

## **Marketing Strategies to Raise Global Economy and Reduce Poverty through Tourism Development in the Third World Countries- A Case Study of Sindh**

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### **Abstract**

Tourism industry serves as a ray of hope for many developing countries. It is a source of socio-cultural exchange, which not only boosts economy, but also improves the living standard of poor people. The research paper attempts to suggest strategies to reduce poverty in the developing countries through adaptation of pro-poor tourism techniques (Wood, 2005; Jamieson et al., 2004; Jamieson, 2003; Ashley et al., 2001). These techniques can also be used to restore the livelihood of people affected by natural calamities. Case study methodology has been used for this particular research. Single case study of Sindh has been taken to explore opportunistic aspects of tourism industry. The research is qualitative in nature, where data is gathered using literature from reliable sources. The study finds pro-poor tourism as one of the finest strategies, which can be conceptualized and implemented to counteract economic challenges in the developing countries. The combination of human as well as natural resources can be utilized to catalyze economic process efficiently. The role of government in this regard is crucial to mediate the process effectively. Furthermore, locating and marketing tourist spots to the global community is highly recommended. The research paper is fruitful for the policy makers, civil societies and all the national and International donors, who are willing to adapt these strategies to assuage poverty in their respective countries through the mediation of tourism.

**Keywords:** tourism, pro-poor tourism, poverty alleviation, strategies, developing countries

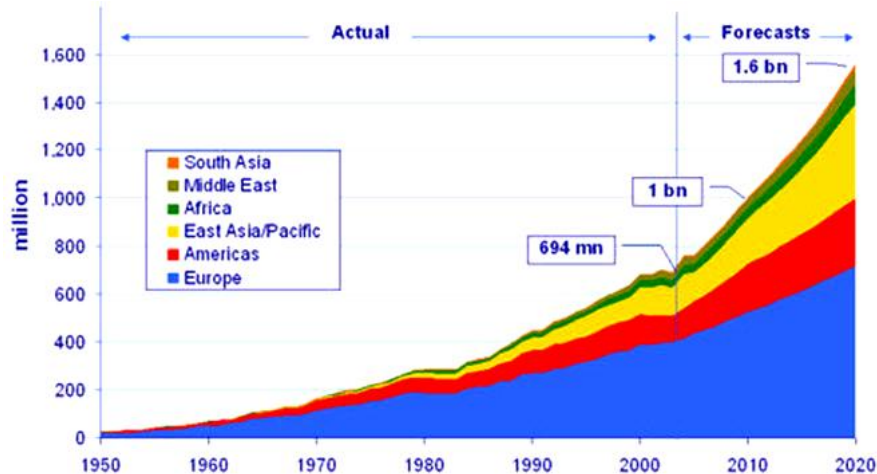
## Background

The global economic recession has particularly affected the people of the developing countries (Birdsall, 2012; Muma, 2011). Rising prices of commodities, financial crisis, unemployment, natural calamities- all led to social and economic instability. To overcome economic crisis, tourism industry emerged to bridge human needs (Cernusca & Dima, 2010; The Nation, 2010; Beirman, 2009). It is the fourth largest industry in the world (UN World Tourism Organization, 2008), which not only contributes in generating foreign exchange (UN World Trade Organization, 2011; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2009) particularly in the developing countries (Samimi et al., 2011; Honey & Gilpin, 2009; UN World Tourism Organization, 2006), but also encourage social and intercultural exchange (UN World Tourism Organization, 2000). The growth of tourism industry can be evaluated through the future forecast presented by UN World Tourism Organization (2001a, 2001b)

Table 1. *W.T.O Tourism Vision 2020 (international arrivals)*

	<b>Base Year</b>	<b>Forecasts</b>		<b>Market Share</b>		<b>Average</b>
	<b>1995</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>annual growth (%)</b>
		<b>(Million)</b>		<b>1995</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>1995 - 2020</b>
<b>World</b>	565	1006	1561	100	100	4.1
<b>Africa</b>	20	47	77	3.6	5.0	5.5
<b>Americas</b>	110	190	282	19.3	18.1	3.8
<b>East Asia &amp; the Pacific</b>	81	195	397	14.4	25.4	6.5
<b>Europe</b>	336	527	717	59.8	45.9	3.1
<b>Middle East</b>	14	36	69	2.2	4.4	6.7
<b>South Asia</b>	4	11	19	0.7	1.2	6.2

Figure 1. Showing the forecast of tourism



(Retrieved from [http://coolgeography.co.uk/GCSE/AQA/Tourism/Tourism%20growth/Tourism\\_Growth.htm](http://coolgeography.co.uk/GCSE/AQA/Tourism/Tourism%20growth/Tourism_Growth.htm))

The comparative matrix show growing trend of tourism industry in Europe, followed by America, East Asia & the Pacific till 2000. Looking particularly from the futuristic perspective, tourism industry is the promising avenue for Africa, East Asia, Middle East and South Asia.

Tourism plays imperative role in generating economy in developing countries. Many researchers endorse its contribution to the economic development and living standard of people (Gadoo & Khan, 2012; Mishra & Padhi, 2012; Aref, 2011; Risso & Brida, 2008; Creaco & Querini, 2003; Hudman & Jackson, 2003); however currently, its intensification is slow in the developing countries as compare to the developed countries.

The table shows top ten destinations according to the percent of tourist arrivals (UNWTO, 2010)

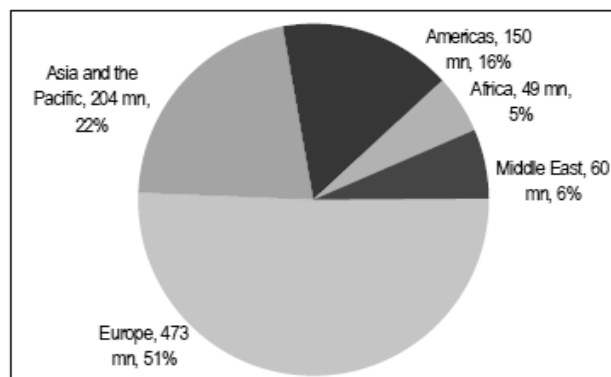
Table 2. Top 10 Tourism Destinations

2010 Rank	Country	Arrivals (millions)		Percent change 2009/2008	Percent change 2010/2009
		2009	2010		
1.	France	76.8	76.8	-3.0%	0.0
2.	United States	55.0	59.7	-5.1	8.7
3.	China	50.9	55.7	-4.1	9.4
4.	Spain	52.2	52.7	-8.8	1.0
5.	Italy	43.2	43.6	1.2	0.9

6.	United Kingdom	28.2	28.1	-6.4	-0.2
7.	Turkey	25.5	27.0	2.0	5.9
8.	Germany	24.2	26.9	-2.7	10.9
9.	Malaysia	23.6	24.6	7.2	3.9
10.	Mexico	21.5	22.4	-5.2	4.4

From the above table, it is found that the world top tourism earners include United States of America, Spain, France, China and Italy (developed countries), leaving behind developing countries. Many factors contribute in slow pace growth of tourism in developing countries, which include poor marketing strategy, lack of security, lack of government support and low exposure of tourist destinations. South Asia is one of the populated regions of Asia. It is the best tourist destination, which has gained lots of attention during the past decades. From Himalayas to Karakoram, many magnificent mountains and artistic aptitudes lie in this region. The tourism in this region grew during 1990's (Mullins, 1999) due to lack of political barriers, effective marketing strategies, etc (Singh, 1997). The future prospect of tourism in Asia can be predicted through the pie chart, which shows that at least 22% of the tourist arrived in Asia during 2010, which though is low in ratio as compare to the developed countries, yet it shows healthy sign of development.

Figure 2. World Inbound Tourism, International Tourist Arrivals, 2010



Source (UN World Trade Organization, 2011)

International arrivals have escalated in few of the South East Asian countries including Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Philippines, due to good marketing strategies and good security condition (UN World Trade Organization, 2011); however, due to poor management,

high security threats and several other obstacles, the industry is not boosting rapidly (Hitchcock et al., 2009; Rasul, 2009) particularly in Pakistan, which directly affect the living standard of local people.

Asian countries are facing several critical challenges. Poverty is one of the biggest challenges for Asia. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (OPHI, 2013), around half of the poor people of the world live in South Asia. According to the latest report of the Asian Development Bank, an estimate of six hundred million people still lives in poverty (Amstutz, 2013; Business Recorder, 2013), out of which, majority are from Asian countries including Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, India, and Ethiopia (Pluss, 2001). It becomes central to overcome poverty by improving the livelihood of people through some productive strategic plans.

### **Objectives**

1. To highlight features of pro-poor tourism strategy
2. To suggest ways through which living condition of the people of Sindh can be improvised by adapting pro-poor tourism techniques

### **Research Design**

The method adopted for this particular study is case study. Single case of Sindh has been taken. Pro Poor Tourism technique has been contextualized from Sindh point of view. Data is collected from reliable resource materials.

### **Context of Sindh**

Sindh is the second biggest province of Pakistan, where majority of the people live in the rural areas and are associated to the profession of agriculture. The standard of living of most of the people is below satisfactory level, while the rate of poverty and unemployment is high, particularly in the rural areas (Parihar, 2010; The Nation, 2008). Thatta, Badin, Sanghar, Dadu are few of the areas, badly hit by poverty and natural calamities.

Figure 3. Map of Sindh



The shrinking opportunities correlate to the high growth of population in Sindh. Although several initiatives were taken by the government to combat poverty, but due to weak governance, most of the strategies fall flat. The World Bank identifies tourism as one of the pathways through which poverty can be controlled (Mitchell & Caroline, 2007; Mitchell & Jojob, 2006; Lejarraga & Peter, 2006). It has potential benefits for rural areas (Udovc & Perpar, 2010), which can raise economy and living standard of individuals. It is believed that poverty can be addressed, if tourism industry expands to provide employment opportunities to the poor people. (UN World Tourism Organization, 2006; Sofield et al., 2004). The need of time is to have tourism strategic plan to reap productive outcomes.

### **Pro-Poor Tourism- Strategic Plan**

Sindh is a diverse society, where people from various cultures are living under one shelter. She has many attractive sights to offer. Moreover, the art and craft, recreational activities, monuments, and above all, historical assets have power to grab attention of foreigners. It is also ranked as one of the top tourist spots due to historical places (Financial Times, 2009).

Tourism is highly dependent upon natural capital, and Sindh is blessed with these resources. The area has potential from economic point of view. If properly utilized, these resources can provide financial support to the poor people. To intervene in tourism for reducing poverty, pro-poor tourism technique is considered as one of the best strategies to raise living standard of people. It is an approach to the development of tourism, which is specifically designed to reduce poverty by utilizing tourism to generate income (Hall & Brown, 2008; Momsen & Torres, 2004; Ashley et. al, 2001). This concept has received growing attention from the third world countries (Nieftagodien, 2013; Mitchell et al., 2009; Lin & Guzman, 2007). Few of the characteristics of pro-poor tourism include poverty alleviation, employment opportunities, cooperation of stake holders, community benefits, etc (Harrison, 2008).

Strategies for pro poor tourism can be divided into three different types: economic benefits, non-economic benefits, participation and involvement. The strategies, which focus on economic gain, include business opportunities, employment opportunities, collective benefits, empowerment and private sector partnership. Non-economic impact includes capacity building, social/cultural impact and training. The third area includes role of government and policy makers, and involvement of poor in decision making (Ashley et al., 2001).

Table 3. *Benefits of PPT Strategies*

<b>Increase economic benefits</b>	<b>Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts</b>	<b>Enhance participation</b>
Expand local employment	Capacity building	Create a supportive policy framework
Expand local enterprise opportunities	Mitigate environmental impacts	Enable participation of poor in policy designing
Develop collective income sources	Improve social and cultural impacts	Building pro-poor partnerships
	Increase local access to infrastructure and services	Increase flow of communication

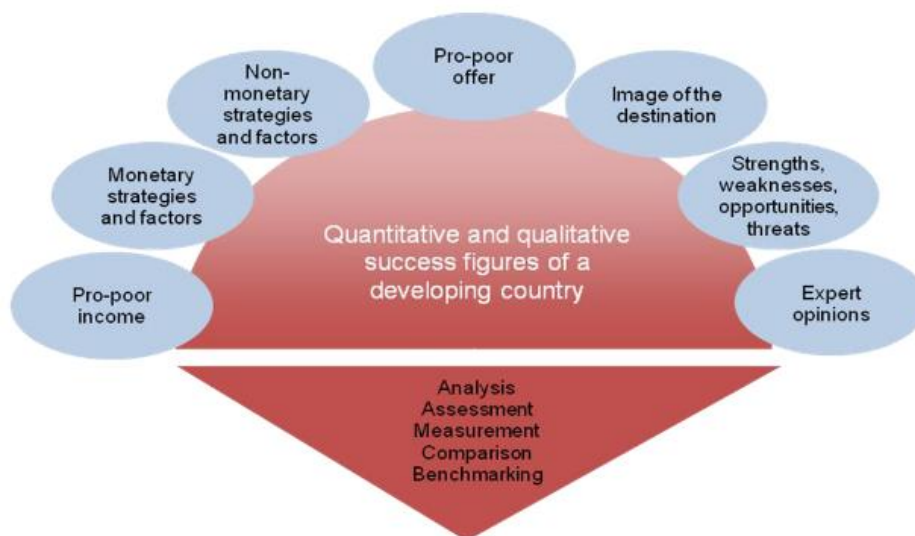
(Source: [www.propoortourism.org.uk](http://www.propoortourism.org.uk))

These strategies are flexible in nature and have been adapted by various countries in their own context. Sindh can also use these strategies to control poverty. On the basis of the strategies, the researcher has designed a sequential plan. The steps which can be involved in pro-poor tourism in Sindh are



From developing countries perspective, the outcomes of Pro-poor tourism can be evaluated using the provided model (as cited by Hussmann, 2010)

Figure 4. Model of Assessment



The Model illustrates all dimensions of assessment. It covers monetary and non-monetary aspects, which are crucial to evaluate the outputs.

### Analyzing Economic Potential of Sindh in the Light of Pro-Poor Techniques

The economy of Sindh is the second largest in the country. The rural area of Sindh mainly earns through handicrafts and agricultural products. The main tourist attractions in Sindh, which has potential to generate economy, include local food, art and craft, dress, music, lakes, forts, and historical sites. From pro-poor tourism point of view, Sindh is a resourceful place. Tourism can provide the following opportunity to this region



Table 4. *Analyzing Opportunities*

<b>Domains</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Business Opportunity</b>	Particularly to the small scale and cottage industries
<b>Destinations</b>	Unlimited sights and tourist spots
<b>Employment Opportunity</b>	Unlimited opportunities for poor people; women empowerment
<b>Collective Benefits</b>	Positive Image of Sindh; global exposure to regional products; improved living condition
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Improved Sanitation and Conservation, but chances of degradation of land and pollution
<b>Social /Cultural Impact</b>	Promote Cultural Heritage of Sindh; share multiculturalism; address social issues on global platform
<b>Participation</b>	Participation of poor in decision making
<b>Partnership</b>	Public-private partnership, NGOS; International Organizations

Empowerment in the field of tourism is crucial to achieve economic gain (Turner & Sears, 2013). Poverty can be controlled in Sindh by expanding this domain. The policies that encourage employment of the local people are more likely to open up opportunities for the Sindhi community. Employment to various professionals must be provided, besides creating equal employment opportunities for the women. People of Sindh can either be hired by government or provided with soft loans to sell their products to the tourists for improving their livelihood. To make their products accessible to the global market and to reap qualitative outputs, it is very crucial for the government and non- governmental organizations to identify the needs of poor. In this regard, it is suggested to provide entrepreneurial skills based training to the local people (Ashley et al, 2004).

Poverty can also be lessened by expanding business opportunities (Ashley, 2002) through supply chain strategy. Small scale workers can supply raw materials to tourism operations or offer products directly to the tourists, hotels, motels or huts. Government of Sindh can provide

technical support to mediate their products to market, besides providing them platform to create linkage with businesses/ entrepreneurs. The contribution of informal sector is crucial in many developing countries (Yunis, 2009). Direct sale of goods and services by the poor community of Sindh is one of the best approaches to meet the issue of poverty. This strategy was recently used during the Sindh Festival, 2014, where the local sellers from the rural areas were invited to sell their products to the visitors, which eventually helped them to market their products to the local and global community. It is central to improve the social condition of people of Sindh. Health care facilities, security, proper sanitation, water supplies, transport, all need to be made accessible to the people of Sindh and same to the tourists.

Mainly, all the policy making decisions related to tourism are taken up by the government without the involvement of local people. Supportive policies must be framed to enable participation of the poor people of Sindh in decision-making processes to maximize positive outcomes. They must be involved in local planning initiatives and their voices should be amplified.

Pro-poor partnership with the private sector is important to bring poverty to an end (Ashley, 2005). Government of Pakistan has defined several policies on federal and regional level with special reference to tourism (Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet, 2010; Shaikh, 2008), however its implementation is questionable. Developing partnerships between public and private sector bodies and adopting integrated approach with other sectors such as air travel industry, etc may provide mutual benefits.

Government should identify tourist spots in Sindh through the support of local people and promote it through media and social networking websites for global exposure. Badin, Matli, Dadu, Mirpurkhas, Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Jacobabad, Sanghar, Jamshoro, Sukkur, Tando Ghulam Ali, Kandhkot, Tando Mohammad Khan, Thatta, Khairpur and Umerkot are few of the best tourist spots in Sindh. Raising consumer awareness and providing visitors with better information may have high impact on the growth of tourism.

Unless youth of Sindh are provided with skill-based training, they cannot serve tourism industry efficiently in the future. Technical and vocational schools should be set-up in rural areas of Sindh to teach courses related to tourism. There is an increase demand of hotels during tourist arrival in Sindh. Government of Pakistan can allot areas, where poor people can build some inexpensive

temporary huts for the tourists. This will not generate income, but would also leave positive image of hospitality round the world. Involvement of Local community has high impact on generating economy through tourism. The case study of Hunza was explored in the light of pro-poor tourism by Karim et al (2012) and found that initiatives taken by community development positively improved the living condition of the people. Similarly, community participation in Sindh can mediate the process effectively.

## **Conclusion**

Pro-poor tourism strategies have potential to overcome poverty. Those involved in tourism should incorporate poor concerns at all levels. Poor people must be involved in policy making. The combination of human as well as natural resources can be utilized to catalyze economic process efficiently. In this regard, empowerment and training must be provided to all the poor people. The need of time is to frame positive image of Sindh in front of global community. Effective marketing strategies can not only bring people to Sindh from different parts of the world, but can also help to reap economic benefits for poor.

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