
CHAPTER - IV

Chapter IV

DYNAMICS OF TOURISM

Introduction

Tourism is now one of the most rapidly expanding sectors within the world's largest and fastest growing industry which emerging as a growing sector of economic development with an estimated annual growth rate of 10-15% (Sreedhar 1995 a & b). Since last two decades tourism sector has been a major growth sector and a major source of employment (WTTC 1995).

The magnificent diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage of Sikkim have attracted tourists, pilgrims, naturalists, explorers, trekkers, mountaineers and adventure travelers. In view of limited industrial growth in Sikkim, tourism can become a potential source of income generation in the remote mountain regions and generate employment opportunity to local people. Over recent years the area has experienced significant changes as a result of tourism growth. Since, 1990 there has been a tremendous increase in visitors' number and its impact and implications in the area are enormous (Rai & Sundriyal 1997). This chapter describes trekking/recreational travel, its growth pattern, visitor's profession, age-sex structure, income and expenditure pattern and market trend analysis related to tourism growth etc.

4.1 Methods

The scarcity of data has led to the in-depth interviews and group discussions with practicing professionals, visitors (resident, non-resident and FITs), local community leaders, and people directly involved in tourism related activities. This section deals with both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data were collected through structured questionnaire with random sampling of 415 visitors in Yukasam-Dzongri-Goechha La trekking corridor and 225 in Khecheopalri Lake site during 1997-98 using different types of questionnaires. The interviews were conducted over a period of six months (March to May and October to December), corresponding with two-peak tourist seasons, the assumptions of a representative sample plausible. The samplings were done at different times of the day and during all days of the sample week to ensure a representative sample at both the sites.

The main attention of the visitors survey has been on preferences and behavior pattern, the attitude and overall reaction of visitors towards varieties of things such as food, accommodation, transport and communication, recreation and expenses on different items etc. The analysis of tourists' origin, their profession, income, purpose of visit, age-sex structure, and means of transport in the area used is helpful in reflecting the characteristics of tourists' behavior, expenditure pattern and

preferences. Besides visitors, tour operators were also interviewed to collect information on marketing, promotional material used for better marketing and travel industry promotions. The survey was restricted to those who are involved in this industry and in sending visitors to trekking and the Lake sites only. This was to assess the problems faced by marketing and achieving target with diverse partners around the world. The survey divided the tourism industry into following sectors viz., tour operators, travel agents, hotels, tourism associations (TAAS) and Department of Tourism, government of Sikkim. It was originally intended to have a survey of all stakeholders, but limited time and resources made possible only 35 samples. Stakeholders were selected on the basis of activeness, and interviews sought only with senior and decision-making staff. The survey paid particular attention to tour operators because these are most closely involved with sending visitors to both the sites. Before interview, each operator was briefed on the purpose of the interview to avoid the bias. The interview was conducted following face-to-face interview and lasted between 30 and 40 minutes each.

In designing the questionnaire, the major concern has been to ensure that it should not produce pre-determined results either by omitting unfavorable alternations in multiple choice questions or by suggesting desired responses through the phrasing and sequence of questions (Nixon 1954). To avoid these problems, the adopted

questionnaire comprised a series of alternate choice questions and ordering, which were arranged sequentially with a view to minimizing the bias. However, it has been realized that it is not possible to eliminate all potential bias from a questionnaire. Formally, the questionnaires underwent a pre-test examination to eliminate potential weaknesses and to add more clarity and uniformity. This was accomplished by interviewing a few tourists/operators and it was realized that some questions did not always lead to useful results. Therefore, in the final version of the questionnaire, removal of previous sets and addition of newer sets were made in the contents for reducing the pace, time and complexity, on the one hand, and clear answering on the other.

The secondary data were generated for tourist inflow information from the Tourism Department, Police Check Post (entry point), hotel/lodges, tour operators and Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI) records.

4.2 Tourism Growth

The number of tourists visiting Sikkim is growing at a very fast rate during recent years. The main reason of this high growth in tourist influx was mainly due to the relaxation in regulation that opened a number of new areas for both domestic and foreign visitors, and development of tourist facilities in Sikkim as a whole in recent years. The real growth of tourist number in Sikkim has started from 1980 onwards.

Until 1980, the state hosted only 10000 visitors, which eventually increased to more than ten times in 1998. Since 1984 there has been a steady increase in the tourists flow. In 1989 about 46416 visitors arrived in Sikkim in which 96% were domestic and 4% foreign, while in 1998 about 143410 tourists visited Sikkim, out of that 93% were domestic and 7% foreign visitors. There was some indication of a decline in visitors number during 1986 and 1987 due to the Gorkha Land Movement in the adjoining Darjeeling hills of Sikkim (Fig. 4.1). It is expected that by 2008 visitor number in Sikkim may reach upto 154180 requiring a considerable increase in bed space capacity.

Tourism in the mountain region is a highly seasonal activity. Flow of visitors distinctly has two peaks annually with low profile in January to March and July to September and high inflow during mid March to June and October to Mid December. During the spring and autumn season, the Sikkim Himalaya offers ideal conditions for recreation and trekking.

The state hosted the majority of domestic visitors compared to foreign. The majority of domestic visitors were from West Bengal (65%), followed by Delhi (10%), Bombay (6%), Madras (5%) and rest 14% from other parts of the country. The foreign visitors to Sikkim also increased during recent years comprising of the following nationality: UK (24%), USA (15%), Germany (13%), France (10%), Japan (6%), Switzerland (5%) and rest 27% from other countries. More than 85% domestic and

65% foreign visitors visited for recreation, followed by 15% domestic and 35% foreigners came exclusively for trekking. Out of the total visitors, about 42% of visitors listed their main motivation to trekking. This value does not include those visitors who merely do some trekking as part of a pleasure or culture based trip. However, despite this steady increase the reason for visits seem hardly to have changed over several years.

4.2.1 Purpose and length of visit

Concerning the purpose or reason of visit to the area, it is not easy to classify into groups because some how or other some visitors have more than a single purpose. Pleasure is the most important reason for visit for both domestic and foreign visitors. At the second level, pilgrimage is the main cause to visit the Khecheopalri Lake, while trekking has been the main cause for visiting Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La corridor (Table 4.1). Among the pilgrimage activities, visits to the monasteries and offering rituals in the lake are the most important. Bird watching and wildlife viewing were other significant reason for travel. It is evident from Table 4.1 that most of the trekking travelers visited the site to enjoy natural beauty and experiencing wilderness.

The “total tourist-visitor-days” is an important factor for the host region, because this ultimately influences the total days spent by the tourists, the requirements of hotel accommodation and catering facilities,

etc. For the visitors, the number of days of their travel and spent are important, because they would like to see as many places as possible within minimum duration. For domestic visitors, the average length of visit in Sikkim has been approximately 10 days in which on an average they spend 5 days in the trekking corridor. In case of foreign visitors, the average length of the entire journey has been 15 days, spending about 8 days in trekking. In the case of Khecheopalri Lake majority (80%) of foreign visitors spent on an average 3 days in the site. A few (20%) spent 3-5 days for viewing the surrounding area.

4.2.2 Pattern of trekking

The Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La corridor inside the Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) recently designated, as a biosphere reserve is the most popular trekking destination in Sikkim. Trekking travel in this trail started in 1960. A Kalimpong based tour operator as stated by local people arranged the first organized trek in 1973. Sikkim State opened its borders to foreigners in 1980. The rise of Sikkim popularity as an adventure travel destination began in 1990. The period 1992-97 showed a steady rise in the number of tourists who entered Sikkim for trekking purposes (Fig. 4.2). In 1997 about 2002 visitors came exclusively to trek in the high mountains. The Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI) also conducts 8 training courses consisting of 1379 trainees. The trail is crowded particularly during

summer and fall seasons (Table 4.2). Foreign visitors need an entry permit to visit Sikkim as well as trekking corridor for a maximum duration of 15 days. The foreign visitors are allowed to go to trek only in groups of at least 4 persons. Tour operators arrange the visit and charge daily rates, including food and guides at rates ranging from US\$ 25 to 50 per person per day. Alternatively, domestic visitors may trek without group. In later case, economic benefits may be dispersed more widely among the local people. But the major source of tourist related income is from guided trek. Thus huge amount of foreign visitors' investment goes to travel agents.

Since ancient time Sikkimese people visited Khecheopalri Lake for pilgrimage purposes. Tourists started coming in this lake after 1980 (according to local people) and the number increased at a high rate since 1990. The data on tourists' flow to this site were not properly recorded and maintained. The magnitude of tourist flows may testify to the increasing economic importance of tourism but in other hand its impact on the lake ecosystem seems serious. Visitors' number has grown rapidly from 16068 in 1997 to 18713 in 1998 (Fig. 4.3). Approximately 55% were domestic followed by 42% Sikkimese pilgrims and 3% foreign visitors. The visit to Khecheopalri Lake is distributed throughout the year. According to local people and observation during survey time, the April and October months are relatively representative of the overall mix of

visitors. The majority of the domestic visitors came from West Bengal State of India. Most of the foreign visitors were free and independent trekkers (FIT's).

4.2.3 Age-sex structure of visitors

Analysis of age structure of tourist arrivals indicates that the middle age-group visitors (21-60 years) had a dominant position at both the sites. It was observed from Table 4.3 that the tourist below the age of 20 years constitute only 1%, while above the age group of 60 have been also estimated 1% each. The percentage of male visitors had been higher than the female for both domestic and foreign visitors mainly due to difficult terrain and inaccessibility.

4.2.4 Educational level and profession of the visitors

In terms of educational qualification of visitors, majorities of both domestic and foreign visitors were bachelor degree holders. A small fraction of domestic and foreign visitors had educational qualification below graduation level (Table 4.4). This shows that the educational qualification did not play major role in trekking travel motivation.

In reference to profession-wise distribution of domestic and foreign visitors, executives (government sector) recorded the highest percentage, followed by students, businessmen and retired personnel at both the sites (Table 4.5).

4.2.5 Mode of travel

It is obvious from Table 4.6 that the principal mode of travel to the sites by both domestic and foreign visitors were reserved taxi, followed by shared taxi and least by government run buses. For non-resident visitors, tour operator organized taxis, while the resident visitors arranged themselves. The FIT's generally preferred government run buses and single seat shared taxi.

4.2.6 Type of accommodation availed

During the survey, it was observed that bulk of domestic and foreign visitors took accommodation in tourist huts, followed by hotel/lodges. But this has changed in 1998 mostly because of construction of 3 star hotel at the Yuksam. Presently more than 50% of the domestic and foreign visitors are staying in hotels at Yuksam. Except one, other hotels are lower budget hotels that offer simple budget accommodation. All budget lodges need to improve their toilets and bathing facilities and housekeeping. But in the Khecheopalri lake site, majority of the visitors (domestic and foreign) stayed in tourist hut as hotel facilities are not available. A very few foreign visitors and Sikkimese pilgrims preferred to stay in monasteries (Table 4.7). About 40% of the domestic visitors preferred to stay at Pelling. Huts at Yuksam, on trekking route and Khecheopalri Lake are not in an appealing condition for trekkers seeking

quality service. Huts need to have basic cleanliness, clean and working toilets and bathrooms, clean sheets and blankets, and also clean kitchens.

4.2.7 Income structure and expenditure pattern

The per capita per day spending of the tourist is an important factor having economic significance. As referred to already, it is influenced by the income of the tourists, the relative prices of different classes of products/services they purchase while on travel. Majority of the domestic visitors belonged to the lower-middle (Rs.2000 to Rs 6000) and middle class (Rs 6000 to Rs 10000) income groups. In the case of foreign visitors, they belonged to the middle and upper middle class (Rs 10000 to Rs 20000) (Table 4.8). During personal conversation, a large number of foreign visitors expressed that visiting India is cheaper than most of the other countries. A positive correlation between the duration of stay and spending capacity was observed, i.e., high income group tourists stayed more and spend more at the sites in comparison to relatively low income group tourists. The major source of tourist related income was from organized treks. Though the trainees of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI) is small in number but significant contributor to the overall picture of tourists' activity in the trekking corridor. They frequently employ hundreds of pack animal porters to carry their goods and equipment from Yuksam to base camp, and add a significant amount to the local economy.

The tourist-cum-pilgrims from the Sikkim visited the Khecheopalri Lake more frequently than the tourists from distant areas. The expenditure pattern has been classified into 4 main groups, that is: (i) boarding and lodging, including entertainment, (ii) internal transport, (iii) shopping, and (iv) miscellaneous. In fact, the expenditure pattern is one of the most important, rather the central parameter, in the surveys of tourist traffic, on account of multiplying economic benefits derived from the foreign exchange brought in by the foreign tourists and spent by them. The average per capita expenditure incurred by both domestic and foreign visitors ranged from US\$ 5 to US\$ 45 depending upon the nature of income and type of trek. Food and lodging is the most important item of expenditure. The expenditure on this item is slightly higher in case of foreign visitors than their counterpart at both the sites. Shopping for both types of visitors was placed on second position. Most of the FIT's spend very less as compared to those who come through organized trek. But their expenditure directly goes to the local community.

4.2.8 Visitors opinion and reaction

About the opinion of the "food", majority of the domestic and foreign visitors considered it as "Good" in quality as well as in taste, whereas lack of good restaurants at both the sites have also been noted. When asked about the accommodation facility, most of the visitors stated that it was just about "Average". The trekker huts were over-crowded

during peak tourist season and camping at sites are generally observed (Plate 2b).

The general opinion of visitors about the local people from both the sites is very satisfactory. Both domestic and foreign visitors consider local people as “hospitable, charming, cheerful and very religious” (Table 4.9 & 4.10). A very few domestic visitors contacted the government run Tourist Information Center at Gangtok, on the other hand most of the foreign FITs received information from the tourist information center at Gangtok. Overall, the visitors were satisfied with the assistance and facilities provided by tourist information center as well as tour operators.

A considerable number of the visitors strongly showed their discontentment about the condition of the trail. Most of the domestic and foreign visitors frequently mentioned about the litter along the trail and campsite. In general, most of the visitors expressed their satisfaction about the local hospitality and food. However, a few visitors were disappointed during stay in trekker’s huts. As a whole majority of the domestic and foreign visitors were satisfied with the site appearance. For a sustained rate of growth of the tourist industry, the complaints, however, deserve urgent attention and remedial measures.

4.3 Tourism Marketing

Sikkim does not have visibility in the market compared to other Himalayan destinations such as Nepal, Bhutan, Ladakh and Tibet. In

addition there is a general vague notion in the market that Sikkim is difficult to get into and that permits are difficult to obtain. There is very little coverage on Sikkim in the press media. There is little awareness about Sikkim in the general travel public in India with the exception of West Bengal. Internationally, there is practically no awareness of Sikkim as an ecotourism adventure travel destination in comparison to other Himalayan adventure destinations. There is little or no television coverage because of permit restrictions. This section discusses approaches taken to regulate tourism by operator and institutions involved with sending visitors to trail and the Lake site.

4.3.1 Marketing products

Sikkim's most conspicuous attraction is its excellent biodiversity. This is what sets Sikkim aside from other Himalayan destinations. In addition Sikkim Kargu and Ningmapa monasteries are located at study sites and have an ancient history and the art has largely been well preserved in several monasteries. The monastic culture is well preserved and has not been well exposed to the international market. The high altitude areas especially the Khangchendzonga (the third highest mountain) base camp area and sacred lakes would offer a great tourism product. Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La trekking corridor is the only high altitude trek route open for marketing to the serious trekkers in Sikkim. During the spring/summer and autumn trek season, the agency based and

private treks are operated by both TAAS and non-TAAS members. HMI operated its mountaineering training programs. There are non-trekking domestic visitors who also came upto Yuksam and its environs. There are a few visitors to Yuksam in the winter months too. A trek day is operated on similar lines as in Nepal. Breakfast is generally western, packed lunch and hot dinner is served with menus of western, Indian and Sikkimese items. Tour operators were most active with value adding practices such as providing information about destinations (Table 4.11). Before the adventure and trek product can be promoted in particular, Sikkim needs to be promoted as a destination with its special unique selling points both in India as well as in the international market. At the same time, attract and satisfy/maintain quality clients certain products have to be developed. Currently one/two agents are selling diversified trek products in Nepal and Bhutan as well as Tibet in order to be able to have a year round offer of products. Sikkim trek product has a fairly short season in the spring/summer and autumn, which may be diversified to offer year round attractions.

4.3.2 Promotional materials

Maintenance and promotion of natural, social and cultural diversity is essential for long-term sustainable tourism, and creates a resilient base for the industry. In most of the areas there is a lack of tourism promotion in general and trekking in particular. Lack of promotional measures in

Sikkim is a great hindrance for selling its products. Presently the promotional activities adopted by Sikkim based tour operator is advertising in only Indian News Papers and Magazines, selling to direct walk-in clients, a few operators with proven service are handling referral business from Nepal, a few operators are handling business from foreign individual motivators and agents. Some operators have established E-mail and one operator a Website.

TAAS and some operators have developed promotional brochures. These brochures are used for marketing but only 3 or 4 operators have acceptable quality materials for the international market (Table 4.12). Tourism department brochure is mostly aimed at the domestic market with package tour information and two brochures covering destination information and adventure/trek options. A good quality brochure would be of most important for tourism marketing.

4.3.3 Economic worth of the tourism industry

The price of products that offered by tour operator varies between operators and quality of products. About 15 TAAS agents are actively operating treks on the Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La route with 303 pax (persons) and non-TAAS members with 591 pax as observed in 1997. A few agents also operated short trek or walk on the Pemayangtse/Khecheopaltri/ Yuksam/ Tashiding route. The trek price for foreign visitors varied between US\$ 25 to 50 per person per day

depending on the group size and services provided. Some times the trek price was as low as US\$ 15 per person per day as has also been quoted in a competitive situation or in the case of walk-in clients where probably service level was sacrificed. Agents who are more aware of the trek market in Nepal and other parts of India seem to have quoted between US\$ 35 to 60 per pax per day to position the product more realistically in terms of competitive trek products in Nepal. But there are also low quality treks being operated by some agents who undertake treks from clients at a given price. The trek price was low for domestic visitors and varied between US\$ 15 to 35 per person per day depending on the quality of service. Most of the income generated by tour operators was from guided trek. Assessing the economic value of the tour operator is a complex task. The estimated total turnover from tourism was at Rs 11728289 (US\$ 286080) in 1998 (Table 4.13). An additional income was also generated from the sale of local crafts to the visitors. About 13 agents are spending between 10% to 25% of their profit or income revenue generally on marketing activity.

4.4 Conclusion

Sikkim has a great wealth of natural and cultural attractions and really does not need large investment in hotel construction. As a matter of fact these would scar the landscape of Sikkim. Adventure/trekking travel is growing very fast and there is a need to link with environmental

awareness among both visitors and host community, with the need to maintain cultural traditions, and the benefits derived from tourism should act as incentives to promote conservation practices and mitigate environmental degradation. Travel agent plays a key role in the development of travel industry with wide coverage in television, besides press and consumer magazine. For better marketing, tour operators should attend some of the important travel marts in Asia and Europe to be able to make contact with foreign agents to generate future business. Time to time press release on travel industry, events, festivals and any new area opening should be sent to travel trade publication and other media. Agent fame trips is the best way to get an agent to see the product first hand and meet with ground operators. Once an agent is excited about the destination and experiences its people's hospitality, there is a good chance he of selling the destination.

Table 4.1. Distribution of tourists classed on the purpose of the visit at the study sites, 1997-1998

Purpose	Yuksam–Dzongri–Goechha La Corridor				Khecheopalri Lake			
	Domestic		Foreign		Domestic		Foreign	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Holiday/Pleasure	36	20.34	73	30.67	96	61.94	73	73.00
Trekking/ Mountaineering	123	69.49	155	65.13	3	1.94	19	19.00
Religious/pilgrimage	10	5.65	7	2.94	56	36.12	6	6.00
Others	8	4.52	3	1.26	-	-	2	2.00
Total	177	100.00	238	100.00	155	100.00	100	100.00

Table 4.2. Seasonal variation in visitors inflow to the study sites, 1997-1998

Seasons	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor						Khecheopalri Lake					
	Domestic		Foreign		HMI		Domestic		Foreign		Local Pilgrims	
	Individual	Groups	Individual	Groups	Individual	Groups	individual	Groups	Individual	Groups	Individual	Groups
Winter	6 (0.94)	2	18 (2.72)	7	315 (22.84)	5	685 (8.65)	98	74 (14.37)	25	178 (3.45)	18
Spring	35 (5.45)	7	146 (22.05)	30	342 (24.80)	5	1900 (23.94)	271	198 (38.45)	66	3440 (66.85)	344
Summer	287 (44.70)	37	145 (21.90)	37	351 (25.45)	6	2253 (28.38)	322	118 (22.92)	39	763 (14.83)	76
Rainy	31 (4.83)	8	26 (3.93)	6	181 (13.13)	4	558 (7.03)	80	37 (7.18)	12	252 (4.89)	25
Fall	283 (44.08)	50	327 (49.40)	52	190 (13.78)	2	2540 (32.00)	363	88 (17.08)	29	514 (9.98)	51
Total	642	104	662	132	1379	22	7936	1134	515	171	5147	514

Values in parentheses are percentages

Table 4.3. Distribution of tourists by age and sex categories in the study sites, 1997-1998

Age-group	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor								Khecheopalri Lake							
	Domestic				Foreign				Domestic				Foreign			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Below 20	3	1.69	1	0.56	5	2.10	3	1.26	6	3.87	2	1.29	2	2.00	2	2.00
21 – 40	96	54.24	30	16.95	83	34.87	57	23.95	71	45.81	38	24.52	29	29.00	22	22.00
41 – 60	47	26.55	-	-	59	24.79	20	8.40	20	12.90	13	8.38	21	21.00	19	19.00
Above 60	-	-	-	-	8	3.36	3	1.26	2	1.29	3	1.94	4	4.00	1	1.00
Total	146	82.49	31	17.51	155	65.13	83	34.87	99	63.87	56	36.13	56	56.00	44	44.00

Table 4.4. Classification of tourists on educational qualification, 1997-1998

Education level	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor				Khecheopalri Lake			
	Domestic		Foreign		Domestic		Foreign	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Upto Senior Secondary	35	19.77	38	15.97	69	45.52	18	18.00
Bachelor Degree	110	62.15	140	58.82	75	48.39	63	63.00
Master Degree	22	12.43	49	20.59	5	3.23	8	8.00
Other	10	5.65	11	4.62	6	3.87	11	11.00
Total	177	100.00	238	100.00	155	100.00	100	100.00

Table 4.5. Profession-wise distribution of tourists visiting the study sites, 1997-1998

Profession	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor				Khecheopalri Lake			
	Domestic		Foreign		Domestic		Foreign	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Govt. Service	99	55.93	96	40.34	93	60.00	38	38.00
Professional / Private Sector	25	14.12	120	50.42	12	7.74	46	46.00
Business	16	9.04	9	3.78	8	5.16	7	7.00
Students	37	20.90	8	3.36	6	3.87	6	6.00
Retired persons	-	-	5	2.10	7	4.52	3	3.00
Others	-	-	-	-	29	18.71	-	-
Total	177	100.00	238	100.00	155	100.00	100	100.00

Table 4.6. Mode of travel of visitors to the study sites,1997-1998

Mode of travel	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor				Khecheopalri Lake			
	Domestic		Foreign		Domestic		Foreign	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
SNT (Bus)	17	9.60	26	10.92	30	19.35	75	75.00
Private Bus	31	17.51	37	15.55	-	-	-	-
Reserved Taxi	28	15.82	150	63.03	115	74.19	10	10.00
Shared Taxi	101	57.06	25	10.50	10	6.45	15	15.00
Total	177	100.00	238	100.00	155	100.00	100	100.00

SNT=Sikkim Nationalized Transport

Table 4.7. Distribution of tourists according to the types of accommodation
availed,1997-1998

Accommodation availed	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La trekking corridor				Khecheopalri Lake			
	Domestic		Foreign		Domestic		Foreign	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Hotel/lodges	54	30.51	116	48.74	114	73.55	-	-
Trekker's hut	116	65.54	60	25.10	7	4.51	93	93.00
Tent	7	3.95	62	26.05	-	-	-	-
Monastery	-	-	-	-	19	12.26	7	7.00
Others	-	-	-	-	15	9.68	-	-
Total	177	100.00	238	100.00	155	100.00	100	100.00

Table 4.8. Per cent of income level categories of tourists visiting the study sites, 1997-1998

Income level category*	Yuksam-Dzongri-Goecha La trekking corridor		Khecheopalri Lake	
	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
Less than Rs 2000	13.65	-	15.82	-
Rs 2001-6000	56.70	-	59.33	-
Rs 6001-10000	27.18	0.84	22.00	1.14
Rs 10001-20000	2.47	7.45	2.85	9.30
Above Rs 20000	-	91.71	-	89.56

*Income per month

Table 4.9. Opinion of visitors (%) on Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La Corridor, 1997-1998

Visitors' Opinion	Likert-scale				
	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion
Local people's hospitality	64	27	7	-	2
Quality of local food	19	63	14	1	3
Accommodation at Camp site	7	67	12	8	6
Scenery	78	22	-	-	-
Wildlife sightings	-	2	36	40	22
Environmental awareness of staff	25	49	13	10	3
Litter at Camp-site & along the trail	17	23	51	9	-
Condition of the trail	-	11	60	29	-
Condition of the corridor forest	25	46	19	10	-

Table 4.10. Opinion of visitors (%) on the Khecheopalri Lake, 1997-1998

Visitors' Opinion	Likert-scale				
	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion
Local people's hospitality	78	20	-	-	2
Quality of local food	60	22	7	-	11
Accommodation at lake site	36	55	7	-	2
Scenery	74	26	-	-	-
Litter in the lake surrounding area	11	34	25	20	10
Condition of the lake	15	30	24	10	21
Condition of the lake surrounding forest	16	61	6	7	10

Table 4.11.Types of tourism products offered by the tour operators to the visitors,
1997-1998

Products	Tour Operators	
	Number	%
Trekking	6	17
Cultural/Religious Tours	3	9
Mountaineering Expedition	1	3
Bird watching/Butterfly	1	3
Rafting/Water sports	2	6
Rhododendron/Orchid trek	2	6
Package tour/ sight scene	20	56

Table 4.12. Promotional measures used by tour operators, 1997-1998

Promotional measures	Tour operators	
	Number	%
Website	6	17
National News Paper	5	14
Travel Magazine	8	23
Tourism/Trade Fair & Conference	5	14
T. V. Channel (Local)	4	11
Sign Board/Banner	7	21

Table 4.13. Revenue received by TAAS and Non-TAAS members from tourists visiting Sikkim

Years	Revenue (US\$)		
	TAAS members	Non-TAAS members	Total
1996	72240	159320	231560
1997	78968	172976	251944
1998	96960	189120	286080

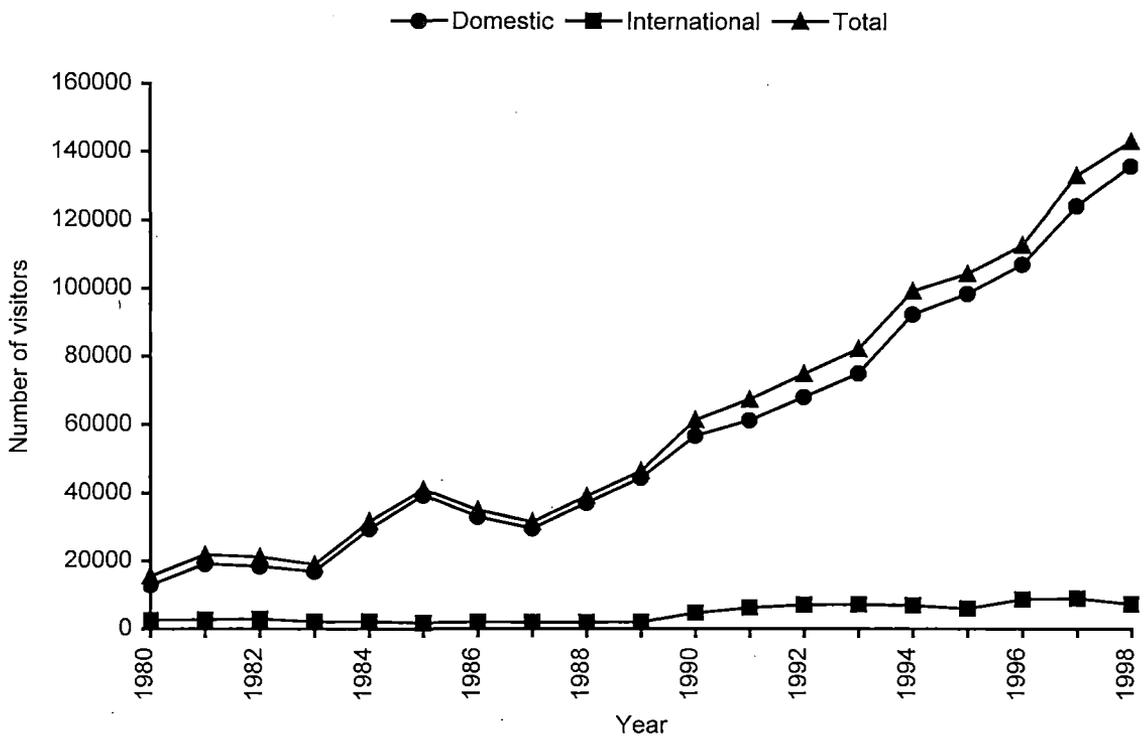


Fig 4.1. Yearly visitor profile from 1980 to 1998 in Sikkim

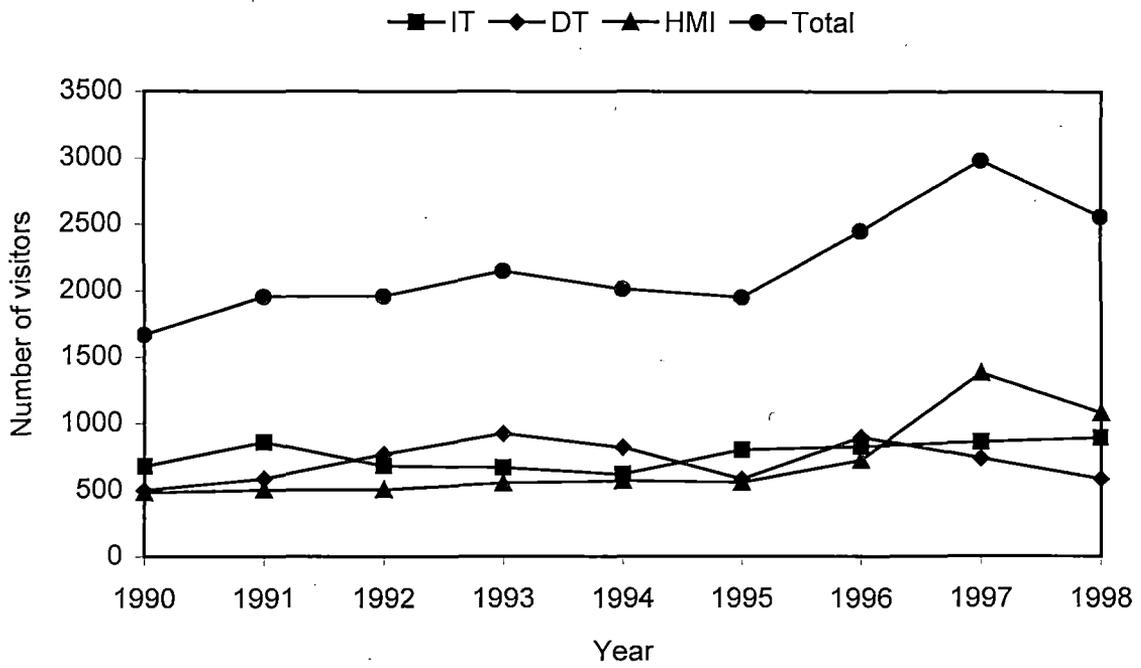


Fig. 4.2. Annual flow of visitors to the Yuksam-Dzongri-Goechha La trekking corridor (IT=International tourist; DT=Domestic tourist; HMI=Himalayan Mountainering Institute)

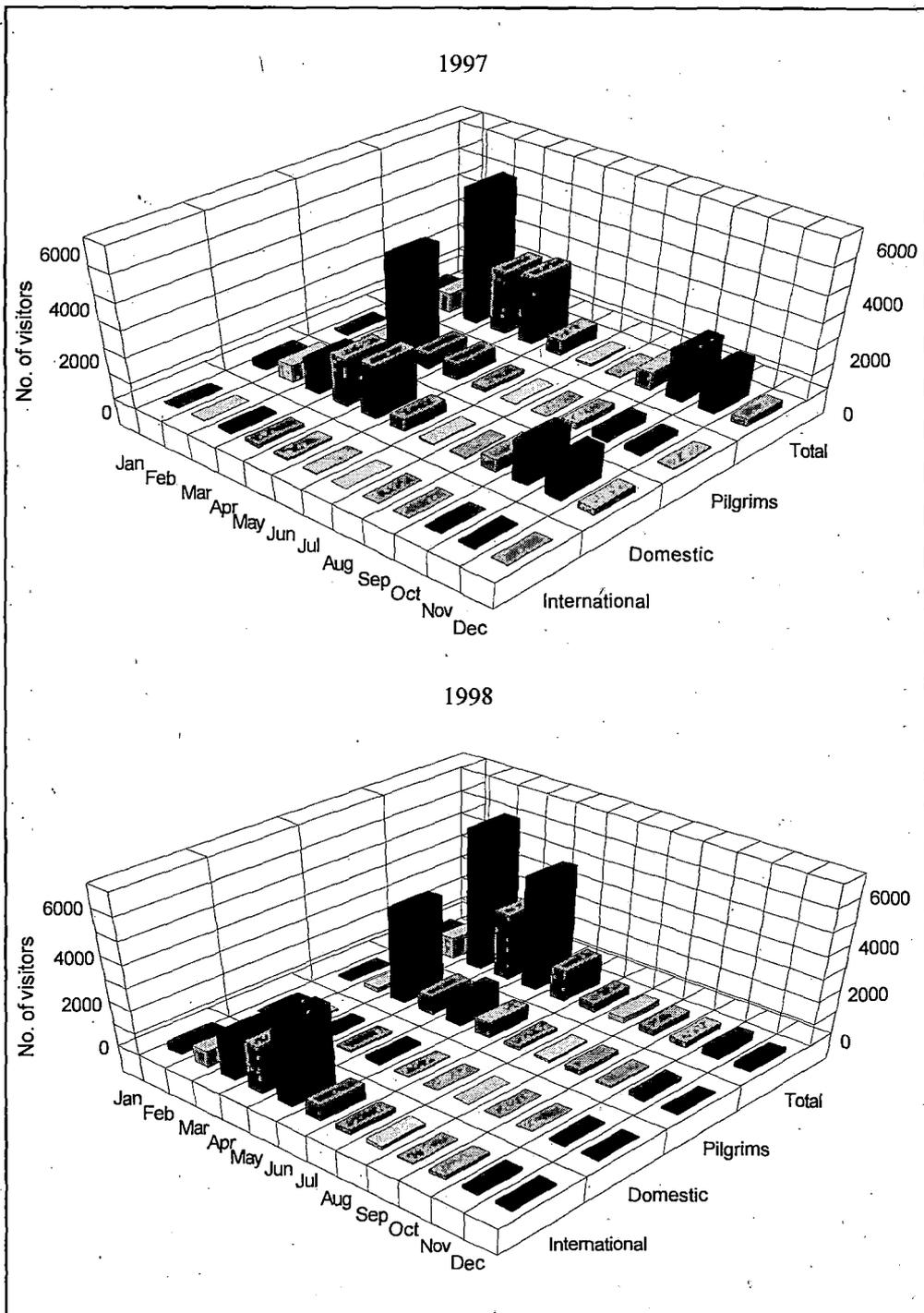


Fig. 4.3 Visitors flow in Khecheopalri lake during 1997 and 1998