

Tourism A Panacea for Pakistan

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Tourism - A Panacea for Pakistan

The Pakistan Business Council (PBC)

Yasar Rashid & Muneeba Nadeem



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The Pakistan Business Council: An Overview

The Pakistan Business Council (PBC) is a research-based business advocacy platform established in 2005. It is now supported by over 100 private sector local and multinational businesses with significant investment in, and long-term commitment to sustainable growth of the country. They come from 14 countries, have leading roles in 17 major sectors of the formal economy, generate 40% of annual exports, contribute a third of Pakistan's total tax revenues and employ three million. Their combined sales represent every 6th Rupee of Pakistan's GDP.

PBC's major objectives are to advocate policies that lead to creation of jobs, value-added exports and reduction in import reliance through improved competitiveness of manufacturing, services and the agriculture sectors. It also promotes formalization of the economy.

PBC's over-arching theme, "Make-in-Pakistan" consists of three pillars: "Grow More/Grow Better", "Make More/Make Better" and "Serve More/Serve Better." Its evidence-based advocacy is backed by over a hundred studies to date through its full-time research team, supplemented by collaborative research with renowned industry experts and economists.

Through its Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business (CERB), PBC works to build capacity and capability of businesses beyond its membership, to adopt high environmental, social and governance standards. PBC holds conferences, seminars and webinars to facilitate the flow of relevant information to all stakeholders in order to help create an informed view on the major issues faced by Pakistan. Through its presence in Islamabad and Karachi, it works closely with relevant government departments, ministries, regulators and institutions, as well as other stakeholders including professional bodies, to develop consensus on major issues impacting the economy.

PBC is a pan-sectoral, not-for-profit, Section 42 entity. It is not a trade body; therefore, it does not advocate for any specific business sector. Rather, its key advocacy thrust is on easing barriers that thwart competitiveness of businesses in Pakistan.

Further information on the PBC is available on: www.pbc.org.pk

The PBC's Founding Objectives

- To provide for the formation and exchange of views on any question connected with the conduct of business in and from Pakistan.
- To conduct, organize, set up, administer and manage campaigns, surveys, focus groups, workshops, seminars and fieldwork for carrying out research and raising awareness in regard to matters affecting businesses in Pakistan.
- To acquire, collect, compile, analyze, publish and provide statistics, data analysis and other information relating to businesses of any kind, nature or description and on opportunities for such businesses within and outside Pakistan.
- To promote and facilitate the integration of businesses in Pakistan into the World economy and to encourage in the development and growth of Pakistani multinationals.
- To interact with governments in the economic development of Pakistan and to facilitate, foster and further the economic, social and human resource development of Pakistan.

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List of Acronyms

CMI	Custom Market Insights	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor	SEZs	Special Economic Zones
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	TAP	Tourist Assistance Program
KKH	Karakoram Highway	TDAP	Trade Development Authority of Pakistan
MFI	Micro Finance Institution	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
PBS	Pakistan Bureau of Statistics	UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships	WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
PTDC	Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation		



Executive Summary

Yaseen Valley

Executive Summary

The tourism sector in Pakistan has witnessed a revival since 2010 due to government support, enhanced security measures and the spread of social media platforms. Pakistan's tourism industry has been receiving international acclaim from multiple global influencers including the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), identifying Pakistan as one of the top tourist attractions for the year 2023.

This study presents an understanding of the constraints and opportunities of the tourism industry in Pakistan and strategies to foster progress. The results are aggregated from the near, medium, and long-term perspectives so that stakeholders can apply practical recommendations and make meaningful improvements. It is strongly believed that tourism can be a panacea for Pakistan and address its economic, socio and cultural issues.

In the year 2019 alone, tourism accounted for 10.4% of the global GDP, with 334 million jobs linked directly and indirectly to the industry, making it one of the most impactful industries globally (WTTC, 2024). Moreover, the multiplier effect of tourism [Direct, Indirect & Induced impacts] means that each dollar spent by a tourist has a ripple effect throughout the economy. The global travel & tourism industry is projected to cross USD 12.3 trillion by 2032 (CMI, 2023).

Tourism plays a vital role in any economy, contributing significantly to its GDP, employment, and overall economic development. Over the last few years, Pakistan has started gaining recognition as an international tourist destination. Many international travel magazines and influencers including Forbes, Conde Nast, and the British Backpacker Society have listed Pakistan in their top travel lists because of its geographical terrain, hospitable people, rich history and culture. In 2022, travel and tourism contributed approximately 5.9% to Pakistan's GDP, a figure that underscores the sector's growing importance (WTTC, 2024). The industry has the potential to grow manifold with consistent support, belief and alignment of all stakeholders.

Tourism, undeniably, has the potential to drive economic growth just like other sectors, but it poses challenges that need to be carefully managed. Problems like overtourism, environmental degradation, and erosion of cultures are major threats to long-term sustainable tourism-led economies. Not only this, but the benefits of tourism need to be distributed amongst the regions and communities equitably to internalize this sector in the economy. To ensure tourism-led economic development and address the challenges, it is imperative that governments and other investors adhere to sustainable practices. This needs to be achieved by balancing sustainable economic growth with the preservation of the environment and local culture.

Pakistan had remained at the center stage of Asian tourism during the 1960s & 1970s with the famous Hippie Trail, which shows that Pakistan has the potential of becoming a top global tourist destination again. Pakistan does not need to target all the 63 various types of tourism, rather it needs to focus on the low hanging tourism sectors and try to increase its share in those sectors, with particular focus on tourism types like adventure, culture, religious, halal, medical, etc. This report works towards a plan to embark on a structured journey to making Pakistan a global tourism giant.

Findings & Recommendations

The detailed findings and recommendations from the report, summarized below, emphasize the areas which need focus to make Pakistan a global tourism destination.

Centralized Tourism Authority in Pakistan:

Since the 18th amendment in 2010, tourism has become a provincial subject without a centralized authority. This is hurting Pakistan's tourism case as the budget and efforts are divided amongst provinces. A Centralized Tourism Authority needs to be enacted by constitutional amendment. The authority must be empowered with an appropriate budget and a well-defined time bound KPIs.

Policy Reforms and Bylaws:

There are very weak policy frameworks and bylaws which hinder the development of a sustainable and structured tourism industry. There should be laws for visa regime, environment, construction, transport, waste management, tourist flows, tour operators, hotel operation, tourist complaint management amongst others.

Country Perception:

Pakistan's global image and perception remain poor, hurting the tourism cause. To address this, the country must actively promote the positive improvements in security through targeted campaigns. Certifications from global safety organizations, along with endorsements from international influencers, should be leveraged to attract potential tourists. Mobilizing Pakistan's embassies and consulates globally through exhibitions, seminars, advertising, lobbying and engaging influencers can prove to be a key strategy to promote the image of Pakistan. An initiative named "Brand Pakistan" is imperative, engaging youth positively, and making effective use of extensive social media penetration.

Branding Pakistan:

Pakistan has weak branding unlike other Asian tourism giants like Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, etc. The country has yet to establish and promote "Brand Pakistan" at a global scale. Pakistan needs a strong branding campaign like "Malaysia Truly Asia", "Wonderful Indonesia", "Tourism Thailand", "Go Türkiye", etc. "Salam Pakistan" branding campaign was launched a couple of years ago, however, it was not promoted aggressively. A strong branding campaign of Pakistan needs to be launched immediately. Holding the World Tourism Forum in Pakistan at the earliest [originally planned to be held in Pakistan in 2021/2022] will give a huge boost to the country's image.

Usage of Digital Media:

Using social media, videos and influencer marketing will aid in the creation of an initial hype surrounding the potential of tourism in Pakistan. Hashtag campaigns, user-generated content, and targeted social media ads can quickly engage international audiences.

Conducive Environment for Tourism Investment:

Pakistan's evolving tourism policies are attracting domestic as well as international investors, these can unlock the country's economic potential. However, there are no specific incentives for tourism sector investments. Enhanced investor confidence can be achieved by offering subsidized loans, government guaranteeing tourism investment [like Small Business Administration in USA], tax breaks, occupancy insurance, legal protection, contract enforceability and community alignment with investors.

Public Infrastructure:

Significant efforts have been made recently to improve tourism infrastructure and connectivity. These include road and mobile networks, electricity, air connectivity, transportation networks, and accommodation. Developing hotels and roads can cater to the growing traveler preferences. If Pakistan continues to invest in its tourism infrastructure, marketing efforts, and safety initiatives, the country could attract up to 5 million international tourists annually by 2028, and this is a conservative estimate. This influx could generate billions in revenue and create hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

Integrated Data Collection:

One of the major hurdles in growing Pakistan's tourism sector is the absence of reliable, up-to-date data. Despite efforts by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) and the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), many regions still lack systematic tourism data collection. Strengthening this system would enable more informed policymaking and investment decisions. The focus on structured tourism data collection is growing, which will help in data-driven policy making and investment. Moreover, collaboration between the government and private sector will be strengthened and tourism planning will be enhanced.

Develop a Tourism Success Story:

Developing a success story gives boost to any industry. Tourism needs a big success story. A possible option is to develop a new city in the northern areas designed to premium international standards. New Skardu City on the riverbank with international airport access just minutes away, and a few hours distance from the mighty K-2 and Deosai Plains can be a great story.

Expanding Community-Led Initiatives:

There is a need to develop small-scale, community-driven tourism projects in various regions on the lines of Trophy Hunting, Clean Hunza and Home Stay Program. These projects can generate local employment, internalize tourism and offer authentic experiences to tourists while preserving cultural heritage.

Improve Tourism Offerings:

Pakistan has much to offer beyond adventure tourism. Out of the 63 categories of tourism, religious tourism has great potential. Pakistan being home to 3 religions – Buddhism, Sikhism & Hinduism – can attract millions of tourists, it is also ideal for Halal tourism, as a destination for cheap Medical Tourism, it is conducive for Music, Cultural & Food tourism, as a historic destination for Heritage tourism, and it has a rich landscape for Rural tourism, etc. These offerings need to be developed systematically.

Capacity Building and Development:

Training and capacity-building programs for the local communities, guides, and hospitality staff will improve the general services in the country. This will create a more enhanced tourist experience, leading to repeat visits and recommendations.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

By expanding PPPs for larger tourism development projects, including resort and transport infrastructure, Pakistan can build sustainable tourism assets that attract both domestic and international tourists. PPPs will also ensure that key tourism areas are managed effectively, with investments in environmental conservation.

Collaborations with International Tourism Boards:

Partnerships with global tourism boards, including cross-border campaigns with neighboring countries, will boost Pakistan's visibility in international markets. These include joint marketing campaigns, collaborative investment forums, and participation in international tourism expos.

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Leadership:

Pakistan should position itself as a leader in eco-tourism and wildlife conservation through long-term conservation initiatives, by building partnerships with global environmental organizations, and having in place an eco-friendly infrastructure.

Tourism industry in Pakistan cannot be developed overnight. It will take several years of sustained investment to realize its full potential, leading to a significant increase in employment especially in rural areas and inflow of foreign exchange, besides improving Pakistan's soft image.



1. Introduction

Gilgit Baltistan

Introduction

Overview of Global Tourism



Figure 1: Gilgit Baltistan

Source: Road & Story

The global tourism industry is a significant component of the world economy, with its size and impact extending far beyond economic growth, job creation, and cultural exchange. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2023 the sector contributed approximately \$9.2 trillion to the global economy, representing 10.3% of the global GDP. This lead to the creation of 27 million new jobs, bringing total employment in the sector to over 334 million, accounting for 10.5% of global employment (Tourism Council, 2024; McKinsey & Company,2024). Revenue wise, tourism is in the top 5 industries globally and employment wise it is at the top.

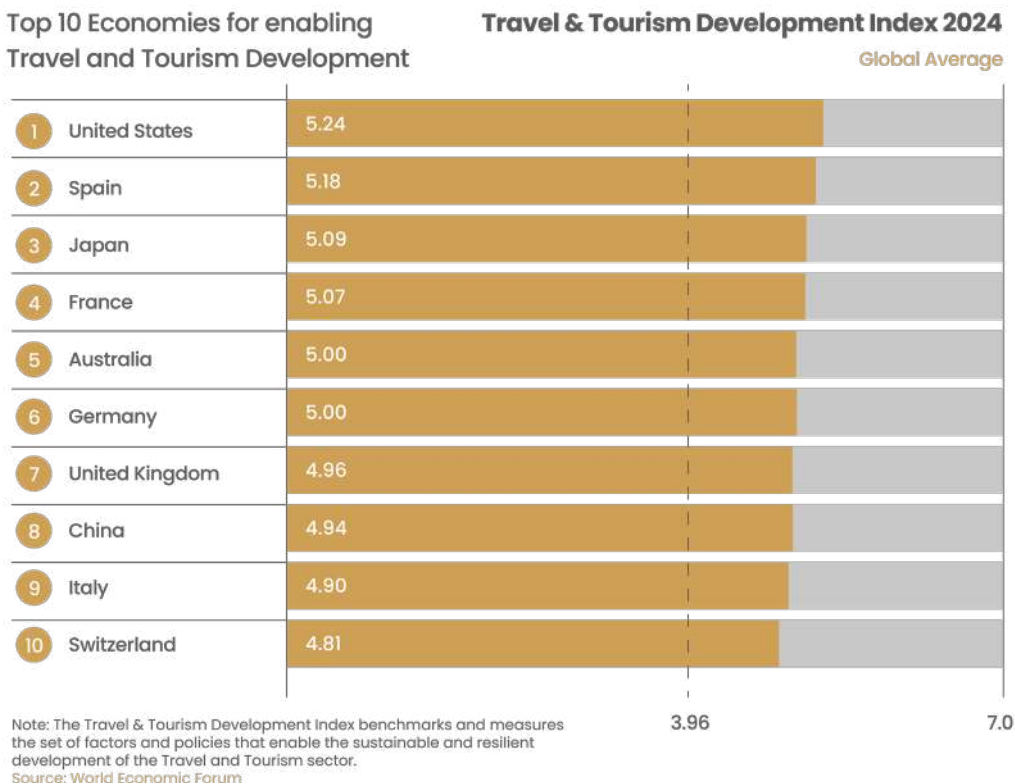


Figure 2: Top 10 Economies

The year 2024 was pivotal for global tourism, with international tourist arrivals surpassing the pre-pandemic levels. The industry is estimated to have welcomed 1.53 billion international tourists, reflecting a 17.24% increase from the previous year. This growth is expected to have driven the sector's contribution in global GDP to 10.6% (WP Travel, 2024).

Current Statistics

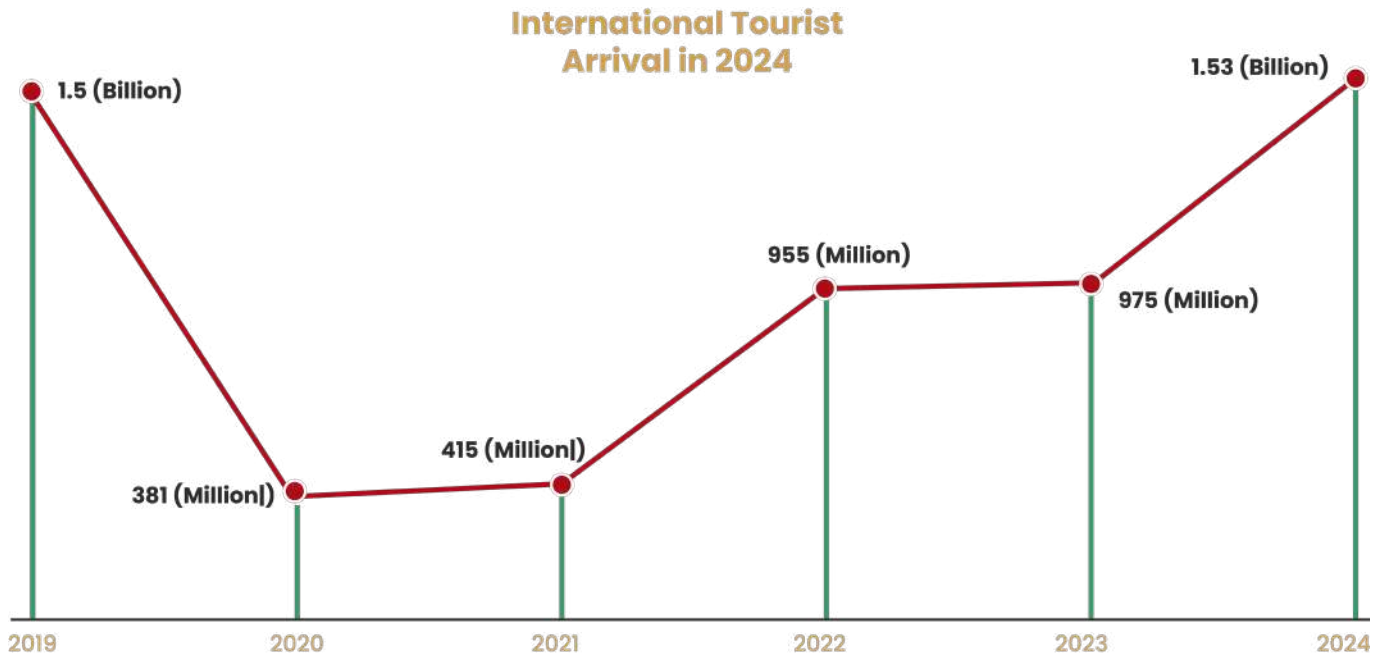


Figure 3: 2024 International Tourist Arrival

Future Potential

The future potential of the global tourism industry is substantial. By 2032, the market size of global tourism is expected to reach USD 12.3 trillion (CMI, 2023), driven by several key trends:

1. Digital Transformation
2. Sustainability and Eco-Tourism
3. Luxury and Personalized Travel
4. Regional and Domestic Tourism

Challenges and Opportunities

Albeit its promising future, the global tourism industry faces an array of challenges. Economic and political uncertainties such as inflation, currency fluctuations and ongoing conflicts are posing risks to the stability of travel. Moreover, the issue of overtourism is causing problems by straining resources, damaging natural environments and impacting resident communities negatively (McKinsey & Company, 2024). Nevertheless, these challenges also present opportunities for innovation and expansion. Data driven approaches are being utilized for the management of tourist traffic, improving resource management and enhance visitor experiences. Destinations with a focus on sustainability and an active involvement of the locals will thrive in this rapidly evolving landscape of tourism (UNWTO, 2024).

In essence, the global tourism industry is expanding due to technological advancements, with a focus on sustainability and an increasing demand for high-end personalized experiences. Given the evident hurdles, the industry's ability to adjust and innovate will be critical in shaping its future. Futuristically, the tourism sector entails great potential for boosting the global economy and it can generate employment as well as facilitate cultural interactions.

Tourism-Led Economic Growth: A Detailed Explanation



Figure 4: Cherry Blossom Hunza Valley

Source: Road & Story

Introduction to Tourism-Led Economic Growth

Tourism-led economic growth is a compelling notion illustrating the potential of the tourism sector to drive economic activity within a country. Tourism revenue builds GDP permanently because of its direct, indirect and induced impact. Poor countries have either oil or tourism to earn foreign exchange, and since Pakistan lacks oil, tourism is its best bet.

Direct, Indirect and Induced Impact of Tourism

Tourism has a direct impact on economic growth as tourists spend on goods and services, which leads to income generation for businesses as well as creation of jobs. This spending includes accommodation, food and beverages, retail, transport, and leisure spending. In the year 2024 alone, tourism accounted for 10.4% of the global GDP, with 334 million jobs, making it one of the most impactful industries globally (WTTC, 2024).

The multiplier effect of tourism means that each dollar spent by a tourist has a ripple effect throughout the economy. For example, when a tourist pays for a hotel room, the hotel generates revenue, which it then uses to pay staff, purchase supplies, and invest in maintenance and development. The hotel staff, in turn, spend their wages in the local economy, further amplifying the economic impact. Every dollar spent in tourism builds the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] permanently by \$0.39 (Rasool, Maqbool & Tarique, 2021).

Overview of Tourism in Pakistan: Historical Context and Current Status

Historical Context



Figure 5: Altit Fort Hunza

Source: Road & Story

Pakistan has a long history of tourism that depicts the culture, natural beauty and geographical position of the country. Over the years, present-day Pakistan has been marked by the presence of the Indus Valley Civilization, the Gandharan Civilization and the Mughals. These ancient civilizations have left behind a treasure trove of archeological monuments which are still a major attraction to world tourists.

In the initial decades of the country's independence, the tourism sector was not very developed. However, the country's natural beauty starting from the Karakoram range to the Balochistan deserts became the center of attraction for the local as well as international tourists. In the 1960s and 1970s, Pakistan formed part of the Hippie Trail, which was a route that tourists used in their journey from Europe through Asia to India and beyond.

The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by a decline in tourism because of political interferences, insecurity and terrorism. These problems combined with poor investment in tourism facilities, ensured that Pakistan remained unknown to the majority of tourists. However, despite these, the country's northern areas of Gilgit-Baltistan and Hunza remained a favorite of adventure tourists and climbers.

Current Status



Figure 6: Hunza Valley

Source: Road & Story

The year 2023 was a landmark year for the growth of the tourism industry in Pakistan with a 115 percent growth in foreign tourists as compared to the previous year. This has been attributed to Pakistan's participation in international travel fairs, marketing promotions and enhanced visa regimes (Pakistan Tourism Portal, 2024; The Nation, 2023).

Pakistan's tourism industry has been receiving international acclaim with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), identifying Pakistan as one of the top tourist attractions for the year 2023. The recovery to pre-pandemic levels, with a 92% recovery rate, shows the increasing trend of people's interest in travelling to Pakistan. (The Nation, 2023).



Figure 7: A place along KKH where three mountain ranges meet

Source: Road & Story

Pakistan's Untapped Tourism Potential

Pakistan holds some of the most attractive scenic beauty and historical sites in the world. Pakistan has everything that any traveler wants; from mountains like K-2 & Nanga Parbat, to the ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley, Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa and Taxila. Over the last few years, it has started gaining recognition as an international tourist destination. Many travel magazines including Forbes, Conde Nast, and the British Backpacker Society have listed Pakistan among their top travel lists because of its hospitality, history and culture.

Some social media influencers which include Eva Zu Beck and Drew Binsky, have promoted Pakistan's positive image as a tourism destination, especially after unveiling some of the country's natural wonders and other tourist attractions. The government has also endeavored to make the country approachable for travelers by relaxing visa requirements and enhancing security. However, still, the country's tourism industry is far from reaching its full potential.

Significance of Tourism in Pakistan: Economic Impact, Cultural Exchange, Job Creation, and International Perception



Figure 8: Kids in Ghizer Valley

Source: Road & Story

Economic Impact

Tourism plays a vital role in Pakistan's economy, contributing significantly to its GDP, employment, and overall economic development. In 2022, travel and tourism contributed approximately 5.9% to Pakistan's GDP, a figure that underscores the sector's growing importance (World Bank, 2023). The industry generated substantial revenue through both direct and indirect means, with international tourist arrivals contributing significantly to foreign exchange earnings. In 2022 alone, visitor spending in Pakistan was estimated at around USD 16 billion, with projections suggesting this could rise to USD 30 billion by 2033 (World Bank, 2023).



Figure 9: Entrance to Hunza Valley

Source: Imgur

The benefits of tourism extend beyond consumption of services such as accommodation, food and transport. It has a multiplier effect on other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, hand made products and infrastructure. For example, construction of roads, airports and other social facilities for travelers also help the locals by enhancing infrastructure and utilities (Pakistan Today, 2024).

Cultural Exchange

For Pakistan, tourism is not only a mere economic activity, it is also a means for exchange of cultures. Pakistan's rich cultural history, comprising of the Indus Valley and Gandhara civilizations and colorful ethnic cultures, draws tourists from all over the world. Festivals like Shandur Polo Festival and Basant annually provide cultural interactions for domestic and international tourists and allow travelers to interact with the rich Pakistani culture (The Business Tribe, 2024).

This cultural exchange helps in enhancing the cultural awareness of Pakistan and its cultural richness amongst the people. It has a positive effect in that it goes against stereotyping and ensures that other countries develop a positive attitude towards the country. People who visit Pakistan are also likely to express their experiences regarding the hospitality of the country, the historical sites and the scenic beauty of it, which as a result creates a positive perception about Pakistan in the international community (Pakistan Today, 2024).

Job Creation

Tourism is one of the key sources of employment in Pakistan, since it offers people an opportunity to work in the services industry. The industry of travel and tourism as a whole directly accounted for 3.95 million jobs in the year 2019, an employment figure which is believed will increase with the growth of the industry (WTTC, 2024). The sector creates employment for both the skilled and the unskilled and is therefore a key area in the fight against poverty and improvement in standards of living, especially in the rural and the developing world where most tourism activities take place.

The tourism industry has created many employment opportunities in areas such as Gilgit-Baltistan and Swat. These jobs are in the field of hotel industry and tour operating, local handicrafts, agriculture and many others. This is particularly important in areas where there are few other employment prospects, hence playing a central role in the economic diversification of any given country through tourism (Ahmed, Rahpoto & Ahmed, 2024).

International Perception

Pakistan's image in the international context has been shaped for many years, primarily due to security concerns and political instability. However, the increase in tourism, due to enhanced security measures and positive government policies, is now helping in reversing this narrative. At the forefront of these efforts is the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), which has launched campaigns like 'Salam Pakistan' to market the country's tourism opportunities internationally (Pakistan Today, 2024).

A global presence in international tourism expos has further helped, along with partnerships with global travel marketers to sell Pakistan as a safe tourism destination. This is evidenced by the 115% surge in foreign tourist arrivals in 2023, which positioned Pakistan among the fastest-recovering tourism markets in the region (Pakistan Today, 2024).

Conclusion

Tourism is a multifaceted industry of the Pakistan economy that has social, cultural, and economic importance. With continued efforts in the development of tourism and marketing of cultural and natural resources, this sector holds great potential for being one of the major pillars of the country's economy in the future.



2. Current Landscape

Nanga Parbat

Current Landscape

One needs to travel only 1500 miles to be mesmerized by the magic, that is called Pakistan. From Karachi to K-2, there are beaches, deserts, lakes, mountains and glaciers. Pakistan is home to some of the highest mountains in the world, hosting 5 of the 14 highest peaks. And it is not surprising that some of the largest glaciers outside the polar region are also located in Pakistan. Pakistan is blessed to have a variety of picturesque sceneries. With areas of unparalleled beauty and profound cultural heritage, with a range of landscapes, historical sites and traditions. From the mountains of the Karakoram to the ruins of the Indus Valley Civilization, there are few places on the earth that can offer such variety.



Figure 10: Phandar Mountains

Source: Road & Story

Tourist Attractions

Below is a list of tourist attractions encompassing the history, culture and geography of Pakistan.

1. Coastal belts [1,000+ KM long beautiful coastal belt]
2. Valleys [Hunza, Swat, Skardu, Kashmir, Chitral, etc.]
3. 100-year-old Hill Stations [Galliyat]
4. Lakes [Beautiful array of lakes spread all over the country including some of the world highest alpine lakes]
5. Mountains Ranges [Karakorum, Himalaya, Hindukush; home to 5 out of 14 peaks over 8,000 meters including K-2 & Nanga Parbat; 108 peaks of 7,000+ meters, 4,500 peaks of 6,000+ meters & uncountable 5,000+ meters peaks]
6. Glacier Ranges [Baltora, Batura, Biafu, Siachen]
7. Three Ancient Civilizations [Indus Valley, Gandhara and Mehargarh dating back to 7000 BC]

8. Six UN Heritage Sites [Mohenjo-daro, Taxila, Buddhist ruins at Takht-i-Bahi, Makli Monuments, Lahore Fort & Shalimar Garden, Unconquered Ratha's Fort]
9. Twenty-six sites on UN Heritage tentative list
10. Hundreds of historical sites including beautiful forts spread all over the country representing Mughal heritage, architecture, art and wars.
11. Religious Tourism [Birth of Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism]
12. Ancient & world-famous Silk Route where Marco Polo travelled for 24 years
13. Historic Events [50 million years old Collision of Continental plates site in Chalt-GB]
14. Unique Places [2nd highest plateaus of the world called Deosai Plains and only habitat of brown bear, KKH the highest paved road, Khunjerab Top the highest international border of the world, Khunjerab National Park home of Markhor]
15. Beautiful gemstones, delicious food, enjoyable festivals, nutritious herbs and much more

Tourism Statistics

Tourism is a crucial sector for Pakistan's economic and social development, playing a significant role in creating employment, generating revenue, and fostering cultural exchanges. However, consistent and comprehensive data collection on tourism remains a challenge. Below is a detailed look at available statistics and the overall trends observed in the past decade.

1. Visitor Numbers:

- **Domestic Tourism:** Pakistan has witnessed significant growth in domestic tourism since 2015, largely due to improving security and better accessibility to popular destinations such as Murree, Hunza, and Swat. Estimates suggest that **over 50 million domestic tourists** travel annually within the country, driven primarily by leisure, adventure, and religious tourism (Kumail et al., 2023).
- **International Tourism:** International tourism has shown positive trends, with around 1.9 million international tourists visiting Pakistan in 2019, as per a report by the World Travel & Tourism Council - WTTC (WTTC Pakistan Economic Impact Report 2019). This marked a considerable improvement from previous years, though the pandemic caused a sharp decline in 2020 and 2021. The numbers began recovering in 2023, but challenges remain in fully realizing Pakistan's potential as an international tourism destination (UNESCO Recovery Tourism, 2024).

2. Revenue Generation:

In 2019, tourism contributed an estimated \$16.88 billion to Pakistan's GDP, reflecting the sector's potential for economic growth. According to the WTTC, the direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP was about 5.6% (WTTC, 2024).

- **Cultural Tourism:** Pakistan's heritage sites, particularly Taxila, Mohenjo-Daro, and the Lahore Fort, have drawn international attention. However, revenue from these sites remains underexploited due to the underdeveloped tourism infrastructure and lack of global marketing (UNESCO Heritage Sites, 2024).
- **Adventure and Eco-Tourism:** The northern regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have become hubs for adventure tourists, particularly those interested in trekking and mountaineering. Despite lower visitor numbers, these tourists are generally high-spending individuals. For example, the K-2 base camp trek brings international adventurers who contribute significantly to the local economies.

3. Employment Statistics:

Tourism provides substantial employment in Pakistan, both directly and indirectly.

- **Direct and Indirect Employment:** Approximately 3.95 million people were employed in Pakistan's travel and tourism sector in 2019 (WTTC, 2024). This included jobs in accommodation services, food and beverage outlets, and recreational activities. Jobs were also indirectly created in sectors like construction, agriculture, and retail, making tourism a major job creator, particularly in rural areas.
- **Rural Employment:** In regions such as Hunza, Swat, and Chitral, tourism is one of the primary income generators. For instance, traditional crafts and guiding services provide essential income streams for local communities.

Challenges in Data Collection

One of the major hurdles in growing Pakistan's tourism sector is the absence of reliable, up-to-date data. Despite efforts by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) and the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), many regions still lack systematic tourism data collection. Strengthening this system would enable more informed policymaking and investment decisions.

Future Projections:

If Pakistan continues to invest in its tourism infrastructure, marketing efforts, and safety initiatives, the country could attract up to 5 million international tourists annually by 2028, as per conservative estimates. This influx could generate billions in revenue and create hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

Case Study: Clean Hunza Project – Responsible Consumption for Sustainable Tourism

The Clean Hunza Project is an exemplary project aimed at checking the increasing environmental impacts of tourism in the Hunza Valley – a famous tourist destination in Pakistan. This initiative for the promotion of responsible consumption and sustainable tourism has received much attention targeting waste management and conservation of the environment for sustainability of the region.

1. Overview of the Clean Hunza Project

The Clean Hunza Project is a community-based initiative which involves communities, NGOs and government organizations. It seeks to respond to the increasing issue of waste in Hunza by sensitizing visitors and inhabitants on the proper utilization of commodities, and disposal of wastes. A key component of this project is the provision of adequate waste disposal mechanisms, recycling bins and awareness creation on environmental conservation measures.

Which is why such projects depend on engaging communities and raising awareness on proper waste disposal. In Hunza, this has been achieved through partnerships with local stakeholders and international organizations working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production.

2. Key Objectives and Initiatives

The Clean Hunza Project focuses on three primary objectives:

1. Waste Management: The project installed separate waste containers for tourists and the locals at Hunza attractions and villages in an attempt to encourage recycling and composting. The proper disposal of waste in tourist areas minimizes the adverse effects of tourism on the environment.

2. Community Engagement: People are engaged in collecting and segregating waste, which encourages them. Part of the project are the educational programs that focus on the issues of waste minimization, recycling and reuse. A study done on the impacts of community-based tourism, supports the idea that locals are key to the continuation of environment friendly policies (Arooj, 2023).

3. Tourist Education: The project involves awareness creation among tourists as part of the awareness creation campaigns. Posters are fixed at sites frequented by tourists and which inform the latter about measures to maintain the cleanliness of the valley and reduce the use of plastic. Apparently, tourist behavior can be shifted through environmental cues including signs and awareness campaigns (Ashraf et al., 2024).

3. Impact on Sustainable Tourism

From the time the Clean Hunza Project was launched, it has had a positive effect on the environment and tourism numbers. Through minimization of waste in the areas that attract tourists, the project has ensured that the region's beauty is retained – a factor that attracts tourists. Optimized environmental conditions enhance tourist experience and result in sustainable tourist arrivals (Jehan et al., 2023).

Also, the project is relevant to the 12th SDG on responsible consumption and production. As such, the project plays the role of a reference for other regions in Pakistan and other parts of the world in the practice of sustainable waste disposal. The project supports the notion that there is a positive correlation between the key aspects of sustainable tourism and the level of success in the corresponding projects in the long run (Azmat et al., 2024).

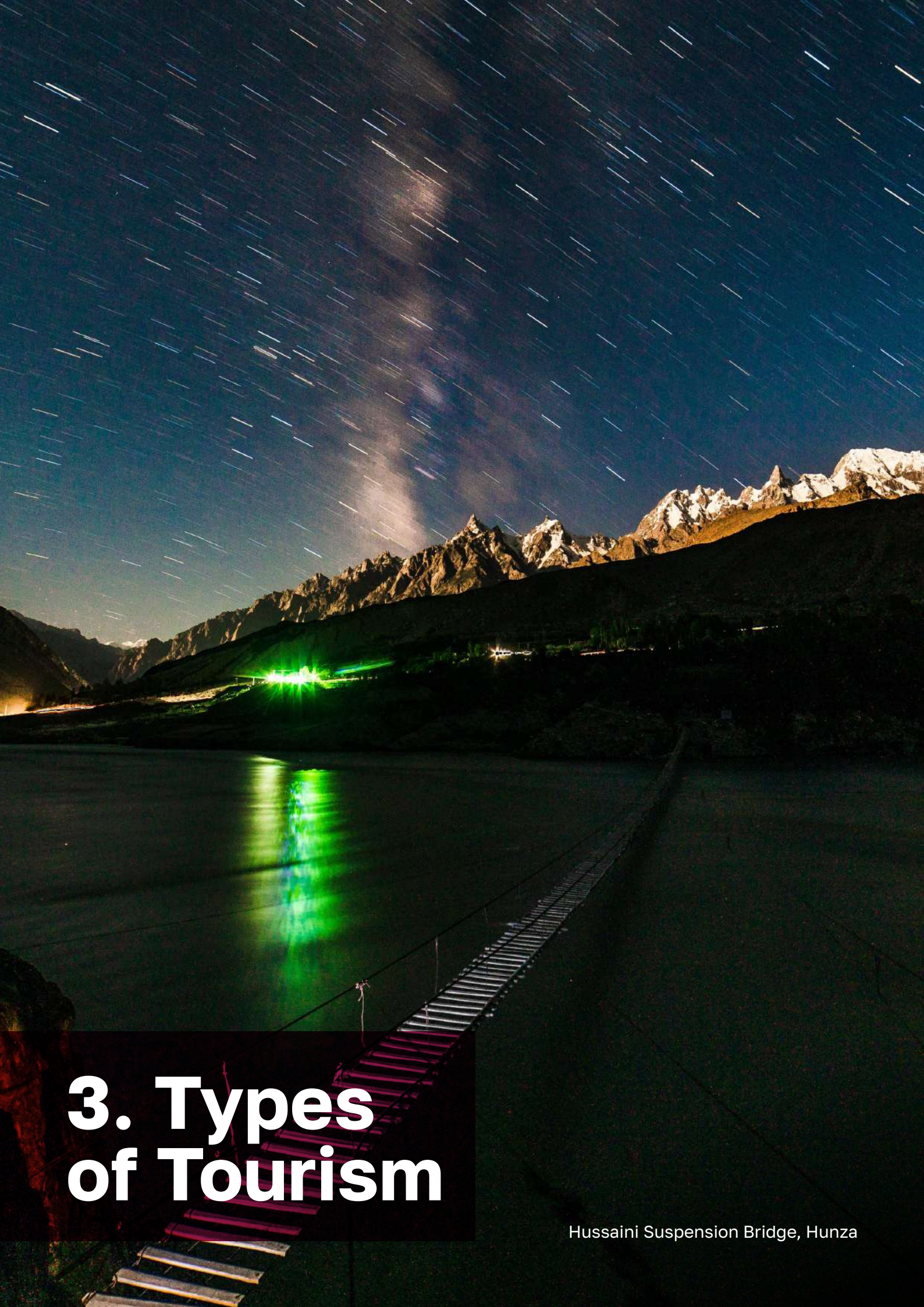
4. Challenges and Future Prospects

However, the CHP also has some drawbacks: the project suffers from a lack of funding, the irregularity of waste disposal facilities, and the lack of strict legislation to support the project. As observed in the case of Clean Hunza Project, sustainable tourism initiatives are long-term endeavors that require the support of all stakeholders for positive outcomes.

In future, the project seeks to extend to other regions in Gilgit-Baltistan to enhance the implementation of sustainable tourism measures and ensure that all stakeholders take more responsibility.

Conclusion

The Clean Hunza Project shows that the consumption of products in a reasonable manner and the disposal of waste is a major factor in sustainable tourism. Through involvement of local communities, awareness programs for tourists and an efficient management of waste, the project has ensured the conservation of natural resource in Hunza, while also promoting sustainable tourism. It will act as a reference model for other tourist destinations in Pakistan and in other parts of the world.



3. Types of Tourism

Hussaini Suspension Bridge, Hunza

Types Of Tourism



Figure 11: Stars over Attabad Lake

Source: Road & Story

62 Types of Tourism

Tourism tends to be an array of experiences which cater to diverse interests and preferences. It does not just include visiting new places but engaging in activities that align with cultural, environmental, adventure, and recreational needs. Several types of tourism have evolved to fulfill the interests of tourists, enabling them to experience the world differently. Before diving into the definitions and industry insights of these tourism types, it's essential to grasp the broad spectrum that tourism offers, as it serves both economic and personal growth while promoting cultural exchange and global awareness.

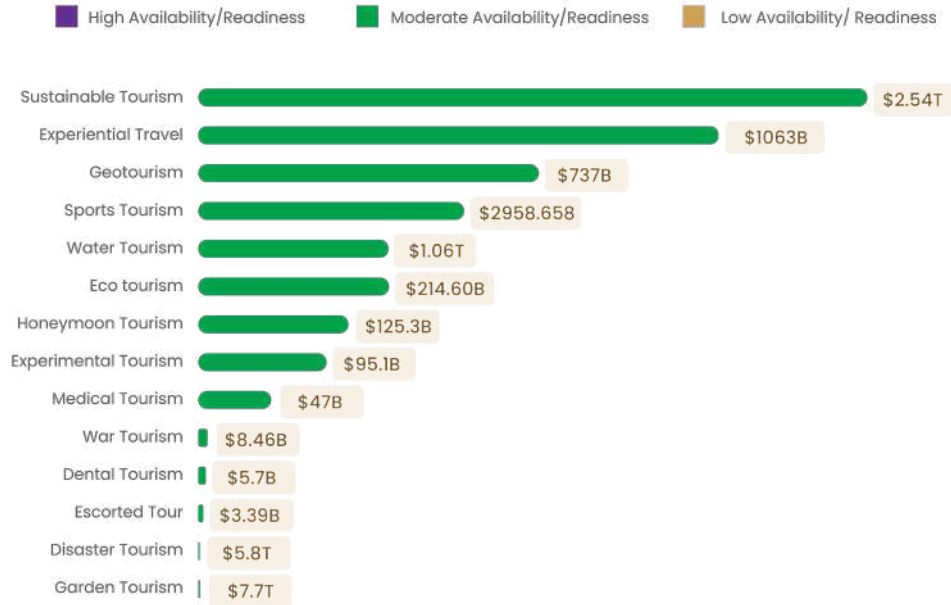
Pakistan Readiness:

Mapping Pakistan readiness for all tourism types

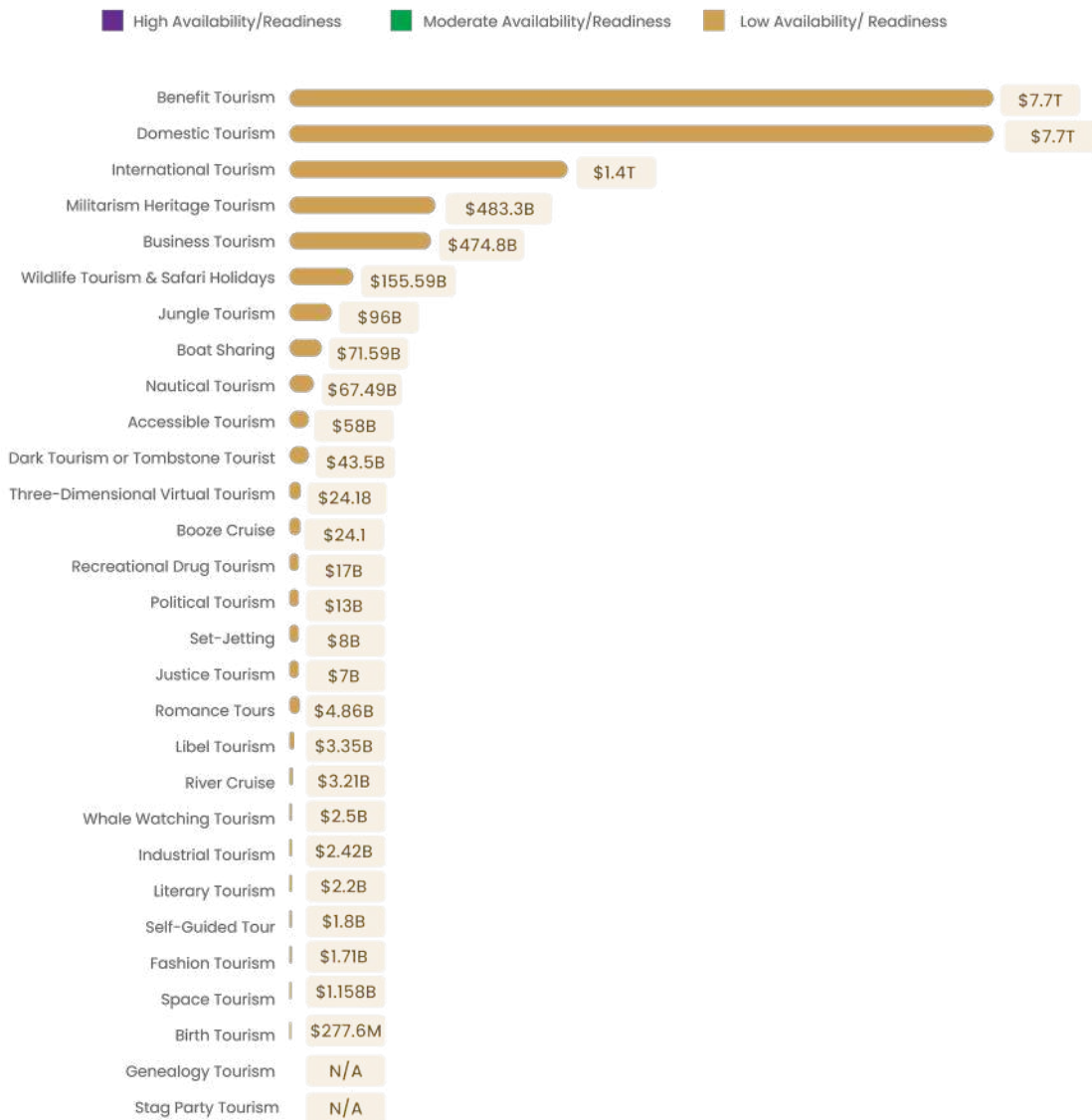
62 TYPES OF TOURISM WITH INDUSTRY SIZE



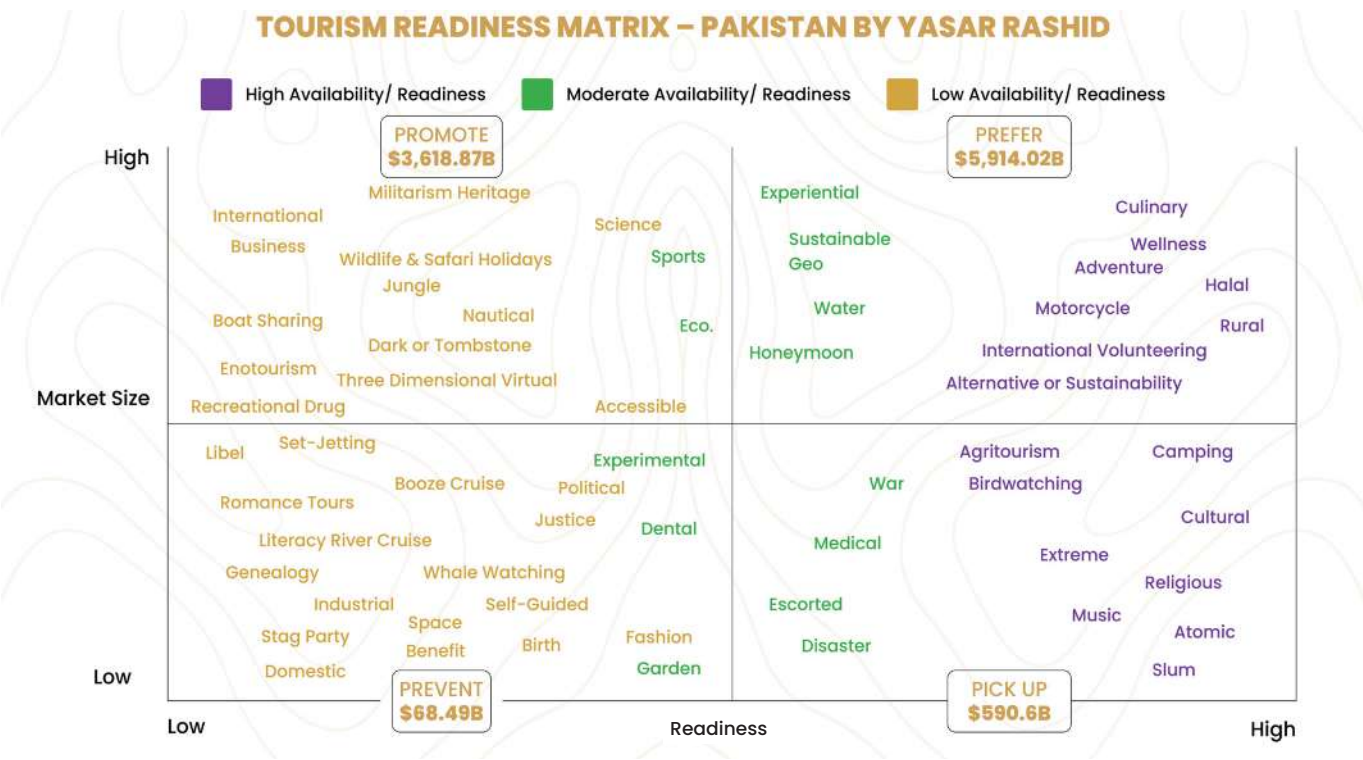
62 TYPES OF TOURISM WITH INDUSTRY SIZE



62 TYPES OF TOURISM WITH INDUSTRY SIZE



Pakistan Tourism Readiness Matrix: An indigenous 4P Tourism Readiness Matrix





4. Opportunities in Tourism

Phander Valley, Gilgit

Opportunities in Tourism

While Pakistan has made its mark on the global tourism map with popular destinations like the Karakoram Range and the Hunza Valley, many regions remain undiscovered or underdeveloped, holding vast potential to attract niche and mainstream tourism. These less-explored areas offer diverse experiences—from desert safaris to mountain treks and eco-friendly tourism—and have the potential to be the next big destinations in adventure, cultural, and eco-tourism.



Figure 12: Phandar Valley

Source: Road & Story

Gilgit-Baltistan: A Frontier of Untouched Natural Beauty

Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), located in the northernmost part of Pakistan, is often celebrated for its majestic landscapes, yet only a handful of locations have received international recognition. Many valleys, lakes, and peaks in GB remain undiscovered or underdeveloped, offering untapped potential for tourism growth.

1. Astore Valley

Known as the “Gateway to Nanga Parbat,” Astore Valley remains relatively unexplored compared to more popular valleys like Hunza. Astore offers stunning alpine scenery, lush green meadows, and hidden gems like the Rama Meadows and Rama Lake. Adventure tourists and trekkers could be drawn to this valley, not only for the landscapes but also for its proximity to some of Pakistan’s most imposing peaks. Additionally, Deosai National Park—known as the Land of Giants—can be accessed via Astore, offering eco-tourists the chance to witness a unique high-altitude plateau with diverse wildlife (World Bank Pakistan Tourism Report, 2024).

2. Ghizer District

With its potential for rivaling Hunza in beauty, Ghizer is an emerging travel destination. The tranquil and picturesque Phander Valley, known for its lush green lakes and wandering rivers, is a place that remains largely undeveloped. Home to Yasin Valley and Ishkoman Valley, the district provides different trekking and cultural experiences. These valleys are, for the most part, uncommercialized, which makes them perfect for eco-tourism and adventure lovers interested in remote, untouched locations (The International Ecotourism Society, 2024).



Figure 13: Yasin Valley

Source: Road & Story

3. Shigar and Khaplu: Gateway to the Karakoram

The tourist hub of Skardu is attracting visitors to Gilgit-Baltistan, yet Shigar and Khaplu remain quite unexplored by mainstream tourism. These regions are abundant in both history and culture, presenting magnificent architecture like the Shigar Fort and Khaplu Palace that have now become heritage hotels (Malik et al., 2023). Owing to their nearness to famous trekking trails in the Karakoram Range, such as the K-2 Base Camp trek, they have a special advantage for both cultural and adventure tourism. Initiatives for sustainable tourism in this area could produce considerable returns, particularly for trekkers and history buffs (Shahzady, 2023).

4. Rupal Valley

While the Diemer side of Nanga Parbat is popular for its Fairy Meadows trek, the Rupal Valley on the southern side remains vastly underappreciated. Known for being the less-traveled route to Nanga Parbat, Rupal Valley is breathtakingly beautiful and provides a challenging and adventurous trekking experience. With better infrastructure and promotion, this could easily become a hotspot for mountaineers and extreme adventure enthusiasts.

5. Haramosh Valley

Tucked away near the city of Gilgit, Haramosh Valley is a hidden gem, offering access to the less-treked Haramosh La and Laila Peak. These areas are perfect for high-altitude trekkers looking to explore off-the-beaten-path destinations. Its raw beauty and the thrill of being lesser-explored make it a prime destination for hardcore adventurers and mountaineers (Nawaz et al., 2023).

Balochistan: Coastal and Desert Frontier

1. Makran Coastal Belt

The Makran Coastal Belt, with its natural rock formations, golden beaches, and unique desert-meets-ocean landscapes, holds immense potential for adventure and eco-tourism. Destinations such as Ormara, Gwadar, and Astola Island have remained largely underdeveloped, yet offer pristine environments for eco-conscious travelers. With improved infrastructure, this coastal area could become an international hub for beach tourism, particularly for diving, snorkeling, and fishing enthusiasts (Makran Coastal Development Report, 2024).

2. Hingol National Park

Located along the Makran Coast, Hingol National Park offers surreal landscapes, it is home to unique wildlife species and iconic natural landmarks like the Princess of Hope and the Hingol Mud Volcanoes. It has the potential to attract adventure tourists as well as environmentalists interested in conservation tourism.

Sindh and Punjab: Expanding Cultural and Heritage Tourism

1. Tharparkar (Sindh)

Known for its rich cultural heritage and desert landscape, Tharparkar offers a unique combination of desert safaris and cultural tourism. The Karoonjhar Hills and Gori Temple are just a few of the attractions that can be promoted to tourists seeking both adventure and religious experiences. Additionally, the region's vibrant Hindu culture and festivals present a rich tapestry for cultural tourism (Tharparkar Culture, 2024).

2. Cholistan Desert (Punjab)

Known for the Cholistan Jeep Rally, the Cholistan Desert has a great deal of additional potential for tourism. With its special culture, desert safaris, and historic landmarks like Derawar Fort, it is a perfect place for both adventure tourism and heritage tourism. The growth of desert camps, eco-lodges, and cultural festivals could make Cholistan an outstanding destination for both international and domestic travelers (Mahmood, Zahra & Manzoor, 2023).

CPEC: The Potential of CPEC in Promoting Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development in Pakistan

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major undertaking that can strengthen the economic relationship between China and Pakistan and also greatly promote tourism development and cultural preservation. Infrastructure projects tied to CPEC, including roads, energy initiatives, and Special Economic Zones (SEZs), offer important support for the growth of the tourism sector, particularly in rural and poorly developed areas.



Figure 14: The Old Silk Route

Source: Road & Story

CPEC presents following benefits:

1. Enhanced Accessibility to Remote Regions
2. Cultural Heritage Preservation Through Economic Zones
3. Gwadar: A Hub for Coastal Tourism and Cultural Exchange
4. Promotion of Adventure and Eco-Tourism
5. Linking Tourism to the Silk Road
6. Job Creation and Community Engagement
7. CPEC's Contribution to Heritage Preservation and Sustainable Tourism

Impact of the Tourism Industry on the Economic Growth of Pakistan

Being a major aspect of Pakistan's economic development strategy, tourism possesses great potential to generate employment, earn foreign exchange, and advance the country's economy. Tourism, as an industry, promotes a broad spectrum of sectors, from transportation to hospitality, and can greatly improve Pakistan's place in the global economy.

1. Contribution to GDP

Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) receives direct contributions from tourism, thanks to spending on services which include accommodation, transportation, entertainment, and dining. In 2020, the direct contribution of tourism to Pakistan's GDP was about 2.9%, and projections suggest that this figure could rise considerably with strategic investments in infrastructure, marketing, and policy reforms (WTTC Economic Impact Report, 2024). This percentage, however, remains below the global average, signifying untapped potential that can be harnessed through policy reform and improved marketing.

2. Employment Generation

The tourism industry is a major generator of employment, particularly in the services sectors such as hotels, restaurants, transportation, and tour guiding. It is estimated that approximately 3.5 million jobs are supported directly or indirectly by tourism in Pakistan. This includes jobs in related sectors such as construction, retail, and manufacturing, which benefit from the demand created by tourists. Tourism's ability to generate employment is critical for alleviating poverty in remote regions of Pakistan, where job opportunities are scarce (Khan et al., 2023).

3. Foreign Exchange Earnings

Tourism is an important source of foreign exchange for Pakistan, particularly through international tourist arrivals. Although Pakistan saw a decline in international tourists due to global economic conditions and security concerns, recent years have seen a revival in inbound tourism, particularly from the Middle East and China. In 2019, Pakistan generated approximately \$1 billion from international tourism. With the development of initiatives like CPEC, this number could significantly increase, providing much-needed foreign currency to stabilize the balance of payments (State Bank of Pakistan Annual Report, 2024).

4. Rural Economic Development

One of the most critical impacts of tourism is the development of rural economies. Tourism provides an alternative source of income for rural populations that rely heavily on agriculture. In regions like Gilgit-Baltistan, Chitral, and Swat, tourism is increasingly being seen as a means to uplift local communities by generating income through home stays, local crafts, eco-tourism, and adventure activities. This rural development also helps to combat urban migration by providing sustainable livelihoods within local communities (Baig, Ali & Khan, 2024).

5. Infrastructure Development

Tourism acts as a catalyst for infrastructure development, including roads, airports, telecommunications, and utilities, all of which are necessary for the smooth functioning of other economic sectors. As the demand for better tourism infrastructure increases, it stimulates public and private investments in transportation networks, water supply systems, and waste management facilities, which are essential for modernizing Pakistan's economic landscape. Major investments such as the Skardu and Gwadar airport expansions are recent examples of how tourism is driving broader economic growth (Jaleel, Qurban & Thongnim, 2023).

6. Impact on Hospitality and Services Sectors

Pakistan's hospitality sector is poised for exponential growth due to increased domestic and international travel. With hotel chains like Marriott, Pearl Continental, Avari and Serena expanding their presence in major cities and tourist hubs, the hospitality industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the country. This growth not only creates jobs but also attracts foreign investment and strengthens Pakistan's services sector. The ripple effect extends to restaurants, travel agencies, and transport services, creating a multi-sectoral impact on the economy (Shahbaz et al., 2024).

7. Cultural Exchange and Soft Power

Tourism also plays an essential role in promoting cultural exchanges and enhancing Pakistan's image on the global stage. The rich heritage and diverse cultural landscape of Pakistan, from the Indus Valley Civilization to Mughal architecture and the vibrant festivals in the Northern Areas, present an opportunity for Pakistan to build its soft power. By welcoming foreign tourists, Pakistan can project a more positive image internationally, dispelling misconceptions and contributing to global cultural understanding (Shah, 2023).

8. Multiplier Effect on Other Industries

The tourism sector's ripple effect on other industries is profound. From agriculture, which supplies food to hotels and restaurants, to the manufacturing industry, which produces souvenirs and travel goods, tourism has a multiplier effect on multiple industries. The construction sector benefits from the development of hotels, resorts, and related infrastructure, while the technology sector sees growth through increased demand for online travel bookings and digital marketing solutions. As tourism grows, it stimulates investment and demand across diverse sectors, boosting Pakistan's overall economic health.



Figure 15: Father and son from Hunza

Source: Road & Story



5. Case Studies and Best Practices

Mahodand Lake, Kalam

Case Studies and Best Practices

Successful Global Tourism Models Pakistan Can Emulate



Figure 16: Mountains of the Hindukush Range

Source: Road & Story

Pakistan's tourism sector has enormous potential, yet realizing this potential requires drawing on successful models from other countries that have overcome similar challenges. By studying how other nations have boosted their tourism industries through infrastructure investments, sustainable practices, and effective marketing, Pakistan can develop strategies to attract more international visitors and create a thriving tourism economy. The following are successful tourism models from countries which Pakistan can adapt and emulate.

1. Malaysia: Diversified Tourism and Strategic Marketing

Malaysia's tourism industry is one of the most successful in Southeast Asia, built on a foundation of diversified tourism experiences that include eco-tourism, cultural tourism, medical tourism, and adventure tourism. The government's Malaysia Truly Asia campaign has been key in promoting the country globally, highlighting Malaysia's rich cultural diversity, pristine beaches, and urban attractions.

What Pakistan Can Learn:

- **Marketing Campaigns:** The Malaysia Truly Asia campaign offers a unified message that appeals to the global audience. Pakistan can develop a similar national tourism brand that emphasizes its diverse offerings—from mountain trekking and cultural heritage to eco-tourism and adventure tourism.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Malaysia's success is built on strategic investments in tourism infrastructure, including airports, roads, and public facilities, making it easier for tourists to travel across the country. Pakistan needs a similar focus on improving transport and accommodation facilities in key tourist regions (Sharida, Shaliza & Syafiqah, 2023).

2. Türkiye: Promoting Cultural Heritage and Religious Tourism

Turkey has positioned itself as a top global tourist destination through its slogan “Go Türkiye”, largely due to its rich cultural heritage and emphasis on religious tourism. The country's historic sites, such as the Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace, and Ephesus, attract millions of visitors each year. Additionally, Turkey's ability to blend cultural experiences with beach tourism has expanded its appeal to a wide range of international tourists.

What Pakistan Can Learn:

- **Cultural Heritage Promotion:** Pakistan's heritage sites, such as Taxila, Mohenjo-Daro, and Mughal-era landmarks have similar potential to attract tourists. By investing in the preservation and marketing of these sites, Pakistan can enhance its appeal to both cultural tourists and those interested in history.
- **Religious Tourism:** Turkey's religious tourism initiatives, such as guided tours and festivals related to Islamic history, can be mirrored in Pakistan, where the country's rich Islamic heritage and significant Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist sites hold immense potential for religious tourism (Bayrakcı & Ozcan, 2023).

3. Costa Rica: Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Practices

Costa Rica is globally recognized as a leader in eco-tourism, attracting visitors with its rich biodiversity, national parks, and commitment to sustainable tourism. The country has successfully integrated conservation efforts into its tourism model, with eco-lodges and nature reserves playing a central role in its tourism offerings. Costa Rica's focus on environmental sustainability has not only protected its natural resources but also boosted its economy.

What Pakistan Can Learn:

- **Eco-Tourism Development:** The opportunities for eco-tourism in Pakistan are also similarly found in the Northern Areas, deserts and in the coastal belt. By implementing sustainable tourism practices and encouraging the use of green accommodation facilities such as lodges, Pakistan can tap into the market of tourists interested in sustainable tourism.

- **Conservation Focus:** The environmental laws of Costa Rica need to be adopted in the areas of Pakistan's national parks like Deosai National Park and Hingol National Park. These areas could be developed for eco-tourism with regard to conservation and sustainable use of the tourists' resources (Lara-Morales, 2023).

4. Iceland: Adventure Tourism and Controlled Growth

Iceland has quickly risen to fame as an adventure tourists' paradise, with attractions like glacier walking, hiking on volcanic territories, and geothermal baths. Iceland being a small country, has been able to address the imbalance of the rising number of tourists, while at the same time, preserving the natural face of the country. The country has set tough measures towards the environment and has regulated the number of tourists to prevent overcrowding.

What Pakistan Can Learn:

- **Adventure Tourism:** The northern areas of Pakistan like Karakoram and the Himalayas are potential destinations for adventure travel. To increase its tourism revenue, Pakistan needs to develop trekking, mountaineering, and water sports infrastructure so as to attract adventure tourists from all over the world.
- **Controlled Growth and Sustainability:** Iceland's strategy of gradual development of tourism through policy measures aimed at controlling tourist numbers visiting specific points and the development of the code of conduct can be applied to the Fairy Meadows as well as Skardu, to prevent over-tourism (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2023).

5. Rwanda: Developing Wildlife Tourism with Community Involvement

Rwanda has become one of the best examples of how the growth of wildlife tourism can involve the community and protect wildlife. Mountain gorillas are one of the most popular attractions in world tourism, and the Rwandan government has put in place a plan whereby a portion of the money generated from tourism is channeled back to the people with the purpose of conservation of the endangered species. This helps in Responsible Tourism.

What Pakistan Can Learn:

- **Community-Based Tourism:** Pakistan may follow Rwanda's example through the participation of local people in eco-tourism and wildlife conservation. In places like Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan, the locals could be engaged as eco-guides or as operators of lodges in a manner that they are empowered through tourism.
- **Wildlife Conservation Tourism:** Like what Rwanda does with tourism around gorillas, Pakistan has the opportunity to develop Wildlife tourism with regards to species of snow leopards and ibex. Habituating wildlife with guided tours in protected special areas is likely to attract only the relevant or selective tourism types (Buzinde & Caterina-Knorr, 2023).

By following the examples of these successful models of tourism, Pakistan should be able to create a more competitive and sustainable section of the tourism sector. These are examples of how rational investment, preservation and proper positioning of a country as a tourist attraction can turn it into one of the most popular destinations in the world.

Local Success Stories: Successful Tourism Projects within Pakistan



Figure 17: Ishkomen, Ghizer

Source: Road & Story

Pakistan is slowly waking up to its tourism potential, and there are several Pakistani success stories to prove this. All these projects are examples of how sustainable practices, communities, and marketing strategies can attract domestic and international tourists. These success stories can help in identifying ways to further boost tourism growth across the country.

1. Home Stay Project in Hunza Valley



Figure 18: Rakaposhi in moonlight, Hunza

Source: Road & Story

Hunza Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan has emerged as a sought-after tourist destination in the country. Tourism has flourished in Hunza because of the partnership of local people, non-governmental organizations, and the government, on sustainable tourism. A beautiful example of such a collaboration is the Home Stay Project by TAP [Tourist Assistance Program] where rooms were developed in the homes of locals for tourists to stay. The project's alignment with the local culture, community engagement and sustainable practices ensured its success.

Project Features:

- Standardized rooms in the homes of locals were established
- Funds for locals as loans were provided to furnish those rooms
- A community-based online platform [www.tap.com.pk] was developed to cultivate a sharing economy
- Marketing and promotion were carried out for the project
- Training of local hosts as per best hospitality standards
- Monitoring of Rooms by local field staff of TAP
- A Micro Finance Institution MFI was entrusted to disburse loans and recover installments
- Tourist feedback mechanism was developed
- SOPs for all areas were formulated

Key Factors of Success:

- **Sharing economy:** There were wide-spread benefits in terms of economic, social, community interactions between locals and tourist, ecotourism, tourist accommodation, leading to lifestyle improvement of poor locals and many more.
- **Community involvement:** The locals served as hosts for tourists and handled the operations, tours, and the sale of local souvenirs, hence, tourism benefited the local people. Projects like the Home Stay Project have not only given families means to earn from tourism but also preserving their culture.
- **Sustainability:** The Home Stay model of tourism in Hunza was ecologically safe, as there were clear requirements for handling waste and environment protection. The tourism facilities developed included eco-lodges and homestays for tourists who preferred to rent environment friendly accommodation.

2. Khunjerab Pass: High-Altitude Adventure Tourism



Figure 19: Khunjerab Pass

Source: Traveler Trails

The Khunjerab Pass located between Pakistan and China has now emerged as one of the most favorite tourist spots for adventure tourists. Being the world's highest paved international border crossing, Khunjerab gives a thrilling experience for those into high-altitude traveling. The development of roads and tourist facilities has made accessing this formerly restricted area easier, thereby increasing local and international tourism.

Key Factors of Success:

- **Infrastructure Development:** Karakoram Highway has been extended to Khunjerab, considerably facilitating access to the area and promoting car touring and adventure tourism.
- **Pak-China Relations:** Khunjerab Pass has facilitated the flow of international tourists from China. Sightseeing attractions include cultural and natural areas of Hunza, Gilgit, and Passu among others. With the start of the Tashkurgan Airport, tourist inflow is expected to increase in the upcoming years.

3. Trophy Hunting



Source: Discovery Pakistan

Figure 20: Trophy Hunting

Trophy hunting is a successful tourism model particularly in GB, KPK and Balochistan. Licenses are auctioned for the hunting of rare species including Markhor, Ibex and the Blue Sheep under strict regulations. The revenue is shared between government and the local community.

Key Factors of Success:

- **High Spending Tourists:** Trophy Hunting attracts high-spending tourists, with permits for species like markhor being issued for \$100,000 or more. A major portion of the revenue goes to the locals, providing them with income for conservation of wildlife.
- **Strict Regulations:** Trophy hunting is highly regulated in Pakistan, and hunters are only allowed to target old, non-breeding males, which ensures conservation of the endangered species. This approach also helps in preserving the genetic diversity among wildlife populations.
- **Adventure Tourism:** Trophy hunting is pursued by affluent travelers who visit Pakistan's remote areas, promoting adventure and ecotourism. It thus plays an essential role in contributing to the tourism industry through the generation of economic activities, and opportunities for the development of tourism in remote areas.

3. Lahore Fort and Shalimar Gardens: Reviving Cultural Heritage



Figure 21: Lahore Fort

Source: Rohan Bhatti (2022)

Pakistan's two cultural sites, Lahore Fort and Shalimar Garden (UNESCO World Heritage sites) have been used in developing cultural tourism. Many of these structures were built during the Mughal empire and have needed restoration in recent years; however, the tourists who visit these sites are history, architecture, and heritage seekers. Such endeavors have positioned Lahore as a key landmark for many cultural tourists who wish to visit the country.

Key Factors of Success:

- **Heritage Restoration:** Lahore's important historical structures have been renovated and preserved through massive investments, this has led to an increase in visitors and the conservation of Pakistan's cultural assets.
- **Cultural Tourism Promotion:** Festivals, guided tours, and cultural programs at these sites have enhanced the attraction for domestic and international tourists. For instance, the Lahore Literary Festival attracts thousands of people each year, which can also make Lahore more popular as a cultural city (Waheed & Khan, 2023).

4. Ranikot Fort: Developing Heritage Tourism in Sindh



Figure 22: Ranikot Fort

Source: My Nation

Ranikot Fort, also called the Great Wall of Sindh, is the second largest fort in the world. Situated near Jamshoro, it has been gradually emerging in the list of tourist destinations in recent years. The attempts to turn the fort into a better visited legacy site has spurred more visitors and investments in the area.

Key Factors of Success:

- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Road and facility development works done recently have enhanced the accessibility to the Ranikot Fort. The structural developments of these visitor centers and guided tours have positively changed the face of Ranikot and enhanced the flow of tourists, making it a famous historical site in Sindh.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The development of Ranikot Fort which is one of the lesser-known historical sites of Pakistan has showcased that Sindh province has a lot to offer in terms of cultural and historical tourism. As a result of the above, more investment in heritage conservation will enhance the growth of tourism in the area (Khan et al., 2024).

These local success stories demonstrate that Pakistan has the potential to transform its natural and cultural endowments into a competitive tourism economy. These projects, be it through eco-tourism, adventure tourism or heritage conservation show that community participation, investments in infrastructure and practices that will assist in the promotion of sustainable tourism are key factors that will lead to sustainable tourism development. To realize its maximum tourism potential, such similar programs need to be replicated across the country on a larger scale.



6. Recommendations for Tourism Development

Badshahi Mosque, Lahore

Recommendations for Tourism Development

ABC of Tourism [Authority, Bylaws and Constitutional changes]

Since the 18th amendment in 2010, tourism has been made a provincial subject with no centralized authority. However, it is imperative that the government create a centralized authority instead of leaving it as a provincial subject. There are 27 different provincial and central bodies that need to be merged. The government also needs to make proper byelaws for all tourism related activities and should be willing to bring a constitutional amendment if required.

Developmental Recommendations

1. Accessibility [Improve roads, complete under construction roads like Sukkur-Hyderabad, KKH, Ghizer-Chitral Expressway, improve airports, aviation facilities, give licenses, bring in foreign airlines, invite good transportation companies].
2. Cellular Connectivity [Improve mobile connectivity by ensuring proper boosters are placed and appropriate bandwidth is given by the telecom companies].
3. Electricity [Complete Bhasha and Dasu Dams, make small run of the water dams, ensure proper electricity for all tourist destinations].
4. Accommodation [Invite top hotel brands, incentivize quality hotel construction, protect the environment, encourage the banking sector for project financing, insure loans and occupancy].

Marketing & Promotion

1. Host the World Tourism Forum in Pakistan
2. Engage Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and encourage all consulates and embassies to promote Pakistan and conduct tourism roadshows
3. Brand Pakistan
4. Encourage Youth [60% of population] to utilize mobile & internet penetration and provide them content to spread over social media
5. Take small steps and make a successful case study. Gilgit-Baltistan is low hanging fruit as it has witnessed a lot of tourism recently, attracted foreign tourists and offers huge tax benefits. Make it a case study and then gradually spread development across Pakistan.
6. Invite top Vloggers to promote security, and features of tourism in Pakistan specially attractions, currency exchange benefits, local hospitality, etc.

Investment

1. Conduct investment conferences and present development projects for investment
2. Conduct international tourism roadshows for investment
3. Incentivize investment in the tourism sector

Tourism Authorities: Role of Various Tourism Authorities & Bodies

For effective and efficient management of tourism growth and marketing of Pakistan as a tourist destination, there is a dire need for a well-coordinated and empowered governance framework for tourism. Below are the key recommendations for restructuring and rationalizing the roles of the various tourism promotion authorities:

A Centralized Tourism Authority

A Centralized Tourism Authority should be the key focal point within the Pakistan tourism system. The authority must operate through coherent and efficient strategies for unification of regional organizations and a clear strategic direction. Centralized governance ensures that the national tourism vision aligns with the policies and activities that support the overall goals of tourism in the country.

An Empowered & Independent Tourism Ministry/Authority

To achieve the desired results, the tourism authority must be empowered, and not bound by bureaucratic hierarchy. Creation of an independent ministry or department will enable swift enactment of new policies and their implementation. This body should be endowed with financial and managerial independence, free from other governmental interests that may dilute the focus on tourism. A dedicated ministry of tourism can improve efforts, enable effective communication between departments, and establish tourism as a significant government priority for the country's development.

Few Professionals with One Person in Charge

Lean management is important but there must be accountability of responsibilities. A small group of professionals with one person as the team leader can guarantee efficient and coordinated decision-making. He/she must have specific targets connected with the KPIs, which should include parameters such as the number of tourists, revenue, and sustainability metrics.

All Tourism Bodies & Secretariats Under Centralized Vision

Unifying the secretariats and the bodies working for the national tourism vision is also very important since there should be harmony in tourism policies and actions. This kind of centralization eliminates the duplication of efforts, makes work more efficient and creates common vision about objectives. This unification can lead to synergies between the national and provincial levels, ensuring the development of tourism.

Rationalization of Tourism Departments

Rationalization of existing tourism departments will also contribute in the elimination of unnecessary bureaucracy in these departments. An important advantage of rationalization would be to facilitate better distribution of resources and to ensure that all activities are geared towards the national objective of tourism development.

Allocate Budget & Assign KPIs

The availability of funding, with specific KPIs to be achieved, will make tourism authorities well-funded and responsible for their performance. Such KPIs should measure tourist satisfaction, infrastructure improvement, conservation of the environment, and revenue generation. Furthermore, continuous evaluation and monitoring of these performance indicators will enable improvement and alignment towards tourism growth objectives.

Policy Reforms: Bylaws & Constitutional Changes

Policy reforms are imperative for the creation of a framework that promotes sustainable tourism development. Below are the proposed byelaws and constitutional amendments that can strengthen Pakistan's tourism ecosystem:

Environmental Bylaws: Balancing Development & Ecosystem

Environmental sustainability must be central to tourism development. It is important that bylaws balance infrastructural development while preserving the ecosystem at the same time. Environmental impact assessments should be made mandatory before the approval of any development or construction project. Moreover, ecosystems must be protected through environmental guidelines.

Construction Bylaws: Emission-Free Standards & Infrastructure Quality

Modern construction requirements should focus on zero-emission structures, state of the art sewage systems, and environment friendly building materials. In regions of cultural or historical significance, it is imperative to blend modern amenities with traditional heritage to preserve the culture. There should be a uniform construction code for five-star hotels and resorts to guarantee that the infrastructure quality meets international standards.

Tour Operators & Transport Quality Bylaws

Tour operators need to adhere to global high standards to deliver a safe and unmatched experience for tourists. Such bylaws should regulate the quality of transport through ensuring that the transport operators maintain their vehicles, reduce emissions and offer safe travel experiences. Licensing and other inspections need to be mandated to maintain these standards with regards to safety and proper usage of tourism transport.

Waste Management Bylaws: Implementation Plan

Introducing appropriate waste management laws is imperative to promote clean tourist destinations and preserve their natural beauty. A detailed waste management plan needs to be implemented, focusing on reduction, recycling and disposal of waste. These bylaws must be upheld through proper audits, with penalties for non-compliance.

Billboards Outsourcing & Placement Standards

Outsourcing billboards while regulating their placement will minimize visual pollution, and guarantee that advertisements will not affect the beauty of tourist destinations. There must be established standards that should be implemented regarding the size, location and content of the billboards in order to avoid clutter.

Computerized Tourist Flow Documentation

Documenting tourist inflow and outflow through computerized entry and exit checkpoints is important for the collection of data and advancing tourism management. This system will allow real-time tracking of the number of tourists, which can then be used for managing tourist flows, allocation of resources, as well as for planning for future growth. It will also help in analyzing visitor patterns and in improving the entire experience.

Traffic Management & Voluntary Forces

The voluntary engagement of students and teachers in tourism can enhance traffic management and guarantee visitors a positive experience. Local traffic police should be helped by trained volunteers in helping control tourists' overcrowding, giving directions and offering basic tourist information. This can also promote social involvement in the development of tourism.

Tourism & Hospitality Education in Educational Institutions

Tourism and hospitality management should be introduced in schools and colleges as a course. This will help ensure the development of a skilled workforce in tourism related services since the market is experiencing growth. Tourism integration into academic curriculum will also improve the level of understanding about the sector's possibilities among young professionals.

University Quotas for Tourist Destination Residents

Special quotas for people from tourist destinations in the best universities will lead to inclusivity and ensure that the local communities' benefit from tourism. This will also assist in cultivating effective tourism leadership within the communities, allowing sustainable strategies for managing tourism.

A Strong Tourist Complaint Management System

Tourist satisfaction can only be enhanced by a robust complaint management system. The system should be simple and easy to use, allowing the tourists to provide their feedback promptly. Any complaints should be dealt with on priority, and the authorities should be held accountable for appropriate and efficient handling of the complaints.

Empowered Tourism Authority with Full Implementation Powers

The tourism authority must be provided complete implementation power to enforce regulations without any external influence. This will assist in the formation of a system that upholds the implementation of laws and regulations, thereby forming a well-structured and stable system for tourism.

International Accreditations

Pakistan must seek international accreditations for its tourism services, destinations, and operators in order to enhance its international reputation as a global tourist destination. Global tourism bodies can also help in attracting tourists from around the globe by ensuring safety compliance, service quality, and sustainability.

Conclusion

With the help of these strategic recommendations, Pakistan can develop a sustainable, well governed and a competitive tourism sector. The synergy between a centralized tourism authority and strong bylaws is expected to herald a new dawn for the tourism industry that, which will unlock growth and at the same time promote cultural and environmental conservation.



7. Conclusion

Naltar Peak, Gilgit

Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings: Near, Medium, and Long-Term Horizons

This study has presented an understanding of the constraints and opportunities of the tourism industry in Pakistan and strategies to foster progress. The results are aggregated from the near, medium, and long-term perspectives so that the stakeholders can apply practical recommendations and make meaningful improvements.

Near-Term Horizon (1-2 Years)

1. Focus on Image Building and Perception Management:

- **Amplifying Safety and Security:** Changes in the global perception of Pakistan's safety is an important issue to tackle. The positive changes in security in the country should be advertised in various campaigns while certifications from global safety organizations should be marketed to inform potential tourists.
- **Digital Marketing and Multimedia Campaigns:** Using social media, videos and influencer marketing will aid in the creation of an initial hype surrounding the potential of tourism in Pakistan. Hashtag campaigns, user-generated content, and targeted social media ads can quickly engage international audiences.
- **Policy Reforms for Investor Confidence:** In the near term, efforts have to be made by Pakistan to restructure policies that ease the bureaucratic procedures and regulatory environment and offer incentives for investors in the tourism areas like eco-tourism and hospitality among others.

2. Launching Community-Driven and Eco-Tourism Projects:

- Small-scale, community-driven tourism projects in regions like Hunza and Skardu should be prioritized. These projects can generate local employment and offer authentic experiences to tourists while preserving cultural heritage.
- Develop a Tourism Success Story: Like clean Hunza project, another possible success story can be a New Skardu City on the river-bank where multiple 5-star hotels and recreational facilities can be constructed.

Medium-Term Horizon (3-5 Years)

1. Developing Infrastructure and Connectivity:

- **Infrastructure Investments:** Improving road networks, airports, and internal transport systems in key regions such as Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, and Sindh will open up remote areas to a larger number of tourists
- **Accommodation Development:** Encouraging the private sector to invest in international-standard hotels, eco-lodges, and resorts across tourist regions will enhance the hospitality sector and attract more tourists, particularly in adventure and eco-tourism.

2. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

- By expanding PPPs for larger tourism development projects, including resort and transport infrastructure, Pakistan can build sustainable tourism assets that attract both domestic and international tourists. PPPs will also ensure that key tourism areas are managed effectively, with investments in environmental conservation.

3. Collaborations with International Tourism Boards:

- Partnerships with global tourism boards, including cross-border campaigns with neighboring countries, will boost Pakistan's visibility in international markets. This includes joint marketing campaigns, collaborative investment forums, and participation in international tourism expos.

Long-Term Horizon (5+ Years)

1. Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Leadership:

- **Eco-Tourism and Wildlife Conservation:** Pakistan should position itself as a leader in eco-tourism and wildlife conservation through long-term conservation tourism initiatives, partnerships with global environmental organizations, and eco-friendly infrastructure.
- **Cultural Preservation and Heritage Tourism:** Pakistan's cultural and historical assets, such as Mohenjo-daro, Taxila, and Lahore Fort, should be key long-term assets. Through the preservation and the development of these sites and through international exposure, these will ensure that Pakistan gets a better brand image as a cultural tourism attraction site.

2. Diversification of Tourism Offerings:

- Growing segments in specific tourism areas such as adventure tourism, religious tourism, and medical tourism will guarantee that many segments of the international market visit Pakistan. Sustained diversification will work towards the elimination of absolute dependence on one type of tourism and hence make the sector more buoyant.

3. Capacity Building and Human Resource Development:

- Training and capacity-building programs for the local communities, guides, and hospitality staff in the long term will improve the general services in the country. This will create a more enhanced tourist experience, leading to repeat visits and recommendations.

Pakistan has the potential to turn its tourism industry into one of the major drivers of the economy, but it needs collective work from the near-term, middle-term, and long-term perspectives. To overcome immediate concerns in the tourism sector including upgraded infrastructure and partnerships with foreign partners, and focusing on sustainable tourism practices, Pakistan can create a new image for the country and make it one of the world's most favored tourist destinations.

Vision for the Future of Tourism in Pakistan

Pakistan's tourism sector has the potential to transform the country's economy, and its image in the future. There is considerable potential for Pakistan to develop into a comprehensive tourist paradise and attract clients from around the world as well as from within the country through the promotion of the beautiful natural landscapes, diverse cultures, and adventure travel. This vision for the future creates a pathway for the possibility of sustainable, inclusive, and competitive tourism in the country.

1. As Global Leader in Sustainable and Eco-Tourism

In the coming decade Pakistani tourism industry will lead the niche in international arena for being a sustainable tourism industry with developed eco-tourism and conservation-driven initiatives. Its pristine mountain ranges, valleys, and coastal regions will be the core selling points for eco-conscious tourists, accompanied by eco-lodges, preserved wildlife, and sustainable tourism standards.

- **Eco-Friendly Tourism Hubs:** Pakistan's northern areas such as Gilgit, Hunza, Skardu, and Fairy Meadows would be developed as new ecological tourist destinations of the world. These regions will provide eco-friendly hotels, with established low-impact trekking trails and immersive wildlife experiences that make tourism in Pakistan sought after for sustainable tourism.
- **Wildlife Conservation Tourism:** National Parks such as Deosai and Chitral Gol will form a core of the Pakistan tourism vision, with protected endangered species such as snow leopards and ibex. Collaboration with global conservation agencies will guarantee that tourism promotes the cardinal objectives of conserving bio-diversity within the destinations to be developed for tourism purposes in Pakistan.

2. A Cultural and Heritage Tourism Powerhouse

Mughal architecture, ancient Buddhist sites, and festivals around the year will embody the heart of the cultural and heritage tourism potential of Pakistan. The country will be known internationally for its endogenous tourism ring, rooted in blending history, religion, tradition, and authentic culture.

- **Preservation of World Heritage Sites:** Prominent cultural heritage sites such as the Lahore Fort, Mohenjo-Daro, Taxila, and Kartarpur Corridor will be rehabilitated and promoted through international marketing campaigns and portraying them as leading destinations for International cultural and heritage tourism. The investments in infrastructure and tourism amenities at these places will guarantee that they are accessible and conserved.
- **Cultural Festivals and Events:** Pakistan will be able to host world-class cultural festivals enticing international tourists to enjoy Pakistani music, dances, foods, and arts. These will include the Lahore Literary Festival, Sufi Music Festival, and traditional crafts like handicraft exhibitions which will also assist in branding Pakistan's cultural face to the world as a vibrant and welcoming destination.

3. A Hub for Adventure and Sports Tourism

Pakistan's vast territory and natural landscapes have the finest potential for adventure tourism. Domestic and international tourists will be attracted to sports tourism by focusing on adventure activities including trekking, mountaineering, water sports, and desert safari.

- **Adventure Tourism Capital of South Asia:** With world-renowned peaks like K-2 and the terrains of Karakoram and the Himalayas, Pakistan will further strengthen its position as the best destination for mountaineering, trekking, and adventurer enthusiasts. This vision will be supported by the development of state-of-the-art base camps, guided explorations, and adventure resorts.
- **Water and Desert Sports:** Coastline beaches and deserts of Pakistan will provide a perfect venue for hosting water sports, including kitesurfing, scuba diving, and desert safaris for travelers. Gwadar's coastal development and exploration of the Thar desert will be prioritized to appeal to adventure tourists in search of unique experiences.

4. An Inclusive, Community-Driven Tourism Industry

Pakistan's tourism industry will also promote sustainability and inclusivity and ensure that the local communities are the direct beneficiaries of tourism. Through capacity-building programs, local people will equally embrace and take on an energetic role in the tourism sector.

- **Community-Led Tourism Initiatives:** Local communities in Chitral, Swat, and Balochistan will operate homestays and eco-lodges, and organize cultural exposure to generate viable revenues. Through training these communities in hospitality, guiding, and sustainability, the Pakistani government will ensure that tourism becomes an opportunity for the social and economic development of the local communities.
- **Women and Youth Empowerment in Tourism:** Incentives will be provided for the employment of women and youth in tourism-related businesses, particularly in cultural dealing and eco-tourism operations among others. This will not only increase the diversity of the workforce in the tourism industry but will also guarantee that minority groups benefit from the expansion of tourism in the country.

5. A Digitally Connected and Smart Tourism Destination

Technology will be a key component of the future growth of tourism in Pakistan. Crucial in making organizational changes, enhancing the tourist experience, and securing global market exposure. The use of smart tourism will enhance tourist's ease, from pre-travel planning and real-time traveling.

- **Smart Tourism Platforms:** Digital platform integration systems will give tourists detailed travel schedules, facilities for booking accommodations and trips, virtual tours, and the ability to monitor events and points of interest in real-time. These will be complemented by artificial intelligence-powered chatbots which will enhance customer service for international visitors.
- **Sustainable Digital Nomad Destinations:** Hunza and Neelum Valley, scenic locations of Pakistan will be used to market the country for digital nomads with aesthetic workspaces and sustainable lodging facilities. With fast and reliable internet connectivity, these places will host work-from-home professionals who desire to work and have fun in beautiful surroundings.

Way Forward

Pakistan will be on the global map for tourism by 2030, and a diverse range of tourists will visit the country including nature lovers, cultural heritage lovers, eco-conscious travelers, and adventure seekers. The sustainable development of tourism in Pakistan will act as a major propeller for the country's economic growth as a result of investments in infrastructure, sustainable tourism practices, adoption of digital technologies, and vibrant community-based tourism activities.

Call to Action for Stakeholders

The future of the tourism sector depends on all stakeholders including government bodies, private investors, and international organizations. This study has provided the blueprint for developing Pakistan as an international tourism hub, but the undertaking requires prompt and integrated action. The following is a call to action for each group of stakeholders to positively implement the recommendations and strategies presented in this study.

1. Government Agencies

- **Implement Policy Reforms:** The government needs to prioritize reforms that would reduce red tape in the existing legislation, enhance investment promotion, and produce a favorable environment for tourism growth. This entails simplifying the visa process and creating special economic zones for tourism.
- **Invest in Infrastructure Development:** Immediate investments in transportation, accommodation, and digital infrastructure are vital. Funding from government to create the infrastructure for road networks, airports, as well as smart tourism platforms, will lead to sustainable tourism.
- **Support Community-Driven Tourism:** Local governments must engage stakeholders in the promotion of diverse models in community-based tourism. Recommendations include training programs, giving grants for small-scale tourism initiatives, and making sure that efforts to develop tourism benefit the locals.

2. Private Sector and Investors

- **Invest in Key Tourism Sectors:** Foreign and domestic private investors are welcome to invest in eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and hospitality sectors. High-potential areas such as Hunza, Skardu, Gwadar, and Balochistan are ripe for investment in luxury resorts, eco-lodges, and adventure tourism facilities.
- **Foster Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** The private sector needs to collaborate with the government to develop large-scale tourism infrastructure projects. PPPs can unlock funding for airports, transportation, and resort developments, ensuring long-term profitability and sustainability.
- **Embrace Digital Innovation:** The private sector must lead the way in integrating technology into tourism services. Investing in digital platforms, AI-driven customer service tools, and smart tourism initiatives. These will improve visitor experience and position Pakistan as a tech-savvy destination.

3. International Organizations and Tourism Boards

- **Support Pakistan's Sustainable Tourism Initiatives:** International conservation organizations and tourism boards will be encouraged to collaborate with Pakistan on eco-tourism and wildlife conservation efforts. Provision of technical expertise, funding, and eco-certification programs will ensure that Pakistan's tourism development aligns with global sustainability standards.
- **Promote Cross-Border Tourism:** Tourism boards and organizations in neighboring countries need to work with Pakistan to promote regional tourism circuits. Cross-border collaborations can boost multi-destination travel, attracting tourists interested in exploring cultural and natural heritage across South Asia.

4. Local Communities and Entrepreneurs

- **Engage in Tourism-Related Enterprises:** Local communities, especially in key tourist regions, should play an active role in tourism development by launching homestays, eco-lodges, guided tours, and cultural experiences. Entrepreneurs can capitalize on the growing demand for authentic, community-driven tourism by offering unique services.
- **Participate in Capacity-Building Programs:** Local residents need to be engaged in capacity-building initiatives offered by the government and the private sector. These programs can provide the necessary skills in hospitality, guiding, and sustainable tourism, empowering communities to benefit from the tourism economy.

5. Media and Marketing Agencies

- **Amplify Pakistan's Tourism Potential:** Media houses, digital marketing companies, and influencers should be welcomed to promote Pakistan's rich tourism potential to the world. New approaches to multimedia campaigns with the use of videos, infographics, and user content will change perceptions and increase interest in Pakistan as a must visit destination.
- **Leverage International Media Platforms:** Pakistan's tourism message needs to be marketed through the international media. This is something that can be achieved through working with travel shows, digital platforms, and travel influencers to give the world a sneak peek into what Pakistan has to offer.

Conclusion and Call to Action

Pakistan has an extremely lucrative tourism industry, and the time has come to act on it with urgency and at all levels of the industry. The approaches discussed in this study can help Pakistan open new economic prospects, promote and safeguard its cultural and historical identity, as well as its natural resources, and ultimately become a global tourist destination. This is the right time for stakeholders to come forward with and invest their resources for a better tomorrow for Pakistan's tourism industry.

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8th Floor, Dawood Centre, M.T. Khan Road,
Karachi, Pakistan

☎ +92 21 3563 0528-29

☎ +92 21 3563 0530

2nd Floor, 1-E (South) Jinnah Avenue,
Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan

☎ +92 51 8444 008

☎ +92 51 8444 009

🌐 www.pbc.org.pk

Shangrila, Lower Kachura Lake