



A Review of Indigenous Tourism in Community Development in Gilgit Baltistan

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ABSTRACT

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Indigenous tourism refers to tourism activities that increase association between tourist, and local people of that area, they linked their self with historical sites, culture, and traditions. The study is about the impacts of tourism on community development and how it contributes to cultural preservation. The applied theory in the study is theory of modernization is given by Rostow Winton in 1954, talks about how society develop from a precondition era to takeoff situation that improves economic development through tourism. The study add value to UN SDG 8, target 8.9. The research is based on a small province Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan. It is a qualitative study from lens of content analysis, it follows the micro (individual) level approach. The results of research shows that indigenous tourism has more positive impact on community development, especially in form of preservation of cultural historical sites, economic development and provide different opportunities to local communities. It has undesirable impact on environment which brings climate change in the region. The communities' control over their own natural resources and use their cultural as a strength to promote tourism and increase the notion of hospitality among the residents. Communities globally have been successful maintaining their culture with tourism because it helps sustainability. The study is significant as it highlights the dual impact of indigenous tourism on community development and cultural preservation while addressing environmental concerns.

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1.0 Introduction

Since 1980s, the concept of Indigenous tourism has been more increased because the indigenous people are considered that they preserve their culture and tradition more. Indigenous people now keep their connection with nature and maintain their ancestral values. (Butler and Hinch, 1996). There are transformative effects of infrastructure and tourism development on social capital, livelihoods, and resilience in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. improvements in infrastructure, such as roads, telecommunications, and public services, have significantly facilitated tourism growth and enhanced accessibility to remote areas. Tourism has emerged as a vital economic driver, creating new income opportunities and fostering local entrepreneurship. Hussain, Mandić and Fusté-Forné (2024).

Dasgupta et al. (2020) conducted research on the effects of tourism to the community growth in indigenous Himalayan communities. This research showed that tourism improved quality of life, created job opportunities and promoted economic development.

Stojanović et al. (2024) examine the significant contribution of natural as well as socio-cultural values to sustainable tourism development within protected areas. The necessity for conservation of tourism resources like natural landscapes, biodiversity and ecosystems. How local culture, traditions and heritage can improve tourist experience and promote community involvement. Such natural and sociocultural values should be included in planning and managing tourism in order to achieve sustainable goals so that a favorable framework is developed which ensures harmony with nature while benefiting locals at the same time.

In recent years it is observed that the behavior of the tourist has been changed now they are exploring new travel experiences and seeking new destinations. Tourism is considered that it does not only support the traditional local economic activities but it also supports the in cultural preservation. Community based tourism has important role in promoting many things including economic development cultural preservation and heritage, promote suitable livelihood, sustainability. This favors the progress of the local communities to preserve their local heritage, their customs and ancestral values. (Guzman et al., 2011).

Günther and Fuchs (2021) studied how indigenous tourism affects the social and economic conditions of Maori people in New Zealand. According to their results, indigenous tourism provides a platform for employment opportunities, income generation as well as increased empowerment, respect and dignity in the society.

The role of indigenous tourism in cultural preservation among the Mapuche community in Chile was examined by Sasaki and Sanchez (2021) through their study. It focused on how tourism facilitated traditional knowledge transfer, cultural revitalization and community's identity reinforcement. a study by Knudsen and Tannerfeldt (2022) investigated how indigenous travel can serve cultural preservation and self-determination purpose for the Sámi people of Sweden and Norway. They highlighted the need for community members' participation in tourism projects which would guarantee true representation of culture while deriving economic gains.

Scheyvens et al. (2021) explore the relationship between indigenous tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), explaining how indigenous communities can make use

of tourism to develop sustainably. Assets that respect traditions, indigenous rights, and knowledge systems are a prerequisite. In this regard, they view it as necessary for the stakeholders in tourism strategy formulation and implementation to include local people. More so, their focus is on an increase in fairness or equity concerning benefits emanating from tourism activities while at the same time reducing cultural degeneration and environmental degradation

Barton and Leonard (2021) discuss about the incorporation of social justice principles into tourism planning, particularly on the issues of racial reconciliation and sustainable community development in the Southern United States. In the book of Routledge's "50 Years of Community Development Vol II" book, analyze the role tourism can play as a potential means of redress for historical injustices and promote fair development. They look into the methods to promote reconciliation through tourism projects that allow people from marginalized communities to have a say in the design and management of cultural heritage sites, as well as for those who are interested in preserving their heritage. They advocate for inclusive planning approaches that prioritize social equity, community participation, and sustainable economic opportunities in tourism development. They introduce the reader to the potential of tourism not only for the regeneration but for social remodeling and local empowerment particularly in historically marginalized areas.

In many developing countries, the important thing for tourism is cooperation, coordination and social association to provide them and to alleviate the community from poverty. Because many countries are completely depended on the tourism and they gain their gross domestic product (GDP) annually from it. The community which are managing the community-based tourism is getting benefit directly from tourism without involvement of any third party while managing the economy. This type of tourism can help to reduce the negative impacts of the alternative tourism in many developing countries (Guzman et al., 2011).

Indigenous tourism gives a unique opportunity to turn the cultural and natural assets into tourist attraction places and activities. But mass tourism does not provide those opportunities to the communities. Planning, marketing, managing natural resources, maintaining and development all these helps to strong the community-based tourism. It is fact that rural areas are now transforming through the initiative of tourism. This change can restructure not only open door for cultural preservation but also for economic stability and sustainability which provide different economic opportunities for the local residents of that area while maintain the traditional activities (Jugmohan et al., 2016).

The concept community-based tourism first developed by Murphy (1985) in which issues related tourism were discussed especially the which are related to local communities while serving to those came to visit a place. He again discussed the same concept in 2004 and opened. This paper looks at a new way of understanding the concept of indigenous tourism in Gilgit Baltistan because tourism is new in the area. It examines the impact of tourism in different ways on the development and how the culture can be preserves in that region. It will further focus whether the indigenous tourism gives benefits and opportunities to the community or it is a threat actually.

Tourism has had considerable economic impact in the region as evidenced by two recent studies by Khan and Rasheed (2022) from Gilgit-Baltistan. It also echoes hurdles like poor

infrastructure, skill shortage and the necessity to embrace policies that bring parity in tourism dividends. According to their study the active involvement of communities in tourism management and decision-making is a key factor for sustainable tourism development in Hadibu, Socotra.

The paper focus at the impact of tourism on indigenous communities in Gilgit Baltistan. It demonstrates how the local people generating a responsible way of tackling tourism in the region and what are the impacts of tourism in indigenous community development and how it contributes to the cultural preservation. Tourism is seen as a threat or a tool to development the communities, how these communities see it, as an opportunity towards growth or empowerment.

The significance of the study is to know the impacts of indigenous tourism on community development and that contributes to the cultural preservation. The study will be helpful for the locals to the area to understand the real impact of the indigenous tourism to sustain the cultural and heritage sites. Moreover, the research will also add value to sustainable Development Goal 8, Target 8.9 which focuses on promotion of recent and sustainable economic growth including target on good jobs opportunities for everyone through implementation of policies which support sustainable tourism. This will help in maintaining local culture and products globally.

1.1 Research Question

What are the impacts of tourism on community development and how it contributes to cultural preservation?

2.0 Literature Review

Tourism has often seen as significant impact on economic development, especially in those areas which has less job opportunities. The sustainability of the tourism and its development does not only dependent on the behavior of the tourist but it also depends on the behavior. If residents of the area are not welcoming and fearful it effects the local tourism industry. Without the residents supports it is challenging for tourism industry to maintain it (Ali, 2022).

The flow of tourist visiting places helps to grow the tourist more in that area. Tourist are considered the main strength of the not only economic industry but many other things like food industry are also included in it. There are basically two types of tourism which domestic and international tourism and both of these tourists are significant to development of the economy, which is considered the basic pillar of the society. Mostly destination is developed on the bias of supply and demand of tourism (Qasim and Rahman, 2022).

Local inhabitants are now less dependent on the agricultural sector. The infrastructure and tourism have visibly enhanced the endurance of the community, which has been able to come up with better ways of coping with economic and environmental challenges. On the other hand, tourism can have some downsides like ecological destruction and cultural impacts, thus the local community members strongly advocate the adoption of sustainable tourism principles to attain a well-rounded economic, social as well as environmental interface. (Hussain, Mandić & Fusté-Forné 2024).

Community based tourism is considered the alternative of mass tourism especially in many developing countries which targets to improvise and better their living conditions. The core idea of CBT is too connected with the hotel management, which provides facilities to the tourist. CBT

increase the interaction between community and the visitor. It further focuses on the sustainability of the products. The World Tourism Organization (2002) has mentioned that sustainable tourism reduce poverty in those areas and elevate the area towards development (Guzman et al., 2011).

Higgins-Desbiolles (2020) in a separate study shows the importance of not returning to business as usual and outlines responsible tourism practices that put Indigenous societies first. The research suggests that when tourism is appropriately managed, it can help better the lives of Indigenous peoples by increasing infrastructure and providing healthcare support. Documentary gives voice to mayors' struggle for cleaner Canadian communities on the reverse side, we should also look out for cultural commodification and authenticity that is potentially lost when tourism does not practice careful management.

Growth is a prerequisite for economic reconciliation, and it provides significant occasion to enriches Indigenous communities with their cultural vibrancy amidst the flourishing new economically promising opportunities (Government of Canada, 2023). This was a major driving force behind the development of funding programs such as Canada's Indigenous Tourism Fund (ITF), which genuinely supports these businesses. The overall goal of the ITF is to enhance Indigenous entrepreneurs' financial capacity to deliver an authentic, high quality visitor experience.

Zielinski, Jeong, and Milanés (2021) found different reasons for people being involved in the development and success of CBT projects including socio-economic, and environmental aspects. The study provides evidence that the active participation and community empowerment are the essence of sustainable tourism in the CBT contexts, as this allows to make people aware of the sustainable practices. They point out the biggest influencers in the concept and progression of CBT- as these are factors such as community solidarity, cultural legitimacy, economic opportunities, and environmental sustainability.

Tourism growth, in areas brings about challenges. Concerns over impact like habitat deterioration and resource exhaustion raise questions about sustainability. It is crucial to adopt management techniques to minimize the effects and enhance the positive outcomes of tourism in countryside regions. Initiatives focused on community-based tourism empower inhabitants in decision making processes ensuring that tourism activities align with community values and aspirations (Liu et al., 2023). The commercialization of culture and potential loss of authenticity also pose threats to traditions and identities emphasizing the need for preservation of cultural heritage. Encouraging tourism practices, such, as ecotourism certifications and responsible visitor education fosters environmental awareness and cultural respect (Chiang & Ko 2023).

Kohsaka and Rogel (2021) highlight the role of Traditional and Local Knowledge (TLK), in advancing sustainable development especially by empowering indigenous and local communities worldwide. TLK covers areas of knowledge such as farming, preserving biodiversity, healthcare and managing resources. This knowledge not sustains community livelihoods. Also bolsters environmental care and adaptability in tackling global issues, like climate change and loss of biodiversity. By integrating TLK into policy frameworks and development strategies communities can utilize their wisdom to promote practices and resilience.

Community participation is widely recognized as crucial for fostering sustainable tourism development. It facilitates local ownership, preserves cultural heritage, and ensures the fair distribution of tourism benefits. However, several barriers impede effective community engagement in tourism planning processes. These barriers include socio-economic disparities, limited education and awareness among community members, and power imbalances among stakeholders. Such challenges often marginalize local communities and restrict their influence in decision-making, thereby undermining the potential for inclusive and sustainable tourism development (Reindrawati, 2023).

A 2023 global review flagged renewable energy infrastructure including solar, wind and hydro-electric projects as posing a risk to Indigenous territories on par with the dangers associated with commodity agriculture, mining or oil and gas development (Mongabay, 2023). To meet these challenges in this era of reconciliation requires a rights-based approach to climate policy and ongoing engagement with Indigenous peoples for their participation and consent.

Mountain tourism is increasingly growing in Pakistan and the economies of mountain are based on tourism. However, climate change effect the concept of sustainability of mountain tourism. Mountain tourism not only increased the area's economy but it helps to allocation of the resources in better ways and it also guides the allocation of natural resources as well like when to increase the forest to maintain the climate change (Ali, 2023).

The potential positive impacts of tourism on community development and cultural preservation, particularly within indigenous contexts. By leveraging tourism as a tool for economic, social, and cultural empowerment, indigenous communities have the opportunity to achieve sustainable development while safeguarding their unique cultural heritage. It is essential for future research and practice to continue exploring innovative and responsible approaches to indigenous tourism that prioritize community ownership, cultural authenticity, and equitable benefits for all stakeholders involved.

Gilgit Baltistan is unique because of its alpine scenery, in northern areas of Pakistan. Privately 200651 people from across the globe visit the Gilgit Baltistan every year according to the tourism department of Gilgit Baltistan. It has been evidenced that both positive and negative effects are there. The main focus of the study was to focus into the effect of tourism on the ecology into different GB area. The findings of the study show that in these areas where the study has been conducted faced to deforestation, biodiversity, pollution and harm on to cultural heritage sites (Saqib et al., 2019). After studying many previous researches, the researchers have done researches on climate change issues, environmental issues, mountain tourism, but this study will fulfill the gap of cultural preservation.

2.1 Theoretical Frame work

2.1.1 Theory of Modernization

This is also known as Rostow's theory of Growth, he explains how societies develop with the passage of time. It was developed by Winton in 1954 while building a stadium which was tourist attraction place in Nigeria. This theory further explains the five stages of development in which includes traditional development (agriculture society), pre-condition for

takeoff (improving transportation), take off (beginning economic growth), and drive to maturity (sustained growth with advanced industries), and high mass consumption. These three factors like transport, investment in different organizations and agricultural production. Once all these three pre conditions starts to take off then it will help local people and tourist areas and it also helps to preserve and protecting such sites. All these generate jobs for people and increase economic development (Ukabuilu and Igbojekwe, 2015).

2.2 Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Indigenous tourisms has positively influence on community development

Indigenous tourisms do not have influence on community development

Hypothesis 2: Indigenous tourism helps to preserve the culture.

Indigenous tourism does not help to preserve the culture.

3.0 Methodology

The research method of the study will be qualitative research I chose this method because the research will be based on the text (content) analysis which will further follow the thematic analysis. It helps to find different patterns, analyze text, images, themes or many other things which gives proper meaning in an organize way. It helps to produce more objective results rather than personal biasness and subjectivity. Additionally, it is good for in-depth research from many sources of data. Basically, content analysis clarifies the issues and increase validity of the date because it also rooted from research.

I chose this method because of the theme-based discussion and also there was a limited time duration and I cannot perform any other kind of research which is completely based on field work or quantitative where data is fully taken from study area which is part of field work. Furthermore, the approach in this paper is micro (individual) level. The method chose in this paper because it enables to observe details at very basic and fine level to reveals the insight knowledge and specific interpretation of data regarding topic.

The area of the study is Gilgit Baltistan which is a small region of Pakistan where tourism has been increased since 2000 because of world highest mountains and natural beauty (Qasim and Rahman, 2022). The ethical consideration of the other research has been mainly concerned and give their work proper citation and references because it maintains trust and rights of other researchers and it ensures the responsible behavior of a researchers.

4.0 Findings and Results

4.1 Economic Impact of Tourism

Gilgit Baltistan is Famous for unique natural beauty, the highest mountains, history and the local cultural. It has been a heaven for those who are mountain trekkers. According to a World Bank report in 2010, the per capita income and GDP for Gilgit Baltistan has increased. The tourism in the GB has significantly influence the economic condition. The statistical measures in that report further has shown that it also increased the economy of the Pakistan between 2010 to 2021 and in 2018 it was the highest per capita which 1.678 USD which was increased and up to 2.83%.

Furthermore, the report shows that the tourism industry has be increased and it has a significant impact on GB's economic development especially from 2010 onward. The industry has experienced an incredible growth in gross domestic product in 2018. However, tourism provide

opportunities regarding jobs but still those are gender based. The association between tourism and economic growth together and both ways like if it is starting that tourism directly leads to economic growth then the similar way promoting tourism is also helping the economic growth (Karim et al., 2023).

4.2 Socio-Cultural Impact of tourism

Indigenous tourism in GB has prominently influence the social, cultural and religious life in many areas there. Because of many tourists it is witnessed that the dressing code, food and cuisine of the local people has been changed but they still preserved and wearing their cultural dresses. The changes come due to the influence of foreign and local tourism while they are visiting to experience the local culture, social life and traditions (Armughan, 2023).

Regular cultural performances for tourist actually helps in keeping the cultural preservation, like people of GB has their own music, they celebrate cultural events and they organized different events on different occasions like Shandur Polo Festival, Navroz Festival, Ginani Festival where not only local but also tourist enjoy the local events, there every district have their own languages many locals say tourist try to learn their languages while interacting the communities.

Many tourists visit and also questioning the religious beliefs of the local community and somehow indirectly invade their privacy and also destroying the personal property of local communities. It was a topic of discussion that many tourists took pictures of local children and post them on different social media websites without any consent the local community more concerned about this because hospitality is in their culture but invading into personal identities is not huge issue (Armughan, 2023).

4.3 Cultural Heritage sites:

There are many Cultural heritage sites (CHS) in the region of Gilgit Baltistan including Shigar Fort, Altit Fort, Khaplu Palace, Kargha Buddha, Danyore Rock, Buddhist Monastery, Rock Carving at Butogah. The Shigar Fort is restored and converted into Serena Hotel and Altit Fort which is recently reported by Aga Khan Trust for Culture Historic Cities Support Program and Government of Norway and open it for tourist and the other places is also restored and tourist visit those places. While maintaining these cultural heritages thousands of local people get different kind of job which increase the development in the region (Kreutzmann, 2013).

4.4 Environmental Impact

Natural environment has a major pillar of any society to maintain the system whether it is social or natural environment. Over the past few years, the natural environment of the Gilgit Baltistan has been damaged because of tourism. Many local tourists have no idea how to dispose the garbage properly, there are the proper infrastructure to throw the garbage. However, there is no penalty to impose who have that kind of littering behavior (Armughan, 2023).

Many trekkers leave their oxygen cylinder on the base camps of the mountains which leads to an unhygienic environment. The indigenous people who live near cities visit the tourist attraction places by car which becomes a reason of traffic jam and air pollution. There are no proper traffic rules that is why there are more changes of accidents because of fast driving by the

tourist due to this not only tourist affected but local residents in the area also get effects. Due to high traffic and litter the pollution has also been increased which leads to environmental impact (EI). (Armughan, 2023).

4.5 China Pakistan Economic Corridor and Tourism

CPEC is a huge mega infrastructure project initiated by Government of Pakistan and China, makes it easy to be at tourist destinations. It brings many opportunities to region including more than half million jobs. In just previous few years Gilgit Baltistan starting tourism. China develops the road infrastructure of Gilgit Baltistan because it is between china Pakistan border. Because of this project the tourism has been increased in the region and through this project they local people get benefits and the knowledge to save their ancestral asset (Nazneen et al., 2022).

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

Gilgit Baltistan is traditionally living mainly on natural resources because it is on mountains from where people get their daily life resources. But tourism brought a shift and the people of Gilgit Baltistan managed the tourism by their own initially it was considered as a threat to the environment and local inhabitant but the shift was positive for community development. Tourism has become an important part of economic development in GB. The communities which serve in GB for tourism they face challenges as well like over tourism. The CPEC project become one of the main reasons of infrastructure in GB which boost the tourism in small villages where traditionally considered difficult to reach. The alternative hypothesis has been accepted that tourism has positive influence on community development.

Many researchers see tourism as an optimistic opportunity to preserve the culture, it helps to fosters the different cultural activities, culture exchange, promote handicrafts production, and empower the local people economically. Tourism has increased the concept of cultural identity. Due to that people of GB has recognized the uniqueness of their culture from other regions, groups and culture. They show their positive side of their culture on the social media, because of their welcoming behavior now more people visit the region every year.

They present their local dresses in the fashion shows for the preservation and advertisement so more people will buy it. Earlier the places where people visit into the forts and museums free now the local people sell tickets to visit the forts, palaces and cultural heritage sites. Eventually the local communities also get benefit from that but also, they use the money to maintain the buildings. They have different cuisines which beautify the taste of the culture. Here the null hypothesis has been rejected so in this case the alternative hypothesis has been accepted, tourism helps to preserve cultural heritage sites, cultural values and customs.

5.1 Conclusion

The study explores what are the impacts of tourism on community development and how it contributes to cultural preservation. The study further shows that indigenous tourism has impacted the region in many different ways. After doing content analysis it is evidence that tourism increase the economic growth. The statistical data shows that tourism in the region of Gilgit Baltistan has boosted the Gross Domestic Product of Pakistan.

Additionally, the local communities are trying to save their traditional dressing code, food

and religious way. Tourism also helped in preservation of many cultural heritage sites, the local community earn economic benefits at grass root level and invested in the sites with different organization likes Aga Khan Trust for Culture Historic Cities Support Program, and government of Norway. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor gives further more addition to enhance the tourism in the region.

Furthermore, if the growth is needed to increase tourism, then economic development should be prioritized in the region. These two factors tourism and economic growth impact each other simultaneously which helps in cultural preservation. However, it effects the environmental situation because the region was full of nature with very low amount of traffic, due to tourism it has increased more than the capacity of the City and it enhanced the pollution level. There is no penalty for littering behavior and waste mismanagement.

Entities key for tourism are one of the critical factors that the role of stakeholders, along with innovative and community-centered tourism planning and community-based approaches, that may push tourism into the right direction. The authors raised the issues of income inequality and lower levels of education and awareness and the communal governance styles such as inclusive governance as the barriers for tourism-aligned community development. One of the consciences of society should be to help the disadvantaged groups is to improve their income and education through tourism. Capacity-building initiatives are an important strategy to improve the local understanding and ability, as well as to localize control.

To aid in implementing these policies, the stakeholders must be able to communicate the new goals to the interested parties in an open and honest manner and to find common ground when deciding on the matter, by integrating the various local perspectives. These proffering's are to generate the promotion of equitable and responsible tourism by communities and tourists. By the collaboration of many nonprofit organization, adding tickets to see the cultural heritage sites, promote sustainable tourism, organize cultural events and strict rules and policies for damaging the heritage sites. The most importantly the involvement of local communities and their engagement to support sustainable tourism which increases active participation of people in preservation of culture and environment.

Both alternative hypotheses are correct that through indigenous tourism people gain the economy that contribute to preserve the cultural heritage site and traditions. This paper focuses on development of indigenous tourism and it further suggest the integration of between indigenous identities into the global tourism industry. The community control over their own resource they did not allow anyone outside to take the resources. They show resistance outside cultural control and different tourism practices.

Asima Manzoom: Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

Muhammad Danial Moin: Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting
Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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