Issues in Promotion of Heritage Tourism in Swat Valley

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CERTIFICATE

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ACRONYMS

ACT: Archaeology Community Tourism

BCE: Before Common Era

CE: Common Era

DOAM: Directorate of Archaeology and Museums (KP Province)

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GoI: Government of Italy

IAMP: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan

IDC: Italian Development Cooperation

IsIAO: Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient

ISMEO: International Mediterranean and Oriental Studies Association

K.m: Kilometer

K.P: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

NOC: No Objection Certificate

PBS: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

PTDC: Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation

PIDSA: Pakistan-Italian Debt Swap Agreement

Sq. km: Square Kilometer

TIAC: Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization – QAU

TNSM: Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi

TTP: Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan

UN: United Nations

UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization

USPs: Unique Selling Points

WCED: World Commission on Environment and Development

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DECLARATION

I, Muhammad Bilal, hereby solemnly declare that the work described in my thesis "Issues in Promotion of Heritage Tourism in Swat Valley" has been carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Zulfiqar Ali. I have not used any further means for the completion of this work except those I have explicitly mentioned in this thesis. All concepts adopted and copied from other written sources have been properly referred to with the source.

This work has not been published or submitted to any other examination board in the same or a similar form, and I am solely responsible for the contents of this thesis.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my parents

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ABSTRACT

The valley of Swat remained a center of Buddhist thought and practice, from 2nd century BCE to nearly 9th century CE. At that time, Gandhara Art flourished here, and many monasteries, stupas and different artifacts were made. The remains of this heritage were long forgotten until the sites were excavated and rediscovered in the 20th century. Today these heritage sites and its artifacts can be visited by tourists. But the proportion of heritage tourism activity and number of tourists at these sites, compare to overall tourism in Swat, is minimal. This research focuses to explore this problem and highlight issues in development and promotion of heritage tourism at these sites. The study also aims at what opportunities locals could realize through successful promotion of tourism. This research employed a qualitative research strategy and the data collection techniques used, included, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study found the prevalence of many issues in the basic structure of heritage tourism activity and sites' promotion. Many locals were having a negative perception, and domestic tourists un-aware about the heritage and artifacts. The non-availability of formal guides at sites and a negative image of Swat in people's mind, due to the recent tragic events of Talibanization, create hurdles in attracting tourists and promoting the sites. Besides this, neither any efforts nor any mechanism for the promotion and marketing of heritage tourism was witnessed, on the part of concerned stakeholders (e.g. heritage managers, etc.). The weak structure of overall heritage tourism enterprise and issues in the very foundational components of this market suggests, that focusing first on these basic components and then later promoting the sites on a larger level would be much more effective and sustainable.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, people are now often traveling within the country and overseas, for many different purposes, and among them, one of the most frequent and popular is *'tourism'*. Presently, tourism, as a whole has become one of the largest and swiftly growing global industries. This rapid growth is evident from the statistics of United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), according to which in 2017, International tourist arrivals grew by 7% and reached 1.3 billion, tourism exports reached $US 1.6 trillion (or $US 4 billion a day on average), and contributed 10% in global Gross Domestic Product (UNWTO, 2017). In terms of the 'most-recent' statistics available with UNWTO for Pakistan, international tourist arrivals (i.e arrivals of non-resident tourists at national borders) were recorded at 966,000 in 2012, as compared to 378,000 in 1995 and 369,000 in the year 1996. This figure though reached 1,161,000 in 2011, the highest ever recorded. This popularity and growth have contributed to the rapid evolution and broadness of the term and practice of *'tourism'*. Today, the definition of tourism varies source by source, person by person, and it is usually defined differently. by different stakeholders, depending upon the context. To prevent disaccord in the definition of tourism, United Nations and World Tourism Organization (1994, p. 5) in their mutual document "Recommendations on Tourism Statistics" defined it as, "Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes." Over time many niche markets and specialized areas of interest are being developed within the broader area of tourism, which offers

different experiences and services to its customers, and has its base of customers. Among these different specialized areas of interest, one of the most popular motivations for travelers to visit and experience a place or a community is its *"heritage"*. Indeed it is the heritage that motivates many modern-day tourists, both from domestic and foreign entities, to travel to an area and experience the local culture, come in contact with local people, get to know the local folklore, and visit festivals, museums, archaeological sites and so on (Gluvačević, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to develop and promote the local unique heritage of a destination effectively and sustainably, so that the destination can be developed to become a popular place to be visited by gaining a 'competitive advantage' over other destinations. An important factor in successful promotion and development of a destination as a tourist spot would be the equitable inclusion of all stakeholders throughout the process, be it government departments, local communities, private investors, or any social groups. Specifically, local communities should be given due importance because they are often neglected by other dominant stakeholders, whereas there exists enormous evidence that their inclusion is a lifeline to such development. If we would be successful in doing it all, we could induce a large sum of people demanding to experience and consume the heritage for aesthetic, leisure and educational purposes, etc. and can also generate a large sum of revenues and employability for the local people and their economy.

The concept of heritage needs to be carefully defined and presented before we initiate any study and investigation into this paradigm. According to Cowell (2008, p. 9), it is "loaded with a complex multiplicity of meanings." Heritage in simple words is anything that is inherited from the past. According to Ashworth and Turnbridge, heritage is:

"The contemporary uses of the past…The interpretation of the past in history, the surviving relict buildings and artifacts, and collective and individual memories are all harnessed in

response to current needs which include the identification of individuals with social, ethnic and territorial entities and the provision of economic resources for commodification within heritage industries" (Ashworth & Turnbridge, 1999, p. 105).

However, Turnbridge and Ashworth (1996, p. 3), proposes that the term heritage has taken on many "different dimensions". And it is being recognized by many in the literature as having a "multi-faceted nature" and a "concept of complexity" (Ashworth & Howard, 1999, p. 5). With time, it has been evident from the literature that heritage is expanding its dimensions and meanings. Heritage according to further analysis of the literature is not merely material but it's social, cultural, and subjective (Smith, 2006; Cowell, 2008). Building upon the same view Timothy and Boyd (2003, p. 3), argues that heritage has three components, tangible immovable resources (e.g. buildings), tangible movable resources (e.g. objects in museums), and intangible resources (e.g. festivals).

Heritage tourism has undoubtedly become popular, with a large number of tourists now seeking meaningful experiences and a relationship with the past (Urry, 1990), and the number of those tourists is growing rapidly. As McKercher & Cros (2002, p. 6) proposes, heritage tourism is "the interplay between tourism, the use of cultural heritage assets, the consumption of experience and products, and the tourist." The definition of heritage tourism implies that successful heritage destinations require well-designed heritage attributes as well as the concurrent participation and involvement of tourists.

In today's competitive global market, strategic planning, development, and promotion are important factors in determining a product, service, or an organization's long-term success. Chances are that in this highly competitive market the best book or a good movie may not receive as much appreciation and sales, as may an average book or movie receive with better planning

and promotional strategies. The same is the case with tourist destinations and products. Because now, there exists a large and diverse array of unique tourist destinations that the tourism sector offers to local and foreign tourists, the tourists usually have a long list of choices to choose from. Today people's interest in heritage and historical relics is growing and they are striving to protect and preserve it as a part of their identity, and offer it for tourist's consumption. Globally heritage tourism contributes a large share in overall tourism activity. Heritage managers are now searching for new destinations and products to be developed and promoted, to diversify the overall heritage market. Careful considerations need to be observed in the development process, as sometimes any minute negligence could threaten both the heritage resources and the tourism stakeholders as well. Therefore a heritage site must be developed and promoted sustainably, which is beneficial for all the stakeholders and most importantly provides quality experiences to its visitors. According to Freeman (1984, p. 46), a stakeholder can be defined as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives." Collaborations and partnerships between all stakeholders and the inclusion of the local community in the planning and development process is a must in these projects. Research shows that mutually beneficial partnerships between stakeholders and the inclusion of the local community lead tourism projects to be sustainable and successful in the future. Once a heritage destination is developed, it needs to be promoted to both its actual and potential tourists, by highlighting its Unique Selling Points (USPs). The destination can better compete with other similar destinations through the realization of 'competitive advantage' over those destinations, by promoting it through its distinctive historical and heritage significance.

In recent years, an enormous amount of literature and evidence has emerged, which shows that people are becoming interested in preserving and protecting their heritage and thus making it

available for public consumption. Besides, the number of visitors traveling for heritage tourism is building up globally. Countries are striving to preserve and protect their national heritage, make them suitable for public consumption, and sustainably promote them to attract tourists. Fortunately, Pakistan is gifted with a tremendous amount of centuries-old diverse heritage sites. Among them are the historically rich Buddhist heritage sites of Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. In Buddhist traditions, the valley has long been known and recognized as forming an ancient place called Udyana, a Sanskrit word meaning a 'garden.' From the second century BCE (Before Common Era) to the ninth century CE (Common Era), Swat remained a "cradle of Buddhism," where at one time more than 1400 monasteries flourished. Very little of this lost civilization was known, until the efforts of ISMEO (International Mediterranean and Oriental Studies Association), also known (and hereafter referred to) as IAMP (Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan). Since the 1950's they have carried enormous excavation and preservation work in the valley, and are still working on many sites. Thanks to their excavation and research efforts, the unbroken cultural evolution of ancient Swat, from prehistory to the advent of Islam was established. It is evident from the archaeological exploration and excavation that Swat was eventually an important region in the past times, rich in cultural heritage. Today, ruins of great Buddhist stupas, monasteries and statues are found all over the valley. And if effectively managed and developed, they can be transformed and promoted as popular tourist destinations, thus boosting up Pakistan's tourism industry and generating huge revenues and employability for the local people. But unfortunately, these heritage sites are largely neglected by the government and other stakeholders until now, and its tourism potential has yet to be exploited.

This study was intended to explore the issues related to the promotion of these sites, and hence find out suitable solutions for its development and promotion. It would seek to recommend strategies to the stakeholders of heritage tourism, to sustainably develop these destinations and effectively promote them, to attract both local and foreign tourists. This will help in strengthening both the preservation efforts of Buddhist heritage at Swat Valley and will diversify what the overall tourism industry of Pakistan has to offer. It will create job opportunities for the locals and will help generate a large sum of revenues, which could help the sluggish economy of the country.

1.1 Problem Statement

The valley of Swat is rich in centuries-old Buddhist heritage, but unfortunately, its historical importance and value as a potential heritage tourism site is largely neglected and has not received the importance of which it is worthy. There is rarely any organized presence of stakeholders, to develop and promote these sites, due to which the current heritage tourism activities are quite minimal, and a huge revenue and employability potential of both the local people and national economy are being missed-out. This study, therefore, thoroughly investigates and identifies the issues prevailing as hurdles in the way of promoting Buddhist heritage sites, and becoming of it as a popular heritage destination. It lay's down the framework for strategies that could be effectively employed to promote these heritage sites with its unique heritage and historical richness and develop them into popular heritage tourism destinations. At last, the study highlight how the development and promotion of these sites could be beneficial for the local communities living around these sites. And specifically, what opportunities locals may realize through this activity.

1.2 Research Questions

To carry out this study, the research problem was stransformed into a few research questions. These research questions were intended to fulfill the different objectives of the research. Realizing this, the researcher operationalized the study into three central research questions:

- What are the issues in the promotion of potential tourism sites of Buddhist heritage in Swat Valley?

- What strategies should be adopted by different stakeholders to sustainably develop and promote these sites?

- How the development and promotion of these tourism destinations can be beneficial for local communities?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aimed to fulfill the following objectives:

- *To identify the prevailing issues in the promotion of the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat Valley as tourism destinations.*

The study locale is rich in centuries-old Buddhist heritage, and there exist a large number of spots where the presence of Buddhist remains could be witnessed. However, it was required to explore what hurdles and issues were presently faced by stakeholders (to whatever extent these 'stakeholders' may be present, even if very minimal) to effectively promote these sites. This also

had to help in understanding, why these sites haven't yet become successful heritage tourism sites, attracting an appropriate number of tourists from both foreign and domestic markets.

- *To propose a heritage tourism development framework and the role of different stakeholders in its execution.*

We know that modern tourists could only be provided with a satisfactory experience of visiting heritage sites, only if they realize authentic encounter's with the heritage resources, and with whatever services they are being promised to. To fulfill this activity, we needed an organized stakeholder's collaboration, where they are supposed to plan and sustainably promote the sites, keeping in mind both the satisfaction of expectations of visitors and the sustainability of the heritage resources.

- *To find out what benefits the local community can gain through successful heritage tourism at these tourist destinations.*

In last, adhering to the theory and practice of importance towards the inclusion of local communities in modern-day tourism activities, special significance was given to partnering with the local's. Efforts were made, to develop a viable framework, where the local community has a part in the overall process and decision making of promoting these heritage sites as tourists' destinations. The study also analyzes what benefits could be realized for these local communities, through the successful promotion of the sites, and how can that be maximized. Finding practical ways to further strengthen this relationship between the tourist activity and its immediate benefits to the local people, was also to be achieved.

1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

1.4.1 Tourism

"Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes" (UN & WTO, 1994, p. 5). It is a socio-economic and cultural phenomenon where people are mostly motivated to visit and experience an area or a community and get to know the history, culture, heritage, natural landscape, or anything that they consider valuable for themselves.

In this study tourism activity includes traveling, visiting, and the stay of those visitors, who are solely motivated to travel to and experience the Buddhist heritage of Swat valley.

1.4.2 Sustainable Tourism

The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as follows:

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. (UNWTO, 1997).

The practice of sustainable tourism was applied to the heritage destinations of this study, by the realization of safeguarding the Buddhist heritage resources of the valley and protecting and fulfilling the needs of all stakeholders, especially the local community and tourists. Also, we have had to protect the surrounding environment and it's natural and social processes.

1.4.3 Heritage

Heritage in simple words is anything that is inherited from the past and is used in contemporary times for different purposes. According to Timothy and Boyd (2003), heritage has three components, tangible immovable resources (e.g. buildings), tangible movable resources (e.g. objects in museums), and intangible resources (e.g. festivals).

Heritage in this particular study includes the centuries-old Buddhist heritage of Swat valley. It includes the ruins of great Buddhist stupas, monasteries, statues, and the available objects of the same heritage on display at Swat Museum.

1.4.4 Heritage Tourism

It is defined as the phenomenon in which the cultural, historical, and ethnic components of a society or place are harnessed as resources to attract tourists, as well as develop a leisure and tourism industry (Chang, 1997).

Heritage tourism was to be carried out at the locale of this study, by taking into account the heritage resources mentioned, as means to mobilize and motivate actors to plan, develop and promote the leisure and tourism industry.

1.4.5 Promotion

In the tourism industry, promotional activities are designed to communicate your messages with your customers and other stakeholders linked to your business. Promotion is typically used to increase demand, but it is also a tool to control accessibility (Beeton & Benfield, 2002). Accessibility, in this case, means the amount of flow of visitors to be allowed to access the site's, in any particular period of time.

The promotional activities within the paradigms of this study did include the planning to convey messages with the stakeholders and advertise the prospective tourist destinations, to bring in a suitable number of visitors, keeping in mind the sustainably of the destination, and its infrastructure and heritage resources.

1.4.6 Stakeholders

A stakeholder is an individual, group, or organization that has an interest in any activity, process, or business and can either affect or be affected by it. In the realm of heritage tourism, stakeholders could include any of these entities, such as the local communities at the destination, the government organizations, heritage managers, private investors, and tourists, etc.

The stakeholders included all the actors (be they individuals, a group, or an organization) having an interest in the development and promotion of the overall heritage tourism activity. In the case of this study, it possibly includes the local communities at the destination, heritage managers, and tourists.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review provides an introduction to any particular topic and throws light upon related concepts and issues. Here, we present a critical and analytical review of the existing literature on any particular topic. In reviewing the literature, we take help from the already available stock of knowledge, and upon it lay the foundations for creating any new or updated knowledge. Therefore, it always provides a startup for any new research investigation.

2.1 Understanding the meaning of Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism has undoubtedly become popular, with a large number of tourists now seeking meaningful experiences and a relationship with the past (Urry, 1990), and the number of those tourists is growing rapidly. This viewpoint is validated by Lowenthal too, stating:

> "All at once, heritage is everywhere…in the news, in the movies, in the marketplace…in everything…it is the chief focus of patriotism and a prime lure of tourism. One can barely move without bumping into a heritage site. Every legacy is cherished. From ethnic roots to history theme parks, Hollywood to the Holocaust, the whole world is busy lauding…or lamenting…some past, be it fact or fiction." (Lowenthal, 1996, p. 14)

The rapid popularity in the concept and scope of heritage in the last few decades has made it a very complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. In simple words, heritage is anything that is inherited from the past and is used in contemporary times for different purposes. Timothy and Boyd (2003, p. 3), argues that heritage has three components, tangible immovable resources (e.g. buildings), tangible movable resources (e.g. objects in museums), and intangible resources (e.g.

festivals). Lowenthal (1994) has noted that heritage derives the icons of identity from our past, and hence bond us with our own earlier selves, and with our promised successors. Therefore the linkage between heritage and identity is important and of great significance.

Similar to the concept of heritage, there is rarely any common ground for the overall meaning and understanding of heritage tourism. The term is defined in many different ways with different interpretations. According to one definition, it consists of "visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, and scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of the community, region, group or institution" (Silberberg, 1995, p. 361). Due to the rapid popularization of the concept and practice of heritage tourism, the literature today is full of interesting definitions and meanings. Yale (1991, p. 21) has presented a very broad definition of heritage tourism, stating that, "the fashionable concept of 'heritage tourism' really means nothing more than tourism centered on what we have inherited, which can mean anything from historic buildings, to artworks, to beautiful scenery".

2.2 Heritage and it's linkage to the Tourism industry

The tourism industry has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world economy in the past few decades. In recent years it has achieved a higher growth rate than the overall average rate of growth in the world economy (i.e. worldwide international tourist arrivals increased 6% in 2018, clearly above the 3.7% growth registered in the global economy: UNWTO, 2018). This high growth in tourism was indeed accompanied by a booming interest in history, heritage, and culture, which has invariably resulted in making a strong linkage between heritage and tourism throughout the world. Tourism is also used as an economic justification for the preservation of heritage, although tourism also serves to preserve artifacts and folklore life in

the gaze of the tourists (Hewison, 1987; Hall & McArthur, 1993). Confer and Kerstetter (2000) support the view of Millar (1989) and Hardy (1988) that heritage tourism is about cultural traditions, places, and values, that groups throughout the world are proud to conserve.

The practice of tourism involves the "transformation of the object and place into attractions, their gradual movement from a setting to a representation of a setting" (Wedow, 1977, p. 201). Heritage tourism involves the connection of tourists to either their own or someone's else real or sometimes constructed, often mythical, past by promoting "a vicarious experience that depends on using objects or locations as means of entering into or living in the past" (Edson, 2004, p. 337). Heritage tourism is a powerful activity in the sense that it constructs, promotes and presents the identity of individuals or groups to the world, give them a sense of the place, and allows the telling of a "national story" through museums and other heritage sites (Light, 2000, p. 158). Of course in heritage tourism, we present both the tangible and intangible aspects of any heritage, and both are of equal interest to modern-day tourists.

The growth in heritage tourism has brought upon many factors into play, from social to political and economic factors. All these factors are important to be explored and investigated and have a keen eye kept on the changing inter-related paradigms between them. For example, the recent boom in tourists' interest to visit heritage sites have both increased the costs of heritage preservation and maintenance but has also increased the economic value of these sites as they provide opportunities for generating revenues, jobs, and leisure as well.

2.3 Significance of Heritage Tourism

The growing popularity in heritage tourism has increased its significance in different perspectives. For different individuals and groups, the significance of heritage varies according to

their values and attitudes and the nature of heritage resources itself. Significance is the way the special and unique qualities of a place are described and presented. This may be presented in local, regional, national, and international terms. Hall & McArthur (1993) have identified four broad and inter-related areas of heritage significance as economic, social, scientific, and political. The economic significance is one of the main justifications for heritage development because it provides resources for tourism and recreation (Zeppel & Hall, 1992). Today, the growing market of heritage tourism has resulted in great economic activity as a result of visitor's expenditures. The social factors attached to the historical significance and contemporary usage of heritage is of equal importance. Heritage helps us in defining who we are as individuals, a community, culture, and a nation, not only to ourselves but also to outsiders. It plays a significant role in shaping our sense of the place. According to Hummon (1992) sense of place develops when people feel a particular attachment to an area in which local knowledge and human contacts are meaningfully maintained. Heritage tourism reintroduces people to their cultural roots and helps them form identity (Donert & Light, 1996). Heritage tourism also has important significance in the case of scientific and educational development of a society. According to Ashworth and Turnbridge (1990) heritage tourism is largely accepted as a means to achieve the educational function of tourism effectively. The connection of heritage to identity and its inheritance from the past makes it inherently linked to political factors. This inter-linkage between heritage and identity means that the meaning and symbolism of heritage may serve political ends by helping governments influence public opinion and gain support for national ideological objectives, developing a positive national image (Richter, 1980), and producing national identity (Pretes, 2003).

2.4 Elements of successful Heritage Tourism development

For a long-term sustainable and successful heritage tourism development, researchers have included additional factors or elements, beyond uniqueness. As identified by Boyd (2002), the main factors for successful heritage tourism include authenticity, protecting resources, a learning environment, partnerships between hosts and guests, and the accessibility to the sites. These elements are widely recognized by many researchers and people related to the heritage sector. According to Boyd (2002:221), authenticity is central to heritage tourism. Cass & Jahrig (1998, p. 12) stated that a "unique and authentic attraction" may give tourists the desire to stay in town longer. In whatever way a heritage site may be developed, promoted, and presented to the tourists, it should have authenticity in its foundations. The literature available on the 'protection of heritage resources' gives enough importance to this phenomenon. There exist two main views on the protection of heritage resources, first that care be given, to balance the interests and needs of both locals and tourists. And the second view relating to protecting historic resources is sustainability. Any tourism activity is beneficial if it does not harm the long-term health of the available historic resources or any related stakeholders.

Heritage tourism also provides learning opportunities to tourists, where they learn about themselves, about other people and the world they inhabit. It specifically provides learning resources on history, art, culture, and religion, etc. According to Boyd (2002), heritage tourism imparts learning through museums, visitor centers, on‐site displays, and literature and information pamphlets. Another important aspect in the successful carrying of heritage tourism activity is building productive partnerships between the stakeholders involved. Partnerships had become part of the common language of tourism and were linked directly to the concepts of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration all of which have led to sustainable tourism

development (Boyd, 2002). The last factor of accessibility also plays an important part in the successful development of a heritage site. It is important to any tourist site, that it be accessible to its potential visitors and has appropriate means of access as well. According to Prideaux (2002), an area's geographical and physical infrastructures are also linked to a destination success as a tourist site.

2.5 The relevance of Sustainability to Heritage Tourism

The idea of sustainability was established initially to protect the environmental and ecological resources from harm, in the pursuit of economic development. The definition of 'sustainability' or 'sustainable development' as presented by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in its 1987 report is the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, p. 6). Although initially the sustainability model was primarily based on caring for social and environmental factors, later the cultural and heritage resources were also declared necessary.

Similarly, sustainable tourism doesn't focus on increased revenues and reflects on the social, cultural, and environmental implications of tourism activities (Reid, 2003). The definition of sustainable tourism according to UNWTO (1997) is "the tourism that meets the needs of present hosts and visitors while safeguarding opportunities for the future." Management of this type of tourism includes attention to social and economic needs as well as supporting aesthetic needs, cultural integrity, ecological processes, and biological diversity (Middleton and Hawkins, 1998). Interestingly, although sustainable tourism development advocates for a holistic planning

approach and takes into account its broader socio-economic context, its focus tends to be inwards and destination-centered, rather than national and global (Sharpley, 2000).

As in heritage tourism, visitor experiences rely heavily on the heritage resources of destinations. Consequently, sustainability necessitates the symbiosis of tourism and heritage through the establishment of proper channels of communication among the two sectors, a balance between conservation and tourism, and the reinvestment of tourism-generated revenues to heritage (Aas et al., 2005; Ayala, 2005; Smith, 2009; Timothy & Boyd, 2006).

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The development and promotion of sustainable heritage tourism require a systematic collaboration between ideas, theoretical and practical considerations, and different stakeholders. Initially, we need to frame ideas that how the overall process of developing and promoting a heritage site as a tourist destination will be carried out. Then it is necessary to understand from the available literature about the possible frameworks and methods that are practically viable and could be applied to our specific site as a potential tourist destination. Although the ideas and theoretical foundations play a crucial role, it's the continuous partnership and collaboration between actors on the ground (i.e. stakeholders and organizations), that make the long-term development and promotion of a destination to be sustainable and a success.

This study aims to build a strategy on how to develop and promote the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat and transform it into a tourist destination. To execute this activity, initially, we require different factors to be evaluated regarding the destination and its heritage. This will make it possible to understand the resources at hand (i.e. heritage resources etc.), the available stakeholders and their potential for action, where do we stand currently, where do we want to

reach, and what issues exist or may be faced in future in achieving our goals. For this purpose, the researcher had developed a conceptual framework, which employs the combination of Gunn's functioning tourism system model, and Jamal and Getz's three-step collaborative community tourism development method. These two models are used to create a heritage tourism development and promotion strategy for Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley. Through these models the candidate had conducted an assessment of available heritage tourism resources, and how to use these resources efficiently, to make sustainable development of tourist activity possible. Therefore, these two models were selected for this study, to guide the execution of the study and help accomplish the research objectives and answer the research questions. The two models employed are discussed below:

1. Gunn's - "The Functioning Tourism System" (Gunn, 1988),

2. Jamal and Getz's - "Community Collaboration Model" (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

2.6.1 Gunn's Functioning Tourism System

This study had utilized a development framework developed by C.A. Gunn (1988), as a mechanism for guiding theoretical considerations. This development framework, 'The Functioning Tourism System,' or FTS *(Figure 2.1)* systematically presents five critical macro-level components that must be studied and addressed to ensure that an area can develop and operate as a viable tourism destination. And can, therefore, be promoted as a potential destination to people who may visit. Further, this framework provides a systematic mechanism through which we can explore and evaluate the overall heritage resources and it's potential for building up heritage tourism activity.
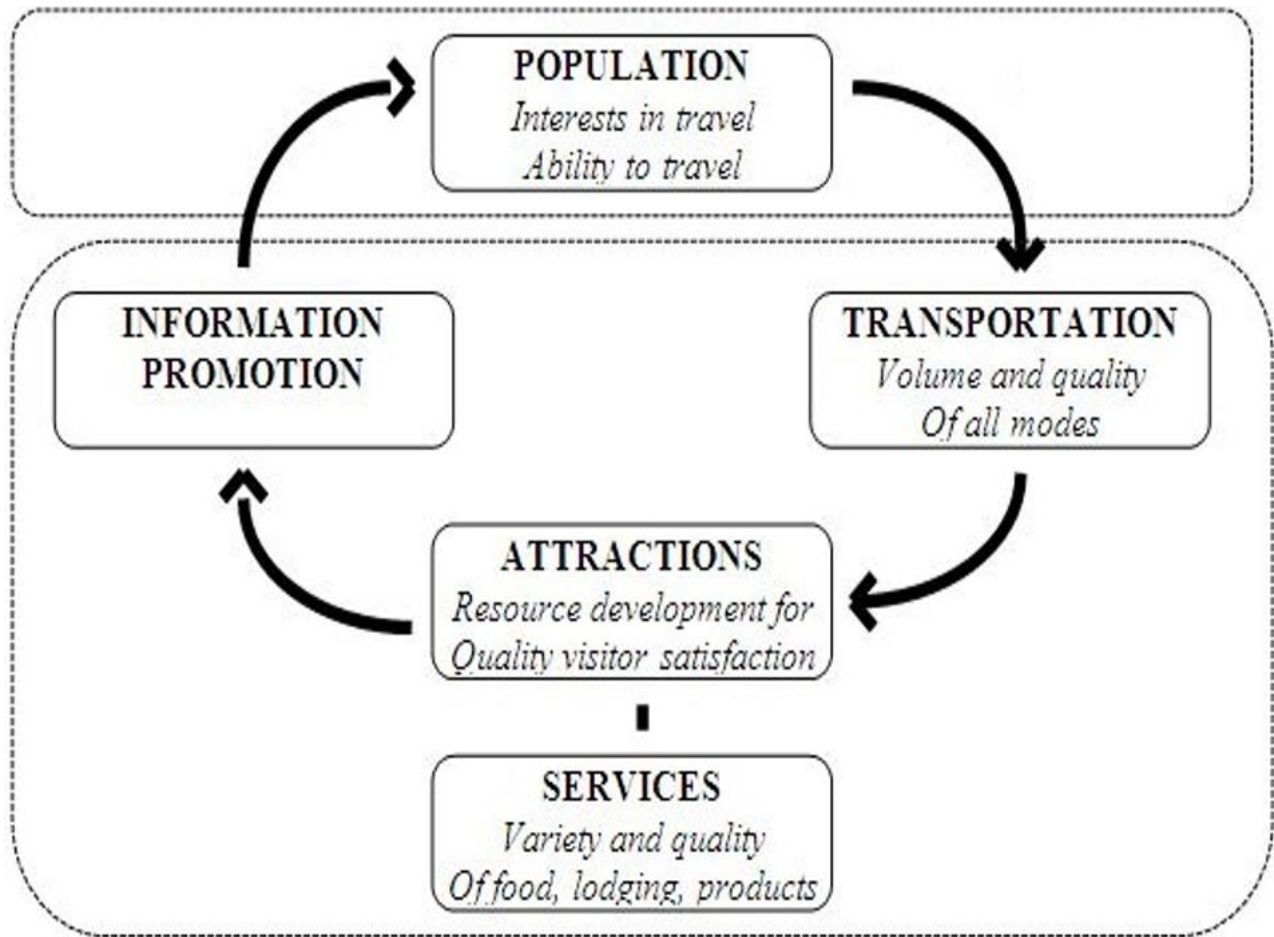
Figure 2.1: The Functioning Tourism System (Source: C. A. Gunn, 1988)

As evident from the figure, this framework examines the population, transportation, attractions, services, and information promotion of a tourism system. For the effective functioning of a tourism system, the presence of all five of these components is necessary. First, there needs to be a population of people who are interested and able to travel to a destination. This population means the people who have a demand for visiting a tourist spot, and have the ability, for example, have the resources and time and a state of health and fitness to visit there. This population will then need accessibility and a source of transportation to reach the

destination, which may include any of these: highways, airways, waterways, and vehicles available. The destination will consist of both attractions and services – the attractions will motivate the population to the destination and the services will allow them to have quality experiences and stay there.

The last component in the model is information promotion, which is the information available and accessible to the population. This information promotion can also be realized through the tourist's word-of-mouth, who have already visited. Gunn's FTS model is a continuous circular model, and, as long as all components are present, it continues to function. Gunn provides a step-wise mechanism to evaluate the resources of sites to be developed, which is discussed below.

Methodology for Inventory of Tourism Resources

Through adaptation from Gunn's work, the following outline provides the proposed methodology for a detailed inventory and evaluation of tourism resources to determine the heritage tourism potential of Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley:

i.   **Evaluate market situation**

The evaluation of the market situation involves, collecting data from the regional market research, being conducted so that effective promotional strategies can be developed.

ii. **Evaluate the attraction potential**

The attraction potential is dependent upon many things, but the main factors involved were the destination Unique Selling Points (USPs) and its competitive advantage over other destinations.

iii. **Evaluate transportation**

Here we evaluate the accessibility to the heritage attractions of the valley. It required that we assess both the available infrastructure (i.e. roads etc.) and various modes of transportation (i.e. public transport via road etc.).

iv. **Evaluate the tourist-oriented businesses**

In this step businesses related to tourism and tourists were to be analyzed. It included restaurants, hotels, guesthouses, petrol pumps or CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) stations, souvenir shops, etc.

v. **Evaluate the information available**

Here, the available information to the actual and potential tourists was reviewed. Where we evaluated and asked questions to decide if the information is viable and current. Answers were to be noted to questions such as, Is the information clear and descriptive? Will it motivate and guide a visitor, or solely a native resident?

vi. **Evaluate promotion**

The evaluation of promotion involved finding out what promotions are currently propagated about the destination. Also, what promotions would be useful and effective for any specific destination.

vii. **Evaluate the infrastructure**

The infrastructure of the sites has to be thoroughly analyzed here. If they can bear an influx of visitors for short periods of time. Infrastructure would include the amenities necessary for tourists like water and sanitation systems, electricity, etc. The tourism plan can be sustainable, only if the basic needs of people can be met.

2.6.2 Community Collaboration Model

This second theory by Jamal & Getz 'Community Collaboration Model' has been applied to this study to incorporate integrative planning to the overall process of developing Buddhist heritage sites, as sustainable tourism destinations. This theory, combined with 'Gunn's FTS' model, had made the researcher better understand the in-depth situation of the sites and the perspectives of the different stakeholders about it. As evident from its name, this theory would better deliver the most needed factor in any tourism development project, i.e. the long-term collaboration between different stakeholders. As aimed, this study had to look upon the development of a tourism market which includes the local community as a durable partner in the overall planning and future on-going tourism activities. The inclusion of the local communities is considered an important factor in the sustainable development of tourism sites (especially in heritage tourism sites) and its long-term operationality as successful tourism destinations.

The collaboration theory *(Figure 2.2)* consists of three stages: the Problem-Setting Stage, the Direction-Setting Stage, and the Implementation Stage. This study had incorporated these three stages to systematically partner with Gunn's FTS model in the development and promotion of heritage tourism at Swat. Each of these stages has its own distinctive facilitating conditions and steps to complete before one can move to the next stage. The problem-setting stage requires the community and other stakeholders (i.e. heritage managers etc.) to determine the problem(s) that need to be resolved, and define the stakeholders who are/will be affected by it. Once the problem is known and discussed by the community and other stakeholders, they can begin the second stage which consists of developing a plan of action for solving the problem. This step involves, what needs to be done by each stakeholder according to the resources available to them, and their capacity to use those resources. Here we would also point out any alternative solutions

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available or at hand. Once a solution has been reached and is shared by all of the stakeholders, stage three can begin. Stage three is the implementation stage, which involves the delegation of tasks and creating reasonable goals that can be completed by each stakeholder. Throughout the implementation stage, the progress needs to be monitored to ensure that the stakeholders and community are following the guidelines that were set previously.
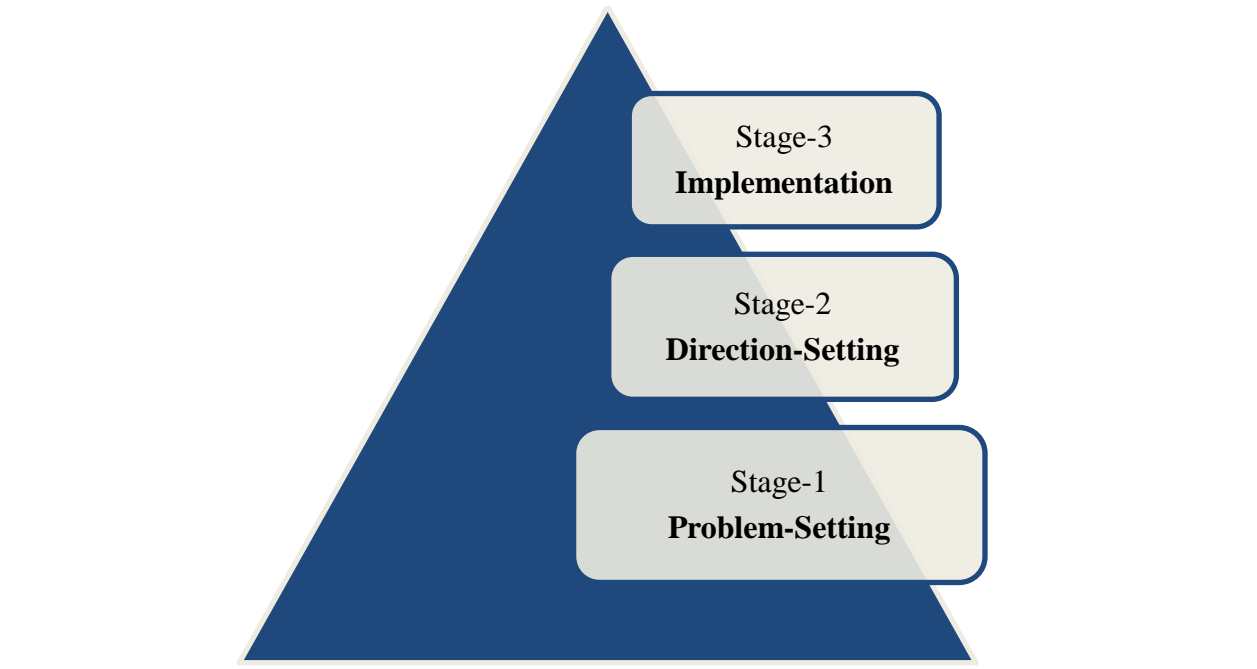
Figure 2.2: A Collaboration Process for Community-Based Tourism Planning (Source: T. Jamal and D. Getz, 1995)

Following the completion of the evaluation of tourism resources based on Gunn's FTS model, this study had utilized Jamal and Getz's community collaboration model. As this three-step model is based on working with the stakeholders (especially local community) of any tourist

destination, the researcher was required to reach these stakeholders (and had been through-there) to determine, the problem, the solution alternatives, and the implementation of the solutions.

2.6.3 Composite Conceptual Framework

The compound usage of Gunn's FTS and Jamal and Getz's community collaboration theory *(Figure 2.3),* as discussed separately in previous paragraphs, had served a very obvious outcome for this study; it had placed it in a better situation to produce an enhanced strategy for development and promotion of Buddhist heritage resources of Swat valley, for tourism purposes. This had facilitated the researcher to search-out the current issues in the promotion and development of these sites and work towards the solution of these issues. And also, to develop the sites as a long-standing and successful tourist destination, and pave the way to attract a suitable number of tourists to these sites.
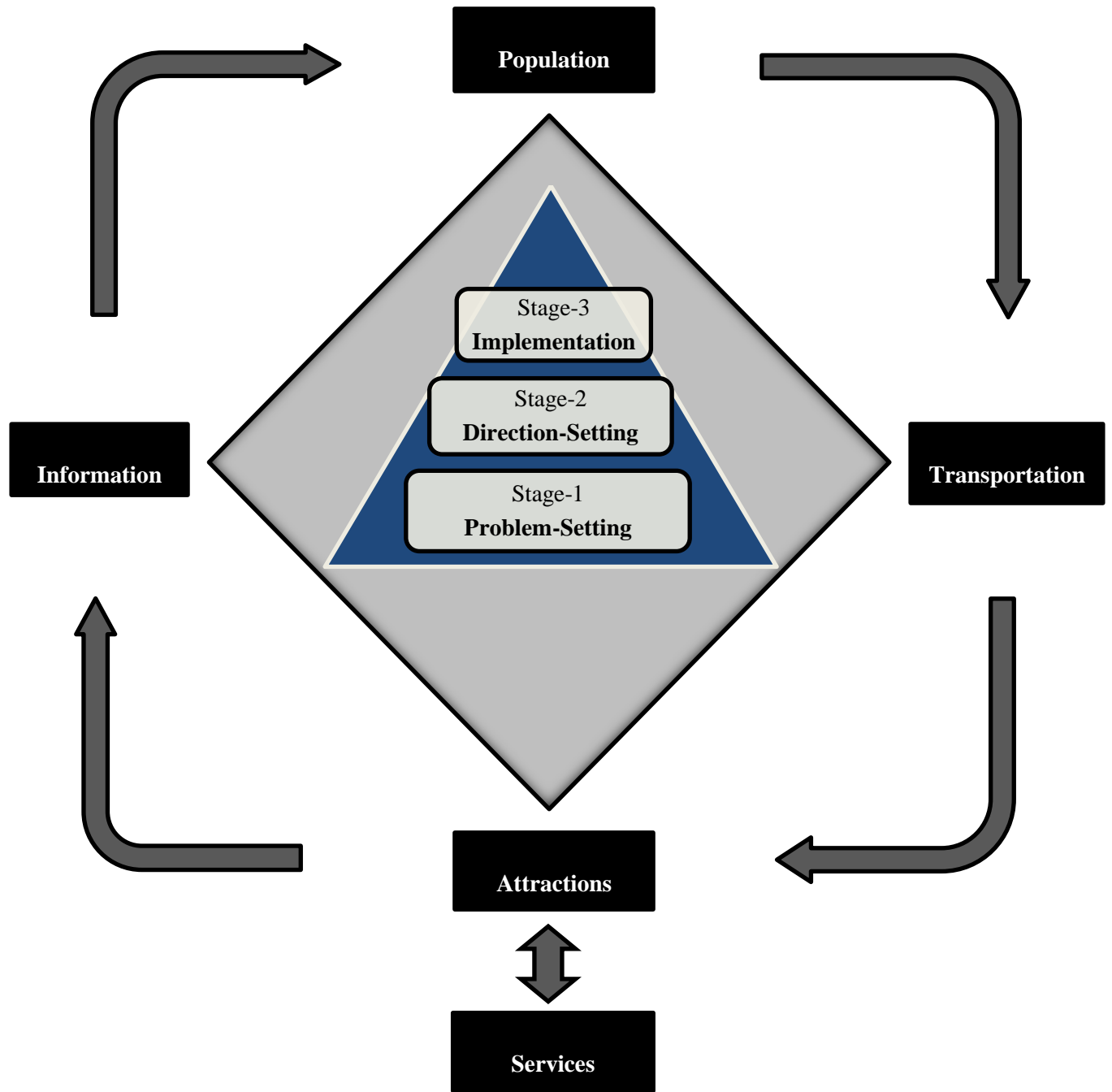
Figure 2.3: Composite Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present a description of the methodological approaches that had been employed in this research. As such, this chapter is to discuss the methodological considerations of the study. It would include research strategy, research design, and Units of Data Collection (UDC's). This would be followed by a discussion of the sampling and data collection techniques, the instruments employed, and the techniques utilized for analyzing the data.

3.1 Research Strategy

A research strategy is determined by the nature of research questions and the subject under examination (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this study, the subject under examination was to identify the issues that are faced in promoting the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley, to attract tourists. And building on this, recommend strategies for the solution of these issues, which could be largely helpful for both the social and economic elevation of the local communities and country at large. Therefore, the study had followed a qualitative research strategy, keeping in mind the nature of the subject under consideration. The main rationale for selecting this strategy was to obtain rich data and, an in-depth understanding of the problem under study, using qualitative interviewing and focus group discussions. As Carson et al., (2001) propose, qualitative research methodology is best useful when seeking an in-depth understanding of a certain situation.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is helpful for any researcher to plan the study in a successful way, and to take guidance from it, wherever necessary. It enables a researcher to effectively analyze the research issues, answer the research questions, and meet the objectives of the study. A research design is considered as the glue that holds all elements of the research together (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The type of research design selected for this study is a descriptive research design. A descriptive research design is defined as a research method that describes the characteristics and nature of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. Usually, in this research design, none of the variables or factors are influenced in any way, but instead, they are studied and are then described in terms of their characteristics. This research had to examine and explore the issues in the development and promotion of Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley as tourist destinations and its solutions. Therefore, descriptive design was considered appropriate, as it can be helpful in the in-depth analyses of the said issues and its coherent description, to reach out for recommendations and solutions. The study gathered data on different components and factors, from various sources regarding these heritage sites and presented and described the prospective framework for its effective promotion and development.

3.3 Units of Data Collection (UDC's)

The Units of Data Collection (UDC's) are the individual 'entities' within the target population, from which data is being collected. These individual entities are the units of observation which are selected based on their relevance to the research questions. A unit of observation is the item/s or person/s or any other specific entity that you observe and collect data from. Units of data collection are vital and play an important role in conducting research. The

researcher, therefore, had made a very careful and meaningful approach in choosing the respondents from the target population of the units of data collection. The units of data collection were the individuals (i.e. respondents) from the target population and were comprised of the following entities:

3.3.1 UDC 1 – Local Community Members

Including members of local communities as a unit of data collection helped uncover their perception, perspectives, and attachment to the Buddhist heritage sites. It derived their viewpoints on the current status and issues in the development and promotion of these sites as tourism destinations. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were being conducted with members of the locals.

3.3.2 UDC 2 – Tourists

Tourists are the persons who are on a visit to any site or destination for leisure, enjoyment, or any other purposes. In the prospect of this study, tourists include those people who are solely motivated to travel to and experience the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley. For the collection of data from this UDC, both semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted, to get their narratives about the topic under study, and what solutions or suggestions they propose.

3.3.3 UDC 3 – Heritage Managers

Heritage managers are the stakeholders of the heritage resources, who usually have a very formal relationship with it. They are considered an authority based on their administrative power

and expertise in knowledge about these resources. Similar to the first two UDC's, here too, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were being conducted. So that the thoughts of heritage managers are being noted about the issues in the development and promotion of heritage sites as tourism destinations, and what strategies to apply to solve those issues.

3.4 Research Methods

Research methods are comprised of all the methods which are involved in conducting any research study. According to Kothari (2004), research methods comprise of all the methods which are used by a researcher in conducting any research. There exist many different types of research methods, which can be used for the collection of the data by researchers, depending upon the nature of their study. In the field of social sciences, the most commonly used methods/instruments, for the collection of data, are un-structured interviewing, semi-structured interviewing, focus group discussions (FGD's), and other observational forms like ethnography, etc. This study had adopted and made use of qualitative methods of data collection. To achieve the objectives of the study, data was collected from primary sources only. The researcher, though tried, there was hardly any relevant secondary data, information, or any other data materials available or found whatsoever, on the issues related to the promotional aspect of heritage tourism at Buddhist sites of Swat valley. Primary data for the study had been collected with the following two different techniques:

- Semi-Structured Interviews, and
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD's)

To collect information over a complex and very subjective type of phenomenon, semi-structured interviewing is a good instrument. As in qualitative studies, a researcher tries to gain the views and thoughts of the respondents over any specific phenomenon, and present and describe it without any biases, therefore this was considered an appropriate instrument for this study. The focus group discussion was used to collect in-depth data and to understand what the respondents think and are of the view, regarding the particular phenomenon of this study. The rationale for using these two different instruments of data collection was to cross-check the data and information obtained from these research instruments.

3.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

This study intended to gather in-depth data, first-hand from the stakeholders, on the current status of heritage tourism and the issues faced in promotion of it. The Buddhist heritage sites in Swat and the tourism activity linked to it had so many different stakeholders and factors involved in it. This makes the examination of this overall phenomenon much complex. As everywhere different groups of humans were linked to these heritage resources, whose ideas, feelings, perspectives, and attachment with it, may differ with each other. Since conventional quantitative methods of data collection i.e. 'closed-ended questionnaires' could not be able to elicit a diverse and good quality of data from the respondents. And rather, any strictly-structured formation of interviewing too could not provide the opportunity to respondents to express their views over any subject openly and to say what they want to say. Besides this, it does not enable respondents, to advance the course of their own description and interpretation, without the framing of the researcher, nor it provides an opportunity for what to be discussed briefly and what in detail. Therefore, semi-structured interviews have been used to collect data and provide

enough space to respondents, to openly express their views and thoughts, and collect rich data. A total of twenty-seven (27) semi-structured interviews were conducted with individual respondents, where the duration of the shortest interview was eighteen minutes (interviewing a tourist) and the longest was of seventy-five minutes (with a heritage manager). The total number of individual interviews conducted with local community members (UDC-1) was eleven, with tourists (UDC-2) it was twelve and with the heritage managers (UDC-3) a total of four interviews were conducted.

3.4.2 Focus Group Discussions

The current study contained focus group discussion as the second instrument to extract in-depth information from the study population. According to Hennink (2014), a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a research instrument used in qualitative studies to obtain in-depth and extensive information using a well-organized and controlled discussion. Focus group discussions are actually similar to other types of qualitative interviewing, but here we interview a group of individuals together. Usually, it involves a group of people to discuss any specific idea, topic, or any issue. According to Fern (1982), conducting one focus group discussion can produce the perspectives equal to a series of in-depth interviews with the same number of participants individually. Focus group discussion can produce an extensive amount and very reliable data, for any social research, because of the cross-check and cross-arguments between the group members, who continuously challenge each other ideas and thoughts, which in the last result into a consensus-building between the members, at the closing of the discussion. Focus group discussions can, therefore, produce a large sum of data, in a very short span of time and help the

researcher to understand more deeply the research issue. Considering all these merits, the researcher employed focus group discussion as an instrument to collect data for this study.

In total, seven focus group discussions were conducted with different groups of respondents, where the duration of the shortest focus group was thirty-two minutes (interviewing a group of tourists) and the longest was of one-hundred and fifteen minutes (with a group of the local community). The total number of focus groups conducted with the local community (UDC-1) was three, and with tourists (UDC-2) and heritage managers (UDC-3), two with each group. Each focus group differed in terms of the number of total participants, depending upon the nature, convenience, and availability of respondents of a particular group. It was much difficult to convince a group of tourists (especially a large one) for a focus group, as compared to the other UDC's because they are usually in a hurry visiting different sites and have a very limited amount of time available to spend at any specific site. Individuals working at heritage sites or linked to these sites by any other means, those can be appropriately considered as 'heritage managers' were very limited in numbers. One of the reasons is because the number of experts or other staff of the archeology department is in short supply. Therefore, the focus groups conducted with the heritage managers were having the smallest number of participants. The local community members were comparatively easily available and accessible, and their group sizes were large. Among the seven focus group discussions conducted, the smallest group size was of five participants (conducted with heritage managers), and the largest group size was comprised of eight participants (that was conducted with local community members).

Serial No.	UDC's	Description	No. of Interviews	No. of Focus Group Discussions	Total
1	UDC 1	Local Community Members	11	3	14
2	UDC 2	Tourists	12	2	14
3	UDC 3	Heritage Managers	4	2	6
				Grand Total	34

3.5 Procedure of Data Collection

An interview guide was prepared and used to elicit information during the conduct of both semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. It was comprised of open-ended questions, where the questions were constructed based upon the main areas of research interests. The use of an interview guide is helpful in interviewing because it gives flow to a conversation and provides an easy framework for discussion. For all the three units of data collection of the study, three different interview guides were developed, but most of the questions in it were the same. Though there were few questions different in each guide, intended to cover the specific standpoint of each unit of data collection, about any particular area of interest. During the preliminary stages of fieldwork, the researcher conducted three pilot interviews at the first sub-locale of Swat Museum, and two each at the sub-locales of Butkara-1 and Bazira (Barikot) site. With the help of these pilot interviews, the interview guide was being restructured and improved. Many of the questions were rephrased, some more were added to it, and a few questions were

found repetitive and were removed. Then formal interviewing was initiated, where the first line of respondents were the tourists. The selection of tourists to be interviewed first was due to three reasons. First, because there is obviously no need for a long-term rapport building with tourists, as the interaction between them and the interviewer is spontaneous and there is almost no chance of meeting for a second time. Secondly, when the researcher approached the officials (or the heritage managers) at the heritage sites of Swat for interviewing, they declined and asked me to come via a proper way by taking a NOC (No Objection Certificate) from the Directorate of Archeology and Museums, Peshawar, to be able to collect data. To get the NOC, I traveled to Peshawar, where the officials told me that it will take four to five working days, as the director was busy with some Buddhist visitors from abroad. There was a weekend in the middle as well, so going back to Swat and conducting interviews with the other units of data collection, before getting the NOC was much intelligible. The third and last reason for interviewing tourists first was that it enabled the researcher to regularly meet with the other two UDC's (i.e heritage managers and local's), which made the researcher familiar to them and developed trust and rapport.

In the course of collecting data from my respondents, both individual interviews and focus group discussions were carried with all the UDC's, the details of which were discussed earlier. During the interviewing process, before the commencement of an interview or a focus group, the researcher would initially brief and inform the participants about the nature of the study and the type of questions to be expected. This was helpful to ensure their consent for participation and build their confidence to actively participate in the conversation, especially focus groups. It also assisted to enlighten the participants about the objectives and usefulness of conduct of this study, so that they may voluntarily reveal the best of information they have.

3.6 Rapport Building

Qualitative researches aim to gather an in-depth understanding of a central phenomenon. In order to fulfill that, the qualitative researchers need to get as close as possible to the research participants, as they are the main source of data. Because, the space and participants are complete strangers for the researcher, therefore to build a degree of comfort, understanding, and trust between the researcher and research participants is mandatory. To realize this understanding and trust, the researcher needs to establish a good rapport with the participants. The purpose of establishing rapport between researcher and participant is to both generate rich data while at the same time ensure mutual respect between researcher and participant (Guillemin & Heggen, 2009). Both the accuracy of the data and the level of interest and sincerity, with which a participant may involve in the research activity, depends crucially on a good relationship between the participant and researcher. In this regard, the researcher in this study (though initially skeptical), fortunately, built a good rapport with the research participants as time passed by. In the initial stages, there were some difficulties faced due to lack of experience and not truly knowing the nature of the mindset of the respondents and how to get close to them.

The tourists were interviewed first because there was not much need of building a long term rapport building and for other reasons discussed above. Because most of the tourists (UDC-1) were found to be either students or very young educated men and women, my own candidature as an M.Phil scholar (and being of young age) helped me develop and carry the interviewing, with a good level of comfort and understanding. In the course of collecting data from tourists, I used to continuously meet random members of my other UDC's (i.e the heritage managers and local's). This gave us enough time to get to know each other and as well as built my rapport as a researcher. When the time came to actually conduct interviews and focus groups with the heritage

managers and locals, almost all of the heritage managers knew me by my name and I knew their's, and the same was the case with many locals, who potentially became my research participants later. Members from these two UDC's would also often come and see me interviewing the tourists. And whenever I would have set with them, talking about many different aspects of life and the world, they would try to ask me questions related to my research work, which I was happy to be asked about and answer them. These all, rather small looking pieces of reasoning or evidence were actually, the tokens for developing a good rapport as a researcher and securing data, that is good in both quality and quantity.

3.7 Sampling

A sample is a selection of a fraction of objects and observations taken from any population of interest. It is comprised of a process through which a subset of individual entities has to be selected out of a large population of entities (Walliman, 2010). The sample selected will be representative of the characteristics of the entire population. In conducting this study on the heritage sites of Swat valley, two types of sampling techniques were been found appropriate, and are utilized.

3.8 Sampling Technique

When conducting any research, it is not possible to include every segment of the targeted population in the research process, so in this case, we choose a sample of a larger population, where randomization is nearly impossible, and researcher has limited resources as well (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). In qualitative research, it is better to select more than one sampling technique. Therefore, two sampling techniques were being used in this study, i.e. convenience sampling and purposive sampling. These sampling techniques were being chosen, considering the

qualitative research strategy of the study. In addition, as randomization is nearly impossible in studies of qualitative nature, where the population is large, and the researcher resources are very limited. The researcher was also overwhelmed by constraints such as a very limited amount of time to carry out this study. Keeping in view these factors, convenience and purposive sampling were found the most appropriate, and are being utilized in this study.

3.8.1 Convenience Sampling

This is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Because the layout of residences of the local people was much dispersed, it was difficult to map the population and draw boundaries from which area to exactly collect data. Secondly conducting interviews on the basis of randomization could have required much more resources and time, which was difficult to be guaranteed in the course of this academic study. Any technique of probability sampling (which is rarely employed in qualitative studies) was therefore deemed inappropriate, and 'Convenience Sampling,' a type of non-probability sampling was selected. This specific type of sampling was helpful to overcome the barrier of choosing from whom exactly to collect the data, as the local communities were residing in very scattered spaces and often without any organized streets or a village. There were also problems to convince the locals to agree for an in-depth interview or a focus group because they were skeptical about both the researcher and his interest in inquiring about the highly valuable (and for some evil) Buddhist heritage resources. The tourists also were often coming in large groups and the best way to reach them for collection of data was to engage those most convenient in accessibility. Also, as the tourists were usually reluctant to spare some time and provide data to the researcher, due to their fix and a limited amount of time at any

specific visiting site, so convenience sampling was considered the best fit to collect data from them. This specific type of sampling technique was also helpful to overcome any financial or social constraints in the smooth and timely collection of rich data from the respondents. In the course of this study therefore, the 'Convenience Sampling' technique has been used for UDC 1 (i.e. Local Community Members) and UDC 2 (i.e. Tourists).

3.8.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling also is a type of non-probability sampling technique. In this method of sampling, initially, we identify the key respondents who can be deemed most suitable to satisfy the aims of any research agenda. Here participants are selected based on some basic characteristics, from whom data is collected then. As Etikan et al., (2016) have stated, they can be some higher educational status, political positions, writers, historians, as these members of the society have some in-depth background knowledge of the issue under probe. Because the heritage mangers, are an authority on the subject matter of the heritage resources and it's linkage with tourism, they could provide a very rich amount of data from their wealth of knowledge. Purposive sampling is also best suited for the heritage managers because it allows the researcher and bestows authority upon him/her to select the participants deemed the most appropriate, and to collect a very purposeful data from them. Based on these merits, the 'Purposive Sampling' technique has been used in this study to collect data from UDC 3 (i.e. Heritage Managers).

3.9 Sampling Size

In qualitative studies, the researcher is often faced with the problem of uncertainty about the number of people to be interviewed. It is difficult to establish or pre-select the sample size, before the start of the actual collection of data in the field. Because in qualitative research the

sample size could be dependent upon the nature of research questions and the ability of participants to provide the required data, a researcher cannot fix the number of participants to collect data from. Also, it is impossible to know in advance, that how many people would need to be interviewed, before theoretical saturation starts emerging. Keeping all these factors in mind, the final sample size (i.e number of total participants) for this study emerged to be seventy-one. This was the point where the researcher found that enough data has been collected and the point of saturation in data achieved. The details of the total number of participants in this study, the number of interviews, and the number of individuals in each focus group of each of the UDC are given in the below table.

Table 3. 2: Number of Participants

Serial No.	UDC's	Description	No. of Interviews	No. of participants in each Focus Group Discussions	Total no. of participants
1	UDC 1	Local Community Members	11	6 + 6 + 8 = 20	31
2	UDC 2	Tourists	12	6 + 7 = 13	25
3	UDC 3	Heritage Managers	4	5 + 6 = 11	15
				Grand Total	71

3.10 Data Analysis

For the analysis of data collected through semi-structured interviews and focus groups, 'thematic analysis' was employed. The goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research

questions or say something about an issue. A thematic framework was constructed as a tool for the thematic analysis of the data. In framework analysis, we use a systematic useful framework, once we have all the data in textual form. In this study, the audio-taped recordings (of both interviews and focus groups) were first transcribed. Afterward, the six steps of Braun & Clarke (2006) were followed for the construction of thematic framework and analysis. Initially, the researcher worked to get familiar with the data. In the second step, initial codes were generated, and in the third step 'searching for themes' took place. The fourth step was to review the themes and merge any similar ones. The fifth step was to define the themes. In the last step, the writing and interpretation took place. All the processes, from transcribing to generating codes and developing themes, to analysis, was done manually. The audio-taped recordings (of both interviews and focus groups) were transcribed, by typing and writing them into MS Word files. The coding and themes generation on hard copies of the field notes was done with the help of ballpoints and highlighters, and on the transcripts written in MS Word, with the help of different formatting tools that MS Word offers, like for example 'Text Highlighting Color.' No help was considered necessary or taken from any qualitative data analytic software (e.g. ATLAS, Nvivo, etc.), due to a relatively small data set. In the writing stage, the information was presented and written under the heading of different themes and sub-themes. These themes and sub-themes were developed according to the objectives of the study. In the analysis of the data, though all the six stages were fulfilled, they were not necessarily followed in a linear format. Due to the complex nature of the data, the researcher had to deal with moving forward and back between them, perhaps many times.

CHAPTER 4

LOCALE DESCRIPTION

4.1 District Geography

Geography covers the diverse environments, places, and spaces of the earth's surface and their interactions at any given time and region. The practice and know-how of anything related to any of the above spectrums, has been in use and of dire importance to human civilization, since time immemorial. From its deep-rooted ancient practices to its modern-day utilization, geography is and will always be concerned with the characteristics of places. It focuses particularly on the place's natural environments and people, as well as the relation between the two. Acknowledging this, in the up-coming paragraphs we would discuss and describe the geographical attributes of our research locale, i.e. district Swat (of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – (K.P) province). Here, more specifically we would describe the subject matters related to the geography of our locale, like location and boundary, topography, tribes, ethnic groups and languages, and climate.

4.1.1 Location and Boundary

The valley of Swat is situated in the north of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K.P) province of Pakistan, lying from 34° 34' to 35° 55' north latitudes and 72° 08' to 72° 50' east longitudes. The valley is comprised of Swat district, which is a part of the Malakand division (an administrative unit) within the province of K.P. Topographically, it is a mountainous region, located among the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountain range. It is surrounded by Chitral, Upper Dir and Lower

Dir in the West, Gilgit-Baltistan in North, Kohistan, Buner, and Shangla in the East and Southeast and Malakand protected area and Mardan in the South.

The district headquarter of Swat is Saidu Sharif, although Mingora is the largest city and a commercial hub of the valley. Both these towns/cities are intertwined into each other and are rather referred to as twin-cities. Saidu Sharif lies at a distance of nearly 195 Kilometer (km.) from Peshawar (the provincial capital), towards the northeast, and 235 km. from the capital city of Islamabad (both, via the newly built Swat Express Way). The total area of district Swat is 5337 Square Kilometer (sq. km), divided into two tehsils, namely Matta (683 sq. km), and Swat (4654 sq. km). According to the last national census of 2017, the valley had an estimated population of about 2,309,570 heads.

4.1.2 Topography

Topographically, Swat is a mountainous region, lying among the foothills of the Hindukush mountain range. This range runs in the general direction of North and South and has a varied elevation within the Swat area, beginning from 600 meters above sea level in the South and rising rapidly up towards the North, to around 6,000 meters above sea level. The highest peak of the Hindukush mountain range in Swat valley is Falak Sair, which is at an elevation of 5,918 meters. The Swat region is also home to some of the most beautiful and mesmerizing lush green valleys, snow-covered peaks, giant glaciers, forests, meadows, and plains. The River Swat also runs through the valley. The snow-melted and crystal-clear cold water of which give life to many of its inhabitants and increases the beauty of its natural landscape.

4.1.3 Tribes, Ethnic Groups, and Languages

Historically, Swat valley has been home to many different ethnic groups and tribes. As evident from historical accounts and archeological remains of the region, many groups of people and their civilizations have flourished here throughout time, leaving their marks on the land and its people. As of today, the valley is home to three main ethnic tribes: *Pakhtuns, Gujjars,* and *Kohistanis.* The Pakhtuns, similar to their numbers in the overall Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, are in majority in the valley. The Pakhtuns of Swat are mainly from the clan of Yusufzai's among the main descent of Pakhtun origin. They mostly have inhabited the lower parts of the valley from Malakand up to Madyan. Gujar or Gujjar is another main ethnic group who mostly are residing in the upper parts of the valley, starting from Madyan towards Kalam, and up to the most northern areas of the valley, like Gabral, Gujjar Gabral, and Ghwai Bela. Although a large number of them also live in the towns of Mingora and Saidu Sharif, in large part for labor and employment opportunities. They have their tribe divided into different clans like Khatana, Bajarh, Chichi, Ahir, Chuhan, Pamra, Gangal, etc. The third main ethnic group inhabitant to the valley are the Kohistanis. They are one of the tribes among the Dardic tribes of the region. They live largely in the most northern parts of Swat valley, like Kalam and areas further north (i.e. Utror, etc.).

These different tribes of the valley speak different languages. The ethnic Pakhtuns speak their mother tongue known as *Pashto*. As they are in majority in the region, have inhabited the main centers of commercial activities and are owners to most of the commercial enterprises, their language Pashto has become a commonly understood means of communication for almost all of the other ethnic groups living in the valley. It is predominantly spoken in Swat and is understood and used by most of the population, especially in the main urban centers. The second ethnic

group of Gujjars speaks *Gujri* or *Gujro*, which has adopted many words of *Pashto* and *Punjabi*. This language of Gujri is also spoken by the Ajar people, who are nomadic Gujjars and form a substantial part of the Gujjar population. A variety of other languages are also used in the area, like (Kohistani), Torwali, Kalami, and Khwar, spoken by the Kalam and Kohistani people in the northern part of Swat. However, most non-Pakhtun people of the area are bilingual and fluent in Pashto along with their native languages.

4.1.4 Climate

Geographically, the valley of Swat lies in the temperate zone. The weather, therefore, is affected by the climatic factors like latitude, altitude, and rain-bearing winds (i.e. the cyclone and monsoon winds). In summer, Swat comes under the influence of the monsoon, while in winter, it is affected by the Cyclonic Current from the Mediterranean Sea. The summer in the lower Swat valley is short and moderate while it is cool and refreshing in the upper-northern part. The hottest month is June, with a mean maximum and minimum temperatures of 33°C and 16°C, respectively. The winter season is long and extends from November to March. During this season both rain and snowfall occurs, though the propensity of snowfall increases as we move towards the upper-northern parts of the valley, which makes the peaks of mountains covered in white, at the lower parts, to its total submersion in the upper parts. The coldest month is January, with a mean maximum and minimum temperatures of 11°C and -2°C, respectively. The average annual precipitation in district Swat ranges from 1000 millimeters to 1200 millimeters.

4.2 The history of Swat

Swat valley has one of the oldest histories, among the many different archaic cities and civilizations, that once existed in present-day Pakistan. Different kingdoms, tribes, and religions have seen their rise and fall in the valley. At the very earliest, the Macedonian ruler and one of history's greatest military minds Alexander the Great, made his way into the present-day towns of Odigram and Barikot in Swat, in 327 BCE (Before Common Era). He stormed these towns and invaded the territories and its inhabitants. These towns have been identified as "Ora" and "Bazira" in the records of the Greeks. Afterward, this area was ruled over by the Indo-Greek kingdom for centuries. Later, the area was occupied by Buddhists somewhere near the 2nd century BCE, and it became home-to and a major center of the Buddhist thought and practice in the region, that was in whole, a part of the greater Gandhara civilization. They followed Buddhism as their religion, and it was a mix of their religious ideals and practices, and expertise in art and architecture, that led to the development of the world-renown tradition of Gandhara (Greco-Buddhist) Art. Gandharan civilization prevailed in the north-west of present-day Pakistan, and the north-east of Afghanistan. It encompassed what is now Peshawar valley and the Potohar region in Pakistan, and parts of Afghanistan, mainly Jalalabad and surrounding areas. This civilization remained a central force in the region from the 3rd century BCE to approximately 1100-1200 CE (Common Era). Swat was an important region in this overall culture and traditions, where hundreds of Buddhist monasteries were built and Gandharan Art flourished. The remains of all this can be found today throughout Swat, though there is still a long way to go to excavate and discover many of the historical places and objects. Buddhism and Gandharan art thrived and flourished in this part of the world until the 8th and 9th centuries when Islam first began to gain sway in these localities. Swat valley also holds a great place in the tradition of

Gandhara Buddhism in the region, because it was one of the last places where Buddhist practices persisted until the 11th century, well after most of the inhabitants of surrounding areas had converted to Islam.

In 1023 CE, Mahmud of Ghazni attacked Swat and conquered the last Buddhist king, Raja Gira in battle. His relationship to the region and its invasion is of special importance because he introduced Islam to the area, after which the religion flourished swiftly to the whole region, and had to become a dominant force and tradition after his time. The coming-to-power of Mahmud of Ghazni also carries importance because from his time-afterward, the chronology of the region took a very different direction. Although the valley is today predominantly inhabited by the Yousafzai Pakhtuns, historians are of the view that the first Muslim arrivals in Swat were non-Pakhtun Dalazak tribes from south-east Afghanistan. Later, in the 16th-17th century, a wave of Yousafzai Pakhtuns hailing from the Kabul valley arrived in the area and started getting their influence over the region, people of whom would later constitute a princely-state in the valley, that was to-be known as 'Swat State.'

Swat State has the distinction of not being imposed by any imperial power or an individual, but was founded in 1915 by a 'jirga' of a section of Swat Valley after doing away with the rule of the Nawab of Dir over their areas (Sultan-i-Rome, 2006). Jirga is a practice in the region (mainly practiced in Pakhtun societies), in which the elders of a single community or many diffenernt communities come together to discuss and decide about an issue or anything of interest to them. The official title of the leader of the princely 'Swat State' was 'Wali of Swat' (leader of Swat), though initially, the title adopted different nomenclature. The youngest of the Princely States of India and dependent upon the British Indian Government and later Pakistan for currency, post and telegraph, and foreign affairs and later on electricity as well, Swat State was

internally independent. It had "its own laws, its own system of justice, army, police and administration, budget and taxes" (M. T. Ahmad, 1962: 43). It also had its own flag with an emblem-of-a fort in golden green background. The region comprising the former princely state today covers parts of the Swat, Buner, and Shangla districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In the year 1926, it was recognized as a fully-fledged princely state by the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent.

The first ruler of the state was Sayyid Abdul Jabbar Shah, who was enthroned in 1915 and remained in power till 1917. He originated an administrative system of the state, which was later modified, developed, and refined by his successors at the seat of the State. In 1917, Miangul Abdul Wadud became the Wali of Swat, who ruled it till 1949. In the year 1949, Miangul Jahanzeb, who was the eldest son of Miangul Abdul Wadud, was enthroned as the last Wali of Swat by his father. He was a very futuristic leader and a well-educated person, who was popular for building high-quality infrastructure and promoting education in his state. He ruled the state from there-after till its merger in 1969. On 28th July 1969, the princely state of Swat became dissolved and was incorporated into the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), when Yahya Khan announced its full integration.

After its integration to Pakistan, Swat had been through different high and lows. Important to mention here is the seizure of the region, in late 2007 by the Taliban of Swat, known as the 'Pakistani Taliban' or 'Swati Taliban.' They are also important to be talked about here, because of their drastic impact on the culture and art, heritage (specifically Buddhist heritage, which will be discussed in the coming paragraphs), and the tourism industry of the valley. In their very initial developments, they got emerged and flourished in the Malakand division and the tribal agency of Bajaur, along the border with neighboring Afghanistan, under the leadership of

Mullah Omer. They were in large part being influenced by the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) or the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Laws, defined by its founder, Maulana Sufi Mohammed (a native of the neighboring district of Dir). Formed by Sufi Mohammed in 1992, this Tehrik was intended to fight against political processes and the democratic form of governance, by declaring electoral politics & political parties both as un-Islamic. Its founder so, ask the people to join him for the cause of enforcing Islamic laws and governance system, as defined by himself. Their motto was *"Shariat or Shahadat"* (Islamic laws or martyrdom).

The Swati Taliban were later influenced by the emerging Taliban's at Afghanistan and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the tribal areas. In their initial days, they were being neglected by the society at large & state institutions because they were not much active. Later as they started becoming an active force in the area and dissemination of Sufi's ideology got its pace, he was taken into prison by state authorities. After imprisonment, his son-in-law Fazlullah (a native of Swat valley) took command of his followers, & became the face of Swati Taliban. He later started propagating the ideology to enforce Islamic laws within the valley, & commanded the people of Swat to live their lives according to the teachings of Islam. His Tehrik (movement) soon became a great threat to the Pakistani state, and eventually, he also started building close links with TTP and the Taliban of Bajaur. The authorities at that time neither reacted to the growing activities of the newly emerging Swati Taliban nor took any steps to address the grievances of the common people. This provided a fertile environment to the ideology and left the region susceptible to similar uprisings. Around 2005, militants led by Mullah Fazlullah raise the flag of another rebellion. The security situation in Swat deteriorated at a fast rate. Then, the authorities saw the fall of towns and the urban centers from a distance, till a time came when the

Taliban roamed freely in Mingora and other main cities to implement their laws by force. The government only had symbolic control, and the residents followed Taliban edicts instead of municipal laws because the militants had established a shadow government to replace the lawful authority. They carried out targeted assassinations of tribal elders, politicians, and government officials, and would kidnap or kill anyone who opposed them. The Taliban's insurgency badly hit the tourism industry, as thousands of potential visitors decided to stay away from the region. Due to the shrinking of tourism-industry, thousands of people lost their jobs. A large number of tourists from countries like Japan etc., who would visit the region due to its rich Buddhist heritage, refused to set foot on a land where foreigners faced the risk of kidnappings, beheadings, and terrorist attacks.

Inter-faith harmony was also affected, and the ancient heritage sites, which had survived many attacks for centuries, were vandalized and damaged. In September 2007, Fazlullah's supporters also tried to destroy the centuries-old statue of Buddha at Jehanabad with dynamite, and prehistoric rock carvings in other parts of Swat Valley, declaring it as idol and un-Islamic. They were clearly following the footsteps of the Afghan Taliban, who dynamited and blew up two giant-sized statues of Buddha in Bamiyan, Afghanistan in 2001. The militants tried to permanently deprive the people of Swat of their rich heritage by attacking the Swat museum. Luckily, it survived the assault and the federal government, taking timely action, took hundreds of priceless and timeless artifacts into possession and shifted them to Taxila. After the improvement in the security situation at Swat valley, those objects were returned, which can witness today on display at Swat museum. The rule and insurgency created by the Taliban continued till their defeat at the hands of the Pakistan Army in the early second half of 2009 when Operation Rah-e-Rast forced Mullah Fazlullah to seek refuge in Afghanistan. This, at last,

paved the way for both, the re-establishment of Pakistani control over the region and the return of peace in the valley.

This tragic time left some of the deepest carvings on the face of the beautiful valley of Swat, together with bitter memories left behind. The Taliban took away the hopes of the people & gave them dead bodies & destruction. The valley famous as "The Switzerland of the East," though for a while became the 'Valley of death.' They used fear & intimidation as a weapon to earn people supports, & silent the voices of their opponents. But who knows that fear, death & hatred can't sustain itself longer, in the mountains where once pilgrims & travelers had to come to, from as far as China & Tibet to hear to the peaceful sounds of the rings of the Buddhist monasteries & witness its green landscape.

4.3 The toponymy of Swat

The modern-day name of the valley, 'Swat' has been linked by different scholars to different historical accounts, sources, people, and civilizations. The oldest historical source, where a mention of any related nomenclature of the valley has been reported is 'Rigveda,' the religious scripture of Hinduism. In Rigveda, River Swat is mentioned as Subhavastu or Suvastu, meaning 'having good/fair dwelling.' Panini, the famous Sanskrit grammarian, also used the same name as in Rigveda i.e. Suvastu. (Wilson 1860: 166; Tucci 1977: 39; Olivieri 1996: 60).

The region of Swat valley in general, and some of its archeological sites specifically, has strong linkages with the 4th century BCE Macedonian ruler Alexander the Great. He himself, and his armies crossed the mountainous ranges of Hindu Kush and conquered the region of the present-day Swat, in the second half of 4th century BCE (i.e. 327 BCE). This conquest of Swat has a mention in the Greek sources as well, where Swat has been referred to as *Soastene* or

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Suastene. The Greek writers have used these two terms, *Soastene* or *Suastene*, for naming the modern-day Swat (Tucci 1977: 39, 43; Olivieri 1996: 59-60). They had actually derived the name of the Swat region from its river, i.e. Swat river (Tucci 1977: 39, 43; Olivieri 1996: 60).

As Buddhism once had a strong-hold on the Swat valley, and many monasteries were built where religious practices must have been in full zeal. Due to which followers of Buddhism used to travel to the valley, crossing the difficult mountainous terrain of the region, from as far as China and other Buddhist nearby regions. Chinese Buddhist pilgrims used to take this hazardous journey and visited Swat from as early as the 5th century CE onward. In search of Buddhist scriptures many Chinese traveled, among them, Faxian visited the valley in 5th century CE, Song Yun in 6th century CE, Xuan Zang (Hsuan-Tsang) 7th century CE and Huizhao in 8th century CE (Beal 1884: xi, xv; Oliver 1890: 215). Important here is to note that in the writings of Chinese pilgrims' the word of Swat has been mentioned for the River Swat. Which from many other sources and including this one, provide the evidence that the valley has derived its name from the river flowing through it, i.e. River Swat. The Chinese pilgrims' like for example Xuan Zang, have mentioned river Swat as '*Su-p'o-fa-su-tu*' (Subhavastu) (Wilson 1860: 116; Watters 1904: 226). There have been many variations in the sources of Chinese pilgrims, regarding the naming and pronunciation of ancient Swat. Faxian (399–414 CE), who visited Swat in 4007 CE and Song Yun (518–521 CE) pronounced Uddiyana as Ou-chang, 'Wu-ch'ang' or 'Woo-chang' (Beal 1869: 26, 188; Cunningham 1871: 81; Watters 1904: 225). Whereas another Chines pilgrim Xuan Zang (629–645 CE) has used the name 'U-chang-na' or 'Wu-changna' for Swat (Wilson 1860: 116; Cunningham 1871: 81; Stein 1921: 14). Similar to Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, Hyecho (700-780 or 704-787 CE), a Buddhist pilgrim traveling from the Korean Silla Kingdom to India, also visited Swat valley in 8th century CE and referred to the region as Wuchang. In his records, he

had used the terms Wuchang and Uddiyana for Swat as he says; "travelling for three days through the mountains due north of Gandhara, I arrived at Wuchang, which the native people call Uddiyana" (Whitfield 2012: 132).

To Tibetans, Swat has been a holy land by virtue of the birthplace of Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, and due to this linkage, references such as 'Urgyan' or 'Orgyan' for the land of Swat, can be found in Tibetan sources (Tucci 1958: 279; Snellgrove & Richardson 2003: 96). A Tibetan Buddhist pilgrim, Buddhagupta who visited Swat in 16th century CE, explains the terms Orgyan or Urgyan and Uddiyana in these words; 'The name Orgyan is derived from Uddiyana on account of the similarity in the pronunciation of *d* and *r*' (Tucci 1940: 4-5, 1977: 39). According to Giuseppe Tucci, a Tibetan Buddhist pilgrim, Urgyan pa also visited Swat in 1250 CE., who entered Swat valley through the Ilam Mountain (Tucci 1940: 9, 11-12; Ashraf Khan 1993: 3-4).

Majority of the scholars such as Deane, Stein, Tucci, Benard, and Callieri believe that Uddiyana of the Sanskrit sources should be identified beyond any doubt with the present-day valley of Swat and neighboring areas (Deane 1896: 655; Stein 1930: 1; Tucci 1958: 279). The homonymous Swat is used both for river Swat and Swat valley, but actually, it was the river Soastos or Suastos (Swat) which furnished the name to the entire valley of Swat (Olivieri 1996: 60; Callieri *et al* 2008: 112).

4.4 Archeological Work in Swat

In Swat valley, the archeological investigation, excavation of different historical sites and the preservation of the sites and objects excavated there-in, is still in its infancy. The same is true for the thousands of years archaic sites and objects of Buddhist heritage in the valley. Though

there have been many hardworking people and organizations being involved in these activities, many would agree that as far as excavation and preservation of Buddhist heritage at Swat are concerned, it is in large part being made possible by the magnificent work done by the Italian Archeological Mission in Pakistan (IAMP) & its scholars. There has been a long list of Italian scholars/archeologists who have invested their time in many aspects of the Buddhist heritage, from excavation and preservation to interpretation and connecting the historical puzzles of the valley with its past. Thanks to the Italian scholars, including, but not limited to, Giuseppe Tucci, Domenico Faccenna and Luca Maria Olivieri, who rendered enormous time and efforts specifically to the heritage sites of the valley, carrying-out research studies, documenting it and working towards the scientific preservation and care of these sites, with all their expert know-how, both in theory and practice.

4.5 The history of Buddhism in Swat Valley

The valley remained a 'cradle of Buddhism' from the second century BCE to the ninth century CE, where at one time more than 1400 monasteries flourished. In Buddhist traditions, the valley has long been known and recognized as forming an ancient place called Uddiyana, a Sanskrit word meaning a 'garden.' Uddiyana was visited by Chinese and later Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims from the 5th century onwards, who recorded numerous Buddhist sites. The place is also renowned for being the birthplace of Padmasambhava, the sage said to have brought Buddhism to Tibet. It is evident from the archaeological exploration and excavation that Swat was eventually an important region in the past times, rich in cultural heritage. Today, ruins of great Buddhist stupas, monasteries and statues are found all over the valley. This rich art and heritage, with its

indigenous features, alien influence, and workmanship developed here, presents a unique art of the world.

As far as the introduction of Buddhism is concerned, King Ashoka was the first to send the Buddhist missionaries to Uddiyana for propagating the teachings of Buddhism. The rock edicts of Ashoka at Shahbaz Garhi, Mardan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) are assumed to be the earliest records to support this theory (Tucci, 1958, p. 281). Later, this land became sacred for Buddhism and numberless monasteries and stupas for religious ceremonials were established. A school of Buddhist art also came into being in order to develop a deep relationship and stay connected with their religion and communicate and express their contemporary life. The glimpses of that art and architecture are also visible even in contemporary times. The Buddhist centers of Uddiyana were so famous that it attracted the indigenous and even foreign pilgrims, particularly from China and Tibet. Though there exist variations in the writings of the scholars, about the exact time period of when did these foreign pilgrims made their visit's. But according to Stein (1916), among the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, Fa-Hien (also spelled as Faxian) was the first to visit this area in 403 CE. Fa-Hien recorded that there were five hundred Buddhist monasteries in Uddiyana inhabited by monks of the Hinayana sect of Buddhism (Stein A, 1921). Similarly, Sung-Yun (also spelled as Song Yun) and other Chinese came here in 519 CE and revealed the majestic sounds of bells hanging on Buddhist temples and the fine natural environment of this area, all together with its fertile soil (Stein A, 1916).

4.6 Buddhist Heritage in Swat Valley

As part of the Buddhist Gandhara Civilization, Swat remained a central point of attraction for Buddhists from all over the South-Asian region. As discussed earlier, it was known as

Uddiyana, where Tantric Buddhism flourished under King Indrabhuti in the eighth century CE. Swat also carries a special significance for Buddhists, because of the belief that Padmasambhava, also called Guru Rimpoche, a semi-legendary Indian Buddhist mystic who introduced Tantric Buddhism to Tibet was, according to tradition, native from Uddiyana. He holds a high place in Buddhist-traditions of Tibet and is being revered as the second Buddha.

The valley had been a part of the Gandharan art and architecture, which is famous today throughout the world for its unique quality of art and skilled know-how. There were beautiful and serene Buddhist monasteries built all over the place, for which pilgrims would come from as far as China, Tibet, and Korea. The serenity of these monastic complexes can also be confirmed from the (written) accounts of these pilgrims. A large number of stupas, carvings, and statues were also built and developed, the remains of which can be found in the valley today as well. Among this heritage, the Butkara-1 monastery, Bazira (Barikot) archeological site, and the giant seated statue of Buddha at Jehanabad, are a few prime examples of the richness of the area with Buddhist heritage. It would be important here to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts and hard work of the Italian Mission and its scholars, who are working tirelessly, since 1950s to excavate, preserve and take care of this important heritage.

During the Taliban's crisis in Swat, the Buddhist heritage witnessed its worst of times. The radically driven extremists considered the heritage as idol and evil and did their best to damage and destroy it. They demolished many stupas and statues and damaged the face of the giant Jehanabad Buddha with dynamite, in a similar way, as in 2001 they dynamited and destroyed the large Buddha statues of Bamiyan Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the government rather powerless or more accurately non-interested did not act to safeguard the relics. In later

years, a group of Italians, together with some Pakistani's helped repair the Jehanabad Buddha statue.

4.7 Sub-Locales

The valley of Swat has remains of hundreds of heritage sites, whose linkages can be traced back to the once-dominant followers of Buddhism, who inhabited the area at that time. Thanks to the untiring efforts and hard work of many individuals and organizations, today many important Buddhist sites and relics are being excavated. Many among these sites are open for visitors and the relics and artifacts are being on display at Swat Museum. Though the heritage tourism industry of Swat is still in its very infancy, tourists can be witnessed visiting and taking interest in the Buddhist heritage sites and all that is on display. As discussed, there are many sites of Buddhist heritage, where tourist activities are taking place, but keeping in mind the requirements of this study and financial and time constraints, the researcher had selected only three important sites as sub-locales for this study, from the greater locale of overall Swat valley. These three sub-locales were carefully selected, through a rigorous analysis of its status in terms of excavation and preservation, importance in Buddhist traditions, and more importantly, it's potential for the heritage tourism market. Besides, the researcher was hoping to get to know well a small part of the overall Buddhist heritage, in relation to tourism promotion, rather than knowing a great deal of it superficially.

The selected sites are:

1. Swat Museum (as a Buddhist Heritage Site),

2. Butkara-1 Site, and

3. Bazira Site (Barikot).

4.7.1 Swat Museum (as a Buddhist Heritage Site)

Another important heritage site, where Buddhist heritage can be seen and experienced by visitors is the Swat museum. It is located at a distance of one-and-a-half (1.5) Kms from Mingora city, adjacent to the Mingora Judicial Complex. Encompassing an area of 120,000 sqm, the sub-sections include reserve collection storage building, reception counters, offices, Shuahada Memorial, guest house, and employees' quarters (Marati & Vassallo, 2013). The history of this museum shares some interesting yet tragic incidents including the 2005 earthquake and bomb blast in 2008 during the Taliban's militancy. These incidents later on compensated by rebuilding and renovation of this museum. As far as the history of establishment is concerned, keeping in view the cultural heritage of this area and excavation in process, the then ruler or 'Wali' of Swat initiated some effective steps to have a building for the storage of these excavated materials, within the Swat (Marati & Vassallo, 2013, p.27). The first inauguration of this museum was done by President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan, back on the 10th of November, 1963. With time to time, there has been made some structural and additional modification by curators and museum officials to increase and include the storage capacity and ethnology of the Swat respectively.

The museum is very important in the overall heritage tourism market and experience extending towards the tourists. Because it had on display the relics, statues, and artifacts of many different Buddhist heritage sites, including the Bazira site and Butkara-1 site. This was the rationale for choosing it as one of the sub-locales for this study. Unfortunately, the museum had been through many tragic incidents and times of chaos around it. Important to mention here was the tragic disaster of the 2005 earthquake and 2008 blast which severely damaged the building, and the collections later were moved to Taxila Museum in the early phase and finally, they were

stored in Peshawar Museum (Marati & Vassallo, 2013, p. 30,31). The year 2011 was a landmark in the rebuilding history of the museum when again Italian Mission along with architectural assistance from the University of Engineering and Technology, Peshawar started to rebuild the entire structure up to the latest standards (Marati & Vassallo, 2013). This rebuilding process continued for four years, till the second time inauguration by Malik Amjad Khan Afridi (advisor to the Chief Minister, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Archeology and Museums) and the Italian Ambassador, Adriano Chiodi Cianfara, on the 10th of December 2014. Since then, the Swat Museum has been displaying the relics and artifacts of Buddhist heritage in the valley.

4.7.2 Butkara-1 Site

The Butkara-1 Stupa identified in historical accounts of Buddhist pilgrims such as Song Yun (520 CE) as the monastery of Ta-Lo is the second site selected as a sub-locale for this study. The heritage site of Butkara-1 and the surrounding area is renamed and is locally now known as Gulkada-1. It is an important Buddhist stupa located within the premises of Saidu-Sharif, Swat. It is believed to have been initially started building around the 3rd century BCE, by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka. He probably had built the enormous central stupa of the site. Till tenth century CE, the central stupa has been encircled and enlarged with a new version of circular structure five times, encapsulating the previous structure. In the surroundings there were nearly 200 smaller stupas (of different sizes) built by the followers and pilgrims of Buddhism, depending possibly upon their financial conditions and religious devotion. The remains of which can be easily witnessed today. This monastery of Ta-Lo was a famous place, where (as discussed in detail earlier) Buddhist pilgrims would visit from as far as China and Tibet. This is also evident from the accounts of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, who visited here from 5th till the 8th century CE.

This stupa of Butkara-1 was excavated by the Italian Archeological Mission in Pakistan, led by archeologist Domenico Faccenna. They started excavating this site in the year 1956. During excavation, a coin belonging to the Chandragupta Maurya period was found, which proves the site to be associated with the Ashokan period. This Buddhist heritage site is believed to be one of the most important sites, in terms of the artifacts and relics that are being excavated here. These precious artifacts and relics are on display in museums in different parts of the world, including Italy. Many of which can also be witnessed at the Swat museum.

This site has been selected as one of the sub-locales for this study due to many significant reasons. Because, it is one of the most well-preserved Buddhist heritage site, located at a very ideal place for tourism activities, as it is located very close to Mingora city, within the premises of Siadu-Sharif. Another reason is its importance in both Buddhist traditions and historical accounts. And also, being well-preserved and easy to access, it is one of the most visited, if not the most visited Buddhist sites in Swat, and tourists enjoy experiencing it.

4.7.3 Bazira (Barikot) Site

Bazira is another important heritage site having its reputation as one of the notable sites in Swat, that has a relationship attached to Buddhists. Though, having inhabited by many different kingdoms and followers of diverse religious ideologies and religions, the ancient city of Bazira in modern Barikot, remained under Buddhist hold for long. According to Olivieri (2018), this place, known by many names including Bazira, Beira, Vajirasthana, Bir-Kot, entails some unique profile due to its occupation-by and connection with some twelve ruling dynasties.

This place is a unique site of Buddhist heritage, having structures and remains of a once-vibrant big and modern city in its own era of existence. There has been a lengthy project carried

out by the Italian Archeological Mission, excavating a nine feet wider defense wall at the front, many excavated homes- or living structures, monasteries, and home-based places of worship of different sizes. A large number of artifacts and relics are also being found and now preserved and displayed at the Swat Museum for visitors. Due to its connection with different dynasties and religions, the excavated parts of the site completed till now and the relics find there-in are carefully marked-with and allocated to different time-periods and dynasties, in relation to its actual inhabitants. The same is being done with the excavated structures and relics, having an association with Buddhists. They can be, of course, termed as Buddhist heritage resources, both of which are today available to be witnessed by tourists.

This site was selected as one of the sub-locales due to its importance as having a very old historical account, associated with Buddhists. This site is carefully being excavated, having a large area cover, which has a lot to offer to its visitors. And it, therefore, has the potential to become a famous destination for travelers from all around the world.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter includes data analysis and discussions, built upon the data collected, in the field from the qualitative in-depth interviewing and Focus Group Discussions (FGD's), as discussed in detail in the 'Methodology' chapter. Keeping in mind the qualitative nature of the study, and concerns faced by the researcher, in the course of carrying a qualitative study (for example, 'point of saturation' in data), in total, thirty-four interviews were conducted. Data was collected through both semi-structured interviews and FGD's. Of the total thirty-four individual and group interviews, eleven semi-structured interviews, along with three focus groups' were taken with UDC-1 (i.e. local community members). Twelve semi-structured interviews accompanied by two focus groups' were conducted with UDC-2 (i.e. the tourists). With the last UDC-3 (i.e heritage managers), four semi-structured interviews and two focus groups' were being conducted.

Data for this research study, titled "Issues in Promotion of Heritage Tourism in Swat Valley," was collected from three sub-locales of Swat, including Swat Museum, Butkara-1 site, and Bazira (Barikot) site. As discussed in the methodology chapter, this study in its entirety was focused on the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat, concerning it's potential for heritage tourism and any issues in this regard. The above sub-locales were chosen and studied, being specifically as 'outfits' of Buddhist heritage, and were therefore analyzed in terms of current (and potential future) issues it faces (or may face in the future) as potential sites for heritage-related tourist activity. For the analysis of data collected, codes and themes were used to manage, organize, and chose the most relevant, pertinent and rich data. Further, thematic analysis is used as a technique,

in which different techniques were developed to analyze & discuss all the data related to it and answer the research questions, taking help from the said technique.

The main focus of the presentation and analysis of the data will be to address the research questions and obviously, the research objectives. The research questions of this study (as discussed in detail in chapter three of this document), are centered on the following main themes; finding-out what are the main issues in the promotion of heritage tourism sites of Swat, what strategies need to be employed to effectively solve those issues and promote these sites, and lastly, what benefits the local communities may realize through the solution of these issues and promotion of these potential sites for heritage tourist activities.

The themes which were developed for the analyses and are presented in this chapter are based on the central questions of the study and the main components of the conceptual framework. Therefore, this chapter will link-up the themes with both of the components mentioned above. A total of six major themes were generated along with their sub-themes.

5.1 Themes

The themes and it's related sub-themes, which were generated with the help of thematic analysis of the data collected from the respondents are being discussed below.

5.1.1 Population (of Tourists)

5.1.1.1 Interest in Travel

For any tourism activity to take place, the first and most important factor is the presence of a population (or rather potential tourists) who may have an 'interest' or whose interest could possibly be developed, to visit and experience a (tourist) destination. This factor 'interest in

travel' of the population is a demand-side component of the overall heritage tourism market and is therefore important for all the concerned stakeholders, especially heritage managers, to have knowledge and understanding of this factor. Through this knowledge, one can understand the motivation behind visiting of the customers, i.e. tourists, and their expectations and needs from any specific destination and its managers. In the case of heritage sites that are studied here, many people were being motivated by their interest to travel-to places having religious significance for them, as many followers of Buddhism from Buddhist countries like Thailand, Japan, etc. do, visiting Buddhist heritage sites of Swat. Many others like to learn and educate themselves about the history, heritage, and civilization of a community or any place, as at the very same Buddhist sites of Swat, many domestic and European non-Buddhist tourists come for. This situation is well-documented in the words of one of the respondents as:

> *Throughout the year we had 2 types of foreign visitors from around the world, one is Buddhists, from countries like Japan, Korea, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, Thailand & Burma, etc., these are Buddhists countries, & most of their visitors that come here are pilgrims, who come here to perform their religious rituals. They have their specific areas in the museum like the footprints of Buddha, where they perform religious rituals & prostrate. Then they also visit Butkara, where they do their rituals, & do circumambulations there. Other than this, the people who visit from Europe or other western countries, are people of the Book (ahle-kitaab), i.e. Christians or Jews, they don't have any such affiliation to come here as pilgrims, they are just common visitors here.*

Regarding domestic (Pakistani) tourists and their interest, the same respondent has these views:

Then we have two types of [domestic] tourists, some people are interested in visiting heritage & historical sites, while others like to see natural landscapes. But the number of tourists interested in visiting heritage & historical sites are very minute, and they don't have any religious motivation, they are just common visitors.

As discussed above, the knowledge and understanding of these visitors and their interests and the issues related to it are very important for advancing a robust heritage tourism market. Also, these factors produce the 'critical junctures,' which possibly defines the direction and magnitude of future growth of the tourist activity, in today's competitive tourism market and well-aware visitors (at least many of them, if not their majority). Therefore, they have an important role in order to be applied in the promotion of these heritage sites. Where factors like, who have an interest in witnessing these sites and do visit here. And who may have an interest but don't have any presence here, and what does any specific group of potential tourists like the most in any site, etc. etc., should be taken notice when promoting these sites. One of the respondents said:

Then in the museum, we have stone instruments, whose time-period starts from 1700 BCE. Later, we have Alexanders' time's Greek inscriptions in one of our showcases, which provides evidence of his entry in 327 BCE. Similarly, we have pieces of evidence of Ashoka's period, Kanishka period…….because this centuries-old Gandharan Art was introduced by Mahayana Buddhists of the Kanishka period, in the 2nd century CE. In the later galleries, we have relics of the Turk Shahi and Hindu Shahi period, and rock art of Buddhist's. And at last part of our gallery, we have objects from the era of Mahmud Ghaznavi and later of Yusafzai state of Swat, and then we had Pukhtun culture also at

display. This all highlights the historical importance of today's Swat, and it's potential for attracting tourists from different parts of the world.

As mentioned, tourists' interest can be built and they can be attracted to any heritage destination, with the help of offering different types of historical attractions and experiences with heritage artifacts. In the case of Swat museum, in addition to Buddhist heritage, we can also attract tourists who may take an interest in history and objects related to Alexander's presence in Swat. Then we have the sites, relics, and statues of the world's famous Gandharan Art. Which has the potential, thanks to its magnificent artwork, to bring-in thousands of people from all corners of the world. Buddhists too have a very deep historical and emotional attachment with Swat museum and the Buddhist sites of the valley. They are already traveling to this ancestral land and love to visit Buddhist monasteries like Butkara-1 etc., and their numbers could probably be increased further, looking to their arrivals and interest. Then among other heritages at Swat museum, we have on display, the heritage of very initial arrivals of Muslims in Swat, which can be of interest to many, and specifically for the domestic tourists of Pakistan. In the last galleries, we have the heritage of Pakhtun's of Swat on display. This, of course, can be very interesting to both foreigners and domestic visitors, and the locals Pakhtun of Swat and K.P would definitely like it the most.

We know, that our main focus here is to develop visitors' 'interest' and promote tourist activity concerning the sites and objects of Buddhist heritage. But during the course of this study, the researcher has been able to find out that the said activity can't be done in isolation or specificity of its own. Neither is it so simple nor beneficial, to do it so. There are many different heritages, religious groups, and their ideologies, and many ethnicities being linked with the

development of tourists 'interest' in the Buddhist heritage of Swat. And therefore, we need to adopt a very inclusive strategy for developing interest and promotion of this (Buddhist) heritage. Where necessary, we need to offer these heritages being sandwiched together for some specific groups of potential tourists like the domestic tourists and more specifically, the local Pakhtun's. Whereas to others, like for example, followers of Buddhism, we can better develop their interest by promoting to them specifically the Buddhist heritage of the area and its uniqueness.

This type of effective planning and hard work, along with employing innovative techniques for spreading awareness about these sites is a need of time. Also, we would have to brainstorm innovative ideas, leading into strategies, in-line with the needs and expectations of these modern-era travelers, to build up their interest and motivate them to travel to these heritage sites of high value. These all strategies would most probably help promote the Buddhist heritage of the Swat valley while accommodating the needs of very diverse tourist groups. After all, the rewards and joys will be thus distributed broadly and the expansion in this market of Buddhist heritage tourism would be sustainable.

5.1.1.2 Ability to Travel

After 'interest,' the second factor that together makes the 'demand side' of the tourism (or heritage tourism in this case) market is the 'ability to travel' of the potential tourists. Ability here means having the resources to accomplish the activity of traveling to and visiting a destination, of which you have an interest in. For a tourist destination to be effectively developed and promoted, we need to examine the ability of tourists. This means to check out that are people-out-there who have an interest and the required ability to visit the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat valley. After

examination of this, we also need to figure out issues related to those potential tourists and their ability to travel to these sites. One of the respondents said in this regard:

> *You know, tourists come here from all parts of Pakistan, even they also come from Buddhist countries like Tibet and Japan, and many other Europeans too visit here. These tourists, of course, have planned for their traveling, and they have time & enough money [resources] to fulfill their dreams……they like to come and enjoy here in Swat.*
>
> *And as I have mentioned earlier, we have two types of tourists, some people are interested in visiting heritage and historical sites, while others like to see green mountains and lakes etc.…….but both of these types [of tourists] have the ability to come here, they have money in their pockets. And of course, they like to visit these sites. Look, how can somebody come here if they don't have the ability [budget] and time and energy [i.e. health and physical fitness] to travel and stay here……and eat?*

People from all over Pakistan and visitors throughout the world (especially from Buddhist countries) have a demand to visit and learn about these historical sites and the artifacts that are available for display. These potential tourists have the 'ability' to fulfill this demand of theirs; to visit and experience heritage sites of Swat. This means they have the available resources to carry out this activity, like they have enough time, physical fitness, and financial resources, for the very least to fulfill this activity. As another of my respondent mentions that:

> *Nowadays, there are not many visitors, but before the incident of terrorism [Taliban insurgency] and the war…….There used to be many more visitors than today, at least in thousands (daily), because Butkara site would also earn a lot of money then…….But now as the situation is still progressing, after peace has prevailed here, so the number of visitors is increasing again.*

Of course, as evident from the above manuscript, and global trends, there is no doubt that tourists' numbers are increasing at heritage sites, throughout the world. The same is the case here in Swat. Though heritage tourism activity was on a rise, Swat (and Pakistan as a whole) was unfortunate enough that it faced many crises and bad times, in the very recent past, that reversed that growth and mobility. We can, therefore, say that though there was a high demand of visitors before the Taliban's crisis and the war against terror, as these incidents prevailed, it curtailed the 'ability' of those visitors, making them unable to decide to come here, keeping in mind the high risk of their safety-for-life (for both domestic and foreign tourists). In addition, this crisis of terrorism and chaos spread in many parts of Pakistan and continued for many years. This prevalence of terror very soon made our country an unsafe zone for tourists and very badly damaged our image in the world. Though this issue would be discussed thoroughly in the coming themes, my concern here is to highlight, that at least we can agree that un-safety and prevalence of chaos and unlawfulness could badly hit on the ability of potential visitors. Thus, making people to withdraw from their likeness for a potential destination, and not visiting there, at least for the time when it's not fully safe.

After all, thank God, that bad times are over, and once again tourism at the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat is on a rising projectile. People (means tourists) once again are now able to fulfill their demand for visiting and enjoying being at the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat. And hopefully, it will improve for the better, if we all strived to keep it so.

5.1.2 Accessibility

5.1.2.1 Roads, Signages on Roads and Directions

Most of the Buddhist heritage sites, if not all of them, can be easily accessed via good metallic roads. The three sites, which are under observation in this study, have all excellent access via a web-of-roads. Though the roads to these sites are good, it does not mean they have excellent accessibility, or rather have a modern tourist-friendly mechanism to be reached. There are problems in locating these sites, that where exactly to go, to find them, especially to sites which are located under condense local populations and their streets and houses. There may be a few signboards of these heritage sites (established by the Archeology and Museums Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) to direct tourists there, and they are of course helpful in circumstances, but their numbers are still very minimal. This problem of accessing these sites is further enlarged by the fact that very few locals have the right information about where exactly a site is located. The local people are sometimes unable to differentiate between two or more nearby sites, as in the case of Butkara-1 and Butkara-3, for example. These issues are briefly and simply mentioned by one of the study respondent as:

> *Actually, if we would go towards the Butkara site, the road is perfect, it is metallic on all the way. Our department had also put a signboard for tourists' direction, but it's just near the site. Other than this, our department couldn't distribute men on every turn of the road to direct tourists to the Butkara site, and at the same time, these visitors had to ask for directions, at each chowk or roundabout to reach Butkara. This activity is indeed heinous (tiresome) for these tourists before they reach the site. Then when these tourists return, some of them complain that we couldn't locate Butkara-1, others say we didn't*

find Butkara-3. Tourists……..actually, they [tourists] face a lot of problems to reach and access these heritage sites. People [both the locals and visitors] don't have information and knowledge that where does Butkara-1 or Butkara-3 is located, where is Saidu Stupa, Panr is then far away from all of these.

As the population of the towns in Swat has been on a rise, and these towns are expanding, the heritage sites, which may once be located encircled by open fields or in sparsely populated villages or towns, are today mostly covered from all sides, by a very dense web of housing schemes and townships. Where very sophisticated and modern concrete buildings are raised from the ground, like the one around Butkara-1 site. This expansion and growth in the number of buildings and structures around the heritage sites have made the accessibility of tourists much more difficult. A tourist who may in earlier times would have easily seen the heritage sites from very far-away and would have gone directly towards it on a sparse land or in a single street, now has to take many turns inside the streets of the densely populated towns. There aren't any signboards at every street's end or round-about, and if a tourist is unlucky enough that no local, who has the knowledge of the site that the visitor intends to visit is available, he/she would definitely not be happy with whatever he/she may go through, to reach the site. One of my respondents said regarding this:

There lies a lot of problems in the accessibility of these sites. Therefore, I would appeal the government to work on these issues, and improve roads, signage and other facilities, so that the visitors may easily access these sites. Our department [DOAM- Department of Archelogy and Museums] alone can't work towards the solution of all these problems, the government must cooperate and provide help in solving these issues.

I would again say that the government needs to improve roads and the leading-by streets, put signboards at different spots in the way so that people can easily reach these sites. Because only a single signboard can't direct people to that site……..for example, a board may have given an arrow towards the right, but as you progress there are many other roundabouts and turns in the way, so which turn then the visitor has to choose? At that spot, there may be nobody to direct that visitor or take him/her to the intended site. These issues are thus faced by visitors, in accessing these sites.

5.1.2.2 Traffic–Management in Towns

For any tourist destination to successfully accommodate tourists, fulfill their needs, and provide good experiences to them, it needs to be well-equipped with all modern amenities and services. Among these services, efficient management of vehicular traffic and developing good traffic plans for cities and towns is very necessary. In the cities of Mingora and Saidu Sharif, which are two of the main towns of the study locale of this research, i.e. Swat, the population of both the local people and the vehicles running-on-roads have increased immensely in the last few decades. Besides, the number of tourists and the vehicles that carry them, are increasing after the end of the crises and the return of peace in the valley. This all adds up and further escalates the already existing problem in the traffic management of the twin-towns (i.e. Mingora and Saidu Sharif). Due to increase in the number of vehicles on roads, very often there are road-jams in these cities, which specifically disturb tourists (especially foreigners), who have come to heritage sites to enjoy their time and return back, with a bunch of good memories and experiences, and some addition to their wealth of knowledge. These issues also develop a bad perception in the

minds of visitors, about the heritage sites of Swat and de-promote them. In this regard, one of respondent said:

> *The location of the Swat museum was appropriate at earlier times when it was established in 1963, at that time its location was an ideal one. Because at that time there wasn't such a hustle bustle of traffic, people were not in large numbers, but now everything has changed. Nobody would be foolish enough to take a turn from Bypass, face the headache creating traffic of Mingora city and reach this museum or Butkara. Only those people would go through this mess and will visit here, who have an immense interest in history or museums. Otherwise, nobody would like to come across such heavy traffic of Mingora city, starting from Bypass road, which definitely takes hours to reach here. If you would go and visit the Bazar's of Mingora now……..very often my friends tell me that you haven't bought a car yet, I tell them, what would I do of a car? Contrary to facilitating me, that car would make my life more difficult while driving it through the heavy mismanaged (or inorganized) traffic.*

This problem creates many issues for tourists who want to enjoy their time being here at Swat. And important here is to mention that these tourists usually have a very limited amount of time to go for vacations because most of them are professionals and have a busy schedule. And reaching the museum and the heritage sites may take a lot of time to go through the heavy traffic of Mingora and Saidu Sharif, where roads are blocked very often. In this regard another of the respondent said:

> *The actual problem is that the population of Mingora had expanded a lot, and as this population will increase, this will bring-in new problems and issues with itself. So, the conclusion of all this would be that visiting this museum or the nearby archeological sites*

aren't easy to be reached, because keeping in view the distance between the Bypass Bus

Stand [or Bypass road] and Swat museum on one side, and then the issue of traffic

blockage on the other side, the tourists usually forego the choice of visiting here. They

travel directly towards upper locations [i.e. Kalam, Malamjabba, etc.]. In this way, a lot

number of tourists go through this city, without having an opportunity to visit the museum

and other heritage sites. Therefore, these heritage sites and the museum remain without

witnessing those tourists.

5.1.2.3 Air Travel Services/Saidu Sharif Airport

The non-operationality of Swat's maiden airport (i.e. Saidu Sharif Airport) has many

negative effects on the heritage tourism market of the valley. In today's modern era of

technological advancement and surmounting economic growth, 'time' has become the most

important ingredient of any human activity. This had compelled the human species towards the

development of fast modes of communication and travel. All around the world, people are now

demanding and preferring to travel as fast as possible, from one destination to another, to save the

most precious ingredient of their lives 'time.' In such a time of human thinking and civilization,

the non-operationality of the Swat airport represses the heritage tourism market on many fronts. It

not only decreases, or at least discourage, domestic tourists who want to travel by air to Swat, but

bluntly is a barrier in the way of foreign tourists to these sites. As traveling by air is much more

convenient and safer (compared to other modes of transportation in the region), plus keeping

time-saving in mind, foreigners most probably would prefer to directly travel to Swat via an

airplane. This non-facility of Saidu Sharif airport also creates barriers in the way of local people,

business owners, and entrepreneurs. This re-direct many commercial activities, jobs, and

potential earning avenues from Swat to other cities, on the land of which these tourists (especially foreigners) put their first step-on. One of the respondents had said:

Actually…….for the people of Swat, the most important concern is that this airport is very much necessary for them. Because a lot of my friends have told me that dear friend we want to start a tour agency here in Swat……so, I told them in return that a tour agency can't be successful here at Swat, because all the tourists fly-into Pakistan via Peshawar or Islamabad airport, then they contact with a tourist agency located at Peshawar or Islamabad, where the agency provides them with a guide and transport facility. Then those tourists come and visit these sites. So if I and you would start a tour agency here at Swat, who would hire our services? Because Swat airport isn't operating and all the tourists coming to Swat, already did had contacted other tour agencies in different cities. If this [Swat] airport was in-case operational, then tourists coming via here would have contacted us.

Most of the tour agencies related businesses are headquartered in big cities like Islamabad and Lahore, and guides are largely from Gilgit, Skardu and Chitral sides, so this [non-operational Swat airport] creates a lot of problems for the local tourism-related businesses and people here. In the absence of this problem, the people of Swat would have also started some good travel agencies here at Swat. Which would have been much fruitful for the people of Swat, and would have once again filled-up the hotels of Swat with tourists. But very unfortunately, Swat airport isn't operating currently, therefore tourists come and visit these sites, and stay here, being hosted within the premises of Swat valley, by travel agencies operating from outside of Swat.

5.1.3 Attractions

5.1.3.1 The perception of People about Swat as a Tourist Destination

A few decades back, Swat earned a good name for itself, in terms of tourism, peaceful environment, historical richness, and beautiful landscape. Of course, Swat was a famous destination from thousands of years, which can be witnessed from the accounts of Buddhist travelers, who use to come here from as far as Tibet and China, in search of peace and tranquility, and to pay their visits to their religious monasteries of Swat.

Though once a tourist's heaven, unfortunately, the turn of time into the 21st century brought with itself many new challenges and trails for this historical valley, it's hospitable people and booming heritage tourism market. One of the respondents was of the view, in this regard;

.......unfortunately in our country and Swat region, there is often [the prevalence of] problems, whereas tourism is the name of peace……..So, when peace is absent, then it creates problems for this industry. Therefore, the biggest problems currently faced by our tourism sector are the absence of peace and political instability. So hopefully if these problems are solved, then our tourism sector will expand further.

About people's perception generally, and more specifically of the tourists, regarding Swat as a tourist destination, another respondent said:

I believe, many tourists have a negative perception of Swat. And Malala had further worsened the situation that she was been, unfortunately, 'shot' here in Swat. Let say, I am an American and I want to visit Swat (Pakistan), where do I should get 'authentic' information from an 'authentic' source, to know the current situation about Swat. And whether I can come and visit these sites [as an American] or not. And if I can visit, how

do I have to reach Swat and then locate these heritage sites. Therefore, we need to project the real, current [security] situation of Swat to the world and improve people's perception of Swat. We should propagate proper information through different campaigns, in order to convince foreigners that this place is now completely safe and secure for traveling. So, I think this 'negative perception' matters a lot in terms of the travel industry and we should put our sincere efforts to change people's views about Swat. I think only then, we would be able to attract tourists from different parts of the world. And you know, I often travel in Gilgit-Baltistan, where I observe a large number of foreigners in places like Hunza, Skardu, etc., 'Why do they travel only in the North?' Swat isn't any less beautiful than northern areas, but actually, it's their [the foreigners positive] perception about the northern areas and the tourist-friendly environment that they get over there.

But we should not forget that things are improving gradually in the Swat valley and the perception of people is changing gradually. Now that the evil of terrorism has been eradicated by the state's institutions and brave people of the valley, tourists are once again returning to the long-barren Buddhist heritage sites. Though there are still many misconceptions and misinformation regarding Pakistan and Swat as tourists' destinations, in the minds of foreign travelers. Thanks to the global News channels, who in-times look more like propaganda machines. Therefore, we still had to go a long way to promote the real situation of Pakistan and Swat to these foreigners and convince them that everything is at peace now. And of course, many foreign visitors have already started visiting these lands. One of the respondents said this:

Swat is a very beautiful place. It is indeed unexplored and is a heaven of tourism. Everything here is very amazing, the place and its environment, the people are very nice.

It has many historical sites like Butkara and the large statue of Buddha above the mountain. But I think, unfortunately, it is not marketed and promoted, the way it should be done.

5.1.3.2 Swat Museum and other Sites and the most liked Relics

As different types of tourists come to the Buddhist heritage sites that we are discussing here. And therefore, we have to fulfill the needs of those differing visitors, so that they return as happy customers. There is a need that we analyze and research those different types of tourists and their needs and aspirations attached to these heritage sites. We also need to inquire, what do they like or liked the most that motivated them to travel here, or may travel in the future. The local population of Swat valley and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is of Pakhtun origin. And though many of them like the sites and relics of Buddhist heritage, we can surely say that they mostly like to see the cultural objects of Swati Pakhtun's. They specifically inquire about the galleries in Swat museum, that had this culture on display, and often complain about the under-representation of Pakhtun culture in the galleries of the museum. Which I believe isn't good for the overall tourism market. We should be specifically concerned because it had indirect negative effects on the perception and attachment of these tourists about the artifacts of Buddhist heritage, that are on display in abundance. One respondent said:

Most of the local Pakhtun people are unaware of what a museum is for……..and when they visit, they complain that you people haven't displayed the Pakhtun culture appropriately and very few galleries are being given to it. Earlier we had a house on display at Swat museum, but then Dr. Luca had it been removed on the reason that the person in it, his dressing, the weapon he was carrying and his turban (phatki), wasn't

representing the real picture of the Yousafzai's of Swat. These people are now complaining again and again, that the house was a good piece. Other than this they don't know anything about the relics and statues here, and therefore don't have any interest in it. They start from the first gallery and quickly reaches the gallery of Pakhtun culture, then see things related to Pakhtun culture, and start complaining that this and that thing is absent here……..why have you removed the house from here, so I tell them that this isn't my job, that what should be placed or removed from the galleries.

Then we have a great deal of heritage from Buddhist civilization. There are a large number of relics and artifacts related to Buddhist heritage. And there are many well-preserved statues of Buddha and other deities of Buddhism. Buddhists from different parts of the world come to many of their religious sites in Pakistan, including Swat valley. A respondent was of this view regarding Buddhist heritage on display at Swat museum:

Buddhists specifically come here to see the relics associated with Buddhist history and people, who once were inhabitants of swat. They have their objects on display in five of the rooms here, and they just spend their time in these rooms. When they enter the museum, they don't spend any time in the first two rooms of the museum [where objects of non-Buddhist heritage are on display], and asks where are Buddhists objects and relics? And then they go straight there, and spend time there.

5.1.4 Amenities and Ancillaries

5.1.4.1 Guides and Interpretation

The building of the heritage tourism industry is no doubt built upon the foundations of different heritage resources, that are attractive enough to capture tourists' interest. That building

in then renovated and painted with the help of innovative and interesting interpretation and stories. These stories and interpretations give meaning to the building and develop an identity of its own. Through which then we humans understand and develop an image in our minds, that what exactly is that building constituted of; i.e. what exactly are the building blocks being used in it. Both of these, the stories and interpretations are disseminated (preferably) by trained guides and interpreters. But unfortunately, among the most extensive issues in the promotion of heritage tourism at Swat, one is the non-availability of guides and the absence of stories. This means, though we have good foundations and up to some extent the building is already being built or is at least in process, but that building is in-visible. Why? Because there is neither done any renovation of it nor is it painted. Now, how can somebody know about an invisible building, and still if somebody knew about it and visits, tell me how they can enjoy being at a colorless, barren building, which has no identity and no linkage with history or a group of humans.

A lot of the tourists that I interviewed as respondents for this study, most often have one problem in common, that there was nobody available to guide them. Therefore, as they said, they haven't learned anything new from this site or the museum. This problem thus demotivates tourists to repeat their visits, and for the very least, the potential to promote the sites through tourist's word-of-mouth is also lost. A respondent, sharing his concerns on this issue said:

Actually, I think, the main concern in such visits [means visits to historical sites] is that you should have a little prior knowledge about the sites. Like you have some material on it, which you read, and then another important component is that somebody over there 'guides' you properly. Only in this way, I think, you would have been able to have 'accomplished' something, what for, visiting such historical sites are actually meant to be. And as such, being a tourist, you would be able to enjoy such sites as well. But, like if

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I would tell you about our current experience (here at Swat museum), there was no

proper guide here, no guide had come to serve us, and tell us something related to the

objects in the museum. Indeed, this type of facility would be very time-saving for the

visitors, and they would be able to decide, what they actually took more interest-in, and

what new information did they learn about it.

In the heritage tourism activity, unlike any other form of tourism, the experience of visitors is in large part dependent upon the services of guides or any modes of interpretation. In the Swat museum, this issue is still existing. There are neither proper guides available nor any audio-visual aids for interpretation. Therefore, the tourists usually come and go, without having anything learned about history and relics, and also have no interest being developed with the museum. Which makes the possibility of the tourists returning to the museum much less likely. One of the respondents said:

The first thing is that there needs to be provided, the facility of a guide. This would be a

great improvement here in the museum......Guides who are available to properly guide the

people (without the demand of the visitors), throughout the day. Then, the visitors would

be more attracted to the museum and they would enjoy their experience here.

5.1.4.2 Entry Fees and Respondents thoughts

In the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat, only two sites have an entry fee to be entered and take a tour of it. One is the Swat museum and the other being the heritage site of Butkara-1. During interviewing, different respondents have different views regarding the entry fees of these sites. Most of the tourists said the entry fee is very nominal, a few said it should be increased a

little, while very few of the tourists (usually students) were of the view that there should be no entry fee for the 'students.' One of the respondents said:

…….if you would look to it, in this way, that in China they have Buddhist sites of 11th century, and still those sites are attracting a big chunk of their overall tourism market. Although those archeological sites and stupas [in China] are from the 11th century, they still attract a large number of tourists. Why? It's because they are effectively utilizing those sites. And here in Swat (Pakistan), we have them of the 2nd century, which means nearly 1000 years older than that of China's. But then, 'Why we don't have any tourist flow at these sites, from which we can earn in millions?' I lived in China for nearly 9 months, and I learned that if these sites were there (in China), they would have been like a 'gold-mine' for them. We have invested so much on these sites and the museum, and still, we have administered an entry ticket of just 10 Rs, which I believe isn't a potential use of these resources.

If we would 'market' these Buddhist sites, and whatever history we own of Buddhism here, then definitely many international tourists would visit these sites. For foreigners, the ticket is usually 1,000 percent (or 10 times) that of the locals. If for example, for the locals, the ticket is 50 Rs, then foreigners are charged 500 Rs (in China). So, similar to China, we need to promote these Buddhist sites, specifically to Buddhists all around the world and more generally to all international visitors, as they are the main source of income for our economy.

The money collected from the entry fees is much helpful in accommodating the expenditures of the sites, the museum, and other departmental initiatives. If we would affectively promote and market these heritage sites of the valley, and once tourists start visiting in large numbers, it could

be much helpful in generating a huge amount of revenues for the national treasury. Important to mention here is that as foreigners, especially Buddhists have much more interest in visiting these heritage sites, and as their entry fee is much higher than domestic visitors, therefore these types of visitors could earn us much more revenues, in terms of entry fees. In this regard, a respondent said:

> *Another important thing is, that when they [the foreign tourists] visit the sites, after that our country is benefited when they take a visit to the museum. At the museum, their [entry] fee is more than the domestic visitors, so one benefit our country gets is that more money is accumulated into the national treasury.*

5.1.4.3 Accommodation Facilities and Restaurants

Accommodation facilities and places for quality food services are important for any tourist destination. In Swat, these facilities are in abundance and are available in much diverse patterns and qualities. Accommodation and food facilities can be found for everyone; from a very average traveler to a very luxury-oriented visitor. A respondent said:

> *Yes, the hotel industry is good over here and a lot of variety of hotels are present here. As I have mentioned earlier here all types of tourists come, from very elite type down to average and then to very low budget people as well. For the elite high-budget tourists, here the top option is Serena Hotel Swat, after that, good choices are then PTDC [Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation], Swat Continental, and Rock City hotel. These all are the best hotels here [in Mingora and Saidu-Sharif]. For the middle-class visitors here at Mingora, we have good hotels at the Udhyana market. Then for those tourists whose budget is further shorter, we have good average hotels near the old bus*

stand, where I believe nobody would have any problems to stay at. So, in short, I would say that Insha Allah [God Willing] no visitors, from elite people down to the very low budget, would face any problems of accommodation here [at Mingora and Saidu Sharif]. And indeed, there are then a large number of hotels at Fizaghat as well………hotels are in abundance all over here, but visitors are in shortage.

Though the facilities are good enough to fulfill the needs of heritage tourism customers, but there are some issues in the hygiene and cleanliness of the living spaces and places of food, like restaurants and other eateries, etc. In this regard, one of the respondents said:

……although the quality is good, they don't have better cleanliness in their food area. The cleanliness that we see at the high-quality hotels [and restaurants], their clean environment, good clean waiters, clean air all around, clean water…….as there is a famous Pashto saying, "chi guraa sewa kegi, sharbat khwagegi" [meaning, 'the more you put sugar to it, the more sweater it be.']. I mean that level of cleanliness and environment is not available at the average hotels and restaurants. So yes, these problems exist wherever the rate is low, and one has to bear it.

5.1.5 Information and Promotion

5.1.5.1 Promotion through Tourist's word-of-mouth

The tourism sector today has become one of the most rigorous and competitive industries. Destinations try their best to provide better services to their customers and provide them experiences of a lifetime. So that customers return to them in future as well, and also promote these sites to other potential tourists through their word-of-mouth. In heritage tourism destinations, the needs and aspirations of tourists are much different than tourists of other sites. In

heritage tourism activity, they want the presence of many different facilities, including but not limited to, availability of well-trained guides, who can guide them around and interpret the sites, objects, and it's history. They want the stories and history being told to them about the sites and relics, and much more. One of the respondents said:

> *………and then another important component is that somebody over there 'guides' you properly. Only in this way, I think, you would have been able to have 'accomplished' something, what for, visiting such historical sites are actually meant to be. And as such, being a tourist, you would be able to enjoy such sites as well. But, like if I would tell you about our current experience (here at Swat museum), there was no proper guide here, no guide had come to serve us, and tell us something related to the objects in the museum. Indeed, this type of facility would be very time-saving for the visitors, and they would be able to decide, what they actually took more interest-in, and what new information did they learn about it.*

Therefore, facilities and services important specifically for the heritage tourism industry and its customers (i.e. visitors), should be provided by the concerned people and officials. In this same regard another respondent said:

> *Basically, I believe, it can be done through the effective promotion of the museum. Also, the building of the museum should be extended a little, and more galleries and objects should be displayed about the local culture and traditions of Swat. The facility of availability of guides should be provided, who properly guide the people (without any demand of the visitors) throughout the day. Then, the visitors would be more attracted to the museum and they would enjoy their experience here.*

5.1.5.2 Promotion through Information Dissemination and Awareness

One of the most common issues in the promotion of heritage tourism sites of the Buddhist heritage of Swat valley is the non-awareness of people at large about these important resources and its potential for touring and leisure purposes. Visitors who usually come to Swat just go towards the natural scenic spots like Kalam and Malamjabba etc., without having any chances to come towards the heritage sites as well. This is in large part because people don't have any information or awareness about these heritage sites. The problem of non-awareness is much larger in the domestic tourists and it enlarges further with tourists belonging to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, of which Swat is a part. One of the respondents said:

> *As what comes to my mind right now, I think, there needs to be given a historical touch to these sites. That what basically is the 'history' of all these sites and the people who once were residents of this place. A brief historical account about how Buddhists actually came to Swat in the 2nd century, how their civilization flourished over here, how they use to build these 'stupas,' and for what purpose they were built……In this way, we need to build a story around these sites and it's people, a story that I think, people can live up to, a story through which we can take the visitors back through time, even if for a very short period so.*

All the stakeholders, especially the government need to take this issue seriously, and disseminate information about these sites, so that promotion is being achieved about the sites. Once the people become aware of the historical importance of these sites and the stories and history related to it, their interest will develop, and they will start visiting here in large numbers. Another of the respondent said:

I think, less than 5 percent of the tourists would have knowledge about Swat museum and other archeological sites here. Therefore, this situation can only be improved and people's interest in archeology and history can be built, only if the government would include these sites and it's historical importance in the educational curriculum. This will also help people know about other religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. because people don't know about these religions. In this way, people will understand better the importance of these sites and the museum, because our people usually have a negative perception of the museum, that there are statues in it and therefore they don't like it. They don't know that there is an art in these statues, which carries its own importance, and had no idea that which one is a Greek, Kanishka, Pakhtun, Punjabi, Kohistani or Gujjar relic. If these all things are made a part of the books that students at educational institutes studies, where they are taught that this is our culture which we have inherited from our ancestors. And are also taught that who were our ancestors, you know………in this way they will definitely know about these sites and its relics, and will also become aware of its importance. Then the heritage tourism industry related to these sites and artifacts will definitely be promoted and it will expand.

5.1.5.3 Promotion and Marketing

Today the world is quickly progressing towards the adoption of new methods of doing business and carrying commercial activities. As the world had started opening its markets and has adopted the capitalist mode of economic activities, the markets and economies tend to become more and more competitive on a daily basis. Today effective and planned promotion, marketing and advertising had become a need of the time, to efficiently compete in the tourism market.

Unfortunately, the heritage tourism sites of Swat had no such mechanism to be promoted and marketed to its potential tourists. Therefore, the number of tourists is very less, if there are any at these sites. There are neither any specific cells or any professionals in the heritage related departments of the public offices and nor any promotional campaigns in this regard. In this perspective these views were shared by one of the respondents:

I think most of the people in Pakistan don't have any idea about these heritage tourism sites and it's potential for tourism activity. I have got a little information about these sites, only because I have carried out some research, before visiting (here). There is a lack of active 'marketing campaigns' here in Pakistan, which I think needs to be worked upon so that people may know about these [archeological] sites and are attracted to these sites. Tourists only tend to visit Murree and Kaghan, Naran, they don't know much about the available choices of these archeological sites. So, these beautiful heritage sites, which carry with itself a history of thousands of years, along such a scenic landscape of Swat, needs to be promoted towards potential visitors. And history needs to be taught to our people, so that they may know how do people of those times, spent their lives, what have they been through, what were the reasons that those civilizations were trapped in a trajectory downward, and how they lead to their extinction. If you would examine this in a way, that how Buddhism flourished over here in those days and became a major religion of the region. And later how it weakened until it vanished completely from this region. So, what were those factors that lead them towards extinction? If answers to such are constructed, this indeed could be a very interesting tale, that can be presented to the tourists through Audio-Visual aids, which they probably would love to know about.

5.1.6 Community Participation in the overall Heritage Tourism activity

5.1.6.1 Buddhist Heritage sites and Local's attachment and perception

The centuries-old Buddhist heritage and the local populace of Swat (who are mainly Pakhtuns) have been in contact for too long now. They have both existed side-by-side, at least for many centuries. And as there are good and bad in every nation and state or a city, in the case of local people residing around this heritage, there are both good people, who have served their whole lives for the preservation and care of it. And we should also know that it was the visionary and attentive, Wali (ruler) of Swat who first permitted the Italian Mission to carry their excavation activities in Swat valley, which helped in excavating many important sites and discovering many others. But then at the same time, some people may have damaged this heritage or have tried to do so. Many others have illegally excavated, smuggled, and sold valuable relics of this important heritage for just pennies.

Though there has been much improvement through times in the interaction of the local people with the Buddhist heritage of the valley, but still, usually a large portion of the population has a negative perception about it. And even if somebody doesn't have any negative thoughts about it, for the very least they act like this heritage doesn't belong to them, or rather they don't care. This problem can be witnessed in these words of one of the respondents, who was a local resident, working as a 'site attendant' at Bukara-1 site:

> *Usually, when our local people do visit here, they are not convinced by the site. They say, 'there is nothing to be seen here and enjoy.' Its just stones all over the place, and start laughing with their group. So then we tell them, yes they are stones, and we may look upon them just as stones. But for followers of Buddhism, these stones and walls are very*

precious and most valuable thing in the world. Because these stones are a part of their

religious beliefs. These stones are sacred to them. So, this is the difference between the

interest of local visitors and foreigners.

As evident from these words, the local people and local visitors don't have the awareness and knowledge about these heritage sites and their historical importance. They don't understand the potential of these for tourism activity, which can be very fruitful to uplift these local communities, socially and economically. But where there are problems and issues, there are solutions and hope. To change the perception, specifically of the local people residing around these sites, and generally of the people of Swat, regarding these heritage resources, we need to work upon many fronts. We need to make the local people realize that this heritage belongs to them, more than anybody else. This will help in furthering the preservation efforts taken by different stakeholders, with having the collaboration of the local populace. And among the many ways, one of the most productive ways would be the strengthening of tourism activity itself. We need to enhance tourist mobility and increase their arrivals. Especially, we should focus on advancing the visiting of foreigners and more specifically 'Buddhists.' This will automatically reframe people's perceptions and will develop gradually a sense of value, for these sites, in the local's minds. They will start looking towards it as assets. The locals' perceptions will also begin improving, once they witness visitors who are followers of Buddhism and show great respect for these sites. Once they understand that these sites carry a high value for these Buddhist pilgrims, and are as holy for them, as to us are our own places of worship, they would definitely start looking towards it with much regard and respect. And of course, that is what their religion 'Islam' actually teaches them; to protect and care for the places of worship, no matter to whom it belongs.

Another respondent, working as a site attendant at Butkara-1 site said in this regard:

I would tell you regarding foreigners' relationship with this site. The last time when some Buddhists visited here to Butkara-1 site for religious worshiping. They carefully left their shoes here outside the monastery and entered with much respect and regard. Then they did all their religious rituals and after completion, very respectfully came and put their shoes back. But at the time, we, as usual, went inside with our shoes, before them. So, then we felt much ashamed about ourselves on the act of moving around with our shoes, while the guests, who have come here from thousands of kilometers away have entered the monastery barefooted, just out of respect.

Therefore, I would say that they taught us a lesson that day, that these sites should be respected and cared for, as we do respect and care for our own mosques.

The attachment of the local people with these heritage sites and their perception about it could also be changed for the better by incorporating the history and importance of this heritage within the educational curriculum of schools, colleges, and universities. We see that in many countries, contents, and courses related to different heritages of the world and within their nation, are being included in the national curriculums by the government. The United Kingdom specifically had done an enormous amount of excellent work in this regard. And that is one of the reasons, why today they have one of the best well-preserved heritage sites and a huge heritage tourism industry. Through teaching the young generation about the history of any heritage and its importance, they can be better convinced to accept any heritage around them as their own and would be better prepared to take care of it and preserve it. The locals then would take much interest in collaborating with other stakeholders related to the heritage tourism market, and many among them would become a part of this industry, to generate social and economic benefits.

These locals can also then become potential visitors and would start visiting different heritage sites around them. All these activities can be thus knitted together with the help of including this heritage in the curriculum of educational institutes, which will gradually change the local's perceptions about this heritage. One of the respondents said about it:

……..this situation can only be improved and people's interest in archeology and history can be built, only if the government would include these sites and it's historical importance in the educational curriculum. This will also help people to know about other religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. because people don't know about these religions. In this way, people will understand better the importance of these sites and the museum, because our people usually have a negative perception of the museum, that there are statues in it and therefore they don't like it. They don't know that there is an art in these statues, which carries its own importance.

5.1.6.2 Heritage Tourism activity and Locals Economic and Social benefits

Tourism can be a great force for the social and economic advancement and elevation of the local communities of Swat valley. And it could be in large part very effective because of the location and layout of the heritage sites of Swat, which are largely intertwined and placed inside the deep residences and townships of the local people. This could be helpful for the local people to have a very direct relationship with the visitors, without the intermediary of any third party. But due to the limited number of tourists and lack of any partnerships between the government and the local people, the locals hardly are included or have any interest in this activity. This tourist activity can also provide many economic opportunities to the local people, if we could

effectively promote it and make collaborations with the local communities. One of the respondents said in this regard:

> *Obviously, local people will realize many benefits. The investment will increase in this area, the local businesses will flourish, as there will be more and more customers in the area. In this way, the local markets will expand and the local economy will grow. The earnings of the local people will increase. Like they would be able to sell more of the local traditional items and handicrafts etc. Employment opportunities will increase and the standard of living of local people will improve.*

Once tourists would come, they would need facilities and services at the heritage sites. They would require facilities like guides, shops near the sites, restaurants, and eateries, etc., for which the local people should be encouraged and helped to become part of these economic activities. They can be given incentives to start their own business shops. In addition, as there is a scarcity of guides at these sites, the government and other stakeholders need to train the local people so that they can become professional guides. This will improve the visitor's experience at heritage sites and they hopefully will re-visit in the future as well. And will also provide economic opportunities to the local people, which will improve their chances of having a better standard of living. Also, as mentioned by one of the respondents, we know that Swat had a good market of locally produced handicrafts and traditional items. They produce some of the best woolen products, woven by hand. The hand-made shawls from Islampur (an area in Swat) and other cultural items can be easily connected and sold to the outside visitors. Economic opportunities of such kind will diversify the income sources of the locals and would also provide them with financial capital to invest in their tourism-oriented businesses. Once the government and other stakeholders enable economic opportunities for the local communities, they themselves would

then start owning this heritage. They would feel pride in this heritage and would teach their children to both protect and respect it.

One of the respondents, working at a heritage site revealed that there are no formal guides available at these sites. He said that guides are an important component in the tourism activity at these sites, and there need to be formal guides available at these sites. These words of the respondent highlight an issue, but it also projects economic opportunities for the local people. The staff working at the archeology department, who mainly are local residents of Swat can be trained to work as guides themselves and also to train further people from the local areas. The department also needs to think about a systematic mechanism of training the youth of the local areas as professional guides. They can encourage the locals to take 'guiding' as a profession and give them incentives like free training-classes etc. or surety for future employability or potential for a career or business venture privately. In terms of this perspective the respondent said this:

There aren't any formal [institutional] guiding services or guides available here, which can be hired by tourists. But I believe that on every site, guides should be available. And all the staff of our archeology department should be given information and training, they must be taught different languages like English, Urdu…….Pashto is understood by all……they should be knowledgeable about all the sites so that then they can guide and interpret these sites to visitors.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter of the study, the conclusion is being given, which is based upon and developed from the analysis of the data and research findings there-in. Following that, the researcher has given recommendations as well. The conclusion presents a summary of the central findings of the study regarding the issues in the promotion of Buddhist heritage tourism sites of Swat. And the part on recommendations illustrates that in the light of the findings of this study, what needs to be done, and how, to solve those issues that are being found.

6.1 Conclusion

This research study, as mentioned, was being carried to inquire about the issues related to the heritage tourism sites of Swat, and give proper, systematic mechanisms to solve those issues, to further tourism activities at these sites. The data collected through qualitative interviewing and findings derived from it, through thematic analysis (as discussed in detail in previous chapters) had highlighted many issues, concerning the promotion of tourism. The nature of these issues varies in both, it's relationship to the diverse array of stakeholders and fields (e.g heritage resources or tourism) as well as in magnitude. What's common in these issues though is that it works as hurdles in progressing the tourism activities at these potential destinations for heritage tourism. Among these, one of the foremost issues found was, the lack of information and un-awareness of the domestic tourists and the locals living around the heritage sites. Very few of the domestic tourists have the knowledge, that these sites exist, and if they do, they don't know its history. And most of the local people don't know exactly, to whom this heritage belongs, and

what is its history. Many of the locals believe it belongs to 'Hindus.' Another main problem is that the local population (not all, but a large number) have rather a negative perception about these sites, and mainly it was found to be (wrongly) based on religious grounds, considering these sites and the statues, etc. as against their religious beliefs. This negative perception can be possibly perceived as a threat to the preservation of these important heritage sites and its potential for tourism activities. We, therefore, need to disseminate information, to make the domestic tourists and local people aware of these sites and its importance for them and everyone else. It is, of course, essential to improve their perception by telling them that in the religion of Islam it is obligatory on every Muslim to protect the places of worship of others. This can be effectively achieved with the help of different strategies and the use of different platforms. We can realize this by focusing on the inclusion of these sites and its history in the national curriculum and disseminating information through national and local newspapers and electronic media, among many other things and platforms.

Another issue was the lack of a vibrant and progressive mechanism for the 'preservation' of many of the Buddhist heritage sites. Though the sub-locales which were studied in this study, were comparatively under a good pattern of institutional observation and preservation, but still attention and improvement need to be stimulated. Besides, it was known that a few other sites, either located far away from the main towns, hidden from the watch of many or due to other reasons, are being left for human vandalism or natural calamities (hazards). For example, the Butkara-3 site has been totally neglected, which is an important site, and is decaying at a high rate and will soon lose many of its assets. The government and department of archeology, therefore, needs to fence this site, along with the Bazira (Barikot) site, and take immediate measures for its preservation, for the good of all.

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In the heritage tourism market, the role of guides and interpretation is very important, but unfortunately, this factor was found at its worst, in Swat valley. The archeology department has no formal guides, but rather the 'site attendants' or 'museum attendants' provide their services as part-time-guides. Because for heritage tourists it's difficult to understand historical sites and its relics on their own, they need a guide and always demand one. But these tourists were found, facing many problems and were unhappy with their experiences, in this regard. Most of the visitors at the Swat museum have just one complaint, the non-availability of guides. Because there are only one or two persons, who can provide their services as a part-time guide, and they do it only on visitor's demand. The tourists also face problems at Swat museum, regarding the interpretive boards hanged aside the galleries. Some boards have very brief accounts, and most of them are given in the English language, making it difficult for many visitors to read and understand. Because many of the visitors are either local people or people from other areas, who don't understand English. Hence, there needs to be a proper availability of guides. And the interpretive boards need to be portrayed in both English and Urdu, as most of the tourists understand at least one among these languages.

Though the condition of the roads is much better in the valley, having a good web of metallic roads towards each heritage site. But the government and archeology department needs to improve the accessibility to these sites by putting signages all around the towns and main highways, and with-in the densely populated twisty streets, which leads to sites of heritage. The distribution of maps at different tourist spots, like the Swat museum, could be much helpful in this regard. The last major issue that exists is the lack of any well-organized, institutional promotion, and marketing of these Buddhist heritage sites as a tourist destination. As tourism globally has become a very competitive industry today, and in Pakistan, the same is happening

gradually. Potential tourists now have a lot of options in terms of destinations to visit-to, and businesses are offering new and unique experiences, with the help of creative ideas and technology. But unfortunately, the heritage sites of Swat has no such mechanisms to be promoted and marketed, so that a robust inflow of tourists can be realized. The data collected during fieldwork shows that respondents (including tourists) have witnessed almost zero promotional or marketing contents regarding the heritage sites of Swat. They have mentioned that we don't have seen anything on any platform, whether it be on social media or electronic media, or any other means of communication. And nor are there any promotional efforts taken through brochures, pamphlets or any tourism expos, etc. Therefore, there needs to be an responsive 'cell' or 'unit' working under the tourism and archelogy departments, specifically to promote and market these heritage sites, using modern means of communication and best practices in the field. This can also be done through promotional campaigns on the different forms of media, like electronic and social media. Especially, social media has become a big force in today's society and is used by millions across the globe. It can be used effectively to promote these sites within Pakistan and internationally, with a special focus on Buddhist populations. Similarly, we need to promote these sites and offer tours to domestic tourists, with the help of advertisements on Television and in different newspapers.

Working upon these issues tirelessly and with planned agendas, we can improve the situation of tourism at these sites. If the tourists will once start experiencing these sites and enjoy the attractions and facilities that it had to offer, they surely will start to become loyal customers of this market. And then they would themselves become ambassadors of these sites, encouraging many others to visit here, and would thus promote these sites through their word-of-mouth.

6.2 Recommendations

This study enabled the researcher to suggest the following recommendations:

1. Efforts towards the vibrant dissemination of information, to the local population and domestic tourists, would be much helpful in eliminating their negative perceptions and would create awareness regarding the Buddhist heritage sites.

2. The government and archeology department must treat all sites of equal value, and should ensure the preservation of the smaller and remote sites as well.

3. Provision of official, full-time trained guides should be ensured, as it is a prerequisite for a vibrant heritage tourism industry.

4. The capacity of the museum should be further enhanced, through; befit inclusion of heritage of all non-Buddhist local ethnic groups, provision of Audio-Visual Aids for interpretation, specifically for 'special persons' and virtual tours.

5. The accessibility to heritage sites can be up-lifted by the proper development of signages on the main highways and with-in towns, that could guide the visitors.

6. Special 'cells' or 'units' should be constituted in the tourism and archeology departments, and professionals be hired, to promote and market these heritage sites, especially through social and electronic media.

7. The government needs to include these heritage sites and its history, in the national curriculum, in order to spread awareness and promote these sites.

8. The followers of Buddhism, residing in Buddhist-majority countries should be offered special 'tour packages' through our embassies in their respective countries.

9. The local people should be included and encouraged to participate in the heritage tourism activities, by making them a part of the planning process and any projects.

10. The problem of non-availability of guides should be resolved by training the locals to become full-time professional guides.

11. The stakeholders (with government support, which itself is a prominent stakeholder), should develop working on means and mechanisms for a better collaboration structure, to promote these sites.

6.3 Significance of the Research

There are hardly any research studies being carried out on the tourism potential and issues related to the promotion of the Buddhist heritage sites of Swat Valley. The study shall provide guidance on the sustainable development and promotion of Buddhist heritage tourism sites to the tourism managers and planners of the country. The document will help tourism managers to incorporate the historical Buddhist heritage of Swat in tourism planning, develop effective strategies for its promotion and marketing, and recognize the importance of heritage tourism sites as an alternative product for the diversification of Pakistan's tourism industry. In this context, the research was intended to explore possible effective strategies for the development, promotion, and marketing of these sites.

6.4 Limitations of Study

The valley of Swat has a large number of Buddhist heritage sites, but due to time and other resource constraints, only three sub-locales were selected and studied (which though are among the most important sites and perhaps the most visited one in Swat). These three sub-

locales were selected as a representative of the overall locale, which probably had put this study under certain limitations, keeping in mind the diverse environments that surround each heritage site.

APPENDIX-1

Fieldwork Images

Figure 1. Front view of the building of Swat Museum. (Photo: author.)

Figure 2. Sculptures of Buddhist heritage on display at Swat Museum. (Photo: author.)

Figure 3. Model of a Buddhist's Stupa at Swat Museum. (Photo: author.)

Figure 4. Swat Museum: Buddhist heritage artifacts on display at a gallery. (Photo: author.)

Figure 5. Swat Museum: Footprints of Buddha. (Photo: author.)

Figure 6. Swat Museum: A statue of Buddha. (Photo: author.)

Figure 7. A mesmerizing view of the entrance of the Butkara-1 site. (Photo: author.)

Figure 8. An information board for visitors at the Butkara-1 site. (Photo: author.)

Figure 9. A view of the Buddhist sacred area of Butkara-1. (Photo: commons.wikimedia.org by Asad Aman.)

Figure 10. A close view of the main large stupa at the Butkara-1 site. (Photo: iminpakistan.com.)

Figure 11. An information board for visitors at Bazira (Barikot) Site. (Photo: author.)

Figure 12. A panoramic view of the Bazira (Barikot) Site. (Photo: author.)

Figure 13. Bazira Site: A front-view of the Defensive Wall and Bastions, which is the main attraction for visitors. (Photo: author.)


Figure 14. Bazira Site: An upper view of the Defensive Wall and Bastions. (Photo: author.)

APPENDIX-2

Interview Guides

1. Interview Guide for Local Community Members (UDC-1)

Introduction:

Respondent's name:

Place of residence:

Respondent's occupation (Work/ job etc.?):

Current Status of, and Issues in Heritage Tourism at Swat:

Tell me what you know about Swat as a tourist destination.

Swat's famous and important Buddhist heritage sites for visitors? (It's history and importance.)

What's the value and importance of these heritage resources/sites for the tourism sector?

Current status of heritage tourism activities at this site.

Tourist's behavior and attitude towards local people & culture, and towards heritage resources & environment.

Local's behavior and attitude towards tourists, heritage resources, and the environment.

What would you say regarding the safety and security of this place for tourists?

Heritage Tourism Development and Promotion:

How to develop and promote this "specific" heritage site?

Have villagers ever involved in any heritage tourism planning and development activities? (Have you ever engaged in it?)

Let say, the government wants to increase the number of visitors to this "specific" heritage site, in your view what would be the strategy to do that? (How can the local community be helpful in it?)

Heritage Tourism benefits for the Local Community:

How do you think the government can take appropriate measures to make tourism activity beneficial enough for the local community?

Do you think, an increase in tourism could bring in any social and economic benefits for your community? Explain.

A partnership between community members and other stakeholders to promote these sites – How?

Have locals ever involved in any excavation and preservation efforts, or tourism activities?

Are you happy that tourists come to this place? Please explain.

If you could improve any one thing about this place as a heritage tourism site, what would it be?

You can add any further information before we end this conversation.

2. Interview Guide for Tourists (UDC-2)

Introduction:

Respondent's name:

Place of residence (country/state/city of origin):

Respondent's occupation (work/job etc.?):

Current Status of, and Issues in Heritage Tourism at Swat:

Tell me what you know about Swat as a tourist destination?

Swat's famous and important Buddhist heritage sites for visitors?

Can you share any knowledge about the Buddhist heritage of Swat, it's history and importance?

What's the value and importance of these heritage resources for the tourism sector?

How would you explain a well-managed tourist spot? What qualities it should have?

Availability of services at this site: Guide, presentation, and interpretation of the artifacts, refreshments (snacks, drinks, etc.), washrooms, parking space for visitors, etc.

Your views regarding the "Entry fee" to this site?

Local's behavior and attitude towards tourists.

The motivation for your visit – What do you prefer to see and experience?

Your experience visiting this heritage: your expectations & reality? (What's better, and what needs to be improved?).

Availability and quality of tourism infrastructure, roads, signage to the sites, public transport, shops, washrooms, etc.

Availability and quality of accommodation facilities, restaurants, food, etc.

What would you say regarding the safety and security of this place for tourists?

Heritage Tourism Development and Promotion:

Do you think the Buddhist heritage of Swat valley is marketed and promoted appropriately, please discuss? (How to improve?)

Do you know of any platform/mechanism, that provides information to tourists and guide them about these sites? (Have you taken help from any?)

Tourist's role in the preservation and caring for heritage recourses, and overall tourism activities.

Let say, the government wants to increase the number of visitors to this "specific" heritage site, in your view what would be the strategy to do that?

Do you think the Buddhist heritage of Swat promotes a positive image of Pakistan and Swat valley? Explain.

If you could improve any one thing about this place, as a heritage tourism site, what would it be?

Heritage Tourism benefits for the Local Community:

Do you think, an increase in tourism could bring in any social and economic benefits for the local communities? – How?

How do you think the government can take appropriate measures to make this activity beneficial enough for the local community?

You can add any further information before we end this conversation.

3. **Interview Guide for Heritage Managers (UDC-3)**

Introduction:

Respondent's name:

Respondent's position in organization/department:

The number of years worked in this organization:

The number of years worked in this field:

Current Status of, and Issues in Heritage Tourism at Swat:

Tell me, of how do you see Swat as a tourist destination?

Swat's famous and important Buddhist heritage resources and sites for visitors? (It's history & importance?)

Current status of Buddhist heritage resources (preservation efforts and sustainability etc.). How to improve it?

The recent significant boom in heritage tourism globally: What is your take on the importance of these heritage resources for the tourism sector?

How would you explain the presence of the Swat museum as a part of the overall heritage tourism market?

Explain the resources on display at the Swat museum? Suggestions for improvement.

Local's behavior and attitude towards heritage resources and tourists.

Tourist's behavior and attitude towards local people & culture, and towards heritage resources & environment?

Motivation for tourists to visit these heritage sites – What do tourists prefer to see when they come to the area?

Availability and quality of tourism infrastructure: roads & bridges, signage to the sites, guides, airport (functioning or not), public transport, traffic management in twin-towns and out of it, shops, washrooms, parking area, etc.

Availability and quality of services like restaurants, quality & prices of foodservice, water & sanitation system.

What type of accommodation facilities are available near this site for tourists? Like public or private hotels, guest houses, etc.?

What would you say regarding the safety and security of this place for tourists?

What feedback do you get from your visitors? Their level of satisfaction, experiencing this place? Discuss.

Heritage Tourism Development and Promotion:

Do you think the Buddhist heritage of Swat valley is marketed and promoted appropriately, please discuss?

What means of communication are used for the promotion and marketing of Swat's heritage sites?

What do you think is the most effective marketing and promotion tool/s for these heritage sites?

How can the local communities and tourists play a productive role in promoting heritage tourism at Swat?

Is there any platform/mechanism to provide information to tourists about these sites? Is the information suitable for both foreign and domestic visitors?

Your department's role in the preservation and care of these resources, discuss. (Tourist's role in sustainability and preservation?)

Have you ever noticed any change or damage in these heritage resources, due to environmental or human factors?

Discuss any collaboration, that exists between government/your department and other stakeholders to develop and promote these sites?

How would you explain a well-managed heritage tourism site? What qualities it should have?

Do you think the Buddhist heritage of Swat promotes a positive image of Pakistan and Swat valley? Explain.

Heritage Tourism benefits for the Local Community:

How do you work with the local communities near the heritage sites of Swat?

In your opinion, how an increase in tourism could bring in social and economic benefits for the local communities?

In your opinion, how the local community could be made a long-term partner in the development and promotion of these sites, please discuss.

Tell me of any other suggestions, that you think are important to be looked upon, to improve heritage tourism at these sites.

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