

A STUDY ON TOURISTS' SATISFACTION LEVELS REGARDING SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF ASSAM TOURISM

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INTRODUCTION

Despite immense tourism potential that Assam reflects, it has not been able to cash in on the same, failing even in the domestic market. While in case of India, many States have shown the required urgency to promote tourism as a major industry, Assam seems to take a backseat and is unaware of its enormous tourism potential bestowed by nature, and harness it in a sustainable manner. There are, however several reasons for this – one very significant reason being – Communicating of 'Assam' in the same manner at all places. Assam is either projected as "the land of Brahmaputra" or "the land of one horned rhino" or "the land of Bihu". It seems like there is nothing else in Assam to offer to the world.

Assam seems to have been following the traditional principle of marketing - "sell what you produce". Whereas the need of the hour is to innovate and follow the modern marketing principle "produce what you can sell". Assam is bestowed in all respects, so it need not rely on phrases like "the land of Brahmaputra" or "the land of one horned rhino" or "the land of Bihu", to draw more and more tourists. Significant research is now required for innovative strategies and implementing innovative practices for effective communication based on the types, desires, needs, requirements, tastes, motives, etc. of tourists, both domestic as well as foreign.

To begin with in this direction, this paper aims at analysing/studying the perceptions of tourists visiting Assam about their satisfaction regarding pertinent aspects of Assam tourism. This paper is based on partial primary data obtained and used for an ongoing research work by the 1st author.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives behind this research work are as under:

- a) To study Satisfaction of Respondents-Tourists with Tourism Packages Related Information
- b) To study Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Tourism Spots Related Information
- c) To study Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Package Prices Related Information
- d) To study Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Tourist Guides Related Information
- e) To study Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Customer Support Related Information
- f) To study Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Overall Quality of Information
- g) To study Reaction of Respondents-Tourists Regarding Matching of Information

METHODOLOGY

The present research study is exploratory in nature.

The population of the present study comprised of tourists who are currently visiting Assam. The population of tourists consists of Domestic tourists from Assam, Domestic tourists from outside Assam and Foreign tourists.

The sample size has been fixed at 400 (four hundred only). Sampling has been done using non probability sampling. To ensure proper representation of the population, Snowball sampling has been used.

A total of 400 (four hundred only) questionnaires were distributed among tourists who visited Assam, dividing the respondents into two categories – Domestic and Foreign, during December, 2016 to April, 2017. A total of 250(Two fifty only) questionnaires were distributed among Domestic tourists and a total of 150(one fifty only) questionnaires were distributed among Foreign tourists.

Out of the 250 domestic tourists, duly filled-up questionnaires were obtained from 212(two hundred twelve) composing 84.8% of the total 250 domestic tourists, 15.2% being the percentage of domestic tourists who did not respond. Out of the 150 foreign tourists, duly filled-up questionnaires were obtained from 85(eighty-five) composing 56.67% of the total 150 foreign tourists, 43.33% being the percentage of foreign tourists who did not respond.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

a) Satisfaction of Respondents-Tourists with Tourism Packages Related Information

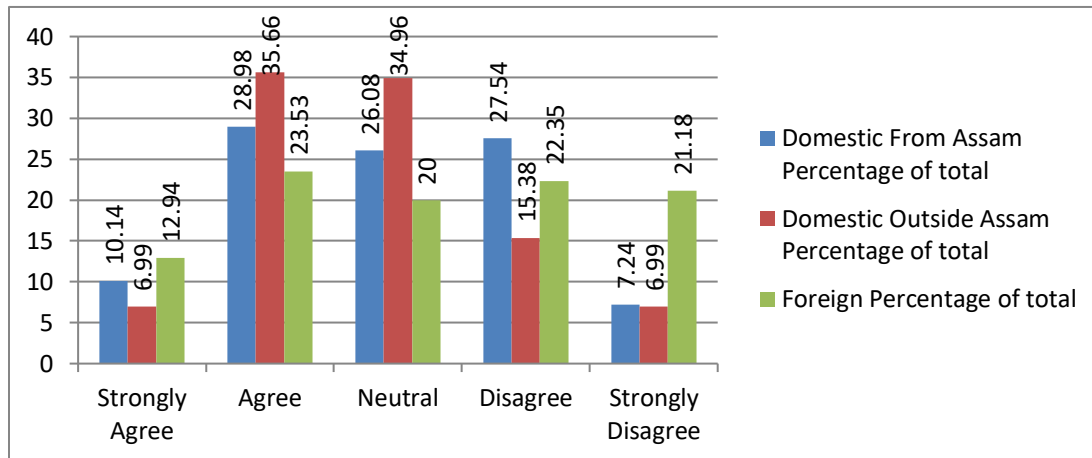
Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places behind the visit of Assam with Tourism Packages Related Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level Of Respondents-Tourists with Tourism Packages Related Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table 1.1: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourism Packages Related Information

Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
				I am satisfied with the Tourism packages related information available to me about "Assam as a tourism destination"	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	7	
Percentage of total	10.14	28.98	26.08	27.54			7.24	100	
		Outside Assam but within India	Responses	10	51	50	22	10	143
			Percentage of total	6.99	35.66	34.96	15.38	6.99	100
	Foreign		Responses	11	20	17	19	18	85
			Percentage of total	12.94	23.53	20	22.35	21.18	100
Part -B									
Symmetric Measures									
				Value	Approx. Sig.				
Nominal by Nominal	Phi			.282	.003				
	Cramer's V			.199	.003				
N of Valid Cases				297					
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis. b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.									

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.1: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourism Packages Related Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.1(Part-A) and Diagram 1.1, it can be observed that a large percentage of tourists from all the categories are satisfied with the tourism packages related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ higher being among the domestic tourists Outside Assam but within India. However it should be kept in mind that a large number of domestic tourists hailing from Assam and foreign tourists in are also dissatisfied with the tourism packages related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’, the percentage of dissatisfied tourists being more among the foreign tourists.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table 1.1 shows that there is significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the tourism packages related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the tourism packages related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

b) Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Tourism Spots Related Information

Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourism Spots Related Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourism Spots Related Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table-1.2: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourism Spots Related Information

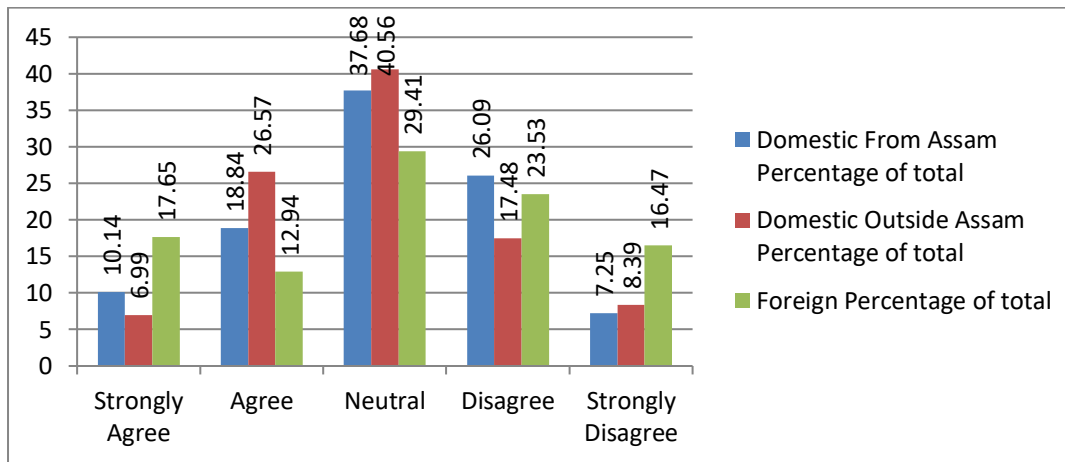
Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
				I am satisfied with the Tourism spots related information available to me about “Assam as a tourism destination”	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	7	13
Percentage of total	10.14	18.84	37.68				26.09	7.25	100
Outside Assam but within India	Responses	10	38		58	25	12	143	
	Percentage of total	6.99	26.57		40.56	17.48	8.39	100	
Foreign	Responses	15	11		25	20	14	85	
	Percentage of total	17.65	12.94		29.41	23.53	16.47	100	

Part-B			
Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.250	.018
	Cramer's V	.177	.018
N of Valid Cases		297	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
 b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.2: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourism Spots Related Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.2(Part-A) and Diagram 1.2, it can be observed that there is more satisfaction among the domestic tourists with the tourism spots related information available currently of ‘Assam as a tourism destination’. However, the percentage of the foreign tourists is more who are dissatisfied with the tourism spots related information available currently of ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table 1.2 shows that there is significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the tourism spots related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the tourism spots related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

c) Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Package Prices Related Information

Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourism Package Prices Related Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourism Package Prices Related Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table-1.3: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Package Prices Related Information

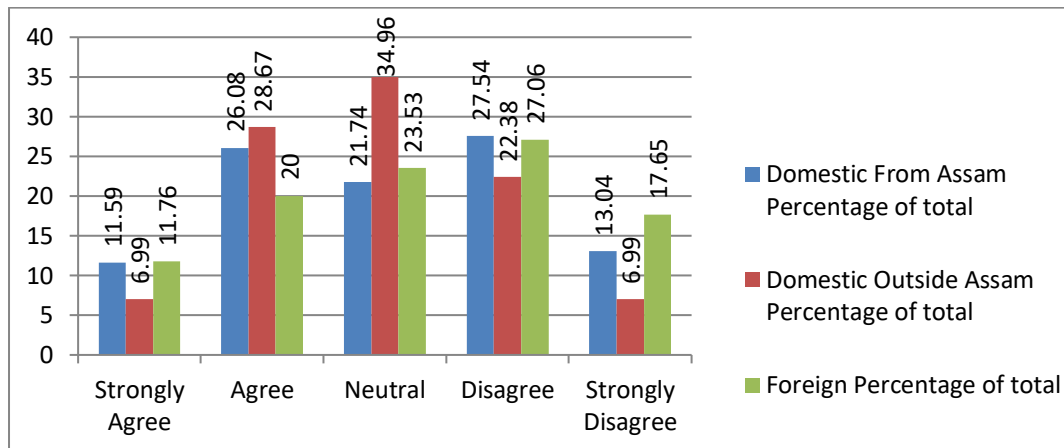
Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
				I am satisfied with the package prices related information available to me about 'Assam as a tourism destination'	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	8	18
Percentage of total	11.59	26.08	21.74				27.54	13.04	100
Outside Assam but within India	Responses	10	41		50	32	10	143	
	Percentage of total	6.99	28.67		34.96	22.38	6.99	100	
Foreign	Responses	10	17		20	23	15	85	
	Percentage of total	11.76	20		23.53	27.06	17.65	100	

Part B			
Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.213	.098
	Cramer's V	.150	.098
N of Valid Cases		297	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
 b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.3: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Package Prices Related Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.3(Part-A) and Diagram-1.3, it can be seen that there is a greater dissatisfaction among the foreign tourists regarding the tourism package prices related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’. There are also a significant percentage of domestic tourists in both categories who were dissatisfied with the tourism package prices related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table-1.3 shows that there is no significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the tourism package prices related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the tourism package prices related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

d) Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Tourist Guides Related Information

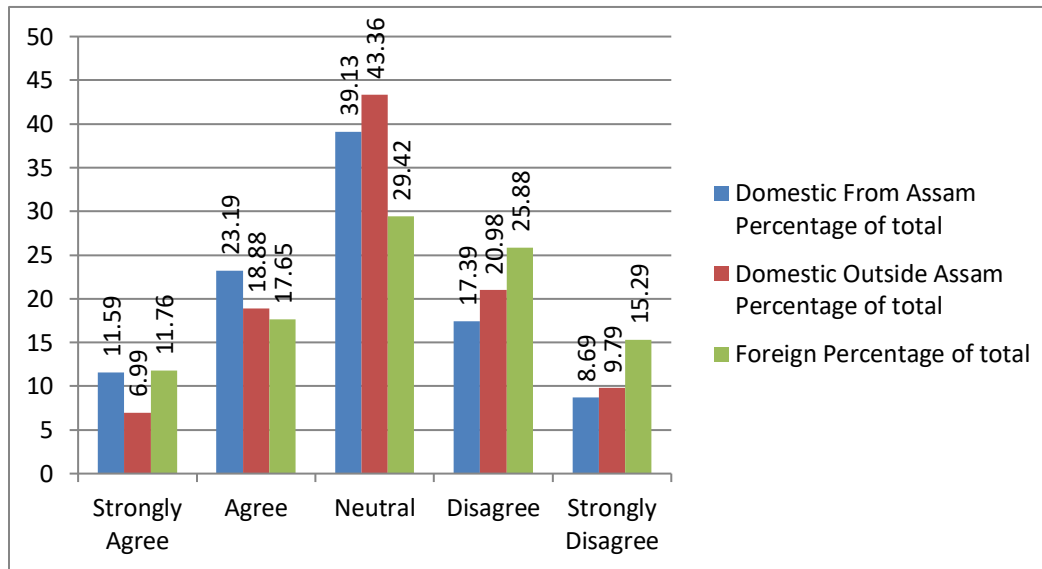
Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Guides Related Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Guides Related Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table 1.4: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourist Guides Related Information

Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
I am satisfied with the Tourist guides related information available to me about 'Assam as a tourism destination'	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	8	16	27	12	6	69
			Percentage of total	11.59	23.19	39.13	17.39	8.69	100
	Outside Assam but within India	Responses	10	27	62	30	14	143	
		Percentage of total	6.99	18.88	43.36	20.98	9.79	100	
	Foreign	Responses	10	15	25	22	13	85	
		Percentage of total	11.76	17.65	29.42	25.88	15.29	100	
Part-B									
Symmetric Measures									
			Value	Approx. Sig.					
Nominal by	Phi		.168	.400					
Nominal	Cramer's V		.119	.400					
N of Valid Cases			297						
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis. b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.									

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.4: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Tourist Guides Related Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.4(Part-A) and Diagram 1.4, it is observed that there is significant dissatisfaction among the tourists of all the categories regarding the tourist guides related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’. Domestic tourists hailing from Assam were more satisfied with the tourist guides related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table-1.4 shows that there is no significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the tourist guides related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the tourist guides related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

e) Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Customer Support Related Information

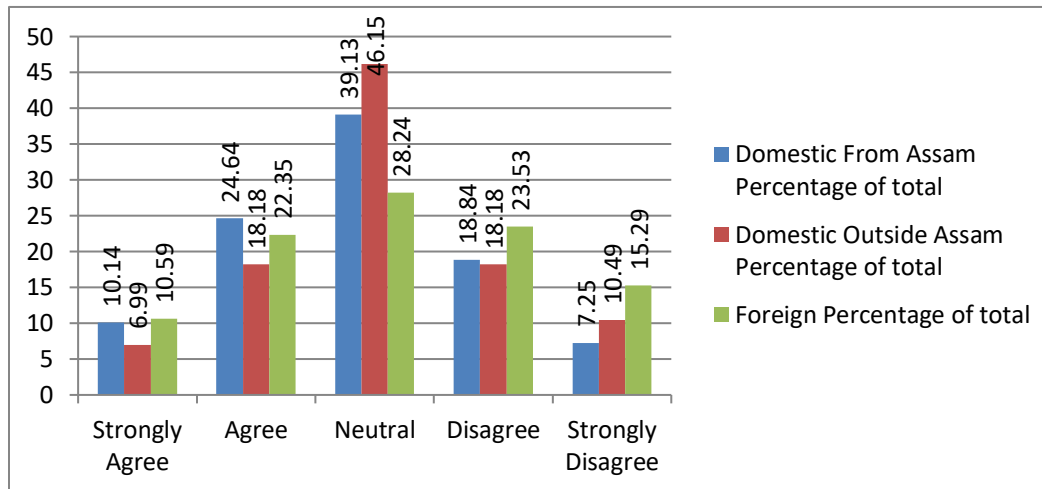
Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Customer Support Related Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Customer Support Related Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table 1.5: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Customer Support Related Information

Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
				I am satisfied with the customer support related information available to me about 'Assam as a tourism destination'	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	7	
		Percentage of total	10.14	24.64		39.13	18.84	7.25	100
	Domestic	Outside Assam but within India	Responses	10	26	66	26	15	143
			Percentage of total	6.99	18.18	46.15	18.18	10.49	100
	Foreign		Responses	9	19	24	20	13	85
				Percentage of total	10.59	22.35	28.24	23.53	15.29
Part-B									
Symmetric Measures									
			Value	Approx. Sig.					
Nominal by Nominal	Phi		.179	.301					
	Cramer's V		.127	.301					
N of Valid Cases			297						
<p>a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.</p> <p>b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.</p>									

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram- 1.5: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Customer Support Related Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.5(Part-A) and Diagram-1.5 it can be observed that the percentage of tourists who were satisfied with the customer support related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’, is higher among domestic tourists hailing from Assam, followed by foreign tourists and then by domestic tourists Outside Assam but within India. However, the percentage of tourists who were dissatisfied with the customer support related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ was more among the foreign tourists compared to the domestic ones.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table-1.5 shows that there is no significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the customer support related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the customer support related information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

f) Satisfaction Level of Respondents-Tourists with Overall Quality of Information

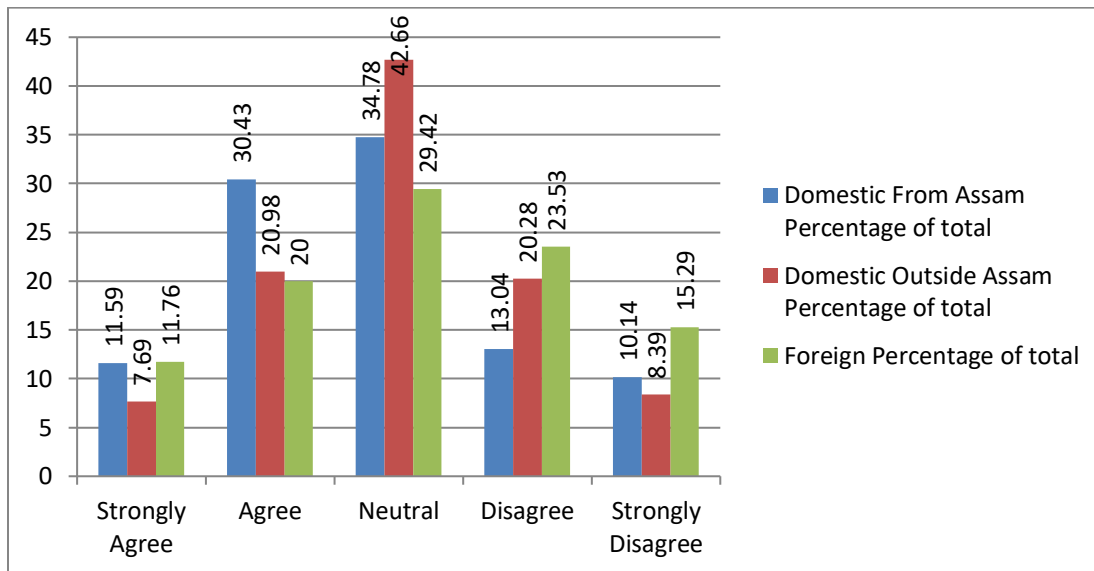
Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Customer Support Related Overall Quality of Information? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding Tourist Customer Support Related Overall Quality of Information are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table 1.6: Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Overall Quality Of Information

Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
				I am satisfied with the overall quality of information available to me about 'Assam as a tourism destination'	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	8	
Percentage of total	11.59	30.43	34.78	13.04			10.14	100	
	Outside Assam but within India		Responses	11	30	61	29	12	143
			Percentage of total	7.69	20.98	42.66	20.28	8.39	100
	Foreign		Responses	10	17	25	20	13	85
			Percentage of total	11.76	20	29.42	23.53	15.29	100
Part-B									
Symmetric Measures									
			Value	Approx. Sig.					
Nominal by Nominal	Phi		.190			.217			
	Cramer's V		.134			.217			
N of Valid Cases			297						
<p>a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.</p> <p>b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.</p>									

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.6: Percentage Distribution Of Satisfaction Level Of Respondents-Tourists With Overall Quality Of Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.6(Part-A) and Diagram-1.6, it can be observed that the percentage of tourists who were satisfied with the overall quality of information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ is higher among domestic tourists hailing from Assam. Still there is a higher level of dissatisfaction among the domestic tourists hailing from Outside Assam but within India and foreign tourists with the overall quality of information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’, compared to the domestic ones.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table-1.6 shows that there is no significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who are satisfied with the overall quality of information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’ and those who are not satisfied with the overall quality of information currently available about ‘Assam as a tourism destination’.

g) Reaction of Respondents-Tourists Regarding Matching of Information

Corollary Research question: [i] What were Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding matching of Tourist Customer Support Related Information disseminated and experienced? [ii] Whether sample opinions regarding Satisfaction level of the tourists hailing from different categories of places regarding matching of Tourist

Customer Support Related Information disseminated and experienced are expected to be similar in the population or not?

Table 1.7: Reaction of Respondents-Tourists Regarding Matching Of Tourist Customer Support Related Information disseminated and experienced

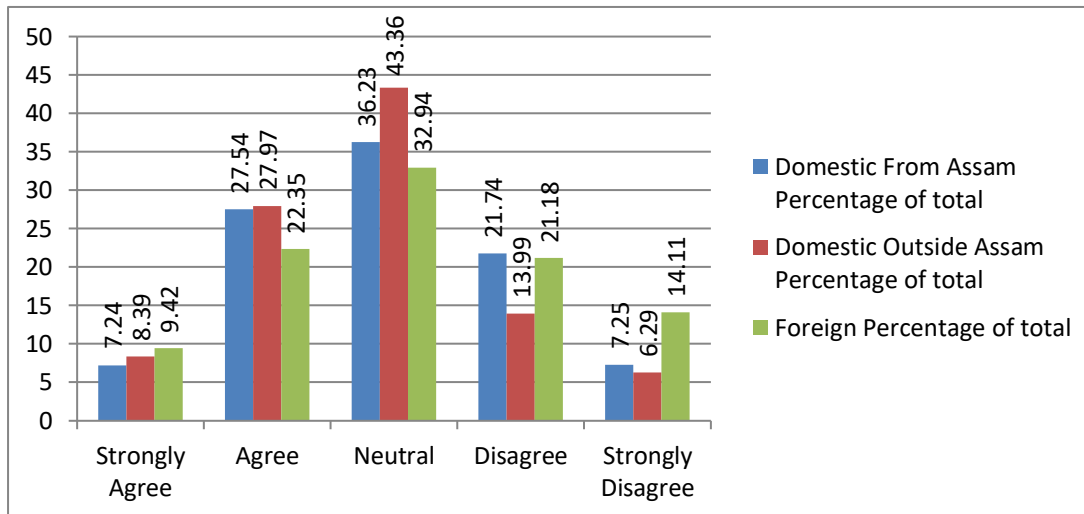
Part-A									
Statement	Type of tourists			Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly	Total
				Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree	
I believe that the information provided to me before coming to Assam match what I actually experienced here	Domestic	From Assam	Responses	5	19	25	15	5	69
			Percentage of total	7.24	27.54	36.23	21.74	7.25	100
	Outside Assam but within India	Responses	12	40	62	20	9	143	
		Percentage of total	8.39	27.97	43.36	13.99	6.29	100	
	Foreign	Responses	8	19	28	18	12	85	
		Percentage of total	9.42	22.35	32.94	21.18	14.11	100	

Part - B			
Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.172	.358
	Cramer's V	.122	.358
	N of Valid Cases	297	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
 b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source of table: Compiled from Survey data

Diagram 1.7: Percentage Distribution Of Reaction Of Respondents-Tourists Regarding Matching Of Information



Source : Compiled from survey data

From the sampled data in Table-1.7(Part-A) and Diagram-1.7, it can be seen that the percentage of domestic tourists hailing from Assam and domestic tourists hailing from Outside Assam but within India who believed that the information provided to them before coming to Assam match what they actually experienced here, is greater than the percentage of foreign tourists. However, it can also be seen that the percentage of tourists who did not believe that the information provided to them before coming to Assam match what they actually experienced here, is more among the foreign tourists, compared to the domestic ones.

The Phi and Cramer’s V test in Part-B of Table-1.7 shows that there is no significant difference in the population between the perception of tourists who believe that the information provided to them before coming to Assam match what they actually experienced here and those who do not believe that the information provided to them before coming to Assam match what they actually experienced here.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of perception of the domestic and foreign tourists to Assam in this paper gave us an idea that current status of customer communication of tourism in Assam is not very satisfactory. Most of the domestic tourists have been found to be from Assam. While this is a sign loyalty and belongingness, the lesser numbers of domestic tourists hailing from Outside Assam but within India is a warning sign to the revenue generation of the tourism industry in Assam. A lot needs to

be done in order to attract and retain more tourists from other states and other countries as well. More research needs to be carried out on the prospects and possibilities of introducing/adopting/adapting some Internet and TV based innovative practices for attaining effectiveness in customer communication of 'Assam as a tourism destination'.