

*Role of Hotels in the Promotion of Tourism in Manipur- A Case
Study of Select Hotels in Imphal City*

Dr. Chithung Mary Thomas¹

Associate Professor,
Dept. Of Management & Business Studies
D.M. College of Commerce
Imphal, Manipur -795001 –India

Waikhom Nichinta Devi²

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Tourism & Hospitality Management
Kha Manipur College
Kakching, Manipur – 795103 – India

Abstract: Tourism as a source of socio-economic phenomenon has evolved into one of the largest and fastest growing industries of the world. The multiplier effect of tourism in terms of employment generation and income re-distribution are unique. Moreover its extensive backward and forward linkages make it particularly potent as an instrument of economic growth. Tourism to a great extent depends on the range and type of hotels available at the destination. Hotels are a core area of tourism playing a distinctive role in the developments of this ever-expanding industry. In a state like Manipur where potentials for industrialisation could not be exploited and realised till date, tourism has become a favoured means of mitigating the socio-economic problems. Concerned efforts have been taken up in the recent past to promote tourism. This paper attempts to examine the nature & characteristics of some select hotels operating within the city of Imphal. It attempts to evaluate to what extent these hotels are able to meet the needs of both foreign and domestic tourists vis-à-vis products offered, marketing tools used and services rendered. The key importance of the study is the assessment of the existing deficiencies in the hotels undertaken in the study and to suggest measures so that supply meets the potential demand. The value added of the paper lies in adopting a framework of strategies to be adopted for overcoming deficiencies, treading the unexplored potential and pointing to certain service conditions so that hotels can play a pro-active role in development of tourism industry in Manipur.

Keywords: Tourism Competitiveness, Rural Tourism, Local Community, Environmental Sustainability, ICT.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hotel is the main basic component of tourism. Hotels provide accommodation, meals and refreshments for the irregular periods of time for those who may reserve their accommodation either in advance or on the premises. In broad terms, hotel provides facilities to meet the needs of the modern traveler. The concept of hotel has transformed itself as hospitality industry on account of its utility in tourism and life away from home. A hotel has been focused around the relationship between the tourists as customers and the destination as service provider.

Tourism is to a great extent depend on the range and type of hotels available at the destination. Hotel is a core area of the tourism industry and plays a distinctive role in the development of this ever-expanding industry. An hotel is an establishment which supplies board and lodging, not engaged in interstate commerce' or in any interstate commerce, competitive with or affecting interstate commerce (or so related thereto that the regulation of the one involves the control of the other), but is a quasi-domestic institution retaining from its ancient origin certain traditional, and acquiring, in its modern development, certain statutory rights and obligations to the public, where all persons, not disqualified by condition or conduct, prepared to pay for their accommodation, are to be received and furnished with a room or place to sleep or occupy if such accommodations are

available, and with such services and attention as are incident to their use of the hotel as a home, and food at stipulated prices and without or with contract as to duration of visit, and which conducts, within the confines of its physical locations, this business of supplying personal services of individuals for profit. The hotel may furnish quarters and facilities for the assemblage of people for social, business or entertainment purposes, and may engage in renting portions of its premises for shops and business whose contiguity is deemed appropriate to a hotel. In the recent past, we have been asked several times about the actual supply of hotel rooms in Manipur. Taking into account all approved and un-approved hotels, we estimate this figure to be close to 2121 rooms. This is an abysmal figure for a state of Manipur's size and population. An increase in business sentiments, leading to higher business related travel or increase in foreign tourist arrivals causes occupancy in markets to go up dramatically.

II. RELEVANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Hotel is a place which supplies boarding and lodging or a place for the entertainment the travelers. From users point of view hotel is an institution of commercial hospitality which offers it facilities and services for sale. Its location places the hotel geographically in or near a particular city or village' within a given area location denotes accessibility and the convenience and attractiveness of surroundings and the appeal it presents, freedom from noise and other nuisances.

Its facilities which include bedrooms, restaurants, bars, function rooms, conference halls, and recreation facilities such as swimming pools, represent facilities for the use of its customers. Its service comprises the availability and extent of particular hotel services provided through its facilities and the quality of these in such terms as degree of personal attention, speed and efficiency.

First hoteliers in Manipur were the kings who accommodations their client in their palace at places of pilgrimage like Kangla, Langthabal, Khongjom, Kaina, Moirang, etc. for in those days most travels were for pilgrimage. Present paper is finds to study the role of hotels in the promotion of tourism in Manipur from the different types of products offered available these hotels. The relevance of the present study emanates from the following facts: i) Manipur is becoming a hospitality hub in the North East India, according to Manipur Tourism (Tourism Department of Manipur) ii) the aware of facilities available hotels in Manipur as a standard of the world class facilities available in India. In this context, it is quite relevant to make a detailed study of pattern of facilities available to Manipur through India, particularly in respect of world class facilities; and to make an exploratory and descriptive study of the role of hotels in the promotion of tourism from the perspective of the different types of facilities available in the hotels.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this research paper is aimed at evaluating the role of Hotels in Manipur in promotion of tourism. To case archive the main objective, some specific objectives are considered as follows.

- i) To find out the nature & characteristic of the hotels under study.
- ii) To analyze different types of products offered.
- iii) To find out the number and quality of manpower employed in the hotels.
- iv) To study the marketing mix employed.
- v) To analyses the STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES and THREATS of the various hotels.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

Ho – There is no significant relationship between hotel industry & growth of tourism in Manipur.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology which was followed, for conducting the study, is discussed under the following heads:

- (i) Topic: “Role of hotels in promoting tourism in Manipur”.
- (ii) Operational area of the study: The study was conducted in Imphal.
- (iii) Type of research: The study is mainly exploratory and descriptive in nature.
- (iv) Type of Universe: The units of the study are those elite hotels in Imphal as provided by the Tourism Department Govt. of Manipur.
- (v) Size of the Units: Ten hotels were selected as sample size of the study.
- (vi) Type of sampling used: Stratified random sampling was conducted for the hotels under study.
- (vii) Type of data used: Both primary and secondary data were used for the study.
- (viii) Method of data collection: Questionnaire cum interview method was used to collect primary data. The questions were structured and undisguised consisting of both open ended and close ended.
- (ix) Data presentation & analysis: Data collected are presented in tables & graphs and mainly descriptive analysis was made.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

1. Nature & Characteristics of Hotels under study:

TABLE I.I: Table Depicting Nature & Characteristics of Hotels

Sl.No.	Name of Hotel	Particulars						
		Year of Est.	Nature of Service	Category	Certification	Affiliation	Location	Type of Org.
1	The Classic Group of Hospitality Ltd.	2009	Fooding, Lodging, Tour Operator	3,4 star	ISO:22000:2005	FHRAI	North AOC	Pvt.
2	Hotel Avenue	1982	Lodging	Nil	None	None	Thangal Bazar	Pvt.
3	New Hotel Airlines	2008	Fooding, Lodging, Tour OP	Nil	None	None	Thangal Bazar	Pvt.
4	Hotel White Palace	2001	Lodging & Fooding	Nil	None	None	Thangal Bazar	Pvt.
5	Bheigo Hotel	1998	Lodging & Fooding	Nil	None	None	WahengbamLeikai	Pvt.
6	Nirmala Hotel	1997	Lodging & Fooding, Tour Package	Nil	None	None	Thangal Bazar	Pvt.
7	Hotel Mass	1989	Fooding, Lodging, TA, Tour Package	Nil	None	None	Assembly Road	Pvt.
8	Hotel Tampha	-	Lodging & Fooding	Nil	None	None	North AOC	Pvt.
9	Youth Hostel	1987	Lodging & Fooding	Nil	None	J.V.	KhumanLampak	J.V.
10	Hotel Imphal	-	Lodging & Fooding, Tour OP	Nil	None	J.V.	North AOC	PPP

Source: Field Survey

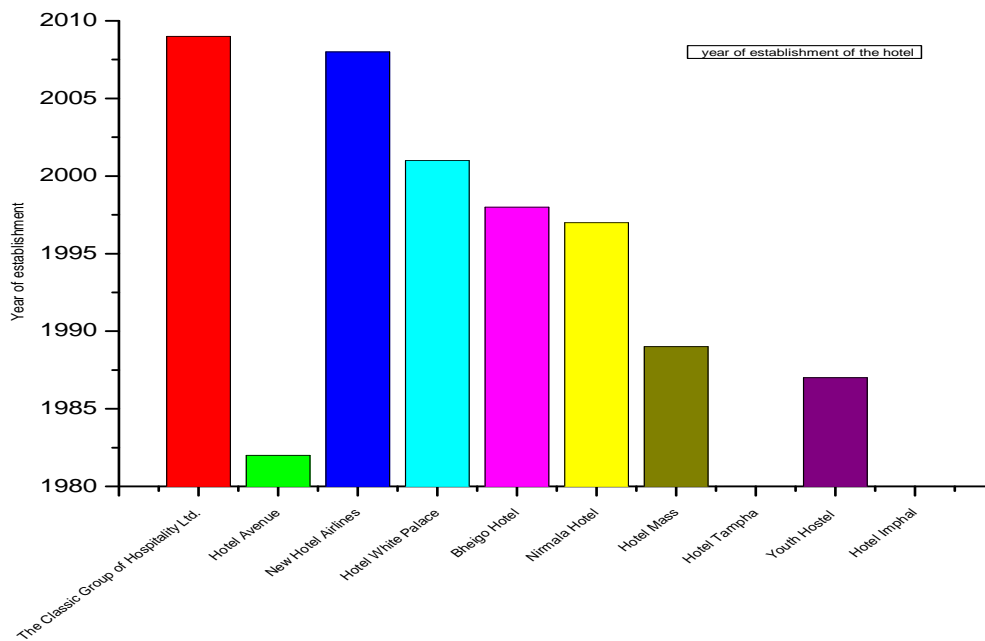


Fig. 1: Depicting Nature & Characteristics of Hotels

i. Year of Establishment

Year	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1981 – 1990	4	40%
1991 – 2000	2	20%
2001 – 2010	3	30%
2011 – 2013	10	10%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

Interpretation: The above table shows that 60% of the hotels were already in existence between 1981 – 2000. Four of the other hotels were established between 2001 – 2013.

ii. Nature of Service Provided

Sl.No.	Nature of Service	No. of Respondent	Total	Percentage
1	Lodging	10	10	100%
2	Fooding	9	10	90%
3	Tour Operator	5	10	50%

Source: Field Survey

From the table above it is clear that all the hotels under study provide lodging facilities to customers. 90% also offers fooding and only 50% offer Tour operations.

iii. Category

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
5 star	0	0%
3 star	1	10%
Non	9	90%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

There is only one hotel viz. The Classic Hotel which belong to 3 Star category. The rest 90% are man-categorized.

iv. Certification from Statutory Body

Certification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Certified	1	10%
Not Certified	9	90%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

90% of the hotels did not possess any certification or standardization except the Hotel classic which was certified by ISO;22000:2005.

v. Affiliation to Federation

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Affiliation to FHRAI	1	10%
Non – affiliated	9	90%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

Except one respondent (The Hotel Classic) 90% were not affiliated to FHRAI.

vi. Type of Organisation

Type of Orgn.	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Sole Proprietor (Pvt.)	8	80%
2. Govt. owned (Public)	-	-
2. Partnership (Joint Venture)	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

It is evident from the table that 80% of the hotels are privately owned by sole proprietors. None are public while there were two hotels run on PPP model.

vii. Location

Location	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Greater Imphal	10	100%
2. Rural	0	0
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows that all of the hotels surveyed were located within the greater Imphal area.

TABLE I.II: Analysis of Product Offered

Sl.No.	Name of Products	Yes	Percentage	No.	Percentage	Not Specified	Percentage
1	Room service	10	100%	0	0%		
2	Restaurant	7	70%	3	30%		
3	Fitness Centre	3	30%	7	70%		
4	Catering	6	60%	4	40%		
5	Boutique	3	30%	7	70%		
6	Laundry	5	50%	5	50%		
7	Business Centre	4	40%	6	60%		
8	Car Park	5	50%	5	50%		
9	Travel Desk	6	60%	4	40%		
10	Concierge service	3	30%	7	70%	2	20%
11	Tour Package	5	50%	5	50%		
12	Tour guide	5	50%	5	50%		
13	Transport facilities	5	50%	5	50%		
14	Debit & Credit card	2	20%	8	80%		
15	ATM	2	20%	8	80%		
16	Foreign Exchange	1	10%	9	90%		
17	Lobby	9	90%	1	10%		
18	Salon & Spa	1	10%	9	90%		
19	Internet	5	50%	5	50%		
20	Doctor	8	80%	8	80%		
21	Conference Hall	7	70%	3	30%	1	10%
22	Banquet hall	5	50%	5	50%		
23	Executive Board room	3	30%	7	70%		
24	Event Management	4	40%	6	60%		
25	Outdoor Entertaining	2	20%	8	80%		
26	Cultural Program	1	10%	9	90%		
27	Swimming Pool	0	0%	10	10%		
28	Indoor Game	0	0%	10	10%		
29	Indoor park	2	20%	8	8%		

Source: Field Survey

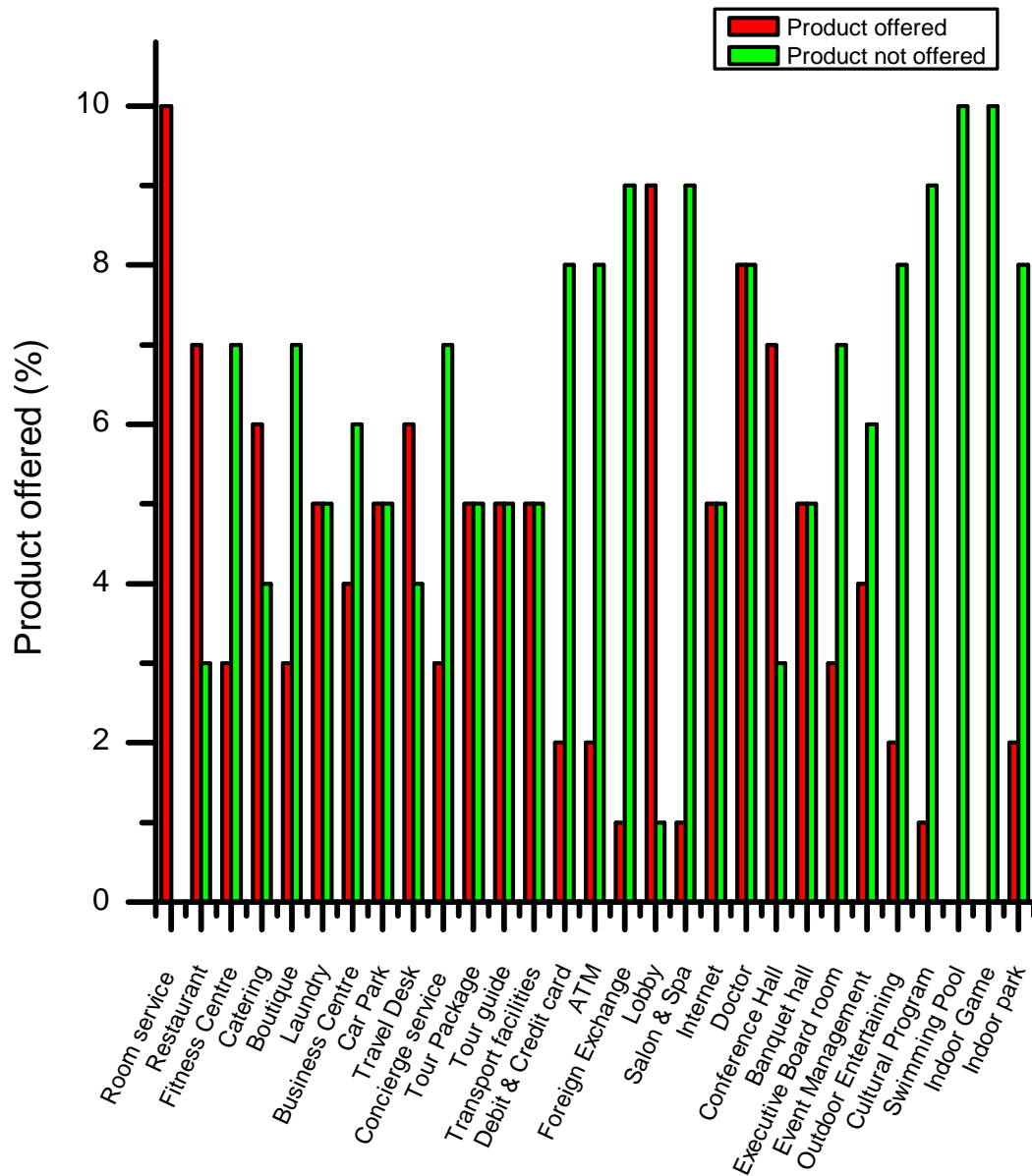


Fig. 2: Analysis of Product Offered

From the above chart, it can be seen that majority of the hotels are offering lodging, fooding and tour guide facilities. The main deficiencies are found to be in the area of fitness centre, boutique, business centre, debit & credit card, ATM, Foreign exchange, salon & spa, executive board room, event management, outdoor entertaining, cultural programs swimming pool, indoor games, indoor park. The rest of the products are somewhat satisfactory.

Number of Rooms

1	The Group of Classic Hotel	226
2	Hotel Avenue	7
3	New Hotel Airlines	11
4	M/S Hotel white Palace	27
5	Bheigo Hotel	22
6	Nirmala Hotel	49
7	Hotel Mass	25
8	Hotel Tampha	110
9	Youth Hostel	10
10	Hotel Imphal by Classic	55

Source: Field Survey

Interpretation: The table shown that the Group of Classic Hotel and Hotel Imphal by Classic Hotel have the most number of rooms with 281 rooms, and Hotel Tampha has the 2nd most number of rooms with 55 rooms each hotel. Moreover, Nirmala Hotel has the 3rd most no. of rooms with 49 rooms. Altogether there is a total of no. of rooms available in the Hotels under survey.

TABLE I.III: Analysis of Employees
Number of Employees

1	The Classic Hotel	300
2	Hotel Avenue	5
3	New Hotel Airlines	20
4	Hotel white Palace	12
5	Bheigo Hotel	24
6	Nirmala Hotel	50
7	Hotel Mass	19
8	Hotel Tampha	3
9	Youth Hostel	20
10	Hotel Imphal by Classic	55

Source: Field Survey

TABLE I.IV: Marketing Mix
Number of Employees

Sl.No	Promotion	No. used	%
1	Advertising		
	1. Newspaper.	7	70%
	2. Magazine	3	30%
	3. T.V.	3	30%
	4. Internet	3	30%
2	Website	2	20%
3	Hoarding	2	20%
4	Others	2	20%

Source: Field Survey

Hotels having separate Marketing Department

Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

Interpretation: From the above table it is clear that most of the hotels use newspaper mostly to promote their hotels & products. 30% used magazine, TV and Internet respectively. 20% uses website's hoarding others.

Again 70% of the hotels have separate marketing department white 30% do not have a separate marketing department.

TABLE I.V:Customer Analysis

Sl.No	Category of Customer	Most	Moderate	Somewhat	Seldom	Never
1	Official	5	5	-	-	-
2	Business	5	4	-	-	1
3	Sports	1	4	3	1	1
4	Health	-	6	2	1	1
5	Political	-	4	5	-	1
6	Visitors (Friends & Relatives)	1	6	1	2	-
7	Missionaries	1	3	3	1	2
8	Adventure	1	3	2	1	3
9	Academic	1	3	3	1	2

Source: Field Survey

Interpretation: Customers in all hotels were mostly or moderately on official work. Visitors on business were also ranked mostly & moderately. Sports related customers were ranked moderately by 40% of hotels. 60% of the hotels ranked moderately for visitor on health reasons political clients were ranked moderately & somewhat by 40% ranked moderately for visitors (Friends & relatives), the rest were evenly distributed.

TABLE I.VI:Linkage Analysis
Industry Partners:

Sl.No	Name of Partner	Yes	%	No	%
1	Government	1	10%	9	90%
2	Travel Agents	1	10%	9	90%
3	NGOs	1	10%	9	90%

4	Community	-	10%	10	100%
5	Suppliers	-	10%	10	100%

Source: Field Survey

Interpretation: None of the hotels except the Classic Hotels have industry partner. Only the Classic Hotel had linkages with Govt. Departments, Travel agents and NGOs.

VII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- All 10 hotels are providing lodging facilities and 70% provided fooding and 50% provided Tour operators.
- 60% of hotels were established between 1981 – 2000. While 30% were established between 2001 – 2010 and 1 was established between 2010 – 2014.
- 90% of existing hotels were non-category hotels with only Classic Hotel was a 3 star category hotel. None except.
- The Classic hotel possessed ISO:22000:2000 Certification. Only 20% were affiliated to FHRAL.
- 80% of hotels were privately owned by sole proprietors while two were joint ventures with the state govt.
- Products offered were quite limited. They were confined to mainly conventional and traditional consisting mainly of room service, restaurants, Travel desk.
- Doctors conference hall, other addl. essential products of modern tourism needs were negligible if not locally missing only the Classic Hotel & Hotel Imphal by Classic were found to be providing some additional products.
- Customers occupying hotels were mainly found to be a) Business, b) Official c) Visitors visiting family and friends.
- Only the Classic Hotel was found to have struck partnership with Govt., Travel agents and NGOs, None were found partnering at community level.
- 70% of the hotels possessed a separate marketing department while 30% did not possess so.
- 70% used conventional method of promoting through newspaper. 30% used magazines, television and through internet. Only 20% had hosted websites, Hoarding was practiced by only 20%.
- None of the mangers/proprietors possessed any formal training.
- 80% of hotels lacked vision and motivation.
- Almost all hotels lacked co-ordination with State Tourism department.
- State owned or unity owned ventures were poorly managed than privately owned hotels.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- The hotels should move every from traditional ways of providing accommodation and move towards providing state of the art accommodation. This will lead to economic, social contract and commercial activities resulting in economic development.
- Since accommodation constitutes the most vital and fundamental part of tourist supply, hotels should be tailored to fit the need and comfort of varied types of tourist.
- Both traditional (hotels, motels) and supplementary (camps, youth Hostels etc.) accommodation should be made to act as incentive to international tourism.
- In state Government should consider the possibility of including tourism projects and particularly those relating to accommodation, in the list of projects eligible for loans from their industrial or other corporation, and that where required, they should establish special financial corporation's for tourism.

5. The government should give sympathetic consideration to the possibility of granting special facilities and incentives for accommodation projects.
6. In Manipur, no hotel industry operating today can be unaware of the swift pace of global change and its impact on every fact of the hospitality industry.
7. Hotels must contently conduct research to identify what will be required in the competitive environment of the present and future with its intense focus on serving customer needs.
8. A good employing information technology to drive business success in this information driven era is not only the path of least resistance, but vital, to virtually every aspect of operations.
9. A strategic planning focus is not only essential, but must embody a concept of planning for the future that anticipated change, rather than being based exclusively on historical models.
10. Hotels in Manipur must have a well-designed organizational structure and must build management capabilities to deal with one of the most critical challenges and diversity in the market place.
11. Training and development programs must be conducted for the existing hotels to sensitize and orient the traditional hotels to adapt to the changing scenario of hospitality industry.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that the accommodation and fooding, product offered strategic and planning management and facilities are presently implemented to promote tourism in Manipur are very weak and there is an urgent need to develop appropriate and workable role for promoting tourism in Manipur. In this research, the findings and suggestions made in the study could help in promoting the tourism industry. Due to the high frequency of changing opportunities trends, surveys are to be conducted now and then to enable to implement appropriate role of hotels.

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AUTHOR(S) PROFILE



Dr. Chithung Mary Thomas is serving as Associate Professor, Department of Management and Business Studies, D.M. College of Commerce, Imphal, Manipur. She is a member of ITC. She has written research papers on various areas related with tourism and hospitality industry in Manipur.



Ms. Waikhom Nichinta Devi, M.Sc. in Tourism Management, Asst. Professor, Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Kha-Manipur College, Kakching is actively engaged in tourism related researches and is a member of ITC.