

Factors affecting the pakistan tourism industry



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Pakistan appeared as a modern nation on 14 August 1947. There are four provinces and all four are gifted with heritage and culture. It is one of fertile and unique collections of majestic and rugged mountains, lush fields, deserts, rivers, lakes, seashores and landscapes enriched with friendly and hospitable people thus making it a heavenly destination for tourists with different tastes. Pakistan is known in the world of tourism because of the mountainous regions of the north, the Hindukush, Karakoram and the Great Himalaya who form the densest concentration of high peaks in the world. Kalam (Swat valley) in Pakistan is known as the Switzerland of Asia. The Hunza and Chitral valleys in Pakistan were the home to a small pre-Islamic animist Kalasha community who claim descent from the army of Alexander the Great (Mapsofworld. com). The historical and archaeological sites of Ghandhara and Indus Valley civilizations, Mohenjo-Daro, Taxila and the Mughal Empire are the examples of oldest civilizations in Pakistan. This multicultural nature of the country also contributes to the tourism industry in the way that it offers various traditions, customs and festivals for the tourists to explore and enjoy.

Problem statement:

According to the above paragraph, Pakistan seems to be a perfect place for tourists to be visited but still the tourist's arrival is decreasing day by day if we take into consideration the years from 1995 till 2008.

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of my thesis is to find out the positive and negative factors which are affecting the Pakistan tourism industry and also the cause of tourists declining ratio. Find out the role of the government towards the development

of this industry and suggest some strategies that can improve this sector and also discover the hidden potential of tourism industry. Another motivation behind this research is to examine and compare the economic effect of tourism in terms of money and job generation in our country as compared to the neighboring countries.

Research Questions:

The research questions are:

What are the factors affecting tourism industry in Pakistan?

How much potential Pakistan has got in tourism industry?

How tourism industry created revenue and job for the country?

What will be the strategies to develop the tourism industry in Pakistan?

What the government should do to develop the tourism industry in Pakistan?

Literature review and theoretical background:

In this chapter, I will discuss some of the available literature and compare it with my research work giving a broader picture of the unique nature of the work and its practical usefulness.

Literature review:

Kakar et al. 2007, in their research thesis provided a relation between tourism and employment in Pakistan. The purpose of this research was to determine the rate of employment generated in different occupations from the tourism sector. The survey was carried out by personal visit to the hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, travel agents, car hire firms, tour operators and <https://assignbuster.com/factors-affecting-the-pakistan-tourism-industry/>

airline offices. They designed a questionnaire for this purpose. The survey was restricted in the sense that it was carried out in only two cities of Pakistan i. e. Swat and Abbottabad and secondly it was carried out in hotels and restaurants. No attempt was made to determine the total impact of tourism on different employment sectors like taxis, guides, entertainment, travel agencies etc. furthermore the statistical data provided on the number of hotels, number of beds and the number of people employed is limited in the sense that there is no proper information about the time/date/year in which the data was recorded.

Baloch (2007) in his research of managing tourism in Pakistan deals with the issue of diagnosing the cause of crawling nature of Pakistan's tourism growth and suggest ways to develop this industry through natural, historical and cultural resources. The research was carried in Chitral valley only. The methodology used was recording the views of tourists, locals, hoteliers and data collection from Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) and Ministry of Tourism. The research is restricted in the sense that the deteriorating condition of this industry is explained only for 2006 and there is no proper statistical data provided for Chitral valley. The data was collected from the concerned departments and there is no proper findings obtained from the tourists and hoteliers.

Although some of the studies found and discussed above are related to the tourism industry in Pakistan but there is hardly any research that focuses mainly on positive and negative factors effecting Pakistan tourism industry on a whole and compare this industry to its neighboring countries. I'll focus on factors effecting tourism, its impact on employment and the revenue

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earned for the whole country. The research will include statistical data for last fourteen years which will help in comparing the performance of this sector with other countries also.

Theoretical Background:

There are many positive and negative factors which are affecting Pakistan tourism industry. These are as follows:

Positive factors:

The tourists usually travel to see different places and things other like climate, nature, cultures, people, customs, arts, cuisines, languages, unique festivals, old historical buildings and sites etc. the reason why Pakistan has a great potential in tourism industry is that it posses every single thing that could meet the demand of visitors. Following are the types of tourism in Pakistan:

Diaspora Tourism:

According to Clarke (2003) the term Diaspora refers to a person who is from one country but originates from another and identifies with the country of origin. The term Diaspora can be approached from two different directions, as a typological tool and as a social condition. When the term is used typologically it refers to a group of people who have moved from one place to another and who still identify with their homeland. The homeland is just a metaphor, it may not even exist but it still carries significance for the individual. Clarke (2003) argues that Diaspora is people who have relocated for any of five different reasons; victim, labor, trade, imperial and culture. All of these reasons are in some way forced upon the individual, which is the

central idea behind this type of approach to the Diasporas' phenomena. For example, the British who immigrated involuntarily to the different colonies were imperial Diasporas. The typological approach to the Diasporas' issue is that it disregards the differences within the different groups. So it is more accurate to describe Diaspora as a condition. " The condition of being from one place but of another and identify with sentiments towards a homeland" (Clarke, 2003)

According to Ali Eteraz (2008), more than 7 million Pakistani people are living outside from Pakistan. Pakistan has got a large number of Pakistani Diaspora which can contribute a positive role in the economy of Pakistan. Apart from Diaspora, visiting friends and family tourism is also very important. Many of these Pakistani Diasporas have friends and families living in Pakistan, and they continue to visit these friends and families playing more positive role in the development of Pakistani tourism.

Domestic Tourism:

According to Richter (1989), many countries of the world take domestic tourism as a " poor cousin" and didn't pay much attention but according to Boniface and Cooper domestic tourism make up 80% of the world tourism flow. In Pakistan, there are many worthwhile places which not only attract international tourists but also domestic tourists.

Heritage Tourism:

Pakistan is a home to the most spectacular ancient cities of the world including the Indus and Gandhara civilization. Taxila, Moenjodaro and

Harrppa, museums, Mughal heritage and the silk route, Badshahi Masjid, Shalimar Gardens, Tomb of Jahangir and the Lahore Fort (UNIC, 2011).

Lahore Fort K Ali

Figure 2: Lahore Fort (Source: http://www.gardenvisit.com/garden/lahore_fort)

Religious/ Spiritual or Pilgrimage Tourism:

Pakistan is also famous for its shrines and temples. Each year not only Muslims from different countries come to visit the holy shrines but also the Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhist visit Pakistan for pilgrimage (UNIC, 2011).

[http://4. bp. blogspot.](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_vuyNCoZLd4w/Sr9cYGLGnzI/AAAAAAAAAtc/3ZQU4lOhpp8/s400/shrine-abdullah-shah-ghazi.jpg)

[com/_vuyNCoZLd4w/Sr9cYGLGnzI/AAAAAAAAAtc/3ZQU4lOhpp8/s400/shrine-abdullah-shah-ghazi. jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_vuyNCoZLd4w/Sr9cYGLGnzI/AAAAAAAAAtc/3ZQU4lOhpp8/s400/shrine-abdullah-shah-ghazi.jpg)

Figure 3: Shrines of Pakistan (Source: <http://pak-istan.blogspot.com/2009/09/shrines-of-pakistan.html>)

Cultural Tourism:

Besides archaeological sites and architecture masterpieces of Mughal emperors and British antecedents, Pakistani cuisine and festivals are yet another interesting part of rich Pakistani culture. The food streets in Pakistan are becoming a major source of attraction for tourists as they can enjoy the local Pakistani food as well as the colorful streets and people shopping in the streets at the same time. Famous food streets in Pakistan are Food Street Gawalmandi and Anarkali in Lahore, Melody and blue area Food Street in Islamabad, Burns Road in Karachi, and Ghantar Ghar in Peshawar. Festivals <https://assignbuster.com/factors-affecting-the-pakistan-tourism-industry/>

tend to provide celebration, joy, mental and physical refreshment to not only local people but also the tourists who come with the aim to explore and enjoy different cultures and festivals. Some of the famous cultural ceremonies and festivals of Pakistan include Lok virsa mela, Horse and cattle shows, Basant or kite flying, Festivals of lamps, Northern areas festivals including the famous Kalash festivals and Silk route festivals etc (UNIC, 2011).

Food Street, Lahore -

Figure 4: Food Street Lahore (Source: <http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/sites/country/26292.php>)

Adventure or ECO Tourism:

ECO or adventure tourism is the most significant part of the tourism industry as Pakistan is blessed with worlds most beautiful and renowned mountains, lakes valleys, glaciers and passes. Tourists not only enjoy the site viewing but also perform activities like skiing, hiking, surfing, camping and cruising. Mountaineering and trekking are the most exciting activities that tourists enjoy. World 2nd largest mountain K2 and Switzerland of Asia known as Swat valley is also located in Pakistan. Silk route is also included among Pakistan attractions as it is an ancient route connecting east and the west. Pakistan is also home to 31 natural and manmade lakes and reservoirs. The helicopter or train safari is also very famous among tourists as they travel to see the most spectacular views of landscapes and mines across the country. The helicopter safari is the latest means of travelling as it takes the tourists high

in the sky so they can enjoy the highest peaks in the north and deserts in the south (UNIC, 2011).

[click here to enlarge](#)

Figure 5: Ayubia (Source: <http://www.offthemap.ca/diaster.php>)

Wild Life Tourism:

There are about 14 national parks which give a beautiful glimpse of the rich Flora and Fauna of Pakistan. And there are 2 safari parks with various types of animals like tigers, lions, monkeys, elephants, giraffes, pythons, birds, deer's etc (UNIC, 2011).

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_POvZp_cG6SE/S55MVLBkT_I/AAAAAAAAABYw/4wINU1_pjL4/s320/CIMG2056.JPG

Figure 6: Kund Wild Life Park (Source: http://kiranpalwasha.blogspot.com/2010_03_01_archive.html)

Sports Tourism:

Pakistan is popular as a tourist sports destination. Himalayan range which is the world's highest mountain range in the world demands for professional trekking along with general trekking. Other types of sports tourism include white water rafting, wild boar hunting in deep forests, shandur polo games, mountain biking, golf, ice climbing, rock climbing, snowboarding, skiing, caving and pot holding etc. rich people and prince come from middle east for deer hunting in Pakistan.

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All the above mentioned factors contribute positively to Pakistan tourism industry but along with these, there are also negative factors which are affecting Pakistan tourism industry and have resulted in the loss of tourists' arrival in Pakistan.

Negative Factors:

The negative factors effecting Pakistan tourism industry are the views and opinions of domestic and international tourists obtained via questionnaire and interview. According to the tourists, the biggest problem they are facing while travelling is security issues which include the current insurgency in Pakistan. Even the domestic tourists don't feel like travelling in their own country. Second issue of tourists decline is negative image of Pakistan portrayed by media to the outside world. Lack of infrastructure, ineffective promotional policies, inadequate tourist's services and facilities, lack of initiatives by concerned government departments, inadequate knowledge and training of personnel in tourism sector, law and order situation especially in the high tourists attraction areas, inadequate infrastructure facilities, lack of incentives in the tourist sector, failure to show and project the positive image of the country via media to the outside world, low allocation of annual tourist budget, lack of development and facilities in the mountain regions, lack of understanding to the tourist needs, the overtaking and change of governments and administration within the country (army rule) and high inflation rate are the key points which have altogether made tourism an unsuccessful industry in Pakistan. The tourism Ministry is not playing sufficient role and tourist faces difficulties in getting timely visa and other information's. The tourism authorities must focus on this sector as tourism is

the only sector, which can contribute substantially in the poverty alleviation and improving the living standards of the local community.

Factors Effecting Tourism

Positive Factors Negative Factors

Security problems for the tourists

Less marketing and publicity on international level

Weak travel and tourism framework

Low allocation of annual tourist budget

High inflation rate

Overtaking and change of governments

Lack of initiative by concerned government departments

Presence of tourist attractions

Mountains

Valleys

Lakes

Historical places

Rich culture

Rich food

Salt mines

Spring festivals

5 stars hotel chains

Restaurants

Handicrafts

Museums

Business environment

Factors effecting tourism

Figure 8: Factors effecting tourism