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## BUDDHIST HERITAGE TOURISM IN TAXILA VALLEY: TOURISTS PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*Tourism is a complex activity that connects the social, economic, and environmental facets of sustainable development. It has both positive and bad effects on the destinations. The opinions of visitors play a crucial role in the design, development, and management of a tourism destination. This study examines the views of national, international tourists and monastic (religious) pilgrims about Buddhist historical tourism in Pakistan's Taxila Valley. To achieve the purpose of the research, a survey based on a questionnaire was conducted in the study area. A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed among the tourists (participants) including 294 national, 60 international tourists and 30 Buddhist Monks. The questionnaires distributed were returned in usable condition. These questionnaires were adapted from relevant studies previously undertaken in different region, (Siddiqui:2018). The data collected through the above-mentioned sources was then analysed using SPSS. The findings show that over the past few decades, Buddhist heritage tourism has been viewed as a developing industry. According to the present survey, the good effects outweigh the negative ones are mostly because of the increased recreational options brought about by development efforts and improved administrative planning. Results of the analyses also show that tourists face a number of difficulties such as bumpy and difficult roads leading to the destinations, lodging concerns, attitudes of the local community, pollution, challenges with international visitors' visas, and unfriendly airport services.*

**Key words:** Taxila valley, Buddhist Heritage Tourism, Perceptions, Problems, Facilities Impacts, Tourists, SPSS Analysis

### **Introduction**

The valley of Taxila is a hub of Buddhist heritage accommodating many important heritage sites including those inscribed on the world heritage list of UNESCO (*UNESCO World Heritage Centre* 2017).

The promotion of cultural, religious and heritage tourism in Taxila valley is mainly based on the Buddhist heritage sites. These heritage sites with their exceptional architectural, archaeological, religious and historical value are popular tourist destinations (Drost, 1996; Li,etal: 2008). Inscription of these sites by UNESCO has played a key role to highlight their significance at international level. The local administration also plays an important role to highlight and promote them at national and international level. However, the heritage sites need to be promoted according to the needs and demands of the tourists. For this purpose, various studies have been undertaken on Buddhist tourism throughout Asia. Numerous studies focus on how Buddhism offers a range of tourism resources, such as monastic legacy, the teachings of the Buddha, Buddhist philosophies, and locations where pilgrims can satisfy their spiritual needs (Bruntz, 2020). The Perceptions of the tourists and problems raised by the visitors, especially by the

international visitors/pilgrims has been of the most crucial topic for researchers and the key elements for the sustainable Buddhist heritage tourism development (Putra, 2021).

The involvement of tourism industry has also played a vital role in the promotion of heritage sites in different parts of the world (Eshliki, 2012). Tourism activities connect the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, affects the destinations in both positive and negative ways. The host community's perspective towards both domestic and foreign tourists is crucial to future tourism planning, management, and destination growth (Jeyacheya, 2020).

Several reports and articles (both published and unpublished) discuss the Taxila Valley as a significant tourists' destination. These earlier studies on Taxila addressed a wide range of topics, including archaeological tourism and asset management. Furthermore, some international studies on challenges faced by international tourists such as visa issuance and other related problems also highlight the issues that need to be addressed on urgent basis for sustainable tourism development in Pakistan in general and Taxila valleys in particular (Song and Witt, 2006).

Some of these researches had great impacts on tourism promotion as the provided guidelines to the authorities to cope with the challenges faced by the tourists before and during their visit to the country and to the heritage sites. For instance, the Government of Pakistan has developed and implemented National Plan for the promotion of tourism. For this purpose, the guesthouses/hotels owned by the Govt have been furnished to cope with accommodation problems faced by the tourists (Alasttal, 2017). To increase commerce and tourist benefits, governments may grant visa-free entrance to visitors from a limited list of nations on a bilateral or unilateral basis. This facility has been provided to the tourists in many countries. In 2008, the US Government extended South Korean nationals' 90-day visa-free access to encourage travel from their country. Since each nation is the other's primary source of incoming tourists, it was anticipated that the 2006 removal of visa requirements between South Korea and Japan would increase traveller numbers in both directions (Lee, 2010).

Similarly, the atmosphere in airports is yet another issue highlighted in the previous studies. The findings indicate the main services that needed to be enhanced include ground transportation, baggage claim speed, complaint processing, health centre, and terminal comfort (Ghazi, 2018). While the main obstacle to promoting tourism in the valleys, particularly in the heritage sites located in rural Pakistan, is the lack of transportation infrastructure for reaching to the site. Scheyvens (2018) in his research discovers a high correlation between people's perceptions of their basic information rights and non-availability of basic information on tourism destinations. According to the author tourists who are aware of the basic legal rights and services offered by heritage sites

are better equipped to deal with issues of prejudice and bias. Worldwide tourism advertising fails due to inadequate knowledge about tourist location amenities (Rabelo, 2022)

Limited research has yet been carried out on heritage tourism in Taxila valley. These studies too do not provide information about visitors' perspectives or attitudes towards promotion of sustainable tourism development in the region. This particular study attempts to provide a more detailed analysis of tourists' perceptions on the promotion of tourism and the attitude of the local community towards the visitors and its positive and negative impacts for the promotion of tourism in Taxila valley.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The main aims of the present research are to:

- Understand the perceptions of visitors about facilities at the heritage sites in Taxila valley
- Identify the major challenges faced by tourists in Taxila valley

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted on the Buddhist heritage sites and Taxila Museum in Taxila valley of Pakistan to identify the perceptions and problems faced by the national and international tourists and pilgrims. Of the heritage sites in Taxila valley, three Buddhist sites Dharmarajika, Julian, Mohra- Muradu were selected along with Taxila Museum.

The study employed a quantitative approach using a questionnaire to investigate tourists' perceptions regarding facilities, and issues related to their visits. The field work was carried out based on, a non-probability convenience sample of 384 visitors. The survey was conducted in Taxila valley based on questions related to Buddhist heritage tourism issues, supervised by the senior author and at some points by the administration of the sites and museum due to security concerns of the monks and some international visitors.

A statistical package of social sciences (SPSS 23) analysis was employed to ascertain the visitor/s' profile and the means and standard deviation of each item used to characterise the tourists' perceptions, issues related to Buddhist heritage tourism, and support for tourism marketing. The component structure of the variables describing the inhabitants' perceptions of tourism was evaluated using chi-square analysis.

### **Operationalization and Instrumentation of Variables**

For measurement of study variables (Promotion of tourism is the dependent variable and facilities and problems were independent) the following procedure was adopted.

The scale for measuring the dependent variable i.e. promotion of tourism consists of 08 items, a positive response on 04 or more items considered the promotion of tourism of Buddhist heritage in the valleys of Taxila.

### Sampling and Sample Size

For calculation of sample size, the following formula was used as recommended by Chaudhry (2009).

$$n = \frac{N\hat{p}\hat{q}Z^2}{\hat{p}\hat{q}Z^2 + Ne^2 - e^2} \quad \text{----- Equation-1}$$

Where “N” denoted the total visitors which is 384 for this study, p represented the visitors proportion or the level of significance, which is 0.50, q=0.50, z denoted the confidence level of the visitors which 1.96 and e represented margin of error which is taken 0.043 while 0.05 is enough for social sciences.

### Data Measurement

For measurement of association and variation between variables, various statistical test i.e. Chi-Square test tau-c test were applied. The procedure is as follow:

The Chi-Square values were based on the following equation proposed by Mary (2009).

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} \quad \text{(Equation # 02)}$$

$\chi^2$  measuring the association between the variables.

The following formula of Kendall’s Tau-c test was used in equation-3 (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992)

$$\tau_c = \frac{n_c - n_d}{\sqrt{(n_0 - n_1)(n_0 - n_2)}} \quad \text{(Equation-3)}$$

A logistic regression model was applied to measure the functional relationship between a group variable i.e. Age, gender, literacy status, visit number, facilities, services, tour guide information, old age and disable people services, marketing material, community attitude, security issues and revisit intensions, a logistic regression model was used. When there are three options for respondents than the logistic regression model is consider effective (McFadden, 1973).

The following formula in equation-4 proposes by Karen (2001) for logistic regression model.

$$\ln\left(\frac{P}{1-P}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k \quad \text{----- Equation-4}$$

In this section thirteen questions about tourists' perceptions of the facilities and problems to Buddhist historical sites and museum in the Taxila were posed red ragging the promotion of tourism. The open-ended questions allowed respondents to openly explore their opinions about these issues, but the yes, no, and don't know answers were also included in the questions. The facilities provided to the tourists in the Buddhist heritage sites was measured through some appropriate attributes is given in Table 1 and discussed below.

**Table-1. Facilities and Problems on the Archaeological site in Taxila**

Attributes	Attitude	P-T			Total	Statistics
		More promotion-of tourism	Moderate promotion of tourism	Less promotion of tourism		
Satisfaction from road facilities to the heritage site	Yes	164 (75.6)	40 (18.4)	13 (6)	217 (56.5%)	$X^2=12.364$ P=0.015 Tau-c=0.58
	No	59 (65.6)	14 (15.6)	17 (18.9)	90 (23.43%)	
	Don't know	53 (68.8)	16 (20.8)	8 (10.4)	77 (20.05%)	
Satisfaction from Accommodation Facilities	Yes	135 (82.8)	19 (11.7)	9 (5.5)	163 (42.44%)	$X^2=17.032$ P=0.002 Tau-c= .000
	No	48 (64.9)	17 (23.0)	9 (12.2)	74 (19.27%)	
	Don't know	93 (63.3)	34 (23.1)	20 (13.6)	147 (38.28%)	
Government Guest House in adjacent area of the sites	Yes	135 (80.8)	25 (15.0)	7 (4.2)	167 (43.48%)	$X^2=15.485$ P=0.004 Tau-c= .000
	No	58 (68.2)	16 (18.8)	11 (12.9)	85 (22.13)	
	Don't know	83 (62.9)	29 (22.0)	20 (15.2)	132 (34.37%)	
Satisfaction from Visa Problem to the foreigners? (Foreigners 90)	Yes	66 (95.7)	02 (2.9)	01 (1.4)	69 (76.66%)	$X^2=2.089$ P=0.019 Tau-c= .967
	No	15 (93.8)	00	01 (6.3)	16(17.77%)	
	Don't know	05 (100)	00(00)	00(00)	05(5.5%)	
Friendly-airport assistance (Foreigners persons 90)	Yes	62 (95.7)	1 (2.9)	1 (1.4)	64 (71.1%)	$X^2=4.370$ P=0.048 Tau-c= .428
	No	12 (93.8)	0	1 (6.3)	13 (14.4%)	
	Don't know	12 (3)	1 (7.7)	0 (00)	13 (14.4%)	
Drinkable-water facilities at the site	Yes	119 (77.3)	29 (18.8)	6 (3.9)	154 (40.10%)	$X^2=11.420$ P=0.022 Tau-c= .056
	No	102 (92.3))	30 (19.6)	21 (13.7)	153 (39.84%)	
	Don't know	55 (100)	11 (14.3)	11 (17.1)	77 (20.05%)	
Neat and clean destination at the site	Yes	161 (75.2)	37 (17.3)	16 (7.5)	214(55.72%)	$X^2=8.577$ P=0.043 Tau-c= .086
	No	59 (67.0)	21 (23.9)	08 (9.1)	88 (22.91%)	
	Don't know	56 (68.3)	12(14.6)	14(100)	82 (21.35%)	
Rest stop places on highways for visitors	Yes	49 (72.1)	13 (19.1)	06 (8.8)	68 (17.7%)	$X^2=2.939$ P=0.568 Tau-c= .271
	No	103 (67.8)	30 (19.7)	19 (12.5)	152 (39.58%)	
	Don't know	124 (75.6)	27(16.5)	13 (7.9)	164(42.70%)	

You are satisfied from the availability of Car Park at heritage sites	Yes	96 (75.6)	23 (18.1)	08 (6.3)	127 (33.0%)	$X^2=6.355$ P=0.044 Tau-c= .041
	No	115 (74.2)	25 (16.1)	15 (9.7)	155 (40.36%)	
	Don't know	65 (63.7)	22(21.6)	15 (14.7)	102 ( 26.56%)	
You are satisfied from the security level (Safety measures) satisfaction	Yes	151 (71.9)	43 (20.5)	16 (7.6)	210 (54.68)	$X^2=5.360$ P=0.050 Tau-c= .785
	No	80 (72.1)	15 (13.5)	16 (14.4)	111 (28.90%)	
	Don't know	45 (71.4)	12 (19.0)	06 (9.5)	63 (16.40%)	
You are satisfied from first aid facility at the sites	Yes	43 (70.5)	07 (11.5)	11 (18.0)	61 (15.88%)	$X^2=6.760$ P=0.149 Tau-c= .583
	No	45 (71.4)	13 (20.6)	05 (7.9)	63 (16.40%)	
	Don't know	188 (72.3)	50 (19.2)	22 (8.4)	260 (67.7%)	
You are satisfied from food price at the sites	Yes	129 (72.9)	35 (19.8)	13 (7.3)	177 (46.09%)	$X^2=10.276$ P=0.036 Tau-c= .796
	No	103 (66.5)	29 (18.7)	23 (14.8)	155 (40.36%)	
	Don't know	44 (84.6)	06 (11.5)	02 (3.8)	52 (13.54%)	
Do you believe the entry fee and other costs were justified by the experience	Yes	155 (74.5)	39 (18.8)	14 (6.7)	208 (54.16%)	$X^2=9.465$ P=0.050 Tau-c= .163
	No	103 (67.8)	30 (19.7)	19 (12.5)	152 (39.58%)	
	Don't know	18 (75.0)	1 (4.2)	5 (20.8)	24 (6.25%)	

- Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of respondents.

### **Results of the visitors' perceptions of facilities and problems**

Facilities for visitors enhance their experiences. An effective visitor management plan must address everything from parking to signage to food quality to lavatory cleanliness. Building a tourism business are challenging in the absence of these high-quality services (Parkin, 1989).

The findings in Table 1 indicate that, out of the 384 visitors, 56.5 % (217) were satisfied with the road facilities, and of those 217, 164 (75.6 %) thought highly of them for the promotion of tourism. The data indicates that out of 384 visitors, 40 (18.4%) show moderate ignorance of road facilities, 13 (18.4%) show less cause for the promotion of tourism in the Taxila valley. In contrast, 23.43 % (90) of visitors express dissatisfaction with the quality of the roads leading to heritage sites. Of these, 59 (65.6%) show highly ignorance of road facilities, 14 (15.6%) show moderate ignorance of road facilities, and 17 (18.9%) show low ignorance of road facilities. Out of 384 people, 77 (20.05%) were unaware of these facilities. Traveller social attachment was shown to be positively correlated

( $T^c=0.51$ ) and highly significant ( $P=0.015$ ) with roads leading to Buddhist heritage sites. These results make it clear that visitors' access to information regarding the state of the roads leading to the cultural sites in the Peshawar and Taxila valleys is inadequate. On the other hand, people who were happy with everything from the heritage sites to the road infrastructure were probably more conscious of the local tourism industry's efforts. Knowledge of the country's tourism resources enhances access to socioeconomic development and other pertinent demands, as well as the country's perception abroad.

In addition, the findings showed that 42.44 % of visitors acknowledged that the accommodations met their needs, while 19.27 % thought the facilities would not be enough to solve their lodging problems and 38.28 % were unaware of the existence of accommodations. The findings showed a strong positive ( $T^c=0.001$ ) and highly significant ( $P=0.002$ ) correlation between the accommodation facilities offered to guests and the promotion of tourism (P-T). These findings indicate that travellers are more inclined to promote tourism if they feel that the lodging options available close to historical sites meet their needs and receive positive feedback on them.

Furthermore, 43.48% of respondents thought that nearby government guest houses and other lodging options are accessible and beneficial for further tourism development. Additionally, 22.13 % of respondents suggested that there be no lodging options or government guest houses in the areas next to heritage sites, while 34.37% of visitors said they were unaware of these locations. The findings showed a strong ( $P=0.004$ ) and favourable ( $T^c=0.000$ ) correlation between tourism marketing and government guest houses, which is a tangible means of facilitating visitor access.

For all those international tourists and religious monks who agreed that facilitation provided and positive behaviour of the visa section officer at visa centre, 76.66% international visitors were agreed compared to 17.77% of those who claimed that no facilities were provided for them and 5.5 % were unaware about facilities at Visa centre. Visa facilitation for international tourist in embassies was found more significant ( $P=0.019$ ) and positive ( $T^c=0.967$ ) with more promotion of tourism.

Moreover, for all those respondents who experienced a friendly airport assistant at different centres of Pakistan facilitated 76.66% tourists were compared to 17.77% those who didn't have a good experience on the airport, while 17.77 % those international tourists were unaware about airport experience. The association of facilitation in the airport and tourist promotion was found significant ( $P=0.048$ ) and positive ( $T^c=0.428$ ). In addition, for all those visitors who were satisfied from the facility of drinkable water provided at the Buddhist heritage sites were 40.10% compared to 39.84% who were claimed in negative opinion about it and 20.05 % out of 384 having no observations about facilities of



drinkable water. Therefore, information about the drinkable water facilities significantly ( $P=0.022$ ) and positively ( $T^c=0.046$ ) contributed to promotion of tourism through these heritage sites. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that, of the respondents, 55.72% agreed that the heritage site and its surroundings were clean and orderly, compared to 22.91 % who disagreed and 21.35 % who were unaware of this. A comparable, highly significant, and positive ( $P=0.043$ ,  $T^c=0.086$ ) correlation between tourists and tidy, clean heritage sites was discovered.

Besides, that for those responders who agreed that rest areas should be offered at various intervals that link to tourism destinations with historical significance 17.72% of respondents were satisfied with the rest areas, compared to 39.58% who said there were no amenities at all and 42.70 % who said they had no awareness that there were rest areas in various locations. Travellers' knowledge of the availability of rest areas is favourably ( $T^c=0.271$ ) correlated and highly significant ( $P=0.056$ ).

In addition, 33% of the respondents stated that they received priority treatment when it came to the availability of automobile parking spaces at museums and archaeological sites, whereas 40.36 % of the respondents said they received no priority treatment when it came to parking their cars near historical monuments. Of them, 26.56% are unaware of the existence of parking lots at museums and historical sites. Low significant  $T^c = 0.041$  and positive  $P = 0.044$  showed a relationship between visitors and parking facilities.

Moreover, 54.68% of the respondents who were satisfied from the security measures when compared to 22.90% of those who not satisfied from the security actions at heritage sites and 16.40% have no knowledge of security at different heritage sites and museums. Security measures taken during the visit have significant ( $P=0.050$ ) and positive ( $T^c=0.785$ ) association with tourists. The knowledge and awareness with respect to the security measures at different sites and museums prevailed to some extent and was also a source of satisfaction of international tourists and creates a positive image on the harmony of a country.

The phenomena of tourism, which fosters the growth of numerous economic ventures directly or indirectly related to the provision of tourism services, as well as the perception of cities, has the potential to generate a variety of criminal activities. Together with tourism stakeholders, destinations need to provide secure and suitable environments for their guests and promote harmony with the local populace. Safety and feeling of security are vital for the standard of living in tourist locations and should be considered while selecting a place (Alkier, 2016).

Additionally, 15.88 % of respondents expressed satisfaction with first aid facilities at heritage sites and museums, compared to 16.4 % who expressed dissatisfaction during their visit to various heritage sites and museums. Notably, a significant proportion of

respondents, 67.70 %did not know that first aid facilities existed at heritage destinations. For the quality of life in tourist areas, security measures are essential. The association between tourists and first aid facilities was significant ( $P=0.019$ ) and weakly positive ( $T^c=0.583$ ).

Conversely, the study results show that satisfaction level of tourists of the food prices at different heritage sites are 46.09% are agreed that food prices are reasonable compared to that 40.36% are having serious constraints on the food prices at different localities of the heritage sites and museums while 13.54 have no idea about food prices. Food price have significant ( $P=0.036$ ) and less positive association  $T^c=0.796$  with social inclusion of PWDs. This probably is because of unsatisfactory price of food at different heritage sites for getting no benefits specific for tourists.

Furthermore, it is likely that the exact allocation of proceeds from entry fees is opaque. It is feasible for tourists to question if their money is being misappropriated or is going towards maintaining and preserving the site. Thus, of the tourists visiting heritage sites and museums, 39.58% are mostly national and local tourists and 54.16, comprising national and international visitors and members of the elite class, are content with the admission fee cost. The remaining 6.25% of tourists are not aware of the entry fee. Travellers and first aid stations had a weakly positive ( $T^c=0.163$ ) but statistically significant ( $P=0.050$ ) correlation.

The main issues raised by national respondents were infrastructure, security, transportation, and hygiene and majority of the international tourists exposed the problems of community attitude and miss management and poor planning of the heritage site and that are the negative impacts for the promotion of tourism.

**Table-02: Perception of the Visitors on Community Attitude**

Attributes	Attitude	P-T			Total	Statistics
		More promotion-of tourism	Moderate promotion-of tourism	Less promotion-of tourism		
Satisfaction from Local community attitude	Yes	154	30	17	201 (52.34%)	$X^2=7.005$ $P=0.136$ Tau-c= .023
	No	24	4	4	32 (8.33%)	
	Don't know	98	36	17	151 (39.32%)	
Training and support for locals to develop tourism-related skills	Yes	59	9	5	43 (11.19%)	$X^2=1.078$ $P=0.898$ Tau-c= .352
	No	92	26	13	131 (34.11%)	
	Don't know	155	35	20	210 (54.68%)	
Satisfaction	Yes	140	27	11	178 (46.35)	$X^2=8.635$

from that tourism impacted local lifestyle and traditions	No	66	22	14	102 (26.56)	P=0.051 Tau-c= .011
	Don't know	70	21	13	104 (42.70)	
opportunity to get involved with people of the local community	Yes	71	18	9	98 (25.52)	X <sup>2</sup> =8.185 P=0.085 Tau-c= .108
	No	116	37	23	176 (45.83)	
	Don't know	89	15	6	110 (28.64)	
Satisfaction from Children touts and baggers at the sites	Yes	93	14	06	113 (29.42)	X <sup>2</sup> =11.230 P=0.024 Tau-c= .056
	No	122	41	25	188 (48.95)	
	Don't know	61	15	7	83 (21.61)	
Overcrowding at the site	Yes	117	21 (80.3)	09 (100)	147 (38.28)	X <sup>2</sup> =7.520 P=0.111 Tau-c= .009
	No	104	31	19	154 (40.10)	
	Don't know	55	18 (25.3)	10	83 (21.61)	
Hassling at the site	Yes	139(19.4)	23 (80.6)	15(100)	177 (46.09)	X <sup>2</sup> =12.283 P=0.015 Tau-c= .009
	No	63	24	6	93( 24.21)	
	Don't know	74	23 (24.5)	17(100)	114 (29.68)	

Respondents were asked about the local community attitude and behaviour with them, majority of visitors (52.34%) reported pleasure with the host community's attitude in the area, compared to 8.02% who expressed unhappiness and 39.32% who did not respond. This result was found to be less significant and to have a weak positive association (P=0.136 and T<sup>c</sup> = 0.023).

Furthermore, the data show that 11.19% of visitors overall are in favour of providing locals with training and assistance in order to help them acquire skills connected to tourism. Conversely, 34.11% expressed dissatisfaction, while the majority of visitors, or 54.68%, claimed to be ignorant of it. The results showed a less significant (P=0.898) but weakly positive (T<sup>c</sup>=0.352) association between local community training and skill and tourism promotion (P-T).

Comparably, when asked how much they were satisfied with how tourism affected local customs, infrastructure and lifestyle, the majority of visitors (46.35%) said they were satisfied with how tourism enhanced the local way of life, compared to 26.56% who expressed dissatisfaction and 42.70% who did not reply. P=0.051 and T<sup>c</sup> = 0.011 indicated a weak positive relationship and less significance for this outcome.

The majority of respondents, or 45.83%, expressed dissatisfaction with the ability to interact with members of the local community; in contrast, 25.52 % expressed satisfaction and 28.64% did not have an answer for the given issue. Involvement with local community of the visitors and tourism promotion were found to have a weakly positive ( $T^c=0.108$ ) and less significant ( $P=0.085$ ) association (P-T). Furthermore, the majority of visitors, 48.95%, feels unsatisfied with the child touts and baggers at the sites; compared to 29.42% feel better, and 21.61% have no remarks regarding this subject. Less significance and a weak positive connection were revealed for this outcome by  $T^c = 0.056$  and  $P = 0.024$ .

When tourists were questioned about the overcrowding at heritage sites, the majority of respondents, 48.95%, were dissatisfied with the situation, while just 38.28% were satisfied and 21.61% chose not to respond. Tourism promotion (P-T) and overcrowding at visiting heritage sites were shown to be positively ( $T^c=0.009$ ) and less significantly ( $P=0.111$ ) associated.

Additionally, (46.09%) of the visitors felt that there was no harassment on the sites, whereas 24.21 % expressed dissatisfaction and 29.68 % had no explanation for this. There was a positive ( $T^c=0.009$ ) and less significant ( $P=0.011$ ) correlation found between the promotion of tourism (P-T) and harassment at heritage sites.

### **Conclusion**

The perception of visitors to the Buddhist heritage sites in the Taxila Valley offer insightful information on heritage tourism today and point out areas in need of development. Overall, the study shows that visitors have a positive opinion of Buddhist heritage tourism in the area and that the administration has improved planning and development in this sector. However, several issues were brought up by tourists, including bad roads, lodging challenges, the attitude of the local population, pollution, and difficulties obtaining visas for foreign travellers. To improve the entire visitor experience and encourage sustainable tourism development in the region, these issues need to be resolved.

The relationship between facility provision and tourism promotion is one of the study's main conclusions. Facilities like lodging choices and road infrastructure are vital in forming tourists' feelings and motivating them to support tourism in the area. The study emphasises how crucial it is to build infrastructure and how having sufficient facilities is essential for promotion of tourism to attract tourists. The results also clarify the importance of local community attitudes regarding tourism. Although most visitors had good encounters with the locals, others expressed worries about things like kid touts, crowding, and harassment at the monuments. Enhancing community involvement and tackling these issues can help create a more hospitable and inclusive travel atmosphere.

The study concludes that in order to boost Buddhist historical

tourism in Taxila Valley, it is critical to address infrastructure shortages, enhance community interaction, and improve the entire tourist experience. By tackling these problems, interested parties can endeavour to achieve sustainable tourism growth and safeguard the area's unique cultural legacy for upcoming generations.

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