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Tea Trails Of Mansehra: Unlocking The Potential Of Tea Tourism In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract

Tea tourism, a branch of Agri-tourism and rest within special interest tourism (SIT), offers unique experiences through cultural immersion, scenic beauty and gastronomic options. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is researching suitable locations for tea estate development to promote sustainable agriculture and to boost rural economies. NTHRI has been working for decades in tea research and promoting tea cultivation in District Mansehra. This study examines tea tourism's potential in District Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, based on experts' views through semi structure interviews. Key themes include stunning landscapes, warm hospitality, and rich cultural experiences, though challenges such as limited infrastructure and environmental degradation are noted. Opportunities for tea tourism expansion exist in areas like Ichrian, Battal, Balakot, Kaghan, and Naran. The recommendations include improving infrastructure, empowering local communities, promoting sustainable practices, and strategic marketing. Public-private partnerships and supportive regulatory frameworks are crucial for developing a thriving tea tourism ecosystem, fostering socio-economic growth while preserving natural and cultural heritage.

Keywords: Tea Tourism, Agri-Tourism, Special Interest Tourism (SIT), Tea estates, Public-Private Partnerships, Farm stay

Introduction

Tea tourism, a niche sector emphasizing sustainability, merges the natural beauty of tea gardens with cultural experiences and tea production activities (Jolliffe, 2007; Koththagoda & Dissanayake, 2017). It's popular worldwide, enhancing both the tea industry and tourism (Khaokhrueamuang et al., 2022). In developing countries like India, tea garden tourism boosts local markets and employment, fostering social connections and rural immersion (Mondal & Samaddar, 2021). Integrating tea tourism into mainstream packages can attract enthusiasts (Sahoo et al., 2021). Nestled in the scenic landscapes of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mansehra is rapidly gaining recognition as a prime destination for tea tourism and agricultural exploration see

Figure 1. Due to its ideal temperature and soil, this area, which is home to Pakistan's first tea plantation, the Shinkiari Tea Garden, produces excellent black and green teas. Through research on novel kinds and sustainable techniques, the National Tea and High-Value Crops Research Institute (NTHRI) in Shinkiari improves tea farming even further in the interested tea farmers and producers. Tea tourism in Mansehra is growing in popularity, providing tourists with opportunities to taste local blends, participate in hands-on tea-making events, and take picturesque tours of tea estates. In addition, NTHRI, Lipton Pakistan also develop the research garden in Shinkiari and Tea processing plant in Dhodial.

When providing farm stays, these farms can provide visitors with a fully immersive rural experience by putting them in close proximity to tea plantations, allowing them to sample local food and establish a connection with the area's agricultural history. This study explores the potential of tea tourism in Pakistan, examining its historical context, global significance, and current trends. By leveraging natural beauty and cultural richness, and addressing tourists' motivations for relaxation and cultural exploration, this research aims to develop strategies to effectively promote tea tourism in Pakistan and beyond.

- **Objectives**

The objectives evaluate the potential of tea tourism in District Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as an alternative livelihood option for communities and to explore the Special Interest Tourism (SIT) for the tourists as niche tourism opportunity.

- To assess tea gardens as a new attraction for the tourists visiting District Mansehra.
- To investigate the potential attractions for the tourist that can drive tea tourism growth in the region.
- To identify the necessary infrastructure and facilities needed to support the development of tea tourism.

- **Background and Gap Analysis**

In Pakistan, tea consumption is a significant cultural aspect. Despite being the second-largest tea importer, tea cultivation is underdeveloped, with potential for growth in Mansehra, Battagram, and Swat districts (Iftikhar, 2009). Mansehra, with a history of tea cultivation since 1958, is emerging as a tea tourism spot (Latif et al., 2012; Sukhava,



2022). The region, despite its tourism potential, lacks infrastructure and marketing.

Figure 1: Location Map of Tea gardens (Map of Tea Estates)

Improved accessibility via major highways highlights Mansehra's potential for tea tourism (Butt & Rizwan, 2022; Sajid et al., 2022). This study aims to assess Mansehra's tea tourism potential, focusing on special interest tourism and identifying gaps and opportunities for sustainable development.

- **Conceptual Model**

Tea tourism, a type of agritourism, has grown in popularity, attracting visitors with its ecological, cultural, and sensory delights. This type of tourism can be explained using the "push and pull" approach. Pull factors include tangible and intangible attractions, from tea plantations to culinary experiences. Push factors arise from travelers' inner desires and interests, such as a fascination with tea culture and a craving for genuine connections.

Literature Review

Tea, beyond being a beverage, symbolizes sustainable cultural travel known as tea tourism (Zhou et al., 2016). As the world's second most consumed drink after water (Grassi et al., 2009), tea is significant in the global market (Basu et al., 2010). The tea plant, native to China, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Indonesia, now grows in other suitable climates (Hall et al., 2004). Countries like India see tea tourism as lucrative (Goonwalla & Neog, 2011), converting large lands into tea gardens (Chen et al., 2021). China's 5,000-year-old tea discovery spread globally, reaching Europe via Portuguese routes in the 16th century. China is the top tea producer, followed by India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, and Turkey, with notable contributions from Vietnam, Iran, Indonesia, Argentina, and Japan (Pure Travel, 2012).

Tea gardens, part of agri-tourism, create jobs and attract visitors with natural beauty and cultural activities (Ananya, 2021; Datta, 2018). Visitors can enjoy tea flavors, cultural performances, and activities like tea leaf picking and nature hikes (Goonwalla & Neog, 2011). Tea, with its rich historical, cultural, and economic significance, has played an integral role in numerous civilizations, especially China. Legends attribute its discovery to Emperor Shen Nong, with early medical uses documented by Lu Yu in "The Classic of Tea" (Weir, 2022). In China, tea is both a vital economic crop and a cherished beverage (Liu,

2023). Similarly, in Vietnam, tea is a strong export sector and tourist attraction (Wenner, 2011). In Turkey, tea embodies a blend of tradition and modernity (Öğüt, 2009).

The global expansion of tea began in the mid-17th century, marked by Europe's first shipment from Japan in 1610 AD, facilitated by Portuguese and Dutch traders (Baruah & Pradip, 2011). In India, Assam's tea history under British rule contrasts with Britain's own tea tradition dating to the seventeenth century (Kalita & Jyoti, 2019). Sri Lanka focuses on black tea production, contributing significantly to its national identity (Cheng et al., 2012). Despite the Industrial Revolution's impact on luxury item consumption, tea remained valued for its stimulant properties (Pilapitiya et al., 2020). Tea tourism, a component of agritourism, offers tourists relaxing excursions while enhancing local agriculture and employment (Huang et al., 2014). Tea gardens provide visually stunning destinations with lush plantations against mountainous backdrops (Willson et al., 2012). Tea tourism models, like those in Vietnam and India's Kodagu coffee model, show how agriculture and tourism can create unique socio-economic benefits (Vinuta et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2024).

Globally, tea tourism involves visiting tea gardens, experiencing tea culture, participating in tea ceremonies, and engaging in tea-related activities, blending natural attractions with cultural experiences (Cheng et al., 2010; Gupta et al., 2022). It offers immersive experiences catering to niche tourism demand (Kler & Wong, 2022). In Pakistan, key tea-producing regions like Mansehra and Battagram have significant potential for tea tourism. Identified by the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council for optimal tea cultivation conditions, these areas provide a foundation for tea tourism (Latif et al., 2008; Waheed et al., 2013). Integrating tea tourism in Pakistan can foster economic development, enhance livelihoods, and create employment opportunities, aligning with sustainable tourism practices (Banerjee, 2023).

Research Methodology

The methodology employed to explore the potential of tea tourism in District Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, utilizing a qualitative research approach to investigate various aspects such as stakeholder perceptions, tourist preferences, and regional

challenges. The limited research on tea tourism in Pakistan, this study fills a significant gap by gathering insights from experts and practitioners through interviews and analyzing YouTube video reviews from potential customers. The study leverages the concept of Special Interest Tourism (SIT), which caters to travelers seeking experiences aligned with their passions (Weiler et al., 1992), allowing for an in-depth exploration of tea tourism as a niche market. By combining stakeholder insights and tourist feedback, the study aims to identify key attractions and necessary improvements, assess challenges, and propose actionable solutions to promote sustainable tea tourism in Mansehra.

Methodology and Research Design

According to Easterby et al. (2002), research is driven by a fundamental worldview and specific procedures to produce results that forecast, prescribe, interpret, or explain occurrences. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) describe research as the systematic collection and analysis of data to achieve a thorough understanding of an issue. Research design is critical in this context, with Chisnall (2001) categorizing designs into exploratory, descriptive, and causal.

Research Design

A qualitative research strategy was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of tea tourism in District Mansehra. Qualitative techniques allow for the collection and analysis of rich narrative and visual data, offering insights into the complexities and nuances of the phenomenon under investigation (Flick, 2015). Triangulation, involving multiple methodologies, data sources, investigators, or theories, is crucial in qualitative research. It helps ensure the reliability and validity of the study by mitigating bias and errors from relying on a single source or approach (Patton, 1999). Polkinghorne (2005) explains that qualitative research aims to uncover the complex intricacies of human experiences, such as feelings, mental processes, and emotions. This approach investigates various characteristics, including views, interests, attitudes, motives, and values, to gain insights into people's relationships and social meaning. Ratcliff (2003) notes that qualitative research is characterized by its unstructured and exploratory nature, with small sample

sizes used to delve deeply into the issue setting and provide nuanced insights. Content analysis is a prevalent method in tourism research, offering valuable insights to understand tourist demand (Hou and Zhi-qiang, 2017).

Sampling

Typically, qualitative research involves 8 to 15 participants, though this can vary. Creswell (2007) suggests sample sizes of 10 for phenomenological studies, 15-20 for grounded theory studies, and 3-5 for case studies. To employ this research studies Eighteen stakeholders were selected based on their direct involvement and significant contributions to the research, including tea farmers, experts, and tourism industry professionals.

Data Collection

Interviews were the primary data collection method. Structured and semi-structured interview questionnaires were used to gather opinions from focus groups and key stakeholders, including tea farmers, experts, and tourism industry professionals. Data collection was divided into four sections, aligning with research objectives and practical considerations. Each section was crafted to gather specific data necessary for understanding tea tourism dynamics in the Mansehra District. Tools like Microsoft Excel were used for data analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to reveal recurring themes and patterns in interview transcripts and viewer comments. Fieldwork from December 15, 2023, to April 5, 2024, involved rigorous interviews and observations in Shinkira, Mansehra, Siran Valley, and Oghi areas.

Data Analysis

Interviews serve as a credible method for judgment assessment and analysis. Participants' demographic information and responses to focused questions were analyzed as follows:

Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis of the research sample presents a multifaceted depiction. The distribution across different demographics, including age, gender, qualification, field

experience, and roles as visitors or service providers in tea gardens, offers a nuanced portrayal of the stakeholders involved. This diverse composition not only enriches the dataset but also facilitates a more inclusive and thorough exploration of the subject matter. These insights serve as a foundational basis for informing strategic decisions, policy formulations, and future research directions within the realm of tea tourism.

In the analysis, eighteen respondents from distinct expertise domains were included: six tourism experts, six agriculture and tea specialists, and six local farmers. This stratification ensures an inclusive exploration of relevant issues. Tourism experts offer insights into destination management and visitor experiences, agriculture and tea specialists provide perspectives on sustainability and land use, and local farmers contribute grassroots-level perspectives, enriching the research with firsthand experiences and community dynamics.

The age distribution of the 18 respondents reveals a nuanced demographic profile. Eleven respondents are aged 36 to 50, indicating a substantial representation of individuals in their prime working years, likely contributing a wealth of professional experience and expertise. Six respondents aged 25 to 35 bring fresh insights and innovative approaches, reflecting contemporary trends. A single respondent aged 50 and above provides invaluable historical context and long-term perspectives. This diverse age distribution captures a broad spectrum of generational viewpoints, enriching the research with varied life experiences and career trajectories.

The gender distribution within the sample shows a notable disparity, with 17 male respondents and only one female respondent. This imbalance highlights the predominance of male representation in the studied context. Among the 18 respondents, 14 hold graduate degrees (MS/PhD), suggesting advanced academic training and specialized knowledge. Four respondents are illiterate, contributing valuable perspectives from lived experience. Field experience varies: nine have 6 to 10 years, four have 11 or more years, and five have 1 to 5 years. This diverse mix of qualifications and experience enriches the research with a broad range of insights. Among the 18

respondents, eight are engaged in offering tea products, indicating a focus on commercial tea sales or production. Six are involved in providing recreational services, such as guided tours or tea tastings, enhancing visitor experiences. Four respondents offer other services within tea tourism, including transportation and ancillary support.

Interview-based Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research methodology employed to identify particular words, themes, or concepts within a set of qualitative data or text. Researchers utilize this technique to gauge and explore the occurrence, significance, and relationships of specific words, topics, or concepts within the data (Hsieh HF & Shannon SE, 2005). The interview content analysis of eighteen participants for twenty-two questions concluded in table 1-22 is below:

Table: Q1 Words responses table current state of tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Shows promise and development. Significant potential Exceptional quality Unique taste.	Underdeveloped Limited infrastructure Absence promotional efforts Lack of government support Limited awareness Minimal tourist interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourists eager to explore tea garden. • Learning production processes • Economic growth and cultural exchange.

Following the guidance provided by the dictionary, the key words and their variants are then placed accordingly in input table. The frequency of words is determined by counting how many times a specific keyword appears in the textual file. The words are placed in sequence as it is used. The analysis in table 1 of keywords reveals that *tea tourism* in District Mansehra shows promise due to its unique quality and potential. However,

experts note that it remains underdeveloped, with limited *infrastructure* and *promotional activities*, resulting in low awareness and lack of *government support*. Consequently, few tourists visit the tea estates. Despite this, both *domestic* and *international tourists* are interested in exploring *tea gardens* and the *production process*. Increased tourism could drive economic growth and cultural exchange.

Table: Q2 Potential areas for tea tourism within District Mansehra

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Favorable terrain and climate Opportunity to attract tourists Abundant opportunities Tea-related experiences Promising areas for tea tourism in Mansehra are Ichrian, Battal, Balakot, kaghan and Naran, Summ, jabori rachari, Ichrian, Siran valley and Malokra by (fao).	Absence of infrastructure, promotional efforts Neglect and lack of infrastructure development Lack of government support.	Picturesque landscapes Offers scenic beauty and an ideal environment Surrounding hillsides.

The table no2 shows that participants agree *tea tourism* in District Mansehra has significant potential due to its favorable *terrain* and *climate*. Promising areas for tea tourism include Ichrian, Battal, Balakot, Kaghan, Naran, Summ, Jabori, Rachari, Siran Valley, and Malokra, as identified by the *FAO*.

Experts noted challenges such as the absence of *infrastructure*, *promotional efforts*, and *government support*. Despite this, the *picturesque landscapes* and surrounding *hillsides* enhance the area's appeal, offering an attractive backdrop for visitors.

Table: Q3 Perceptions for the development of tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Community prosperity Attracting tourists Traditional tea cultivation practices Potential future of tea tourism Employment creation and income generation.	Barriers Lack of strategic planning, Lack of financial investment.	Economic expansion Cultural experiences and nature-oriented activities.

The table: 3 indicates that experts believe the future of *tea tourism* in District Mansehra holds promise for community prosperity by attracting tourists interested in traditional tea cultivation practices. This industry has the potential to create employment opportunities and generate income for locals, contributing to regional economic development.

However, barriers include a lack of strategic planning and financial investment, which hinder growth and limit the industry's ability to attract visitors. Despite these challenges, tea tourism can drive economic growth while offering cultural experiences and nature-oriented activities for visitors.

Table: Q4 Few factors which contribute to this belief

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Region's natural beauty Cultural significance Climate for tea cultivation Global trend towards	Neglectful governance Infrastructure deficiencies Limited promotion Environmental concerns	Socio-economic growth Distinct taste Favorable environmental conditions

experiential tourism.	Less competition with other tourist destinations.	Cultural significance of tea cultivation.
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The table no: 4 shows that tea tourism in District Mansehra is in demand due to its natural beauty, cultural significance, and beneficial climate for tea cultivation. It aligns with the global trend toward experiential tourism, where travelers seek immersive experiences that connect them with local cultures and environments.

Challenges include neglectful governance, infrastructure deficiencies, and limited promotion, which hinder development. Environmental concerns and competition with other tourist destinations also pose difficulties. Despite these issues, tea tourism in District Mansehra has the potential to promote socio-economic growth by leveraging its unique taste, favorable conditions, and cultural significance.

Table: Q5 Experience of tea gardens in Pakistan

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Lack personal experience but credible sources such as You Tube videos and events suggest the presence of significant tea plantations Visits and studies of numerous tea gardens Extensive experience.	Disappointed by the lack of support and resources from government agencies such as the NTHRI.	Impressive scenery and tea cultivation techniques.

The table no;5 shows that tourism sector experts lack personal experience, but sources like YouTube videos and events reveal substantial tea plantations in the area. Insights from visits and studies by tea and agriculture sector experts enhance understanding of the subject.

Many farmers are abandoning their tea farms due to disappointment with the lack of support from government agencies, such as the NTHRI. Tourists are interested in exploring the scenic beauty and learning about tea cultivation techniques in the tea gardens.

Table: Q6 Rate the facilities and services

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Tourists wants accommodation, transportation, and guided tours.	Visitors dissatisfied with their experience Not offer basic amenities Lack of proper facilities and services.	Only NTHRI offer guided tours and tea tasting sessions.

The table:6 shows that tourists in Mansehra's tea gardens desire essential services such as accommodation, transportation, and guided tours to enhance their visit. These amenities improve overall experience and satisfaction, attracting more tourists to tea tourism. Many visitors are dissatisfied due to a lack of basic amenities and facilities. This shortfall can negatively affect their enjoyment and perception of the location. Currently, only the NTHRI offers guided tours and tea tasting sessions, providing unique experiences in tea tourism.

Table: Q7 The types of activities to be link with tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Workshops on tea cultivation Art of tea making Showcasing traditional music dance, and cuisine.	The lack of proper infrastructure Research and support.	Tea tasting sessions Photography Movies shooting Potentially some cultural activities Guided tours Tea cultivation and processing Nature walks Camping, tea stalls, kids play areas, water sports, restaurants, picnic spots, hiking, trekking.

The table 7 indicates that tea tourism can feature workshops on tea cultivation and tea making, as well as traditional music, dance, and cuisine, enriching visitors' cultural experiences. However, insufficient infrastructure, lack of research, and limited support hinder the growth potential of tea tourism in the area.

Tea tourism offers a range of activities, including tea tasting sessions, photography, movie shooting, cultural activities, guided tours, tea cultivation and processing demonstrations, nature walks, camping, tea stalls, kids' play areas, water sports, restaurants, picnic spots, hiking, and trekking.

Table: Q8 Assessing the feasibility of tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	

Market demand	Limited	Engaging with local communities
Infrastructure	infrastructure	and stakeholders
development	Restricted	Developing strategies to overcome
Regulatory support	promotion and	barriers
Community	marketing initiatives	Conducting market research
engagement	Socio-economic	Prospects for growth and
Government support.	hurdles.	development
		Strategies and investments.

The table 8 highlights that key factors influencing the feasibility of tea tourism include market demand, infrastructure development, regulatory support, community engagement, and government backing. Addressing these factors could facilitate rapid growth in tea garden tourism in the region.

Challenges include limited infrastructure, restricted promotion, and socio-economic hurdles, which impede development and potential growth.

Tea tourism activities involve engaging with local communities and stakeholders, developing strategies to overcome barriers, conducting market research to identify growth prospects, and implementing strategies and investments to advance the industry.

Table: Q9 The types of investment/resources are required to develop a potential site

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Roads, accommodations, & visitor centers	Lack of substantial funding and support from stakeholders	Collaboration with local stakeholders, communities, and organizations
Implementing sustainable tourism practices and conservation	Lack of resources.	Create a supportive ecosystem for tea tourism development and
Training programs for local		

communities, guides, and hospitality staff Ensure high-quality visitor experiences Improve service standards.		implementation Promotional activities, and training initiatives Attract domestic and international tourists.
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The table 9 shows that investments and resources needed for tea tourism development include infrastructure such as roads, accommodations, and visitor centers. Implementing sustainable tourism practices and conservation efforts is crucial for long-term success. Providing training programs for local communities, guides, and hospitality staff ensures high-quality visitor experiences. Major challenges include lack of substantial funding, support from stakeholders, and insufficient resources, which hinder growth. To support and develop tea tourism, activities should involve collaborating with local stakeholders, communities, and organizations, conducting promotional activities, and implementing training initiatives to attract both domestic and international tourists.

Table: Q10 Tea tourism contribution to the likelihood of the local community

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Significant benefits generating income Employment opportunities to the local community Socio-economic well-being.	Without adequate development and support, its impact may be limited Without support and investment it is not possible Fails to provide meaningful economic opportunities for local farmers.	Poverty reduction, Sustainable development, Cultural enrichment Economic growth.

The table no 10 above shows that tea tourism offers significant benefits, such as income generation, employment opportunities, and enhanced socio-economic well-being for the local community. Satisfied locals are likely to provide a better-quality experience for tourists.

Without adequate development and support, tea tourism's impact may be limited. The lack of investment and government support, including from organizations like NTHRI, prevents the realization of its full potential and economic benefits for local farmers.

Tea tourism can improve local living standards through poverty reduction, sustainable development, cultural enrichment, and economic growth, contributing to the community's overall prosperity.

Table: Q11 Essential fundamental infrastructure

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Transportation access Pathways within tea gardens Restroom facilities Accommodation Tea cultivation processes Hotels or guesthouses Tea tasting experiences Cafes or restaurants.	Government neglects this opportunity to utilize and generate income.	Variety of leisure activities.

The table 11, highlights that tea gardens enhance tea tourism by providing essential amenities such as transportation access, well-defined pathways, restroom facilities, accommodation options, and opportunities for tea cultivation education and tea tasting. Cafes or restaurants can also offer refreshments and meals.

Conversely, the government's neglect in capitalizing on this opportunity hampers tea tourism growth. Offering a variety of leisure activities can further attract and engage tourists.

Table: Q12 Your experience of amenities and services in tea garden linked to tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Guided tours Tea cultivation and processing Tea tasting sessions Offering tea-related products and handicrafts Recreational activities Dining facilities Souvenir shops.	Lack of investment Lacking in quality or variety Inadequate government support and funding.	Tourism and Hospitality sectors activities will be provided.

In District Mansehra, tea tourism offers a range of experiences, including guided tours through lush tea gardens, tea tasting sessions, exploration of tea-related products and handicrafts, and recreational activities amidst scenic landscapes. Dining facilities provide opportunities to enjoy tea-infused cuisine, while souvenir shops allow visitors to purchase tea-related products.

However, challenges such as lack of investment, inadequate government support, and limited quality and variety of offerings hinder growth show in table no: 12. Enhancing tourism and hospitality activities can create employment opportunities and boost income.

Table: Q13 Specific infrastructure and facilities required for tea tourism growth

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	

Development of pathways Eco-friendly accommodation Glamorous camping sites Locally grown teas available for purchase Enhanced transportation Zip lines, hiking trails.	Lack of infrastructure severely limits tea growth Investment and support needed Lack of services and facilities.	Educational insights Waste management systems Employment opportunities Generate economy.
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In District Mansehra, experts suggest improvements such as developing pathways within tea gardens, offering eco-friendly accommodation, glamorous camping sites, and locally grown teas for purchase. Enhanced transportation facilities and amenities like zip lines and hiking trails could further enrich visitors' experiences mentioned in table 13.

However, lack of infrastructure and insufficient services and facilities hinder tea tourism growth. Addressing these issues through investment and support is crucial. Tea tourism activities should focus on educational insights into tea cultivation, waste management, employment creation, and economic contributions.

Table: Q14 Types of product link with tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Locally sourced teas available for purchase Souvenirs crafted by local artisans Packaged tea products Unique blends or flavors Brochures or travel guides Export opportunities Guidebooks spotlighting tea tourism.	Lacking in appeal or feasibility The lack of government support and promotion.	Guided tours Tea tasting experiences Cultural experiences Eco-tourism activities Adventure tourism Culinary tourism Heritage tourism Wellness tourism.

In the table 13 it is noted that District Mansehra has potential for tea tourism, offering a range of locally sourced teas, souvenirs crafted by local artisans, and packaged tea products. Visitors can explore unique tea blends, and access brochures or travel guides. There are also export opportunities for tea and tea-related products.

Despite the presence of tea gardens and some efforts to attract tourists, the sector suffers from lack of appeal and feasibility, exacerbated by insufficient government support and promotion efforts.

Tea tourism activities include guided tours, tea tasting sessions, cultural experiences, eco-tourism activities, adventure tourism, culinary explorations, heritage visits, and wellness retreats, catering to diverse visitor interests.

Table: Q15 Sources to attract tourist in this segment

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Scenic beauty of the surroundings Creating engaging content Exhibitions, and events Tea-making traditions of district Partnerships with travel agencies Participation in tourism expos.	Lack of promotion, limited infrastructure, and unappealing offerings.	Digital marketing channels Social media platforms Travel blogs Showcase the unique experiences Workshops at tea centers.

In the above table no 15 highlights that attracting tourists to tea tourism in District Mansehra requires emphasizing the scenic beauty of the area, creating engaging content, and organizing exhibitions and events that showcase local tea-making

traditions. Forming partnerships with travel agencies and participating in tourism expos can further enhance visibility.

Challenges include lack of promotion, limited infrastructure, and unappealing offerings, which hinder growth. Utilizing digital marketing channels, social media platforms, and travel blogs can effectively showcase tea tourism experiences. Additionally, organizing workshops at tea centers can engage visitors and highlight local tea culture.

Table: Q16 Attractions for visitors in tea gardens

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Guided tours Tea cultivation Processing firsthand Tea tasting sessions Cultural activities such as traditional music and dance performances Outdoor activities Gardens and landscapes Recreational activities Birdwatching and graphy.	Shows no concern government and NTHRI for tourists attractions Lack of research.	Job Opportunities Generate economy by tea and tea tourism.

The table 16 highlights that promotional methods can effectively attract tourists to tea tourism in District Mansehra. Guided tours, tea cultivation and processing experiences, and tea tasting sessions offer diverse experiences. Cultural activities like traditional music and dance, combined with outdoor recreation in picturesque gardens, enhance the appeal. Visitors can also enjoy birdwatching and photography.

However, tea tourism struggles to attract tourists due to lack of government support, insufficient attention from NTHRI, and limited research. Despite these challenges, tea tourism holds significant potential for job creation and economic growth, generating income through tea sales and tea garden activities.

Table: Q17 Strategies for tourists to participate in tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Collaborating with travel agencies Design specialized tea-themed tour packages Organizing tea festivals or cultural events Showcase local tea culture Partnering with hotels and restaurants Offer tea-infused cuisine Accommodation packages Implementing targeted advertising campaigns.	Lack of interest and demand in the segment.	Connection between people Community engagement Sustainability Involvement of local community.

The table 17 shows that to boost tea tourism in District Mansehra, strategies such as collaborating with travel agencies for specialized tea-themed tour packages, organizing tea festivals or cultural events, and partnering with hotels and restaurants for tea-infused cuisine and accommodation packages can attract visitors. Targeted advertising campaigns can further promote the region.

However, the lack of interest from both the government and tourists presents a challenge for development. Tea tourism in District Mansehra fosters a connection

between people and promotes community engagement through involving locals in sustainable practices.

Table: Q18 To kick start tea tourism

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Significant investment Infrastructure development Promotional efforts Enhancing accommodation Partnerships with government agencies and private sector Community engagement Training local guides and hospitality staff Raise awareness about tea tourism	No strategies of government NTHRI no initiative related tourism	Generate economy Upgrade local community life Employment opportunities Develop further tea states and stop tea import.

The table18 describes that to kick-start tea tourism in District Mansehra, significant investment in infrastructure and promotional efforts is needed, along with partnerships with government agencies and the private sector. Community engagement and training local guides and hospitality staff are crucial for raising awareness.

The lack of government strategies and NTHRI initiatives is a major hurdle. Both sectors failed to support tea farm cultivation and development.

Tea tourism has great potential to drive economic growth, improve local quality of life, create employment opportunities, and reduce the need for tea imports.

Table: Q19 Successful startups business

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Tea experiences Tea plantation tours Boutique tea shops Virtual tea tastings Subscription services delivering premium tea to customers Eco-friendly accommodations.	Lack of interest from tourists and stakeholders.	Promote tea tourism through online platforms Partnerships with local (farmers) tea producers.

The table exhibits 19 that tea tourism in District Mansehra offers diverse experiences, including tea plantation tours, visits to boutique tea shops, and virtual tea tastings in the future. Subscription services for premium tea and eco-friendly accommodations cater to various interests. Experts note that the lack of interest from tourists and stakeholders is a significant challenge for growth. Promoting tea tourism through online platforms and forming partnerships with local tea producers and farmers are key strategies.

Table: Q20 Suggestions to be incorporated in policy

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Protect Eco-system Promote sustainable tourism practices Build partnerships between government and private sectors Incentives for infrastructure development	Lack of human resource in tea garden tourism	Community engagement to boost tea tourism Launches special interest tourism

Strategies to mitigate risks		
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The table 20 reveals that promoting tea tourism in District Mansehra requires prioritizing ecosystem protection and sustainable tourism practices. Building partnerships between the government and private sector is crucial, as are providing incentives for infrastructure development and implementing risk mitigation strategies.

Experts highlight that the lack of human resources and absence of proper planning have significantly impacted tea tourism. Engaging the community is essential for fostering local support and participation. In the near future, the region could launch special interest tourism projects, as noted by the FAO project.

Table: Q21 Economic benefits of tea gardens (as Tourists’ attractions) for local tea farmers

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Additional income through the guided tours Sale tea Photography Hospitality services Short videos shooting Capturing tea high market of Pakistan.	Lack of interest and support from tourists and stake holders Time-consuming process of plant generation No Support from NTHRI No proper management system Tea plucked by farmers and no processing unit available for them No other income source for life during cultivation.	Job opportunities Additional income sources Revenue economic growth.

The table 21 shows that engaging in guided tours, tea sales, photography, hospitality services, and short video shooting can provide additional income opportunities for tea tourism in District Mansehra. Capitalizing on the high market demand for tea in Pakistan further boosts the region's economic potential.

Challenges include a lack of interest and support from tourists and stakeholders, a time-consuming plant generation process, and insufficient support from NTHRI. The absence of processing units limits farmers' ability to add value to their produce, affecting their income. Despite these issues, tea tourism has significant potential to create job opportunities and enhance economic growth in the region.

Ambivalent		Activities
Affirmation (abbreviated AFF)	Negation (NEG)	
Invest in skills development in tourism and hospitality services		Stimulate economic growth
Collaborations between tea producers and tourism stake holders		Create sustainable livelihoods in the region.
Preserve the natural eco-system		
Promote the destination through digital marketing		
Support the local tea farmers		
Support the entrepreneurs	Develop infrastructure	
	Build marketing strategies	
Policies for the tea tourism.		

Table: Q22 Suggestions & recommendations

Table 22 suggests that to enhance tea tourism in District Mansehra, it's essential to invest in skills development in tourism and hospitality services. Collaborations between tea producers and tourism stakeholders can foster growth. Preserving the natural

ecosystem and promoting the destination through digital marketing are crucial. Supporting local tea farmers and entrepreneurs, developing infrastructure, and implementing marketing strategies are essential. Additionally, establishing policies tailored for tea tourism can facilitate its sustainable development and attract tourists. Tea tourism initiatives aim to stimulate economic growth and create sustainable livelihoods, benefiting local communities and fostering long-term prosperity. Although tourist activities are currently limited, there is strong interest from both domestic and international tourists in exploring tea gardens and seeing the production process. Increasing tourism promises significant economic growth and cultural exchange.

Conclusion

District Mansehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa shows promising potential for tea tourism, thanks to its scenic landscapes and cultural richness. To maximize this potential, enhancing infrastructure like roads and accommodations is crucial. Promotional efforts should focus on cultural showcases and digital marketing. Sustainable practices and community involvement are key for long-term success. With clear regulations and public-private partnerships, Mansehra can become a sustainable and attractive tea tourism destination, preserving its heritage while boosting economic growth.

Limitations of the Study

Acknowledging potential limitations is essential for maintaining research credibility. Limitations may include constraints in data availability, challenges in accessing stakeholders, and the inherent subjectivity in qualitative methods. These will be addressed through transparent reporting and rigorous methodological approaches.

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