

An Analytical Study on the Tourists' Perspectives of Socio-Economic Impacts and Challenges of Border Tourism in Punjab

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Article History:

Received: 12-12-2024

Revised: 25-01-2025

Accepted: 05-02-2025

Abstract:

This paper, "An Analytical Study on the Tourists' Perspectives of Socio-Economic Impacts and Challenges of Border Tourism in Punjab," is designed to analyze the socio-economic effects and challenges faced by tourists at border tourism destinations in Punjab. A structured approach has been used where an online comprehensive questionnaire is filled out by the tourists at key border destinations such as Amritsar (Attari-Wagah Border), Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur (Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border), and Fazilka (Sadqi-Sulemanki Border). Using a convenience sampling method, there are 224 valid responses gathered regarding tourist perceptions of socio-economic impacts and challenges. Data were analyzed by using SPSS software, and factor analysis was used to assess socio-economic impacts, while the Friedman test was used to assess challenges. Findings reveal that border tourism in Punjab significantly influences culture, economy, and infrastructure and cultivates cultural exchange, ensures the preservation of traditions, helps improve employment, and provides regional development. On the other hand, through the study, various challenges have emerged such as accommodation shortage and overcrowding, insufficient medicinal facilities, and bad direction. This requires improvement in all infrastructure along with proper management. In conclusion, whereas border tourism in Punjab holds great socio-economic benefits, improvement of existing challenges through better facility and management strategies could enhance the tourism experience and further spur local economic growth.

Keywords: Tourists Perspective, Socio-Economic Impact, Challenges, Border Tourism Sites, Punjab.

1. INTRODUCTION

Border tourism has gained much attention in the recent past due to the potential it has for border understanding, economic development in local economies, and the building of peace. Border tourism has become an important phenomenon in India, especially in a state like Punjab, with its long international boundary with Pakistan. The socio-economic impacts of border tourism are multidimensional, ranging from economic growth through enhanced local businesses to challenges such as security concerns and infrastructural limitations. This study is focused on conducting an analytical study of the tourists' perspective towards the socio-economic impacts and challenges of border tourism in Punjab with special emphasis on the main border tourism destinations such as

Amritsar (Attari-Wagah Border), Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur (Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border), and Fazilka (Sadqi-Sulemanki Border).

Amritsar, as famous for the Attari-Wagah Border, has been a representative of India-Pakistan relations, where thousands of domestic and international tourists visit to witness the flag-lowering ceremony every day. Socio-economic impacts on this border tourism are massive because it contributes a huge share to local businesses, especially hospitality, transportation, and retail sectors (Goswami & Kumar, 2018). Attari-Wagah border is an area of great cultural and historical importance where tourism not only brings about economic benefits but also aids in the promotion of national pride and inter-border cultural exchange (Sharma, 2020). However, issues such as border security and political sensitivities often hinder tourism growth in such areas (Sethi, 2017). Other border areas of the state of Punjab, which include Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur, and Fazilka, also carry the same importance for border tourism though to a lower scale. They also have lesser-known border crossing stations like Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border and Sadqi-Sulemanki Border. They also have a mixture of historical places and agricultural landscapes. Although these sites hold historical and cultural importance, they often suffer from socio-economic deficiencies, such as poor infrastructures, insufficient tourism service, and lesser awareness from the tourists side (Kaur & Singh, 2019). All these drawbacks hamper the possible growth of these tourist destinations along the border and suppress their economic implications on local communities (Kaur & Sharma, 2021).

Socially, economically, and infrastructurally, border tourism can rev up job creation, upgrade infrastructure for people and infrastructural setup, and improve the flow of cultural exchange between the Indians and Pakistanis. There are, however huge political factors-the uneven distribution of benefits accruable from tourism, security factors, and the prevailing politics-having a significant impact on unlocking all possibilities of border tourism in such areas (Batra, 2020). Local communities are also challenged by the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable management of tourism (Arora & Singh, 2020). In addition, the infrastructural development to support a steady influx of tourists is often inadequate, especially in rural areas along the borders, where basic facilities such as transportation, accommodation, and sanitation remain inadequate (Chakrabarti, 2018). This study seeks to understand the tourists' perspectives regarding the socio-economic impacts and challenges of border tourism in Punjab by conducting surveys and interviews. This will help in assessing the impact of tourism on the economy and lifestyle of the local community and how tourists perceive the challenges of border security, political tension, and infrastructure. The key factors that influence tourist experiences will be identified in this research, which will give policymakers and tourism authorities more valuable insights to enhance border tourism in Punjab while addressing the challenges effectively.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Concept of Border Tourism

Border tourism serves as a particular niche in tourism, which is meant for and encourages traveling to zones located along or near international borders (Więckowski, 2023). The geographical, cultural, and

historical context underpinning the specific scenario of a border region then provides the inspiration for unique experience to be derived for anybody interested in visiting, especially when borders meet at a number of countries, traditions, and various landscapes (Bremer, 2004). Border tourism generally encompasses activities like cross-border excursions, cultural exchange programs, heritage exploration, and eco-tourism that allows the tourists to immerse themselves in the extensive varieties of attractions borderlands have in store for them (Panagopoulos et al., 2024). More often than not, such destinations are imbued with the richness of collective history and living cross-cultural experiences such as bilingual populations, distinctive regional food items, and folk art originating in many different countries. In addition, border tourism raises the awareness and interaction of the countries concerned together with being used as leverage to trigger regional economic growth, heritage cultural development, and serve peace purposes (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013). Governments and other stakeholders can use border areas as tourist destinations and attract both domestic and international travelers at the same time while working on challenges such as infrastructure development, safety concerns, and environmental conservation (Ashley et al., 2007). Border tourism is therefore an innovative tool for transforming regions considered peripheral into centers of action regarding cultural activities and economic growth but simultaneously enhance sustainable development and unity worldwide (Al-Khatib et al., 2023).

2.2 The Role of Border Tourism in Economic Development

Border tourism significantly contributes to the development of economies of regions along the borders because it creates cross-border trade, supports local businesses, and enhances cultural exchange (Stoffelen & Vanneste, 2017). As a niche tourism form, border tourism attracts tourists with interests in exploring unique cultural experiences, historical landmarks, and less commercialized natural landscapes as opposed to other standard tourist destinations (Newland & Taylor, 2010). This influx of tourists can stimulate local economies by increasing demand for goods and services such as accommodation, food, transportation, and souvenirs, thus creating job opportunities and improving the standard of living for local communities (Gao et al., 2019). Border tourism also stimulates investments in infrastructure, such as roads, airports, and tourist facilities, which will benefit both the local population and the wider region (Wendt et al., 2021). The economic effects go beyond the immediate neighborhood of the border, since border tourism may spur the economy of the neighboring cities and regions through regional cooperation and integration (Abdelhak & Belkacem, 2024). In addition, it strengthens the socio-cultural bonds between nations, promoting peacebuilding and stability as it fosters mutual understanding and respect among neighboring countries (Farmaki & Stergiou, 2021). However, to unlock border tourism potential, security issues, visa policies, and sustainability of tourism must be tackled in a way that benefits the economy in a long-lasting and equitable manner for all stakeholders involved in this tourism activity (Kozak & Buhalis, 2019).

2.3 Cultural Exchange and National Identity through Border Tourism

Border tourism plays an important role in the cultural exchange and development of national identity because it encourages interactions between countries that share borders. The platform for the exchange of traditions, languages, and customs allows visitors and the local community to gain a more profound

understanding of each other's cultural heritage (Kapoor & Kumar, 2020). In regions where borders are not just political but also cultural lines, tourism can challenge stereotypes and promote tolerance through direct interaction (Sen & Verma, 2018). In addition, border tourism reinforces national identity as tourists are likely to engage with symbolic elements of their home country's culture while exploring cross-border spaces (Bhatt & Sharma, 2022). This type of tourism highlights those unique cultural aspects of a border area that may not be easily known outside the local regions, thus strengthening both the local and national pride in this regard (Kaur, 2019). Border tourism also initiates national debates about heritage and identity, where people from different nations share their history and current issues (Rai & Singh, 2021). Moreover, border tourism accessibility also increases new cultural exchange where local culture can be preserved while sharing with the global world (Chopra & Tiwari, 2020). Through these interactions, border tourism not only strengthens the relationship between neighboring nations but also enhances a sense of collective belonging within national borders.

2.4 Challenges and Barriers to Border Tourism Development

Border tourism development encounters several challenges and barriers, which hamper its growth and sustainability. Among the prime challenges, political instability and tension between bordering countries will often cause restricted access or even closure of borders and thus restrict tourism flow (Sinha & Mehta, 2020). Security issues are also very challenging as border areas will have greater security measures, thereby making traveling less attractive and difficult for tourists (Sharma & Singh, 2021). In addition, there is poor infrastructure in the border areas which hampers the tourism development in those areas, as transport, accommodation, and other facilities required by the tourists are not available or are very poor in such regions (Rai & Sharma, 2019). Cultural and language differences between neighboring nations might create barriers to communication and understanding, which might discourage cross-border exchanges and impact the overall tourist experience (Bhatti & Jamil, 2020). Moreover, uncontrolled tourism can lead to environmental degradation in border areas due to the deterioration of natural resources, which may affect the local ecosystem and reduce tourism activities in the future (Chopra & Yadav, 2022). Lastly, there may be inefficiency and missed opportunities for sustainable tourism development in the absence of coordination among countries and local authorities managing border tourism (Verma & Kapoor, 2018). These barriers, however, need to be broken by providing holistic solutions: political relations, infrastructural development, and environmental preservation to open up the fullest benefits of border tourism.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the tourists perspective on socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations of Punjab.
- To examine the challenges faced by tourists at border tourism destinations of Punjab.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of the titled "An Analytical Study on the Tourists' Perspectives of Socio-Economic Impacts and Challenges of Border Tourism in Punjab" study adopts a structured and systematic approach toward the gathering of data and the analysis of research objectives. First, a total

structured questionnaire was formulated considering the vast literature review which was followed by consultation about the survey instrument with my research supervisor to ensure its relevance and authenticity. This questionnaire was designed and framed for gathering critical data which would show the perceptions of tourists pertaining to socio-economic impacts, challenges that border tourism destination in Punjab may face. An online medium, that is Google Forms, was utilized to disperse the questionnaire for convenient accessibility by respondents. Tourists who have visited Punjab's most prominent border tourism sites-including Amritsar's Attari-Wagah Border, Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur's Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border, and Fazilka's Sadqi-Sulemanki Border-were targeted respondents in the survey. Convenience sampling was adopted to carry out this study and it enabled the researcher to draw a sample of people willing and readily available to take part in the research. There was a total of 320 questionnaires that were dispensed, and responses gathered amounted to 230 responses. After strict scrutiny of its completeness and relevance, valid responses for analysis were drawn into 224 responses. It was a three-section questionnaire. The first section collected demographic information from the tourists, such as age, gender, and the frequency with which they visited the border tourism sites. The second section focused on the perceptions of tourists related to the socio-economic impact of border tourism activities at border destinations of Punjab, constituting 14 questions developed on a five-point Likert scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This could be used by the respondent to express the level of agreement with each statement towards socio-economic impacts. The third section contained 12 questions on the difficulties that tourists face in visiting these sites, which used the same five-point Likert scale. The reliability analysis of the 36 items in the questionnaire had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.958 for all items, meaning an excellent internal consistency. The reliability of the 14 socio-economic impacts-related questions was at 0.974 while that of the 12 challenges-related questions was 0.969, meaning that data is quite reliable.

For data analysis, the study used SPSS software. To achieve the first objective, factor analysis was used to establish the dimensions of socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations in Punjab. The use of this technique assisted in unearthing the factors that explained the socio-economic effects of border tourism such as cultural, economic, and environmental impacts. To address the second objective, whereby it aimed to assess the rankings of various challenges that face tourists at border tourism destinations, Friedman's test was used to establish the ranking of these challenges. Friedman's test is a non-parametric statistical method, which could be used in this regard since the data were ordinal and allowed a comprehensive consideration of the tourists' opinions regarding the challenges they meet. With such approaches, the research analyzed not only the socio-economic implications and issues surrounding border tourism in Punjab but also enlightened people with information regarding tourist experiences traveling to such regions.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Parameter	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	126	56.3
	Female	98	43.8
Age	18-25 Years	48	21.4
	26-35 Years	56	25.0
	36-45 Years	34	15.2
	46-55 Years	46	20.5
	Above 55 Years	40	17.9
Marital Status	Single	102	45.5
	Married	122	54.5
Educational Qualification	Intermediate	21	9.4
	Graduate	80	35.7
	Postgraduate	77	34.4
	Doctorate	38	17.0
	Others	8	3.6
Occupation	Student	64	28.6
	Government Employee	73	32.6
	Private Job	45	20.1
	Self-Business	33	14.7
	Others	9	4.0
Annual Income	Not Earning	55	24.6
	Up to 3 Lakhs	50	22.3
	3-6 Lakhs	60	26.8
	6-10 Lakhs	41	18.3
	More than 10 Lakhs	18	8.0
Area of Residence	Within Border Districts of Punjab	79	35.3
	Districts of Punjab Other than Boder Districts	81	36.2
	Other States of India	64	28.6

Frequency of Visits to Border Tourism Destinations in Punjab	Once a year	141	62.9
	2-3 times a year	66	29.5
	Monthly	16	7.1
	Weekly	1	.4
Primary Mode of Transportation for Tourism	Personal vehicle	176	78.6
	Public transportation	39	17.4
	Tour operator services	9	4.0
	Others	--	--
Border Tourism Destinations of Punjab where You have Visited	Amritsar (Attari-Wagah Border)	79	35.3
	Tarn Taran	44	19.6
	Gurdaspur	19	8.5
	Ferozpur (Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border)	57	25.4
	Fazilka (Sadqi-Sulemanki border)	25	11.2

Table no. 1 presents a detailed breakdown of the demographic characteristics of respondents and their tourism behavior with respect to border tourism destinations in Punjab. Based on gender, the majority of respondents are male (56.3%), while 43.8% are female. Age-wise, it can be seen that the maximum percentage of respondents lies in the 26-35 years category (25.0%), followed by 46-55 years group at 20.5%. The 18-25 years and 36-45 years age groups account for 21.4% and 15.2%, respectively, while 17.9% are above 55 years. For marital status, slightly more respondents are married with 54.5% while 45.5% are single. From the educational point of view, the highest group accounts for graduates (35.7%), followed by postgraduates (34.4%), and then doctorate holders (17.0%). Only a very small proportion has an intermediate level of education (9.4%), and 3.6% have other qualifications. Government employees are the highest percentage (32.6%), followed by students at 28.6%. Other occupational categories are private job holders at 20.1%, self-employed at 14.7%, and others at 4.0%. Looking at annual income, a large share of the respondents (24.6%) are not earning, followed by 22.3% who are earning up to 3 Lakhs and 26.8% between 3-6 Lakhs. Between 6-10 Lakhs, a relatively small proportion (18.3%) is earning, and 8.0% is reporting an earning of more than 10 Lakhs. Looking at their place of residence, 36.2% of the respondents are residing in non-border districts of Punjab, followed by 35.3% from the border districts, and 28.6% from other states of India.

Regarding tourism behavior, most respondents visit border tourist destinations once a year while 62.9%, and 29.5% visit 2 to 3 times a year. A very small proportion visits monthly at 7.1%. And an extremely small number (0.4%) reported visiting border tourist destinations once a week. Most respondents used their personal vehicles to get to the destinations as the leading mode of transportation (78.6%), followed by public transportation at 17.4%, and by tour operator services at 4. The specific border tourism destinations visited in Punjab were most visited by the respondents who have visited Amritsar (Attari-Wagah Border) (35.3%), followed by Ferozpur (Ganda Singh Wala-Hussainiwala Border) (25.4%). Other popular destinations include Tarn Taran (19.6%), Fazilka (Sadqi-Sulemanki border) (11.2%), and Gurdaspur (8.5%). This data reveals key demographic trends and insights into the tourism patterns related to border destinations in Punjab.

5.2 Tourists Perspective on Socio-Economic Impact of Border Tourism Destinations of Punjab

The first objective of the study is to analyze the tourists perspective on socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations of Punjab. Questions to tourists who visited various border tourism destinations of Punjab were asked on 14 parameters of socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations of Punjab on a five-point likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Factor analysis is performed to find out the most important dimensions of socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations of Punjab.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity in Analyzing Socio-Economic Impact of Border Tourism in Punjab

KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.936
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		5050.245
	df		91
	Sig.		.000

Table 2 is the result, which shows suitability of data for factor analysis with regard to the socio-economic impact of border tourism in Punjab. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy results in the value of 0.936, well above 0.6, as recommended, meaning that a sample size is adequate with highly suitable data for the factor analysis. Moreover, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results show a highly significant value; it has a chi-square value of 5050.245 with df = 91 and a p-value of 0.000. This result shows that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, thereby ensuring that there are adequate correlations among the variables for applying factor analysis. These findings form a sound statistical basis for further factor analysis that would identify key dimensions of socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations in Punjab.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained Through Principal Component Analysis for Socio-Economic Impact of Border Tourism in Punjab

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.446	74.615	74.615	10.446	74.615	74.615	6.259	44.705	44.705
2	1.947	13.906	88.521	1.947	13.906	88.521	6.134	43.817	88.521
3	.313	2.233	90.754						
4	.241	1.719	92.473						
5	.188	1.345	93.819						
6	.160	1.145	94.964						
7	.144	1.031	95.995						
8	.114	.812	96.806						
9	.108	.771	97.578						
10	.095	.676	98.254						
11	.088	.626	98.879						
12	.076	.542	99.422						
13	.047	.334	99.756						
14	.034	.244	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3 summarizes the total variance explained by the components obtained from PCA for the analysis of the socio-economic impact of border tourism in Punjab. Initially, 14 components were considered and their contributions to the total variance were evaluated. The first component is the largest, with an eigenvalue of 10.446, accounting for a sizeable 74.615% of the total variance; hence, it explains a big part of the variability of the data. The second component has an eigenvalue of 1.947, which adds 13.906% of variance, bringing the cumulative variance accounted for by the first two components to 88.521%. These two account for the most important dimensions of the socio-economic impact. In summary, PCA found two dominant components explaining most of the socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations in Punjab, which captures as much as 88.521% of the variation. The results thus depict highly efficient dimensional reduction to permit a focused exploration of the most influential factors.

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix for Identifying Dimensions of Socio-Economic Impact of Border Tourism in Punjab

Rotated Component Matrix^a		
	Component	
	1	2
Local pride in traditions and history	.909	
Cultural exchange between tourists and locals	.896	
Awareness of historical events in border areas	.889	
Environmental cleanliness and maintenance	.879	
Infrastructure development due to border tourism	.876	
Local perception of regional importance	.866	
Employment generation through border tourism	.833	
Preservation of cultural heritage in border areas		.905
Cross-cultural understanding and peacebuilding		.896
Promotion of sustainable tourism practices		.896
Income enhancement for local communities		.864
Contribution of border tourism to the local economy		.839
Improvement in quality of life for locals		.839
Promotion of small-scale businesses by border tourism.		.837
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.		
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.		

Factor 1: Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Impacts of Border Tourism: This composite element includes a wide array of variables, collectively depicting the all-around socio-economic, cultural, and environmental impacts of Punjab's border tourism. With all these seven interrelated variables that have strong factor loads on this composite, its overall cumulative explanatory power is substantial. The highest load indeed pertains to "Local pride in traditions and history" at 0.909, indicating the role that border tourism has been able to play for improving local pride in the collective heritage and historical tales of those regions. This aspect underlines the role of tourism in promoting the identity of the community and creating a stronger cultural sense of its past. In the same way, "Cultural exchange between tourists and locals" (0.896) points to how border tourism acts as an interface for meaningful interaction, giving people from different groups better opportunities to understand and respect each other. This cultural exchange, rather than just enhancing the tourists' experience, enhances social bond and identity among the participant group. "Awareness of historical

events in border areas" (0.889) further stresses the role of border tourism as an educational tool that increases awareness of historical importance in such regions, thereby contributing to preserving historical narratives and involving tourists and locals in discussions over regional and national heritage. The Environmental front "Environmental cleanliness and maintenance" (0.879) indicates that border tourism would promote the use of green practices and proper management of natural and built environments, which might include proper sanitation of public areas and increased waste management systems to respond to the increased tourists' inflow. Infrastructural aspect "Infrastructure development due to border tourism" (0.876) indicates positive changes in terms of physical infrastructure such as proper transport system and tourist facilities such as accommodation and public amenities. Such developments not only facilitate tourism but also benefit local communities by enhancing their quality of life. The variable "Local perception of regional importance" is 0.866 and indicates the enhanced recognition and importance of border regions as pivotal cultural and economic zones. This perception helps in repositioning these areas as significant contributors to the state's and nation's identity. Lastly, "Employment generation through border tourism" (0.833) captures the economic impacts made from the sector, where it has direct and indirect job opportunities that fall across the hospitality, transportation, and retail industries, which consequently improve the local economy. To sum it up, this part of the paper is called "Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Impacts of Border Tourism," and summarizes the changes border tourism is bringing to the local populations. This underscores the ability to provide cultural pride, promote meaningful interactions, increase historical awareness, propel environmental stewardship, facilitate growth in infrastructure, raise regional importance, and stimulate economic development through employment opportunities. Altogether, these highlight the holistic benefits of border tourism in reshaping the socio-economic landscape of Punjab.

Factor 2: Socio-Cultural Preservation and Economic Empowerment through Border Tourism:

The second component captures a spectrum of variables that collectively emphasize socio-cultural preservation, peace building, and economic empowerment of the borders in Punjab. High factor loadings across seven interrelated dimensions highlight the benefits border tourism has on the community and cultural landscapes in this region. The highest factor loading variable is "Preservation of cultural heritage in border areas" (0.905), which underlines the importance of tourism in preserving and promoting the unique traditions, art forms, and historical landmarks specific to border regions. Tourism not only raises awareness about these cultural assets but also encourages their protection by creating avenues for their integration into the tourism experience. "Cross-cultural understanding and peacebuilding" (0.896) represents the influence of border tourism in bridging diverse cultural groups and developing mutual respect among them. Border site interactions between the visitors and locals can be catalysts for the breakdown of stereotypes, the building of relations, and the promotion of coexistence and collaboration. The "Promotion of sustainable tourism practices" reflects the recognition of environmental and social sustainability in tourism development, as well as the focus on sustainability (0.896). Border tourism contributes to long-term benefits for the environment and the local populace by encouraging responsible tourism behaviors, such as eco-friendly travel practices and community-centric tourism models. The theme of "economic empowerment" is repeated in this component, with variables such as "Income enhancement for local communities" (0.864), "Contribution of border tourism to the local economy" (0.839), and "Promotion of small-scale businesses by border tourism" (0.837). These variables collectively portray how tourism promotes

economic development through income generation for the individual and small-scale business. Locals often capitalize on the inflow of tourists through entrepreneurial ventures such as handicrafts, local cuisine, and guided tours to promote inclusive economic growth. "Improvement in quality of life for locals" (0.839) further portrays the transformational role of border tourism in improving living standards. Upgrades in infrastructure, better amenities, and increased economic activities are all part of the prosperous and vibrant community environment. In a nutshell, the second component, "Socio-Cultural Preservation and Economic Empowerment through Border Tourism," aptly describes the dual role of border tourism in preserving cultural identity and promoting economic well-being. It emphasizes heritage conservation, peacebuilding, sustainable practices, and local economic development in the sense that it demonstrates the multidimensional role of border tourism toward creating strong and culturally enriched communities in Punjab.

The results are robust in supporting the first objective that aims to analyze tourists' perspectives on the socio-economic impact of border tourism destinations in Punjab. The two key components revealed by the factor analysis underscore the multifaceted socio-economic, cultural, and environmental impacts of border tourism in the region. The first one is titled "Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Impacts of Border Tourism." The most notable positive impacts are that border tourism enhances local pride in traditions, fosters cultural exchange, raises awareness of historical events, and generates employment opportunities. It also signifies the development of infrastructure and environmental cleanliness improvement, which are associated with the development of the culture and economy of the region. These findings show how border tourism contributes to better quality of life for the people in the local community, better infrastructural development, and more importance given to the regions. Thus, the results effectively show how varied socio-economic impacts border tourism could be perceived by tourists in agreement with the first objective of the study.

5.3 Challenges Faced by Tourists at Border Tourism Destinations of Punjab

The second objective of the study is to examine the challenges faced by tourists at border tourism destinations of Punjab. Questions to tourists who had visited border tourism sites of Punjab were asked on 12 challenges and barriers which they face at the sites on a 5-point likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Friedman test is used for the analysis of the data.

Table 5: Friedman test results for challenges faced by tourists at border tourism sites of Punjab

Ranks	
	Mean Rank
Lack of proper transportation facilities	5.10
Limited availability of accommodations near border tourism areas	7.69
Safety and security concerns	5.51
Inadequate signage and navigation tools	7.56
Lack of cleanliness and hygiene	4.93

Insufficient promotion and awareness about border tourism sites	7.26
Restrictive border regulations and permissions	5.43
Language barriers	7.56
Poor connectivity to digital networks	5.86
Overcrowding at popular border tourism sites	7.63
Limited availability of local guides	5.86
Lack of medical or emergency facilities near border tourism destinations	7.61

The friedman mean rank table shows that there is a clear display of challenges faced by the tourists visiting border tourism sites in Punjab, based on their mean rank. The highest-ranked challenge is the limited availability of accommodations near border tourism areas with a mean rank of 7.69, which means that tourists find the lack of nearby lodging facilities to be a major hindrance. This could be due to the fact that border areas are remote, and infrastructure development may not keep pace with the influx of visitors. The next two factors are overcrowding at popular border tourism sites (7.63) and the lack of medical or emergency facilities (7.61), which indicate critical gaps in essential services for tourists. Overcrowding is also experienced with the limited number of places that attract a high traffic volume, which increases traffic and lowers the general enjoyment. The lack of hospital facilities puts one at danger, especially in case of emergencies, which is very unsafe in border areas with least access to health facilities. The next category of challenges is a lack of adequate signage and way-finding aids and linguistic difficulties, with a mean rank of 7.56. Inadequate signage tends to cause disorientation among tourists, particularly in areas or locations they are not familiar with, such as borders, where visitors are not likely to be accustomed to the location. The problem is further compounded by the language barriers since most of the tourists are not conversant with the regional languages, which means they cannot express themselves or seek help if they get lost in the area.

The other challenge identified is low promotion and awareness of the border tourism destinations (7.26). This, therefore, indicates a lack of effective marketing to attract tourists in those areas. This can be because there are more mainstream destinations that are more preferred for tourism, making these less visited despite the potential in those areas. This may prevent the tourists from planning and getting the information needed ahead of their trip. Lower-ranking challenges such as safety and security problems (5.51), border restrictions and permits control (5.43), for example, are less serious challenges but remain relevant. Here, the fact that safety concerns represent a challenge does not have to imply that other vital issues like accommodation or medicine take priority over them. Restrictive regulations have the likely effect of dampening activity in tourism, but one would think that it probably has more of a negligible effect as far as tourism experiences go compared to challenges related to infrastructure. Another challenge- connectivity to networks and poor availability of guides with both having a mean rank at 5.86-perhaps indicates connectivity and support are important, but again, not urgent to the visitor. Finally, the unavailability of transportation facilities properly (5.10) and unhygienic and unhealthy environment (4.93) received lowest ranks that although these factors

are of notable problems; however, they are not as important. The travel difficulties can be overlooked by the tourists if they have managed to make all sorts of arrangements in advance for traveling or if there exist other means of transport. The cleanliness issue, though being important for a good tourism experience, might not take precedence over safety or any basic facilities in such destinations. In a nutshell, the present study findings suggest that tourism at border destinations in Punjab is mainly concerned with problems of infrastructure, essential services, and access, like accommodation, healthcare, and navigation, while those of safety, regulations, and hygiene are relatively secondary concerns. These higher-ranking challenges may be addressed and significantly improved the tourist experience at these sites.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, this research paper, "An Analytical Study on the Tourists' Perspectives of the Socio-Economic Impacts and Challenges of Border Tourism in Punjab," is a comprehensive study in the understanding of the socio-economic implications and the challenges that the tourists face while visiting border tourism destinations in Punjab. Two of the objectives were indicated as: Socio-cultural impacts: it involves aspects that range from cultural, economic, and environmental impacts to the preservation of the socio-cultural features of a nation and its empowerment economically, driven by border tourism. Border tourism, significantly promotes pride in tradition and history and enables a people to cross their own boundaries with culture. They become knowledgeable of what went on historically. In addition, it improves the infrastructure, creates employment opportunities, and enhances regional importance, hence contributing to local community economic growth and quality of life. The second was a problem of the nature faced by the tourist whereby, the main problems came in terms of inadequate accommodation, over-capacity, poor medical provision, and lack of proper guidance and signs. These challenges prove to emphasize the infrastructure for the sites and management needed. However, other difficulties are in terms of aspects related to safety, security as well as regulations were somewhat lesser problems, whereas difficulties such as medical provision and movement call for urgent solutioning. Overall, it is suggested that addressing the infrastructural deficits and upgrading promotion efforts can substantially ameliorate the tourism experience and further upgrade the socio-economic benefits that local communities derive from border tourism in Punjab.

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