

TOURISTS' PERCEIVED VALUE TRUST AND EXPERIENCE TOWARDS
DELIGHT AT RELIGIOUS AND HISTORICAL SITES IN PAKISTAN

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DEDICATION

This doctoral research thesis would not have been possible without the divine help of Almighty Allah (SWT). I dedicated this thesis to my beloved father Mr. Khalil Ullah and mother who thought me to think positive and be consistent every time in life. This thesis is also dedicated to my brothers, sisters and all family members. I am also thankful to my wife, my daughters Ayesha Khan, Aqsa Khan and my son Khubaib. I love you all.

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ABSTRACT

Literature from previous studies stated that researchers and tourist organisations have focused too much on tourist satisfaction and consider it as the only strategic tool for organisations to achieve competitive advantage. However, the majority of the researchers argued that satisfied tourists may not be loyal, thus creating doubts about tourist satisfaction and its impact on attracting more tourists. As such, recent researches that focus on tourists' delight have indicated its relevance as a tool for tourism-related entities to gain a competitive advantage by attracting a larger number of tourists. Prior findings suggested little or no significant relationship between the precedents of delight in tourism-related studies. Thus, these issues compel to advance this research and discourse the research gap. Hence, this study evaluates the effect of tourists' perceived value; tourists' perceived trust, and tourists' experience on religious tourist's delight at religious and historical sites in Pakistan. Subsequently, a conceptual framework was proposed by combining previous empirical studies and models, particularly the Stimulus Organism Response Model (SOR) and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory Model (EDT). The methodology of the study is quantitative in nature and data were collected from 375 religious' tourists from abroad at three religious and historical sites in Pakistan. Smart PLS v.3 software was used to perform Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Seven hypotheses were developed to be tested, and all were supported. The results of the study disclosed that tourist's trust, value, and experience have a direct and positive effect on tourist's delight. Moreover, the tourist's trust and value also have a positive and direct impact on the tourist's experience. The results also indicate that the tourist's experience has a direct positive effect on tourist's delight. Furthermore, the tourist's experience plays a mediating role between tourist trust, tourist value, and tourist's delight. The results indicated that tourist's experience mediates the relationship between tourist value, tourist trust with tourist's delight. Theoretically, this study contributes by combining aspects from the SOR model, and the EDT model to examine the effect of tourist value, tourist trust on tourist's delight through tourist's experience. Practically, this study implies that the Pakistan tourism department, management of tourist sites, and tour operators need to offer better services to attract a larger number of religious tourists. Delighted tourists will revisit the religious and historical sites of Pakistan due to their religious obligations towards these religious and historical sites. This study can be generalised to benefits other religious and historical sites.

ABSTRAK

Literatur daripada kajian yang terdahulu oleh para penyelidik dan organisasi pelancongan memberi tumpuan yang lebih kepada kepuasan pelancong dan menganggapnya sebagai wadah yang strategik bagi organisasi untuk mencapai kelebihan daya saing. Walau bagaimanapun, majoriti penyelidik berpendapat bahawa pelancong yang berpuas-hati mungkin tidak setia, lantas menimbulkan keraguan tentang kepuasan pelancong dan kesannya dalam menarik lebih banyak pelancong. Oleh itu, penyelidikan pada masa kini memberi tumpuan kepada kegembiraan pelancong dan menganggapnya sebagai alat untuk entiti berkaitan pelancongan untuk memperolehi kelebihan daya saing dengan menarik sejumlah besar pelancong. Penemuan penyelidikan yang lalu mencadangkan hanya sedikit atau tiada hubungan yang signifikan di antara preseden kegembiraan dalam kajian berkaitan pelancongan. Sehubungan itu, isu ini menarik minat penyelidik untuk memajukan kajian ini dan membincangkan jurang penyelidikan ini. Oleh itu, kajian ini menilai kesan dari persepsi nilai pelancong; persepsi kepercayaan pelancong dan pengalaman pelancong terhadap kegembiraan pelancong agama di tempat-tempat keagamaan dan bersejarah di Pakistan. Selanjutnya, sebuah rangka konseptual yang menggabungkan kajian dan model empirikal yang terdahulu, khususnya Model Tindak Balas Organisme Rangsangan (SOR) dan Model Teori Pengesahan Keraguan Jangkaan (EDT) dicadangkan. Metodologi kajian ini bersifat kuantitatif dan data dikumpul daripada 375 pelancong agama dari luar negara di tiga tempat keagamaan dan sejarah di Pakistan. Perisian Smart PLS v.3 digunakan untuk menjalankan Model Persamaan Struktur (SEM). Tujuh hipotesis telah dibangunkan untuk diuji, dan kesemuanya adalah disokong. Hasil kajian mendedahkan bahawa kepercayaan, nilai dan pengalaman pelancong, mempunyai kesan langsung dan positif terhadap kegembiraan pelancong. Tambahan pula, kepercayaan dan nilai pelancong juga mempunyai kesan positif dan langsung terhadap pengalaman pelancong. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa pengalaman pelancong mempunyai kesan positif langsung terhadap kegembiraan pelancong. Selain itu, pengalaman pelancong memainkan peranan antara kepercayaan pelancong, nilai pelancongan, dan kegembiraan pelancong. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengalaman pelancong mempunyai kesan positif yang langsung terhadap kegembiraan pelancong. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa pengalaman pelancong mengantara hubungan antara nilai-nilai pelancongan, kepercayaan pelancong dengan kegembiraan pelancong. Secara teori, kajian itu menyumbang dengan menggabungkan aspek-aspek dari model SOR dan model EDT untuk mengkaji kesan nilai pelancong, kepercayaan pelancong, terhadap kegembiraan pelancong melalui pengalaman pelancong. Secara praktikal, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa jabatan pelancongan Pakistan, pengurusan tapak pelancongan dan pengendali agensi pelancongan perlu menawarkan perkhidmatan yang lebih baik untuk menarik sejumlah besar pelancong agama. Pelancong yang gembira akan kembali ke tempat-tempat keagamaan dan bersejarah di Pakistan kerana kewajipan agama mereka ke atas tapak-tapak agama dan sejarah ini. Penyelidikan kajian ini boleh diperluaskan dan memberi faedah kepada tempat-tempat keagamaan dan sejarah yang lain.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	-	Average Variance Extraction
CB-SEM	-	Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling
CMB	-	Common Method Bias
CMV	-	Common Method Variance
CR	-	Composite Reliability
EDT	-	Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory
S-O-R	-	Stimulus Organism Response
HTMT	-	Hetrotrait-Monotrait Ratio
IPMA	-	Importance and Performance Matrix
MD	-	Mahalanobis Distance
P-Value	-	Probability Value
PLS	-	Partial Least Square
SEM	-	Structural Equation Model
TTCI	-	Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index
TPV	-	Tourist Perceived Value
TPT	-	Tourist Perceived Trust
TE	-	Tourist Experience
TD	-	Tourist Delight
UTM	-	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
VB-SEM	-	Variance- Based Structural Equation Modeling
VIF	-	Variance Inflation Factor

LIST OF SYMBOLS

R^2	-	Coefficient of Determination
Q^2	-	Predictive Relevance
F^2	-	Effect Size
β	-	Path Coefficient

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Many studies have been conducted by different scholars on tourists' delight. However, the studies are still deficient in nature that could describe religious tourists' delight, especially within the context of religious and historical tourist sites in Pakistan. There are numerous sites in Pakistan which are utilised for religious rituals by different religion followers. Among the rest, most important, sacred, and ancient religious tourists' sites include Katas Raj Temple (District Chakwal, Punjab, Pakistan), Gurdwara at Nankana Sahib (District Nankana, Punjab, Pakistan) and Muslim sites such as Darga Hazrat Datah Ganj Baksh (Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan). Thus, this issue of deficient research in the field of religious tourism compels the researcher to advance the present study in order to discuss the discourse of religious tourists' delectation in detail to fill the gap (to be elaborated later). The religious tourists' delight required further investigation particularly to sacred and historical sites. Therefore, the outcome of the study shall provide an improved mechanism for Department of Pakistan Tourism to recognise and exploit religious tourists' delight for the promotion of religious tourism.

The research to date has inclined too much focus on customers' satisfaction and considered it as a fundamental aspect in achieving sustainable business advantage. However, the majority of researchers argue that satisfied customers may or may not be loyal, created doubts about customers' satisfaction and its impact on sustainable benefits in attracting more and more customers (Barnes *et al.*, 2016; Jones and Sasser, 1995; Keaveney, 1995; Keiningham and Vavra, 2001). A report published by Institute of Juran (cited in Arnold *et al.* (2005) stated that out of 200 firms, about 30 per cent of

the responded considers satisfaction as a key driver in their business growth. However, in reality, less than 2 per cent have genuinely experienced an increase in their businesses due to satisfaction (Arnold *et al.*, 2005). Thus, delight emerged as a new strategic intent for organisation growth as compared to satisfaction. Organisations gain a market advantage due to delight rather than satisfactory outcomes (Kao *et al.*, 2016; Roberts-Lombard and Petzer, 2018; Torres *et al.*, 2018). Keiningham *et al.* (2014), has explained that the liability of satisfied customers is less than 30 percent that they will repurchase the product or services. However, delighted customers have 85 per cent likelihoods that they will repurchase the product or services (Keiningham *et al.*, 2014). Like Arnold *et al.* (2005), Keiningham *et al.* (2014), also elaborates that, less than 2 per cent role played by customer satisfaction, which ultimately can decrease tourists' revisit intentions. As such, the insufficient role played by satisfaction and its relationship with crucial behavioural outcomes such as repurchase or revisit intentions in terms of competitive advantage is resulted in the shift of paradigm from satisfaction to delight (Kao *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the phenomenon of delight is recognised by many business firms as a new strategic force for their businesses' growth (Barnes *et al.*, 2016). The term delight was initially defined by Oliver *et al.* (1997, p. 329) that "positive emotional state generally resulting from having one's expectations exceeded to a surprising degree." Thus, satisfaction occurs when the expectations of tourists are fulfilled accordingly; however, delight occurs when tourists' needs meet surprisingly above the level of expectations (Oliver *et al.*, 1997).

Discouraging performance of Pakistani tourism among the world tourism ranking remains a vital challenge for the government of Pakistan. Pakistan ranks very low in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI). TTCI defines the competitive index as "the set of issues and policies that permit the sustainable development of the Travel and Tourism sector, which, in turn, imparts to the growth and competitiveness of a country." (Arshad *et al.*, 2018, pp. 4-5).

According to the evaluation by Arshad *et al.* (2018), Pakistan ranks 124 out of 136 countries with regards to TCCI in 2017. Table 1.1, indicates the rank of Pakistan in tourism-related elements among 136 countries of the world. Such, a low ranking of

Pakistan is, indeed a concern for a country, which technically is quite attractive for all kinds of tourism and particularly very appealing for religious tourism.

Table 1.1 Pakistan Ranking with Tourism-Related Elements

S. No	Tourism-related Elements for Ranking	Rank of Pakistan out of 136 Countries
1.	Prioritisation of Travel and Tourism	122
2.	Tourism services infrastructure	125
3.	Airport infrastructure	99
4.	Price competitiveness	29
5.	Cultural resources and business	59

Adopted from (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017)

Ranking of Pakistan tourism as shown in Table 1.1 is an alarming situation for Pakistan tourism department to scrutinise the low ranking of Pakistan out of 136 countries. Even though Pakistan has a high potential for religious tourism, there is a need to conduct a research study in this context. Religious tourists' delight will enhance the Pakistan ranking by attracting more and more religious tourists, due to its captivating sacred and historical significance.

1.2 Overview of Religious, Historical Tourism in Pakistan

Religious tourism can be explained as visiting the holy places, such as shrines, tombs, or a building, mainly used for worships, and other relevant areas of interest for pleasure, gratification or delight (Arshad *et al.*, 2018; Yeoman, 2009). This kind of tourism depends on the people's beliefs regarding a particular religion or expanding his/her religious knowledge to other people (Yeoman, 2009). Pakistan is one of the countries where it has the world's three biggest religions' followers (i.e. Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism). Pakistan does not only possess Islamic heritage sites; it also has rich heritage sites of other religions (Arshad *et al.*, 2018).

Pakistan has numerous religious and historical sites such as shrines of Sufis and Saints for Muslim tourists. The list of shrines for Muslim tourists includes; Data Ganj Bakhsh Ali Hujwari, Bahauddin Zakaria, Hazrat Baba Fariddudin Ganj-e-Shakar, Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai and Lal Shehbaz Qalandar (Rasul *et al.*, 2016). Sikh religious sites include; Gurdwara of Nankana Sahib and Gurdwara Hassanabdal. Hindu religion sites includes ancient temples such as Kalka Cave Temple, Panchmukhi Hanuman Mandirand, Shivala Mandi are 1500 years old and located in various parts of Pakistan (refer Table1.2) (Misra, 2016). Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bahi and Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol are Unesco Heritage sites since 1980 and are famous destinations for Buddhist tourists.

Apart from these religious and historical sites, only three places, such as Shrine of Hazrat Data Gang Bakhsh, Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, and Katas Raj Temple are selected for this study. The criteria, which has set to collect data from these sites, is exclusively due to the popularity of the sites amongst tourists, ease of access to the researcher, historical in nature, scenic beauty. Another important reason behind selecting these historical and religious sites together is due to tourist religious obligations and emotional attachment with these sites. Additionally, it also includes a large number of pilgrims currently visiting these sites (Arshad *et al.*, 2018; Misra, 2016; Rasul *et al.*, 2016).

Nankana Sahib in Punjab province of Pakistan is a beautiful place for the Sikh community from all over the world. The main reason behind this attraction is that the founder of Sikh religion, Guru Nanak, was born in Nankana Sahib Pakistan (Arshad *et al.*, 2018). The worship places such as Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib and Hassanabadal both are incredibly amazing sites to visit (Rasul *et al.*, 2016). Pakistan also has various shrines of Sufis and Saints for local Muslim tourists, and these sites are also attractive for other tourists around the world. The Katas Raj temple is very popular and historically significant heritage site for Hindu pilgrims coming mainly from India.

Table 1.2 List of Religious and Historical Sites in Pakistan

S. No	Religious and Historical Site	Location	Religion Follower
1	Shrine of Hazrat Data Gang Baksh Ali Hujwari	Lahore	Muslims
2	Shrine of Hazrat Baba Fariddudin Ganj-e-Shakar	Pakpattan	Muslims
3	Shrine of Bahauddin Zakaria	Multan	Muslims
4	Shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai	Matari	Muslims
5	Shrine of Lal Shehbaz Qalandar	Sehwan	Muslims
6	Gurdwaras of Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Sikh
7	Gurdwara Hassan Abdal	Hassan Abdal	Sikh
8	Gurdwara Kartarpor	Kartapor	Sikh
9	Kalka Cave Temple	Sukker	Hindu
10	Panchmukhi Hanuman Mandir	Karachi	Hindu
11	Katas Raj Temple	Chakwal	Hindu
12	Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bahi and Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol	Takht-i-Bahi	Buddhist

Adopted from (Akhter *et al.*, 2019; Arshad *et al.*, 2018; Haq and Medhekar, 2013; Rasul *et al.*, 2016)

1.3 Problem Statement

The term satisfaction is broadly researched in literature during the last two decades, however, still there is a lack of acceptable definition among the researchers (Oliver, 2014). The customers' expectations are mostly linked with prior experience of the product and services. Hence, to differentiate between satisfaction and delight (Christ-Brendemühl and Schaarschmidt, 2020; Kotler and Keller, 2016; Voorhees *et*

al., 2017), concisely elaborated that, execution of customers' expectations if, were according to the needs and wants of the customer, can leads to satisfaction. However, if fulfilment of needs and wants, exceeds expectations can literally convert satisfaction into delight (Christ-Brendemühl and Schaarschmidt, 2020). Hence, delight is an extraordinary level of satisfaction, where customers become surprised to received product or services beyond their expectations (Christ-Brendemühl and Schaarschmidt, 2020).

Previously, tourism-related strategies, tourists' organisation considers satisfaction as a critical strategy to attract more and more tourists to achieve its' objectives of maximising its profits and market shares (McDowall, 2010). The level of tourists' satisfaction was considered because of tourists experience with the product or services. If tourist's experience with the product or service was, according to the expectations of the tourist, then the tourist is considered as satisfied. On the other hand, an unsatisfied tourist will be the one whose experience with the product or service was not according to his expectations (Cutler *et al.*, 2016).

Furthermore, despite findings related to the role of satisfaction in tourist behavioural outcomes, Barnes *et al.* (2016), and Barnes *et al.* (2010) research supports the importance of delight. Moreover, their research findings show that delight has a high impact on behavioural outcomes. Such as attracting more and more tourists, tourist obligations, loyalty, and enhances revisit intentions of touring. The importance of these factors is quite relevant to religious tourist delight. As due to tourist religious obligations towards the tourist sites, one feels delighted can maximise the number of tourists. Thus, it shall help in enhancing Pakistan ranking. However, doubts remain in describing the concept of delight (Barnes *et al.*, 2010). Some literature proved the highly significant impact of delight with loyalty and intentions of revisit in the study of ruler tourism and tourist lodging experience (Loureiro, 2010; Loureiro and Kastenholz, 2011).

Contrary to this, other researchers' findings suggest little or no significant relationship between delight with loyalty and revisit intentions in tourism-related

studies. From the perspective of the hospitality industry, Kim *et al.* (2013) has stated, that as compare to delight, satisfaction is strongly related to loyalty. Bowden and Dagger (2011), in their study from restaurant's perspective, have argued that delight is helpful in tourist experience, though it is less effective in tourist loyalty as compare to satisfaction. However, Bowden-Everson *et al.* (2013), in their study on the restaurant industry, supports a steady relationship of delight with its outcomes, such as loyalty as compare to satisfaction.

The evidence in respect of delight to be a superior variable in comparison with satisfaction in augmenting the number of customers and produce benefits to the organisations is also supported by Bartl *et al.* (2013). Their study which is within the context of information technology, supports the notion that delight has a powerful impact on repurchase- intentions as compared to satisfaction. Thus, problem and confusion emerged, whether delight is significant or not in the context of tourism. Hence, in some tourist spots, even if the tourist becomes delighted, one may not visit the tourist destination and prefer some new location. This lack of interest with the particular site might be because, so far, the researchers define the term delight in the context, which is not fully capable of describing it adequately, particularly within the context of religious tourism.

Key questions are arising on how to describe the notion of delight in the context of religious and historical sites. Firstly, it's the value of the site, the real cause of delight needs to be unveiled. As earlier, relationship between value and delight have also been established many times in the context of customers shopping experience (Arnold *et al.*, 2005; Maria Correia Loureiro *et al.*, 2014; Roberts-Lombard and Petzer, 2018), delight of tourists at tourist sites (Ali *et al.*, 2018; Loureiro, 2010) and in the context of marketing and consumer behaviour (Cheung, 2015). Secondly, several qualitative studies are conducted to date have discussed the antecedents of delight (Barnes *et al.*, 2016). However, according to Barnes *et al.* (2016), there is a lack of quantitative research in describing the concept of delight. Thirdly, so far the majority of research in the context of tourism-related studies, such as, passenger delight (Ali *et al.*, 2016b), tourist delight in theme parks (Ali *et al.*, 2018; Ma *et al.*, 2013), have discussed the dependent variables of delight and only direct relationship with other

variables, similar to this study, such as experience and value have considered. However, this research will discuss the direct and indirect relationship of value, trust, and experience with delight in the context of religious tourism.

The S-O-R and EDT theory support the indirect relationships among the study variables. While, Kano Model support the direct relationships between the study variables (explained in detail in chapter no 2).

Mohammed Abubakar (2016), stated that trust is an essential motivator for tourists to decide to visit a particular destination. However, marketing managers consider trust as a critical element for the marketing of a specific target (Choi *et al.*, 2016). Thus, trust emerged as a potential perception towards the tourist destination and also an essential aspect in envisaging tourists' intentions toward the target (Artigas *et al.*, 2017; Mohammed Abubakar, 2016; Wang *et al.*, 2014a). Therefore, tourist's behaviour towards the destination prompted by trust in the form of attitudes, risk, obligation, loyalty, attachment to a particular site, which combined effect, can be in the form of joy and happiness. However, there is lack of research being conducted on the impact of trust on tourist's decision visiting a particular tourist destination. Thus, tourist perceived trust, being used as a new variable to measure the relationship with delight, as per researchers' knowledge there is lack of research to test such relationship of religious tourist trust with religious tourist delight has ever measured.

Tourists at tourists' destinations look for value against the amount they spend on travelling. Previously, researchers align perceived value for the cost and its benefits with the products or services (Holbrook, 1999; Walsh *et al.*, 2014). However, in the context of tourism, the tourist emotions and obligations towards the tourist site can be considered as a vital ingredient in the development of perceived value (Lee *et al.*, 2011; Pandža Bajš, 2015).

Approximately about two decades when the term customer delight was emerging as an essential aspect for researchers, till date it is not yet appropriately described and is in perpetual improvement (Artigas *et al.*, 2017). Previously, research

always focused on defining the term delight, its antecedents, and concerns associated with delight. However, in respect of its association with other fields, according to Artigas *et al.* (2017), that delight is still yet not described and is relevantly a new phenomenon. Thus, this study shall contribute to the body of knowledge in understanding delight in the context of religious tourism.

In brief, the problem statement of this research consists of three gaps. First, is a contextual gap, as per the knowledge of the author lack of such study is available in the context of religious tourist delight in religious, historical sites of Pakistan. The second gap is its' theoretical/conceptual gap, as this study will measure the direct and indirect relationship between perceived trust and delight. The relationship of trust has been measured in other studies with emotional outcomes, such as satisfaction and loyalty (Maria Correia Loureiro *et al.*, 2014). However, as per the understanding of the researcher, this relationship between perceived trust and religious tourist delight will be essential to describe the delight more appropriately. Thirdly, there is a need to fill a theoretical research gap by explaining the term delight more prominently. As per the knowledge of the author, current available research is deficient in describing delight in the context of religious tourist visiting religious and historical sites of Pakistan. Loyal tourist may or may not revisit the destination. However, religious tourist delight will revisit the tourist destination, and it is due to their religious obligations. Thus, if they become delighted, their chances of revisit will be higher and will compel other fellow sharing the same religion to visit the tourist destinations. Therefore, this study focuses on religious tourist delight, which will enhance the number of international tourists to visit Pakistan. Thus, in this way, by increasing the number of foreign tourists, Pakistan's ranking shall improve as well as its economy.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are some main research questions regarding the current study.

- i. What is the relationship between perceived trust and religious tourist delight?

- ii. What is the relationship between perceived trust and tourists' experience?
- iii. What is the relationship between religious tourist perceived value and religious tourist delight?
- iv. What is the relationship between perceived value and tourists' experience?
- v. What is the relationship between experience and religious tourist delight?
- vi. Does the tourists' experience mediate the relationship between perceived value and delight?
- vii. Does the tourists' experience mediate the relationship between perceived trust and delight?

1.5 Research Objectives

This study proposes to identify the impact of precedents of religious tourist's delight, such as perceived value, perceived trust on tourist's experience.

- i. To examine the relationship between religious tourists' trust and religious tourists' delight.
- ii. To identify the relationship between tourists' trust and religious tourists' experience.
- iii. To examine the relationship between religious tourists' value and religious tourist delight.
- iv. To assess the relationship between religious tourists' perceived value and religious tourists' experience.
- v. To assess the relationship between religious tourists' experience on religious tourists' delight.
- vi. To investigate the mediating effect of the religious tourist's experience, mediate the relationship between religious tourists' perceived value and religious tourist's delight.
- vii. To investigate the mediating effect of the religious tourists' experience, mediate the relationship between religious tourists' trust and religious tourists' delight.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research study utilises the quantitative methods to test the relationship between religious tourist perceived value, trust and religious tourist delight. It will also test the mediating role of tourist experiences in the relationship between tourists perceived value, trust and delight in the religious and historical sites of Pakistan such as Katas Raj Temple, Gurdwara of Nanakana Sahib and Muslim tourist visiting site, i.e. Hazrat Data Gang Bakhsh Lahore. By testing these relationships, the subject area expected to offer valuable insight to Pakistan tourism department, about what to do to increase the number of religious tourists, which will successively enhance Pakistan's tourism ranking from the current. The survey is being conducted on the religious tourists only who are there to perform their religious rituals. The respondents are limited to international religious tourists, i.e. Muslims, Sikh, and Hindu, who regularly visit to perform their religious rituals in these sites. Religious tourists are the tourists, who judge the importance of sacred, historical sites to decide to visit and revisit the destinations.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The main contribution of this research study is to propose a cohesive model of religious tourist delight and its precedents such as experience, value, and trust. The outcome of the study shall contribute well in both perspectives, i.e. theoretical and managerial. Little research related to delight in the context of tourism is available in the current literature. The term delight used in most of the marketing-related research as a mediating variable, and its outcome was mainly loyalty, revisit intention (Ali *et al.*, 2018; Kim *et al.*, 2013). Research studies show a significant relationship between delight and loyalty (Loureiro and Kastenholz, 2011). However, other researchers' identify insignificant relationships between the two which has created doubt and does not describe tourist delight in its true spirit (Maria Correia Loureiro *et al.*, 2014).

The current study contributed to the body of knowledge by examining the role of tourist perceived value and perceived trust to delight the religious tourists. The attributes associated in the current study, are in the form of trustworthy services offered by these sites. It also includes value in relation to these historical and religious sites, which are in the form of site historical originality (colours, architecture etc), food and residence according to the tourists' religious obligations. Accordingly, testing the relationship between perceived trust and delight shall also contribute to the body of knowledge (Ali *et al.*, 2018) . Religious tourist's visit the religious, historical sites of Pakistan may be due to their religious obligations. As merely satisfied tourist may or may not be loyal to revisit the tourist destinations (Barnes *et al.*, 2016). However, religious tourist's delight shall further enhance the number of tourists to visit these sites. Thus, the attraction of a large number of tourists shall improve Pakistan's ranking among the rest of the world.

Similarly, this research utilises tourist's experience as a mediator between tourists perceived value, trust and delight. Hence, it will enhance the models of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), stimulus organism response (SOR) theory, Expectancy disconfirmation theory (EDT) proposed by Oliver *et al.* (1997). Furthermore, it will contribute practically as well as theoretically to suggest strategies. That shall help Department of Pakistan tourism to attract a large number of religious tourists due to delighting them. In short, this research study provides a cohesive model of tourists' delight to improve religious tourist delight within sacred, historical sites of Pakistan. This model fulfils the lack of tourist delight research by emphasising on the impact of tourist perceived value, trust and experience.

Earlier, researchers argued that instead of delight, the tourism operators had been trying to attract tourists by offering satisfaction level services. However, it might not be an effective strategy for the growth of tourism (Ahrholdt *et al.*, 2017). The problem of not considering delight as a strategic intent for tourism growth is due to insufficient research till date to adequately describe delight in the context of tourism (Ahrholdt *et al.*, 2017; Albayrak and Caber, 2015). Thus, to enhance the level of travel and tourism operators and overall tourism-related business in Pakistan, this study provides a better understanding of religious tourist delight rather than merely satisfied.

A religious tourist's delight is the result of the extreme level of joy and happiness on the tourist's mind. The outcome shall be in the form of more and more tourists visit religious and historical sites of Pakistan.

1.8 Operational Definitions

This study uses relevant operational definitions according to the objectives of the research. The following are some of the operational definitions:

1.8.1 Tourist Delight

Oliver et al. (1997) have defined delight “an extremely optimistic emotional state, in general, resulting from having one's expectations exceeded to a surprising degree”. Thus, religious tourist delight defined as a measure of the emotional attachment of tourists with sacred, historical sites. Where tourist feels joy, happiness, pleasure, surprised to see the religious, historical importance of the site. Hence, it can change their behavioural emotions to an extremely high level (i.e. happiness, joy).

1.8.2 Tourist Experience

Tourist experience defined as tourist post-visit observation regarding religious and historical site in the form of image of the site, choice of the site, architecture and design of the site, and services offered by the tourist site (Ali *et al.*, 2018; Jani and Han, 2013; Wu and Liang, 2009; Zhang *et al.*, 2014a).

1.8.3 Tourist Perceived Value

Perceived value can be defined as an individual, cognitive-affective evaluation of the product or service, which occurs in the purchasing process. Besides, it is also based on a comparison between benefits and costs, arising out of the offer and the offers of competitors in the market, and which varies with the changing circumstances of time, place, and situation in which the assessment is made (Pandža Bajš, 2015, p. 124). Tourist perceived value is also related to the emotional attachment of the tourist in the form of feeling pleasure and relaxed during a visit to the religious and historical sites (Lee *et al.*, 2011). In this study perceived value is what religious tourists give value to originality of the colours, architecture and tourist religious obligations in the form of food and residence.

1.8.4 Tourist Trust

Tourist trust has been defined as an individual behaviour and attitude towards tourist sites through the experience of various attributes offered by the religious and historical sites. Which must be authentic, generous and proficient in which all the stakeholders perform their services being honest, generous, competent and trustworthy (Kumar and Kaushik, 2018). In this the current study, tourist perceived trust is the trustworthy services offered by these religious and historical sites.

1.8.5 Religious Tourism

This kind of tourism can be defined as the tourism of motivated tourists who are inspired by their ethical and religious obligations and travel for pilgrimage or perform their religious rituals at a particular destination (Timothy, 2011).

1.8.6 Religious, Historical Tourist Sites

In this study, religious tourist sites refer to places in Pakistan, which are very old, historical and are also currently used by the religious tourists to perform their religious rituals according to their religious obligations. All the rituals were different from each other's but were according to tourist's faith.

1.9 Outline of the Research Study

This research study comprises of five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, the scope of the research and operational definitions. Chapter 2 covers the critical literature review of dependent, independent, and mediating variables. Based on the critical literature review, Chapter 3 outlines the methodology of this research, which includes, research design and framework, methods and instruments for data collection and analysis. Chapter 3 also consists of the research population and sampling techniques to answer the research questions and meet the objectives of this research study. Chapter 4 includes the results and findings by using various statistical software's. Moreover, this chapter also comprises of data screening with the following sections for SEM analysis. The final Chapter 5 possess discussion on statistical findings obtained from Chapter 4.

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