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FACTORING IN CPEC'S ROLE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze historical evolution, importance for national prosperity and perspective vis-à-vis prospects of tourism development in Pakistan, especially in the wake of ongoing CPEC projects. As, it is well known fact that development of tourism over the years has been greatly influenced by the overall human development, therefore industrial revolution led to the development of economic corridors, integration and connectivity among societies. Consequently, industrial society initiated the process of globalization and activities of mass tourism. However, owing to rapid technological advancements postmodern society started looking for personalized and diverse tourism products. As per OECD (2010) globalization has strengthened certain driving facets of tourism that include rising incomes, development of network societies and cheaper and faster means of communication. The tourism demand dramatically increased after World War II and many investors, entrepreneurs and Governments were lured in, to invest in tourism without proper consideration to the feasibility and aftermaths. Majority of experts hold the view that tourism has picked up in the last four to five decades as an unplanned activity. Indeed, it was developed in variety of ways and paces across the countries. Though developed World has formulated the contemporary tourism planning approaches; while taking due cognizance of their cultural environment, human resource status, political and socio-economic systems that can prove helpful for others as well, yet practical manifestation of these planning approaches in developing countries like Pakistan can only be implemented after necessary adaptation to prevalent environments mutates mutandis.

INTRODUCTION

Travel and Tourism have been developing over the years in commensuration with the human development, especially over the last few decades tourism has risen as one of the vibrant components of global economy. Consequently,

tourism has come to stay as a major industry, however standardized mass production coupled with market maturity led to different types of tourism that encouraged finding new models of customized production. Of late the trend of activities related to experiences, being part of destination culture and interaction with producers is giving rise to the concept of creative cities and neighbourhoods.

The accelerated growth in tourism for last couple of decades and rapidly developing means of communication/ information have led to greater awareness among the masses regarding sustainability. Consequently, attention is shifting from quantitative demand to qualitative nature of products. The tourism industry is expecting continuous growth Worldwide in the coming years with developing countries spear heading the drive (Chen & Chiou-Wei, 2009). Though Pakistan had all the attractions and potential of developing tourism in a big way but unfortunately lost lots of precious time and lagged behind because of multiple reasons. Currently according to the "World Economic Forum" Tourism and Competitive Ranking" of Pakistan is ranked at 1241 out of 185.

UNWTO experts, Harry Huang and George Drakeop recently attended a workshop organized by PTDC at Islamabad and said that based on facts and figures contained in our comprehensive report, it can be said with authority, that tourism opportunities in Pakistan are not less than any other country of the World, however, Pakistan could not capture its rightful place in global tourism due to various factors². The main reason is the nonexistence of proper advertising and non-participation of the concerned Pakistani authorities in global tourism events. This is causing a negative impression of Pakistan Worldwide. Hence there is requirement to step up the efforts and latest drives of PTDC in this regard such as the 'Amazing Pakistan' and 'Emerging Pakistan' campaigns are the steps in right direction but these are required to be supplemented through various 'offers', and 'deals'. Pakistan must not lose the opportunity to claim her share of market in global tourism. We have already lost precious time. Let us create conducive environment by finding the panacea to our short comings, innovations, blue ocean strategies and opening our doors to show the World that how, really wonderful, divers, amazing and friendly is Pakistan.

Tourism's Historical Evolution

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2008), has defined "Tourism" as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places, where they normally live and work, as well as their activities during their stay at these destinations. However, the evolution of tourism can be traced back to Greece and Roman eras, when travels were undertaken primarily for the purposes of politics, communication, military and trade. Later from 500 to 1400 AD the growth of religiously motivated travels picked up and turned out to be a well-organized phenomenon known as pilgrimage; such as Muslims

¹The Express Tribune, March 3rd, 2018

²<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/03/09/ptdc-be-transformed-into-national-tourism-authority-unwto-report/>

travels to holy cities of Mecca and Medina, whereas Christian and Jews to Rome and Jerusalem. During 16th and 17th centuries besides, the growth of trade and commerce, people traveled for knowledge and experience as well. Especially colonial aristocracy belonging to UK took tours as essential part of their preparation to be potential administrators and governing masters. Indeed it was “Industrial revolution that laid the foundation of mass tourism but the impetus was added by the technological advances during 19th and 20th centuries that made required information for tourism activities vis- a -vis services available for faster and convenient travels”. (Seth, 1985; Inskip, 1991)

In the light of literature available the rise of tourism planning can be partitioned into five phases that include; (1) “Unplanned Tourism Expansion Period” (Gunn, 1988). Planning wasn't in fashion at all in this era, rather it was unpopular and undesirable (Bhatia, 1986). (2) “Start of Partially Supply Oriented Planning Era” (Inskip, 1991). In this period, the main emphasis was on development of physical infrastructure like restaurants, motels transportation links to destination areas and telecommunication systems. (3) Entirely Supply Oriented Tourism Planning Period (Gunn, 1988). During this period focus remained on to capture bigger share as an objective therefore Tourist industry developed haphazardly and while planning, no attention was paid to environment, customer satisfaction and development of local people in the respective areas. (4) “Market/Demand Related Planning Era”. (Archer & Cooper, 1994). During this period the focal point of tourism plans was providing exciting experiences and advertising efforts in the industry to draw in a bigger numbers of tourists (5) Contemporary Planning Approaches Period.

The negative effects of thoughtless and unplanned development of tourism forced the contemporary planners to take due cognizance of social, psychological, political, cultural and environmental impact as well.

Importance of Tourism for National Development

Since “Tourism Industry” has global outlook in terms of investments, cultural transformation, learning experiences and environmental impact; therefore, it has become a force multiplier for promoting economic activities in creating job opportunities in different sectors of economy, driving exports and contribution to GDPs. As per WTTC analysis Travel & Tourism is 10.4% of global GDP and creation of jobs constitutes 9.9% of 2017's total employment and is likely to increase further³. This global growth in Tourism was chiefly robust across Asia, validating the sector's resilience. The performance of 2017-18 indicates that countries such as Tunisia, Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt despite facing the menace of terrorism, natural and man-made disasters have recovered strongly. Over the previous decade, one fifth of total jobs created worldwide have been in this sector. Within 10 years ahead, nearly 100 million new jobs can be created with proper regulatory environment and government backing⁴.

³<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/pakistan2018.pdf>

⁴ *ibid*

According to the WTO report (UNWTO, 2008), tourism sector is contributing about thirty-five percent of global services exports, and huge growth has been and is still being achieved by developing countries. The data also indicates that the contemporary global growth in tourism is marked by the growth in emerging destinations in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Moreover, tourism represents over 70% of service exports in comparatively less developed countries. Despite being rich in touristic potential (cultural diversity, diverse geographic scenery etc), Pakistan still faces several barriers to tourism's development.

CPEC is likely to have instrumental effect on travel & tourism in Pakistan through various projects and increased connectivity vis-a-vis inclusive integration for influencing many areas with huge potential for development (The News, 2021). Since, it comprises of series of mega, medium and small projects with the collaboration of both governments, therefore is likely to impact the industry and consequently our economy in a big way. Moreover, overall, it would be very beneficial for the development of tourism, job opportunities, prosperity and economic wellbeing of the country. Besides many other types of tourism across the country, the northern areas of Pakistan can be turned into an echo tourism hub for the local and international tourists.

Macro trends in tourism indicate that the advent of the industrial era transformed this industry into a mass recreational activity, while globalization and post-modernization have changed it into a personalized and diverse field of tourism products that are linked to demand and supply. As per (OECD, 2010), the growth of tourism is to a large extent the product of ever-increasing globalization. In fact, it proved a support system for the various key drivers like growing income, new means of transport, and network societies in international tourism. The implications of the ever-growing importance of networks, the rise of the networked organization and the networked individual are profound. (Castells, 1996). Public-private partnerships as well as partnerships between different sectors of the industry (e.g., airlines, hospitality-groups, tour-operators, niche market associations etc.) have also become imperative. More significantly, technology specialists are helping to develop new breed of media-marketing campaigns. Increasingly complex value-chains, involving suppliers from within and without the industry, are supporting traditional value-chains in variety of ways. Travel and tourism are no more tied to the foundations of the old economy. In this new scenario, value-networks and destinations, rather than being simple inputs, are becoming a vital part of the value-creation methods in tourism.

Perspectives and Prospects of Tourism in Pakistan

Pakistan also realized the necessity of promoting tourism; therefore, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) was incorporated on 30th March 19705 with the Vision to develop the tourism sector as a national priority. It was mandated to undertake development in a sustainable and suitable way, while taking due benefit of regional and international trends and developments. A considerable contribution to the improvement in living standards in Pakistan

⁵http://www.tourism.gov.pk/adventure_tourism.html)

and promotion of country's cultural and natural heritage was expected as result of PTDC efforts. PTDC is governed by Board of Directors (Minister in charge as chairman) and besides, providing transportation to various tourist resorts/areas also owns several motels across the country. However, due to natural calamities those befell our country time and again and onslaught of terrorism badly affected tourism as a whole. After the passage of 18th amendment PTDC's outreach and coordination role have been further complicated/ curtailed, therefore requires transformation to National Tourism Development Authority (NTDA). As published in Dawn News, subsequent to amelioration in the security conditions, Pakistani tourism has increased by 300percent⁶ in last couple of years. A World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report referred to by Bloomberg evaluated travel industry's input to the economy at Rs 2.03 trillion, 6.9% of the GDP. This contribution was estimated to rise 6% in current year, and to display a 5.8% increment annually, reaching Rs 3.8 trillion (7.2% of 2027's GDP).

There are plenty of tourist attractions; those can help placing Pakistan higher on "Tourism Competitive Index" which range from Mohenjo Daro, Harapa and Taxila, to coastal areas, deserts, plains and the Himalayan hill-stations. Tourists and adventure seekers from all over the world visit Pakistan which is home to number mountain peaks over 7000m, especially K2. Pakistan has many old forts, Mughal architecture and the famous Hunza and Chitral valleys; those are home to small isolationist Kalash community. The historic city of Lahore is the cultural capital of Pakistan, with many examples of Mughal architecture such as Badshahi Masjid, Shalimar Gardens, Tomb of Jahangir and the Lahore Fort. Besides numerous and variety of other attractions, Pakistan boasts 6 UNESCO World Heritage sites: -

- Mohenjo-Daro
- Taxila.
- Rohtas Fort
- Lahore Fort and Shalimar Gardens.
- Takht-i-Bahi and Sahr-i-Bahlol
- Thatta's Historic Monuments.

⁶ (<https://www.dawn.com/news/1403800>)

The current and projected situation of travel & tourism contribution to GDP, overall job creation and investments in tourism sector is tabulated as below: -

TRAVEL & TOURISM'S DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO GDP		2017 (US\$ Bn)		TRAVEL & TOURISM'S TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TO GDP		2017 (US\$ Bn)
2	China	402.3		2	China	1349.3
8	India	91.3		7	India	234.0
12	Thailand	42.2		15	Thailand	95.0
	World Average	21.5			World Average	62.9
22	Indonesia	19.4		23	Indonesia	58.9
	South Asia Average	18.7			South Asia Average	46.9
27	Malaysia	15.2		28	Malaysia	41.9
43	Pakistan	8.8		42	Pakistan	22.3
55	Bangladesh	5.3		61	Bangladesh	10.6
59	Sri lanka	4.5		62	Sri lanka	9.9
83	Myanmar	2.0		87	Myanmar	4.9
110	Nepal	1.0		120	Nepal	1.9
TRAVEL & TOURISM'S DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT		2017 (US\$ Bn)		TRAVEL & TOURISM'S DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT		2017 (US\$ Bn)
1	China	28250.0		1	China	79900.0
2	India	26148.1		2	India	41622.5
	South Asia Average	4959.3			Indonesia	12241.6
4	Indonesia	4585.1		4	South Asia Average	8321.9
10	Thailand	2336.6		10	Thailand	5834.0
12	Pakistan	1492.8		12	Pakistan	3894.0
17	Bangladesh	1178.4		17	Bangladesh	2432.0
	World Average	937.5			World Average	2341.0
25	Malaysia	669.8		25	Malaysia	1704.5
29	Myanmar	569.8		29	Myanmar	1282.4
34	Bangladesh	497.7		34	Nepal	1027.1
40	Nepal	404.2		40	Sri Lanka	875.1

TRAVEL & TOURISM INVESTMENT		2017 (US\$ Bn)		VISITOR EXPORTS		2017 (US\$ Bn)
2	China	154.7		2	China	125.3
3	India	41.6		4	Thailand	59.6
16	Indonesia	12.0		14	India	27.3
	South Asia Average	8.0		23	Malaysia	18.5
20	Thailand	7.7		27	Indonesia	14.4
29	Malaysia	5.3			World Average	8.1
	World Average	4.8			South Asia Average	6.1
37	Pakistan	3.9		56	Srilanka	4.7
66	Bangladesh	1.0		78	Myanmar	2.4
69	Srilanka	0.9		108	Pakistan	0.9
106	Myanmar	0.3		120	Nepal	0.7
128	Nepal	0.2		150	Bangladesh	0.2

TRAVEL & TOURISM'S DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO GDP		2018 % GROWTH		TRAVEL & TOURISM'S TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TO GDP		2018 % GROWTH
9	Thailand	7.8		6	India	7.5
10	India	7.6		9	Thailand	7.4
	South Asia Average	7.2			South Asia Average	7.2
19	China	6.9		21	China	6.6
36	Bangladesh	6.1		23	Bangladesh	6.4
38	Pakistan	5.9		38	Pakistan	5.8
53	Indonesia	5.2		45	Indonesia	5.4
54	Myanmar	5.2		47	Myanmar	5.4
58	Sri Lanka	5.1		49	Nepal	5.2
63	Nepal	4.9		56	Sri Lanka	5.1
	World	4.0		79	Malaysia	4.3
88	Malaysia	3.9			World	4.0

TRAVEL & TOURISM'S DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT		2018 % GROWTH		TRAVEL & TOURISM'S TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT		2018 % GROWTH
21	Thailand	5.2		14	Thailand	5.5
44	Nepal	3.9		29	Nepal	4.2
49	Sri Lanka	3.7		66	China	3.2
64	Bangladesh	3.0		70	India	3.1
	South Asia Average	2.8			World	3.0
75	India	2.8			South Asia Average	3.0
76	Pakistan	2.8		79	Pakistan	2.6
	World	2.4		82	Sri Lanka	2.6
96	Myanmar	2.2		88	Bangladesh	2.5
108	Indonesia	1.8		102	Indonesia	2.0
123	China	1.5		117	Malaysia	1.5
132	Malaysia	1.0		152	Myanmar	0.0
TRAVEL & TOURISM INVESTMENT		2018 % GROWTH		VISITOR EXPORTS		2018 % GROWTH
15	Bangladesh	8.0		10	Thailand	8.9
20	Nepal	7.6		11	India	8.8
34	India	6.7			South Asia Average	7.7
35	Indonesia	6.6		50	Bangladesh	6.3
	South Asia Average	6.6		62	Nepal	5.3
53	China	6.2		63	Myanmar	5.3
78	Thailand	5.2		69	Sri Lanka	5.1
80	Pakistan	5.2		80	Pakistan	4.7
	World Average	4.8			World Average	3.9
88	Myanmar	4.6		10 3	Indonesia	3.8
10 2	Sri Lanka	4.3		12 4	Malaysia	3.1
11 3	Malaysia	3.9		17 0	China	0.5

Source: (WTTC Country League Table Rankings, 2018)

Though performance of Travel & Tourism remained much below the World and South Asian averages because of multiple factors, yet the prospects of tourism are very bright because Pakistan was declared World's top travel destination for 2018 by the British Backpacker Society. No doubt it described Pakistan as "one of the friendliest countries on earth, with significant diversity of tourist attraction and especially mountain scenery that is beyond anyone's wildest imagination"⁷. Pakistani Northern areas are acclaimed to be a mountaineer's

⁷<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/02/22/boosting-pakistans-tourism-industry/>

paradise. It's also called 'The Jewel of Pakistan' because the region possesses certain highest peaks, vast quantum of glaciers and magnificent lakes.

There are numerous tourism opportunities starting from Khunjrab Pass to Gawadar along CPEC. Pakistan has the mountain ranges that are among the highest in the World. Besides K2, four mountain peaks are above 8,000 meters and 50+ peaks pass 7,000 meters. Last year the area saw an influx of nearly two and a half million tourists (local and international). CPEC can help Pakistan and China's tourism industry to collaborate and optimize the advantages. A bus is already operating between Xinjiang and Gilgit-Baltistan and another has just started from Lahore. Later this connectivity can be extended to other cities of both countries.

Yema Group's leader, Mr. Qiang lately announced ongoing consultations with Pakistani companies on developing joint tourism products. Ever since the dramatic reforms and increasingly opening up of Chinese economy, rising number of business opportunities are being developed. Chinese surveys indicate that tourism will see a considerable growth due to CPEC. This is a huge market share, out of which maximum can be captured by providing right environment, policies and aggressive branding/marketing.

Instead of reinventing the wheel we can benefit from the successful models of Tourism development adopted by the countries that best suits our environment and "Malaysian Model of Travel and Tourism Development" is one such example. The analysis of Malaysian Model of Tourism Development⁸ reveals that Malaysia followed the comprehensive planning approach for the development of tourism and successive governments played predominant role in making their tourism industry second highest (after manufacturing) contributor to their GDP. According to Bhuiyan (2013), Malaysian authorities have played a vital part in enacting and implementation of a variety of laws by furnishing suitable institutional and legal structure to guarantee sustainable tourism and promoting regional integration.

Malaysia adopted graduated and integrated development plans, starting from easy to challenging development goals. For case in point, initial Malaysian Plans (MP) pivoted on cultural heritage and picturesque nature requiring little investment. With the strengthening of economy, private-sector emboldened and augmented foreign direct investment. Tourism products requiring monetary and directorial efforts were introduced (termed as seventh and eighth MPs). Ninth and Tenth MPs tourism focal point shifted to recreational, health, Luxury and business tourism. Through Visit Malaysia campaign in 1990, tourism volume and revenue generated were boosted. Tourism Satisfaction surveys in Malaysia has discovered that the primary variables for drawing in the tourists are:

Scenic Landscape

⁸<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262105663>

- Cultural depth
- Quality and variety of cuisine
- Service quality
- Local hospitality
- Political solidity
- Developed infrastructure

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of CPEC in the development and success of tourism sector in Pakistan can be substantiated by utilizing the historical experiences.

Conclusion. With the practical manifestation of above recommendations, it is expected that Pakistan stands excellent chances of achieving break through and optimize its right full potential of tourism. The long-term sustainable tourism objectives can be achieved through a clear vision, better strategy and secure environment and well-developed communication/ tourism infrastructure. The continuous improvement and high-quality services coupled with a strong marketing of the opportunities and destinations can help Pakistan improve its tourism competitive index. Government and public private partnership can play an important role in the development of the tourism sector locally, regionally as well as internationally.

Policy Guidelines, Structural and Monitoring Role of Government.

The Government representatives involved in the development of tourism sector must ensure: (1) Strategic plans for the promotion of tourism are holistic, sustainable and realistic made through engagement with all stakeholders as adopted by Dubai & Malaysia Tourism Development Authorities, (2) Restructuring of tourism sector by re-assessment of resources and limitations. (3) Placement of competent and skilled management in place, implementing of cutting-edge information systems and liaisons with foreign tourism companies and authorities. (4) Implementation of a solid control framework to assess and manage the viable strategies, through a dependable arrangement of correspondence for guaranteeing and coordination among all segments. (5) Promotion of local tourism through different channels of media and conducting research on development of sustainable tourism. Besides traditional means, there must be an exclusive media and a research center specialized in the sustainable tourism to promote and market tourist attractions in Pakistan at all three tiers; local, regional and across the globe, through a reliable web portal rich in relevant information.

Focusing Local, Regional and International Markets. There is a need to revisit present approach and target the local market followed by expatriate Pakistanis and then the international market. Utilizing surveys and tourist data collection systems, necessary strategies can be cultivated.

Infrastructural Development. Infrastructure has a direct correlation to tourism's success. Dubai and Malaysia are a case in point, the heavy investments in local tourism industry's infrastructure, control systems for assurance of international standards of quality and ease of monetary transactions

are good indicators for success. Collaboration with international travel associations and investments by investors in tourist industry infrastructure are necessary to boost the industry. Since quality of tourism is also augmented by development of information technology therefore, communication infrastructure, easy access to technology and connectivity are important factors in this regard that need to be harnessed.

Differentiations and Diversification of Product. In this age of hybridism, it is imperative to have a diverse array of tourism products that can pull in new tourists. Products can be customized as per need of the visitor's providing flexibility and assurance of service quality. Seasonal, sports-based, festivals, culinary and business-oriented products are but a few avenues to be explored.

Safety and Security. A secure destination is the main prerequisite, while selecting a travel destination. Safety and security is the responsibility of the state, while tourism sector builds the perception through timely provision of relevant information, qualified and competent staff, complain resolution centers, health facilities and emergency assistance teams etc. It is therefore imperative to build conducive environment by improving security paradigm and strategize removing negative perceptions prevalent among international customers.

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