

**Impact of Percieved Pricing and Quality of Tourist’s Satisfaction under the  
Moderation of Tourist’s Advocacy for Economic Viability**



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**Department of Business Studies**

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# Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled: **"Impact of Perceived Pricing and Quality of Tourist's Satisfaction under the Moderation of Tourist Advocacy for Economic Viability"** submitted by Mr. Zafar Abbas is accepted in its present form by the Department of Business Studies, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad as satisfying the requirements for partial fulfillment of the degree of **Master of Philosophy in Business Economics**.

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## Dedication

This work is dedicated to my caring teachers and family.

## **Acknowledgement**

Paying my humble gratitude for all these to Almighty Allah who has been so kind in conferring His blessings upon me and provides me the energy, courage, quest and sanity to discharge over responsibility and to successfully accomplish my task and enabled me to complete this thesis.

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**Zafar Abbas**

## DECLARATION

I, Zafar Abbas, MPhil research scholar in the subject of Business Economics, hereby declare that the matter printed in this study is my own work and has not been printed or submitted as research work or dissertation in any form in any university in Pakistan or abroad.

**Zafar Abbas**

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## **Abbreviations**

T&T Travel and tourism

F&B Food and beverages

GDP Gross domestic product

WTO World tourism organization

GB Gilgit Baltistan

K2 Karakorum 2

PTDC Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation

## **ABSTRACT**

This empirical research investigates the economic viability of tourism, based on tourist advocacy and satisfaction predicted by destination price and quality. The target of current study meant to analyze the perceptual impact of destination quality and price on tourist satisfaction under the moderating role of tourist advocacy across tourists. Data collection was conducted through adopted and adapted questionnaires under non- probability convenient sampling technique from domestic tourists visiting Gilgit-Baltistan. Sample size was 200 questionnaires and were fully responded. SPSS was used to analyze the response and results showed that perceived pricing and quality are positively associated with tourist satisfaction. Moreover, tourist advocacy does not moderate the association between perceived quality/price and the tourist satisfaction in the target area. Thus, the theoretical and practical implications were made for policy makers in public and private tourism sector and the tourists based on the findings of this study and recommendations were made accordingly for the future researchers.

### **Key words**

Perceived pricing, Perceived quality, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourist Advocacy, Domestic Tourist

## Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Tourism is a huge multinational enterprise which is of the central importance to the economies of a number of countries (Pearce, 1982). Tourism and hospitality being business of the people and for the people, the encounter between tourists and service providers is very significant characteristics of the tourism industry (Haiyan Song, 2012). Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world and it plays a vital role in the development of economy of any society or a country (Sharpley, 2002). In this era of globalization places especially third world countries are striving to develop and progress their economies through tourism sector as the 10.2% (\$7.6 trillion) (UNWTO, 2017) share of world GDP is contributed by tourism. Tourism is considered as a tool to promote world peace, reduce poverty level, and develop human resource and culture.

Pakistan as south Asian nation has been one of the most attractive tourist destinations for international tourists. But in Pakistan's economy the GDP share of tourism is 2.7% (WTTC, 2017). Pakistan is amongst top ten tourist destination but on world tourism index Pakistan is ranked at 124 out of 136 countries (World Tourism Index, 2018). The tourism richness of Pakistan can be observed by the facts that it has five highest peaks of 8000 feet high, natural parks and uniqueness of four seasons, coastal belt for beach tourism, archeological sites of Mohan Jodaro and Harappa and religious tourism sites. Further Pakistan is replete with natural beauties from climatic essence and cultural heritage to important geographical location. Pakistan is one of the world's nations hosting millions of tourists which provide an opportunity for the government to turn tourism into an organized industry through proper planning and execution of plans. Tourism sector can be used as an alternate job market to deal with the higher rate of unemployment in the country. But unfortunately with all above mentioned tourism resource the country has failed to secure a higher rank in world tourism index. Forbes magazine in its report on world's top adventure and travel destinations ranked Pakistan on the 10<sup>th</sup> position (Abel, 2018). Abel Ann (2018) in her article describes the country as one of the friendliest tourist destinations on the world map, with its mountainy sceneries that is beyond imagination and incompatible (Abel, 2018).

Gilgit-Baltistan serves Pakistan as it's the tourism capital (Abel, 2018), which is also gate way to CPEC. Gilgit-Baltistan hosts five of the highest peaks of the world, including the

second highest peak K2, Naga Parbat (The killer mountain) and Rakaposhi. Gilgit- Baltistan is the place on earth that is rich in landscape, lakes, glaciers, natural parks (Deosai Natural Park and Khunjarab Natural Park) and beautiful valleys. Gilgit Baltistan beyond its natural beauty has beautiful landmarks inspiring culture, people and its history. Deosai plains, Naltar, Rama, Fairy Meadows, Hushe valley and Rama valley are wonderful places to visit (Abel, 2018). A greater number of tourists visit Gilgit Baltistan annually domestic as well as international. In 2018 more than two million domestic tourists visited the area. According to Shafa (2017) around 2 Million tourists visited Gilgit Baltistan in 2017. During the last eleven months of 2017 domestic tourists marked a huge growth and the number has risen as compared to 0.5 Million tourists during corresponding period of the last year. This tourism hype injected Rs.300 Million cash inflow revenue to the local economy. The government is expecting 2.5 Million domestic visitors in 2018 (Shafa, 2017) .

Gilgit- Baltistan is consisted of ten districts under its territorial definition and is located in the extreme north of Pakistan geographically. Internationally it borders with Afghanistan in the west, China in the north, India in the east while Tajikistan through Wakhan Strip in North West. Nationally it is connected to Azad Kashmir in the east, Chitral to the Southwest and Indus Kohistan of KP province to the south. Its area is about 729696 Sq. Km with human population of 2.5 million. The annual population growth rate is 2.56%. Visitors call Gilgit-Baltistan a real peerless pinnacle of beauty, hospitality and adventure.

This study means to establish a unique mechanism for promotion of tourism by linking tourist advocacy to tourist satisfaction and destination service quality and prices offered by hospitality sector. The more tourist advocacy means the more socio-economic development of developing regions like Gilgit-Baltistan. Tourism is the sole industry which is playing its crucial role for the development of the area economically. Tourist advocacy can be used as a tool to win over competitors in this cut throat competitive industry. According to Forbes (Abel, 2018) Magazine Gilgit Baltistan is one of the 10 coolest places in the world to visit in 2019 positioning Pakistan in the list of famous tourist places' ranking of the world. Figure 1 shows the geographic significance of GB.

## Map of Gilgit-Baltistan



**Figure1**

According to Forbes (Abel, 2018) valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan like Astore, Hunza, Shigar and Khaplu are most beautiful places. These destinations offer the unparalleled scenery that which compels one to gaze out from the window of the one's vehicle by unblinking eyes, so that one would not miss the especial moments of the majestic landscape could offer. Further the stunning view of an unending series of suspension bridges that join the banks of the surging rivers pounded with snow melt water. In addition to these scenic the warm welcoming the highly friendly people make the visitor experience unforgettable. The centuries of history, the Atta-Abad Lake, the combination greenery to granite, the walks through the fruit orchards along hand cut water channels, the hundreds of snow covered blazing Peaks and much more make the grand adventure awaiting. (Abel, 2018)

The well managed tourism industry can exploit this richness of the area's beauty economically for the development of the area, people and the industry. According to Uysal and Yoon (2005) managers of the tourist destination need to establish a higher level of tourist satisfaction to develop an optimistic post purchase behavior of tourists for the sustaining and enhanced level of the destination competitiveness. At present tourism is a highly competitive industry and it is

deemed as the driving force for the regional and social development. Successful tourism industry management can increase employment, income and government revenues. In tourist destination management to provide high service quality to enhance the satisfaction of the tourists has become a vital concern for the sustainable tourism development (Liu & L.C, 2010).

The problems and challenges of tourism industry of Gilgit-Baltistan are innumerable which are hugely impacting this sector. Among these problems are accessibility issue, water and electricity shortage. Water and electricity availability is too short to the tourism industry in GB though there are plenty of water and electricity resources are available naturally which is adversely affecting the industry especially in winter. The government is required to prioritize water and electricity efficiency across the province through best practiced technologies for water conservation particularly in water scarce areas.

It is pertinent to educate about appropriate water behavior, global water quality and scarcity issue to avoid the irresponsible use of water and negative implications of irresponsible behavior.

Further, educating government officials and employees of the industry about dangers and hazards of the chemicals and materials which can be detrimental to water quality if disposed improperly, which is also an important aspect to be addressed.

Integrated efforts of all stakeholders such as government, community, tourism industry, travel and tour operators to improving water and electricity governance and starting new projects to meet the deficiency of water and electricity shortage is crucial.

It is also suggested that operational electricity and water needs can be met by allocating revenues of tourism to projects under public private partnership. There are uncountable water resources which offer the opportunity of hydel power projects to meet electricity short fall.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Tourism and hospitality industry needs to adopt service standards those of recognized internationally to ensure high levels of service quality to earn high economic profits (Haiyan Song, 2012). This research addresses both practical and theoretical dimensions of the tourism sector. Gilgit-Baltistan being the tourism capital is contributing to Pakistan's economy and employment sector, but there exists no promotional campaigning of this heaven like area and

using tourist advocacy is the only promotional tool so far. This study identified that better tourist advocacy may accelerate the promotion of the tourism in the area. Tourist advocacy may backfire if the destination quality and price do not meet the expectations of the tourists. Therefore, these economic benefits can be further accelerated if proper channels are established for the promotion of the region. This study identified that better tourist advocacy will accelerate the promotion of the tourism industry in the target area of research, in a condition where the services provided by tourism sector are not competitive and require research input to make them competitive. Therefore this study will serve as a model to fill the service quality gap.

This study is aimed at exploring the impact of perceived pricing and perceived quality and its consequences related to tourist satisfaction for economic viability.

### **1.3 Research Gap**

This study uses tourist advocacy as moderator between independent variables (perceived quality and perceived pricing) and the dependent variable (tourist satisfaction) due to its critical role for the promotion of tourism.

According Tarn in previous studies regarding consumer satisfaction price is one the neglected but very important variable (Tarn, 1999). Further Cole, Crompton and Willson have recommended the future inquiry on the impact of the service quality on tourist satisfaction in the area of research on future behavioral intentions (2002).

This study is unique in its kind as it uses tourist advocacy as moderator while measuring the impact of quality and price on tourist satisfaction. No such study is conducted so far which highlights the importance of using tourist advocacy for the promotion of tourism and combining the Perceived pricing, tourist advocacy and tourist satisfaction in a single mechanical relationship which makes this study unique one. Consequently this study is also an effort to filling the research gap in tourism literature by investigating the relationship among quality, price and satisfaction with tourist future intentions/advocacy so that effective and efficient promotional mechanism that uses tourist advocacy as moderator. Therefore this study would be a valuable contribution to the tourism literature. The above discussion leads us to the following

research questions and objectives by narrowing down the area of interest, which guide the analysis of this study.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

On the basis of the stated problems/research gap, this study is indented at finding answers to the following questions:

1. Does perceived pricing and quality affect tourist satisfaction?
2. Does tourist satisfaction lead to economic viability?
3. Does tourist advocacy moderate the relationship between perceived pricing/ quality and tourist satisfaction?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study contains the following research objectives:

1. To reveal the influence of perceived quality and price on tourist satisfaction
2. To explore the relationship between tourist advocacy and perceived quality and price.
3. To find out whether tourist advocacy moderates the relationship between perceived pricing/quality and the tourist satisfaction

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

Tourist satisfaction has been one of the important academic research topics for at least last four and half decades (Xia Wang, 2009). This study explores the antecedents (perceived pricing and perceived quality) and consequences (tourist advocacy) of tourist satisfaction. This study will enable host community to improving tourism related services and quality by being more informed about the current hospitality issues. This study will help owners, executives and managers of tourism industry of GB to being more competitive and will serve as service quality model to fill the gap by offering a measurement tool that could be used across the tourism industry. The study will increase the importance of tourist advocacy as a promotional instrument.

According to UNWTO (2017) in most countries around the world travel and tourism is an important economic activity that brings direct economic impact and the tourism industry has

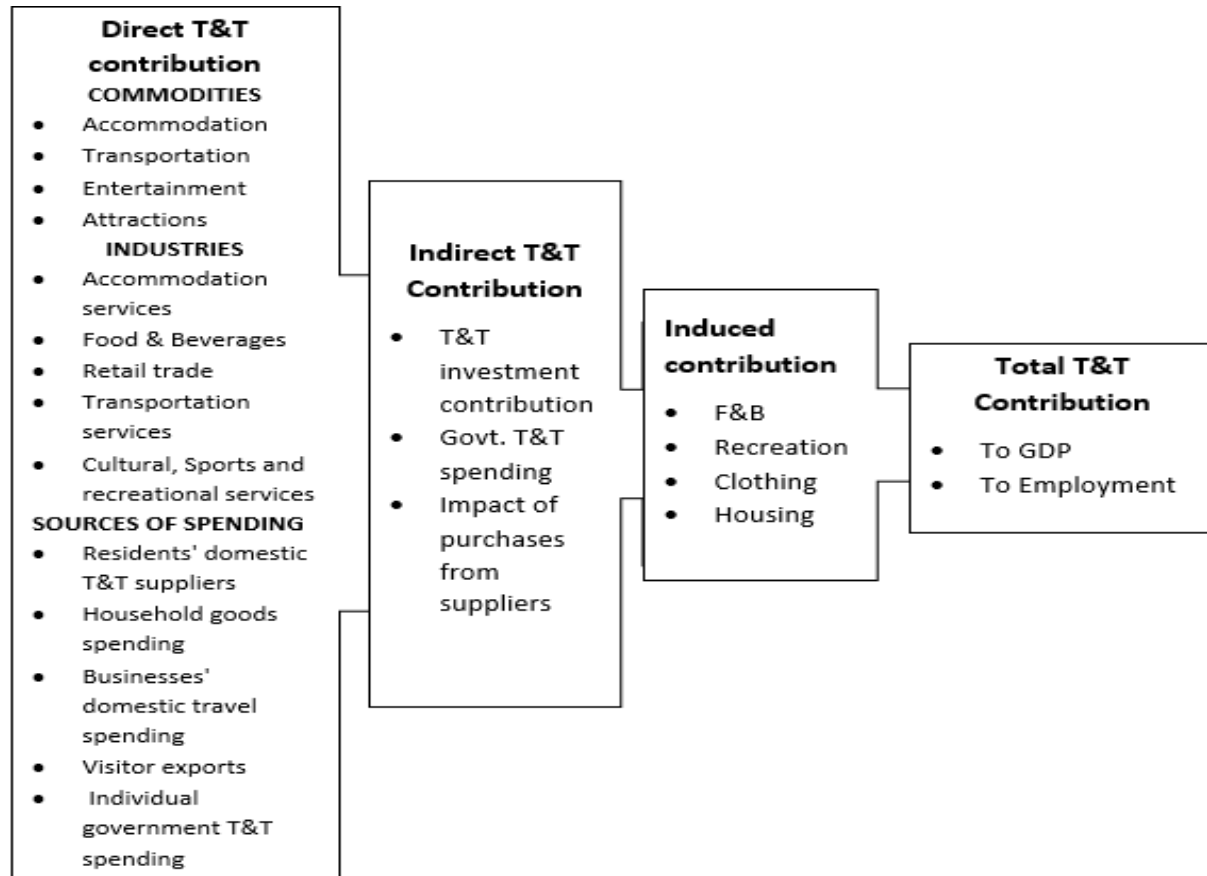


significant indirect and induced impacts as well. This study will highlight the potential of Gilgit Baltistan as a strategic contributor to the economy and GDP of Pakistan as it serves as tourism capital (Abel, 2018) of the country. The model of this study will provide a mechanism to improve, promote and sustain the tourism development for the socio-economic development of Gilgit- Baltistan. This study also is also intended to contribute to policy and conceptual formation by reckoning the determinants of the tourist satisfaction and tourist advocacy.

Utilization of tourist psychological aspects to make quality of destination improved and competitive. Butler's Tourism Destination Lifecycle Model suggests that all tourist destinations experience same stages of development such as "exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline and/or rejuvenation". Delivery of this message the relevant stakeholders may help them improve their services. According Zhang Inbakaran and Jackson (2006) it is fundamental that the successful tourism development is based on the harmonious and the balanced relationship between tourists, the people of the destination they encounter the people of the destination they encounter and the companies and businesses delivering tourism services.

Figure No.2 below better explains the contribution of tourism to the economy of any country or society.

Figure No.2 (UNWTO)



This study will help tourism relevant departments to formulate policies accordingly by providing a baseline. It will also provide the idea of how tourism sector may contribute to overall economic sector of the province and the country. According to World Tourism Organization tourism industry impact comprises of direct as well as indirect and induced impacts (2017). The sustainable development impact on community level is linked with the country poverty reduction goals. Particularly goals relating to entrepreneurship and small enterprises which ultimately empower lesser privileged segment especially youth and women.

### Underpinning Theories

There are several economic and consumer theories which are relevant to this study and few of them are being included in this study.

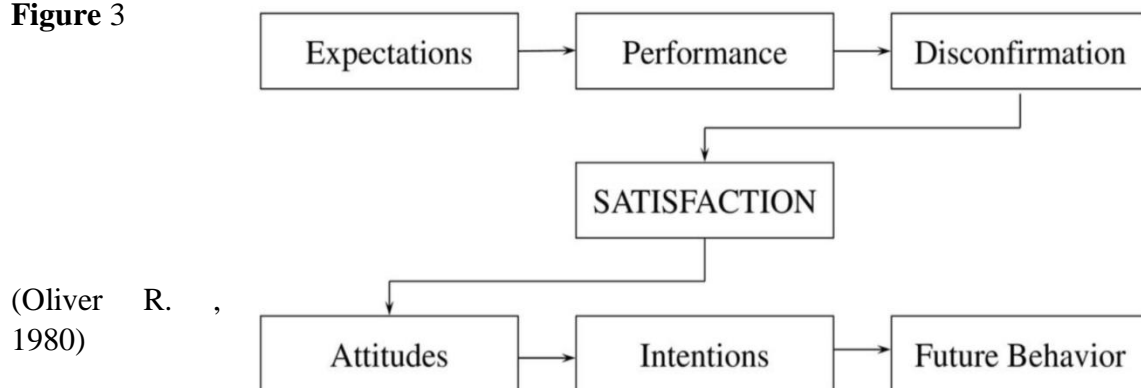
## Economic Theory of Price

As for economic theory of price is concerned, it states that price is supposed to impact choice of the buyer as price is the prime indicator of purchasing cost. The theory assumes that the buyer has perfect knowledge of prices and the buyer desires utility or satisfaction from comparable product substitutes. Within the given budget limit the buyer wants to maximize the satisfaction by choosing a suitable product mix. Nevertheless, to the level the buyer is conscious of the prices that he/she pays, influence the way prices are perceived and the role of price in buyer's choice (Monroe, 1973).

## Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory by Richard L Oliver

Expectancy theory is also included in this study as it encompasses all aspects regarding tourist perception of post purchase behavior. In this study the moderator tourist advocacy itself is a post purchase behavior. According to this theory the consumer satisfaction is directly influenced by perceived performance and disconfirmation beliefs while is indirectly influenced by both expectations and perceived performance by the means of mediational relationship which passes through the disconfirmation construct. Figure 4 shows Oliver's model.

**Figure 3**



According to this theory when the services and products offered by host destination will be more tourist oriented in terms of price and quality there will be greater satisfaction. The greater level of tourist satisfaction will lead to more of tourist advocacy. In this way greater tourist advocacy will result in more economic benefits to the host community.

## **Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Under this part of the of this study, we will define the variables of the model of the study, i.e. perceived quality, perceived pricing, tourist advocacy and tourist satisfaction, followed by the hypothesized relationships between independent and dependent variables and the role of moderating variable in the light of the available literature. Finally theoretical framework will be presented accordingly.

The literature and research on tourism is a mixture of vast range of issues and ideas. Geographers, psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists have contributed to tourism literature. Tourism is a huge multinational enterprise which is of the central importance to the economies of a number of countries. (Pearce, 1982)

### **2.1 Definitions of variables of the study**

#### **2.1.1 Perceived quality**

In consumer literature several definitions of quality are available. Perceived quality refers to overall cleanliness of the destination, easy access to the destination, historical attractions, quality of the accommodation, opportunities for rest, personal safety and security, an unspoiled nature, offer of local cuisine and diversity of cultural and historical attractions (Zabkar, Brencic, & Dmitrovic, 2010). Both academicians and practitioners use the term service quality, nevertheless, the service quality is not defined in such a way that it could guide management decisions. Frequently service quality is used as a variable itself instead of portraying it as a function of a range of resources and activities (Gronroos, 1984). Quality may be divided into two types the subjective quality and the objective quality. Objective quality is defined as, "what" a consumer gets against what(price) he/she pays for, in order to get utility while perceived quality is the function of objective quality or the surplus over the expected and actual utility. In other words perceived quality is the utility surplus.

According Zeithmal (1988), quality refers to excellence or superiority of certain service or product over another of its kind, in its broader sense. Therefore, perceived quality may be defined as the judgement of the consumer about a product's overall superiority or excellence as compared to the available products or substitutes. It is pertinent to mention that objective

or actual quality if different from that of perceived quality as perceived quality is a higher level abstraction rather than a specific attribute of a service or a product. According to Zeithaml, in global assessment of quality the perceived quality in some cases resembles the attitude or judgement usually performed within the evoked set of behaviors (1988).

### **2.1.2 Perceived pricing**

Price is the predictor of purchase intention (Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany , 1992).According to Zeithaml (1988) price from the consumer's perspective is what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product or service. Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany argue that Price is the most influential determinant of customer decision (1992). They say Price actually predicts the purchase intention of the customer (Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany , 1992). So it is reflected in case of price level at tourist destination which not only appealing when they are low and repealing as well when they are unnecessarily high due to demand and supply relationship. Further when, what is paid is perceived less than expected utility the tourist satisfaction will be negative. Therefore the relationship between perceived pricing the tourist satisfaction is bidimensional and goes positive as well as negative. There is difference between objective and perceived nature of price as suggested in consumer research.

Economic theory says price influences buyer's choice as an indicator of cost of purchase. It is assumed that the buyer always has a perfect information about prices and wants satisfaction from comparable product substitutes that he or she can determine a product mix that maximizes his satisfaction within the given budget limits. However consciousness of the prices always influences the way price is perceived and the role of price in buyer's choice (Monroe, 1973).

### **2.1.3 Tourist Advocacy**

Tourist advocacy is the positive consequence of tourist satisfaction (Xia Wang, 2009). Tourist Advocacy is the behavioral response of tourists against the quality of services they experience during their visit to the tourist destinations. Zeithmal, Berry and Parasurman say that the behavioral response of the customer is linked to the service quality and if the

customer is satisfied the retention of customer is possible. At the cumulative level as the other research has indicated that the evidence of service quality impact on consumers' behavioral responses should be detectable. The research offers a conceptual phenomenon that the impact of service quality on particular behaviors of the customers signal that whether they remain consistent with the defect from a service providing entity. Multi company empirical study examination shows the evidence of relationship between concerning customers' behavioral intentions how they are influenced by service quality (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Therefore tourist advocacy is quite natural when the customers are content with the service quality offered by the destination. Tourist advocacy helps to create and develop a stream of new customers and retain an advantageous free publicity and goodwill for tourist destination (Athula, 2015).

Tourist satisfaction research about tourist destinations reveal that a great level of satisfaction encourages visitors to revisit the destination and further, the satisfied ones tell their relatives and friends providing a free advocacy and helping promote an increased level of tourist inflow to the destination (S, K, & K, 2000).

#### **2.1.4 Tourist Satisfaction**

In promotion and marketing of tourism services and products measuring tourist satisfaction plays an important role (Fang Meng, 2008). Satisfaction is a psychological outcome (Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007) derived from experience. According Tribe and Snaith tourists' satisfaction of the destination is to the level at which the tourists of a particular destination assess the attributes of that destination exceed their expectations for those attributes. (Tribe & Snaith, 1998). Tourist satisfaction means positive post purchase/visit behavior. For the improvement and sustaining the destination competitiveness the destination managers should establish a high level of tourist satisfaction index with the purpose of post visit positive behavior of the tourists (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Tourist motivation is the forerunner of the Tourist satisfaction based on services purchased by the tourists and it is ultimately reflected in tourist advocacy (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Satisfaction further may be explained as the perceived difference between actual performance and the expectations. When performance level fails to touch the minimum level of expectations, dissatisfaction occurs (Ranjbarian & Pool, 2015).

Satisfaction measures that how products and services supplied by the destination come across or exceed the tourist expectations. Customer satisfaction is also considered as a vital performance indicator of a business operation. In a competitive tourism business environment customer satisfaction is deemed as the chief differentiator and satisfaction is the key element of any business (Athula, 2015). The service sectors of tourism can be divided into six components (i.e., immigration and transportation services, attractions, hotels, shops and restaurants) which a tourist encounters and experiences (Haiyan Song, 2012).

## **2.2 Relationship between Perceived quality and Tourist Satisfaction**

Researchers like Zakbar, Brencic and Dmitrov argue that visitor perception of the quality of the destination and resulting satisfaction are important for a successful destination management and marketing (2009). The relationships between quality and customer satisfaction has been a much debated issue in the field of tourism business research. A number of parameters/models have been suggested and tested empirically in a wider range of industries and tourism is one of them. It is believed that in tourism high service quality and the resulting and the resulting satisfaction leads to a positive word of mouth referral endorsements, referrals and repeated visits. According Zakbar, Brencic and Dmitrovic, it is common that tourism product providers as well as tourist destination management organizations conduct regular visitor satisfaction surveys (2010).

An effective management and marketing of a tourist destination bases on well understanding of tourists' believe of quality and value of the destination and how it ends in influencing their satisfaction and reinforces their intention to revisit the already experienced destination. It is generally supposed that tourists' perception of quality and value of destination affects their satisfaction gauge, and it is also proved by research that these factors have a positive impact on revisit intention. The findings of various research attempts in this area have been supportive to improving the understanding of the mechanisms that influence tourist behavior resulting in increasing the number of tourists visiting the destination (Ranjbarian & Pool, 2015). Managing the perceived service quality means that the firm has to match the expected service and the perceived service to each other so that consumer satisfaction is achieved (Gronroos, 1984). The perceived quality of tourism services and products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction (Leea, Jeonb, & Kim, 2011).

Eraqi (2006) documented that the quality of consumed services and products greatly affect tourists' satisfaction and vice versa. According to Kotler et.al there are two types of qualities such as product features which boost the customer satisfaction and the freedom from deficiencies which increase customer satisfaction (2010). According to Richard L Oliver, customer's satisfaction is post-consumption evaluative judgement (1980).

Kvist, A .J and Klefsjo argue that service quality begins from the needs of the customer and ends with tourist satisfaction and positive perceptions of service quality (2006). According Kvist both consumer and the service provider have a significant impact on the creation and delivery course of a service therefore service was defined heterogeneous (2006). According to Munhurrun and Seeblaluck perceived quality and perceived value/price and to empirically test the constructs that are likely to influence tourist satisfaction, which in turn affect tourist loyalty (2015)

After studying in detail following hypothesis can be generated that:

**H1: *Perceived quality is positively related to tourist satisfaction.***

### **2.3 Relationship between Perceived pricing and Tourist Satisfaction**

Beardon and his colleague's findings suggest that price discrepancy terms which reflect transaction utility have been found to be significant predictors of purchase intentions and behavior, it seems that the transaction utility itself is a transitory utility source for consumers. For instance, when a consumer enters a market or decides one brand over another the positive transaction utility is perceived often as a bonanza because this utility encourages consumer for transaction. Nonetheless, the choice of the consumer consequently depends on satisfactory tradeoff between price and the utility (Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany , 1992). In the models of reference price internal price reference can typically be estimated from the prices of actual market. Using actual market prices to estimate internal standards of consumer reference price is reasonable given that due to the generally poor price knowledge consumers have exhibited in previous research? The answer to this question is yes on the bases of research. Though prices of internal reference are estimable and obviously affect price perception of consumer, the gains in measuring and using those standards in predicting brand choice for frequently purchased products may not be worth the costs. Reasons why the surrogate price measure may work and implications for the measurement of internal reference-price standards



are considered (Urbany & Dickson, 1991). The data suggests that the strategies of pricing should consider the exterior influence of such travel variables on value perceptions of travelers (Murphy & Pritchard, 1997). Findings of the Oliver suggest that reasonable price is used as an indicator of the acceptable level of sacrifice a consumer is prepared to make to receive the benefits of a tourism experience. While satisfaction occurs when travelers' expectations are matched or exceeded by their perceptions of performance (Oliver, 1980).

According Tribe and Snaith tourists' satisfaction with a destination is the degree to which the tourist of a particular destination assess the attributes of that destination exceed their expectations for those attributes (Tribe & Snaith, 1998). In the light of above literature review for exploring the relationship between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction it is concluded that prices of the destination must meet the level of expectations of the tourist. If they exceed over expected utility there will be negative impact on tourist satisfaction and when the perceived price is below the expected utility of the destination services or products there will be a positive impact of perceived pricing and the satisfaction. Therefore we hypothesize this relationship accordingly covering the both positive and negative aspects. Price as the variable customer's evaluations of service leads to a cognitive judgement of perceived value that has a significant influence on satisfaction, and will end up in post purchase behavior. According Tarn price becomes a significant determinant to contributing to explain the post-purchase behavior of the customer (Tarn, 1999). Customer pays a price and seeks satisfaction by utilizing the product or service. (Monroe, 1973). Perceived quality and perceived value and to empirically test the constructs that are likely to influence tourist satisfaction, which in turn affect tourist loyalty (Munhurrun, Seebaluck , & P, 2015). So the same phenomenon is reflected in the case of tourist behavior as the tourist himself or herself is a consumer of service. Therefore we assume that

***H 2: Perceived pricing is positively related to tourist satisfaction.***

## **2.4 Moderating role of Tourist Advocacy between Perceived quality and Tourist Satisfaction**

Destination service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction are variable of high interest in tourism research as they offer a mechanism to marketers and businesses related to the hospitality industry. These variables have a greater influence on customers' post-purchase

behavior and intention to revisit or repurchase of the service or product (Tarn, 1999). Customer satisfaction is related closely to service quality of the destination (Tarn, 1999).

The consumers' satisfaction is significantly attributed to its ability in predicting post-purchase behavior and advocacy. Further it is a significant determinant of repeat sales, word-of-mouth referral and customer loyalty. Perceived value is posited to be highly associated with service quality and customer satisfaction (Tarn, 1999). A path model is developed and tested that relates customers' perceptions of performance on multiple dimensions to the perceived level of overall quality possessed by the property, satisfaction with the lodging experience, and their willingness to provide positive word-of-mouth referral attitude.

Results indicate that customer's intentions to provide positive word-of-mouth primarily are a function of his or her perceptions of the total quality of the property/service/product, rather than their expressed level of satisfaction with the staying loyal (Getty & Thompson, 1995). Perceived quality with its necessary positive relationship with tourist satisfaction allows behavioral response in form of referring others to visit the destination plays a vital role to bring more economic benefits to the service providers and enabling them to improve their services at higher levels leading to more satisfaction and more advocacies from tourist/customer side. Therefore we suppose that

*H3: Tourist advocacy moderates relationship between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengthens the relationship.*

## **2.5 Moderating role of Tourist Advocacy between Perceived pricing and Tourist Satisfaction**

The price inclusion in customer's evaluation of services directs to a cognitive judgement of perceived value that may have a significant influence on customer satisfaction and is reflected in post purchase behavior of the customer. The inclusion of this variable in the study may contribute to explaining the post purchase behavior (Tarn, 1999). This study has incorporated price in the measure of perceived value expected by customer when he or she intends to trade off. The study concludes that perceived value is correlated with satisfaction. The results after regression analysis and structural equations modeling indicate that perceived value helps in explaining the variation of behavioral intentions. Such results suggest that perceived price is an

important factor in evaluations of customer's satisfaction and post-purchase behavior (Tarn, 1999).

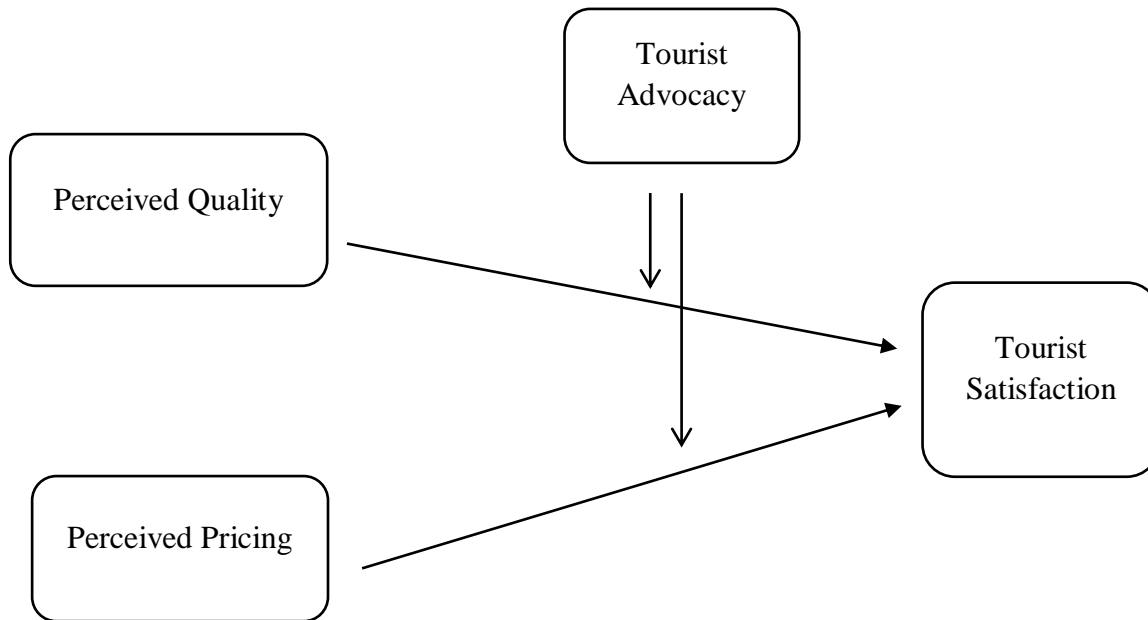
The consumer is normally price conscious to the level she or he is not ready to a higher price for a certain service or a product, and when she or he finds the price over than what is expected and acceptable to them, in such a situation the consumer prefers to refrain from availing the service or purchase of the product. Nevertheless, the price conscious consumer will not be ready to pay for the distinguishing features of a product if the price difference for these features is too huge (K.B & Petroschius, 1981).

So the price is related to consumer satisfaction and his or her response as advocacy bases on this satisfaction. According Monroe value is the ratio of quality to price. (Monroe, 1973)

Therefore we can hypothesize that:

***H4: Tourist advocacy moderates the relationship between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengths the relationship.***

## 2.7 Theoretical framework



“Impact of perceived pricing and quality on tourist’s satisfaction under the moderation of tourist’s advocacy for economic viability”

## **Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY**

This study was carried out to check the influence of perceived pricing and the perceived quality on tourist satisfaction under the moderating role of tourist advocacy. In this section the procedure that follows throughout the study is explained. Methodology is the key factor to analyze the impact and casual effects of the existing variables. In this segment, the methodology adopted to carry out the quantitative research is discussed. It includes research design, population and sampling and data collection technique, instrument adopted and data analysis method.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The current study examined the influence of perceived pricing and perceived quality on Tourist satisfaction. Additionally the moderating role of tourist advocacy between Perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction was investigated. Further moderating role of tourist advocacy between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction was also investigated. All the variables are measured through adopted questionnaire. The data was collected from the tourists staying in public sector hospitality industry (PTDC) and private sector hospitality industry (hotels, guest houses and resorts) in Gilgit-Baltistan. Data was collected after getting consent from hotel management and the respondents. The respondents were approached when they were comfortable to respond during their visit at Gilgit.

#### **3.1.1 Type of Study**

In this study the impact of perceived quality and perceived pricing on tourist satisfaction with the moderating role of tourist advocacy was measured. The respondents had to report on self-reported perception based questionnaire about these variables. The research was quantitative in nature where data collected from primary resources was analyzed. The data was collected from the tourists staying in public sector hospitality industry (PTDC) and private sector hospitality industry (hotels, guest houses and resorts) in Gilgit-Baltistan.

### **3.1.2 Study Setting**

A field survey approach through questionnaire was used for this study which was rendered as the most suitable tool to get opinions from sample. The sample respondents were seasonal domestic tourists visiting Gilgit-Baltistan from all provinces including AJK and ICT.

### **3.1.3 Time Horizon**

The data was cross-sectional in nature and was collected over an estimated time period of three months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

### **3.1.4 Research Interference**

The direct contact approach was adopted to avoid the interference or minimized to at least level since this research was based on field (tourists staying in hotels and guest houses) study. The sample consisted only domestic visitors (visitors from all over Pakistan) to different destinations of Gilgit Baltistan.

Data was collected through a self-administered paper-and-pencil survey questionnaire. All 200 questionnaires were filled by tourists. The convenient sampling technique was used to save time and cost. The academic purpose of research was mentioned in cover letter that the research was aimed at providing clear understanding of the impact of perceived quality and perceived pricing on tourist satisfaction with moderating role of tourist advocacy. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses so that they would feel free to fill in the questionnaire.

### **3.1.5 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for this research was the domestic tourist from all provinces, AJK and ICT visiting different districts of Gilgit- Baltistan.

## **3.2 Population and Sampling**

### **3.2.1 Population**

The Population of this study was comprised of the domestic tourists from all four provinces, AJK and ICT who had stayed in reputed hotels and guest houses of different districts of Gilgit Baltistan.

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

Convenient sampling which is a type of non- probability sampling, was used as to align population characteristics and study objectives. We used convenient sampling because this sampling technique served our research objectives by targeting specific respondents (domestic tourists). Further convenient sampling remained relatively less time taking and had lower financial costs. A cover letter was attached to ensure the confidentiality of the respondent so that they would feel free to respond. The size of the sample was 200 respondents making the study reasonable enough. The response of respondents was collected through self-administered questionnaire.

## **3.3 Measuring Instrument**

Information for this was gathered through self-administered structured questionnaire containing close ended questions. Hypothesis testing was used to determine the impact of perceived quality and perceived pricing on tourist satisfaction with moderating variable. The questionnaires used for the data collections were adopted from previous researches and responses were measured on a 5 point Likert Scale where 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree and 5= Strongly Disagree.

### **3.3.1 Independent Variables**

There were two independent variables of this study which are “Perceived quality and Perceived pricing”.

## **Measures for Perceived Quality**

Perceived quality was assessed with 6 items scale developed by Petrick (2002). The scale included items like “The quality of this destination is outstanding.”, “The quality of this destination is very reliable.”, “The quality of this destination is very dependable.”, “The quality of this destination is very consistent.”, “The quality of this destination is of high standard.”, “The quality of this destination is very favorable.” The five point Likert scale was used in order to measure the items.

## **Measures of Perceived pricing**

Perceived pricing was assessed with 5 items scale developed by Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany (2001). The scale included items like “Price charged by this destination is not very expensive. ”, “Price charged by this destination is very bargaining. ”, “Price charged by this destination is not very high.”, “Price charged by this destination is very reasonable.”, “Price charged by destination is not very pricey.” The 5 point Likert scale was used to measure Perceived pricing ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

### **3.3.2 Dependent Variable (Tourist Satisfaction)**

The dependent variable of this study was tourist satisfaction. Tourist Satisfaction was measured by 3 items scale developed by Yoon and Uysal (2005). The scale included items like, “This destination is better than what I expected.”, “This destination provides much more benefits than costs.”, “This destination is the best among other competing.” All items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

### **3.3.3 Moderating Variable (Tourist Advocacy)**

Tourist Advocacy was assessed using 3 items the scale developed by (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). The scale consisted of items like, “Were you recommended by friends to visit this destination? “Did anybody tell you good things about this destination? “Did your friends and relatives encourage you to visit this destination? “The 5- point Likert scale was used ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.



### **3.3.4 Control Variables**

One way ANOVA was performed to control variations in the dependent variable.

### **3.5 Demographics**

In this study to get the more reliable and accurate results the demographics details of respondents were also collected such as; gender, age, qualification and profession, origin and number of visits. According to (Becker et. al., 2016) demographics are important while running the regression analysis. In current study demographics were controlled in regression analysis. Furthermore the result of ONE-WAY ANOVA shows insignificant effect of these variables on the hypothesized model.

### **3.6 Data analysis procedure**

First of all the data was checked for identification of missing values after make sure that there was no missing value in data in next step data was analyzed for out liar analysis. Second, the reliability analysis had been run to check the reliability of scales. Thirdly the frequency distribution analysis has been run where the demographics details had been checked out. Further the descriptive statistics and correlation and regression analysis had been run to find out the complete results.

## Chapter 4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter the results of collected data are explained. SPSS software was used to analyze the data. Analysis includes the summary of demographics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis. Step wise regression was also performed to check the moderation analysis and interaction term was used.

### 4.1 Demographics of sample

There were seven demographics in this study. The summary of each demographic variable is explained distinctly in following sections. While they were controlled in regression analysis.

**Table 4.1.1 Respondent Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	153	76.5	76.5	76.5
Female	47	23.5	23.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The analysis shows that from population the 76.5% respondents were male and the 23.5% were female respondents from total sample size of 200. This result is in line with the observation during the data collection phase. The target audience was domestic tourists from all four provinces of Pakistan including Azad Kashmir and Islamabad. The majority of audience was male and there was a reasonable number of female tourists who visited Gilgit Baltistan between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

**Table 4.1.2 Respondent Education**

Level/Grade	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Matriculation	18	9.0	9.0	9.0
Intermediate	31	15.5	15.5	24.5
Graduation	65	32.5	32.5	57.0
Masters	78	39.0	39.0	96.0
MPhil	5	2.5	2.5	98.5
PhD	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The qualification distribution of target audience shows that 9.0% respondents were matriculates , there were 15.0 % of the respondents were intermediate, 32.5% were those who had done their graduation , the percentage of respondents with having masters completed was 39.0% and 2.5% respondents were MPhil qualified ,while 1.5% of the tourists was holding their Ph.D.

**Table 4.1.3 Respondent Age**

Age group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-30	72	36.0	36.0	36.0
31-40	50	25.0	25.0	61.0
41-50	50	25.0	25.0	86.0
51-60	13	6.5	6.5	92.5
61-70	8	4.0	4.0	96.5
71-80	2	1.0	1.0	97.5
80 plus	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

In this study from the targeted audience there were 36.0% tourists belong to the age limit of 20 to 30 years, 25.0% of the tourists at 31 to 40 years of age, there were 25.0% tourists visited GB were under 41-50 years of age range and 6.5% tourists were between 51 to 60 years, 4% respondents were between 61 to 70, 1% of them were from 71 to 80 years, while 2.5% respondents were from 80 plus age group.

**Table 4.1.4 Respondent Profession**

Profession	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Teacher/Professor	25	12.5	12.5	12.5
Engineer	19	9.5	9.5	22.0
Doctor	9	4.5	4.5	26.5
Businessman	66	33.0	33.0	59.5
Architect	4	2.0	2.0	61.5
Media Person	4	2.0	2.0	63.5
Other	73	36.5	36.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Results show that from total population of 200 respondents there were 12.5 % tourists belonging to the teaching profession, 9.5% were engineers, 4.5 % were doctors, 33% of the tourists were business persons while 40% respondents belonged to other profession.

**Table 4.1.5 No of visits by respondents**

Visits	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
First	112	56.0	56.0	56.0
Second	35	17.5	17.5	73.5
Third	14	7.0	7.0	80.5
Fourth	17	8.5	8.5	89.0
Other/Above	22	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Results reveal that from the total population of 200 respondents there were 56.0 % respondents who had been for the first time in GB, 17.0% respondents were on their second visit, 7.0% tourists were third time visitors and 19.5% respondents out of 200 were from those who used be visiting Gilgit Baltistan frequently.

**Table 4.1.6 Respective province of respondents**

Province	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Punjab	90	45.0	45.0	45.0
Sindh	51	25.5	25.5	70.5
KPK	33	16.5	16.5	87.0
Baluchistan	2	1.0	1.0	88.0
AJK	5	2.5	2.5	90.5
ICT	19	9.5	9.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The results revealed that 45.0% of the tourist belonged to Province of Punjab which is the biggest populated province of Pakistan. 25% of tourists were from Sindh which comes in second number in terms of population, 16% of the respondents belonged to Khaiber- Pukhtoon- Khuwa, 9.5% tourists came from Islamabad, while 2.5% respondents were from Azad Kashmir. The least percentage (1%) of tourists came from Baluchistan the least populated province amongst four provinces of the country.

## **4.2 Reliability Analysis**

Results of reliability analysis include, are of the variables' instrument's reliability presented in the model. These results show that perceived quality scale has .799 Cronbach alpha reliability, perceived pricing showed .732, tourist satisfaction has .790 and tourist advocacy has .839 Cronbach alpha reliability which are shown in the table 4.2.1 below respectively.

**Table 4.2.1 Reliabilities of the scales**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
Perceived quality	.799
Perceived pricing	.732
Tourist Satisfaction	.790
Tourist Advocacy	.873

### **4.3 Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis was run to see that how the variables are statistically significantly correlated with each other. The results are mentioned in the following table.

**4.3.1 Correlation table**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1.PDQ	1			
2. PDP	.263**	1		
3. TS	.484**	.445 **	1	
4.TA	.440 **	.303 **	.633 **	1

N=200, \*\*p<0.01.

The above table contains the results of correlation among variables studied in this study such as; perceived quality (PDQ), perceived pricing (PDP), tourist satisfaction (TS) and tourist advocacy (TA). Perceived quality is significantly positively correlated with perceived pricing at **.263\*\***, with tourist satisfaction at **.484\*\*** and with tourist advocacy at **.440\*\***. Perceived pricing is



positively correlated with tourist satisfaction at **.445\*\*** and also with tourist advocacy at **.303\*\***. Tourist satisfaction is significantly positively correlated with tourist advocacy at **.633\*\***. All variables are positively correlated with each other at 0.01 levels which are in line with hypothesized model.

#### 4.4 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was run to check the relationship between variables of the propose model. The results of regression analysis are mentioned in proceeding tables.

**Table 4.4.1 Multiple Regression analysis**

**Regression analysis for determinants of Tourist Satisfaction**

Predictors	Tourist Satisfaction		
	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			
<i>Control Variables</i>		.015	
Step 2			
PDQ	.403***		
PDP	.338**		
TA	.105ns	.358	.343

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The Table- 4.4.1 represents ( $\beta = .403$ ) and positive relationship of perceived quality and tourist satisfaction, and ( $\beta = 0.338$ ) perceived pricing has positive relationship to tourist satisfaction. The influence of demographic variables i.e. age, gender, qualification, profession, occupation, number of visits, province of tourist and occupation were controlled and then regression analysis between concerned variables was performed. Furthermore, the value of  $R^2 = 0.358$ , which depicts that the impact of variables on tourist satisfaction is 35% while 65% impact on tourist satisfaction is due to other variables or factors. **Hypothesis 1:** Here  $P=0.000$  i.e.  $P < .001$  which means there is a highly significant relationship between perceived quality and the tourist

satisfaction and leads towards acceptance of the hypothesis 1(H1): *Perceived quality is positively related to Tourist Satisfaction*. **Hypothesis 2:**  $P = 0.000$  i.e.  $p < .001$  for perceived pricing which is highly significant that leads towards acceptance of the hypothesis 2 (H2): *Perceived pricing is positively related to Tourist Satisfaction*. In the table  $\Delta R^2 = 0.343$  depicts that the actual changed in tourist satisfaction is just 34.3% due to independent variables.

#### 4.5 Moderated Regression Analysis

**Table 4.5.1 Hierarchical Moderated Regression Analysis**

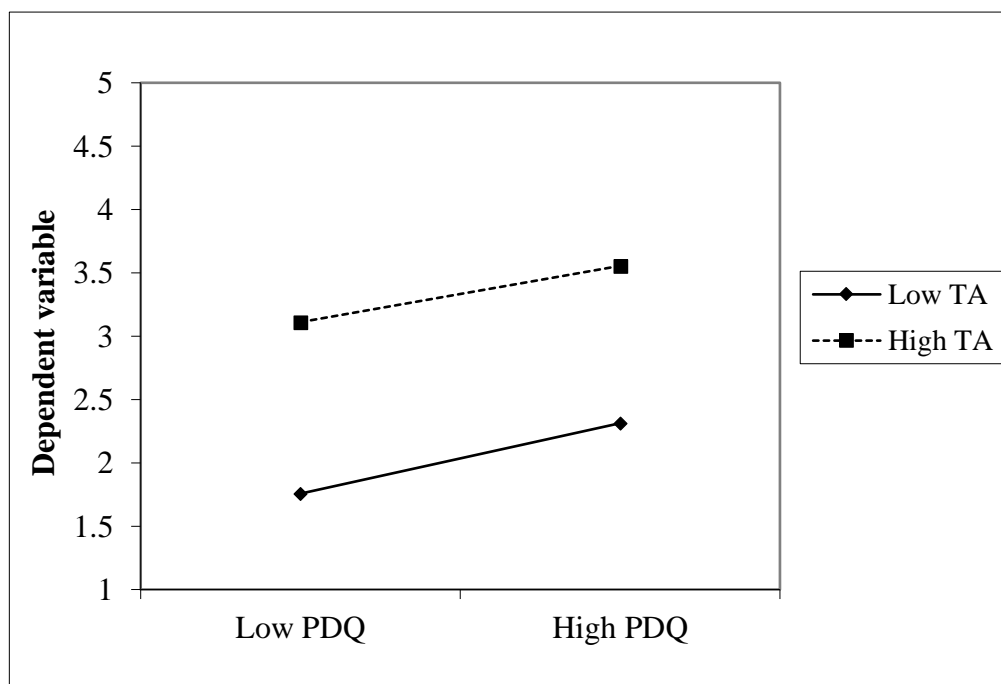
Predicator	Tourist Satisfaction		
	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Moderation			
Step 1			
Control Variables		0.015	
Step2			
PDQ	.396***		
PDP	.326**		
TA	.018ns	.348	.330
Step 3			
PDQ* TA	.012ns		
PDP * TA	.023ns	.351	0.003ns

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The Table-8 represents  $\beta = .018$  for moderator variable i.e. tourist advocacy and  $P = 0.698$  (level of significance); and interaction term between moderator and respective independent variable  $P = 0.713$ . As moderator and both interaction terms are insignificant, thus H3, H4 and H5 are rejected. Further  $\Delta R^2 = 0.003$  which means no actual change is observed in the dependent variable i.e. tourist satisfaction due to moderation of tourist advocacy.

## 4.6 Moderation graph I

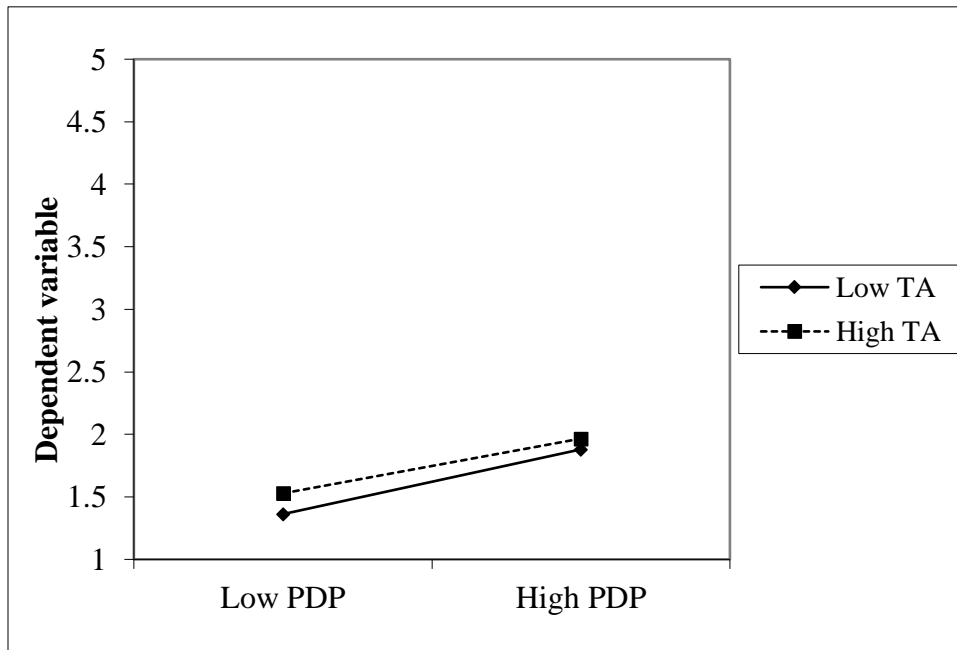
Figure 5



**Interpretation :** The figure No.5 shows that there is no moderating role of tourist advocacy as moderator between independent variable i.e. perceived quality and the dependent variable i.e. tourist satisfaction. Since in the above graph lines do not intersect one another which means no moderating role existed. This may be the result of tourist's higher satisfaction irrespective of the quality due to the naturalness and natural beauty of Gilgit Baltistan that may neutralize the role of advocacy as moderator between perceived quality and the tourist satisfaction.

## Moderation graph II

Figure 6



**Interpretation:** The interaction plot in figure 6 shows that lines do not intersect one another. It means that there is no moderating role of tourist advocacy between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction. Though generally tourist advocacy plays its moderating role between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction but in case of Gilgit Baltistan moderating role of tourist advocacy is insignificant. This may be the result of higher tourist attraction of the area leading to higher satisfaction irrespective of prices or the prices are already below the expectations of the tourists.

## 4.7 Accepted/ Rejected Hypothesis

**Table 4.7.1 Summary of Hypothesis Acceptance/ Rejection**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>H1</b>	<i>Perceived quality is positively related to Tourist Satisfaction.</i>	<b><i>Accepted</i></b>
<b>H2</b>	<i>Perceived pricing is positively related to Tourist Satisfaction.</i>	<b><i>Accepted</i></b>
<b>H3</b>	<i>Tourist Advocacy moderates relationship between Perceived quality and Tourist Satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengthens the relationship.</i>	<b><i>Rejected</i></b>
<b>H4</b>	<i>Tourist advocacy moderates the relationship between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengthens the relationship.</i>	<b><i>Rejected</i></b>

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## **Chapter 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Discussion**

There are many studies conducted on tourist satisfaction and tourist advocacy in past literature with different constructs. But there is relatively little attention is paid to include price as variable and its impact on tourist satisfaction with moderating impact of tourist advocacy. The research on proposed hypothesized model has been conducted in public and private sector hospitality organizations of Gilgit-Baltistan, hosting tourists from all provinces of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir.

After the data processing and analysis discussion for each hypothesis has been undertaken accordingly as following.

#### **5.1.1 Hypothesis: 1**

H1: Perceived quality is positively related to tourist satisfaction.

This (H1) hypothesis is accepted because  $p < .001$  is positively significant.

The regression analysis shows the results of direct effect of perceived quality on tourist satisfaction. And results show that perceived quality is positively related with tourist satisfaction. This result is supported by Gronroos' work where he says that managing the perceived service quality means that the firm has to match the expected service and the perceived service to each other so that consumer satisfaction is achieved (1984). The perceived quality of tourism services and products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction (Leea, Jeonb, & Kim, 2011).

Since customer satisfaction is closely related to service quality of the destination (Tarn, 1999) and the result is supported by Oliver's expectancy disconfirmation theory. This theory encompasses all aspects regarding tourist perception of post purchase behavior. This theory suggests that satisfaction is directly influenced by disconfirmation of beliefs and perceived performance, and is indirectly influenced by both expectations and perceived performance by means of a mediational relationship which passes through the disconfirmation construct.

According to this theory when the services and products offered by host destination will be more tourist oriented in terms of price and quality there will be greater satisfaction. The greater level of tourist satisfaction will lead to more of tourist advocacy. In this way greater tourist advocacy will result in more economic benefits to the host community. The final result of this promotional mechanism under this study serves as a tool of promotion and advertisement. Further the results may be used in policy making or betterment of tourism services by service providers.

Since quality is one the important antecedent of tourist satisfaction, therefore its quality improvement is essential to earn higher revenues and profits for economic wellbeing of Gilgit-Baltistan. This results gives the service providers an opportunity to further furnish their services. Researchers have also provided evidence indicating that overall visitor satisfaction is an accurate measure of the quality of an experience at parks and wilderness areas like GB (Cole, 2001).

Furthermore tourism areas GB are not competitive due to low quality services and need to enhance the quality of services and tourism product to make tourism economically more viable.

### **5.1.2 Hypothesis: 2**

H2: Perceived pricing is positively related to tourist satisfaction.

This (H1) hypothesis is accepted because  $p < .01$  is positively significant.

Regression analysis result shows that perceived pricing is positively related with tourist satisfaction. It means that the reasonable destination price level leads to higher level of tourist satisfaction.

As price is the predictor of purchase intention (Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany , 1992) and the result is supported by economic consumer theory. According economic consumer theory, price is supposed to impact buyer's choice. Price is as an indicator of purchasing cost and the consumer always evaluates the trade- off between price he/she pays and the utility. Assuming the buyer has perfect knowledge regarding prices and desires satisfaction from comparable product substitutes, he or she can decide a product mix that maximizes his satisfaction for a given budget limit. Nevertheless, to the extent buyers are conscious of the prices that they pay, influence the way prices are perceived and the role of price in buyer's choice. (Monroe, 1973). Therefor this theoretical concept can be utilized in tourism industry to evaluate tourist's satisfaction.

These results are further supported by Oliver's theory of expectancy disconfirmation. Expectancy theory encompasses all aspects regarding tourist perception of post purchase behavior. In this study the moderator tourist advocacy itself is a post purchase behavior. This theory suggests that satisfaction is directly influenced by disconfirmation of beliefs and perceived performance of products and services in terms of price. Further satisfaction is indirectly influenced by both expectations and perceived performance of products and services in terms of price and quality when a tourist passes through the disconfirmation construct by means of a mediational or moderational relationship.

According to this theory when the services and products offered by host destination will be more tourist oriented in terms of price and quality there will be greater satisfaction. The greater level of tourist satisfaction will lead to more of tourist advocacy. In this way greater tourist advocacy will result in more economic benefits to the host community.

### **5.1.3 Hypothesis: 3**

H3: Tourist advocacy moderates relationship between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengthens the relationship.

Hypothesis (H3) is rejected because  $p > .05$  is insignificant.

Rejection of hypothesis H3 lead us to the conclusion that tourist advocacy did not moderate the relationship between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction. This is also supported by Leea, Jeob and Kim that there is a negative relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist complaints, and a positive relationship exists between satisfaction and loyalty/advocacy (2011). The other reason may be that, that data was collected from the tourists were mostly on their first visit and no advocacy was provided for them.

As per the regression analysis results Tourist Advocacy did not moderate relationship between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengthens the relationship.

The result against this hypothesis reveals that the quality is supposed to be experiences by tourist, which should be improved, leading to actual on ground satisfaction rather being told by others in the form of advocacy.



Since, there is a negative relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist complaints, and a positive relationship exists between satisfaction and loyalty/advocacy (Leea, Jeonb, & Kim, 2011) and either case may be represented by the research results. The results are backed by Oliver's expectancy disconfirmation theory (Oliver R. , 1980). According the theory when the services and products offered by destination will be more tourist oriented in terms of quality it will lead to a greater tourist satisfaction.

The greater level of tourist satisfaction will result in more of tourist advocacy rather its reverse effect. In this way tourist advocacy plays least role in attaining tourist satisfaction, as actual experience it counted, accordingly in the host community.

#### **5.1.4 Hypothesis: 4**

H4: Tourist advocacy moderates the relationship between perceived price and tourist satisfaction in such a way that increase in tourist advocacy strengths the relationship.

Hypothesis (H4) is rejected because  $p > .05$  is insignificant.

Rejection of hypothesis H4 lead us to the conclusion that tourist advocacy did not moderate the relationship between perceived quality and tourist satisfaction. This result is backed by the research by Beardon, Kaiccker, Borrero, & Urbany that there are both positive and negative relationship between tourist satisfaction and perceived price as perceived price is always above or below of the actual price based on utility (1992).

The moderation of tourist advocacy between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction was tested in regression analysis. The regression analysis shows that tourist advocacy does not significantly moderate the relationship between perceived pricing and tourist satisfaction which means perceived pricing is an important determinant of tourist satisfaction. The findings of this study are also backed by Expectancy theory. Expectancy theory by Oliver encompasses all aspects of tourist perception regarding purchase behavior (Oliver R. , 1980). In this study the moderator tourist advocacy is a post purchase behavior. This theory suggests that satisfaction is directly influenced by disconfirmation of beliefs and perceived performance, and is indirectly influenced by both expectations and perceived performance the disconfirmation construct.

This theory advocates that the services and products offered by host destination should be more tourist oriented in terms of price and quality. This phenomenon will result in greater tourist

satisfaction. The greater level of tourist satisfaction will lead to more of tourist advocacy. In this way greater tourist advocacy will result in more economic benefits to the host community. Finally the satisfied tourist leaves an unending stream of tourists from his social circles like family, friends and even unintentional referrals. Especially in nowadays scenario satisfied tourists use social media and involve in volunteer advertisement about the destination. Which is a priceless advertisement for the service providers .Therefore service providers are required to improve the standards of goods and services these findings of this study suggest.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The current study was conducted to examine the influence of perceived pricing and perceived quality on tourist satisfaction under the moderating role of tourist advocacy for the economic viability of tourism. This research was aimed at testing the economic viability of tourism on the host community of the tourist destination.

Findings of this study show that tourist satisfaction depends on destination price and quality amongst many other factors of tourist satisfaction. It reveals that destination price and destination quality are positively related with tourist satisfaction. Furthermore tourist advocacy does not significantly moderates the relationship between destination and destination quality and tourist satisfaction. This fact highlights importance of relationship between price/quality and satisfaction which ultimately results in tourist advocacy in the target area. So, this study contributes by introducing a promotional mechanism for economic viability of tourism based on tourist advocacy. In this scenario proper attention should be made towards maintaining price and quality competitiveness. In other words it highlights the importance of price and quality for the growth of tourism and it is suggested that the policy makers should pay proper attention to establish price level and maintaining quality standards of the services and products. Which would certainly increase level of tourist satisfaction and may result in robust kind of tourist advocacy.

### **5.3 Implications (Practical and Theoretical)**

There are practical and theoretical implications of the study. They are discussed one by one in coming paragraphs.

#### **5.3.1 Practical Implication**

The study has its practical implications for tourism industry and government departments related to tourism by which tourism industry and tourism related departments can enhance their performance, productivity and good will by making tourism products and services more competitive and standardized. These implication are given below.

- First, as the results of the study show that perceived quality is positively related to tourist satisfaction and this information may be used by tourism industry to understand the tourist expectations and hence cater the services and products accordingly. Further quality of the services and products may be improved in order to attain higher tourist satisfaction.
- Second, this study's results show that price of the products and services is positively related to tourist satisfaction, which means that the tourism industry should maintain the price level. And government departments may use this information to control price level in case of influx of more tourists and sudden hike in prices may lead to dissatisfaction on tourists' side and ultimately tourism industry would suffer.
- Third, the positive relation of price and quality with tourist satisfaction may lead to mass tourism in future therefore the private and public sector of tourism and planning departments should project future needs and act accordingly. So that the tourist would not suffer and tourism industry would not lose its business.
- Fourth, this study may serve the tourism entrepreneurs as a guideline to establish new businesses because in future an overwhelming influx of tourists is awaiting due to higher quality of the destination.
- Finally, past research has suggested that customers are attracted and retained when their needs are met, and they tend to express their satisfaction to others. The satisfied tourist is involved in volunteer advertisement of the destination he/she experienced positively. It

means the host community or destination managers are required to put their all senses and sevens to provide better and more tourist oriented services.

### **5.3.2 Theoretical Implications**

The findings of this research have significant theoretical implications. After literature review the fact that, tourist advocacy moderates relationship between destination price/quality and tourist satisfaction, was established. But the results of this research show that tourist advocacy did not play the role of moderator which means that tourist advocacy does not necessarily moderate the relationship between destination price/quality and tourist satisfaction. These two contradictory results lead us to conclude that tourist advocacy stems from tourist satisfaction. Therefore we say that tourist advocacy does not produce tourist satisfaction rather it is tourist satisfaction that produces tourist advocacy. That means if services and product are made competitive and standardized the tourist satisfaction level will enhance. And this enhanced level of satisfaction will lead to more tourist advocacy and tourist advocacy may act as promotional tool for the tourist destination.

Tourist advocacy has been studied in past in different perspective but this study used it as moderator. Although according to the literature reviewed tourist advocacy plays its role as moderator between independent and dependent variables of this study, yet it is proved otherwise in this study. That is to conclude that tourist advocacy has its dynamic role, such as, it plays moderator's role for one tourist destination as an independent variable while as dependent variable for another destination.

This study also investigates the relationship of price of tourism services and products and tourist satisfaction. Since price level dynamically affects the tourist due to their different level of purchasing power and income. Therefore it is hard for the researchers to determine the exact effect of price on tourist satisfaction. In the same way, there are tourists who have natural urge to visit new places and get involved with nature for their own satisfaction. In such a case quality of the destination may not affect their urge to move around as a tourist, therefore even man made quality of the tourist destination may be irrelevant to the satisfaction of the tourist. Hence it may be concluded that price and quality of the tourist destination may not have influence the tourist satisfaction.

## **Limitations**

Just like every other study this study also has its some limitations and needs more addition in other aspects. The current study also has several limitations which are needed to be addressed in future by other researchers.

- First of all, this study seems not to be generalized due to limited sample and specific target sector. .
- Secondly, this study explores perceptions from specific geographic location i.e. Gilgit-Baltistan.
- Thirdly, this study is focused only on domestic tourists.
- Fourthly Convenient Sampling is used for the collection of data which may leave room for research bias.
- Finally, this study only focused on self-report feedback rather than dyads or time lags etc.

## **5.4 Directions for Future Research**

- Future researchers are required to collect data with an increase in sample size, because the data was collected from only three districts out of 10 districts of Gilgit Baltistan due to time constraints. If the data was collected from all districts with an increased sample size, then tourist advocacy may have moderated between the variables.
- The future studies should examine the other intervening variables influencing tourist satisfaction.
- In future research data can be collected from general tourists and hospitality sector of a country or from different countries which may improve results for generalization.
- The future research should examine moderators others than tourist advocacy between perceived pricing and quality and tourist satisfaction because according the results of this study the moderating variable tourist advocacy did not moderate the relationship between variables in the target area. The reason may be that most of the respondents visited the

area after getting information from the social, electronic and print media therefore media may be taken as moderator. The other reason may be the convenient sampling due to which tourist advocacy did not moderate the relationship between variables.

- Future researchers are required to check the effect of price and quality on tourist satisfaction at multilevel or group level.

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## Appendix

Dear Respondent!

My name is Zafar Abbas, studying in **Pakistan Institute of Development Economics Islamabad**. I am doing this survey as I am working on my thesis entitled “*Impact of perceived pricing and quality on tourist’s satisfaction under the moderation of tourist’s advocacy for economic viability*”. These questions require answers based on your visit experiences to Gilgit-Baltistan. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for research purpose. Your identity will not be disclosed on this document so kindly give an honest opinion to make this research unbiased. You are requested to take 10 minutes out of your busy schedule to fill this questionnaire. Although you are not bound to answer these questions and at any point in time, you can quit answering but still I will be privileged by your opinion in this research work. If you need findings of this research, please order a copy at 03155908494. Once again thanks for your precious time and cooperation.

Regards

Zafar Abbas

Research Scholar



<b>Perceived pricing</b>						
7	Price charged by this destination is not very expensive.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Price charged by this destination is very bargaining.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Price charged by this destination is not very high.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Price charged by this destination is very reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Price charged by destination is not very pricey.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tourist satisfaction</b>						
12	This destination is better than what I expected.	1	2	3	4	5
13	This destination provides much more benefits than costs.	1	2	3	4	5
14	This destination is the best among other competing.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tourist Advocacy</b>						
15	Were you recommended by friends to visit this destination?	1	2	3	4	5
16	Did anybody tell you good things about this destination?	1	2	3	4	5
17	Did your friends and relatives encourage you to visit this destination?	1	2	3	4	5

-----End-----