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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	CLOUD BASED TECHNO-ECONOMY MODEL FOR RURAL SECTOR <i>RUCHIR SAXENA & DR. RIPURANJAN SINHA</i>	1
2.	EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF STEEL INDUSTRY OF INDIA <i>V. KASTHURI & DR. R. VENKATACHAM</i>	8
3.	IMPACT OF I.T. IN HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES AND COMPETENCY <i>DEEPAK KUMAR, DR. NIRDOSH KUMAR AGARWAL & DR. SUBODH NALWAYA</i>	14
4.	A STUDY OF CUSTOMER PREFERENCES OF MOBILE BANKING AND BARRIERS IN ADOPTION OF MOBILE BANKING SERVICES IN SELECTED CO-OPERATIVE BANKS IN PUNE CITY <i>SHRI AMOL D LONDHE & P. CHATTOPADHYAY</i>	17
5.	DATA MINING AND IDS (INTRUSION DETECTION SYSTEM) <i>P. RAMACHANDRAN & DR. R. BALASUBRAMANIAN</i>	22
6.	IDENTIFICATION OF HIPOS AMONGST HIGH PERFORMING EMPLOYEES AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT <i>ADITH DEV AKKARA, VIDHAN SHARMA, VAISHALI RAJANI, DR. RAVINDER KAUR</i>	25
7.	DIGITAL MARKETING: THE SUCCESS MANTRA <i>V.SRAVANI CHARI</i>	30
8.	TEXTILE EXPORTERS IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF TIRUPUR <i>DR. G. YOGANANDAN</i>	33
9.	A STUDY ON INVESTMENT PATTERN OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES IN COIMBATORE CITY <i>DR. K. KANNIAMMAL & JANNET.A</i>	37
10.	IMPACT OF TURNOVER RATIOS ON PROFITABILITY: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TWO AND THREE WHEELERS SECTOR IN INDIA <i>V.SANGEETHA & DR. M. KRISHNAVENI</i>	41
11.	THE CAUSATIVE EFFECT OF ADVERTISEMENT ON SALES <i>JAKKIREDDY SURESH REDDY & MULINTI CHINNA PULLAIAH</i>	48
12.	DIGITAL DIVIDE: CONSEQUENCES AND REMEDIAL MEASURES <i>M MAQBOOL PALA</i>	52
13.	SCHEDULING BASED NOTIFIED TRACKING BY RAILWAY NETWORK USING MOBILE USER APPLICATION <i>S. ARUNKUMAR</i>	54
14.	THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT ON JOB SATISFACTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR FIRMS IN KERALA <i>BINDU R</i>	56
15.	ANALYSIS AND GROWTH OF SIKKIM HANDLOOM AND HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY <i>TENZING DORJEE BHUTIA & RISHI THAPA</i>	59
16.	ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF COMPUTERIZED ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS ON AUDIT RISK: THE CASE OF AUTHORIZED ACCOUNTANTS ENGAGED IN NEKEMTE TOWN <i>KENO TELILA MIJENA</i>	63
17.	BANK SELECTION CRITERIA EMPLOYED BY CORPORATE CUSTOMERS: A CASE STUDY ON TEN SELECTED COMMERCIAL BANKS IN ADDIS ABABA CITY ETHIOPIA <i>MUSE BEYENE</i>	68
18.	PANCHAYATI RAJ IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: AN INTRODUCTION <i>KHEM RAJ</i>	85
19.	A STUDY ON CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR IN BUYING GOODS ONLINE WITH REFERENCE TO THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT <i>R. ANANTHA LAXMI</i>	89
20.	URBAN DEVELOPMENT WITH DIVERSIFICATION OF FUND: A CASE STUDY <i>RUPAK KARMAKAR</i>	93
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	96

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ANALYSIS AND GROWTH OF SIKKIM HANDLOOM AND HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses the growth of Sikkim Directorate Handicrafts and handloom industry during the past years. Sikkim handicrafts and handloom as on date is a hub of activity, development and progress showcasing the traditional arts and crafts of Sikkim. The growth and expansions of handicrafts and handloom industry in terms of physical assets, infrastructure and manpower has been impressive, having on date as many as 32 branch training centers throughout the state with a total number of 650 trainees, 13 production units with approximately 70-250 paid workers and 260 personnel including officer and support staff. There are different kinds of handicrafts and handloom products made in Sikkim and the growth of this handicraft and handloom industry is moving in a positive direction. For the overall growth of handloom and handicrafts, Directorate of Handicrafts and handloom (D.H.H) has been continuously working for the development of majority of the weavers belonging to the smallholders group living in isolated rural areas. It provides appropriate access to markets for their products and also imparts information about the recent preferences and demands of the customers. Lastly, the study explores the program implemented by the D.H.H. for the Development of handicrafts and handloom industry both in Sikkim and India.

KEYWORDS

Sikkim, handloom industry, handicrafts industry.

INTRODUCTION

Sikkim Handicrafts represents beauty, dignity, form and style. The directorate of handicrafts and handloom (D.H.H) began its history in the year 1975 when it was established as the Palden Thendup Cottage Industries Institute for Training and Production of traditional arts and crafts with 58 numbers of trainees all over the Sikkim. From the early period itself when Sikkim itself was a Country handloom and handicrafts industry has been playing a significant role in its economy in providing employment and income belonging to the weaker section of the society of the rural and semi urban areas. In the year 1975 when Sikkim became a part of India, handloom and handicraft still continues to contribute in generating income and employment to the rural and semi urban areas population till date. The Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom (D.H.H.) primary objective is not only to preserve and showcase the traditional arts and crafts of Sikkim but to promote and disseminate information regarding the policy orientation of the government in setting the highest standard comparable to the best in the world for arts and crafts, skill development and environment friendly working culture. As a policy initiative there has been tremendous investment in Skill Development Programme by the state government in assistance with central government whereby local trainees and artisans are trained in different crafts with the objective of developing and acquiring skills which will enable them not only to generate employment but in the long run to acquire self sufficiency and self reliance. To analyze the growth D.H.H of Sikkim, it had started with only 58 trainees in the year 1957 but the figures has risen to 680 trainees registered in Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom in the four districts of Sikkim. In the last decades the growth of Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom in Sikkim has evolved into major centre of learning and training of traditional arts and crafts and as on date there are 32 branch training centers throughout the state imparting training to rural youth in different eleven specific crafts. The government in order to encourage the local trainees to take training seriously it had stipend the trainees from Rs 700/- and Rs 900/- respectively to Rs 1500/- for the 1st year trainees and Rs 2000/- for the 2nd year trainees according to the government vides Notifications No: 580/C&I/2012 dated 06/08/2012. According to our survey conducted we found out that for the growth of Sikkim handloom and handicrafts industry the D.H.H. works in cooperation with the NGO's Self Help Groups, Cooperative and Panchayati Raj Institutions at the Village and Block Level integrating and creating an environment of collaboration and participation through facilitation, incentives and other policy related interventions. The development and management strategies are being worked to optimize the strength of this sector and to add value for creating new skills, ending unemployment, eliminating poverty, enhancing the status of women, preserving and encouraging tribal and local crafts and setting the pace for developing a judicious and transparent socio-economic system. To provide the marketing platform for the sale of the products made by the trainees and artisans the Sikkim Handloom and Handicrafts Ltd. was established in the year 2003 vide Registration No. 29(C) LD/2001/200 dated 18/10/2001 incorporated under registration of Companies Act Sikkim 1961 dated:16.10.2001. Promotion, Publicity and marketing of Sikkim as a Handicrafts and Handloom destination is being taken up aggressively and in a well phased manner at the local National & International level. Thus the present study will focus on the growth and impact of Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom (D.H.H.)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the growth of Sikkim Handicrafts and handloom industry.
2. To study the various types of program implemented by the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom (D.H.H.), Sikkim.

SOURCES OF DATA

The data for this article has been collected from primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include meeting the official of the Sikkim handicraft and handloom industry at the concern offices and secondary sources includes Sikkim handicraft and handloom reports, research reports, reference article and electronic sources.

DISCUSSION

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED BY THE DIRECTORATE OF SIKKIM FOR THE GROWTH OF HANDLOOM AND HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY

1. INTEGRATED HANDLOOMS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (IHDS)

During the year 2007-2008 the central government of India introduces centrally sponsored scheme called Integrated Handloom Development Scheme (IHDS) for the development of handloom and handicraft industry for North Eastern region. Sikkim being one of the North Eastern regions which has been continuously developing in the field of handloom and handicraft industry has also successfully implemented this program. The Core objective of this program was to uplift the development of lower community living in the rural area. The program was successful in reaching the lower community specially the women community who were the major beneficiary of this program who are now capable of multitasking and are contributing to the family source of income. IHDS has four components under its scheme – (i) The **Cluster Development Program** main objectives was to provide financial assistance for meeting expenditure on formation of Self Help

groups, setting up yarn depots, design development, setting up common facility center dye houses, margin money for working capital, new looms and accessories and construction of works sheds, skill up gradation and marketing opportunities. (ii) The **Group Approach** was formulated and implemented to supports those handloom weavers who were not covered by the cluster development program in groups of 10 or more and up to 100 weavers, by providing financial assistance for basic inputs; training in weaving, dyeing, designing and managerial disciplines; and construction of work sheds. Per beneficiary cost is in the range of ₹ 10,000 to ₹ 30,000. (iii) **Marketing Incentive** was provided to handloom corporation, Apex organizations and primary weaver cooperative societies, at the rate of 10% (shared 50:50 between the central and the state governments) for promoting marketing of handloom products, largely through promotion of investments in infrastructure. The program of marketing incentive motivated the different organizations to work collectively and effectively in marketing the handloom and handicraft productively. (iv) lastly up to 10% of funds under the scheme was for innovative ideas, and up to 2% allocated for publicity, monitoring, supervision, and training of officials of the development commissioner for handlooms and state directors of handlooms and state directors of handlooms as well as for evaluation of the scheme

2. MARKETING AND EXPORT PROMOTION SCHEME

The Marketing and Export Promotion Scheme, aimed at developing and promoting marketing channel in domestic as well as export markets. The department has been providing assistance to the local entrepreneur who is engaged in selling and marketing of handloom and handicraft goods. The assistance the department provides under this scheme are Marketing Promotion Program assisting the sale of handloom products by organizing exhibitions at national, regional, state and district levels, providing facilities to consumers to purchase genuine handloom products under one umbrella scheme, promoting awareness about latest designs and varieties of handloom and handicraft products, providing marketing infrastructural support, encouraging innovation in designs, fostering brand identity and technological developments among weavers. The department has also been helping in organizing special expos, craft Melas, Urban Haats, giving national awards and national Merit Certificates, registration of special designs and techniques under the Geographical Indication Act, and establishing brand image for handloom products through the handloom Mark.

3. BORDER AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM 2012-13

According to survey conducted and discussion with the official of the Sikkim Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom it was found that in the rural and semi-rural areas there exist quite a large number of school dropouts among the youth. The department objective is to take all the school dropouts and provides necessary training modules and courses in consultation with the various Central & State agencies involved in the promotion of handloom and handicrafts of the state. The objectives are to train the local semi skilled weavers and artisan and also to educated energetic youth force and channelize them into a productive socio-economic identity which already exist in the state which on the long run will provide a base for further development of the remote border region of the state. The Project aims to reduce the migration of the youth from the far flung border areas by providing capacity building and skill development training in various crafts so that they are able to generate their own source of income.

4. MARKETING SUPPORT AND SERVICES SCHEME (MSS)

The objective of the MSS scheme is to enhance the access of artisans to various markets and marketing channels, and also create awareness about handicrafts amongst consumers and public at large, both in domestic and international markets, along with creation of marketing infrastructure. The Scheme has three broad components. (i) Domestic marketing through Crafts bazaars, exhibitions, sourcing shows, setting up Urban Haats, Emporia, and warehousing facilities; and organizing Workshops, (ii) International marketing including workshops and training program, craft exchange program, participation in fairs and exhibitions, road shows, reverse buyer-seller meets and market studies abroad, and (iii) Publicity and marketing

5. SETTING UP MORE NUMBER OF OUTLETS INSIDE SIKKIM AND OUTSIDE SIKKIM

For the growth of handicrafts and handloom industries a new program Under the National Bamboo Mission has been setup. Two Sales emporiums have been set up at Namchi, South Sikkim and at New Sikkim House, New Delhi. The concept of a value added MICE Agenda- meetings, incentives, convention and exhibition are also included in the programmed under the National Bamboo Mission, D.L.E's, National Handloom Expo's and Gandhi Shilpa Bazaars.

6. COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

For the growth of handloom and handicraft industry in Sikkim there was a need for bringing togetherness among the community in the society. Directorate of handloom and handicrafts realized the working together in cooperation with NGO's, Self Help Groups, Cooperative and Panchayati Raj Institutions at the village and block level integrating and creating an environment of collaboration and participation through facilitation, incentives and other policy related interventions. The government has set up one computer aided design centre in the Directorate of Handloom and Handicraft with assistance from the Information Technology Department, Government of Sikkim and C-DAC, Kolkata and similar I.T based economy activity training centre at Namchi South Sikkim. The idea behind setting up these two centers was to upgrade the skill of local weavers/artisans to professional weavers/artisans and empower them to create and develop innovative Information technology based designs which would contribute value to the traditional products making it globally competitive and acceptable.

7. MARKETING SUPPORT AND SERVICES SCHEME (MSS)

In order to access better market for the selling of handicrafts and handloom products, Marketing Support and Service scheme (MSS) has been providing access to various markets and marketing channels, and also creating awareness about handicrafts amongst consumer and public at large, both in domestic and international marketing, along with creation of marketing infrastructure for the local entrepreneur. The Scheme has three broad components. (i) Domestic marketing through Crafts bazaars, exhibitions, sourcing shows, setting up Urban Haats, Emporia, and warehousing facilities; and organizing Workshops, (ii) International marketing including workshops and training program, craft exchange program, participation in fairs and exhibitions, road shows, reverse buyer-seller meets and market studies abroad, and (iii) Publicity and marketing

8. SETTING UP MORE NUMBER OF OUTLETS INSIDE SIKKIM AND OUTSIDE SIKKIM

With the continuous growth in Handloom and Handicrafts industry, the government of Sikkim has been setting up more number of outlets within Sikkim and outside Sikkim to cater the needs of the customer in the market. A new program under the National Bamboo Mission has been setup. Two sales emporiums have been setup at Namchi, South Sikkim and at New Sikkim House, New Delhi. The concept of a value added MICE Agenda-meetings, incentives, convention and exhibition are also included in the programmed under the National Bamboo Mission. D.L.E's, National Handloom Expo's and Gandhi Shilpa Bazaars are some of the other program formulated and implemented for the sale of handloom and handicraft products.

The table below represents the annual sales growth of the Sikkim Handloom and Handicraft industry for the past ten year. It can be seen that during some years there was growth in the sales figure but in some years there has been declined in the sales figure too. The analysis for the growth and fall in the sales figure has been discussed below.

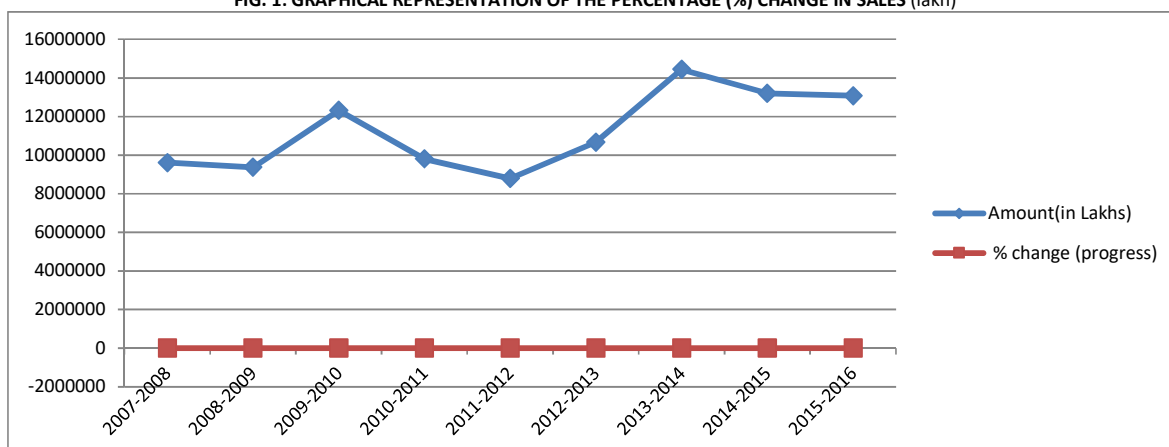
ANNUAL SALES REPORT WITHIN THE STATE AND OUTSIDE STATE IN THE YEAR 2007-2016

TABLE 1

YEAR	Total sales (in lakh)	Growth (%)
2007-2008	Rs.96,11,126	(-)
2008-2009	Rs.93,69,775	(-2.51)
2009-2010	Rs.1,23,17,967	(31.46)
2010-2011	Rs.98,02,725	(-25.65)
2011-2012	Rs.87,91,213	(-10.31)
2012-2013	Rs.1,06,74,962	(21.42)
2013-2014	Rs.1,44,42,286	(35.29)
2014-2015	Rs.1,32,00,000	(-8.6)
2015-2016	Rs.1,30,78,117	(-0.92)

Source- Government of Sikkim DHH

FIG. 1: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PERCENTAGE (%) CHANGE IN SALES (lakh)



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates proportionate increase and decrease in the sale of the handloom and handicraft products between the years 2007-2016. As observed in Table 1 the individual yearly sales, it is found that during the year 2008-2009 the sale figure has slightly declined compared to the previous year sales figure of 2007-2008. The reason for the decline in the sales figure may be due to the lack of proper programs and scheme not being implemented by the state due to which the artisan was not able to produce quality products in the market according to the needs and demand of the customer. The other reason being less number of inflow of the tourists to Sikkim during that year. The year 2009-2010 witnessed a drastic growth in the sale from (-2.51%) to (31.46%) and the reason for such huge sales was the result of implementation of the 2007-2008 centrally sponsored program in coordination with the concerned state department. In addition, there had been a remarkable increase in the inflow of tourist to Sikkim as mentioned in table 2. In continuation to the analysis of the growth in the sales figure of table 1, we can see that from the year 2010-2012 there has been a decline in the sales figure and the reason being due to a major earthquake of 6.6 magnitude Richter scale that hit the Sikkim Himalayan region during 2011 which had caused major drawback to Sikkim tourism industry and its impact can be seen for the year to come as observed in table 2 as given below. Further analysis shows that after 2012 again the growth in the sales of handloom and handicraft started increasing slowly and it continues to increase. One of the major increases in the sales of the handloom and handicraft industry during the course of the year is formulation and implementation of number of programs and schemes implemented by the government of Sikkim for the development of handloom and handicraft industry. As Sikkim, being one of the major preferred tourist destinations both nationally and internationally it has witnessed a large number of tourists (table 2) every year. According to the survey conducted these tourists who visit Sikkim are the major purchaser of the handloom and handicraft products. Therefore, overall if we look at the sales figure in the table 1 Sikkim handloom and handicraft industry has been doing well in the recent years although the last two years (2014-2016) there has been slight decrease in the sales figure the reason may be lack of proper marketing channel and artificial goods replacing the authentic handicraft and handloom products in the market since the customer are not able to easily differentiate between the two.

STATISTICS OF TOURIST ARRIVAL IN THE STATE OF SIKKIM

DATA OF DOMESTIC TOURIST FROM YEAR 2007-2015

TABLE 2

MONTH	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
JAN	22286	24035	30395	40160	42314	28560	30292	28824	54229
FEB	23465	26098	35883	48420	50652	29642	31278	19830	44366
MAR	47465	51018	55965	60560	62438	45231	48102	24597	32515
APR	70684	76539	85669	87172	89238	65341	69054	63730	89648
MAY	86448	99625	108778	116641	124323	120212	131804	92199	138695
JUN	34025	35172	63905	68236	69784	65673	68205	85763	86218
JULY	19462	22010	26992	27021	29540	18628	17161	19472	19521
AUG	21428	22628	35826	37180	38964	35294	7713	11875	19535
SEP	25295	26910	41285	53624	13943	12678	20115	25478	25535
OCT	43218	49456	44865	59582	9682	42390	50461	75025	75908
NOV	38215	43018	43720	48764	8326	39602	42836	53275	55827
DEC	33213	35864	42345	52651	13249	55287	59728	62350	63026
TOTAL	465204	512373	615628	700011	552453	558538	576749	562418	705023

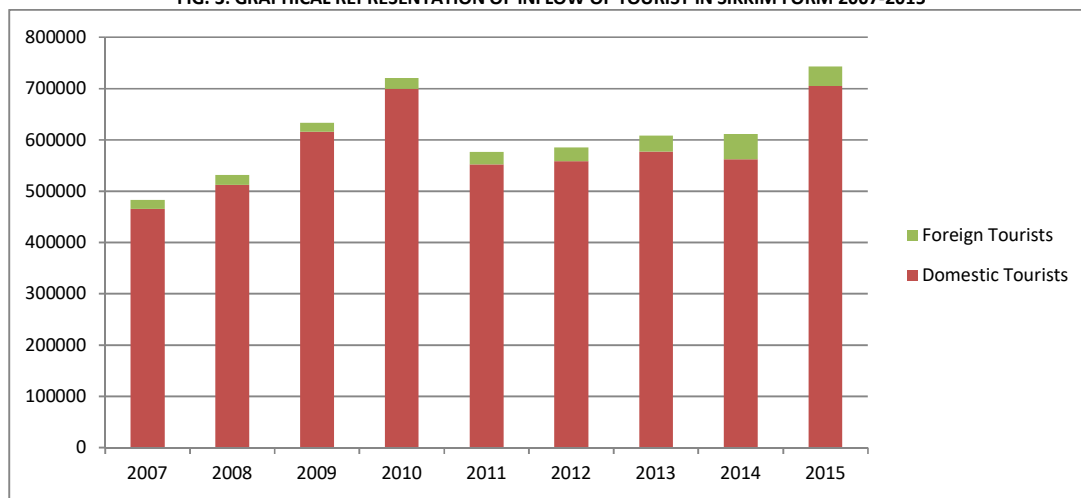
DATA OF FOREIGN TOURIST FROM YEAR 2007-2015

TABLE 3

MONTH	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
JAN	866	910	696	984	1436	1904	873	4145	3458
FEB	1286	1106	1053	1320	1065	2406	1247	3803	3119
MAR	2225	2406	2184	2605	2423	3199	2524	5211	4971
APR	2386	2411	2544	3036	2615	3939	4895	2855	6909
MAY	1058	1857	1335	1593	2875	2058	1312	4927	2326
JUN	631	393	429	830	643	1152	804	3939	1727
JULY	549	453	646	680	553	1282	563	2496	1382
AUG	811	864	846	979	873	1048	2579	1429	1563
SEP	1230	1330	1275	1678	1415	1432	3942	2410	1406
OCT	3106	3386	2925	2780	4286	4486	5292	8906	4431
NOV	2471	2867	2406	2410	3323	2300	3210	5537	3877
DEC	1218	1171	1391	1862	2438	1283	4457	3517	3310
TOTAL	17837	19154	17730	20757	23945	26489	31698	49175	38479

Source –government of Sikkim tourism department, sikkimtourism.gov.in

FIG. 3: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF INFLOW OF TOURIST IN SIKKIM FORM 2007-2015



CONCLUSION

The present study shows that there is a significant growth in the Directorate handloom and handicrafts industry in Sikkim. The study is also significant since it is conducted in Sikkim which has shown a paradigm shift in the different varieties of handloom and handicrafts products produce by local artisan and which has shown an increasing demand for the products both in Sikkim and in other parts of India. During the course of the study it was found that only a few shopping outlets are present for the sale of handloom and handicraft product in entire Sikkim, which is not able to cater the needs of the large number of tourists visiting Sikkim. In order to meet the large number of demands from tourists visiting Sikkim and to further increase the sales growth of handloom and handicraft products produce the government needs to increase more number of shopping outlets both in Sikkim and in other parts of India, especially in major metropolitan cities where the demand for the Sikkim handloom and handicraft product produce continues. Further the government needs to established Research and design development units in each district of state for generating sustainable livelihood both in urban and rural areas. The government also needs to build on infrastructure where the local artisan and upcoming entrepreneurs in the field of handloom and handicrafts industry can be provided with proper training facilities so that unskilled artisan and entrepreneurs can be developed into skillful artisan and successful entrepreneurs who can contribute towards the growth of the Sikkim handloom and handicrafts industry. The findings of the study will help in realizing the growth, viability and potential creditability of the handicrafts and handloom produce which can play an important role in contributing towards the economy of the state of Sikkim.

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