

Tourism for Peace: An analytical study of Hazara region Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract

This research explores the critical role of tourism as a catalyst for peace, socio-economic development, and cultural cohesion in the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Focusing particularly on the lesser-known Siran Valley and Manoor Valley, the study investigates how tourism can strengthen intercommunity relations, preserve cultural heritage, and generate sustainable economic opportunities. Using a qualitative research design grounded in existing literature, government reports, and secondary data, the study analyzes tourism's socio-cultural, environmental, and economic impacts. Findings highlight that tourism in Hazara has immense potential to promote peace, but requires strategic planning, sustainable practices, improved infrastructure, and community participation. The research concludes that responsible tourism development can help Hazara emerge as a leading peaceful and sustainable tourism destination in South Asia.

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Candidate of Master of Philosophy at National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that this thesis, titled "Tourism for Peace: An Analytical Study of Hazara Region Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" is my original work and has not been submitted previously for any degree or academic award at any university or institution. All sources of information used in this thesis have been duly acknowledged and referenced according to academic standards.

I take full responsibility for the content, authenticity, and originality of this research.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my parents, whose prayers, sacrifices, and unwavering support have been the foundation of all my achievements.

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TITLE

TOURISM FOR PEACE: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF HAZARA REGION

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Abstract

In Hazara region, tourism shows a fundamental opportunity for both economic stability and regional stability as well as the widespread impacts of tourism in terms of socio-cultural and political dynamics. The present research explores tourism in Hazara and its potential as a catalyst for peace and sustainable development that how tourism can minimize conflicts and promote community cohesion. It adopted theoretical framework and empirical research with the case studies (Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley) while look into the role of tourism in social harmony, socio-cultural heritage, and economic progress across Hazara. Similarly, the findings highlights that it is essential to adopt sustainable tourism strategies, maximize local values and assistance environmental degradation and socio-economic disparities. This research encourages for cohesive policies supporting responsible tourism management, community participation and voice, and environmental stewardship. Recommendations stress infrastructure enhancement, socio-cultural heritage promotion, and the adoption of sustainable tourism principles to unlock Hazara's full tourism potential. To address these challenges and leveraging its rich cultural and natural assets, Hazara can emerge as a best destination for sustainable tourism in South Asia, development regional prosperity and advancing peace.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Tourism has emerged as one of the largest and most dynamic industries globally, reshaping perspectives and fostering connections among people worldwide. This phenomenon, often described as “Citizen Diplomacy,” underlines the pivotal role of ordinary individuals in bridging political and social gaps where governments may struggle (D'Amore, 2013). As a multifaceted sector, tourism encompasses cultural, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and rural tourism, each catering to the diverse interests of both domestic and international travelers (Verma, 2006). According to Galtung's framework, which distinguishes between cultural, structural, and direct violence, achieving peace entails more than the absence of conflict; it necessitates conditions that prevent violence and promote harmony (Galtung, 1996). Besides tourism is categorized into domestic, inbound, and outbound types, all contributing significantly to economic growth and encourage global awareness of tourism's societal benefits (Gupta, 2013). The present study aims to explore how tourism, particularly in the Hazara Division of Pakistan, would serve as a catalyst for peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Pakistan's tourism sector holds vast potential across diverse domains such as adventure, cultural, religious, and educational tourism. Despite various initiatives, its economic contribution through employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, and revenue remains underdeveloped. There are untapped opportunities within the CPEC and SAARC regions, aiming to leverage shared cultural and religious attractions to enhance tourism's socio-economic impact (Rehman, 2015). According to the UN Tourism, tourism involves the travel of individuals outside their usual environment for leisure, business, or other purposes, excluding activities remunerated from within the destination (UN Tourism , 2018). Pakistan's tourism is characterized by its rich cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and historical sites, making it a hidden gem in Asia's tourism landscape. The country's hospitable reputation

further enhances its appeal to international visitors (Arif, 2019). With strategic alignment with regional initiatives like CPEC and SAARC, Pakistan aims to capitalize on shared cultural and religious attractions to enhance socio-economic impact.

Pakistan's travel and tourism sector contributed 5.9% to the country's GDP in 2022, supporting 4.2 million jobs. Despite Pakistan's abundant tourist attractions, these statistics reveal opportunities for further development. Visitor spending in Pakistan amounted to approximately US\$ 16 billion in 2022, with projections to grow to about US\$ 30 billion by 2033. With the relaxation of Covid-related travel restrictions, Pakistan experienced a notable surge in domestic tourism. For instance, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province alone hosted over 1.2 million domestic and international tourists between 2021 and 2022 (Afzal, 2023). Despite challenges in infrastructure and global competitiveness, Pakistan has made progress, bolstered by initiatives such as the establishment of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in the 1970s, focused on policy formulation and promotion (Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), 2024).

Tourism plays a pivotal role in Pakistan's economic growth by generating employment, particularly in Hazara, where it supports numerous small businesses in economically disadvantaged areas. Hazara's breathtaking landscapes, including mountains, valleys, lakes, and rivers, attract tourists from around the world. Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, especially in northern regions like HinduKush and Karakoram, further enhances its allure as a tourist destination (Tufail, 2022). Located in the northeastern part of KP province, Hazara comprises eight districts: Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Battagram, Upper Kohistan, Lower Kohistan, Kolai Pallas Kohistan, and Torghar. Surrounded by Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir to the north and east, Islamabad Capital Territory and Punjab to the south, and Malakand and Mardan divisions to the west, Hazara division holds a strategic position (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024).

Tourism is widely recognized as a pivotal economic sector, particularly in Hazara, where it serves as a vibrant source of employment across public and private sectors. Despite Pakistan's vast tourism potential and extensive infrastructure, government revenue from tourism taxes lags behind other South Asian countries. International investments are increasingly enhancing tourism infrastructure, attracting global visitors to Hazara's diverse attractions, cultural events, and adventure opportunities like trekking and skiing (Tufail, 2022; Qadar Bakhsh Baloch, 2015). Beyond economic benefits, tourism in Hazara fosters cultural exchange, social cohesion, and intercommunity understanding. Total an area of 18,013 km² east of the Indus River, the region of Hazara present a temperate climate year-round and historical importance as a gateway for ancient empires into Kashmir (Khan, 2019).

In Pakistan, Hazara division holds significant due to its historical and archeological sites. It has strong potential in resources such as water, power and energy, and infrastructure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Hassan Farooq, 2021). Geographically, its natural landscape and environment attract various tourists' activities and visits. Therefore, Hazara shows resilience in economic growth and stability, despite the socio-political challenges in policy making in both the federal and provincial power politics. The present research examines how tourism in Hazara can contribute to societal harmony and economic development. To analyze how tourism impacts social values and norms, religious and local communities, the research objectives to uncover its potential to promote peacebuilding and sustainable developments. Along with socio-cultural heritage and geo-strategic dynamics, the present research examines the role of tourism in bridging cultural differences, establishing dialogue and cooperation. Thus, via to strategic engagement, tourism can affected barriers and stereotypes, and shape enduring connections to peace and prosperity.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The Hazara region, located within the administrative jurisdiction of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan and bounded by the Indus River, presents itself as a repository of profound historical significance and latent developmental prospects. Despite its topography and cultural heritage, the region has been restrained by periods of instability and conflict. Throughout these challenges lies the growing potential of tourism to catalyze progress and harmony. The present research attempts to explore the pivotal role of tourism in promoting peace within Hazara, with a specific focus on lesser-known areas such as the Siran and Mahnoor valleys. It analyses tourism and its profound impacts in these regions, particularly how tourism can bridge cultural gaps, enhance public relations, and foster community development, and strengthen economic resources and empowerment while promoting peace. The academic importance of the present study is highlighted by its alignment with broader discussions on tourism's potential for change, particularly how these valleys can influence tourism for resilience, long-term sustainable development, national and institutional stability.

1.2. Significance of the Study

The present research holds important implication in view of its study of tourism's potential to encourage and promote common ground and cooperation within the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Hazara region, with its diverse ethnic and cultural heritage, presents a unique opportunity for tourism to act as a bridge connecting people from various backgrounds. Through ecotourism and cultural tourism initiatives, this study upholds for sustainable practices that not only enhance cultural obligations but also contribute to broader societal cohesion. To understand the importance of preserving natural landscapes and historical and archaeological sites, while promoting responsible tourist behavior, the study aims to generate economic potential and ensure the long-term sustainability of tourism in Hazara.

The present study research develops its significance through its scope and applicability. To understand the lesser-known tourist destinations (Siran and Mahnoor valleys) and new types of tourism activities within the context of peacebuilding, the study seeks to attract tourists for educational and recreational purposes. Findings and recommendations emerging from this research could be enforced not only in the Hazara region but also in other tourist destinations across Pakistan. To discover unexplored areas for investment and development, this study aims to provide policymakers and stakeholders with strategic perceptions to organize both short and long-term planning and policies and sustainable development initiatives.

Moreover, this study purpose set out as a foundational resource for academia, policy formulation, and trade initiatives. To provide an in-depth analysis of the impacts of tourism on Hazara's economy, environment, and socio-cultural dynamics, the research informs decision-making processes. It deals with valuable contribution to policymakers, local communities, and all other stakeholders within the tourism industry, help informed strategies to maximize benefits and minimize adverse effects. It also contributes to broad debate on tourism and its role in promoting peace and prosperity. Through present the region's historical and cultural richness and natural beauty, the study aims to attract a diverse range of tourists and promote multi-cultural appreciation, conclusive proponent for tourism as a catalyst for change in Hazara and Pakistan.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the positive and negative effects of tourism on social harmony, intercommunity relations, and peace within the Hazara region.
2. To conduct an in-depth exploration of lesser-known areas within Hazara, such as the Siran and Mahnoor valleys, documenting their historical significance and natural beauty.

3. To evaluate the economic effects of tourism on local communities in Hazara by assessing indicators such as job creation, income generation, and infrastructural development.
4. To develop concrete recommendations for promoting sustainable tourism practices in Hazara, focusing on community engagement, long-term peacebuilding, and environmental preservation.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the significant impacts of tourism on social cohesion, intercommunity dynamics, and peace within the Hazara region?
2. What is the cultural and environmental significance of the lesser-known Hazara regions like Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley?
3. How does the tourism industry in Hazara influence the socioeconomic fabric of local communities, specifically in terms of employment generation, income augmentation, and the requisite infrastructural enhancements necessitated by the growing influx of tourists?
4. What actionable recommendations can be formulated to enhance the implementation of sustainable tourism practices within the Hazara region?

1.5. Literature Review

Tourism has become a prominent area of study attracting considerable research attention in recent years. These studies explore the global landscape of tourism, analyzing its opportunities and challenges, and propose sustainable strategies to enhance local economies and community well-being. The literature reviewed informs the current study by identifying issues related to peace, potential, challenges, and opportunities in sustainable tourism development within

Hazara Division and the selected valleys. This review amalgamate prior research relevant to the study's objectives.

The work (Peace through Tourism: An Historical and Future Perspective, 2013) by Louis D'Amore analyzes tourism and peace in both historical and future sustainability, and mutual understanding. It elaborates the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IPT) and the concepts of "Citizen Diplomacy". Author argues that "Sustainable Tourism Development" is important in environmental protection, cultural preservation, and economic sustainability. Author explains tourism and its potential to promote international engagement, environmental conservation, socio-cultural development, poverty reduction, and conflict resolution. The forms of peace tourism, such as ecotourism, volunteer tourism, and philanthropic tourism focus on their roles in strengthen peace with nature, others, and future generations. However, author is limited and there is epistemic gap and lack of detailed analysis of localized impacts. It is limited in empirical evidence, and lack of knowledge of different cultural dynamics. The broad scope of the work may lead to generalizations, necessitating localized research to address contemporary challenges and emerging trends in tourism. Besides the author methodology is qualitative, stress the need for quantitative data to support claims. It provides a grasp of essential of tourism's potential to contribute to global peace and sustainability. Thus to address these gaps via localized, empirical research focusing on regions like Hazara is important for developing targeted techniques for exploiting tourism for social cohesion, cultural preservation, and economic growth and stability.

Tomas Pernecky's article, (The Being of Tourism, 2010) advocates for a critical shift in tourism scholarship, urging a departure from traditional perspectives towards more nuanced, emic, and situated approaches. Drawing on Martin Heidegger's concept of being-in-the-world, Pernecky argues that tourism cannot be divorced from everyday life, challenging researchers to act as culturally embedded storytellers. The author contends that tourism serves as a lens

through which to understand broader societal dynamics and meanings, proposing a theoretical reorientation that expands the understanding of tourism's role and impact. However, the article is constrained by its geographic specificity, focusing primarily on theoretical insights rather than direct applications to specific case studies.

In their work (Regional Integration of Pakistan Tourism: Exploring and Prospects, 2015), Qadar Bakhsh Baloch and Alam Rehman focuses on the transformative potential of globalization for Pakistan's diverse tourism industry, encompassing adventure, business, cultural, and religious tourism among others. Despite Pakistan rich tourism offerings, its economic contributions have been modest, necessitating a reorientation towards leveraging shared cultural and religious attractions within the SAARC region. Similarly, the work highlights the missed opportunities and proposes leveraging the SAARC platform to enhance regional cooperation, mobilize resources, and foster socio-economic development. It argues for strategic alignment with SAARC's objectives to overcome existing barriers and promote sustainable tourism growth, contributing to socio-political harmony and broader regional stability. However, the work identifies limitations in addressing specific regional contexts like Hazara Division and conceptual gaps in exploring tourism's potential as a peacemaker within Pakistan, highlighting the descriptive nature of literature.

Q. Castaneda and J. Burtner work titled (Tourism as "A Force for World Peace" The Politics of Tourism, Tourism as Governmentality and the Tourism Boycott of Guatemala, 2010) analyze the political dimensions of tourism via an examination of the 1979 boycott of Guatemala organized by the International Union of Food and Allied Workers. This ethnographic analysis reveals tourism's dual role as both an economic activity and a strategic instrument influencing Guatemala's adoption of neoliberal policies under global pressures. Castaneda argues that the boycott, orchestrated by international NGOs, was pivotal in demonstrating how tourism serves as a form of governance, shaping national policies and

political landscapes. While by analyzing original documents from the IUF's archives, the article explores the dynamics and rhetoric of the boycott, emphasizing its profound impact on Guatemala's perception of tourism as a potent force in both economic and political realms. However, the work focus solely on Guatemala limits its broader applicability to other contexts exploring the relationship between tourism, politics, and international governance strategies.

The research paper (Promoting Peace Through Tourism: a role for co-operatives, 2006) by Sanjay Kumar Verma asserts that tourism strategies integrating community-based organizations offer a pathway to encourage peace. It outlines India's economic advancements amid persistent socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and social disparities, despite the country's democratic stability. The author advocates for tourism policies oriented towards cooperatives rather than capital-centric approaches, emphasizing the need for substantial investment in cooperative human resources. This approach aims to safeguard cultural, community, and environmental assets while ensuring economic sustainability and enhancing tourist experiences. However, the paper's scope is confined to India, excluding direct discussion of neighboring countries like Pakistan or specific regions such as Hazara Division, aligning with its territorial focus.

In work of Bola Olusola Adeleke (Peace and Tourism in Nigeria, 2008) aptly argues that peace and stability are essential prerequisites for tourism development, particularly in nations with rich human, natural, and cultural resources, such as Nigeria. Despite the global rise in tourism, Nigeria's industry has not grown due to political instability, crime, and ethno-religious conflicts. The article argues that ecotourism can diversify Nigeria's economy beyond oil, create wealth, and promote cultural exchange and peace. The 2006 Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan, endorsed by UNWTO, highlights tourism's potential to create skilled jobs for women and ethnic minorities and preserve the environment and culture. Nigeria must adopt eco- and sustainable tourism practices, including certification programs to measure

impacts. Key recommendations include sustainable management, maximizing community benefits, promoting cultural heritage, and improving infrastructure. Addressing political instability, crime, and ethnic disputes is crucial, as tourism needs stability to thrive. While this article provides valuable insights into the role of tourism in promoting peace and economic development in Nigeria, it has geographical limitations and does not directly relate to the case study of Hazara Division, Pakistan, which is the focus of the current research. The research questions of the present study also differ, as they are specifically designed to address the unique context and challenges of Hazara Division. Therefore, the findings and recommendations from this article may not be fully applicable to the current study's objectives.

The article (Sikh Bazar at Garhi Habibullah, Mansehra (Pakistan): History Architecture and Tourism Potential, 2021) authored by Abdul Hameed et al., look into the historical Sikh settlements in Hazara, Pakistan, dating back to the Sikh era (1799-1849 CE). It meticulously examines the architectural remnants of that period, focusing primarily on military structures such as fortresses and temples erected under the reign of Ranjeet Singh. Such places function as tangible remnants of Sikh influence in the region as strategic importance and cultural legacy. The author does not thoroughly discussed historical and socio-cultural aspects, ignoring vital dimensions i.e. tourism and peace. This Knowledge gap in discourse limits the exploration of how Hazara's Sikh heritage could be utilized for tourism promotion and community engagement today.

In their article titled (An Exploratory Study of the Factors that Promote and Delay Sustainable EcoTourism Development in Mansehra, 2020), Usman Khan, Faisal Khan & Muhammad Faizan Malik focused on Mansehra district and its strategic located on the Karakoram Highway as an ancient trade routes, and its potential in tourism in northern Pakistan. Authors argues that its diverse attractions as well as its natural landscapes, historical sites, and high-altitude mountains have the capacity to appeal diverse tourists, and adventure

seekers. However, despite its innate appeal, the area faces several challenges i.e. insufficient awareness and infrastructure, and a lack of systematic exploration and documentation of its tourism resources as well as issues such as waste management, conservation efforts, and the absence of a long-term plan. However, the article is limited in its space like only focus on Mansehra within the Hazara division and did not explore tourism as peace, an important aspects which the present research would discussed.

Alam and Ali's research article, (Exploration of Islamic Tourism Initiatives in Pakistan; Insights From Muslim Nations with a Robust Halal Economy, 2022) contributes significantly to our understanding of how countries with strong Halal economies influence the global travel industry. Focusing specifically on Islamic tourism initiatives in Pakistan, their study provides insights into the unique cultural and economic dynamics shaping tourism in the nation. The article helps to further understand Islamic interpretation of tourism in terms of economic actions, and tourism promotion and development. However, article is limited in both the implications of the Halal economy and their potential contributions to peacebuilding. And it did not directly deals with regions like Hazara.

Hassan Farooq research article titled (The Geostrategic Significance of Hazara Region in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, 2021) analysis of Hazara region and its geostrategic significance. Author argues that it is the country's most significant regions and contributions across various sectors i.e. hydroelectric power generation, industrial output, water reservoirs, and tourism. The area's strategic installations and ongoing development projects not only strengthen economic growth and development but also play necessary positions in national energy security and infrastructure development. However, the author primarily focuses on Hazara's economic and geostrategic prominence, it indirectly highlights the region appeal through its rich natural landscapes and tourist destinations, making it a key area of interest for both domestic and international visitors.

Khan Gul and Samina Tufail's article titled (TOURISM INDUSTRY OF HAZARA DIVISION, 2022) explores the profound impact of tourism on Hazara division, Pakistan, highlighting its natural allure and cultural wealth which attract global tourists. Situated within Pakistan's broader tourism landscape, their qualitative study synthesizes data from various sources to underscore tourism's pivotal role in fostering economic opportunities, especially crucial for national development, including the empowerment of women and youth. The research article also advocates for strategic reforms aimed at bolstering tourism infrastructure and services to meet evolving visitor demands and ensure sustainable development. While to accept limitations in generalizability, the present study calls for more robust empirical research to fortify its findings. However, it convincingly argues for optimizing Hazara's tourism potential through targeted enhancements, thereby promoting both economic prosperity and the preservation of cultural heritage.

In the PhD dissertation titled (PROSPECTS OF HOTEL INDUSTRY IN HAZARA REGION under CEPEC, 2019) by Armaghan Khan, the study examines the impact of the new corridor and motorways, particularly the E-35 Hazara motorway, on the growth of the hotel industry in the Hazara region. This region, known for its popular tourist destinations such as Naran Kaghan, Nathia Gali, Ayubia, Shogran Siri Payee Meadows, and Thandiani, has seen enhanced connectivity due to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) road network. The E-35 motorway provides a faster and safer route for tourists and establishes a crucial link between Gilgit Baltistan and the Khunjerab Pass border with China, fostering opportunities for the hotel and tourism industry. Utilizing primary data collected through questionnaires from hotel managers/owners and tourists, the study employs frequency distribution, percentages, and graphs to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of respondents. Additionally, multivariate analysis through logistic regression models evaluates the expectations of both hotel managers and tourists regarding the hotel industry's growth under CPEC. The findings indicate a

significant potential for the expansion of the hotel industry in the Hazara region, driven by improved accessibility and increased tourist inflow facilitated by CPEC. However, the article's limitation lies in its lack of direct discussion on tourism as a peace-promoting factor and its exclusive focus on CPEC. The present research aims to fill this gap by analyzing tourism prospects within Hazara, specifically in the Siran and Mahnoor valleys.

1.6. Research Methodology

To explore the complex relationship between tourism and peace in the Hazara region, this study employs an embedded research design, embracing a multidisciplinary approach. Different field of studies discusses the landscape, religious, socio-cultural history, and traditional norms and values of the region. This multidisciplinary framework helps to discover the diverse impacts of tourism on regional peoples and peace dynamics. It uses qualitative methods and analytical approach and collected data from secondary sources such as books, journal articles, government sources, UN Tourism data, and unpublished theses.

Similarly, the region, its traditional and diverse communities forming a unique blend of customs that attract tourists looking for genuine experiences. To analyze the tourism and peace, the KP Culture and Tourism Authority has been central in promoting these cultural treasures, collaborating with local communities to preserve heritage sites and promote sustainable tourism practices. Globally, international frameworks such as the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IPT) inform principles to influence tourism as a tool, and peace among different social groups. Therefore, various government reports and documents, particularly, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa helps critical perspectives into regional development projects, infrastructural improvements, and set of policies in terms of tourism and its socio-economic impact. Hence, the study follows interdisciplinary approach while

understanding how tourism can strengthen sustainable development, intercommunity relations in the region and Pakistan.

1.7. Delimitation of the Study

The present study is limited to Hazara region and analyze only “tourism for Peace”. It examines different dynamics of tourism and peace, as well as the potential influence of broader geopolitical and geo-strategic factors on tourism and peace initiatives. These delimitations are essential in place to make an in-depth investigation of the selected case study. In terms of data collection, the present research depends on secondary sources i.e. published data. It does not include interviews or surveys in its data collection approach. This approach was chosen to maintain consistency in data collection and analysis methods, while focusing on existing literature and documented information to address the research objectives and questions significantly.

1.8. Chapterization of the Study

The structure of the thesis is divided into six chapters, along with references and an abstract.

Chapter one, titled “**Introduction**,” introduces the thesis as the groundwork for this research. It gives background information, defines the problem being studied, and outlines the specific goals. The chapter also poses research questions that guide the study, highlighting why it is important to explore how tourism and peace relate in the Hazara region. This chapter includes a thorough literature review, critically examining existing scholarly works to identify knowledge gaps. It also explains the research methodology, highlighting the methods for data collection and analysis, the study’s limitations.

Chapter two “conceptual Framework” explores the shift towards a conceptual framework approach to understand tourism in Hazara. This approach is essential for analyzing

tourism's multifaceted nature, impacts, and potential to promote peace. The chapter outlines key concepts such as cultural and eco-tourism, and discusses tourism's socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts. Contextualizing tourism within Pakistan and KP, it highlights Hazara's geographical, cultural, and historical significance. The chapter explores peacebuilding, cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, and how tourism affects social cohesion and community dynamics. Despite Pakistan's tourism potential and infrastructure growth through initiatives like CPEC, its tourism tax revenue lags behind other South Asian countries. Highlighting tourism's economic importance, the chapter draw attention to Hazara's potential to create substantial employment. This sets the stage for a thorough examination of how tourism can encourage peace and sustainable development in Hazara.

Chapter three, "**Tourist Attractions of Hazara**," explores the tourism potential of lesser-known areas like Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley. It examines the cultural and natural heritage of these regions to assess their appeal to tourists and their potential economic impact on the local community. The distinctive features and attractions of Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley, the chapter give emphasis to their untapped potential to boost tourism in Hazara and promote sustainable economic development. The chapter also addresses the question: what is the cultural and environmental significance of lesser-known areas within Hazara, such as Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley?

Chapter four, "**Tourism as a Peacemaker**," analyze how tourism promotes tolerance and understanding among the Hazara people, focusing on its role in building peace. It examines how tourism encourages conversations between communities and supports peace initiatives in the area. This chapter underlines tourism's potential as a catalyst for reconciliation and social cohesion in Hazara, particularly focus on the question: What are the significant impacts of tourism on social cohesion, intercommunity dynamics, and overall peace within the Hazara region?

Chapter five, “**Challenges and Opportunities**,” explores how the tourism industry in Hazara influences the socioeconomic fabric of local communities, specifically in terms of employment generation, income augmentation, and the requisite infrastructural enhancements necessitated by the growing influx of tourists. This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic, environmental, and cultural factors affecting Hazara's tourism sector. It identifies challenges such as urbanization, infrastructure deficits, and socio-political instability that hinder tourism development. Besides, it examines opportunities for sustainable tourism growth, emphasizing strategies to capitalize on Hazara's tourism potential. This chapter aims to help develop tourism sustainably in Hazara. It seeks to improve economic opportunities and build community strength through tourism.

Chapter six, titled “**Recommendations and Conclusion**,” summarizes the study's findings and proposes practical strategies to promote ecotourism in Hazara. It offers a plan for sustainable tourism that balances economic growth with environmental preservation and community welfare. The chapter concludes by outlining pathways for leveraging Hazara's cultural and natural heritage to foster regional harmony and proposing avenues for future research in sustainable tourism practices. It also addresses the question: What actionable recommendations can be formulated to enhance the implementation of sustainable tourism practices within the Hazara region?

Chapter Two

Conceptual Framework

2.1. Introduction

This chapter develops a conceptual framework for tourism and peace and its applicability in the Hazara region. This approach is important to analyze the multifaceted nature of tourism, its impacts, and its potential to promote peace and socio-economic development. This chapter presents a structured lens in order to investigate diverse dynamics of tourism i.e. historical, socio-economic, religious, cultural, and environmental in the context of Hazara region.

This chapter analyzes an important concepts and begins by defining tourism and its various forms. Likewise, cultural tourism and eco-tourism, followed by a discussion on the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism. Regionally, the chapter then contextualizes tourism within Pakistan and KP, highlighting Hazara's geographical, cultural, and historical significance. In due course, it delves into the conceptual foundations relevant to tourism in Hazara, analyzing how these concepts intersect and influence each other. This includes an exploration of peacebuilding, cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, and the impacts of tourism on social cohesion and community dynamics. The framework would be developed by integrating findings from existing research and applying these concepts to understand the specific tourism dynamics in Hazara.

Tourism is recognized globally as a crucial sector for economic development, benefiting both developed and developing countries alike. In Hazara, the tourism industry serves as a significant source of employment across public and private sectors. Pakistan holds immense tourism potential and has developed substantial infrastructure, including initiatives like the CPEC aimed at enhancing accessibility for tourists. However, Pakistan's tourism revenue from taxation remains comparatively lower than that of other South Asian countries. The diverse tourism offerings in Pakistan attract international visitors, prompting government

investments in new facilities to cater to growing tourist arrivals (**Tufail, 2022, pp. 67-71**). This chapter will, therefore, provide a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics, setting the stage for a detailed analysis of tourism's potential to promote peace and sustainable development in Hazara.

2.2. Key Concepts in Tourism: Conceptual Framework Development

In this part, we explore the main ideas and elements essential for understanding tourism in Hazara. To understand tourism and its various forms, it would be better to examine its diverse impacts on socio-cultural, economic, and environmental aspects. This section also explores conceptual foundations such as cultural heritage, community development, and sustainability, analyzing their interrelationships within the tourism context. These concepts would be applied to understand how tourism can promote peace and development in Hazara.

Tourism contains a broad range of activities and services related to travel and leisure. It is commonly defined as the travel and associated activities of individuals away from their usual home environment. This sector includes a diverse array of enterprises that cater to tourists' needs, from accommodation and transportation to entertainment and cultural experiences. Defining tourism can be challenging due to its many facets and the fact that some enterprises serve both tourists and non-tourists (Khan A. , 2019, pp. 10-12). Tourism can be categorized into three main types: domestic, inbound, and outbound tourism, each contributing to revenue generation and promoting societal awareness of tourism's benefits (Gupta, 2013, pp. 996-1012). Hill stations, such as those found in Hazara, attract tourists with their cool climate, serene environment, and scenic beauty, highlighting the sector's potential to thrive in locations that offer natural beauty and a peaceful retreat from urban life (Khan A. , 2019, pp. 10-12).

Tourism has significant socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts. It can promote social cohesion and intercultural understanding, foster economic development through job creation and revenue generation, and lead to both positive and negative environmental

changes. For instance, the global significance of tourism is evidenced by its contribution to GDP and job creation, with the sector supporting millions of jobs and generating substantial economic activity. In 2019, before the pandemic, the travel and tourism sector, encompassing direct, indirect, and induced impacts, contributed 10.5% of all jobs (334 million) and 10.4% of global GDP (US\$ 10.3 trillion), with international visitor spending totaling US\$ 1.91 trillion. According to the WTTC's latest research, in 2023, the sector contributed 9.1% to the global GDP, a 23.2% increase from 2022, but still 4.1% below the 2019 level. Additionally, 27 million new jobs were created in 2023, a 9.1% rise from 2022, and just 1.4% below 2019 figures. Domestic visitor spending increased by 18.1% in 2023, surpassing 2019 levels, while international visitor spending jumped by 33.1% in 2023, though it remained 14.4% below the 2019 total (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2023). Emerging trends such as ecotourism emphasize the preservation of natural environments and the well-being of local cultures, reflecting a shift towards sustainable travel practices that balance environmental conservation with the promotion of cultural heritage (Khan, PROSPECTS OF HOTEL INDUSTRY IN HAZARA REGION under CEPEC, 2019, pp. 10-12).

The conceptual foundations relevant to tourism in Hazara include peacebuilding, cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism. Johan Galtung's distinction between cultural, structural, and direct violence provides a framework for understanding how tourism can contribute to peace by addressing underlying issues and promoting positive interactions (Galtung, 1996, pp. 1-23). Community development is also crucial, as communities serve as voluntary and autonomous associations striving to achieve socio-economic and cultural objectives through cooperation and unity (P.P. Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-15). To analyze these concepts and their interrelationships helps us understand how tourism can influence social cohesion, community dynamics, and environmental preservation in Hazara.

Thus, tourism academia has evolved significantly over the past two decades, experiencing alternating phases of enthusiasm and skepticism regarding its role in promoting peace. This resurgence of interest reflects a renewed belief in tourism as a potential agent for peace. This intellectual journey has seen the emergence of numerous academic journals, such as the Journal of Tourism and Peace Research, which aim to establish a niche in the study of tourism with a specific focus on fostering peace. Tourism functions not merely as an economic activity but as a significant framework through which global interactions and identities are constructed (Franklin, 2003, pp. 1-20; Crang, 2014, pp. 66-77). This evolving ontological shift in tourism studies, as advocated by (Pernecky, 2010, pp. 1-15), emphasizes a departure from traditional views towards a more nuanced understanding of tourism's transformative potential in peacebuilding processes.

The socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism are profound. Socio-culturally, tourism can foster understanding and cross-cultural interactions. Economically, it provides opportunities for livelihoods and economic growth, particularly benefiting marginalized communities. Environmentally, sustainable tourism practices are crucial for conserving natural resources and minimizing ecological footprints (Verma, 2006, pp. 54-58). Key concepts underpinning tourism in Hazara include cultural heritage, community development, and sustainability. Cultural heritage preservation not only attracts tourists but also strengthens local identities. Community development through tourism involves local participation and benefits, enchanting socio-economic empowerment. Sustainability in tourism emphasizes responsible practices to ensure long-term environmental, socio-cultural, and economic viability.

The intersection of these concepts within Hazara's tourism context highlights their interdependent nature. Cultural heritage preservation enhances community pride and tourism appeal while sustainable practices mitigate negative impacts, ensuring tourism's positive

contributions endure. Beyond its economic and cultural dimensions, tourism operates as a form of governmentality, influenced by policies and strategies that regulate and promote tourism as a means of societal governance. This perspective views tourism not merely as an economic sector but also as a mechanism for societal control and influence (Foucault, 1991, pp. 73-86). Post-boycott, Guatemala adopted neoliberal strategies to position tourism as a pivotal economic sector, integrating cultural heritage preservation and infrastructure development into national economic policies (Burtner, 2010, pp. 1-21). This shift underscored tourism's role not only in economic growth but also in cultural identity and international relations.

2.3. Tourism as a Force for Peace

The concept of tourism as a force for peace has evolved significantly, highlighting its potential to encourage mutual understanding and global harmony. In this section of the thesis, it examines the role of tourism in peacebuilding, with a particular focus on Hazara's tourism potential within the conceptual framework of sustainability and community development. The International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) originated in the mid-1970s, commissioned by the Canadian Government to study tourism's future. The study predicted a bright future for tourism driven by higher incomes, increased education, and more leisure time. IIPT's concept of "Peace" extends beyond the absence of war to include inner peace, peace with others, nature, past and future generations, and the Creator. The first Global Conference on Tourism introduced "Sustainable Tourism Development" and a new paradigm for a "Higher Purpose of Tourism" (D'AMORE, 2013, pp. 369-382; IIPT, 2024).

Historically, tourism has been seen as a global peace industry. In 1929, the British Travel and Holidays Association adopted the theme "Travel for Peace." Similarly, the UN's International Tourism Year in 1967 embraced "Tourism: Passport to Peace." The IIPT's first global conference in 1988 was titled "Tourism: A Vital Force for Peace," underlines tourism's ongoing potential to foster peace (Honey, 2009, pp. 1-6). Tourism plays a crucial role in

economic diversification and poverty alleviation. Various forms, including eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and rural tourism, contribute significantly to economic growth and sustainability by promoting responsible practices that conserve natural resources and support local communities (Verma, 2006, pp. 54-58).

Ecotourism, in particular, reduces dependency on single industries and fosters economic opportunities and peace among different ethnic and religious groups. Nigeria's 2006 Tourism Development Master Plan highlights tourism's benefits, such as job creation, focusing on women and ethnic minorities (Adeleke, 2008, pp. 1-14). Tourism can also serve as a catalyst for peacebuilding by promoting mutual understanding and dialogue between diverse communities. This is exemplified by initiatives between India and Pakistan, where tourism has facilitated cultural exchange and cooperation (Verma, 2006, pp. 54-58). Critics also note that tourism's impact on peace depends heavily on pre-existing peaceful conditions. Countries with political instability often struggle to develop sustainable tourism economies, suggesting that tourism is more a consequence of peace than a cause (Burtner, 2010, pp. 1-21).

Tourism promotes and encourages socio-economic contributions and creates a harmonious platform for exchange, sharing, and mutual understanding. It promotes cooperation, a sense of belonging, and integrity in societies where justice, equality, human rights, and prosperity prevail (P.P. Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-3). Peace involves not just the absence of violence but the protection of human rights and ensuring basic needs like education, shelter, food, and health services (Moufakkir & Kelly, 2010, pp. 5-15). Education and awareness are crucial for nurturing peace, which is fundamental for societal harmony (P.P. Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-3).

The interconnectedness of peace, environment, and tourism is delicate, and managing these interconnections can help reduce vulnerabilities. A sustainable environment is crucial for

sustainable tourism, and environmental justice plays a key role in maintaining societal peace (Upreti, 2011, pp. 55-69). Tourism, a human and social experience, serves as a catalyst for socio-economic development, especially in underdeveloped areas. It generates jobs, income, and fosters unity among different communities (ALASTTAL, 2018, pp. 1-5). Hence, tourism impacts social cohesion by fostering inclusive development and empowering local communities. Frameworks for cultural and environmental preservation within tourism are critical for safeguarding Hazara's rich heritage and natural landscapes, aligning with the thesis on Hazara's tourism potential

In short, to combine these concepts and definitions, a comprehensive conceptual framework emerges for studying tourism in Hazara. This framework guides our analysis of tourism's impacts on social cohesion, community development, and sustainability, underscoring its potential role in promoting peace and socio-economic progress in the region. Emphasizing cultural heritage preservation, community engagement, and sustainable practices, tourism not only drives economic growth but also serves as a catalyst for peacebuilding. This approach enriches Hazara's tourism landscape, promote mutual understanding and contributing to global efforts towards sustainable development and (communal) harmony.

2.4. Contextualizing Tourism in Pakistan and KP

In Pakistan, tourism is increasingly recognized as a vital economic pillar, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, encompassing the scenic Hazara region (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). The travel and tourism sector made a substantial impact on the national economy in 2022, contributing 5.9% to the GDP and supporting 4.2 million jobs, with visitor spending reaching approximately US\$ 16 billion and expected to grow to US\$ 30 billion by 2033. Following the easing of Covid-related travel restrictions, domestic tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa surged significantly, with over 1.2 million tourists welcomed between 2021 and

2022 (Afzal, 2023). Sustainable management practices are crucial to harnessing this growth while maximizing economic benefits through enhanced resources, equipment, and training.

In 2018, Pakistan's tourism sector added 7.4% to the GDP, amounting to Rs. 2486 billion, and generated employment for 2.8% of the population, equating to 1,534,000 jobs. Inbound tourism receipts totaled US\$ 351.6 million, with an average tourist expenditure of US\$ 364.2. With 56 million local tourists in 2018, travel expenditure was projected to grow annually, reaching nearly PKR two trillion by 2026. Pakistan ranked 58th globally for outbound tourism and 143rd for tourism receipts in 2018, underscoring its position in the global tourism landscape (Ali, 2022, pp. 6-8). Therefore, tourism's role as a significant economic driver in Pakistan is underscored by projections that expanding the sector to 11% of GDP could create 6.27 million jobs, reflecting its potential for further expansion fueled by increasing global and domestic tourist arrivals (Mohammad Alam, 2021, pp. 412-421).

Pakistan's tourism sector boasts a diverse array of attractions, ranging from the majestic Himalayas to ancient civilizations, appealing to adventure enthusiasts, historians, and religious pilgrims alike. Famous destinations such as Kaghan, Swat, Murree, and Quetta offer picturesque landscapes and pleasant climates, showcasing Pakistan's natural beauty and cultural richness (Arif, 2019, pp. 1-4). The SAARC platform presents a strategic opportunity to harness these resources, fostering intra-regional tourism flows and economic interdependency. Globalization further enhances tourism's role as a transformative force, facilitating economic growth and cultural exchange within South Asia (Rehman, 2015, pp. 405-415).

Pakistan's journey into the realm of tourism began formally with its membership in the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in September 1949. Initially managed by the railway division, the responsibility for tourism evolved through various ministerial

transfers, culminating in the establishment of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in March 1970. Despite these institutional developments, the tourism bureau was subsequently transferred to the Ministry of Culture, Sports, Tourism, and Archeology in 1977, and again to the Ministry of Culture, Sports, Tourism, and Youth Affairs in 1996 (ALASTTAL, 2018, pp. 1-5). This repeated administrative transfer caused crises in leadership, adversely affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism industry.

In the above context, KP stands out as a sanctuary of hospitality, offering breathtaking landscapes, a rich cultural tapestry, and a storied history within its expansive 101,741 km² territory in northwest Pakistan. This province holds a unique allure, drawing adventurers, archaeologists, and explorers alike, with its cultural influences spanning Persians, Turks, Greeks, Buddhists, Mughals, and Britishers evident in its artifacts, performing arts, cuisine, and visual arts. The climate varies significantly across KP, with harsh winters and abundant snowfall in the north contrasting with milder winters, moderate rainfall, and hotter summers in the south. KP's northern regions, renowned for lush green valleys and snow-capped mountains, attract global tourists and bolster local employment through scenic tourist destinations (KP Culture and Tourism Authority , 2024).

Within KP, the Hazara region stands out for its diverse tourism attractions, particularly its rich cultural heritage that annually draws numerous visitors for festivals and adventure activities like trekking and skiing (Raheem, 2023, pp. 1-14). The growth of tourism has sparked economic activity in Hazara, generating new business opportunities while also posing challenges such as maintaining environmental sustainability and service quality (Tufail, 2022, pp. 67-71). The provincial government of KP actively promotes tourism in Hazara, enhancing tourist facilities with initiatives such as billboards, signboards, brochures, and promotional booklets. Efforts to establish tourist facilitation centers and rest areas in Abbottabad and Mansehra are underway, supported by the Tourism Corporation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (TCKP),

which aims to improve the overall tourist experience by providing portable washrooms (Ali, 2022, pp. 6-8). The Hazara Division's appeal extends to both Pakistani and foreign tourists, with its numerous picnic spots attracting over one lakh visitors during Eid holidays. The recent establishment of the Hazara Motorway has further catalyzed tourism growth, while the CPEC promises to foster cultural exchanges between Pakistan and China, echoing historical interactions along the Silk Route (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100).

2.5. Review of Existing Research on Hazara

Tourism in Hazara is a topic of significant scholarly interest, driven by its rich historical significance, cultural heritage, and emerging developmental challenges. The literature reveals Hazara's potential as a compelling tourist destination, characterized by its natural beauty and profound cultural landmarks (Hassan Farooq, 2021), and archeological sites (Hameed, 2022, pp. 20-32; Raheem, 2023, pp. 1-14). Various academic studies highlight Hazara's geostrategic importance and economic contributions, particularly in sectors like hydroelectric power, industrial development, and infrastructure (Premodh, 2012, pp. 1-6). However, a notable gap identified in the literature is the insufficient exploration of tourism's role in fostering peace and sustainable development in Hazara.

The concept of 'Peace through Tourism' offers a crucial lens through which to analyze Hazara's tourism potential. This concept, often misunderstood, emphasizes that tourism can operate as a channel for peace promotion without compromising economic, environmental, or social objectives (Kelly, 2006, pp. 1-13). Rather than being merely a form of alternative tourism, 'Peace through Tourism' aims to address underlying conditions that contribute to violence, fostering conditions where violence is seen as unnecessary. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this scholarly gap by proposing a nuanced conceptual framework integrating theories of peace through tourism and sustainable tourism development. By exploring how tourism can catalyze peacebuilding and socio-economic development in Hazara, this research

seeks to provide comprehensive insights into the multifaceted impacts of tourism in the region. Such an approach not only enriches the academic discourse on tourism in Hazara but also offers practical implications for policymakers and practitioners aiming to harness tourism for both economic growth and peace enhancement in the region. (Khan U. F., 2020)

Similarly, the historical legacy of Sikh rule in the Northern part of Pakistan, specifically within the Hazara Division of KP, spans the era from 1799 to 1849 CE, marked by Ranjeet Singh's military campaigns to consolidate authority. Unlike the Mughals before them, Sikh rulers faced persistent challenges from local uprisings, limiting their monumental construction projects. Consequently, surviving Sikh architectural remains in Hazara primarily consist of strategically positioned small fortresses designed for defense, along with remnants like Hindu temples and a Sikh Guru Duwara (Abdul Hameed, 2021, pp. 83-96; Raheem, 2023, pp. 1-14). The Sikh Bazaar at Garhi Habibullah in Mansehra, initially established during the British era (1849-1947 CE), stands as a significant cultural heritage site with potential for tourism development. However, existing literature on tourism in Hazara often overlooks the specific contributions of Sikh-era structures and their potential significance for cultural tourism. Thus, the present research aims to bridge this gap by systematically documenting and promoting the tourism potential of the Sikh Bazaar at Garhi Habibullah, contextualizing its historical and cultural importance within Hazara's broader tourism landscape. To understand historical analysis with contemporary tourism perspectives, this research fills a critical void in understanding and promoting Hazara's unique heritage.

Other various studies discussed the tourism potential of Hazara division, particularly within Mansehra district along the Karakoram Highway. The work of Usman Khan examines Mansehra as central hub of ancient civilizations, rich in cultural heritage and natural beauty including high-altitude mountains, valleys, and historical developments (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). Despite its potential, Mansehra remains underdeveloped as a tourist destination,

facing challenges such as awareness, scientific exploration and inadequate infrastructure. The available literature identifies these deficiencies as significant barriers to sustainable eco-tourism development in the region. Hence, the main purpose of the present research to highlights these challenges via qualitative analysis, and to build inclusive strategies and planning as well as conservation efforts for safeguarding the cultural and natural resources that appeal to tourists and peace.

Many other studies on the tourism potential of Hazara division in Pakistan have extensively explored its diverse attractions, wide historical sites and natural outlooks. In Rehman works, Hazara's appeal for adventure tourism, cultural exploration, and religious pilgrimage, documenting its rich historical and cultural heritage (Rehman, 2015, pp. 405-415). Current literature lacks insight into how tourism in Hazara can promote regional integration and peacebuilding within SAARC. While existing studies highlight Hazara's tourism assets, they do not explore their potential for driving socio-economic growth and fostering interregional harmony through tourism. The present study addresses this gap by proposing a framework that integrates Hazara's tourism potential with SAARC's objectives of regional integration. By synthesizing existing research and proposing new strategies, this thesis aims to strategically position Hazara in the regional connectivity tourism market, offering innovative approaches for sustainable development and regional peace.

Thus, it is considered that tourism is globally acknowledged as one of the fastest-growing industries, significantly contributing to income generation, job creation, and foreign exchange earnings. It plays a crucial role in reducing a country's current account deficit and facilitating capital formation through foreign exchange inflows. Despite its potential benefits, tourism in Pakistan has historically been neglected, with recognition of its economic advantages emerging only in the early 1960s. This realization prompted the establishment of a

small tourism department within the Ministry of Railways, which has since evolved into a dedicated Ministry of Tourism (Khan A. J., 2011, pp. 1-9).

To sum up, the review of existing research on Hazara region reveal its rich tourism potential, characterized by diverse historical, cultural, and natural attractions. Studies have underscored Hazara's appeal for adventure tourism, cultural exploration, and religious pilgrimage, emphasizing its significance as a tourism hub within Pakistan. Despite this comprehensive documentation, significant gaps persist in understanding how Hazara's tourism assets can promote regional integration and peacebuilding, particularly within the CPEC and SAARC framework. The analysis has identified these gaps and proposes a conceptual framework to integrate Hazara's tourism potential with objectives of regional cooperation. Thus the present research contributes by offering innovative strategies to grasp Hazara's tourism assets for sustainable development and regional peace, highlighting the need for comprehensive development plans and conservation efforts to protect its cultural and natural resources. Moving forward, further research and strategic initiatives are essential to fully realize Hazara's tourism potential and its role in promoting socio-economic development and interregional harmony.

2.6. Application to Hazara's Tourism

The concept of 'Tourism and peace' and their application in Hazara is important while explaining challenges and opportunities for achieving sustainable development. Historically, tourism industry has gone through significant evolution, driven by strategic investments and infrastructural developments started by both public and private organization such as the World Bank and the KP government, leveraging resources from the International Development Association (Tufail, 2022, pp. 67-81; Hameed, 2022, pp. 21-24; Raheem, 2023). For instance, the opening of the Karakoram Highway to foreign tourists in the 1980s was a historical

development that not only triggered a rapid expansion in tourism but also encouraged the exploration of its topographies and cultural dynamics.

Geo-strategically, major projects of BRI under CPEC i.e. the Suki Kinari Hydro Power Project and the Dassu Hydropower Project in Upper Kohistan, highlight Hazara's leading role in Pakistan's economic growth path (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). Such initiatives enhance infrastructure as a tourist destination by improving accessibility to its natural wonders, historical and archaeological sites. It can be say that strategically harnessing these developments, Hazara region stands equipped to make considerable input to local, regional and national economic growth and cultural exchange.

Moreover, the application of a strong conceptual framework to Hazara's tourism landscape enables the identification of respective problems and the formulation of targeted strategies. These strategies are important to address barriers and inclusive growth that benefits local communities. As practical case studies and examples, the present research main objectives is to investigate and provide practical findings into maximizing Hazara's tourism potential as peace, while developing long-term socio-economic benefits and cultural preservation. In short, the conceptual framework helps to highlights gaps in knowledge, and there is limited work on "tourism for peace" is not discussed in details. Practically, Hazara division represents a dynamic case study, offering conceptual understanding of 'tourism for peace' in terms sustainable development, and regional integration. Not only as a premier tourist destination within Pakistan but also as a beacon of responsible tourism practices globally.

2.7. Critique and Justification

The conceptual framework designed for analyzing tourism dynamics in the Hazara region manifests several strengths that enhance its relevance to the complex tourism landscape. For instance, integration of "tourism for Peace" and sustainable tourism development theories is considered a strongest aspects. Such discussion allows an advanced perspective on how tourism

can encourage socio-economic development, particularly in terms of peace in the region. This all-inclusive approach helps an in-depth evaluation of the various effects of tourism on Hazara i.e. socio-economic, and environment. It underlines the importance of implementing Hazara's distinctive cultural and natural resources. And balancing with regional and global tendencies in responsible tourism and promoting a sustainable equilibrium between tourism enhancement and environmental management.

Nonetheless, it also has some flaws and limitations that need to be discussed. Likewise, the most important substantial obstacle is its dependence on generalized theoretical conceptions which not completely grasp the region-specific nuances and socio-political complexities of Hazara. Albeit, theories like peace via tourism give useful perspectives, their application in the unique context of Hazara requires careful adaptation to local dynamics and historical parlance. The framework's ability to effectively address practical challenges, such as infrastructure issues and community participation in tourism initiatives, needs much more empirical support. The framework, and theoretical basis and interdisciplinary approach affirm its relevance for an in-depth knowledge and analysis of tourism and its impact on the Hazara region. Thus evaluating its strengths and weaknesses, the present research enhances the ongoing academic discussion and discourse on sustainable tourism development and provides practical recommendations for responsibly and inclusively improving tourism potential in the Hazara region of Pakistan.

2.8. Contextualizing Peaceful Tourism Dynamics: Hazara Perspectives

The above discussions underlines a framework put together numerous theoretical perspectives to analyze the complex implication of tourism on economic development, socio-cultural dynamics, and environmental sustainability within the region and beyond. Central to this framework is the concept of 'Peace through Tourism,' which posits tourism as a potential catalyst for peace in Hazara region. To influence Hazara's rich cultural heritage, natural

landscapes, and strategic initiatives, the framework identifies opportunities for sustainable tourism practices that can enhance regional integration and economic growth. Besides, the conceptual framework deepen the importance of strategic planning and management to address current challenges such as socio-religious constraints, infrastructure deficits and environmental conservation. This ensures that tourism in Hazara adheres to both global best practices and local community needs.

Therefore, this conceptual framework and its application to our research objectives and methodology is essential to understand the direction of the present research. The present research objectives to analyze “tourism for peace” within the case study of Hazara. To understand the applications of the developed framework, this study aim to provide a structured approach to examine tourism dynamics in Hazara. Similarly, the integration of the regional context of Pakistan and KP enriches our analysis by providing a broader perspective on Hazara’s role within the national tourism geography. The relevant literature and research findings, thereby contributing to an inform viewpoint of impact of tourism in both regional development and integration.

Hence, this chapter elaborates theoretical insights that how these concepts relate to the present research goals, and places them within the broader context of Pakistan and KP. This study explores case studies and empirical analyses to validate the framework’s effectiveness in addressing the challenges and opportunities of tourism for peace in Hazara region. This inclusive approach not only provide a gaps in academic discourse but also practical insights for government, policymakers, stakeholders, and regional communities in the sustainable development of tourism in Hazara.

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter presents a thorough analysis of tourism dynamics in Hazara through a comprehensive conceptual framework, aim to elucidate the complex interplay between tourism

development, peacebuilding, and sustainable growth. It begins by exploring fundamental tourism concepts such as cultural and eco-tourism, examining their diverse impacts on Hazara's socio-cultural milieu, economic structure, and environmental sustainability. The literature review conducted underlines tourism's evolving role as a driver of peace, contextualizing Hazara within the broader national and regional contexts of Pakistan and KP. It identifies significant knowledge gaps in understanding how tourism can contribute to regional peace initiatives, construct the conceptual framework's development.

Over and above, the conceptual framework highlights tourism's pivotal role in socio-economic development and to promote peace in Hazara region. To understand theories of peace via tourism and sustainable development, the framework proposes innovative strategies to grasp Hazara's diverse attractions for promoting regional integration and harmony. To make a point of inclusive and community-centered approaches, it advocates for stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and environmental stewardship to maximize long-term benefits while minimizing negative impacts of tourism growth. Addressing historical administrative challenges and policy shifts that have historically hindered tourism in Hazara, the framework calls for enhanced governance and strategic planning to enhance sector resilience and competitiveness.

Lastly, this chapter build Hazara's tourism dynamics within the broader regional context of Pakistan and KP province. It stress the strategic significance of Hazara in initiatives such as the CPEC, SAARC, and other regional organizations, focus on the region's potential as an important gateway for international cultural and socio-economic and religious engagement and exchanges. This contextualization further enhance our understanding of Hazara's tourism landscape and provides a foundational framework for future research and policy options aimed at sustainable tourism development. It guides forthcoming empirical

studies and policy recommendations aimed at harnessing Hazara's tourism potential to promote and encourage regional integration, peace, and sustainable development.

Chapter Three

Tourist Attractions of Hazara

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the tourist attractions of the Hazara region, particularly focusing on the lesser-known areas of Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley. By examining the cultural and natural heritage of these regions, the chapter evaluates their ability to attract tourists and stimulate the local economy. Through a detailed examination of the unique features and attractions offered by Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley, this chapter highlights the untapped potential of these areas to contribute to Hazara's tourism sector and promote sustainable economic growth. Specifically, what is the cultural and environmental significance of lesser-known areas within Hazara, such as Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley?

The Hazara region in Pakistan, particularly the selected case studies like Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley, has a special blend of geographies and topographies, as well as socio-cultural, historical, and natural attractions for tourism development. Historically, according to Farooq, due to its strategic location, Hazara has symbolized an important pathway for various imperial invasions and expeditions (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44). This rich historical background develops the tourism potential in the region, providing visitors with aspects of its past resistance against imperial forces. The Sikh era (1799-1849 CE), in particular, is remembered for military expeditions led by Ranjeet Singh, resulting in small fortresses and other defensive structures that still stand today, present a glimpse into the region's tumultuous history (Hameed A. A., 2021, pp. 83-96).

For example, during the Sikh ruled in northern India and Pakistan, along with its historical legacy, buildings and bazars in Mansehra such as the Sikh Bazaar at Garhi Habibullah is also important for tourists to visit as they explore the historical past of the area within the communal (religious) perspectives (Hameed A. A., 2021, pp. 83-96). In addition, the historic

Rohtas Fort in Jehlum and the scenic Satpara Lake in Skardu are examples of how diverse attractions can draw both domestic and international tourists (Khan, 2021, pp. 2-8, 76-88).

These sites contribute to the socio-economic development of the area by attracting tourists interested in historical narratives.

However, there is also an issue when we analyze the dominant discourse in tourism studies, particularly, the Eurocentric and Westernized perspectives are predominantly economic in context. For (Xiao, 2006) this perspective emphasize the prevalence of positivist methodologies that limit broader interpretations and theoretical explorations within the field of tourism. However, the Critical Turn group, for alternative and critical approaches that challenge these normative boundaries. This shift towards a more inclusive and interdisciplinary approach seeks to unravel the complex interplays of culture, identity, and power within tourism context. Hence, the conceptualization of culture propose a valuable framework for how tourism can serve as a platform for peace via cultural exchange and consensus (Pernecky, 2010, pp. 1-15).

Notwithstanding tourism in Hazara faced significant challenges i.e. infrastructural limitations and insufficient development activities which hinder its full tourism potential in the region (Khan, 2021). To address these issues, a comprehensive strategies is needed to be discussed for sustainable tourism practices with effective marketing and infrastructure development. Thus, this chapter analyze the dynamics of tourism in Hazara, along with its importance in economic diversification and poverty alleviation, as well as cultural and environmental significance of lesser-known areas (Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley). A comprehensive and inclusive approach to tourism development in Hazara is necessary, as tourism operates as form of governmentality and a global peace industry. This approach, combined with the region's rich heritage, contributes to regional integration and peacebuilding efforts.

3.2. A Demographic Profile of Hazara Region: Geography, Topography and History

The Hazara region, situated in the northeastern part of KP Province, covers an area of 18,013 km². It Hazara the districts of Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Battagram, Torghar, Upper Kohistan, Kolai Palas Kohistan, and Lower Kohistan. It is bordered by Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, Punjab, and other KP districts, the Indus River flows from north to south, and forms much of its western boundary. (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-34). At high altitude, and pleasant weather create a pleasant atmosphere throughout the year, effecting it an attractive destination for visitors (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5). Hazara has diverse landscapes, ranging from the lush Galliyat and Thandiani Valleys to the rugged Chohr Valley and the pristine Supat Valley (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). Its picturesque scenery and heritage-rich background makes it desirable destination for tourists, promoting by stimulating economic growth. "A historical passageway for empires and invaders alike.

Geo-strategically, Hazara, a historical passageway for empires and invader alike. Artifacts of these rooted history, and the Indus civilization found in Haripur, together with built heritage, embodying the artistic and cultural legacies of the Sikh and the Mughal ruled, scattered throughout (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). Besides, its heritage were evolved over thousands of years, archaeological survey reveals successive civilizations such as the Persians, Greeks, Mauryans, Indo-Greeks, Scythians, Parthians, Kushans, Hindu-Shahi, Islamic, Sikh, and British era. Among the key sites are: the Zardheri Buddhist complex with its cruciform Stupa and Monastery, Ashoka rock edicts, the Tomb of Shah Hamadan, the Turkish Court or Guli Bagh monument, the Lingam temple, and the Gurdwara Siri Guru Singh Sabha, preserving the legacy of Colonial India (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478).



Figure 1. Map of Hazara (Universal Service Fund, Government of Pakistan, 2025)

The region has been significant, various external forces as like the Mughals, Pakhtuns (particularly the Durranis), and Sikhs used as gateway and providing access from the plains into Kashmir and northern India (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5). Moreover, Hazara has a storied history of resistance against imperial forces, owing to its strategic position as a key route for invaders. This resistance, spanning from Arsakas's defiance against Alexander the Great to opposition against British imperialism, underscores the region's enduring spirit of defending its sovereignty and cultural identity. During the British colonial era, Hazara's resistance efforts varied: settled districts pursued their goals through political parties and legal means, while tribal areas adopted guerrilla tactics during religio-political movements like the Tehreek-e-Mujaheddin, the Khilafat Movement, the Silk Letter Movement, and the Non-Cooperation Movement. Hazara's role in promoting Muslim nationalism and contributing significantly to the establishment of Pakistan contrasts starkly with the Indian nationalism prevalent in

Pashtun-dominated Frontier provinces, highlighting its pivotal role in shaping regional and national identities (Hussain, 2021, pp. 42-54).

Demographically, about 6.2 million across its eight districts as a heterogeneous population, with ethno-linguistic groups like the Hindkowans, Pashtuns, and Kohistanis. The region's climatic diversity, with Abbottabad renowned as one of Pakistan's雨iest areas, adds historical and natural beauty for tourists (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). Strategically, it also plays an important role in Pakistan's infrastructure development under CPEC. For example, the projects like the Suki Kinari Hydro Power Project and Dassu Hydropower Project are considered as economic potential and as a gateway for international economic initiatives i.e. BRI (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024). Both in regional and national developments projects, Hazara influences strategic advantages as well as cultural and environmental significance, making it a pivotal destination for sustainable tourism and peace.

The region also features a geographically diverse landscape, an area of 2,858 square miles, located between 33° to 35° N latitude and 72° to 74° E longitude. It shares a border with the Kaghan Range to the north and the Kunhar River to the east, which separate it from Chilas in Kashmir. The landscape from the Orash plain, it is set at an altitude of 4,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level, to the Kaghan Valley, which covers 1/3rd of the region and extends up to 17,000 feet. This geographical diversity leads to numerous tourist attractions, likewise, places like Saif-ul-Malook, Lulusar, and Dodupatsar lakes in Naran valleys in Mansehra. Besides, the Galiyat and Thandiani valleys in Abbottabad, along with the picturesque Kaghan, and Shogran valleys, further increase the region's appeal (Tufail, 2022, pp. 74-75).

Similarly, these districts (Mansehra and Abbottabad) within Hazara are particularly known for tourism. Firstly, Mansehra, with its dense forests and pleasant summer climate,

functions as a door to northern Pakistan's tourism. The landscape such as Kaghan, Naran, Shogran, and Siri Payee meadows in the district. Secondly, Abbottabad, known for its pleasant weather and distinguished educational institutions including the Pakistan Military Academy, attracts a substantial number of tourists annually. Hill stations like Thandiani, Nathia Gali, and Ayubia, as well as the Karakoram Highway, tracing the ancient Silk Road, develops the region's appeal to visitors both regionally and transnationally (KHAN, 2019, pp. 43-54). Such fusion positions Hazara as a premier destination for transnational and national cultural and eco-tourism, and contribute to the local communities and peacebuilding.

3.3. Key Tourist Attractions: An Analysis

Hazara Division in Pakistan stands out as a premier tourist destination, revered for its rich cultural, historical, religious, and mountainous attractions. Located at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, and China, Hazara Division draws hundreds of thousands of tourists annually, both domestic and international, across various seasons. These attractions not only bolster the region's economy but also create numerous job opportunities in sectors such as transportation, hospitality, and related services (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44). There are various tourist places and spots that attract many tourists locally, regionally, and globally. Here, we discuss these key tourist attractions as follows:

Mansehra District within Hazara exemplifies this tourism potential with its diverse geographical features encompassing valleys, lakes, streams, wildlife, and lofty mountains. It offers a compelling cultural experience with historical and religious landmarks that allure global travelers seeking natural beauty and cultural enrichment. Effective tourism planning is crucial to harnessing these resources for socio-economic development. Notably, the significant national parks in Mansehra, including Lulusar National Park and Saiful Muluk National Park, were established to conserve the natural heritage of the Kaghan region. These parks are renowned for their diverse flora and fauna, which include species like the elusive snow leopard

(Tufail, 2022, pp. 75-78). They provide serene environments ideal for tourists seeking tranquil natural settings amidst breathtaking landscapes.

Geographically, Mansehra district lies strategically within the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, bordered by Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Muzaffarabad, Abbottabad, and Haripur. Spanning an area of 4,579 square kilometers, it is situated in proximity to major cities like Abbottabad, Peshawar, and Islamabad, accessible via well-developed road networks such as the Hazara Expressway. Its natural beauty and diverse landscapes, including the iconic Kaghan and Naran valleys with attractions like Ansoo Lake, Lalazar, Shogran, Saif-ul-Maluk Lake, Babusar Top, and Lulusar Lake, ensure its enduring popularity among tourists throughout the year (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478).

Moreover, Abbottabad District, located in the heart of Hazara Division, features a diverse array of historical sites and natural wonders spread across its 715 square miles. Positioned between $33^{\circ} 49'$ to $34^{\circ} 22'$ N latitude and $72^{\circ} 55'$ to $73^{\circ} 31'$ E longitude, the district attracts tourists with its mix of historical allure and scenic landscapes. Key attractions include Thandiani, Chilaas, and Arassa, each offering unique experiences that appeal to history buffs and nature enthusiasts alike (Tufail, 2022, pp. 75-78). Tourism plays a vital role in the economy of Abbottabad, serving as a gateway to key regions across Pakistan. Notable attractions in and around the city include Ayubia, Thandiani, Shimla Hills, Ilyasi Mosque, Harnoi (Dor Watercourse Valley), and Galliyat. However, Abbottabad's potential as a tourist destination is hampered by official neglect, excessive construction, unplanned land use, and pollution from transit traffic (Shujah, 2016, pp. 2-5).

Similarly, Abbottabad city, known as “the City of Pines,” serves as the vibrant hub of the region, located just 135 km from Islamabad. It is renowned for its picturesque valley views and dense pine forests, creating an enchanting atmosphere enhanced during snowfall in

December and January, as well as misty monsoon months from July to September. Shimla Peak, locally known as Shimla Pahari, stands out as a popular picnic spot adorned with lush greenery and offering adventurous hiking trails. Families frequent Shimla Peak for its luxurious huts, hotels, and restaurants, making it an ideal getaway year-round (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44).

Thandiani, a peaceful hill station near Abbottabad, charms visitors with its cool air and misty scenery. Less than 40 km from Abbottabad and approximately 150 km from Islamabad, Thandiani is celebrated for its natural beauty, luxurious camping resorts, and extensive hiking trails that attract nature enthusiasts seeking tranquility amidst breathtaking scenery (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44). Moreover, Mushkpuri Top, the second highest peak in Abbottabad, is a beloved destination for hikers, featuring lush slopes and breathtaking views year-round. Its appeal reaches its peak during snowy winters, offering visitors unforgettable vistas and exceptional outdoor adventures in a pristine natural environment (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44).

Haripur district in Hazara division stands out for its diverse array of tourist attractions, including the impressive Tarbela Dam, Pakistan's largest earth-filled dam renowned for its role in irrigation, flood control, and hydroelectric power generation. Beyond its engineering significance, Haripur offers scenic marvels such as Nara Akhoonkhail, Chhajiyan Waterfall, and Sirikot, each contributing to the district's allure with historical intrigue and natural beauty (Tufail, 2022, pp. 75-78).

In similar vein, Kaghan Valley in the district Mansehra, emerges as a jewel of natural splendor, enticing travelers with its mild weather and landscapes. The post-2005 earthquake, the valley is a focal point for environmental studies and cultural exploration. Along with a key attraction i.e. the Babusar Pass and Saiful Muluk Lake, the valley is also famous for cycling, boating, camping, and horse riding, especially in winter (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44).

Moreover, Lalazar Valley, known as the “Land of Flowers,” located about 281 km from Islamabad, it charms with picturesque campsites, mainly in summer. Both Kaghan and Naran Valleys, a hub for scenery and treks like Ratti Gali, Doodhi Patsar, Saral Gali, and Aansoo Jheel, continue to captive for eco-tourists. These valleys, hidden in the Lower Himalayas, ensure all-season opportunities for trekking and sightseeing, drawing nature seekers. Also, Khanpur Dam appeal with its crystal-clear waters and recreation options. Closed to Islamabad, the dam attracts tourists from all over Pakistan, enticed by its scenic beauty and opportunities for leisure (Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44).

3.4. Case Studies of Lesser-Known Areas

1. (a): Siran Valley

Siran Valley, located in Mansehra district, KP, is a hidden treasure in the rugged beauty of Northern Pakistan. Named after the serene Siran River that winds through its landscape, the valley offers a peaceful retreat amidst green hills and towering peaks. Geographically, it spans between $34^{\circ} 33' 35''$ to $34^{\circ} 44' 30''$ north latitude and $73^{\circ} 13' 38''$ to $73^{\circ} 22' 40''$ east longitude, strategically nestled among neighboring valleys like Allai and Kaghan, making it an enticing destination for exploration. The Siran River, stretching 130 km and joining the Indus at Tarbela in Hazara Division, covers a total area of 5284.2 square kilometers (Shah, 2017, p. 3; Fariha Iqbal, 2010, pp. 36-43). "This diversity enhances the valley's charm."

The topography of Siran Valley varies from rugged hills in the north to more uniform plains in the south, creating diverse landscapes ideal for outdoor activities such as hiking and camping. The valley has a moist climate with seasonal shifts with cold winters and rainy monsoons, nourishing its greenery and the Siran river. This diversity enhances the valley's charm and sustain diverse flora and fauna, a place for nature and wildlife tourists (Shah, 2017).

Socio-culturally, Siran Valley is a cultural mix of groups like Sayyids, Gujars, Swatis, and Awans, shaping its vibrant traditions and legacy. For example, the indigenous Gujars,

coexist with Swatis who have shaped the valley's rural and economic structure. Syeds and Awans, respected for their spiritual leadership and agricultural prowess, deepen the cultural richness of the area. Diversity and native dialects spoken; Pashto, Urdu, Hindko, and Gujri and practices different cultural rituals and festivities shaping life in Siran Valley (Shah, 2017, p. 15).

Besides, Siran Valley accessibility via the Hazara Expressway and its strategic location make it an attractive destination for both local and international tourists. The base camp at Dadar, approximately 180 kilometers from Islamabad via the Hazara Motorway, serves as a gateway to the valley's natural wonders and cultural heritage. Visitors can engage in various recreational activities such as ziplining, boating on Siran Lake, and exploring ancient villages that offer insights into the valley's rich history and local way of life. The valley's moderate climate throughout most of the year, although cold in winters, ensures that tourism activities can be enjoyed almost year-round, further boosting its appeal (Ain, 2024).

Siran valley and its economic potential is growing tourist influx and investments aimed at developing its tourism infrastructure. Land is being acquired for resort construction and amenities that cater to the growing number of visitors looking for tranquility and adventure in the valley. Nevertheless, eco-friendly tourism and its economic progression with conservation, and develops Siran valley to set an example for northern Pakistan, and South Asia. As infrastructure and services advance, the valley would attract more travelers seeking tranquility, safeguarding long-term goals and growth for the regional and local community (Ain, 2024; The Express Tribune, 2023).

In a nutshell, both environment and socio-cultural aspects, the valley emerges as a promising destination in Mansehra district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Lush landscapes and thriving fauna, and cultural depth creates a distinct journey. With regional connectivity,

developments, and eco-friendly tourism, Siran Valley is set to become a key contributor to Pakistan's tourism sector, maintaining its heritage and ecology.

2. (b): Mahnoor Valley

In district Mansehra, Mahnoor Valley is located in Balakot Tehsil. The mountains range is about 14 km, and this valley is best known for its natural greenery scenery and moderate trekking paths, hiking trails, attracting tourist globally (Tripako, 2021; Musafir Travel and Tour, 2024). Geographically, the valley is characterized by its rugged terrain and green forested landscapes, presenting the country's ecological diversity. The valley centerpiece, Kuch Gali, attends as a popular trekking pass, and as awe-inspiring landscape and a profound nature escape. Even with its challenging terrain, and hidden destination, the area experience mild temperatures for much of year. With winters occasionally bringing cold temperatures that dip below freezing, making it a more attractive spot for adventure tourism (Rshid, 2021; Tripako, 2021).

So, both culturally and historically parlance, Mahnoor Valley is home to approximately 30,000 residents spread across 14 villages. And these communities, relying on donkeys and ponies for transportation, have shaped a distinctive way of life through nature's patterns and mountainous terrain. There are 9 primary schools in the valley, and its commitment to education within the peaceful embrace of Northern Pakistan. Although its cultural and natural environment, Manoer Valley has faced challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, power and energy (limited electricity), and roads in need of improvement, and healthcare facilities that require more work for enhancement. These challenges, however, call attention to the valley's untapped potential for tourism development. Hence, with strategic investments in infrastructure and amenities, it could emerge as a prominent tourist destination, while fostering sustainable livelihoods while preserving its natural heritage (Tripako, 2021).

The development of Mahnoor Valley as a tourism hotspot hinges on fostering community-led initiatives that prioritize environmental conservation and cultural preservation. To engage all local stakeholders in planning and projects, there is an opportunity to create inclusive growth that benefits both local and regional tourist alike. Increased connectivity and accessibility via roads and transportation, along with eco-friendly tourism practices, will further amplify the flow of tourism in the valley. Such developments also appeal among eco-tourists and adventure seekers in the region (Tripako, 2021). Therefore, Mahnoor Valley needs to be highlighted and promoted. The valley will be remained a land of high adventure and nature due to its cultural authenticity. So it needs roads infrastructure, highways and domestic productions and awareness.

3.5. Cultural Heritage and Tourism

Preserving cultural heritage is crucial for safeguarding the identity and historical roots of societies. Hazara Division in Pakistan, known for its diverse cultural heritage, has been shaped by centuries of exchanges along historical routes like the Silk Route. This region has served as a crossroads where rich historical sites (Hameed, 2022, pp. 20-32) and cultural traditions from South Asia, Central Asia, and China converged, leaving a profound imprint on its architecture, languages, and traditions (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100; Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-38). The Great Tang Dynasty, for instance, witnessed Buddhist pilgrims traveling through Taxila, Swat, and Peshawar, contributing to the region's spiritual and architectural legacy (Farooq, 2021).

The impact of tourism on cultural sites in Hazara is multifaceted, offering economic opportunities while presenting challenges to preservation efforts (Khan A. , 2019). Tourist influxes to historical landmarks such as Taxila and Peshawar contribute significantly to the local economy through visitor spending and job creation in hospitality sectors. However, increased foot traffic and insufficient infrastructure can threaten the physical integrity of these sites, necessitating sustainable tourism practices (Farooq, 2021, pp. 31-33; Tufail, 2022, pp.

67-81). Strategies focusing on controlled access, visitor education, and community involvement are essential to mitigate these impacts and ensure the longevity of Hazara's cultural heritage.

Heritage tourism plays a vital role in preserving cultural heritage and generating economic benefits. Centered around archaeological sites, monuments, historic buildings, and artifacts, heritage tourism serves as a significant revenue source for numerous countries. In 2022, the green valleys of Hazara attracted nearly 300,000 tourists, including hikers and adventure sports enthusiasts. During the Eid holidays, approximately 363,000 tourists visited popular destinations in the Hazara and Malakand divisions, providing a substantial boost to the rural economy. Notable sites visited included Abbottabad, Nathia Gali, Ayubia, Donga Gali, Harnoi, Bagnotar, Khanspur, Kaghan, Naran, Saiful Malook in Mansehra, Kalam, Bahrain in Swat, Kumrat in Dir Lower, Chitral, and other tourist resorts (Khan O. M., 2023; Raheem, 2023). These trends underscore the significant potential of heritage tourism to contribute to sustainable development and economic growth in the region.

As a result, promoting cultural tourism in Hazara requires strategic initiatives that balance economic benefits with conservation imperatives. Joint efforts among government (national and provincial) bodies, local communities, and all other private sectors are very essential in developing tourism products, while providing genuine cultural experiences. Investment in tourism infrastructure, elements that influence transportation infrastructure, and preservation projects as well as supports the conservation practices of cultural sites. Besides, educational tourism programs aimed at raising cultural awareness, knowledge and skills specific to tourist industry (KP Culture and Tourism Authority , 2024; Tufail, 2022, pp. 68-71).

In the above context, the CPEC presents a game-changing opportunities for cultural tourism in Hazara. It develops regional connectivity and infrastructure and improve access to valuable cultural artifacts and fuels economic development in the territory (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100; Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). CPEC and its initiative emphasizes the importance of combining sustainable development practices to preserve culture transformation. Hazara can use its unique cultural heritage to attract global visitors to maintain and preserve these resources responsibly.

To cut the story short, the cultural heritage is integral to its identity and tourist attraction in Hazara region. Through sustainable tourism strategies and initiatives such as CPEC, Hazara can preserve its archaeological sites, the ancient city of Taxila, and others historical and cultural legacies while capitalizing on tourism revenue. So, the developments of cultural and educational tourism needs to be focused on conservation, local industries and strategic partnerships to ensure Hazara's historical richness and natural landscapes for regional and global changes.

3.6. Environmental Attractions, Conservation, and Economic Impact of Tourism in Hazara

Hazara division in Pakistan features a diverse natural environment that supports its growing tourism industry. Covering an area of 18,013 square km east of the Indus River, Hazara enjoys a temperate climate year-round, ideal for tourism activities across all seasons (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5, 40-45; Farooq, 2021, pp. 29-37). Its geographical diversity includes lush valleys, pristine lakes, and rugged mountain ranges, such as the iconic Kaghan and Naran valleys, renowned for their breathtaking landscapes and natural attractions like Saif-ul-Malook Lake and Babusar Top (Tufail, 2022, pp. 67-81).

Environmental conservation plays a pivotal role in sustaining Hazara's natural beauty and tourism appeal. As tourists flock to its scenic wonders, ensuring the preservation of fragile

ecosystems and biodiversity becomes paramount. Sustainable tourism practices, such as controlled visitor access, waste management initiatives, and community-based conservation efforts, are essential for minimizing environmental impact while maximizing the benefits of tourism (KHAN, 2019; Tufail, 2022).

Thus, tourism significantly contributes to Hazara's local economy through various channels, including job creation, income generation, and infrastructural development. The influx of visitors supports a robust hospitality sector, creating employment opportunities in hotels, restaurants, and transportation services (Khan A. , 2019). Moreover, tourism-driven infrastructural projects, bolstered by investments like those under the CPEC, enhance connectivity and accessibility to Hazara natural and cultural treasures (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2024).

As a result, it is considered that the assessment of tourism's economic impact highlights its role in driving regional development in Hazara. Along with revenue, tourism stimulate domestic industries i.e. the productions of arts and crafts likewise handicrafts, local markets, and recreational services. Moreover, infrastructure improvements funded by tourism investments, such as roads and accommodations, further stimulate economic activities and rise living conditions for residents. Shortly, its attraction significantly contribute to tourism discourse, sustainable tourism practices and strategic investments under the BRI. The region can preserve its environmental heritage and heterogeneous society while safeguarding tourism destination within diverse landscape of KP and Pakistan.

3.7. Challenges and Opportunities

Although blessed with natural beauty, tourism marketing in Hazara, numerous challenges limit the capacity of regional tourism. Along with socio-cultural and environmental issues, poor roads infrastructure, and connectivity to isolated areas, lack of tourism education are the important to be addressed (Ali, 2022, pp. 6-8; Raheem, 2023). The push for high-class

hospitality, elite hotels, peaceable environments, and security standards for visitors remains critical to infrastructure and services in the tourism sectors. For this reason, socio-political factors also play a significant role in shaping tourism dynamics in Hazara. Issues like regional instability, socio-political tensions, and security concerns could hinder visitor inflow to the region. Moreover, political participation, bad governance and institutional delays may hinder the development of tourism-related institutional capacities, infrastructure and services, impacting visitor experiences and behaviour.

On the other hand, Hazara Division presents abundant opportunities for sustainable tourism development. By embracing sustainable practices such as eco-friendly accommodations, community-based tourism initiatives, and cultural preservation efforts, Hazara can enhance its appeal as a responsible tourism destination. Community engagement and participation are crucial in ensuring that tourism benefits are distributed equitably among local residents, fostering socio-economic development and cultural exchange (D'AMORE, 2013, pp. 369-382).

The long-term benefits of tourism for Hazara encompass economic growth, job creation, and infrastructure development, essential for enhancing the region's socio-economic landscape. Hazara aims to diversify its economy and reduce dependence on traditional industries, promoting sustainable development and resilience against economic fluctuations through leveraging its natural assets and cultural heritage. Looking ahead, Hazara tourism prospects appear promising with ongoing investments in infrastructure, promotional campaigns, and policy reforms supporting sustainable practices. Addressing current challenges and seizing emerging opportunities will position Hazara as a leading destination for cultural, eco-tourism, and adventure tourism, thereby contributing significantly to regional development and fostering international cooperation.

3.8. Recommendations for Enhancing Tourism

In order to capitalize on Hazara's rich potential as a tourism hub and address existing challenges, several strategic recommendations are proposed. First and foremost, there is a need to promote domestic tourism and accessible tourism, particularly in unknown areas within Hazara via destination marketing organization and infrastructure development. Here, for example, tourist destination like Siran and Mahnoor Valleys which boast unique natural landscapes and socio-cultural significance. Thus, all-inclusive strategies diversifying tourist attractions beyond popular destinations like Naran, Kaghan, and Abbottabad, Hazara can attract a broader range of visitors and improve and ease pressure on overcrowded destination, the decision to take the trip.

First, policy recommendations must prioritize sustainable tourism and its current and future socio-economic and environmental impacts. Also this should involves destination management, affinity group, regulations to protect fragile ecosystems, promoting eco-friendly accommodations. Besides, transportation options, and community engagement in tourism planning and management as well as incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices can encourage short, medium and long-term commitment to environmental stewardship while enhancing the quality of visitor experiences, and agri-tourism along with alternative tourism.

So, it can be say that effective strategies for balancing tourism growth and conservation involve a strong and comprehensive approach that integrates tourism development with conservation efforts. This includes creating protected areas, implementing responsible tourism guidelines, and closely monitoring the impact of visitors on natural and cultural heritage sites. For competitiveness of a tourism destination, incorporating sustainability into tourism policies and practices allows Hazara to safeguard its pristine landscapes and cultural treasures for future generations, while shaping and reaping the economic benefits of responsible tourism i.e. business tourism, and visitors.

3.9. Conclusion

To cut the story short, this chapter has explored the diverse attractions and challenges of tourism development in Hazara in terms of its natural beauty, socio-cultural richness, historical and archaeological importance. It concluded that there are immense potential of tourism in Hazara, as a premier tourism destination in Pakistan and south Asia. Domestic tourism and the importance of developing tourism in Hazara extends beyond economic benefits i.e. domestic tourism consumptions, expenditure of a resident visitor within the economy to environmental conservation, and regional development. Its durable consumer goods, and dwellings, the region like Hazara can emerge as a model for responsible tourism in both regional and global levels.

So, this chapter analyze tourism development in the context of its broader research objectives, as well as shed light on its socio-economic dynamics, environmental sustainability, and cultural resilience in the Hazara region. It also stress that it is important to implement recommended strategies for promoting lesser-known areas and adopting economic analysis of sustainable tourism policies while to achieve a balanced approach to tourism growth and economic territory. Both provincial and federal governments must adopted a long-term policies and collaborative efforts with all stakeholders to unlock the potential Hazara's tourism.

Chapter Four

Tourism as a Peacemaker

4.1 Introduction

Tourism can bring numerous benefits beyond just economic ones. In the region like Hazara, it can help promote peace, tolerance, and unity among different communities and ethnic identities. Hence, this chapter looks at how tourism can act as a tool for peace, and discuss its role in improving understanding among Hazara's diverse communities. It elaborates how tourism leads have facilitated dialogue between these communities and contributed to broader efforts aimed at building peace in the region. To understand these dynamics, this chapter emphasize the forms of tourism in promoting reconciliation and social harmony within Hazara, intends to bring tangible and intangible benefits to tourism stakeholders and the local that what are the significant impacts of tourism on social cohesion, intercommunity dynamics, and peace within the Hazara region?

Tourism characteristic activities and their potential as a tool for peacebuilding halts from its ability to go beyond socio-political divides, creating platforms for meaningful interactions and dialogue among people from diverse ethno-linguistics backgrounds. In Hazara, where historical tensions and socio-political complexities persist, tourism initiatives have shown promise in bridging these divides. To bring together tourists and local communities in shared spaces, it promote common identification and inbound tourism, breaking down stereotypes, a sense of shared humanity (Verma, 2006, pp. 54-56). This provides a valuable input to collective rejuvenation but also strengthens the fabric of communities through respect for all culture i.e. uniformity of behaviour and decision-making autonomy as institutional unit.

Hence, this chapter examines both tangible and intangible examples where tourism has acted as a catalyst for peacebuilding in Hazara. Within the context of selected case studies, this chapter highlight how tourism infrastructure and activities, when designed and implemented

thoughtfully, can diminish tensions, promote dialogue, and build trust among communities with historical grievances. So, it is very important for designing sustainable tourism strategies that maximize social benefits while minimizing potential negative impacts in the limited geographical spaces.

Hence, this chapter emphasizes the significance of utilizing real-world examples and measurable outcomes to systematically grasp how tourism contributes to peacebuilding. It seeks to deal actionable perceptions for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders engaged in tourism development in Hazara. Thus, this evidence-based approach not only validates the theoretical underpinnings of tourism as a peacemaking tool but also provides practical recommendations for yoking tourism's potential to promote and encourage peace and unity in both rural and urban tourism.

4.2. Empirical Analysis of Social Impacts

Tourism and its importance for peace and social unity is widespread recognition in the northern Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan. In this section, we used empirical analysis to examine how tourism initiatives have nurtured social inclusiveness, enable cross-community engagement, dialogue and peacebuilding endeavors and actions in the Hazara region. For example, the study like (IIPT, 2024; Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-15) aptly narrated that tourism serves not only as an economic driver but also as a platform for cultural exchange and similarity for building peaceful societies. Importantly, the UN's recognition of tourism as a means to achieve peace draw attention to its potential to transcend political boundaries and foster global cooperation and tourism value chain. Peace and tourism are often linked via various international agreements and understandings i.e. (i): the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948), (ii): the International Bureau of Social Tourism (1963), (ii): the Helsinki Accord (1975), (iv): the World Tourism Organization's Tourism Bill of Rights & Tourist Code (1985), (v): and the UNWTO's

Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty (2003) plan. Besides, the United Nations has recognized tourism as a pathway to achieving peace, as emphasized in the UN Conference on Environment and Development (June 14, 1992) and the Amman Declaration on 'Peace through Tourism' adopted at the Global Summit on Peace through Tourism (November 11, 2000) (IPT, 2024; Kunwar, 2015, pp. 1-36). So, in order to benefit from, it is very important to emphasize on business and professional purpose of tourism, sustainable practices and involve local communities in tourism development and adventure tourism (Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-3; IPT, 2024).

In this context, it can be said that various studies and surveys from Hazara reveals insightful cases where tourism plans have played an important role in both historical and archeological discoveries and sites (Raheem, 2023, pp. 1-14) conflict resolution and community integration and cohesion. In particular, developments under the CPEC have opened up new avenues for tourism-related businesses in Hazara i.e. usual environment and residence, services and cultural heritage: local arts and crafts (Mohammad Alam, 2021, pp. 412-421; Ullah, 2018, pp. 261-272). Thus, these initiatives not only create wellness tourism but also empowerment, domestic's tourism and economies, thereby contributing to stability and reducing socio-economic disparities that can fuel conflicts.

Therefore, the conceptual framework of peace through tourism, particularly the studies of (Galtung, 1996) and (Kelly, 2006) argued that peace is more than just the absence of conflict; it requires active efforts to promote social justice and economic equity. So, tourism in Hazara enable cultural dialogue and inter-cultural exchanges and interactions among the diverse ethno-linguistics communities and identities (Honey, 2009, pp. 1-6). In this context, Pakistan-China relations, particularly the developments under the BRI like the projects of Karakoram Highway and CPEC have improve regional connectivity via the ancient Silk Road (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5; Amir, 2022, pp. 1-17).

Moreover, to fully utilize the prospects of tourism, in Hazara region, accessible tourism must be ensures the availability in destinations, and accommodations. The development of infrastructure, for example, Hazara Motorway has improved accessibility to adventure tourism (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100). This comprehensive approach not only enhances tourism but also builds community resilience against conflict by bring up local identity and pride as well as a business mix, plan and travel. Therefore, cultural tourism and customaries tours are evidence from Hazara shows that tourism can effectively promote peacebuilding. Eco-tourism through the economic advantages and cultural exchanges facilitated by tourism, policymakers and stakeholders can advance ethno-tourism, and sustainable development and peace in regions.

4.3. Tourism Initiatives and Social Cohesion in Hazara: Building Bridges across Communities

Tourism promotes peace and strengthens dialogues between regions and neighboring countries, fostering mutual respect and peace. Tourists engage with local culture, landmarks, music, and cuisine, influencing their perceptions positively. Sports tourism, in particular, acts as a tool for peace by promoting social integration through shared activities among diverse cultures and social classes. In Hazara, tourism initiatives harness the region rich cultural heritage to encourage social cohesion and intercommunity dialogue. Despite historical tensions rooted in socio-political dynamics and historical grievances, tourism is increasingly seen as an important for bridging divides and promoting peaceful coexistence (Mohanty, 2019, pp. 3-9; Premodh, 2012, pp. 1-6).

Central to tourism role in Hazara is its ability to facilitate cultural exchanges that promote empathy and reduce stereotypes among different communities. Government and NGO-sponsored cultural festivals and heritage tours provide platforms where residents from

diverse backgrounds can interact positively, fostering a shared sense of identity and unity (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 91-95). Similarly, infrastructure developments like the Hazara Motorway and the CPEC further enhance Hazara connectivity and accessibility, facilitating increased cultural exchanges between local communities and international tourists. These developments not only stimulate economic growth through tourism but also deepen cultural understanding between Pakistan and countries like China, contributing to regional stability and cooperation (Amir, 2022, pp. 1-17). These efforts display and honor the cultural variety of the region, helping to connect different ethnic and religious groups, promote peace and collaboration.

Tourism impact on social cohesion within Hazara communities extends beyond cultural exchanges to economic empowerment and community involvement. Local residents engaged in tourism-related activities, such as homestays and handicraft production, become stakeholders in the tourism economy, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in their cultural heritage (I IPT, 2024). This involvement strengthens community resilience against social tensions by highlighting the economic and social benefits of tourism development. Besides, environmental sustainability is also integral to tourism's role in promoting social harmony in Hazara. Sustainable tourism practices ensure the responsible use of natural resources, preventing environmental degradation that could lead to social conflicts (Upreti, 2011, pp. 55-69). Preserving its natural environment through tourism helps in both economic growth and environmental protection, contributing to lasting efforts for peacebuilding. Thus tourism initiatives in Hazara play a vital role in promoting social cohesion and fostering intercommunity dialogue. Through cultural exchanges, economic empowerment, and environmental stewardship, tourism contributes to building resilient communities capable of overcoming historical divisions.

4.4. Challenges to Tourism-Driven Peacebuilding

In today's contemporary era, tourism is intrinsically linked to sustainability and environmental considerations for sustainable development. The role of sustainable tourism in peacebuilding cannot be overlooked, as emphasized by (Murphy, 1985, pp. 25-37), who highlighted the local community as the backbone of tourism development. Without community sustainability, tourism development cannot be expected to thrive. Thus, local peace is crucial for tourism and the natural environment. However, despite its promise as a peacebuilding tool, tourism faces several challenges that hinder its effectiveness, particularly in the Hazara region. One primary challenge is the socio-political instability that frequently disrupts tourism activities. The region's complex political landscape, characterized by intermittent conflicts and governance issues, often deters tourists and investors, undermining efforts to develop a robust tourism industry. Political tensions and security concerns create an environment of uncertainty, which can stymie tourism development and its potential peacebuilding benefits (IPT, 2024; Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-15).

The connection between peace and tourism is evident, with peace being defined and understood differently across various disciplines. The Amman Declaration on Peace through tourism asserts that peace is a prerequisite for travel, tourism, and the overall growth and development of human beings. Peace is one of the most fundamental rights everyone is entitled to. As (Farahani, 2014) noted, there is a significant demand for peace in tourism, quoting "peace: passport to tourism." Tourism, as a universal phenomenon integral to globalization and liberalization, seeks peace, stability, and tranquility for its growth and prosperity. Tourism thrives on peace, making it a peace-based industry. However, the socio-political instability in Hazara undermines this foundation, presenting a substantial challenge to tourism-driven peacebuilding initiatives.

In addition, cultural barriers also pose significant obstacles to leveraging tourism for peacebuilding in Hazara. As ethno-linguistics and heterogeneous society, the area is home to a diverse mix of ethnic and religious groups, with distinct social norms and values. Though such mixture have potential strength, however, it can also lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, especially when not managed sensitively in the context of tourism and perceived risk and international tourism. Language differences, discrimination, and cultural insensitivity from tourists or tourism operators can exacerbate existing tensions and foster resentment among local communities. Therefore, efforts to promote tourism must include comprehensive cultural sensitivity training and awareness programs to ensure that tourism activities do not inadvertently deepen divides (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100). Moreover, tourism can lead to economic inequality, where certain areas or groups may benefit disproportionately, leaving others marginalized. This economic disparity can create or intensify local conflicts, as communities or individuals who feel left out of the economic gains may harbor resentment against those who benefit (Amir, 2022, pp. 1-17). So, to ensure that tourism development is all-inclusive and equitable is crucial to preventing such socio-economic disparities from undermining peacebuilding efforts, a barrier to tourism development and participations.

Last but not the least, the environmental impact of tourism in Hazara presents a significant challenge. Though tourism can bring economic benefits, it can also lead to environmental degradation if not managed sustainably. Along with biophysical, environmental damage, such as deforestation, pollution, and depletion of natural resources, can worsen local conflicts and destabilize the long-term viability of tourism as a peacebuilding tool. Sustainable tourism practices must be prioritized to ensure that tourism development does not come at the expense of the region's natural resources and the well-being of its communities. By providing political and financial supports, policies promoting eco-friendly tourism and involving local communities in environmental conservation efforts are very important to address these

challenge (Upreti, 2011, pp. 55-69). Thus, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environments as well as can promote peace and social unity in Hazara, however, complex issues like socio-political instability, heterogeneous cultural and norms, economic inequality, and environmental harm need to be addressed properly. All-inclusive approach must be followed, and to raise awareness of environmental values and economic importance.

4.5. Opportunities for Enhancing Tourism's Role in Peacebuilding

In Pakistan, the era of 1960s has witnessed tourism promotion and developments. Tourism dynamics holds immense potential for economic stability, empowerment and overall growth in terms of improving the country's global image. The growth and development of tourism in Pakistan had the highest number of tourists, and can support social stability and peace, making it a key part of national development plans and industries (Khan A. J., 2011, pp. 1-9). To counter challenges, Hazara has great potential and offers diverse opportunities for tourists. Key strategies i.e. tourism marketing for both national and international travellers, sustainable tourism practices, tourism infrastructure and education that highlight the benefits of tourism to local communities and domestic business. These strategies can help ensure that tourism development is equitable and contributes to peacebuilding efforts by providing economic opportunities and to identify the factors which are acting as the barrier to the growth of international tourism.

Along with adequate socio-political commitment and removing institutional barriers, all stakeholders like the government, NGOs, and local groups must be played a key role in promoting peace via tourism. Firstly, government policies can help by providing security, improving infrastructure, and tourism marketing the region as a tourist spot. Secondly, NGOs can support tourism initiatives by providing expertise, funding, and promoting community-based tourism projects that emphasize cultural exchange and to achieve sustainable socio-

economic developments. Besides, domestic and local communities are the backbone of tourism development, and their active participation is needed for the success of tourism attractions i.e. shared cultural and religious infrastructure. So, community involvement ensures that tourism development is sustainable and that the benefits are shared equitably, thereby reducing potential conflicts and peace (IIPT, 2024; Mohanty, 2019), as well as facilitate tourism reorientation.

Policy recommendations and best practices for enhancing tourism's role in peacebuilding can be drawn from successful examples globally. Over the past 25 years, the IIPT has organized sixteen conferences and summits, bringing together leaders from various sectors to showcase over 1,200 case studies of "Success Stories" and models of "Best Practice" demonstrating the multifaceted benefits of tourism (D'AMORE, 2013, pp. 369-382). These events highlight the importance of collaboration among stakeholders and the need for policies that support sustainable tourism development. Policy support and financial incentives can further encourage co-operatives to expand their role in tourism, particularly in rural and community-based initiatives (Verma, 2006, pp. 54-58). Additionally, strategies to promote cooperative involvement in tourism include enhancing awareness, fostering partnerships between cooperatives and tourism stakeholders, and leveraging cooperatives' strengths in community engagement and cultural heritage preservation.

Hence, tourism in Pakistan, particularly in the Hazara region, is rich in all types of tourist destinations, including cultural, adventure, socio-religious as well as deals various activities such as hiking, trekking, mountaineering that can attract tourists both regionally and nationally. As shared religious and cultural infrastructure, the rich cultural heritage and historical significance of Islamic sites can also appeal to Muslim tourists globally, endorsing cultural exchange and harmony (Ali, 2022, pp. 1-24). The ensuing and to make the most of tourism's ability to build peace, it is also important to put in place policies and practices that

encourage cultural sensitivity, inclusivity, sustainability and co-operation. So, to remove institutional barriers to intra-regional tourism can help reduce the socio-religious, political, and cultural complications that now block tourism development and strengthen tourism as peacemaker in the region.

4.6. Siran and Mahnoor Valleys: An Analysis

Along with other areas in the region, both Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley are great examples of tourism as peacemakers. Their mountainous ranges, and historical and archaeological sites as well as natural beauty and cultural heritage, these areas have attracted tourists. Thus, this has led to prosperity alongside improved social cohesion economic growth between different cultures for environmentally sustainable tourism development in the region.

Eco-tourism in Siran Valley, has been instrumental in promoting peace and social unity (Ain, 2024; The Express Tribune, 2023). Focusing on sustainable tourism, local communities have protected their environment and gained economic benefits. So, community-based tourism projects have created opportunities for inter-cultural exchange between locals and visitors, encouraging dialogue and reducing historical tensions (Shah, 2017, p. 3; Fariha Iqbal, 2010, pp. 36-43). These projects have included initiatives such as guided eco-tours, homestays, and cultural festivals that display case the unique traditions and lifestyles of the local population. The positive outcomes from these initiatives have demonstrated the value of community involvement and the importance of preserving cultural and natural heritage in promoting peace within geographical and biological diversity and history.

On the other hand, Mahnoor Valley represent a significant case of how tourism acts as peace (Tripako, 2021; Musafir Travel and Tour, 2024). The valley is famous for its natural attraction and adventure tourism i.e. hiking, trekking, mountaineering, and natural exploration activities. So, alongside business tourism, it also created opportunities for cultural tourism.

Domestic tourism, specifically role of local communities has served as catalyst for these engagements, and is central to the sustainability of tourism industry. This engagement has helped bridge cultural divides and promote a sense of shared identity among different ethnic and religious groups, and feel about this. Therefore, Mahnoor Valley emphasize the importance of involving local communities in tourism planning and management to ensure that tourism development is all-inclusive and helpful for all stakeholders and industry (Rshid, 2021; Tripako, 2021).

The above discussion concluded that there are important factors that help tourism projects succeed in promoting peace. Firstly, local communities' participation is central for the sustainability and after-effects of tourism strategies. When communities are engaged in tourism development, they are more likely to support and benefit, and pushed to promote economic growth and improve the quality of life for its people. Secondly, the diversity of its culture, promoting cultural sensitivity and awareness among tourists and tourism operators is also important in preventing cultural misunderstandings and conflicts. Training programs and educational campaigns can help ensure that tourism activities are conducted respectfully and inclusively, expanding their peace-enabling functions. Thirdly, sustainable tourism practices that prioritize environmental conservation and equitable economic distribution can help to the management of any consequential impacts, particularly environmental degradation and economic inequality, faced tourism industry for the tourist industry.

In a nutshell, both these Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley identify the complexity and the barriers in tourism as peace. These valleys have used sustainable tourism projects that involve complex interrelationships among local communities, encouraging cultural exchange and mutual understanding in the northern Pakistan. It is needed utmost attention, particularly the lessons learned from these examples offer valuable guidance for policymakers, tourism

professionals, and communities aiming to use tourism for peacebuilding in different settings, from within stakeholders.

4.7. Conclusion

In short, the chapter is concluded that tourism can promote peace in Hazara. It is found that tourism strengthens social bonds, and boosts the local and regional economy. In Hazara region, tourism as a peacemaker has been shaped sustainable development, community participation, and respecting local culture. Firstly, to establish community-based tourism initiatives will be important to promote local communities and their cultural festivals, and cultural diversity, inclusive development and eco-friendly tourism practices to reduce environmental impact. Policies should support tourism businesses, waste management, energy conservation, and environmental protection, and to prevent socio-economic inequalities.

Education and awareness play a pivotal role in promoting tourism as a peacemaker (Khan A. J., 2011). Implementing educational programs is significance of tourism destinations that can reduce cultural misunderstandings and foster respectful interactions between tourists and local communities. Therefore, tourism has great potential to promote peace, it also faces challenges. Issues like security, counter-terrorism issues as well as socio-political instability, economic gaps, and environmental issues have negatively impacted travel and tourism. These challenges highlight the complexity of using tourism effectively for peacebuilding in Hazara. It is also found that tourism industry is a catalyst to bring socio-economic wellbeing to our understanding of tourism as a tool for promoting peace. Along with long-terms goals and planning, government and all stakeholders must put together tourism market as priority with supporting policies to maximize its role in building peace, as an attractive tourist destination. Despite these challenges, tourism can make positive contributions to peace and has tremendous opportunities in its tourism industry in Hazara region of Pakistan.

Chapter Five

Challenges and Opportunities

5.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to identify key challenges and opportunities for tourism as a peace in Hazara. It examines the need to evaluate, tackling key issues such as socio-economic, political, religious, environmental, and economic factors. It suggests ways to overcome these challenges and take advantage of new opportunities in the future. To understand these interactions is very important sustainable tourism growth in the area. The chapter begins with an overview of the various challenges that impede tourism development in Hazara, likewise, urbanization, infrastructure deficits, and socio-political instability. And then analyzing the opportunities that could be harnessed to promote a thriving tourism sector in the region that how does the tourism industry in Hazara influence the socio-economic fabric of local communities in the context of employment generation, income augmentation, and the requisite infrastructural enhancements necessitated by the growing influx of tourists?

Geographically, Hazara division holds a strategic position that links Islamabad, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, extending to the Pakistan-China border via Gilgit Baltistan. For example, the Karakorum Highway (KKH), as an ancient route between Pakistan and China, runs through Hazara, considered the significance of the area in regional connectivity. Under BRI, the project like CPEC has further enhanced position of Hazara region by introducing numerous key projects, including dams, power and energy generation projects, industrial zones, and trade routes etc. (Hassan Farooq, 2021, pp. 28-44). Thus, this strategic importance highlights both the opportunities and challenges of leveraging Hazara's geographical advantage for sustainable tourism development and destination.

Like the other region of Pakistan, in Hazara, the tourism sector also faces a range of challenges. Along with depleted infrastructural like underdeveloped tourist routes, poor road

conditions and inadequate signage, issues such as illegal infrastructure, garbage problems, noise pollution, cultural sensitivities, socio-religious factors, and concerns related to food quality and pricing also impact accessibility to tourist sites as well as a shortage of visitor services are most of significant problems (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). Additionally, terrorism, socio-political instability and security concerns have suffered greatly. The complexities in the process of visa and negative perceptions abroad further impede the realization of Pakistan's tourism potential within the SAARC region. However, aligning policies with SAARC's objectives could streamline visa procedures, improve infrastructure, and cultivate a positive tourism image, thereby development sustainable tourism growth and economic resilience (Rehman, 2015, pp. 405-415).

Moreover, cultural barriers is also considered a significant obstacles to tourism development in Hazara. The region's diverse mix of ethnic and religious groups, while a potential strength, can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts if not managed sensitively and properly. Cultural insensitivity from tourists or operators can exacerbate existing tensions and stand-in resentment among local communities and their economy. Works to promote tourism must include all-inclusive cultural sensitivity training and awareness programs to ensure that tourism activities do not inadvertently deepen divides (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100). So, this sensitivity is crucial for bring up an inclusive tourism environment that respects and celebrates the region's cultural diversity and social structure.

Nevertheless, there is a lot of opportunities for tourism industry and sector in Hazara, if it explored properly. To improve infrastructure developments and regional collaboration, Hazara can boost its attractiveness to tourists in the whole region. Pakistan must adopt inclusive tourism planning and development while dealing with local communities. It ensure fair economic benefits that could turn tourism into a catalyst for socio-economic development and socio-cultural exchange. Hence, for long-term goals and development, it is essential to

prioritize sustainable tourism practices that protect the environment and involve local communities in conservation efforts (Khan, 2021; ALASTTAL, 2018, pp. 1-5). Hazara can use its special cultural and geographical features to develop a strong and lasting tourism industry. This can help in promoting peace and stability in not only in Pakistan but also in South Asia.

5.2. Socio-Economic Challenges in Tourism Development

The socio-economic challenges facing Hazara's tourism sector are complex and multidimensional i.e. from socio-economic disparities to employment issues, and uneven income distribution. These challenges are worsened by insufficient infrastructure and restricted access, which hinder the sector's long-term growth and development. Also unauthorized development and construction, urban-rural disparities, and problems in hotel industry management has been created a paradox to address these issues effectively. Financial imbalance manifest in uneven distribution of tourism-related income, where certain regions or communities benefit more than others, caused polarization. For instance, while some areas receive substantial tourist influx and revenue, others remain neglected, perpetuating inequality and limiting overall socio-economic growth and development (Ali, 2022, pp. 1-24; Shujahi, 2016, pp. 1-36). Then, to address these disparities requires substantial government intervention and investment to ensure equitable distribution of tourism benefits across all regions of Hazara and beyond.

Employment issues also significantly impact the tourism sector in Hazara. Albeit tourism has a lot of potential to generate substantial employment opportunities, but the lack of a skilled and educated workforce poses a major barrier to business tourism (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). These problems are further compounded by issues related to financial elitism where tourism-related jobs often bargain low wages and limited job security. Consequently, many individuals are unable to improve their living standards despite working in the tourism industry. Thence, this calls for targeted efforts to enhance vocational training and education in

tourism and hospitality, safeguarding that local communities can fully participate in and benefit from tourism development. While creating policies that promote fair wages and job security is essential for sustainable socio-economic growth.

A limited hostel business, infrastructure development and accessibility are acute challenges that significantly affect tourism in Hazara. The region's geographical diversity forms the backdrop for numerous significant tourist attractions and destinations, together with the Galiyat and Thandiani valleys in Abbottabad, and the picturesque Kaghan, Shogran, and Naran valleys, renowned for natural wonders like Saif-ul-Malook, Lulusar, and Dodupatsar lakes (Tufail, 2022, pp. 69-74). However, depleted infrastructure, poor road accessibility and conditions, inadequate transportation facilities, and lack of proper signage hinder access to these sites, discouraging tourists and impeding the sector's growth and industry. For that reason, to address these issues requires substantial investment in infrastructure development, for example, quality infrastructure, building and access to roads, vehicles, enhancing transportation services, and improving way finding systems to ensure tourists can easily and safely access these attractions and local tour operators.

Moreover, insufficient knowledge and scientific exploration presents an additional socio-economic challenges to tourism development in Hazara. There are various places that are unexplored and undocumented. Such are limiting their tourism potential and depriving local communities of the economic benefits that could be derived from these attractions (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). Likewise, a lot of unplanned tourism and insufficient local awareness also threaten the preservation of natural and cultural resources, prominent to environmental degradation and loss of cultural heritage. In this way, promoting scientific exploration and full documentation of these sites, along with society engagement and education, is crucial for sustainable tourism development. To promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of Hazara's cultural and natural assets, tourism can be developed in a way that preserves these

resources for prospect generations which in turn reflect changes in the travels and tourism sector and industry.

As a result, the recent BRI and its large-scale projects like the CPEC further influenced the complex paradigm of its infrastructure developments and socio-economic dynamics of tourism in Hazara. Though CPEC has transformed large socio-economic benefits (i.e. infrastructure and economic), but also witnessed a complexity when it comes to implementation (Nazim Rahim, 2022, pp. 17-24; JALIL FARAZ, 2023). The perceptions of the local populace towards CPEC developments are generally positive, recognizing the potential for substantial socio-economic benefits. However, to maximize these benefits and ensure sustainable development, it is very important to engage regional people in the planning and performance of tourism projects. It also ensuring that their voices are heard, and their needs are addressed. Such community-centric approach can help cultivate intrinsic values, promote human rights, and enhance peaceful coexistence, finally contributing to the peace and stability of the region (P.P. Mohanty, 2019, pp. 1-15).

5.3. Environmental Considerations

The importance of environmental conservation in sustainable tourism cannot be overstated. Tourism and the environment share a symbiotic relationship; neglecting environmental concerns and effects like pollution (garbage), and illegal constructions (Shujahi, 2016) can lead to societal problems and degrade the tourism potential of a region. Minor environmental issues, if unchecked, can escalate into significant conflicts and disharmony between local communities and tourism entrepreneurs. For instance, the degradation of natural landscapes, pollution, and loss of biodiversity can not only diminish the attractiveness of tourist destinations but also spark local resentment and resistance. Therefore, maintaining an interdependent relationship among the environment, tourism, and local peace is crucial. Ensuring environmental justice helps maintain societal peace, while sustainable tourism practices contribute to this balance

(Uperti, 2011, pp. 55-69). A healthy environment can foster thriving tourism, and conversely, a flourishing tourism industry can contribute to environmental conservation efforts.

There are various impacts of tourism activities in Hazara, and contribute to environmental issues and degradation, such as the influx of tourists to popular destinations such as the Kaghan Valley, Saif-ul-Malook Lake, and the Galiyat region. The most problematic issues are climate changes, deforestation, littering, all forms of pollution are witnessed in the region. To illustrate, ecological imbalance, pollution and disruption are also faces threats from unregulated tourist activities in the area like Saif-ul-Malook Lake, renowned for its pristine beauty. Besides, the increased transportation, especially vehicular traffic to these destinations contributes to air pollution and the depleted infrastructure, aggravates environmental challenges (Khan U. F., 2020; Hassan Farooq, 2021, pp. 29-36). Thus, environmental management practices must be fully realized to ensure that tourism in Hazara remains sustainable and does not compromise the ecological integrity in the area.

For Hazara, there is a lot of strategies for minimizing environmental degradation and promoting ecotourism. In the first place, good management system; one effective approach is to implement systematically waste management systems i.e. recycling and proper disposal facilities, the problem of littering and keep natural areas clean. Moreover, eco-friendly transportation, likewise, new electric vehicles and public transport. Also boosting the use of renewable energy sources in tourist facilities and promoting water conservation measures are also critical steps toward reducing environmental impact. The need for connecting local communities in environmental conservation efforts, as a sense of ownership and responsibility towards preserving their natural heritage (Murphy, 1985, pp. 25-37).

For sustainable tourism, ecotourism proposal a viable pathway to tourism development in Hazara. To focus on responsible travel to natural areas, ecotourism emphasizes

conservation, community involvement, and education (Ali, 2022, pp. 1-24). This approach not only helps in preserving the environment but also provides economic benefits to local communities. In particular, ecotourism initiatives, driven by community, can create new job and generate income while promoting environmental governance. Also, learning and training programs via education system that inform tourists about the significance of conservation and respectful interaction with nature ecosystem can enhance their awareness and support for sustainable practices. Hence, developing eco-friendly infrastructure, such as sustainable lodges and nature trails, assess systematically the environmental impacts of tourism.

To conclude, environmental considerations, both natural and man-made are paramount and essential to tourism in Hazara. Their relationships are complex and interdependent and needed a balanced approach that prioritizes conservation and sustainability. To address the environmental impacts of tourism activities via strategic interventions and promoting ecotourism can help preserve Hazara's natural beauty and biodiversity, which it depends. Thus, to implement such strategies, Hazara can ensure that its tourism sector contributes positively to both the domestic business, and environmental protection and conservation efforts, the broader goals of sustainable development and societal peace, as well as increased economic importance.

5.4. Cultural and Heritage Preservation

The potential of cultural and heritage in Hazara shows the role of tourism in traditional heritage preservation and conservation, while having significant challenges despite its rich archaeological and historical significance. The region, rich in archaeological heritage has also subject to irregular and pragmatic conservation measures due to lack of financial investment, and restricted access to funding and infrastructure. To illustrate, the establishment of the Directorate of Archaeology in 1992 and continued attempt by Hazara University's Department of Archaeology have revealed nearly 400 sites in Abbottabad, Haripur, and Mansehra,

reflecting the area's profound cultural legacy (Archaeological investigations in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) (Khan O. M., 2023). However, heritage tourism benefits economically but needed thorough management to prevent damage to these fragile sites (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). Besides, it is also noted that in 2022, the influx of approximately 300,000 tourists to Hazara's green valleys revealed an acute demands of environmentally-friendly tourism practices that maintain and protect these national cultural patrimony (Khan O. M., 2023).

Therefore, to preserve religio-cultural heritage for tourism development in Hazara, while maintaining authenticity and cultural sensitivity in tourist interactions. The critical challenge involves harmonizing efforts to promote tourism while safeguarding local customs and traditions. Due to its rich diversity of wildlife and sanctuaries, as Hazara attracts a diverse range of visitors, both domestic and international tourists and travelers, make certain that cultural exchanges are respectful and mutually beneficial (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100). Such integration and engagement influences further enhanced opportunities for improving visitor experiences and promoting tolerant and perspective between these communities. However, it also requires well-structure and good governance to minimize and address local traditions and heritage sites (Lack of Heritage Conservation).

Hence, efforts to blend cultural preservation with tourism in Hazara must require to focus on involving the community and educational programs. In the traditional area, tales and folklore play an important role in conservation ancient sites, their historical, archaeological importance, research and discoveries (Hameed, 2022, pp. 20-32). And also, these stories not only enrich the visitor experience but contributes to the conservation ethos i.e. a sense of pride and ownership among local communities. Besides, strong and effective heritage conservation policies, stakeholder collaboration, backed by adequate resources are essential to safeguard cultural heritage for future generations (Archaeological investigations in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). In Hazara, creating a sustainable and all-inclusive tourism industry involves

more than economic benefits; it reflects a commitment to preserve the diverse cultural heritage in the entire region.

5.5. Global and Local Context-Specific Challenges

One of the most important sectors for national economy, tourism development in Hazara is shaped and re-shaped by global and domestic challenges that impact its growth and sustainability. On the one hand, if we look it globally, tourism trends and market dynamics significantly influence Hazara's tourism sector, as a cultural and natural destination is immense, generate a positive economic impact in a medium or long-term (Raheem, 2023, pp. 1-14). However, tourism industry in Pakistan faced struggles with neglect and poor governance and management (Arif, 2019, pp. 1-4). Such challenges not only weaken the effective advancement of its rich legacy and natural landscape both regionally and globally, weakening its standing against other sites within the region.

On the other hand, locally, socio-political determinants significantly influences tourism and its development in Hazara. There are both challenges and opportunities, extensive cultural plurality, its historical and archaeological sites and remains, likewise, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Sikh, and Muslim era (Raheem, 2023). To illustrates, problems like lack of engagement and coordination among the various tourism industries as well as insufficient promotional efforts delay and impede tourism industry and its growth in Hazara (Coordination and Publicity Deficits) (Khan U. F., 2020). So, all-inclusive, effective coordination and long-term publicity strategies are essential to capitalize on Hazara's cultural potential and attract a more diverse tourist demographic.

For this reason, security concerns also loom large in influencing tourist perceptions and activities in Hazara. Even with its notable ecological beauty, security perceptions can deter potential visitors, re-shaped socio-economic benefits (Arif, 2019, pp. 1-4). To address these concerns via strong and effective security measures and proactive communication strategies is

important for environment for tourists. Thus, to ensure a safer environment for tourists and improving safety perceptions, Hazara can enhance its attractiveness as a tourism destination and unlock its full potential in the worldwide tourism framework.

5.6. Opportunities for Sustainable Tourism Development in Hazara Region

Notwithstanding various challenges, in the Hazara region, tourism has seen marked growth and opportunities for sustainable development. Its natural and cultural landscape, the places like the Karakoram Highway and other archaeological and historical artifacts, have great potential for tourism growth (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5). The development like strategic initiatives i.e. Tourism Development Authority could enhance coordination among tourism sectors, management and promotion (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). This centralized approach would not only optimize efforts but also ensure sustainable practices while implementing to protect natural and cultural heritage in the Hazara region.

Firstly, public participation is very important in harnessing these opportunities. In tourism sector, enhancing the self-sufficiency of local communities to actively participate in tourism services can lead to better preservation of cultural heritage and natural resources (Ali, 2022, pp. 1-24). For instance, in this sense, eco-tourism is important agenda for cultural awareness campaigns and eco-friendly practices with environmental conservation objectives as long-term goals (Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). To engage and interact with public in sustainable tourism practices, Hazara can yield long-term advantages.

In sustainable tourism, transport infrastructure and tourism development is considered very critical to enhancing tourism appeal and accessibility in the region. The classical demand for global tourism functions are transport infrastructure i.e. Improving roads, facilities, and amenities for visitor experience, economic growth and tourist spending (KHAN, 2019, pp. 1-5). Similarly, security is also important factor, such as safety measures, tourism police and tourist routes, to reassure visitors and security concerns can effect on tourism development

(Khan U. F., 2020, pp. 471-478). Repeated tourism influences these measures for attracting a broader spectrum of tourists and their safety, thereby reinforcing Hazara's reputation as a tourism-optimize area for growing and strengthen tourism in Pakistan and South Asia.

Hence, to achieve sustainable growth, expanding the variety of tourism options is another important way to develop. Through niche markets and targeted segments the promotion of a diverse activities such as cultural interactions and adventure tourism, Hazara can stand out from competitors and appeal to a wide range of visitors and travelers (Khan, 2021, pp. 134-147.) Strategies that brings to light Hazara's cultural diversity and natural wonders can resonate with international travelers in search of deep, original and transformative interactions and experiences (Ali, 2022). This approach not only expands tourism revenues but also promotes cultural understanding and appreciation, contributing to global peace, intercultural dialogue.

So, for sustainable tourism, both the environmental conservation and community involvement, aligns with global trends promoting responsible travel practices (D'AMORE, 2013, pp. 369-382). Therefore, Hazara's adoption of sustainable tourism principles can serve as a model for other regions, exhibiting best practices in balancing tourism growth with environmental protection. To integrate "Peace through Tourism" leads into educational programs and academic research, Hazara can build upon tourism as a tool for promoting cross-cultural dialogue and building frameworks for peaceful collaboration amidst diversity (Premodh, 2012, pp. 1-6).

To put it briefly, Hazara finds itself at a turning point where strategic investments in infrastructure, community engagement, and sustainable practices can unlock its tourism potential while preserving its natural and cultural heritage (JALIL FARAZ, 2023, pp. 90-100). Thus, by taking advantage of opportunities like eco-tourism, developing niche markets, and

preserving culture, Hazara can become a sustainable tourism spot that enhances growth in both economic and social sectors, as well as reinforced efforts towards global peace.

5.7. Tourism in Hazara: Integrating Governance, Technology, and Strategic Solutions

Government policies play a crucial role in shaping sustainable tourism development in Hazara, Pakistan. Historically, administrative inefficiencies and frequent restructuring have posed challenges to the consistent promotion and growth of the tourism sector. The evolution of the tourism department from a small cell within the Ministry of Railways to its current status as a dedicated Ministry of Tourism reflects the recognition of tourism as a pivotal economic driver (Khan A. J., 2011, pp. 1-9). Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to leverage government policies to overcome obstacles and maximize tourism's potential impact.

As a form of governmentality, the concept of tourism represent its broader societal influence beyond economic considerations. As aptly narrated by (Foucault, 1991, pp. 73-86) tourism operates within the context of governance that regulate and shape societal behavior. This stance reveals the role of policies in not only promoting tourism for economic profits but also for societal control and influence. Alike, Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are instrumental in driving tourism development in Hazara, as well as allow for shared resources, expertise, and responsibilities between government bodies, private enterprises, and local communities. Various successful case studies globally illustrate how effective stakeholder engagement through PPPs can lead to sustainable tourism practices and balance-economic growth and development.

In such way, in Hazara, PPPs can enhance infrastructure development, marketing efforts, and community involvement in tourism plans and actions. To encourage partnerships with all-stakeholders that align sustainable tourism goals, the government must create a conductive environment for private investment and community participation (Khan A. J., 2011, pp. 1-9). Such strategy not only increased support and option but also ensures that tourism

development benefits local communities while preserving its natural and cultural heritage. In particular, in preserving heritage and planning tourism have effectively reduced conflicts and improve the visitor experience, empower communities and increase their involvement in tourism activities. Therefore, both government and private sector involvement need to construct long-term policies, while to address socio-economic issues. Hazara can lead by example in promoting sustainable tourism and improving governance, overcoming current challenges to lay down a standard for responsible tourism practices in Pakistan and South Asia and beyond.

In similar vein, ‘tourism as peace’ requires strategic planning and policy frameworks to secure constructive results and desirable outcomes. In Hazara context, it is essential to adopt strategies that prioritize domestic tourism, preservation of tradition and environmental conservation and practice. To minimize socio-economic disparities, policies must aim at equitable distribution of tourism revenues and opportunities that could arise from tourism development. Such approach must aligns with sustainable tourism practices (Honey, 2009 , pp. 1-6) emphasizing the need for inclusive growth and minimizing negative impacts on local societies. In such situation, Hazara can promote community resilience and societal harmony while exploiting economic benefits from tourism via the incorporation of these principles into tourism regulations and plans.

In this way, environmental sustainability is key in maintaining the delicate balance between tourism and peace, and their outcome in terms of the environment in Hazara. (Upreti, 2011, pp. 55-69) Besides, the importance of proactive eco-activism to prevent disputes i.e. ecological degradation. In this case, in both eco-tourism initiatives and conservation efforts, sustainable tourism practices is also considered an important role in preserving Hazara’s natural heritage while promoting pacifism. To prioritize environmental sustainability, tourism

entrepreneurs in Hazara can help prevent possible disputes and ensure tourism's long-term role as a catalyst for business development and growth.

To analyze such misconceptions and criticisms surrounding peace via tourism is another crucial aspect of strategy development (Kelly, 2006, pp. 1-13) Also it highlights the need to manage perceptions and balance interests to enhance the credibility of peace-building efforts via tourism. This entails establishing the stage that diminish vulnerabilities and enhance resilience against potential conflicts. Hence, to grasp the interconnections between peace, the environment, and tourism, Hazara can effectively address challenges and utilize tourism as a mechanism to promote short, medium, and long-term peace and progress.

Therefore, both digital and technological advancements hold significant potential to revolutionize the tourism industry in Hazara, Pakistan as well as in the entire region. Such new development enable tourism stakeholders to enhance visitor experiences via subjective experiences, personalized services, interactive guides, and engaging digital platforms. Then, it is also important to note that digital marketing strategies play a pivotal role in promoting Hazara's unique attractions to a global audience, stress its cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and adventure tourism. Thus, innovations in tourism management, such as mobile apps for itinerary planning, virtual tours, and real-time travel updates, not only streamline visitor engagement but also ensure efficient management of visitor inflows, resources management and distribution. In such travel patterns, these advancements not only attract more tourists but also contribute to sustainable tourism practices by minimizing environmental impact, resource allocation, and in-place capacities.

Lastly, in global village, using digital tools enables instant communication and feedback, helping tourism authorities in Hazara to quickly meet tourist needs and expectations. To incorporate technology into tourism management, stakeholders can develop a more flexible

and responsive tourism sector, enhancing Hazara's attractiveness as a premier tourist hub, site and popular gateway. Hence, digital transformation not only improves operational efficiency but also supports local economic development by expanding job opportunities in digital marketing, hospitality services, and technological infrastructure. As Hazara embraces these innovations, it positions itself at the forefront of sustainable tourism development in Pakistan, offering memorable experiences that blend cultural richness with modern convenience and environmental management, conservation and practices.

5.8. Conclusion

To cut the story short, this chapter analyzed the challenges and opportunities and their complex paradigm in tourism development in Hazara, Pakistan. In the context of challenges, it highlights the socio-economic, environmental considerations, and cultural and heritage preservation, as well as global and local challenges that hinder the sustainable advancement of the tourism industry and sectors. All these challenges include economic inequalities, depleted infrastructure, environmental degradation, and concerns regarding the preservation of cultural heritage. However, despite these hurdles, the region has had significant opportunities for tourism growth due to its abundant natural landscape, historical landmarks, and pluralism.

Within this chapter, it also discussed the importance of adopting a holistic approach to sustainable tourism development in terms of biodiversity, cultural identity, and economic growth. To overcome all the challenges, different initiatives like social connectivity, public participation, the promotion of eco-tourism, and infrastructure development. Such efforts are very optimistic and essential for enhancing travellers and visitor subjective experiences but also for ensuring long-term care for environment, and inclusive economic growth in Hazara region in particular and Pakistan in general.

It also concluded while developing the prospects of tourism, and long-term strategies and policy frameworks in Hazara. In the first place, an immediate response is required to

coordinate planning that complements tourism expansion with environmental preservation and interest of communities. All policies must prioritize sustainable approaches, ensuring tourism growth meets localized socio-economic concerns and environmental conservation purposes and goals. In the second place, reinforcing transportations, physical infrastructure, and accessibility to tourist destinations is also important to boost visitor and tourist arrivals, improve tourism services, and enhance their experiences in the area to effectively compete in the global tourism domain.

Besides, to facilitate public-private collaborations and alliances as well as strengthen all-stakeholder engagement will be important in leading tourism developments and projects forward in Hazara. Local participation, domestic businesses, and governmental agencies can harness collective expertise and resources to overcome challenges and capitalize of new opportunities. All these partnerships can facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity building, and innovative recommendations that enhance competitiveness in tourism sectors. In Hazara, sustainable tourism development requires an all-inclusive approach in order to balance economic growth and eco-activism and socio-cultural preservation. Political and strategic decisions must include promoting tourism while preserving local cultural heritage and historical and archaeological sites, encouraging international, regional, and local tourism, and supporting responsible tourism practices. To put these strategies into action, Hazara can become a model for sustainable tourism, offering enriching experiences while safeguarding its environmental and cultural heritage for years to come.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and Recommendations

Tourism has emerged as a pivotal catalyst for prosperity, cross-cultural engagement, and economic uplift in both regional and global levels. In Hazara region, tourism represents a transformative opportunities to support economic growth as local level, deepen cultural exchange, uphold ecological sustainability. The present thesis analyzed tourism development in Hazara region in terms of socio-religious, economics, and historical, archaeological and environmental dynamics while developing its potential as peace. It examines the prospects of tourism, its challenges and recommendations as well as the pivotal role of sustainable tourism in promoting economic growth, protecting socio-cultural heritage, and supporting ecological conservation and preservation. Also, it emphasizes the imperative of long-term strategic planning, public involvement and cross-sector collaboration in ensuring an equitable distribution of tourism benefits and minimizing potential negative consequences.

To understand ‘truism as peacemaker’ a strong conceptual framework provides critical insight into how tourism growth and sustainability are linked. Various theories and models related to sustainable tourism i.e. the triple bottom line approach, emphasize the necessity of coordinating sustainable outcomes across profitability, societal needs, and ecological dynamics. After analysis, the existing literature on tourism in Hazara highlighted epistemic gaps and needed the importance of taking a multi-faced framework. Such approach must integrate policy-making, public participation, and environmental protection to create a resilient and well-developed tourism industry. The present research has provided the conceptual framework, examines different theories and models related to tourism development and sustainability both regionally and globally.

Geographically, Hazara is strategically positioned in the northeastern part of KP province. Historically, it serve as a gateway between plains and its mountainous regions of

Pakistan. Thorough history, the region has been influenced by civilizations i.e. Hindu and Buddhist, Delhi Sultans, the Mughals, Pashtun under Durranis, and Sikhs, as well the British Raj shaping its diverse cultural landscape and socio-economic fabric. Economically, the region is also significantly contributes to the country's economy via diverse sectors like hydroelectric energy-power generation, industrial production, and agriculture, vital for both regional development and national prosperity. And also the region boasts a wealth of tourist attractions, ranging from the breathtaking valleys of Kaghan, Naran, Siran, Mahnoor, and Haripur to historic sites in Abbottabad as well. Such diverse landscapes and cultural landmarks hold immense tourism potential, yet challenges such as depleted infrastructure and accessibility issues present barriers to bring this potential to fruition. To improve infrastructure is very important to enhancing visitor experiences and supporting sustainable growth in Hazara's tourism market and enterprise ecosystem.

In terms of peace, tourism plays a crucial role in and while facilitating social cohesion by trans-cultural dialogue. Along with selected case studies, this critical analysis and case illustrate tourism's potential as a powerful tool for peacebuilding in Hazara. It contributes to building common ground and reduces social tensions when managed sustainably and in a non-discriminative way. Nonetheless, effective management requires addressing socio-economic disparities and ensuring equitable distribution of tourism shared benefits for local stakeholders. Hence, public participation, long-term and strategic planning, the collaboration of all stakeholder are very essential for creating a sustainable tourism model in Hazara. Such approach not only supports regional development but also strengthens peacebuilding efforts by enhancing cross-cultural communication, dialogue and mutual cooperation.

In Hazara region, the tourism industry faced huge challenges in terms of socio-economic and environmental that must be effectively managed balance development and continued growth. Wealth disparities, depleted infrastructure, inadequate employment

opportunities, all have posed substantial barriers to tourism growth and accessibility in the region. Ecological preservation is predominant due to the potential negative impacts of tourism actions on Hazara's biodiversity. Besides, cultural preservation amidst ever-increasing tourist visits presents distinctive challenges that need detailed management and good governance. Thus, to address all these issues demands pre-emptive government policies, collaborative among the stakeholders, and public participation. In Hazara, business tourism, ecotourism, cultural preservation, and technological innovations are very important for driving green tourism development. Such measures not only ensure equitable distribution of tourism benefits but also safeguard the region's rich cultural and natural heritage for next generations, like these places.

6.1. Findings and Discussion

The present research reveals the diverse impacts of tourism on Hazara region within socio-cultural, religious economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions as well historic and archaeological. First of all, socio-culturally, tourism enhances social cohesion and intercommunity relations via cultural exchange and dialogue, advancing peace efforts and actions. Along with identity, it also preserves local heritage, albeit with challenges in upholding cultural integrity, originality and heritage. In term of economic, it also improves occupation, employment and income distribution, still gaps continue to exist destabilization inclusive progress, prosperity and equitable development. Infrastructure development supports local economies, point out the need for low-impact strategies. Environmentally, tourism poses challenges like environmental degradation, prompting the need for green tourism ventures. In term of governance policies shape tourism but require enhanced multi-stakeholder involvement. To sum up, the evidence points to the complicated effects of tourism in Hazara, imposing measures to reduce imbalances, preserve culture, promote sustainability, and strengthen governance mechanism to achieve constructive socio-economic impacts.

The study also reveals that in Hazara, tourism has significantly influenced social interrelation and intercommunity dynamics by facilitating cultural exchanges and interactions within the heterogeneous communities. All these interactions have contributed positively to peacebuilding efforts, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation throughout local populations. Nevertheless, numerous challenges like balancing cultural perspectives and making certain equitable participation in tourism activities persist, highlighting the need for inclusive strategies to support social peace, and coexistence. And tourism has been pivotal in generating employment opportunities and redistributing income within local business tourism. However, inequalities and gaps in benefit distribution and reliance on seasonal employment call attention to the challenges in attaining sustainable economic growth via tourism. Besides, while tourism has spurred infrastructural development, particularly in transportation and hospitality sectors, behind these developments without compromising local resources is still a vital concern.

Environmentally, in Hazara region, the far-reaching impacts have given rise to erosion of natural habitats and scarcity of environmental resources. Measures to minimize such effects via ecotourism has shown promise, point out the importance of sustainable practices in preserving Hazara's biodiversity and ecological balance. Strategies, likewise, solid waste management scheme and locally managed environmental conservation programme are very vital for ensuring that tourism development aligns with green development aims. Both government and private policies and regulations play a pivotal role in shaping Hazara's tourism landscape. Even though current policies have supported infrastructural development and tourism promotion, shortfalls in both regularity enforcement and stakeholder's engagement are evident. To strengthen governance frameworks i.e. e-governance, accountability, transparency, and public participation are all necessary for sustainable tourism practices and socio-economic advantages of tourism for citizens.

To understand ‘tourism as peace’, this study tries to develop the theoretical frameworks in order to interpret the empirical findings on tourism’s impacts in Hazara. Thence, the concept of peace via tourism has guided the analysis that how tourism activities contribute to social bonds, community unity and economic development within the region. The findings reveals that both alignment and divergence between empirical observations and theoretical predictions. Such approach deepens our awareness and knowledge of how tourism dynamics unfold in practice, shedding light on the complexities of sustainable development via tourism as peace.

In addition to this, highlighting key issues that span the socio-cultural, religious, economic and environmental factors of tourism in Hazara as well as their interconnectedness and two-way influence. Socio-culturally, tourism bring up cross-culture communications, community adoptability, facilitating peace and reciprocal understanding. In the context of economic, it also develop job sector and empower new generation, business tourism, and sustainable infrastructural development, albeit with challenges in fair and equal benefits sharing in all other sectors in tourism industry. Environmentally, the impacts of tourism is huge and results biodiversity and nature zones, making essential the implementation of strong conservation and eco-friendly tourism approaches in the region. Such themes not only need holistic approaches to manage tourism sustainably, but also to achieve equilibrium between economic growth and the protection of cultural and environmental heritage and values in Hazara. So, to explore new trends, e-tourism, sustainable practices reveals innovative approaches that would shape and re-shaped future tourism development via public participation, digital tourism, and as well marketing point of view in Hazara region in general, and the case studies (Siran Valley and Mahnoor Valley) in particular.

6.2. Recommendations

Tourism has great association with other industries and sectors in the country’s economy. To explain Hazara’s tourism potential in terms of its diverse socio-cultural heritage, there are

several key steps are necessary: sustainable practices of both natural resources and infrastructure as well as challenges faced by both historical and archaeological significance. Tourism education, and business tourism must be re-structuralized in or to appeal both regional and global travellers included SAARC countries and influence from CPEC. Besides, e-tourism or digital tourism, eco-tourism must be utilized in order to influence local population, regional integration and sustainable tourism in Hazara. Such all-inclusive and long-term strategies will encourage socio-economic development, cross-cultural visits both regionally and globally. So this section of the chapter outlines some of the important recommendations for promoting peace in the region.

(A): Community Engagement and Empowerment. The most important and simple steps to improve tourism as peace needs community engagement. To empower local community, there is needed effective involvement, strategies, participatory decision-making processes. All these could be attained via ongoing dialogue, seminars and discussions while making new and strong perspectives. Therefore, for tourism benefits, empowerment initiatives are equally essential. These initiatives must concentrate on empowering local residence, educational initiatives, and create business opportunities.

(B): Environmental Conservation and Ecotourism. In tourism, environmental sustainability is imperative to safeguard Hazara's natural resources. So, long-term policies and plans must prioritize eco-friendly practices such as renewable energy, reducing greenhouse gases emissions, and implementing waste reduction strategies. Also there must be initiatives to protect biodiversity i.e. re-organized wildlife awareness, protecting local population and community and illegal activities like deforestation. Promotion of eco-tourism in the area must be addressed via its decentralized tourism policy and educational experiences.

(C): Cultural Preservation and Heritage Management. To integrate cultural heritage preservation with tourism development also requires holistic frameworks and preemptive management tactics. Thus, recommendations like to establish heritage conservation zones, while implementing strict regulations to look over illegal construction near to archaeological and historical sites, and cultural artifacts. The new policies must bring promotional strategies to highlight the socio-cultural and traditional tales and folklore of Hazara. Such policies also to preserve cultural heritage via tourism and deepen appreciation for its rich heritage among both local and travelers.

(D): Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure in Hazara. The most important aspects of tourism is infrastructure which attracts the new visitors. Therefore, to improve tourism infrastructure in Hazara is very vital for visitor destinations. Government must upgrade transportation networks i.e. road systems and public transit. Quality infrastructure is essential for boosting tourism due to its eco-friendly accommodation and hospitality facilities. To enforce policies against the unauthorized construction and zoning violations will safeguard Hazara's scenic landscapes and historical sites, marinating their legacy for the long-term benefits. Thus via sustainable infrastructure development, Hazara can build a tourism sector that unites economic prosperity and environmental care while safeguarding its precious natural resources.

(E): Strategies for Sustainable Tourism Development in Hazara. To maximize tourism and its role in peace, Hazara region must give precedence to strong strategies that create opportunities for local alongside environmental protection. All policies need to support sustainable tourism practices, evaluate and regulate for environment and socio-cultural sustainable tourism. Sustainable management and implantation practices alongside legal compliance, educational training which are essential to enforce customer satisfaction. Public participation must be benefited via tourism in terms of reasonable pay, unbiased hiring

practices. Thus, environmental sustainability tourism must be prioritized by the government via renewable energy, eco-friendly policies (reduced plastic use & waste management) as well as make sure about long-term economic benefits.

(F): Policy Implications and Advocacy for Enhancing Tourism in Hazara. Lastly, to maximize its tourism opportunities, the region like Hazara must focus on excellent facilities and services appealing to both regional and foreign tourists. Also it must promote rural tourism and its resources while to engage foreign visitors via localized traditional norms and values in order to achieve long-lasting peace. Therefore, both provincial and federal government need dialogue and intergovernmental relations in order to enhance sustainable tourism practices, administrative stability as well as developing Hazara's tourism sector strategically, politically and economically.

To cut the story short, to tie together tourism's potential as peace, it is very important to re-develop strategies that align economic growth with environmental and social sustainability in the whole region. And this involves building environments where tourism can foster mutual understanding and mitigate conflict, dealing with the fundamental causes of inequality and ecological degradation. Due to its rich heritage, Hazara region and its position as a pivotal tourism destination capable of driving economic prosperity, cultural dialogue and responsible environmental management. To maximize benefits, long-term strategic planning and sustainable management practices are important to participate from diverse community. Hence, for future academic research, this research helps to understand the concept of peace in tourism as well as to analyze sustainable tourism practices, public participation and engagement to ensure Hazara's tourism industries contributes effectively to both regional and global economic growth and stability. It also plays a key role in the economic rejuvenation and regional advancement of the Hazara region within Pakistan and reinforcing its competitive edge in the global tourism realm.

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