

Examining the Challenges of Sports Tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: Prime objective of current research was to examining the challenges of sports tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Methodology: The population of this particular study was comprised of all the sport organizers of tourism authorities (The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cultural & Tourism Authority (K.P.C.T.A), Galiyat Development Authority (G.D.A) and Kaghan Development Authority (K.D.A) in K.P.K, Pakistan. A total 75 subjects were taken as population, it was very limited and easily approachable, and census method was used for data collection. The investigator used descriptive research design with the cross-sectional survey approach for data collection. The investigator utilized a self-made close-ended on 4-point Likert scale for the purpose of data collection. The pilot testing was done for the purpose to examine the existing draw backs and errors in the initial draft of research instrument. For the content validity purpose, the initial version of the instrument was sent to the five experts of the field. Cronbach's alpha method was used for checking the research tool's reliability and its value was 0.76. The response rate was recorded as 92.30%. For data analysis, descriptive statistics (Frequencies, percentages and mean) were used to analyze and tabulate the collected information.

Findings: The results showed that sports tourism challenges such as organizational challenges, environmental challenges and social challenges are a major concern for sports tourism in the surveyed area which is the main cause of downfall of sports tourism. Additionally, the study identifies the importance of addressing social and cultural barriers to promote greater participation, particularly among female athletes.

Conclusion: So, the study recommended that sports tourism department of Pakistan may improve the infrastructures (accommodation, transportation, and equipment). This will lead to enhance sports tourism in Pakistan.

Keywords: Sports Tourism, Sports Participation, Tourism Challenges, Organizational Challenges, Environmental Challenges and Social Challenges.

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Introduction

Sports tourism is a platform for a positive and short phase of peoples' activities, particularly in good-looking natural environments beauty and spare moments, partially in open-air sports in physical leisure facilities and to do physical exercises especially for rehabilitation (Gill et al., 2023; Maqsood et al., 2024; Gill et al., 2024). Moreover, Sports tourism is a type of tourism/travel movement in which a person takes part in sports or purposefully supports and observes participants (Higham & Hinch, 2018). According to Njoroge et al. (2015), sports tourists have taken a trip away from the residence range to participate in sports events. Sports tourism is examined as the best tool for sustaining the livelihood of the host communities in emerging countries (Wanyonyi et al., 2021). A research study by Asdullah et al. (2015) explained that sports tourism is a travel activity in which different individuals participate in sports activities and entertain themselves purposefully.

According to Lickorish and Jenkins, (2007) explained that the tourism concept is recreational, leisure, or business purpose activity in which people/tourists move from one place to another. From last decades, the tourism concept evolved, that resulted in performing various sorts of tourism activities i.e. cultural, food, religious, landscape, leisure, and many more (Kirilenko & Stepchenkova, 2018). Sports tourism refers to the world trips made specifically to watch sports events; such as the Olympics, cricket leagues, football matches, rugby, polo match, car racing, rock climbing, mountain biking, water rafting, and so many other sports are considered the main events of sports tourism (Asdullah et al., 2015a). Generally, sports and tourism are two main different trades (Higham & Hinch, 2018a). The financial potential of these industries were investigated and known since 1990 (the World Sports Tourism Congress conducted in Barcelona). Consequently, all World countries have started to invest in the shape of first-class sports facilities construction and organized different sports activities to attract a larger number of sports tourists (Herstein & Berger, 2014). It may assist the world countries to make income for their economies (Bodet & Lacassagne, 2012).

According to Khan et al. (2022) the current economies of any country tourism play role as the “goose that lays golden eggs”. Sports tourism is a travel activity around the world mainly participate and observe sport events; such as Olympics, cricket matches, football leagues, rugby, polo festivals, car racing, rock climbing, mountain biking, Water rafting, and various other sport events are considered in sports tourism (Asdullah et al., 2015a). Sport tourism is a social event come about as a separate interaction of events, people and destinations at a certain point in time (Getz, 2008; Weed & Bull, 2009). Sports tourism has taken a trip away from residence range to watch sporting events (Njoroge et al., 2015). While sport tourism involvement are travels to take part and watch to sport events (Ratten, 2011; Patterson & Getz, 2013).

Active vs. Passive Sport Tourists

Gibson et al. (2018) active sports tourist are persons who take part in sports whereas on public holiday/vacation, representing the activities of physically participate as an ‘athlete’ for example, skiing & golf as on festival, take part in planned activities, and adventure tourism events, such as; canoeing and hiking. In compare, the passive ones bound their movement to watching sports activity in a festival/destination. In the direction of this second type, nostalgic tourists have been included; specifically those who visit sport facilities and museums, even though some examiners still address this part as a separate class (Gibson et al., 2018a).

Moreover, for a decade, sports and tourism were two separate industries. Both were connected in complete isolation from one other. After that, investigators understood the value of sports tourism as an important characteristic of tourism and the benefits that emerged as a result of the coordination between them (Mapjbil et al., 2015). The conduction of Sports events facilitates and attracts audiences/tourists to the countryside (Beech et al., 2005). Despite this fact, tourists can be more motivated by walking around the landscape and becoming physically good look and maintaining the way of life of the host community.

Sports tourists can also be motivated by sports competitions held in the country (Gibson et al., 2012). As a result, both types of tourists are fruitful sources of income for the host country.

Significant of Sports Tourism in Pakistan

The geographically location of Pakistan is rich in numerous attractive and eye-catching destinations which can catch the attention of people from every place of the world. The country is set apart with high adventure, more commonplace natural loveliness and particularly rich historical heritage, and it consists of diverse culture, people and landscape. Various towering mountain peaks of the world situated in northern area of Pakistan and the second highest mountain in the world also located in the country. Tourists from every part of the world visit Pakistan every year to enjoy mountaineering and other exciting high adventures. Due to above explain unique positions and different facilities; the land of Pakistan is moreover most excellent for various sports which are not accessible in several countries of the world. Furthermore, there are different local sporting activities held every year in various side of the country. These sporting activities are heart of attraction for the tourists from diverse places of the world and offer them highest stage of enjoyment and happiness. Similarly, Pakistan has blessed with high peaks, pristine lakes, the Rocky Mountains, deserts, and beautiful coastlines. Pakistan also has numerous Sports like Cricket, Hockey, and Polo. However, the lack of government attention towards sports tourism and the maintenance of sports infrastructure can result in economic loss as Pakistan has a huge consumer market with a population of more than 200 million people (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017). Apart from that, Pakistan has potential consumer markets not only for its people but also for people from other countries. Despite this, the Government of Pakistan does not pay enough attention to the vitality of the sports tourism sector. This led to the Government not formulating supportive official incentive policies and therefore the government has not built sports tourism infrastructures. However, the professional's involvement is also not enough. Apart from addressing these concerns, there is a lack of people with practical experience in this field and not enough figures of sports tourism professionals. In addition, funding is also a major barrier limiting the construction of sports tourism infrastructure in Pakistan (Ullah et al., 2021). Moreover, Security issues during the organization of sporting events were also a serious challenge for the sport tourism department regarding foreign tourists. The decades-long war against terrorism has dealt a mortal blow to Pakistan's tourism sectors, and this unhelpful security image has plagued Pakistan and its emerging sectors. Moreover, Ahmed et al. (2022) present time severe need for an integrated approach for make sure the supply of eligible and professional workers and managers for the tourism industry of K.P.K Pakistan. There are no standardized degree courses on tourism offered by big universities in Pakistan. On the other hand, lack of research is a big challenge to the tourism sector. Unfortunate road convenience, underdeveloped visitor routes, and a deficiency of tourist accessibility are a few of the main considerable challenges for Pakistan tourism sectors. Another big challenge of Pakistan tourism industry is the media. The mode the media has represented Pakistan by just highlighting the accidents, bomb blasts, murders, and other social distress has smashed Pakistan's status all over the world.

18th Constitutional Amendment and Tourism

The tourism industry of Pakistan was transfer for the province levels in the 18th constitutional amendment passed by the parliament on April 20, 2010. Similarly, Imran (2010) explained tourism master plan of 2002 in this approach. The strategies and organizations, the state has a prepare 2002 Tourism Master Plan organized mutually by the government of Pakistan, United Nation Development Program, and the W.T.O, the tourism master plan have specified among others, some limitations, which should be beaten to guarantee the sustainable development of tourism services;

- i. Lack of awareness, impact and benefits of tourism among the general public.
- ii. Lack of trained personnel in tourism sectors.
- iii. Lack of regulations tourist services and facilities in certain areas.

- iv. Lack of national and provincial authorities' investment in tourist facilities and services and little encouragement for private investors.
- v. Limited and old infrastructure all over the country (Ahmad & Anjum, 2012).

Moreover, Virk et al. (2003) IUCN efforts in cooperation among Pakistan to build the tourism sustainable are as follows; "In 2003, IUCN collaborated by Pakistan tourism plan developed as well as specifically a plan for northern areas of Pakistan sustainable growth. IUCN published a complete details on information's for sustainable development of northern areas in 2003, the report gave entire information regarding the northern areas and what were the strategies to make it sustainable and tourist friendly they made in order as according to IUCN report 2003 for northern areas of Pakistan, Pakistan have huge tourism potential other than was a mistreated due to few causes.

Impact of Sports Tourism on National Economy

According to Jimenez-Garcia et al. (2020), recent year Sports tourism has been the fastest growing sector, with annual income of USD \$ 800 billion worldwide. Due to its prospective in bringing high rate of earnings, it can be utilize efficiently for the improvement of the local regions (Brunet & Xinwen, 2009). A regular and valuable collaboration between all stakeholders is essential as this support will contribute in the development of the areas image (Tarfanelli, 2010). Snow-related sports activities are practiced in more or less 6,000 ski areas in around 70 countries (Vanat, 2018). Skiing activities are an important economically tool and are being used as an apparatus for regional and local areas development, in particular for development the tourism (Demiroglu et al., 2019).

According to Mosbah and Saleh (2014) stated that UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) statement that, sports tourism is a multidimensional business with the purpose of income generating in many countries. Today's worldwide sports tourism has grown to be powerful economic growth force. Furthermore, Erixon (2018) stated that, U.S produced total of \$589 million in financial actions in which main contributor was sports tourism. In recorded that 2018 the sports tourism increased Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by generated since 9.9% to 10.5%. WTTC, (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017) recognized that, the tourism business bring about US\$8.8 trillion to the world central economy contributor compare to global GDP 10.4%. Additionally it gives 319 million employments yearly, instead of 10.0% of the entire worldwide jobs. At nearly all developing countries, has curved out to be present a main channel of economic & social development. The industry of tourism every year adds about 10% of the GDP of the country. Tourism appearances in 2018 are evidence on 2,029,206 & Ksh.157.b revenue of tourism (K.T.B, 2018 report) as a consequence, tourism sector is a most important strength of the economy (Wanyonyi et al., 2021).

Environmental Challenges (Accessibility to Winter Season Areas)

According to souse et al. (2021) environmental challenges such as ice and snow raise the possibility of injuries and falls. Bad weather can disrupt your group event in a moment. Even though a heavy snowfall would clearly have to be postponed, you must be arranged to events with light snowfall. The sports event's organizers always have a backup plan in place to deal with a bad weather challenge. In support of that, if rain is forecast and you have planned an open-air event, arrange umbrellas. If a high temperature wave is predicted, be organized to make available water bottles, sunglasses and juice to your guests. It can be really complicated to convince a huge figure of visitors to be present at a corporate event for the period of the winter seasons. Peoples are more tired to indoors for the reason that the wintry weather conditions and don't like to leave their comfortable homes. The sports organizers can manage these challenges and raise the attendance on your corporate events for the period of the winter seasons by building an engaging and attractive environment. There are several winter themes that can bring into play for corporate events to create it more attractive for your visitors. Sports organizers can find some ideas and winter themes for group of people events in one of past blog posts (Knowles et al., 2020).

Social Challenges

According to Zhang et al. (2023) the Human being manners, like; visitor opinion, as well as the direction of staff in sports tourism developments, is also a common possible challenge stated by all study. Especially, the tourism threat perception since tourists is mainly popular and they trust that tourists' mental maturity toward tourism threat and the social practiced for the duration of travel can considerably influence the procedure and growth of a sport tourism plan (Bentley et al., 2008; Hartmann, 2006).

Furthermore, the group of peoples is creation of societal link between the persons. The present modern era is struggled from diverse social challenges as well as unemployment, corrupt behavior and gender discrimination, (Alexander, 2010). John and Morufu (2013) societal challenges similar to unemployment, security issues and racially causes for result of the individual's actions. While the sports involvement of the female is concerned, it is unspecified that social challenges can influence the female participations in sport events (Adie et al., 2008).

Security Challenges

Then protection priority is the main concern when host time of sports activities, because contestants and supporters are concerned a lot for their safety and security on every occasion when events are hosted in diverse cities or regions in support of example, Libya cannot host in the AFCON 2013 while an consequence of civil wars for this reason that AFCON, 2013 was transfer to South Africa, also 2011 African Cup of Nations 2017 withdrew its bid for hosting (Wanyonyi et al., 2021).

Moreover, fear and security are the mainly crucial and central challenges to both international and national tourists (Krajnak, 2021). A main cause of insecurity and fear is Terrorism and a main alarm for the world and local areas (Fuchs & Pizam, 2011). The heartbreak that took place on 9/11 significantly changed the international tourist's mindset. A further detailed verifies and strict visa processing can simply affect the movements in international tourism across the world. This percentage of most countries is international tourists declined. Tourist places show the identity and representation of the country and are also flexible and easy targets for terrorists (Bank, 2016). This, alongside with other terrorist attacks, drastically influences the economic situation of the country, such as European countries, which terrorist attacks in Paris lost from 0.8 to 1 billion USD (Khan et al., 2022). Terrorism practices extend fear, demotivate tourists and dishearten shareholder; consequently, it presents a strong negative affect for economic development (Krajnak, 2021a; Santamaria, 2021). Pakistan was also a main sufferer of terrorism (GTD) after 9/11, which brings massive losses to the country in every part of directions such as; security-wise economically and socially etc. Pakistan was measured an insecure country, which disheartened tourists and investors. This cleaned out the tourism area, and its contribution to the economic development of the country was deficient (Muzamil, 2021).

Organizational Challenges

The researchers focused on organizational challenges faced by tourism authorities like; Lack of professionals, Lack of information & knowledge Lack of infrastructure and Lack of finance. The detail is given below:

Lack of Infrastructure

According to Hussein (2014a) Overpopulation and the pressure created by the infrastructure facilities in Egypt, like electricity and transport and roads, which decrease the results of the hard work of the status in improvement. Poor infrastructure facilities in Egypt representing in the connection of roads and transportation systems, sanitation and electricity, which does not allow heavy tourism related with sports event.

Lack of Finance

The consecutive crises that influence the tourism industry, like the global financial crisis and its impact on worldwide requirements for tourism, including sports tourism (Hussein, 2014a). Despite the consequences, present are various hurdles that developing countries like Kenya arranged to host flourishing sports tourism. Lack of financial support has been recognized as the core challenge obstructing most developing countries, as well as Kenya, from hosting major sports tourism events (Andreff, 2012a; Wanyonyi et al., 2021a).

Furthermore, the high rates of corruption in Kenya have obstructed the victorious sports event hosting. The misuse of financial ads for development of sports infrastructures has absent the state by not offer to sports facilities designed for hosting sports tourism. These threats have damaged the capability of city to offer also have set bad status of the state (Wanyonyi et al., 2021a). Andreff, (2016) also claims that sports in Kenya have beard for several times from mismanagement, political position and corruption, consequential the state collapse to build several important shocks in national and international competitions.

Lack of Professionals

The management is a key to success of their sports events. The majority sport events are not managed appropriately. This cannot be secluded since the reality that inexperienced persons are in sports management sites. While a sports activity is not accurately organized, it was not motivating for sport tourists to focus & participate actively. Sports tourism events arranging, and especially big event, need the contribution of different positions of stakeholders. Therefore, it suggested that designed for any successful achievement of an organization's planning, execution and results of the events; stakeholders must include a common enjoyment of wellbeing of every group's/ individual concerned (Swart et al., 2018).

Lack of Information & Knowledge

Tourism departments strongly depend on the strategically correct employment of knowledge-based and their information systems applications. In fact, various investigators believe the information systems and in especially, the information technology (IT), especially sports major events and its flexibility as an in proficient to accomplish the preferred competitive advantages, and as a central support to strategic and operational business decisions (Al Azmi et al., 2012) hence additional study is required to observe the function of such IT applications in decision-making enhancing. In furthermore, investigators (Masa'deh, et al. 2008) highlight the require for large firms to combine their IT systems with their Knowledge Management strategies and procedures in organize to survive in their greatly competitive business atmospheres, which in turn could step up the management decision-making as well. The core inspiration of hosting sports tourism into build countries for growth causes, the deficiency of intentional tourism policies in addition to planning have an obstacle the development of tourism in Nairobi (Njoroge et al., 2015a). A large group of people have no awareness of tourism, particularly in region which is far from the traditional culture and places of attractions (Hussein, 2014a).

Estimates of COVID-19 Impact on Sports Tourism

Sports tourism stands for a significant worth to the U.S. market. On the other hand, this economic value has been strictly limited by the corona virus pandemic that has particularly hurt the tourism sectors and sports events (Bhuiyan et al., 2020). Similarly, the Covid-19 outbreak and the recent flood situation and their impact on sports tourism are also major challenges for sports organizers (Wanyonyi et al., 2021a). The Covid-19 situation has created travel limitations and lockdowns that have led to the delay or cancellation of several sports tourism events which resulted in inactivity and athletes at that era usually achieve the state of obesity (Gill et al., 2023). So basically; the study tries to find out several of these challenges faced by the sports tourism authorities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Galvani et al., 2020). Despite that, the country has hosted sports tourism events for the last ten years but still faces challenges that badly

affected the development of the sports tourism process. There have been many research studies on sports tourism, but there is still a lack of studies on the challenges of sports tourism faced by the event organizing authorities, especially within the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province context. Therefore, there was still an acknowledged gap for the need to conduct a research study that highlights the challenges of sports events held in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a beautiful place where natural scenery attracts the outsiders to itself from all over the globe. This is blessed with several towering peaks, the Rocky Mountains and pristine lakes (Arshad et al., 2018a). So, sports tourism in K.P.K has a great platform to encourage talent in various sports such as Cricket, Hockey, Polo, Water rafting, Rock climbing, Mountain hiking, and snow festivals (W.T.T.C, 2017a). In spite of this, in K.P.K, there is a lack of attention of the government to make strengthen the sports tourism industry. This led to lack of policy formulation and thus the government does not build sports tourism infrastructures and basic other necessities (Arif & Shikirullah, 2019a). Other than addressing these concerns, neither the staff has any practical experience in this field, nor there a sufficient number of sports tourism professionals. In addition, lack of funding is also an important barrier that limits the construction of sports tourism infrastructure in K.P.K., Pakistan (Ullah et al., 2021a). Moreover, security issues are also a serious concern for organizers of foreign tourists (Arif & Shikirullah, 2019a). Owing to heavy snowfall in Galiyat, Naran, and Swat winter seasons, it is also a big hurdle for conductions of sports tourism. Despite this, no single research has been done in this specific context; therefore, the investigator highlighted the challenges faced by sports tourism organizers.

Sports tourism is a travel activity in which people take part in various sport events and watch as participants purposefully. This study may also beneficial for sports tourists and event organizers to make sports settings and to change people's behavior against sports tourism. The study results may be fruitful for sports organizers and other concerned to have some informative conferences/sessions, and seminars regarding sports event. Moreover, this research may enable the sports tourism departments of "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cultural & Tourism Authority (K.P.C.T.A), Galiyat Development Authority (G.D.A) and Kaghan Development Authority (K.D.A)" to organize sports events and enhance their income sources. Furthermore, the study results may be helpful for government of K.P.K. to understand and tackle the sensitivity of challenges faced by the sports tourism industry. In addition, current research may also designed to provide basic knowledge about sports tourism challenges to the students, teachers, coaching staff, athletes, businessmen, media, local community, local culture, tourism departments, and people who are involved and not involved in the sports activity. The findings of the study can significantly contribute to the existing literature in the field as well. The black-and-white picture of current research can assist future investigators who want to investigate the same issue in different contexts.

Materials and Methods

The population consisted on 75 participants. As population was very limited and easily approachable, so census method was used for data collection. The investigator used descriptive research design with the cross-sectional survey approach for data collection. As the current research study dealt with three different variables like environment challenges, social challenges and organizational challenges, so the investigator developed and used self-made close-ended scale for the purpose of data collection. The pilot testing was done for the purpose to examine the existing draw backs & errors in the initial draft of research instrument. The complications, possible flaws and ambiguities were removed with consultation of research supervisor. For the content validity purpose, the initial version of the instrument was sent to the five experts of the field. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the inter-consistency among the questionnaire items. So, Cronbach's alpha method was used for checking the research tool's reliability, and its value was 0.76. For the purpose of data collection, formal approval was taken from the Departmental Supervisory Committee of social sciences of University of Haripur, K.P.K, Pakistan, and sent to the heads of tourism authority of sampled sports tourism organizers. The investigator collected back from all the participants after filling the questionnaires. Response rate was recorded as 90.90%.

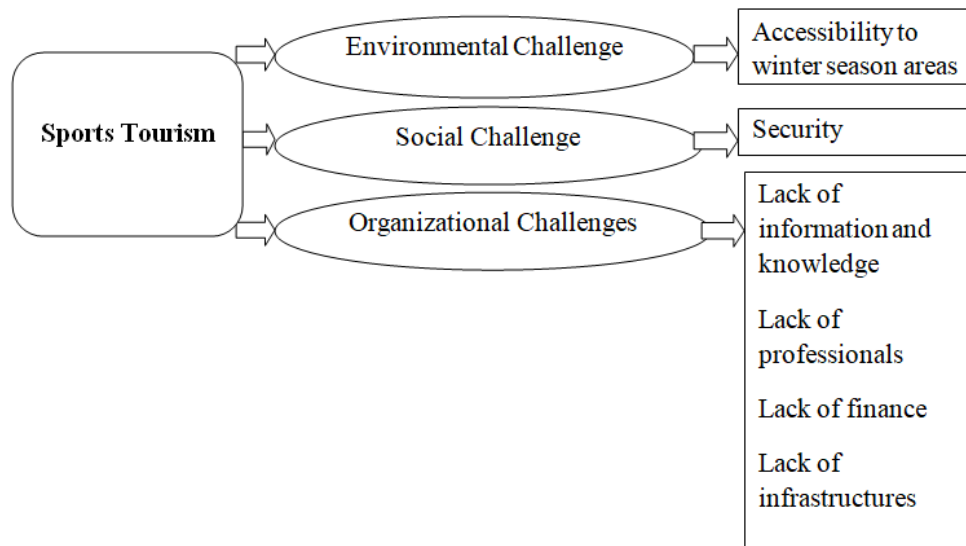


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework

Data Analysis

Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS-26) version was applied for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze and tabulate the obtained data. Frequencies, percentages and mean were applied to analyze the collected responses.

Descriptive Results

The descriptive statistics is key part of researches where the data have been provided in regard to the study variables for better understanding of descriptions of the study variables/dimensions under considerations.

Table 1: Gender wise Frequencies and Percentage

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)
Male	54	90.0	90.0
Female	6	10.0	10.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0

This table 1 shows the gender wise Frequencies and Percentage of study population. It indicates that there were total 60 participants, in which 54(90.0%) respondents were male and 6(10%) respondents were female. Therefore, male participants were more in number than female participants in particular research.

Table 2: Age group frequencies and Percentage

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
21-30	20	33.3	33.3
31-40	25	41.7	41.7
41-50	7	11.7	11.7
51-above	8	13.3	13.3
G. Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above table 2 is about the age group Frequencies and Percentages of participants. Age group table results show that among 60 respondents, there were total 4 age groups in which Group 1 is 20(33.3%) which has age 21-30 years. Whereas group 2 is 25(41.7%) who has the 31-40 years age and group 3 people who are 41-50 years old are 7(11.7%). And group 4 is 8(13.3%) respondents who have 51 and above age.

Table 3: *Region wise frequencies and Percentage*

Region	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Abbottabad	19	31.7	31.7
Mansehra	17	28.3	28.3
Peshawar	23	38.3	38.3
Others	1	1.7	1.7
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above table 3 concerning the Frequencies and Percentage of Region wise/ locality group show that there were total 4 region wise groups of study participants which belong to Abbottabad were 19(31.7%), Mansehra participants were 17(28.3%) whereas participants of Peshawar region were 23(38.3%) and others were 1(1.7%) who participated in the present study.

Table 4: *Department's wise frequencies and Percentage*

Departments	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
KPCTA	23	38.3	38.3
KDA	15	25.0	25.0
GDA	22	36.7	36.7
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above Table 4 concerning the department wise Frequencies and Percentage show that there were total 60 respondents in which 23(38.3%) were from K.P.C.T.A department, 15(25.0%) were from K.D.A department and 22(36.7%) respondents were from G.D.A department who participated in the present study.

Table 5: *Experience wise frequencies and Percentage*

Experiences	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1-10	38	63.3	63.3
11-20	15	25.0	25.0
21-30	1	1.7	1.7
31-above	6	10.0	10.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above table 5 concerning the Experience group Frequencies and Percentage shows that among 60 respondents, group one frequencies and percentage were 38(63.3%) who has the experience of 1-10 years in their relevant field, group 2 has 15(25.0%) experience in their field whereas group 3 has 1(1.7%) experience and group 4 were 6(10.0%) respondents who has the experience more 31 years in their field.

Table 6: *Qualifications wise frequencies and Percentage*

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
HSSC	5	8.3	8.3
Bachelor	17	28.3	28.3
Master	27	45.0	45.0
M.Phil/Phd	11	18.3	18.3
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above table 6 is about the qualification wise Frequencies and Percentage of study respondents. It shows that among 60 respondents, there were total 5(8.3%) respondents who have FA/FSC education, having Bachelor qualification were 17(28.3%), whereas Master degree holders were 27(45.0%) and M.Phil./PhD degree holders were 11(18.3%) who participated in the present study.

Table 7: *Professional qualifications frequencies and Percentage*

Professional qualifications	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
YES	29	48.3	48.3
NO	31	51.7	51.7
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The above table 7 shows the professional qualification wise frequencies and Percentage of the respondents. It shows that among 60 respondents, there were total 29(48.3%) respondents who have professional degreed whereas 31(51.7%) respondents were those who have not any type of professional qualifications.

Sports Tourism Challenges Frequencies, Percentages & Mean Distributions

The participants were requested to give their opinions in relation to this in a Likert type scale where (01): strongly disagree (02): disagree (03): agree (04): strongly agree.

This part provides the frequencies and percentages distributions about the responses rate regarding every point added in the scale to measure the study variables/dimensions..

Table 8: *Sports Tourism Challenges Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	Sports tourism encourages the verity of sports events for tourists.	-	2 (3.3%)	38 (63.3%)	20 (33.3%)	3.30
2	Sports tourism is paying its due role in the organization of sports events.	1 (1.7%)	4 (6.7%)	43 (71.7%)	12 (20.0%)	3.10
3	Sport tourism departments take interest in sports regarding problems.	2 (3.3%)	21 (35.0%)	31 (51.7%)	6 (10.0%)	2.68

Table 8 depicts frequency, percentages, and mean of participants' responses upon the sports tourism challenges face by tourism departments of KPK province, Pakistan. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. The majority of the respondents indicated that sports tourism encourages the verity of sports events for tourists that 38(63.3%) were agreed, 20(33.3%) were strongly agreed and only 2(3.3%) were disagreed. A Mean 3.30 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that sports tourism encourages the verity of sports events for tourists in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Environmental Challenges Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Distributions

Table 9: *Accessibility to Winter Sport Tourism Areas Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	Excessive snow fall lead to affect accessibility in the arena of winter sports.	1 (1.7%)	2 (3.3%)	42 (70.0%)	15 (25.0%)	3.18
2	Land sliding lead to affect accessibility in the arena of winter sports.	-	3 (5.0%)	45 (75.0%)	12 (20.0%)	3.15

3	Severe weather and snow-fall sometimes cause to postponing of sports tourism events.	-	2 (3.3%)	43 (71.7%)	15 (25.0%)	3.21
4	Severe weather sometimes damages roads system which restrict and access to Organize event at a fixed time.	1 (1.7%)	4 (6.7%)	38 (63.3%)	17 (28.3%)	3.18
5	Lack of accessibility resources cause less participation of tourists during winter sports tourism.	-	6 (10.0%)	40 (66.7%)	14 (23.3%)	3.13

Table 9 depicts frequency, percentages, and means of participants' responses upon the environmental challenges like accessibility to winter sport tourism areas challenges face by sports organizers in tourism departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. The majority of the respondents indicated that excessive snow fall lead to affect accessibility in the arena of winter sports that 42(70.0%) were agreed, 15(25.0%) strongly agree whereas 2(3.3%) were disagreed and were strongly disagreed 1(1.7%) only. A Mean 3.18 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that excessive snow fall lead to affect accessibility in the arena of winter season in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that land sliding leads to affect accessibility in the arena of winter sports that 45(75.0%) were agreed 12(20.0%) strongly agree and only 3(5.0%) were disagreed. A Mean 3.15 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed land sliding leads to affect accessibility in the arena of winter sports in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that lack of accessibility resources cause less participation of tourists during winter sports tourism that 40(66.7%) were agreed, 14(23.3%) strongly agree and only 6(10.0%) were disagreed. A Mean 3.13 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that lack of accessibility resources cause less participation of tourists during winter sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Social Challenges Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Distributions

Table 10: *Social Challenges Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	Social cultural barriers (religious, cultural & gender discrimination) are also a big concern for the conduct of sports tourism.	3 (5.0%)	22 (36.7%)	32 (53.3%)	3 (5.0%)	2.58
2	It is difficult for me to understand diverse languages and to communicate with them.	10 (16.7%)	32 (53.3%)	18 (30.0%)	-	2.13
3	Due to lack of awareness about sports, local community creates hurdles in way to conduct sport tourism.	7 (11.7%)	25 (41.7%)	25 (41.7%)	3 (5.0%)	2.40
4	Religious boundaries cause the low participation of females in sports tourism.	-	16 (26.7%)	32 (53.3%)	12 (20.0%)	2.93

5	Cultural norms and values also create a hurdle for female participation in sports tourism.	1 (1.7%)	10 (16.7%)	36 (60.0%)	13 (21.7%)	3.01
6	The poor role of the media to aware tourists of national and international forums may cause a hurdle for sports tourists' participation.	3 (5.0%)	12 (20.0%)	35 (58.3%)	10 (16.7%)	2.86
7	The propagating of the negative media image of Pakistan in and outside the country is also a problem for the development of sports tourism in the country.	1 (1.7%)	12 (20.0%)	32 (53.3%)	15 (25.0%)	3.01

Table 10 shows frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the social challenges face by sport organizers in tourism departments. The majority of the respondents indicated that social cultural barriers (religious, cultural & gender discrimination) are also a big concern for the conduct of sports tourism that 32(53.3%) were agreed, 3(5.0%) strongly agree, whereas 22(36.7%) were disagreed and only 3(5.0%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 2.58 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that social cultural barriers (religious, cultural & gender discrimination) are also a big concern for the conduct of sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that the propagating of the negative media image of Pakistan in and outside the country is also a problem for the development of sports tourism in the country that 32(53.3%) were agreed, 15(25.0%) strongly agree, whereas 12(20.0%) were disagreed and only 1(1.7%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 3.01 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that the propagating of the negative media image of Pakistan in and outside the country is also a problem for the development of sport tourism in the country in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Security Challenges Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Distributions

Table 11: *Security Challenges Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	Security issues are also a big concern for sport tourism.	3 (5.0%)	14 (23.3%)	33 (55.0%)	10 (16.7%)	2.83
2	Government security plan is insufficient to organize sport tourism events.	7 (11.7%)	29 (48.3%)	18 (30.0%)	6 (10.0%)	2.38
3	High-tech security equipments are available for providing safety to participants and tourists.	9 (15.0%)	22 (36.7%)	26 (43.3%)	3 (5.0%)	2.38
4	Sufficient security forces are available to provide safety to national and international players.	1 (1.7%)	9 (15.0%)	44 (73.3%)	6 (10.0%)	2.91
5	Security threats are occurring during sports tourism.	2 (3.3%)	27 (45.0%)	24 (40.0%)	7 (11.7%)	2.60

6	The poor security has led to a dramatic decrease of tourist visits in K.P.K Province.	4 (6.7%)	20 (33.3%)	30 (50.0%)	6 (10.0%)	2.63
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Table 11 shows frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the security challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The majority of the respondents indicated that security issues are also a big concern for sports tourism that 33(55.0%) were agreed, strongly agree 10(16.7%), whereas 14 (23.3%) were disagreed and only 3(5.0%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 2.83 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that security issues are also a big concern for sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that the poor security has led to a dramatic decrease of tourist visits in K.P.K Province that 30(50.0%) were agreed, 6(10.0%) strongly agree, whereas 20(33.3%) were disagreed and only 4(6.7%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 2.63 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that the poor security has led to a dramatic decrease of tourist visits in K.P.K Province in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Organizational Challenges Frequencies, Percentage and Mean

Lack of Information & Knowledge Frequencies, Percentage and Mean

Table 12: *Lack of Information & knowledge Frequencies, Percentage & Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	Sa	Mean
1	Through seminars/workshop, sufficient information is provided in regard to sports tourism.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20.0%)	43 (71.7%)	3 (5.0%)	2.78
2	Lack of strategic planning leads to create an issue for sports tourism.	1 (1.7%)	20 (33.3%)	35 (58.3%)	4 (7.7%)	2.70
3	Lack of tourist information centers in northern areas leads to the low interest of sports tourists.	1 (1.7%)	25 (41.7%)	31 (51.7%)	3 (5.0%)	2.60
4	Insufficient digital technology information and awareness is provided in regard to conduct sports tourism.	1 (1.7%)	21 (35.0%)	30 (50.0%)	8 (13.3%)	2.75

Table 12 shows frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the organizational challenges like lack of Information & knowledge challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. The majority of the respondents indicated that through seminars/workshops, sufficient information is provided in regard to sports tourism that 43(71.7%) were agreed, 3(5.0%) strongly agree whereas 12(20.0%) were disagreed and strongly disagree 2(3.3%) only. A Mean 2.78 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that through seminars/workshops, sufficient information is provided in regard to sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that insufficient digital technology information & awareness is provided in regard to conduct sports tourism that 30(50.0%) were agreed, 8(13.3%) strongly agree, whereas 21(35.0%) were disagreed and only 1(1.7%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 2.75 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that insufficient digital technology information & awareness is provided in regard to conduct sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Lack of Professionals (Organizational Challenges) Frequencies, Percentage and Mean

Table 13: *Lack of professional's Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	The tourism departments have insufficient professional & resources which leads to smooth conduct of sports tourism.	3 (5.0%)	24 (40.0%)	25 (41.7%)	8 (13.3%)	2.63
2	K.P tourism organizations have lack of experienced and Skilled staff for sports tourism.	1 (1.7%)	24 (40.0%)	30 (50.0%)	5 (8.3%)	2.65
3	Insufficiently trained commentator/host for sports tourism events.	1 (1.7%)	24 (40.0%)	30 (50.0%)	5 (8.3%)	2.65
4	Insufficient technical managers for sports tourism.	3 (5.0%)	20 (33.3%)	34 (56.7%)	3 (5.0%)	2.61

Table 13 depicts frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the organizational challenges like lack of professionals challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. The majority of the respondents indicated that the tourism departments have sufficient professional and resources which leads to smooth conduct of sports tourism that 25(41.7%) were agreed, 8(13.3%) strongly agree, whereas 24(40.0%) were disagreed and strongly disagree 3(5.0%) only. A Mean 2.63 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that the tourism departments have sufficient professional and resources which leads to smooth conduct of sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that insufficient technical managers for sports tourism that 34(56.7%) were agreed, 3(5.0%) strongly agree, whereas 20(33.3%) were disagreed and only 3(5.0%) were strongly disagreed. A Mean 2.61 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that insufficient technical managers for sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Financial challenges (Organizational challenges) Frequencies, Percentage and Mean

Table 14: *Financial challenges Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.No	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	Tourism Authority has economic challenges uch as; availability of budget and funds for conduct of sports tourism in K.D.A, G.D.A and K.P.C.T.A.	2 (3.3%)	14 (23.3%)	28 (46.7%)	16 (26.7%)	2.96
2	Tourism authorities have sufficient corporate sponsorship for organizing sports tourism.	9 (15.0%)	30 (50.0%)	17 (28.3%)	4 (6.7%)	2.26
3	Sports grants are provided according to the demands of sports tourism.	4 (6.7%)	33 (55.0%)	19 (31.7%)	4 (6.7%)	2.38
4	Provided funds/grants are sufficient to host/ accommodate the sports tourism.	4 (6.7%)	34 (56.7%)	18 (30.0%)	4 (6.7%)	2.36

Table 4.14 shows frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the organizational challenges like Financial challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. The majority of the respondents show that tourism authority has economic challenges such as; availability of budget and funds for conduct of sports tourism in K.D.A/G.D.A, & K.P.C.T.A, that 28(46.7%) were agreed, 16(26.7%) strongly agree, whereas 14(23.3%) were disagreed and strongly disagree 2(3.3%) only. A Mean 2.96 indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that tourism authority has economic challenges such as; availability of budget and funds for conduct of sports tourism in K.D.A/G.D.A, & K.P.C.T.A, in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that provided funds/grants are sufficient to host/accommodate the sports that 34(56.7%) were disagreed, 4(6.7%) strongly disagree, whereas 18(30.0%) were agreed and only 4(6.7%) were strongly agreed. A Mean 2.36 indicated that majority of respondents were disagreed that provided funds/grants are sufficient to host/accommodate the sports in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Lack of Infrastructure's (Organizational challenges) Frequencies, Percentage and Mean

Table 15: *Lack of infrastructures Frequencies, Percentage and Mean*

S.#	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
1	K.P tourism departments have sufficient infrastructure as per International standards, including road connectivity, airports, an accommodation, electricity and transport systems.	11 (18.3%)	23 (38.3%)	23 (38.3%)	3 (5.0%)	2.30
2	Lack of infrastructure like; race tracks, gymnasiums and accommodations are fair enough for smooth running of sports tourism.	4 (6.7%)	15 (25.0%)	37 (61.7%)	4 (6.7%)	2.68
3	Lack of appropriate equipment to smooth organizing of sports tourism.	1 (1.7%)	16 (26.7%)	39 (65.0%)	4 (6.7%)	2.76
4	Sufficient sports grounds are available in rural areas (Galiyat, Naran and Kaghan) for different sports tourism events.	7 (11.7%)	41 (68.3%)	10 (16.7%)	2 (3.3%)	2.11
5	Insufficient accessibility resources (transport) to reach at the event's destination.	2 (3.3%)	28 (46.7%)	26 (43.3%)	4 (6.7%)	2.53
6	It is convenient for sports tourists to access the facilities (e.g. seats, toilets, food, shops and information center).	4 (6.7%)	24 (40.0%)	26 (43.3%)	6 (10.0%)	2.56
7	Parking area facility is enough for all concerned persons (tourists and sports persons).	5 (8.3%)	27 (45.0%)	26 (43.3%)	2 (3.3%)	2.41

Table 15 shows frequency, percentages, and means of responses of the respondents upon the organizational challenges like Lack of infrastructures challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The total 60 respondents were responded positively. The study results indicated that 23(38.3%) were disagreed that K.P tourism departments have sufficient infrastructure as per international standards, including road connectivity, airports, accommodation, electricity and transport systems, 11(18.3%) were strongly disagreed whereas 23(38.3%) were agreed and only 3(5.0%) were strongly agreed. A Mean 2.30 indicated that majority of respondents were disagreed that K.P tourism departments have sufficient infrastructure as per international standards, including road connectivity, airports, accommodation, electricity and transport systems in K.P.K, Pakistan.

The majority of the respondents indicated that parking area facility is enough for all concerned persons (tourists and sports persons) that 27(45.0%) were agreed, 24(40.0%) disagree, whereas 5(8.3%) were strongly disagreed and only 2(3.3%) were strongly agreed. A Mean 2.41 indicated that majority of respondents were disagreed that parking area facility is enough for all concerned persons (tourists and sports persons) in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Mean of Sports Tourism Challenges

Table 16: *Mean of Sports Tourism Challenges*

Sr.No	Sports Tourism Challenges	N	Mean
1.	Accessibility to winter sport tourism areas	60	3.17
2.	Social challenges	60	2.70
3.	Security challenges	60	2.62
4.	Lack of information & knowledge	60	2.70
5.	Lack of professionals	60	2.63
6.	Financial challenges	60	2.49
7.	Lack of infrastructures	60	2.48

From Table 16, shows that Mean of sports tourism challenges faced by the sport organizers in sport tourism K.P.K departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. A mean (3.17) indicated that majority of the respondents were agreed that the accessibility to winter sport tourism areas is a big challenge in sports organizer in K.P.K, Pakistan. A mean (2.70) indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that the social challenge in sports tourism is a big challenge of sports organizer in K.P.K, Pakistan. The Mean table regarding security challenges (M=2.62) indicated that majority of respondents were agreed that there is also security challenges in organizing of sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan. Furthermore, 2.70 mean indicated that lack of information & knowledge of organizers to conduction of sports tourism is also a big issue for them. Additionally, Lack of professional's Mean (2.63) indicated that the respondents were agreed that there is lack of professionals in tourism department to organize sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan. In addition, financial challenges mean 2.49 indicated that the respondents were disagreed that there are no financial challenges in organizing the sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan. Moreover, Lack of infrastructures Mean (2.48) indicated that the respondents were disagreed that there are sufficient infrastructures to organize sports tourism events in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Mean of Research Variable

Table 17: *Mean of Research Variable*

Sr.No	Research Variable	N	Mean
1.	Environmental Challenges	60	3.17
2.	Social Challenges	60	2.66
3.	Organizational Challenges	60	2.58

From Table 17, show that the environmental challenges face by sports organizer in tourism departments. The total respondents of this study were 60 which responded positively. A mean of 3.17 indicated that

majority of respondents were agreed that environmental challenges affect the sports tourism. Furthermore, social challenges mean of 2.66 also indicated that majority of the respondents were agreed that the social challenges are important issues for organizing sports tourism in K.P.K, Pakistan. Also, organizational challenges mean (2.58) indicated that the majority of respondents were also agreed that the organizational Challenges face by sports tourism organizers in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Conclusion

The study purpose was to highlight several challenges faced by organizers in sports tourism departments in K.P.K. including environmental, social, organizational, financial, and infrastructure-related challenges etc. Although the study results indicated that sports tourism events are encouraged in the same region, whilst participants also respond that sports tourism departments need to play a more active role in addressing these challenges. The study findings emphasize on the need to improve infrastructures, including accommodations, appropriate equipment's, accessibility resources, and parking facilities, as well as to arrange easy access to information and training for sports tourism professionals. Additionally, the study identifies the importance of addressing social and cultural barriers to promote greater participation particularly among female athletes. Addressing these challenges can help to promote the growth and uplifting of sports tourism in the region and enhance the overall tourism industry in K.P.K, Pakistan.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be made to address the challenges faced by organizers in sports tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

1. **Improve infrastructure:** Govt. may improve the infrastructure in the region, including accommodation, transportation, and equipment. This will help to attract more tourists and ensure smooth running of sports tourism events.
2. **Increase funding:** More funding should be allocated to the tourism authority to support sports tourism events. This can be achieved through the government's budget allocation or by seeking corporate sponsorship.
3. **Enhance security:** While most respondents agreed that sufficient security forces are available, but security measures are insufficient so Govt. should improve security measures during sports tourism events to ensure the safety of players and tourists.
4. **Provide training and education:** More seminars, workshops, and training sessions should be provided to increase awareness and knowledge about sports tourism. This will help to develop a skilled workforce and enhance the professionalism of the industry.
5. **Address social and cultural barriers:** Efforts should be made to address social and cultural barriers, such as gender discrimination and cultural norms that hinder the female participation in sports tourism.
6. **Promote digital technology:** Greater use of digital technology should be encouraged to improve information dissemination and communication between stakeholders in sports tourism.
7. **Develop strategic planning:** should develop a strategic plan for sports tourism that addresses the challenges faced by organizers and outlines a clear roadmap for the future of the industry.

By implementing these recommendations, K.P.K. may overcome the challenges faced by organizers in sports tourism and improve the development of the industry in the region.

Suggestions for Future Investigators

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, here are some suggestions for future investigators:

1. While this study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by organizers in sports tourism in K.P.K, future investigators may consider these challenges/barriers in conducting a larger and more diverse study that covers the other regions in Pakistan. This would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities of sports tourism across the country.
2. This study focused on the perspectives of sports tourism organizers in K.P.K. Future research may explore the perspectives of tourists who participate in sports tourism events. This would provide valuable insights into their motivations, experiences, and perceptions of the challenges and opportunities of sports tourism.
3. While this study identified financial challenges as a major concern for sports tourism in K.P.K, future researcher may investigate the economic impact of sports tourism on local communities and businesses. This would provide a better understanding of the potential benefits of sports tourism and how it can contribute to the economic development of the region.
4. The study identified the lack of strategic planning and insufficient digital technology information & awareness as organizational challenges for sports tourism. Future research may evaluate the effectiveness of policy initiatives aimed at addressing these challenges. This would help policy makers to refine their strategies and enhance the support provided to sports tourism organizers.
5. The study found that there is a lack of infrastructure in the region, including accommodation, appropriate equipment, and accessibility resources. Future research may investigate the impact of infrastructure development on the growth of sports tourism in K.P.K. This would provide insights into the types of infrastructure that are most needed and how they could be developed in a sustainable and effective manner.

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Conflict of Interest


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