Challenges and Potential Opportunities of Tourism in Kumrat Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract: *The study examines the potential opportunities and challenges faced by the tourism sector in District Dir, specifically focusing on Kumrat Valley. A sample size of 384 respondents was taken from the population, and data was collected using an interview schedule. The data were entered into SPSS and analyzed using cross-tabulation, Chi-square, and binary logistic regression tests to analyze the association of every impediment of tourism with the potential opportunity of tourism. Moreover, the study adopted a multivariate analysis model to establish the combined effect of all the socio-economic and infrastructural impediments on the potential opportunities of tourism. The study reveals that Kumrat Valley has emerged as a promising tourism destination in recent years, offering a wide range of potential opportunities. However, the area faces significant socio-economic and infrastructural obstacles that impede tourism and restrict tourist flow. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, damaged road situation of Kumrat, lack of market facilitation to outsiders, insufficient electricity availability, inappropriate ATM and bank systems, and local people's discouragement of women and industrialists from involvement in tourism. To address these issues, the study recommends that the government promote tourism in Kumrat Valley through study-based initiatives. Both government authorities and local communities need to collaborate to overcome these challenges.*

Key Words: Tourism, Challenges, Opportunities, Socio-economic, Infrastructural

Introduction

Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest-growing industries in the world. Three key industries, technology, telecommunications, and tourism, are driving the global economy in the twenty-first century. The phenomenon of tourism is cultural, but it has developed into a science with its own methods and parts as societies have advanced. Tourism includes all of the activities when people travel to certain locations and stay there for up to a year in a row for pleasure, business, or other reasons that are different from their typical environment. (Qadr, 2011). 10 % of the global GDP is attributed to the tourist sector. The tourist sector employs one in ten people. The tourism industry has had consistent growth for the past nine years. In contrast to 2018, the total number of foreign visitors climbed by 5% or to 1.4 billion USD in 2019. Compared to the previous year, total worldwide tourism exports rose by 4% and reached 1.7 trillion USD in 2019. International visitor arrivals are continuously increasing, and this development in receipts supports the global economy in both developed and developing countries (UNWTO, 2020). As in Pakistan, the variety of tourism potential opportunities available is in the form of historical, ethnic, geographic, cultural, and natural, with the impacts of deserts, mountains, reverse, peaks, scenic land, archeological sides, and so on (Arain, 2019). Astounding Himalayan peaks, magnificent gorges, waters, sea coasts, deserts, magnificent land, and impressive scenery that challenge and appeal to venture seekers and environment lovers are all found in Pakistan. It is also the home of many ancient civilizations, ancient empires, monuments, museums, religions, and cultural heritage. In addition to the Arabian Sea, Pakistan

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shares borders with India, Afghanistan, China, and Iran. Because of this situation, Pakistan has emerged as one of the most appealing travel destinations. In Pakistan, the most visited tourist destinations are Chitral, Gilgit, Kaghan Valley, Lahore, Mohenjo Daro, Swat, and Skurdu. (Alasttal and Burdey, 2017).

The contribution of Pakistan's tourism industry to the nation's overall GDP in 2017 was PKR 930.9 billion (US$ 8832.1 million), or 2.9%. The British Backpacker Society ranked Pakistan among the top twenty travel destinations in the world in 2018. The same organization ranked Pakistan third in the world for adventure tourism. Pakistan was included in the top ten undiscovered nations in 2020 by Forbes Magazine (Associated Press of Pakistan, 2020). Religious, Archeological and Historical, Adventure, and Eco-tourism are the four basic categories into which the various forms of tourism in Pakistan can be divided (Kasim, 2011; Fakhar, 2010). However, eco-tourism involves visiting forests, mountains, glaciers, lakes, and other outdoor activities rather than religious or archaeological sites (Tolkach, 2016). The locations in Pakistan that are used for adventure tourism include Hunza, Ayubis, Murre, Malam aba, Kaghan, Chitral, and Balakot due to their magnificence and attractiveness in the northern parts of the country. (Khalil, 2007).

Pakistan, especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is a hub of tourism and the gateway to the Northern Areas, where natural beauty is at its peak. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's economy and employment creation are significantly influenced by tourism. The province offers stunning natural features such as mountains, valleys, forests, rivers, and a rich history. Numerous people visit the region each year for festivals and events because of its rich culture and customs. It is an ideal place for historical, religious, and medical tourism. Attractive spots in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are Swat, Galyat, Naran, Kaghan, Takht Bhai, Gorgatri, Kumrat Dir, Shangla, Shogran, Khyber Pass, and many more (Khan, 2021). The fact that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tourism-related spending increased from Rs. 86.23 million in the fiscal year 2012–13 to Rs. 791 million in the fiscal year 2018–19 further demonstrates the province's growing importance in the industry. The province has experienced an unprecedented increase in visitor traffic as a result of increased tourism promotion, which has boosted economic activity and produced new job prospects for the local populace (Annual Development Plan 2018-19).

Kumrat, which is at the top of this list of natural wonders in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is extremely beautiful and draws tourists from abroad as well as Pakistani locals. In Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province's Upper Dir District, Kumrat Valley is situated. It is one of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's most well-known tourist destinations and is located about 45 minutes from Thal, a town on the Panjkora River. A diversity of flora and fauna can be found in Kumrat forests, fog-covered mounds, snow-capped mountains, and verdant pastures, which are all habitats for these species (Nafees, 2008). Towering Deodar forest trees that are situated on flat terrain next to the Panjkora River are another characteristic of Kumrat Valley. This Valley also contains waterfalls and Kala Chashma (Black Spring).

Besides these potentialities, the area faces severe hurdles that restrict tourists and tourism promotion. The selected area of the study, at the same point, confronted both the challenges and opportunities of tourism. The prominent challenges among them are socio-cultural restrictions and lack of economic facilitation with respect to infrastructure development, religious restrictions, institutional challenges, etc. According to Thornton et al. (2011), One more thing that makes tourism difficult is infrastructure Roads, railroads, airports, the availability of gas and power, parking lots, museums, stores, the availability of networks, and other economic problems like human resources, Lodging facilities, foreign exchange earnings, expenses of the area, employment opportunities, accommodation, hospitality, wealth, and taxes management. In the chosen area, Robertson (2002) discovered a further barrier to tourism. He found the area's culture rigid, having an orthodox level of thinking, listening to music, the Prada system, belief, conservative forces, and barriers to social change, which ultimately built an unconducive environment for tourism. Additionally, government initiatives regarding the promotion of tourism in the area are questioned by various researchers ATDI (2010), and they found a lack of coordination among the various stakeholders of tourism like environment, wildlife, forestry, and other institutions of the government like NGOs, Media, community organization, health department, security agencies, hotel and restaurants, law and order situation, handling institutions, etc.

Conceptual Model on Impediments to Tourism in Kumrat
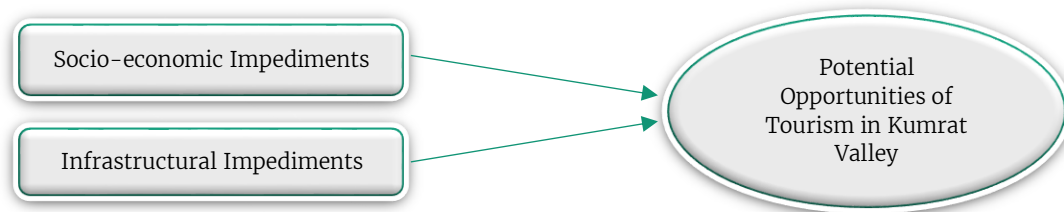
Keeping in view the issue of not inadequate strategies to handle hurdles and restrictions in the way of tourism in Kumrat Valley, this study is an attempt to explore the challenges confronted by tourism in the area. Moreover, the study analyzes the influence of restrictions on the potential opportunities for tourism in the selected area. Furthermore, the study examines the existing level and status of tourism in the area with respect to local socio-economic development and living standards.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine potential opportunities of tourism in the selected area
2. To explore the socio-economic and infrastructural impediments in the way of tourism in the District Dir Kumrat Valley.
3. To analyze the influence of hurdles that confronted tourism in Kumrat

Literature Review

The literature review in this study is based on the principle that research is a collective effort, one in which many researchers contribute and share results with one another (Randolph, 2009). This section of the study attempted to explore different viewpoints of the research scholars and critically analyze each of them within the context of the cultural setting of the selected area. The tourism industry has been experiencing rapid growth on a global scale, as highlighted by the World Travel and Tourism Council (2017). While extensive research has been conducted on tourism, particularly in developed countries, there remains a lack of exploration in the context of developing nations (Jenkins, 1980). Moreover, there has been increasing interest in utilizing tourism as a means to drive development, as it has the potential to improve economic conditions, create job opportunities, and promote market stability in the communities hosting tourism activities (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000). It is a crucial aspect of the economy that has regrettably been ignored, so it is crucial to promote Pakistan as a travel destination, particularly the northern regions and KP (Nafees, 2008). Tourism has seen significant expansion over the past 20 years and is currently considered the fastest-growing economic sector in the world. In the modern world, the growth of the tourist industry has outpaced that of other industries like the food, oil, and automobile industries. Its expansion is also being seen as a result of international tourism diversification. One of the main effects of this growth has been to strengthen the economy of the countries by creating jobs in a range of industries, including agriculture and telecommunications (Tolkach, 2016).

The Current Situation of Tourism in Pakistan

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report from 2017, the direct impact of tourism on Pakistan's GDP and employment was as follows: In 2016, the travel and tourism sector directly contributed USD 7.6 billion, accounting for 2.7% of the country's GDP. It was projected that this contribution would increase to PKR 833.8 billion (5.1% of GDP) in 2017 and PKR 1,432.1 billion (5.6% of GDP) by 2027. The report also estimated that the GDP contribution of travel and tourism would rise from 6.9% (USD 19.4 billion) in 2016 to 5.8% per annum (USD 36.1 billion) in 2027, representing 7.2% of GDP. Regarding employment, the travel and tourism sector directly supported 1.337 million jobs in 2016, accounting for 2.3% of total employment. It was anticipated that this number would increase to 1.368 million jobs in 2017 and reach 1.757 million jobs (2.3% of total employment) by 2027. However, when considering indirect employment contributions of the industry to the overall workforce, it was estimated that it accounted for around 6.0% or approximately 3.550 million jobs. This indirect employment was expected to grow by 3.0% to 3.657 million jobs in 2017 and by 2.7% per annum to 4.783 million jobs (6.3% of the total) in 2027.

Lorde et al. (2011) examined the potential of eco-tourism in the northern regions, particularly highlighting the Malakand Division as a gateway to the Northern Areas. The captivating natural beauty and landscapes of the northern region have the ability to attract and retain travelers who are interested in exploring these areas. According to Kavoura and Stavrianeas (2015), eco-tourism offers a distinct approach to generating foreign reserves, developing infrastructure, and stimulating business growth while simultaneously creating employment opportunities. Furthermore, Baloch (2007) emphasized in his study that tourism is a significant and multifaceted global industry that contributes to a nation's economy through job creation and the provision of services. Given the immense tourism potential, the valleys of Swat, Dir, and Chitral have been specifically chosen as the focal points of investigation, providing a reliable source of factual information.

Obstacles in the Way of Tourism in Pakistan

International travel is adversely affected by various issues, particularly those associated with terrorism. In response to the September 11 events in the United States, Pakistan joined the global fight against terrorism. The tourism industry suffered significant infrastructural damage due to acts of terrorism, leading to negative consequences (Henderson, Foo, Lim, & Yip, 2010). Gausi (2002) conducted a study following the American terrorist attacks in 2001, which heightened security risks for travelers worldwide. The Middle East was the region most severely impacted, experiencing a 30 percent decrease in tourism. Subsequently, the negative effects extended to America, Asia (24 percent), East Asia, and the Pacific (10 percent). Africa, however, witnessed a comparatively smaller decline in tourist arrivals, around 3.5 percent during that period. Empirical research indicates a significant correlation between terrorism and travel, demonstrating detrimental effects in numerous countries (Chen & Noriega, 2004). A nation's economy is considered stable when there is a stable law and order system in place. According to Khan (2021), peace is the key factor for the tourism industry. Alasttal and Burdey (2017) emphasize that the biggest threat to managing tourism in Pakistan is the deterioration of law and order and political instability. The smooth functioning of society relies on maintaining peace. Therefore, this study aims to address the impact of the law and order situation on tourism development in the chosen region. Additionally, Gausi (2002) highlighted in his research that safety concerns, security issues, and political instability are perceived as negative factors for tourism in African countries.

According to Arshad (2017), visas for tourists in Pakistan were difficult to obtain due to the country's unreliable security and turbulent geopolitical situation. The importance of this issue increases when visitors enter Pakistan from India. The lack of educated, trained, and skilled workers force is one of the biggest issues the tourism industry has faced (Heskett et al., 1994). According to Arif (2019), the area of tourism is relatively new in Pakistani academia since the nation's first institution to provide degrees in the subject was founded in 2008. This is also the reason why 14% of studies claim that there isn't adequate education in the subject. The capacity of the staff of the tourism department, hotel operators, trekking firms, officials, guides, and porters should be improved through capacity-building training programs for quality assurance (Baloch, 2007). A skilled and educated workforce is vital to the growth of the tourism industry, according to past studies. The goal of achieving client loyalty and happiness can be successfully attained if the workforce in the tourism industry has a positive attitude toward their work. Additionally, Baloch (2007) found that the government has never played a pushy role in the growth of the tourism industry. Over-centralization and a lack of cooperation across the national, provincial, local, and departmental levels have been hallmarks of the industry's poor management. A key technique for promoting the nation's tourism is participation in international fairs. Pakistan has a ranking of roughly 125/136 in terms of how effectively it uses branding and marketing to draw tourists (WEF, 2017).

In the context of Dir, it has been an independent princely state since it emerged in Pakistan in 1969. Before merging, it was ruled by Nawab's Family (Ali, 2015). The princely state opposed education, the use of the English and Urdu languages, white clothing, and architectural colors that were crucial to development and tourism, which had a detrimental impact on the number of visitors to Dir (Ahmed & Anwar, 2016). Only a few awareness-raising campaigns were organized in Dir, primarily by NGOs or the commercial sector (Khan, 2021). The Government campaign for tourism promotion of Dir is highlighted except for Kumrat. It was made possible when Imran Khan visited this area, and people came to know about Kumrat. Arif (2019) also showed that the departmental link of the tourism sector with forestry, the

environment, wildlife, and ways is very important. The tourism department or cell for each province or federal territory is independent, according to Arshad (2017). Examples include the Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP), Tourism Corporation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (TCKP), Sindh Tourism Development Corporation (STDC), Culture, Tourism and Archives Department Baluchistan, Tourism Department Gilgit Baltistan, AJ&K Tourism, and Archaeology Department. The necessity of using information technology to promote tourism was further addressed. Ahebwa (2013) further argued that management should improve local residents' quality of life by helping those residents. The researcher investigated all of these challenges in terms of management, promotion, research, innovative growth, and the function of the Department of Tourism and its connections to other departments.

A key strategy for achieving sustainable tourist growth at a place is community involvement. As Ndiradevi (2013) studied, the local people try their best to communicate in broken English to acquaint the foreigner with their culture and tradition. This need for communication has led to the opening of various institutes where one can learn how to speak English and other foreign languages like French, German, etc. Additionally, the previous researcher looked into how important healthcare facilities were to the growth of enterprises and efficient resource management. According to ATDI (2010), the current health services must be improved, and mobile hospitals and dispensaries should be kept at tourist hotspots where they can provide tourists with peace of mind regarding their health concerns.

It was extracted from the above discussion that tourism in Kumrat is confronted with various hurdles. The prominent hurdle among them is the unavailability of adequate literature. It was found that the local people of the selected area had low socio-economic status and limited employment opportunities. The study is thus attempting to explore the socio-economic and employment opportunities with respect to the development of tourism. Additionally, the tourism industry has grown significantly in importance around the globe. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of Pakistan's largest provinces in terms of its abundance of tourist-related resources, and the country as a whole has enormous tourism potential. However, despite being one of the industries with the fastest growth rates worldwide, unfortunately, Pakistanis are not aware of this. The purpose of this study is to identify the variables preventing Upper Dir Kumrat Valley tourism from reviving.

Material and Methods

This research was based on a quantitative methodology to quantify and enumerate the responses of the respondents regarding the challenges confronted by tourism and to analyze the influence and restrictions upon the potential opportunities of tourism in District Dir, Kumrat Valley. This study captured a snapshot of the study population. In the present study, Kumrat was selected as a universe. The current study population is diverse and comprised of various categories. The selected strata of the study were tourists, households engaged with tourism, political activists, social activists, religious leaders, and hotel employees. As a result, the study adopted a disproportionate method of stratified random sampling technique in order to represent each category of the study population. The researcher randomly collects data from each stratum. In this article, the academic thesis data of the principal author was used for analysis. The data was taken under the supervision of the Department of Sociology at Bacha Khan University of Charsadda.

The samples of 384 respondents were selected from the target population. Therefore, the sample size of the current study was selected by the formula.

$$\frac{(Z-Score)^2 \times P^* (1-P^*)}{(Significance\ level)^2}$$

Which is applicable to the unknown population. (Shete, et al., 2020).

The data was collected through the interview schedule. Additionally, in the study, potential opportunity means all those factors that may lead to the promotion of tourism in the area or by which outsiders are attracted to the area. There are several opportunities in the selected area. Among them, the prominent ones are natural beauty, a pleasant climate, greenery, waterfalls and springs (kala chasma), and sacred places of the area. In the study, all the indicators (types) of potential opportunities were addressed by the Likert scale as strongly disagree, disagree neutral, agree, and strongly agree. Further, in order to apply bivariate analysis to the study, all the indicators of potential opportunities were computed into a single

variable and then recoded to dichotomous variables as *insufficient potential opportunities and sufficient opportunities.* The current study adopted two different phases to analyze the study data. In the first phase, univariate and bivariate analyses were made to find out the level of influence of various variables upon each other. A binary logistic regression test was applied to study data to analyze the association of every impediment of tourism with the potential opportunity of tourism in the Kumrat Valley. The study adopted a multivariate analysis model to establish the combined effect of all the socio-economic and infrastructural impediments on the potential opportunity of tourism in the selected area. The higher statistically significant socio-economic impediments of tourism are kept constant in the first model, and then all the other infrastructural impediments are added in separate models. Furthermore, for the multivariate analysis, multiple logistic regression tests were applied by taking socio-economic impediments as constant, and then all the other impediments were added one by one to the model. The multivariate analysis model provided an in-depth analysis regarding the impediments of tourism and its adverse effects on tourism development in the selected area.

Data Results and Discussion
Table 1
Potential opportunities of tourism in Kumrat Valley

	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
1	Kumrat valley is full of natural beauty that can be used as a potential for the promotion of tourism.	13 (3.4)	29 (7.6)	21 (5.5)	119 (31.0)	202 (52.6)	384 (100%)
2	Kumrat Valley is full of scenic, and healing for all people i.e. local and tourist	9 (2.3)	20 (5.2)	9 (2.3)	108 (28.1)	238 (62.0)	384 (100%)
3	Climate of the Kumrat is pleasant and mild Cools summers are common throughout the area	13 (3.4)	31 (8.1)	7 (1.8)	86 (22.4)	247 (64.3)	384 (100%)
4	Natural objects like breathtaking lakes, soaring mountains, picturesque of the Kumrat valley are famous	5 (1.3)	35 (9.1)	13 (3.4)	35 (9.1)	296 (77.1)	384 (100%)
5	The most visited spots in Kumrat valley is Kumrat waterfall, Kala Chashma, to attract the tourist	17 (4.4)	18 (94.7)	8 (92.1)	112 (29.2)	229 (59.6)	384 (100%)
6	Historical places in Kumrat enlighten the archaeological sites	22 (5.7)	41 (10.7)	38 (9.9)	171 (44.5)	112 (29.2)	384 (100%)
7	There are many Hunting tourism activates which attract tourists in the area	157 (4.9)	111 (28.9)	74 (19.3)	16 (4.2)	26 (6.8)	384 (100%)
8	The Jama Masjid Thall is sacred place that attract tourist in the area	18 (4.7)	29 (7.6)	31 (8.1)	200 (52.1)	106 (27.6)	384 (100%)
9	Wildlife tourism further contributes to Socio-economic development of Kumrat valley.	38 (9.9)	114 (29.7)	128 (33.3)	93 (924.2)	11 (2.9)	384 (100%)
10	Tourism in Kumrat positively influence the standard of life of the local people	0 (0.0)	29 (7.6)	18 (4.7)	119 (31.0)	218 (56.8)	384 (100%)

Table 2

Statistical association between socio-economic hurdles and potential opportunities of the Kumrat valley

Socio-economic	Respondents' views regarding hurdles confronted with Potential opportunities				
	Insufficient	Sufficient	Total		
	Frequency, %	*Frequency, %*		*OR, 95% C.I*	*P. Value*
Male members of the family in the valley are restricting women's engagements with local tourism					
Strongly disagree	11(21.2%)	41(78.8%)	52(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	7(14.6%)	41(85.4%)	48(100.0%)	1.57(.554-4.454)	.395
Neutral	4(6.9%)	54(93.1%)	58(100.0%)	3.62(1.07-12.19)	.038
Agree	52(27.1%)	140(72.9%)	192(100.0%)	.722(.345-1.51)	.387
Strongly agree	21(61.8%)	13(38.2%)	34(100.0%)	.166(.064-.434)	.000
Local people discourage industrialists and other wealthy people from investing in the tourism industry					
Strongly disagree	37(24.3%)	115(75.7%)	152100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	56(36.1%)	99(63.9%)	155(100.0%)	.569(.347-.993)	.025
Neutral	0(0.0%)	30(100.0%)	30(100.0%)	.178(.000-.)	.998
Agree	2(6.5%)	29(93.5%)	31(100.0%)	4.66(1.062-20.49)	.041
Strongly agree	0(0.0%)	5(100.0%)	16(100.0%)	(.178-.000.)	.998
Language differences between the local people and tourists create communication problems					
Strongly disagree	5(13.2%)	33(86.8%)	38(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	70(32.3%)	147(67.7%)	217(100.0%)	.318(.199-.850)	.022
Neutral	8(33.3%)	16(66.7%)	24(100.0%)	.303(.085-1.07)	.065
Agree	12 (13.2%)	79(86.8%)	91(100.0%)	.997(.326-3.056)	.996
Strongly agree	0.(0.0%)	14(100.0%)	14(100.0%)	.999(.584-.000)	.999
Local people are reluctant to interact with visitors due to cultural differences					
Strongly disagree	3(18.8%)	13(81.2%)	16(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	8(21.1%)	30(78.9%)	38(100.0%)	.865(.197-3.79)	.848
Neutral	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	6(100.0%)	.231(.030-1.76)	.158
Agree	78(27.6%)	205(72.4%)	283(100.0%)	.607(.168-2.18)	.445
Strongly agree	3(7.3%)	38(92.7%)	41(100.0%)	2.92(.524-16.3)	.222
Tourists are confronted with illegal offenses by the local people					
Strongly disagree	2(6.9%)	27(93.1%)	29(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	79(32.9%)	161(67.1%)	240(100.0%)	.151(.035-.651)	.011
Neutral	5(11.1%)	40(88.9%)	45(100.0%)	.593(.107-3.28)	.549
Agree	9(16.7%)	45(83.3%)	54(100.0%)	.370(.074-184)	.225
Strongly agree	0(0.0%)	16(100.0%)	16(100.0%)	.174(.000-.)	.999

Association between socio-economic hurdles confronted with sufficient potential opportunities of tourism in Kumrat Valley: In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 4(6.9%), while sufficient opportunities were 54(93.1%). The odd ratio of the neutral response to men's discouragement of women in tourism for sufficient opportunities was 3.62 times greater than strongly disagree. Men's discouragement of women in tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, 1.07-12.19). After the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles (men's discouragement of women in tourism, discouragement of industrialists and other wealthy people, and language difference), men's discouragement of women in tourism becomes insignificant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (.704-9.483).

Among the total sample size, insufficient opportunities were 2 (6.5%), while sufficient opportunities were 29(93.5%). The odd ratio of the agreed response to local people discouraging industrialists from investing in sufficient opportunities for tourism was 4.66 times greater than strongly disagree. Local people discouraging industrialists from investing in tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I *(1.062-20.49)*. After the adjustment of socioeconomic hurdles, local people discouraged industrialists, and men discouraged.

Local people discouraged industrialists and other wealthy persons from investing in the tourism industry, which became significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (.996–22.255).

In the total sample size, insufficient opportunities were 70(32.3%), while sufficient opportunities were 147(67.7%). The odd ratio of the disagree response to language difference of the area in tourism for sufficient opportunities of tourism was .318 times lesser than strongly disagree. Language difference in the area of tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *.199–.850*). After the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles, men's discouragement of women in tourism, language differences of the local people, and local people's discouragement of industrialists and other wealthy people, Language differences between the local people and tourist create communication problem that becomes negative significant to sufficient opportunities of tourism in Kumrat valley, for this statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (.186–1.623). Among the total sample size of 384, insufficient opportunities were 3(50.0 %), while sufficient opportunities were 13(50.0%). *However, by applying binary logistic regression, local people's reluctance to interact with visitors due to cultural differences* was statistically insignificant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 79(32.9%), while sufficient opportunities were 161(67.1%). The odd ratio of the disagree response to tourists being confronted with illegal offenses from the local people in tourism for sufficient opportunities of tourism was .151 times less than strongly disagree. Tourists are confronted with illegal offenses by the local people of the area. For tourism, it was statistically negative, which is significant for sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *(.035–.651)*.

Table 3

Statistical association between Infrastructural hurdles and potential opportunities of the Kumrat valley

Infrastructural hurdles	Respondents' views regarding hurdles confronted with sufficient Potential opportunities				
	Insufficient	Sufficient	Total	OR, 95% C.I	P. Value
	Frequency, %	*Frequency, %*			
Local infrastructure is damaged and not up to the mark for tourist requirements					
Strongly disagree	19(55.9%)	15(44.1%)	34(100.0%)	*1,00*	
Disagree	19(33.9%)	37(66.1%)	56(100.0%)	*2.467,(1.029–5.913)*	.043
Neutral	6(37.5%)	10(62.5%)	16(100.0%)	*2.111,(.625–7.134)*	.229
Agree	46(19.5%)	190(80.5%)	236(100.0%	*5.232,(2.472–11.072)*	.000
Strongly agree	5(11.9%)	37(88.1%)	42(100.0%)	*9.373,(2.958–29.704)*	.000
Lack of coordination among relevant stakeholders of tourism departments caused natural and man-made disasters					
Strongly disagree	8(40.0%	12(60.0%	20(100.0%	*1.00*	
Disagree	13(50.0%)	13(50.0%)	26(100.0%)	*.667(.205–2.169)*	.500
Neutral	13(18.8%)	56(81.2%)	69(100.0%)	*2.87,(.976–8.44)*	.055
Agree	41(20.6%)	158(79.4%	199(100.0%)	*2.569,(.985–6.69)*	.054
Strongly agree	20(28.6%)	50(71.4%)	70(100.0%)	*1.667,(.593–4.687)*	.333
The road situation of the Kumrat is damaged and not up to mark for tourists and local requirements					
Strongly disagree	2(14.3%)	12(85.7%)	14(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	4(8.7%)	42(91.3%)	46(100.0%)	*1.750(.285–10.742)*	.546
Neutral	10(45.5%)	12(54.5%)	22(100.0%)	*.200(.036–1.113)*	.066
Agree	22(52.4%)	20(47.6%)	42(100.0%)	*.152(0.30–.762)*	.022
Strongly agree	57(21.9%)	203(78.1%	260(100.0%)	*.594(.129–2.729)*	.503
The government and other agencies failed to mitigate the disaster in the area due to infrastructural constraints					
Strongly disagree	2(25.0%)	6(75.0%)	8(100.0%)	*1.00*	
Disagree	31(47.0%)	35(53.0%)	66(100.0%)	*.376(.071–2.003)*	.252
Neutral	17(13.5%)	109(86.5%)	126(100.0%)	*2.137(.398–11.467)*	.376

Agree	39(22.7%)	133(77.3%)	172(100.0%)	1.137(.221–5.858)	.878
Strongly agree	6(50.0%)	6(50.0%)	12(100.0%)	.333(.47–2.366)	.272
The lack of electricity services for visitors restricts the development of tourism					
Strongly disagree	8(18.6%)	35(81.4%)	43(100.0%)	1.00	
Disagree	48921.5%)	175(78.5%)	223(100.0%)	.833(.363–1.915)	.667
Neutral	7(24.1%)	22(75.9%)	29(100.0%)	.718(.228–2.260)	.572
Agree	31(45.6%)	37(54.4%)	68(100.0%)	.273(.110–674)	.005
Strongly agree	1(4.8%)	20(95.2%)	21(100.0%)	4.571(.532–39254)	.166
The communication system of Kumrat Valley is far behind the tourist's standards					
Strongly disagree	3(23.1%)	10(76.9%)	13(100.0%)	1.00	
Disagree	25(25.5%)	73(74.5%)	98(100.0%)	.876(.223–3.440)	.850
Neutral	8(34.8%)	15(65.2%)	23(100.0%)	.563(.119–2.649)	.467
Agree	30(16.4%)	153(83.6%)	183(100.0%)	1,530(.397–5.892)	.536
Strongly agree	29(43.3%)	38(56.7%)	67(100.0%)	.393(.099–159)	.184
The lack of market facilities enlarged visitors' difficulties in buying day–to–day groceries and other things					
Strongly disagree	12(41.4%)	17(58.6%)	29(100.0%)	1.00	
Disagree	33(20.5%)	128(79.5%)	161(100.0%)	2,738(1.191–6.93)	.018
Neutral	15(83.3%)	3(16.7%)	18(100.0%)	.141(.033–.598)	.008
Agree	32(20.1%)	127(79.9%)	159(100.0%)	2.801(1.216–6.454)	.016
Strongly agree	3(17.6%)	14(82.4%)	17(100.0%)	3.294(.773(14.036)	.107
The lack of banks and ATMs restricts tourism in the area					
Strongly disagree	6(54.5%)	5(45.5%)	11(100.0%)	1.00	
Disagree	12(28.6%)	30(71.4%)	42(100.0%)	3.00(.768–11.719)	.114
Neutral	25(48.1%)	27(51.9%)	52(100.0%)	1,296(.351–4.782)	.697
Agree	45(18.2%)	202(81.8%)	247(100.0%)	5.387(1.574–18.429)	.007
Strongly agree	7(21.9%)	25(78.1%)	32(100.0%)	4.286(1.002–18.324)	.050

Association between Infrastructural hurdles confronted with sufficient potential opportunities of tourism in Kumrat Valley: In the total sample size, insufficient opportunities were 5(11.9%), while sufficient opportunities were 37(88.1%). The odd ratio of the strongly agreed response to Local infrastructure being damaged and not up to the mark for tourist requirements in tourism for sufficient opportunities of tourism was *9.37* times greater than strongly disagree. Local infrastructure damage in the area of tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *2.958–29.704*) after the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles (Men's discouragement of women in tourism, language difference of the local people, local people discouragement of industrialists, and Local infrastructure damage). Local infrastructure is damaged and not up to the mark for tourist requirements, which becomes highly significant sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (2.232–40.324).

In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 41(20.6%), while sufficient opportunities were 158(79.4%). *However, by applying binary logistic regression,* the stakeholders of tourism departments caused natural and man-made disasters, which were statistically insignificant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in the selected area of the study.

Among the total sample size, insufficient opportunities were 22(52.4%), while sufficient opportunities were 147(67.7%). The odd ratio of the agreed response to the Road situation of the Kumrat is damaged, and not up to mark for tourists, and local requirements in tourism for sufficient opportunities of tourism was .152 times greater than strongly disagree. The road situation of the Kumrat damaged the area for tourism, which was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, 0.30–.762) after the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles (men's discouragement of women in tourism, language difference of the local people, local people discouragement industrialists and Road situation of the Kumrat damaged). The road situation of Kumrat is damaged and not up to mark for tourists, which becomes significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (.053–1.840).

In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 39(22.7%), while sufficient opportunities were 133(77.3%). *However, by applying binary logistic regression,* the Government and other agencies failed to mitigate the disaster in the area due to infrastructural constraints, which was statistically insignificant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in the selected area of the study. Among the total selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 31(45.6%), while sufficient opportunities were 37(54.4%). The odd ratio of the agreed response to Lack of electricity services to visitors restricts the development of tourism in the area for sufficient opportunities of tourism was *.273* times greater than strongly disagree. The lack of electricity services to visitors restricts the development of tourism in the area and is statistically negatively significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *(.110-674).* In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 29(43.3%), while sufficient opportunities were 38(56.7%). *However, by applying binary logistic regression,* the Communication system of Kumrat Valley is far behind the tourist standards and was statistically insignificant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in the selected area of the study.

In the selected sample size, insufficient opportunities were 32(20.1%), while sufficient opportunities were 127(79.9%). The odd ratio of the agreed response to Lack of market facilities enlarged visitors' difficulties in buying day-to-day groceries in tourism for sufficient opportunities of tourism was *2.80* times greater than strongly disagree. The lack of market facilities in the area for tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *1.216-6.454*). After the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles like men's discouragement of women in tourism, language difference, local people's discouragement of industrialists, and lack of market facilities). The lack of market facilities enlarged visitors' difficulties in buying day-to-day groceries, which became significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (1.215-9.767).

Among the total sample size, insufficient opportunities were 45(18.2%, while sufficient opportunities were 202(81.8%). The odd ratio of the agreed response to the lack of Banks and ATMs restricting tourism in the area for sufficient opportunities was *5.38* times greater than strongly disagree. The lack of Banks and ATMs in the area for tourism was statistically significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism. For this association, the confidence interval value was (C.I, *1.574-18.429*). After the adjustment of socio-economic hurdles like men's discouragement of women in tourism, language differences, local people's discouragement of industrialists, and lack of banks and ATMs). The lack of banks and ATMs restricting tourism in the area has become highly significant to sufficient opportunities for tourism in Kumrat Valley. For this, the statistical association of adjusted value is (adjusted ci, (.372-6.183).

Table 4

Multivariate table by applying the Multiple logistic regressions analysis

Hurdles to tourism	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Women's discouragement of tourism	2.5(.70-9.48)	2.51(.663-9.51)	2.20(594-8.18)	1.85(.478-7.19)	2.47(.637-9.65)	.138(.033-.572)
Industrialists' discouragement of tourism	4.70(.999-22.25)	5.26(1.07-25.74)	5.72(1.18-27.69)	4.31(.892-20.83)	4.60(.962-22.01)	4.956(.968-25.38)
Language difference	.549(.186-1.62)	.808(.255-2.65)	780(.253-2.39)	.609(.203-1.82)	.642(.211-1.95)	1.61(.448-5.805)
Damage Infrastructure to tourism		9.48(2.23-40.32)				9.72(2.04-46.29)
Kumrat Road situation damage			.311(.053-1.84)			.055(.003-.916)
Lack of Market facilities				3.44(1.21-215)		30.21(3.53-257.0)
Lacks of Banks & ATM					1.51(.372-6.18)	.542(.049-5.94)

After the adjustment of all socio-economic hurdles, local people discourage industrialists from tourism (Adjusted OR 4.70, CI (.996-22.255)). And infrastructural impediments like local infrastructure are damage (Adjusted OR 9.48, CI (2.23-40.32)) Road situation of Kumrat (Adjusted OR .311, CI (.053-1.84)) Lack of Markets facilities (Adjusted OR 3.44, CI (1.21-215)) Lacks of Banks & ATM (Adjusted OR .662, CI 1.51 (.372-6.18)) were significance. In the last modal of the analysis, some of them remain significant hurdles confronting potential opportunities for tourism in the Kumrat Valley. Like Women discouragement to tourism (Adjusted OR .006, CI .138(.033-.572)) local infrastructure is damage (Adjusted OR .004, CI 9.72(2.04-46.29) Lack of Markets facilities Adjusted OR .002, CI, 30.21(3.53257.0). The rest of the other was insignificant impediments that confronted potential opportunities for tourism in the selected area of the study.

Conclusion

The main purpose of the study is to explore the potential opportunities of tourism in District Dir, Kumrat Valley, and analyze the socio-economic and infrastructural challenges confronted by tourism in the selected area. The study concluded that socio-economic and infrastructural impediments influence the potential opportunities in the area. Kumrat Valley, located in the Upper Dir District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, has gained popularity as a potential tourism destination in recent years. Known for its breathtaking natural beauty, the valley offers a serene, lush green meadows and picturesque environment that attracts nature enthusiasts. The area offers a diverse range of eco-tourism opportunities, including the enchanting Kumrat waterfall, captivating kala Chashma, breathtaking Dojanga, and picturesque Jahaz Banda. Kumrat Valley, located in the northern regions of Pakistan, is undeniably renowned for its stunning natural beauty, making it a highly desirable destination for tourists.

Besides these potentialities, the area faces severe hurdles that restrict tourists and tourism development of this region, particularly the inadequate infrastructure. Kumrat Valley suffers from poor infrastructure, including unreliable power supply, lack of electricity, market facilities, lack of paved roads, absence of a functional telecommunication system, unavailability of ATM and online payment facilities, discouragement of women and industrialists insolvents in tourism. These infrastructural deficiencies significantly impact the valley's appeal to tourists. Moreover, the study also investigated that Kumrat Valley is always neglected by the state authorities in comparison to Murree. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that factors such as hotel location, accommodations, lack of hotel and restaurant facilities, language differences, culture differences, and illegal offenses of the local people do not significantly impact the tourism of the area. The road infrastructure is not up to par to cater to the needs of tourists and locals. Additionally, the researcher utilized multivariate analysis to assess how various factors collectively influence tourism promotion. These factors include the discouragement of women from participating in local tourism activities, the deterioration of local infrastructure, and the absence of market facilities, which contribute to visitors' challenges in purchasing everyday groceries and other necessities.

Suggestions/Recommendations

Based on a comprehensive analysis of the current state of the tourism industry in Kumrat District, Dir, and considering the social, economic, and infrastructural challenges identified in this study, the following recommendations are particularly relevant for policymakers at the federal and provincial levels:

- It is essential that the government invests in infrastructure, such as roads and public amenities. By enhancing connection and accessibility to popular tourist destinations, more travelers can be drawn in, boosting the economy.
- Government should implement policies that promote responsible tourism, such as waste management, energy efficiency, and the protection of natural and cultural heritage.
- Invest in training initiatives to improve the abilities of the local tourism workers. This can involve instruction in hospitality, multilingualism, and customer service – qualified workers can provide a better visitor experience and contribute to the overall improvement of the sector.
- To ensure that local communities profit from tourism through job creation, income generation, and cultural preservation, promote community involvement in decision-making processes,

- Give tourists' safety and security first priority by putting safety-related policies into place. Develop tourist police units, expand the capabilities of law enforcement organizations, and raise awareness among residents of the value of creating a friendly and safe environment for visitors.
- Establish partnerships between the government, private sector, and local communities to leverage resources and expertise for tourism development. Foster collaboration with tourism industry stakeholders, including hoteliers, tour operators, and transportation providers, to collectively work towards sustainable growth and address socio-economic challenges

By implementing these recommendations, the government can overcome socio-economic impediments and create an enabling environment for tourism growth.

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