

**RESEARCH PAPER****Over-Tourism: A Potential Threat to Gilgit Baltistan's Environment, Social and Cultural Heritage****¹Amna Malik, and ²Noor Fatima**

1. Lecturer Department of political Science and International Relations, University of Management and technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Student, BS International Relations, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

Corresponding Author

amna.malik@umt.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

For the last few years, tourism has witnessed a rapid increase globally. The term over tourism comes to prominence as one of the highly discussed problems regarding tourism by mainstream media and different environmental organizations. The main objective of the article is to discuss the negative impacts of over-tourism on the environment as well as on the socio-cultural heritage of the regions of Gilgit Baltistan. The emergence of mass tourism in a single season affects many aspects of this region ranging from basic commodities to the social and cultural life of the locals.. Unregulated land development leads to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and soil erosion as infrastructure is built to accommodate the tourist flow. Methodology used for this research is based on the survey questionnair where respondent was given question in close ended form. Secondly desktop method is used where previous research were taken as supportive literature to give effectiveness of the primary data .The research finding highlights the negative impact of the over tourism on the environment as well as on the social-cultural structure of the locals of the Gilgit Baltistan. To overcome this issue government must focus on ecotourism and local people participation in policy making can reduce the negative impact of tourism in the region.

Keywords: Environmental Impact, Gilgit Baltistan, Over Tourism, Social Cultural Impacts**Introduction**

This research study is crucial to the reader, society, and the world because it provides important information and knowledge about the over tourism and its negative impact on the environment as well as on the host communities, their eco-system, and bio-diversity. The research has a main focus on the region of Gilgit Baltistan of Pakistan which is receiving more tourists than ever before and negatively impact the environment of the region. The more readers are familiar with the problem the more it could be easy to overcome challenges related to over-tourism. Numerous factors affect the environment in which tourism is performed. The article focuses on those adverse impacts of tourism on environment and social cultural life of the people, where they considered that unchecked tourism has greatly impacted their lives and natural beauty of the region.

Tourism is the leisure activity which people around the world enjoy mostly in their holidays period. To refresh their mind and soul they visit to the different places and enjoy the scenic beauty and different culture of the world. World Tourism Organization (1991) has given the most accurate definition of tourism which was subsequently endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 1993, "Tourism has included the activities of persons travelling to the other places and staying in there for not more than one consecutive year for recreation, business and other purposes"

Although tourism is a now integral part of global society, it has only lately emerged as a popular activity. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution tourism demand has

increased. The impact of technological innovation on tourism expansion lasted into the twentieth century, with the rise in popularity of the vehicle and the invention of the airplanes, which made travel easier and faster. In the twenty-first century, tourism demand will continue to be significantly influenced by information technology (Holden, 2017).

When it comes to natural tourist destinations, tourism must protect the flora and wildlife as well as the microclimate. It is first and foremost duty of the tourists to respect the residents, their culture, and historical sites of the host community. The latter in particular are tiny, frozen-in-time microcosms that tourism should protect. If this isn't the case, we're talking about unsustainable or over-tourism, which is harmful for the environment, the residents, and the location itself (UN, 2015).

The main reasons for over-tourism in Gilgit Baltistan are been investigated through interview survey and reports which states that the beautiful scenery sites of Gilgit Baltistan are a major factor that attracted tourist all around the world. Recent visits of celebrities and foreign YouTube bloggers also influence the nationals to visit these attractions. Transportation facilities made it easy for tourists to explore the beauty of Gilgit Baltistan. The major development of roads and hotels increase the carrying capacity of tourists which resulted in the overuse of resources and damaging the environment for example to accommodate the number of tourists more forest and agricultural land is cleared for the construction of hotels and tourist spots. finding of Batool & Chaudhry (2024) states that people of Hunza says that due to the tourist influx there is dropping in cultural morality and tourism also limited their access to attractions, which eventually destroying their indigenous heritage.

Literature Review

The acceptance of leisure, often called tourism, in modern Western society as part of our way of life might lead us to believe that it has always been a part of human life. However, the word "tourist" is a fairly recent addition to the English language. The word *tourist* first appeared in the early 19th century. (Cooper, 2016).

- Coasts,
- Oceanic islands and marine ecosystems,
- Mountains,
- Polar ecosystems, and
- Tropical rain forests

These are the major landscapes are being explored for tourism

Despite the fact that over tourism is a relatively new phenomenon and scientific research issue, several definitions have been suggested in the literature thus far. Most experts believe it is difficult to construct a widely accepted definition of over tourism. (Zemla, 2020). Here are some of the definitions which are helpful in describing the phenomena of over tourism. According to Peeters et al (2018)

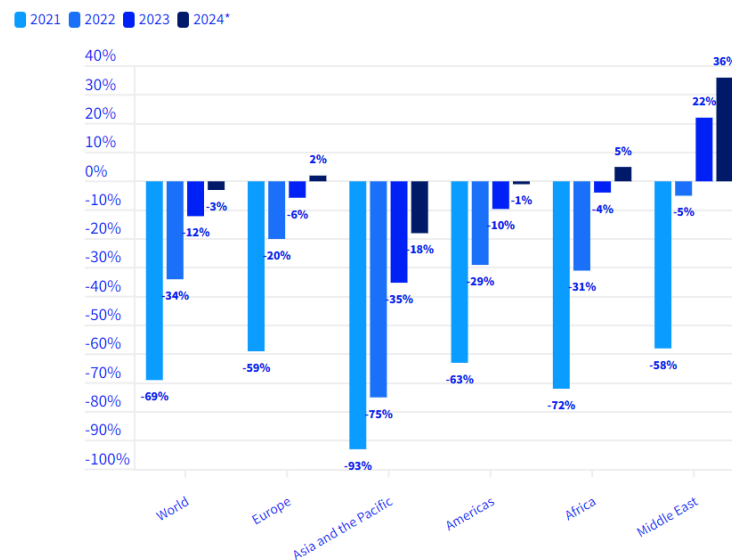
“Over tourism is the state in which number of tourists increase in certain places, exceeds in ecological, social, economic, psychical or political capacity threshold”

Goodwin define “Over tourism is the situation where local communities or host feel that there are too many visitors at their place and quality of life there has been deteriorated unacceptably” (2017)

Tourism has been developed form the very past to the present. From Roman to Napoleon and towards the industrial revolution., technological advancements such as the

automobile and jet engines facilitated faster and easier travel, contributing to the growth of tourism. The reduction cost of the fuel prices and greater economic growth also leads towards the mass tourism (Holden, 2017) Alonso-Almeida et al , 2019 emphasized that social media has great impact in generating over tourism, as they increase tourism demand and steer it to certain places.

International Tourist Arrivals, World and Regions



Source, UN Tourism | World Tourism Organization © • % change over 2019 |
*Preliminary figures Data as collected by UN Tourism

Impact of Tourism on the Environment

After the destruction of WW-2, major focus was shifted towards the rebuilding of European economy, and environmental priorities were then low. Later, in the 20th century, when environmental problems due to tourism became more and more prominent and the preservation of nature began to be taken seriously. The dependence of tourism on the natural and cultural resources of the environment always means that its development leads to changes that can be both positive and negative (Holden, 2008).

Tourism's negative environmental effects, such as loss of natural scenery, pollution, and destruction of flora and animals, were already notable. In coastal area tourism has negative impact on the loss of coral reef which play significant role in maintaining the temperature of the earth. Plastic pollution is damaging the ecosystem of the oceans which cause the loss of marine life. Mountain area are now being developed for the purpose of tourism, construction of hotels, cabins and related infrastructure likes roads have increased pressure on land and forests. Tree are being removed for the purpose of ski runs and other activities, causing the loss of animal habitat means that rain is not absorbed in the same quantity as it was absorbed earlier. Removal of trees has lost the coherence and stability of the tree roots in the soil which cause mountain slope more slippage that eventually leads to the loss of gravity and more land sliding occur in the region. In Britain and other European countries, protests against road building became a central focus of environmental campaigns as the countryside and nature were lost. (Holden, 2008).

Tourism has a great impact on the natural ecosystem of the seas and mountain region. Plastic pollution has significantly damaged the marine life and deforestation has disturbed the balance of earth, leading more land sliding and loss of wild life in forests.

Carrying Capacity

Carrying capacity is the relationship between tourism and Environment and it is determined by the of the relevant natural resource. Simply put, the environment becomes stressful when the volume of visitors is exceeded. (Cooper, 2016).

Physical capacity, means that how much seats are available for the tourist i.e., number of seats in the airplanes or parking spaces in tourist destination for the private vehicles. Psychological or behavioral carrying capacity, it is the type of condition where tourists feel that other people presence in the environment are spoiling their experience.

Social carrying capacity, is the capacity of the host population to deal with the tourist influx. For the development of sustainable tourism, it is very important to take local community as a part of decision-making body. Being the native of that place they do have more knowledge and understanding of their land. Recently, Spain has protested against the unsustainable mass tourism as it increases the cost of living for locals (New York times, 2024).

Social Cultural Impact of Tourism

Civil society and local populations are in great concern with the growth of tourism. Most popular tourist destinations are being burdened with the over tourism and continuously damaging the social, cultural and ecological environment of these destinations. (Zemla, 2020)

Seraphin et al. stated that the natural outlook of the tourist destinations is compromised and that tourists are having a negative impact on the quality of life of residents, and unable to contribute positively to protect the local environment. Another significant factor for conflict between tourists and people in specific towns is the nature of the assets used by tourists and/or residents. When discussing the problem, Goodwin described over tourism as a classic example of the Tragedy of the Commons, where natural resources are being used by the locals for economic gain Tourism commons are extremely prone to overcrowding and degradation due to tourist pressure. Tourism industry are using these resources for its benefits and economic gain. (Goodwin, 2016)

According to Cohen (1984) the sociocultural implications of tourism is considered as one of the most important concerns while studying tourism. Studies of Crandall (1994) provides a comprehensive overview of a country with a robust tourism industry can face negative and good societal repercussion. However, his main focus remains primarily on developing countries. Sharpley (1994) defines the social implications of tourism could be divided into positive and negative impact. Positive changes include from the development of a tourism industry are (quality of life being improved in native region, women role changes from non-working to working women, most importantly change in the community structure) and negative impacts of tourist-host interaction can lead towards the (the demonstration effect, increase in crime rate, prostitution, local language erosion/dialect, impact on the religious and cultural practices).

Several studies, however, indicate that tourism as a source of social change might impact the family structure and traditional values of host societies. According to Brougham & Butler, 1981, (Cohen, 1988), cause cultural commercialization increase the crime rate. (Belisle & Hoy, 1980, Perdue et al., 1987, Sheldon & Var, 1984) studies investigate that over tourism can lead to prostitution, gambling, smuggling, drug use, and addiction. (Liu & Var, 1986) studies indicate that it increases exploitation of local people.

The Goa Establishment has gone against the travel industry due to the deficiency of admittance to assets for nearby individuals and other related common freedoms infringement related to its turn of events (Holden, 2008).

After studying the existing literature, it has been seen that the growing phenomenon of over-tourism in Gilgit Baltistan is not addressed which directly impacts environmental degradation. The burden on these resources increases under the phenomena of tragedy of commons, when they are used to create over-tourism, which causes them to become depleted. Tourism is undoubtedly one of the main contributors to environmental problems in Gilgit Baltistan. The behavior of the locals also changes from welcoming to antagonism stage as they blame visitors for the wrongs had happen in their community.

Material and Methods

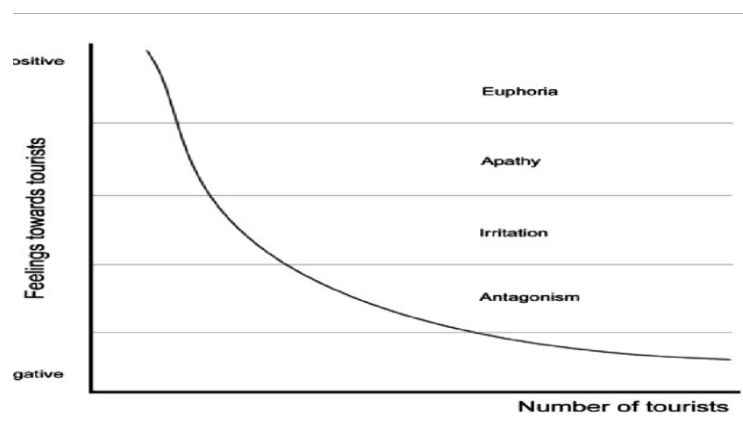
A qualitative method is used in the study where a survey questionnaire is developed to know the opinion of people of Gilgit Baltistan. To carry out the research, the data is collected from the random population of Gilgit Baltistan. In this research, thirty participants including both males and females were chosen to collect the data. The snowball sampling method is used in this research study where Participants are prompted to forward the survey to friends, and family. Desktop research is a social method of research which is based on information that can be found in previous reports, survey or questionnaire ben conducted by the researcher. The research is analyzed in narrative interpretation in which it will be narrate people sentiments on over tourism in Gilgit Baltistan.

Theoretical Framework

This postulation deliberately found and upheld by different speculations, Doxey's Irritation Index theory on over tourism and tragedy of commons. Where resources are being used by everyone. According to Hardin the Tragedy of the Commons is an environmental and economic problem where individuals have access to a shared resource but use these resources for their own self-interest at the expense of others interests. This can lead to overconsumption, underinvestment, and resource depletion. (Earth .org)

Doxey's Irridex

Doxey's Irritation Index theory model is supported by the research findings of Long et al. (1990) showing that residents' attitudes are initially positive but turn negative once a threshold is reached. The Irridex model shows that residents' attitudes towards tourism change over time in a predictable unidirectional sequence.



- According to the hypothesis, visitors generate curiosity among locals and are welcomed when tourism is low in the area (Euphoria stage).

- As the number of tourists grows, interactions between hosts and visitors become more formal, and the locals become less interested in the visitors (Apathy stage).

the residents start to worry about problems like crime, price increases, and impolite tourists when the expansion of tourism is anticipated to accelerate and the maximum number of visitors is achieved (Saturation stage).

- The number of visitors then irritates the hosts, which progresses to annoyance (Irritation stage).
- The hosts eventually begin to treat visitors badly and view them as a burden (Antagonism stage). Whatever wrong has been done in the host society, the blame is shifted towards the visitors. (Doxey, 1975)

Growth of Tourism in Pakistan, Key prospects

Pakistan is culturally diverse, geographically diversified, and historically rich, all of which add to the region's enormous tourist potential. Tourism has recently emerged as a formidable strategy for producing significant financial rewards. With its closeness to some of the world's tallest mountains, lakes, and natural splendor, Pakistan's tourism business is ripe for opportunity, attracting people from near and far. (Khan, Raza et al, 2024)

Many individuals today prioritize nature, beauty, and peace when picking a trip over pricing. (UNEP 2015) Protests against tourism in recent years have centered on the declining quality of life for locals. (Milano, Novelli & Cheer, 2019). The ongoing debates on over tourism thus draw on the negative social/socio-cultural impacts of tourism on host communities – one of the traditional areas of tourism research since the second half of the twentieth century (Herntri and Janova 2024). Over-tourism is a phenomenon that occurs when the impact of tourism on a destination becomes excessive and negatively affects the quality of life for locals as well as the experiences of visitors.

The word "over tourism" gained popularity in the global media. (Gössling, McCabe & Chen, 2020). Since Overtourism has attracted scientific attention and been the subject of multiple research projects. (Eckert, Zacher, Pechlaner, Namberger & Schmude, 2019, Goodwin, 2019, 2021, Koens, Postma & Papp, 2018, Peeters et al., 2018, World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2018). Uncontrolled tourism has degraded ecosystems, especially in coastal and mountainous places. The growth of tourism worldwide has been substantial, with increasing numbers of international arrivals each year. Pakistan, with its diverse tourist attractions and potential for tourism development, is not immune to these challenges.

Pakistan is blessed with not only natural beauty but also has most unique historical and archeological sites. Indus civilization is famous for its enriched history, because of these significance sites most the visitors from the abroad visit Pakistan. According to Meon et al., (2018), Pakistan's geographical location gives the country an advantage in terms of attracting more tourists (Ahmed, Ahmed & Abbas, 2022).

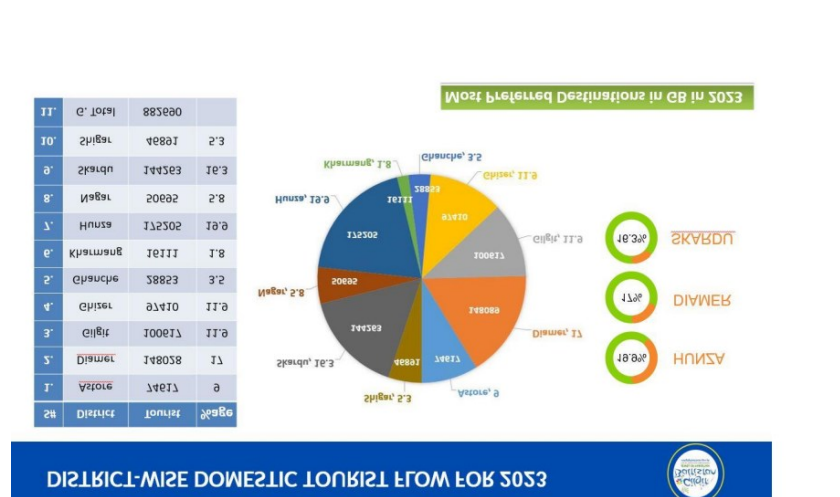
Media has played a very positive role in promoting the tourism in Pakistan. More people across the world both national and international tourists are posting photos and videos related to beauty of the Pakistan. Several YouTube vlogs, blogs and tourist groups are actively propagating a positive image of Pakistan around the world and encouraging visit to Pakistan. (Ahmed, Ahmed & Abbas, 2022).

Domestic Tourism

There is increase influx in the domestic tourism in Pakistan. Gilgit-Baltistan has become a famous tourist destination for both national and international tourists for its

natural and unique beauty. The majestic mountains, cold desert, historical forts, national parks and beautiful lakes are source of attraction for the tourist. According to the Tourism Department of GB, there is continuous increase in the tourist’s arrival in the region (Friday Times, 2023).

Fig 1, Domestic Tourist flow in Gilgit Baltistan -2023



Source, Figures provided by the Tourism Department, Gilgit-Baltistan

Over-Tourism in Gilgit Baltistan, Environmental Socio and Cultural Impact

Recent increased tourism leads to increased infrastructure development, propelling the country toward higher rates of urbanization. Furthermore, as transportation and infrastructure development expand, the number of environmental issues grows. This illustrates that, while tourism is beneficial to the country's development and prosperity, it also has a negative impact on its environment. (Iqbal, 2014, Ren, et al. 2019, Farhadi & Zaho, 2024) tourism was used as a tool to strengthened the economy of the country and mostly neglected its impact on environment and on the host countries. Mountainous region of Pakistan is famous for its tourist attractions. Gilgit Baltistan has a variety of tourist attractions because of natural and unique beauty it is now considered as one of the most travelled tourist destinations in Pakistan.

Mountain regions are considered as the second most popular region for tourist attractions. Just as tourism has caused negative environmental impacts in coastal areas like plastic pollution, it has also had a negative impact on mountain ecosystems. Due to its sensitive physical environment because of clod conditions and nutrient-poor soils. it is characterized by short growing seasons. The combination of these factors makes the subsequent recovery of damaged vegetation difficult. Due to the technological advancement mountain regions have become popular destinations for activity tourism, as they are providing tourists with different activities such as skiing and snowboarding, mountain biking, paragliding, rafting, and hiking. (Holden, 2008).

Developing countries like Pakistan often struggle with low economic growth, which leads to various challenges such as poverty, high inflation, and low-income generation. However, one potential solution to these problems lies in the development of tourism.

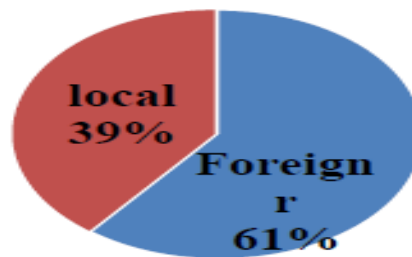
Due to major tourist attractions in Northern Areas, these places often face high volumes of tourists which not only negatively impact residents but also the surrounding environment. Gilgit-Baltistan is one the key tourist destination, which is used as a case study in this research to study the implications of over-tourism.

Table 1
The main characteristics of ‘quality’ tourism

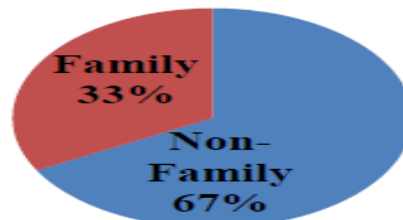
Statements	Percentage importance rating
Landscape of the visiting place must be beautiful	46
Atmosphere of that area must be relaxed and peaceful	46
Cleanness of the surroundings should be on priority	39
There must be sunlight available for maximum hours of the day.	38
The climatic conditions must be clean and healthy	32
Quality of food must be essential	30
There must be little traffic and clam atmosphere	29
There must be place for the tourist excursion	26

Note, The same person could name several characteristics if they thought them important in determining the quality of a destination. Source, European Tourism Analysis (1993)

Since tourism is a significant contribution to the region's economy in Gilgit Baltistan, it is regarded as a latent factor for regional growth. Every year, a sizable number of tourists, both domestic and foreign, travel to this area. Regarding the number of visitors, the Gilgit Baltistan region receives a respectable number of tourists both local and foreign, mostly for adventure and expedition tourism.



Source, Economics Review (Khan, Batool, Asif 2021)



Source, Economics Review (Khan, Batool, Asif 2021)

The above figures from the previous studies show that mostly locals are visiting Gilgit Baltistan and non-family persons mostly students or friends. Most of the students are coming to Gilgit Baltistan for sightseeing and want to spend their time with nature. But means that they are polluting the environment as well.

Tourist are now with this mindset that they are values clients in tourist destinations and should be treated well, as they are paying for their vacations and want to receive best possible treatment. They did not want to limit themselves according to the local constraints. On the contrary, they expect that local should amend or adjust according to their needs and satisfaction (Zemla, 2020)

Factors Contributes to Over-Tourism in Gilgit Baltistan

The growth of tourism in recent years has impacted the environment and social cultural life of the host country. Mountainous region of a country is mostly attracted by the

tourists in recent times because of the development of infrastructure. Pakistan is bestowed with most unique and ethereal beauty. Due to the demand of high tourism in the country, the government has taken initiative in the development of the infrastructure like roads and restaurants. These developments have positively impacted the economic condition of the country but due to unchecked tourists' influx has negatively impacted the environment and social life of the locals.

The Siachen Glacier, regarded as the highest battleground in the world, the Baltoro Glacier, the Karakoram Mountains, and the Deosai National Park are just a few of the breathtaking natural treasures that can be found in Gilgit Baltistan. Explore the region's enchanted landscapes, which range from the Himalayas' untamed peaks to the tranquil serenity of alpine meadows and crystal-clear lakes. The breathtaking scenery of Gilgit Baltistan is a sight to behold and a place to create memories for the future. Every step a tourist takes is a feast for the senses, from the wide stretches of snow-capped peaks and valleys to the gleaming waters of glistening lakes.

There are few historical sites in Gilgit Baltistan,

- Karga Buddha
- High fortress
- Baltit fortress
- Shigar Fort
- Chaqchan Mosque
- Gilgit rock carving

Gilgit Baltistan is home to a wide variety of cultures, including indigenous peoples such as the Balti and Burusho peoples. Visitors can experience the region's unique cultural heritage through music, dance, and cuisine, as well as many festivals and celebrations.

Gilgit Baltistan offers sportsmen various adventure sports like mountaineering, rock climbing, skiing, and rafting. Visitors can push themselves to their limits by climbing the world's highest peaks or navigating the region's steep rivers. (Arshad, Iqbal, Shahbaz, 2018) This year, to beat the summer heat, many showbiz stars visited the northern regions of Pakistan to promote the tourism industry. Recently, according to her social media account, actress, host, and model, Ayesha Omer visited beautiful places in the North. The famous "Bulbully" actor posted many pictures of himself with his friends enjoying the cool weather at Attabad Lake in Hunza Valley.

She recently visited Raikot Sarai, Fairy Meadows, Saiful Malook Lake, and beautiful tourist areas in Nanga Parbat, Gilgit Baltistan. Maryam posted her photos on Instagram and captioned them, "We are Pakistanis" while traveling to Hunza (Arshad, Iqbal & Shahbaz, 2018) Meanwhile many foreign YouTube bloggers for example Eva zu Beck, Glen and Mado, and Jay Palfrey are a few names who visited this beautiful region and attracted so many tourists to visit these sites.

Environmental Effects of Tourism

Kocak et al., (2020) noted that, regardless of a country's tourist potential, the environmental impact of tourism could not be neglected. This was mentioned despite the fact that tourism has the ability to benefit the country. For example, using fossil fuels for transportation and hoteling has a negative impact on the nation's ecosystem. In this connection, Bano et al. (2021) stressed that governments who are currently facing difficulties and problems related to economic stability cannot turn toward the ways in which they could handle challenges from an environmental perspective.

Tsai, Lin, Hwang, and Huang (2014) highlighted that the increase of environmental challenges can have an impact on people's health and well-being. This was stated from the view point of the environmental protection.

Seraphin et al (2018) It was stated that the natural viability of destinations could be permanently compromised, and that tourists are having a negative impact on the quality of life of residents while also cutting tourists' beneficial investments to local legal business entities. Over tourism has also been related to the Tragedy of the Commons, because travel businesses frequently rely on and exploit public resources.

When it comes to tourism the one factor which is dominated is the uses of assets by the tourist and local resident, which eventually leads to conflict between these two main actors of the tourism. When explaining this issue, Goodwin (2018) pointed to over tourism as a typical example of the Tragedy of the Commons. In this scenario common resources are being used by the public for the gain of economic benefits. When in certain area tourism start increases these resources are being exploit by everyone and leads to the over consumption of these resources. The tourism industry then used these common goods of public and can deplete these resources before time.

Natural meadows, which make excellent cattle feed, are now crisscrossed with jeep trails, and human presence is evident everywhere. Such practices have a significant negative impact on the entire environment. Due to these circumstances, many unique animal species are now in danger of extinction, forests are shrinking daily, grazing areas are becoming increasingly constrained, and the overall climate is also changing. Nature preservation is now of the utmost importance. People no longer place a high premium on protecting the environment, which will hurt both our quality of life and the tourism sector when it becomes overdeveloped.

Gilgit Baltistan it been observed that the majority of hotels, restaurants, and guest houses had only recently been built and had used wood from the nearby forest. In the middle of the forests, they have built the luxury guest houses or cabins cost of 50 thousand rupees per night, by compromising the natural beauty of that place.

Socio Cultural Impact of Over-Tourism in Gilgit Baltistan

Over the past few years, the number of tourists visiting Gilgit-Baltistan has increased exponentially. widespread exposure on social, print, and electronic media by locals and some well-known celebrities' people are more interested in visiting Gilgit Baltistan. The improved infrastructure in terms of roads, hotels, forest cabins and tourist destinations, and the lure of pleasing summer weather attracted the tourists worldwide. The tourism and hotel industries of Gilgit-Baltistan have ostentatiously improved as a result. In 2015 alone, almost 600,000 tourists visited Gilgit-Baltistan, according to an article in the Express Tribune. There are many different kinds of tourists among them, such climbers, trekkers, hikers, photographers, tourists, cultural tourists, trophy hunters, etc. (Express Tribune, 2015)About 64% of locals believe that tourist have influenced their social life and 59% agreed that their local language is also been compromised(Amin,Khan et al, 2019)

Table 2
Questions and Responses of Villagers About Socio-Cultural and Economic Impacts of Over-Tourism

Impacts	Questions	Yes %	No%
Socio-cultural impact	Does tourism have any negative impact on the social life of the local people?	64	36
	Do you agree that tourism should be promoted in your region?	83	17
	Is the language of that area also been influenced by the tourist?	59	41
	Have you observed that behavior of the local people been changed or influenced by the tourist?	68	32
	Did you find any conflict between visitors and local resident?	33	67

Have you notice or observed the foreigners influence on the young generation?	68	32
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Table 3
Elements responsible for over tourism in Gilgit Baltistan

Q. 1	Which places are more visited by tourist in Gilgit Baltistan?	Agree %	Disagree %
Tourist Places Visited frequently	Is Hunza a popular tourist destination?	96	4
	How often does Skardu get visited by tourists?	75	25
	Does Astor entertain a number of visitors?	52	48
	Naltar Valley is frequently visited by tourists.	75	25
	Is Diamer a popular tourist destination?	30	70
Impact of Tourism on Local Residents Life and on Environment	I like to get to know and talk to tourists.	65	35
	Can these attractions accommodate an increasing number of people?	65	35
	Do you like visiting these tourist attractions?	79	21
	If there are too many tourists visiting an attraction or location, does that influence whether you decide to visit that place or not?	56	44
	Over the past couple of years, tourism in Gilgit Baltistan has increased,	92	8
	Did tourism make any difference in my quality of life?	44	56
	Do you feel like the tourist in Gilgit Baltistan have an impact on their social lives?	56	44
	Do you feel like the tourist have an impact on the environment of Gilgit Baltistan?	85	15
	Do you think that because of tourism, GB is losing its authentic culture and historical sites?	58	42
	Does the flow of tourism in natural sites results in increased pollution, habitat destruction, and loss of biodiversity?	80	20
	Did tourism in Gilgit Baltistan increased energy consumption and excessive waste generation?	75	25
	I feel that too many tourists visit GB	83	17
	Gilgit Baltistan would be a better place if we had a limited number of tourists?	70	30

Data Analysis

Based on the above results obtained from the survey data and desktop method which provide a better understanding related to this research. it can be deduced that a large number of tourists visit above mentioned destinations in Gilgit Baltistan. According to the data, the highest percentage of people agree that Hunza is a popular tourist destination however Skardu is second on the list while Naltar Valley lies in third. Diamer and Astor Valley are found on the fourth and fifth numbers respectively. 92% of locals think that these attractions bring a huge influx of visitors to Gilgit Baltistan every year. Data also portrays that more than 80% of locals feel that the continuous increase in tourists causes air, noise, and water pollution as well as habitat destruction. loss of biodiversity, energy consumption, and excessive waste generation are other consequences. 83% of locals are on the same page that too many tourists are visiting Gilgit Baltistan even 57% are of the opinion that Gilgit Baltistan could be a better place if there is a smaller number of tourist arrivals. 56-58% of people are in opinion that over tourism are impacting their social life. Same number of people are in opinion that it also negatively impacting their culture and historical heritage.

Over the past five years, tourism has increased in Gilgit Baltistan. The growing numbers of tourists are not only responsible for the negative impact on the environment but also for causing harm to the socio-cultural heritage of the region. Previous research on this problem concluded that an increase in tourism is responsible for environmental degradation as to accommodate the tourist, Gilgit Baltistan locals are clearing the forests to build hotels and restaurants, not only this the visitors who came to visit this beautiful site

also contribute in air, noise and water pollution by throwing garbage on the roads and on the recreational sites. The most visited site in Gilgit Baltistan is the Hunza and Sakardu. Due to over-tourism in this region, environmental problems are highlighted among the locals and on a government level.

Tourism also has an impact on the social-cultural values of the region. Socially people are facing problems related to overuse of resources to accommodate visitors. More food, electricity and water consumption create problems for the locals as they are facing food shortage sometimes and pay high electricity bills with no availability of plain drinking water. Over tourism has great impact on the Gilgit Baltistan culture as more people are finding foreign dressing as a mark of fashion and leaving their traditional local outfits. Not only get this but their eating habit also influenced with the replacement of new foods like pizzas and burgers. Replacement of traditional language SHINA with other languages is another negative impact of over tourism in this region.

Over all growing phenomena of over tourism in Gilgit Baltistan has negative impact not only for the environment but for the social and cultural life of the locals. Government of Gilgit Baltistan has taken initiative to deal with this problem but the current policies related to tourism are having weaknesses in it which remain ineffective to deal with this problem like clearing land for building new hotels without the permission of local government.

Conclusion

Tourism, a popular form of leisure in Western society, has evolved over time and is now considered a leading economic industry. Over-tourism refers to the negative impact of tourism on a destination, affecting locals' quality of life and visitors' experiences. The UN World Tourism Organization defines over tourism as the degradation of sensitive ecosystems, traffic generated by tourist vehicles, and rent costs that are no longer within reach of people.

The growth of tourism worldwide has led to concerns about over-tourism and its adverse effects on destinations. Pakistan, with its diverse tourist attractions and potential for development, is not immune to these challenges. The country has a market for around 50 million potential domestic visitors, with 5 million visiting KPK alone in 2018. However, Pakistan's market share in the worldwide tourism industry was only 0.08% in 2017, much below its potential.

The Northern Areas of Pakistan, particularly Gilgit Baltistan, serve as a popular tourist destination, both domestically and internationally. Tourism in this region has been instrumental in boosting the local economy, creating job opportunities, and gaining recognition on a national and international scale. However, as with any popular tourist destination, the phenomenon of over-tourism has emerged as a concern. Overcrowding, soil erosion, water pollution, the melting of glaciers, and damage to the ecosystem are some of the negative consequences associated with over-tourism.

It is crucial for Pakistan, especially in the Northern Areas, to strike a balance between attracting tourists and preserving the natural environment and cultural heritage. Sustainable tourism practices and responsible management are key to ensuring that tourism continues to bring benefits to both the local communities and the visitors while minimizing its negative impact on the environment. By addressing these challenges and adopting sustainable approaches, Pakistan can harness the full potential of its tourism sector and pave the way for inclusive growth and development.

Recommendations

- The term "ecotourism" is the most commonly used. Ecotourism, or more specifically nature tourism, is often seen as a solution to negative environmental impacts. Ecotourism is considered low-impact, encouraging responsible and "eco-friendly" visitors and using low-impact developments and modes of transportation. Ecotourism is also largely non-consumptive, meaning that it does not involve killing or harming fauna and flora, rather, it is seen as having a strong educational component.
- Government should take serious action and should formulate such policies which regulate the construction of new buildings without harming the environment.
- There should be policies which regulate the flow of tourists especially in the summer season.
- Locals' community must be educated related to problem with the over tourism which they are using as a source of income generation. They should facilitate with other economic activities which support their livelihood and overcome the phenomena of over tourism. Local community should take part in the decision making and planning activities related to tourism

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