception about women empowerment were studied in relationship with women's involvement in TRA and SES. The paper finally established the relationship between socio-economic status of women and their involvement in tourism related activities

Respondents' acceptance of women in TRA is on the positive side (Table 1). As mentioned earlier (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, *ibid*) a positive acceptance is beneficial to the local community, the present study also showed a hope for local women to get involved in tourism related activities for their betterment. TRA having avenues for women (A_1) gets the highest mean score (1.23) and statement (A_4) regarding government policies helping women to get into TRA, gets the lowest mean score (0.51). This proves that though women are realising the opportunities, they are not aware of government and NGO's policies to involve women in TRA. In contrary to this, Zamani and Musa (2008), found that residents of Masooleh, Iran, were aware of different policies of government for promoting tourism.

Table 1: Community Acceptance Regarding Tourism

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
1. TRA have avenues for women (A_1)	1.23
2. TRA are suitable for women (A_2)	1.17
3. TRA are safe for women (A_3)	1.04
4. Government policies are helping women to get into TRA (A_4)	0.51
5. Women empowerment is possible through TRA (A_5)	1.01

The rate of involvement of women in tourism industry was found unsatisfactory. The study revealed that only 152 (23.56%) women were involved in tourism related activities in the study area. This figure is almost half of the Global Tourism Workforce of 46 per cent (Sherpa, 2007). Out of 152 respondents who are involved in TRA, 70 are directly involved. Direct involvement includes sole ownership (3), family business (12), partnership (5), and employee (53). The status of those who are in family business or employed is mostly at lower grade, 42 work as workers, 11 as staff, 9 as supervisors and only 2 as executives.

These figures revealed that position of women in tourism workforce is mainly at the bottom level. This can be because of lower educational qualification of the women who are involved in TRA. 133 (87.5%) of the women who are involved in TRA are under graduate and only 19 are above that. Indirect involvement in TRA includes weavers (45), followed by supplier of food to hotel and lodges (32) and cultural workers (4). Three women work both as weaver and supplier.

To measure association between acceptance and involvement in TRA, independent sample t test was carried out, which shows high significance between acceptance and involvement in TRA (Table 2). Acceptance regarding tourism (A₁-A₅ of Table 1) and involvement in TRA is statistically significant at 0.01 significance level. Women those who are involved in TRA have more positive acceptance than those who are not involved.

Table 2: Mean, SD, N and 't' Values of Community Acceptance According to Involvement in Tourism

Acceptance of	Involvement in Tourism	Mean	SD	N	T-value	Remarks
TRA have avenues for women	Yes	1.61	.564	152	8.330	P<0.01
	No	1.12	.846	493		
TRA are suitable for women	Yes	1.53	.754	152	6.179	P<0.01
	No	1.05	.857	493		
TRA are safe for women	Yes	1.39	.943	152	5.395	P<0.01
	No	.94	.911	493		
Govt. and NGO policies are helping women to get into TRA	Yes	.76	.976	152	3.584	P<0.01
	No	.44	.950	492		
Women empowerment is possible through TRA	Yes	1.41	.801	152	6.326	P<0.01
	No	.88	.937	492		

Husbands (1989) found a significant difference between residents' perception of tourism and with respect to social status and social class. Ming and Poh (2006) also reported association between perception regarding impact of tourism and demographics of people. Song et al. (2004) while studying residents' attitude towards impact of tourism, finds that most of the residents support the development of tourism, but with variations in attitude among different demographic strata. Long et al (1998) found an interesting result which indicates that the perceived impacts of tourism, both positive and negative, increase with increasing levels of tourism. The results suggest that resident attitudes initially increase favorability with increasing tourism development, but achieve a threshold level of development beyond which attitudes become less favorable.

While considering the socio-economic status it was seen that 369 respondents (57.2%) fell in lower SES group, 244 (37.8%) fell in middle SES group and only 32 (5%) women was

found in upper SES group. Result gave a clear picture of poor SES of women which needs improvement (Table 3).

Table 3: Socio-economic Status of Women in the Study Area

<i>Socio-economic Status Score</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>
1-8	369 (57.2%)
9-14	244 (37.8%)
15-20	32 (5%)

To find out impact of involvement of women in TRA and their Socio Economic Status independent sample 't' test was carried out. Result showed that there is significant relationship ($p < 0.01$) between involvement in TRA and SES of women (Table 3). From the mean score it is clear that women who are involved in TRA have high SES.

Table 4: Mean, SD, N and 't' values of Socio-Economic Status According to Involvement in Tourism

<i>Involvement in Tourism</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>T-value</i>	<i>Remark</i>
Yes	9.58	3.70	152	4.482	P<0.01
No	8.03	2.94	493		

The study revealed that rate of involvement of women in TRA and their SES are low in the study area. But the silver lining of the finding is that the community acceptance of tourism level is high in the study area. Results made it evident that acceptance is associated with involvement in TRA and involvement in-turn leads to high SES level of women.

Conclusion

To summarize the finding, it can be said that the rate of involvement of women in TRA was less compared to the global scenario. The level of involvement was also found to be at the bottom of the pyramid. It calls for creating awareness for greater involvement of women in higher positions of TRA. Taking into consideration the findings that women involvement in tourism related activities is more among the age group of 25 years and above, lower age group population also should be encouraged to enter in TRA. Sensitization programmes can be taken for creating awareness among women belonging to other age groups.

As the acceptance level of tourism in the study area is high, there is enough scope for increasing the rate of involvement of women in TRA. It has also been found during the study that there is a positive relationship between involvement in TRA and SES. So, it is evident that tourism activities can be used as tools for uplifting SES of women in the study area. It has been found during the study that the present SES of women is low and needs improvement.

The process of enhancing SES of women through tourism starts with the sensitization of the women community regarding involvement in TRA. Here the government and NGOs

can put in their efforts. As the community acceptance of tourism is already high, awareness campaign programmes can be arranged where the positive relationship between involvement in TRA and SES is highlighted.

As the women community starts becoming aware of TRA, avenues for their probable involvement in tourism will have to be identified. The natural skills of women community include weaving, culinary and textile crafts. The government announces different schemes for the upliftment of women from time to time. Utilizing these schemes of the government targeted at the women section, programmes can be developed for entrepreneurship development and providing incubation facilities to women.

Involvement of women in TRA can be enhanced by forming Self-Help Groups (SHGs). SHGs can facilitate the members for effective coping and handling of the problem through group activities (Mok; Cheung and Cheung, 2006). Self-help group activities can empower members to cope with problems and stress, and to establish stronger relations with the organizations that serve them and with the community where they live (Chesler, 1991; Nylund, 2000; Mok, 2001). In Assam, SHGs run by women are found to be of high grade in comparison to the groups run by men (Rao, 2009). Receiving finance is also easy for Self-Help Groups as the mechanism of lending through Self-Help Groups has gained wide popularity during the last few years and has been adopted as an important strategy by banks for lending to the poor (Bhatia, 2007).

From the above discussion, it is evident that SHGs can be a proper media for women in the study area to get involved in TRA. SHGs should get necessary training, finance and infrastructure so that they can take up appropriate activities to get involved in TRA. Different government organisations and departments can help women SHGs in this regard. Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi), Department of Forest and Department of Tourism can provide training for skill development. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and NEDFi can also provide necessary financial assistance to the groups. For production and marketing of products infrastructural facilities are must. Department of Forest and Department of Tourism can take initiative in providing infrastructural facilities to the SHGs. Therefore an integrated approach is required for increasing the number of women in higher levels of TRA in the study area. Government, different organizations and the local women should unite together to work towards betterment of women as well as the community.

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