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The Influence of Wine Tourism Experiences on Destination Image and Revisit Intention A Case of the Chilam Joshi Festival in Kalash Valley, Chitral

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of wine tourism on destination image and revisit intention among tourists attending the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival in Chitral, Pakistan. The Chilam Joshi Festival is a unique cultural event celebrated by the Kalash community, where traditional wine-making practices, indigenous heritage, and cultural festivities create a distinctive tourism experience. Despite the growing importance of wine tourism worldwide, limited research has explored its role in shaping destination image and revisit intention in indigenous and non-Western contexts. The study adopts a quantitative research approach based on a cross-sectional survey design. Primary data were collected from 250 domestic and international tourists who attended the Chilam Joshi Festival. A structured questionnaire was used to measure wine tourism experience, destination image, and revisit intention. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and mediation analysis. The findings reveal that wine tourism has a significant positive effect on destination image and revisit intention. The results further indicate that destination image positively influences tourists' intention to revisit Chitral. Moreover, destination image was found to mediate the relationship between wine tourism and revisit intention, suggesting that positive wine tourism experiences enhance tourists' perceptions of the destination, which in turn increases their likelihood of returning. This study contributes to the existing literature by extending wine tourism research into an indigenous cultural festival setting in Pakistan. The findings provide valuable insights for tourism planners, destination marketers, and policymakers seeking to promote sustainable tourism development in

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Chitral and preserve the unique cultural heritage of the Kalash community. Strengthening wine tourism experiences and enhancing destination image can help increase tourist loyalty and encourage repeat visitation to the region.

Keywords: Wine Tourism, Destination Image, Revisit Intention, Kalash Community, Chilam Joshi Festival, Chitral, Cultural Tourism.

Background of the study

Tourism is one of the strongest economic sectors, richest cultural experiences and significant forces driving regional economies globally. Scholars have long recognized tourism as a complex multi-dimensional phenomenon that intersects with Geography, Economic, Sociology, Psychology and Cultural Studies. According to The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2008), "Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes". Leiper (1979), one of the earliest theorists of tourism systems, describes tourism as "a whole system encompassing the tourists themselves, the generating region, the transit route, the destination region, and the tourism industry that links all these components".

Among the various forms of special interest tourism, wine tourism has gained significant attention in recent decades. According to the UN Tourism (2016), "Wine tourism is a sub-type of rural tourism that is related to the journey and stay of the visitor, whose motivation is the study and/or enjoyment of wine and the lifestyle of the wine-producing regions. It includes tasting wine, visiting wineries, vineyards, and specialized restaurants, as well as attending wine festivals and events". Wine tourism involves visiting to vineyards, wineries, and wine regions primarily to experience wine production, tasting and related cultural activities. It extends beyond mere consumption to encompass the broader "winescape" which is a unique mix of the natural scenery, the local heritage, infrastructure and social elements that create special experience for the visitors (Bruwer & Lesschaeve, 2012). Similarly cultural festivals serve as powerful platforms for destination branding by offering authentic, memorable experiences that blend tradition, performance and community interaction.

This study focuses on the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival, Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as a distinctive case where wine tourism intersects with indigenous cultural heritage. The Kalash people, an indigenous community of the Hindu Kush mountains, maintain unique pre-Islamic traditions, including the production and ritual use of grape wine. The Chilam Joshi Festival, celebrated in spring, features vibrant dances, traditional songs, purification rituals, and communal celebrations that incorporate local wine practices. This creates a rare form of wine-infused cultural tourism that blends sensory experiences (wine tasting and rituals), aesthetic elements (dances and costumes), and deep cultural immersion.

Despite growing global interest in wine tourism, most existing research originates from established wine regions in Europe, Australia, and North America. There is limited empirical understanding of how wine tourism experiences within indigenous cultural festivals shape destination image and influence tourists' revisit intentions, especially in developing countries like Pakistan. This represents a significant research

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gap, as non-Western, community-based models may differ substantially from commercial winery-focused approaches. The present study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of the wine tourism experience at the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival on visitors' perception of Chitral's destination image and their intention to revisit. By doing so, it aims to provide valuable insights for destination marketers, festival organizers, and policymakers, working toward the sustainable development of cultural and wine tourism in northern Pakistan.

Although considerable research has explored wine tourism, destination image, and revisit intention, most studies have been conducted in Western wine-producing countries, leaving a significant gap in non-Western and indigenous cultural contexts. Previous scholars have emphasized the need to investigate wine tourism experiences in diverse cultural settings, particularly within festival environments. The Chilam Joshi Festival of the Kalash community in Chitral represents a unique indigenous wine tourism event where traditional grape wine is deeply connected to local culture, religion, and celebrations. Despite its growing popularity among domestic and international tourists, little is known about how the wine tourism experience at the festival influences tourists' perceptions of Chitral as a destination and their intention to revisit. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of wine tourism on destination image and revisit intention in the context of the Chilam Joshi Festival, Kalash Valley, Chitral.

Wine Tourism

Wine tourism, at its simplest, refers to "travel motivated by engagement with the wine and the world that produces it". Wine tourism has emerged as one of the most dynamic and academically productive forms of special interests of tourism over the past thirty years. Hall et al. (2000), describe wine tourism as "visitations to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for the visitors".

Bruwer and Lesschaeve (2012) developed the "winescape" concept which captures the full environmental and sensory context of wine tourism experiences which are the natural landscape of the wine region, the sensory pleasure of tasting, the social warmth of interactions with producers and fellow visitors, the quality of hospitality received, and the overall atmospheric feel of the place. This multi-dimensional framework moved wine tourism research way beyond the simple act of tasting and positioned it as a form of immersive, place-based experience with deep cognitive and emotional resonance.

The experiential dimensions of wine tourism have been theorized most influentially by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999), who present the Experience-Economy Framework. This framework identifies the four primary domains of meaningful consumer experience which are esthetics, education, entertainment and escape, collectively known as the 4Es. Joy et al. (2022), in their study of the Okanagan Valley in Canada, added a fifth dimension that is particularly relevant to the present research. Analyzing over 2,500 TripAdvisor reviews of winery experiences, they found that the quality of social exchanges with winery staff, with the local community, and with other tourists, was among the most consistently mentioned and most emotionally powerful elements

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of the wine tourism experience. This finding takes on special significance in the Kalash context, where the entire festival is built around communal participation and where wine is consumed not privately but as an act of collective belonging.

The connection between wine tourism experience and destination image has been documented across a range of settings. Wu and Liang (2020), using data from wine tourists in China, showed that involvements with wine products shapes both the cognitive beliefs of tourists about a destination and the emotional feelings to which they attach, with bot dimensions then feeding into their travel intentions. Joy et al. (2022) confirmed that positive winery experiences generate a distinctive and differentiated destination brand image, translating into loyalty and repeat visitations. Serra-Cantallops et al. (2021) mentions that, even in the Balearic Islands, a destination is not primarily known for wine, including winery visits in tourist itinerary measurably improved overall trip satisfaction, strengthen destination image, and increased the likelihood of future wine-related intentions. The implication is that wine tourism does not need to be the dominant attraction of a destination to have real effects on how visitors perceive and remember it.

Sekhniashvili (2021), in the systematic review of wine tourism destination image studies published between 2001 and 2020 found that of twenty-one empirical studies examined, virtually none were conducted in non-Western, indigenous or South Asian settings. Indigenous wine traditions, including those rooted in sacred ritual, seasonal ceremony and communal identity rather than commercial viticulture remain almost entirely absent from the academic record.

Festival Tourism and Wine Festivals

Festivals occupy a unique and increasingly important position within the broader landscape of special interest tourism. As planned events that bring together communities, cultures, and visitors around shared traditions, seasonal celebrations, and cultural practices, festivals serve simultaneously as vehicles of cultural identity preservation, community social cohesion, economic development, and destination marketing. Getz (2008) defines festival tourism as “the development and marketing of festivals and events as tourist attractions, catalysts for other forms of tourism development, and image builders for destinations seeking to differentiate themselves in competitive markets”. The academic study of festival tourism has grown substantially over the past two decades, with particular attention to the relationships between destination image formation, and revisit intention.

Festival tourism has grown into a major field of scholarly inquiry because festivals put people at the center of the experience which the conventional tourism attractions often fail to do. Visiting a monument or a museum is largely a passive encounter with the past. Attending a festival is an active and socially immersive encounter with a living community. This difference matters for how tourists remember the experience, how they evaluate the destination, and whether they want to return.

Al-Azzam et al. (2022) captured this dynamic in their study of Arab visitors to the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts in Jordan. Using the Event Experience Scale, they measured festival experience across four dimensions (affective engagement, cognitive engagement, physical engagement, and novelty) and found that all four significantly predicted revisit intention. The finding is useful beyond its specific context because it

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validates a framework for measuring festival experience that can be adapted for other cultural festivals, including the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival. Supriono and Yulianto (2021) took a slightly different angle in their study of the Jember Fashion Carnaval in Indonesia, examining festival quality (program content, staff behavior, convenience, facilities, and information) and finding that program content, staff, and convenience all significantly shaped destination image, which in turn strongly predicted revisit intention.

Wine festivals occupy a special place within festival tourism because they combine the sensory pleasures of wine with the communal energy of celebration in ways that are. You can buy a bottle of wine anywhere. You cannot replicate the experience of drinking wine in the place it came from, surrounded by the people who made it, during a festival that has been observed for generations. This is the irreducible value of wine festival tourism, and it is what makes it such a powerful vehicle for destination image formation.

Lee and Kwon (2021) demonstrated in their study of food and wine festival visitors that personal involvement in the festival experience (measured through dimensions of pleasure, risk probability, and risk importance) mediates between tourist motivations (novelty-seeking and socialization) and satisfaction outcomes. Importantly, intangible satisfaction and the emotional and cultural quality of the experience proved a stronger driver of loyalty and revisit intention than tangible satisfaction (physical facilities and services). This finding carries direct implications for the Chilam Joshi, where the intangible dimensions of the experience (the spiritual weight of the wine rituals, the beauty of the dances, the sense of witnessing something ancient and alive) are likely to be far more determinant of revisit intention than anything that could be measured in terms of parking availability or catering quality.

Yuan et al. (2008) provided the most directly applicable wine festival model for the present study. Drawing on path analysis of 501 visitors to the Vintage Indiana Wine and Food Festival, they established a clear causal sequence: past festival attendance builds perceived value, perceived value generates satisfaction, and satisfaction is the primary driver of both the intention to revisit the festival and the intention to visit local wineries in the region. This spillover effect, the way a festival can enhance the broader destination image and generate tourism beyond the event itself, is particularly relevant to the case of Chitral, where a positive Chilam Joshi experience could reasonably be expected to generate interest in the Kalash valleys as a whole, not just in the festival days themselves.

The Chilam Joshi Festival: A Wine Tourism and Cultural Heritage Event

The Joshi Festival is alternatively known as Zhoshi or Chilam Joshi stands out as the most festive, celebrated in public, and popular among tourists as compared to other festivals celebrated in the Kalash culture. This festival is celebrated every year in May in all the three valleys inhabited by the Kalash people and serves as an equivalent of Eid in the lives of the Kalash people as it marks the rejuvenation, fertility, unity of the Kalash community, and gratitude for the blessings of the spring season (Mohyuddin et al., 2014). The word “Chilam” refers to the high mountain pastures where the shepherds take their goats during the summer season, while the word “Joshi” (or Zhoshi in Kalasha) stands for the spring festival. Together, the name evokes the

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connection between pastoral livelihood of the community, seasonal cycle, and spiritual life that the festival celebrates.

The Joshi festival lasts for five days, with a well-structured and organized ritual process. Ten days before the festival begins, the shepherds move their herds to the goat sheds, and milk is preserved in preparation for chirik pipi, where milk is shared in the community to mark the start of the Joshi festival. Young boys and girls collect yellow flowers (Sophora Mollis) and walnut branches from the high pastures to decorate houses, doorways, walls, and the "Jestak Han" (the temple of the Kalasha female deity Jestak). The second phase of the Joshi festival is the religious part, characterized by offering sacrifices to "Mahandeo God" and praying for the prosperity of the people in the community. In this phase, the "gulprik" ritual is conducted, where all babies who were born between the previous Joshi festival and the current one are taken to the high mountainous pastures and purified using milk by a virgin boy (onjesta suda) so as to be incorporated into the Kalash tribe. The third and final phase spans two days of communal singing and dancing on themes of Kalasha history, love, and legend, ending with the secret Gatch song sung by elders while participants wave walnut branches and pray for the abundance of the goat herds (Ali & Chawla, 2019).

The role of wine in the Joshi festival is central and multi-layered. Wine (traditionally brewed by the Kalash from locally grown grapes) is not merely a beverage consumed at the festival; it is a ritual substance with deep religious and communal significance. It is served alongside freshly baked bread and milk in prayer rituals, offered as a libation by the "Qazi" during sacrificial ceremonies, and shared communally as an expression of Kalasha identity and solidarity (Mohyuddin et al., 2014). The Pul festival in the Birir valley, which coincides with the grape and walnut harvest in October, explicitly features the ceremonial crushing of grapes by virgin boys as a central ritual and connecting the entire cycle of viticulture, harvest, and wine production to the sacred calendar of Kalasha religious life (Ali & Chawla, 2019). This integration of wine into the spiritual and communal fabric of the Chilam Joshi festival positions it squarely as a wine tourism event in the fullest academic sense of the term — visitation to a place where grape wine traditions and the attributes of a wine-producing culture are among the prime experiential offerings for visitors.

The Chilam Joshi festival attracts thousands of tourists annually from across Pakistan, as well as a significant number of international visitors, particularly from Europe, North America, and neighboring Asian countries. Its vivid cultural spectacle such as the colorful traditional dress of Kalasha women, the rhythmic group dances (particularly the famous Cha dance where girls clasp each other's shoulders and dance in spinning circles), the drumbeats and traditional songs, the communal feasting, and the extraordinary natural beauty of the Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir valleys create a tourism experience that is unlike any other in South Asia. This experiential uniqueness gives the Chilam Joshi festival enormous potential as a destination image-building event for Chitral, generating cognitive impressions of cultural authenticity and natural beauty, affective associations of joy and wonder, and conative intentions to return and to recommend the destination to others.

However, the festival and the broader tourism development of the Kalash valleys face significant challenges. Security threats following the post-9/11 rise of Taliban activity

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along the Pak-Afghan border have severely reduced international tourist arrivals (Ali & Chawla, 2019). Cultural tensions between the Kalash community and visiting tourists (particularly incidents of disrespectful behavior toward Kalash women during festival dances) have occasionally led to the cancellation of performances and created lasting bitterness (Mohyuddin et al., 2014). The local administration's restrictions on the Kalash wine trade have reduced the community's economic independence, while the pace of religious conversion, modernization, and demographic change continues to threaten the cultural integrity of the festivals. These challenges underscore the urgency of research that can identify what aspects of the Chilam Joshi wine tourism experience most powerfully shape tourists' destination image of Chitral and drive their intention to revisit; the findings that can directly inform tourism policy and cultural preservation strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention is the primary dependent variable of this study and represents the behavioral outcome of central concern to tourism destination managers and policymakers. Revisit intention is defined as a tourist's expressed willingness and likelihood of returning to a previously visited destination in the future. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) characterized it as one of the most reliable indicators of destination loyalty, while Um et al. (2006) described it as a form of post-consumption behavioral intention reflecting the probability of repeat engagement with the same destination. The concept encompasses two related behavioral dimensions: the willingness to revisit the destination personally and the willingness to recommend it to others, with the latter often conceptualized as a form of passive revisit intention mediated through social influence.

The strategic importance of revisit intention for destination management cannot be overstated. Morshed et al. (2022) highlighted that repeat tourists consistently demonstrate more favorable behavioral profiles than first-time visitors: they tend to stay longer, spend more, engage more deeply with local experiences, generate more positive word-of-mouth, and require less marketing expenditure to attract. Research indicates that a high level of satisfaction leads to repeat visitation, while dissatisfaction can result in negative word-of-mouth, ultimately affecting the destination's reputation (Soonsan & Somkai, 2022).

Destination Image

Destination image is one of the most extensively studied constructs in the tourism literature, sitting at the heart of the tourist decision-making process and influencing where people choose to travel, what they expect to find when they arrive, how they evaluate their experiences during the visit, and whether they intend to return and recommend the destination to others. Hunt (1971) was among the first scholars to draw systematic academic attention to destination image, arguing that the impressions people hold about places play a decisive role in shaping tourism flows. Crompton (1979), in his seminal study of Mexico's image as a vacation destination, defined destination image as “the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person holds of a destination”, a formulation that has remained foundational to the field for over four

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decades. Crompton's framework further distinguished between cognitive components (factual beliefs about the destination), affective components (feelings and emotions evoked by the destination), and overall impressions as a tripartite structure that has become the standard framework for destination image research.

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) elaborated this framework by proposing a model of destination image formation that distinguished between the cognitive component (encompassing beliefs and knowledge about a destination's specific attributes) and the affective component (encompassing the feelings and emotions) that the destination evokes. Gartner (1994) extended the framework further by adding a conative component (the behavioral intention or action tendency that emerges from the cognitive-affective evaluation) and by identifying eight image formation agents through which destination image is constructed, ranging from overt induced agents such as advertising to organic agents such as personal experience. Lobo et al. (2023) confirmed that events contribute to destination branding by creating positive emotional connections and memorable experiences that become permanently associated with the host destination, consistent with Gartner's (1993) theoretical framework positioning festivals and events as autonomous image formation agents.

The cognitive-affective distinction in destination image was formalized by Gartner (1994) and has since become the dominant organizing framework in the field. Cognitive destination image refers to the knowledge-based, rational beliefs, a tourist holds about a destination's attributes, its natural scenery, cultural heritage, infrastructure, safety, accessibility, and value for money. These are the things tourists think about a destination: what it looks like, what it offers, how easy it is to navigate. Affective destination image, by contrast, refers to the emotional responses a destination evokes the feelings of excitement, relaxation, warmth, or wonder that it stirs in the tourist's mind. These are the things tourists feel about a destination, as distinct from what they know about it.

The distinction matters not merely taxonomically but functionally, because cognitive and affective images contribute differently to tourist behavior. Beerli and Martin (2004) established that affective images are formed on the basis of cognitive ones; that you tend to feel warmly about a place once you know enough about it to generate an emotional response, but that, once formed, affective images may exert stronger effects on behavioral intentions than cognitive ones. Baloglu and McCleary (1999), in one of the most cited papers in the destination image literature, confirmed that affective evaluation has a greater influence than cognitive evaluation on overall destination image and on the likelihood of a visit. Kim and Yoon (2003) further demonstrated that affective images have a greater effect on overall image formation and destination assessment than cognitive images.

Stylos et al. (2017) extended the cognitive-affective model by incorporating a conative component; referring to the behavioral intentions that arise from the overall image formed, and a holistic image component that integrates all of the other dimensions into an overall gestalt impression of the destination. Their large-scale structural equation model (N=2,526 tourists at Chalkidiki, Greece) confirmed that all image components positively predicted revisit intention, both directly and through the holistic image mediator, with the relative importance of different components varying by tourist nationality.

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Fei Yuan and Chok Nyen Vui (2023), in their broad theoretical review of destination image research, confirmed the three-component model (cognitive, affective, conative) as the current theoretical consensus and identified marketing, cultural, natural, and social factors as the principal drivers of destination image formation.

Wine Tourism

Wine tourism has changed a lot over the years. When people first started talking about it in the 1990s, it was a pretty new idea. Hall et al. (2000), described wine tourism as "people visiting vineyards, wineries, and wine festivals just to taste wine and experience the whole wine region." This definition shows two important things about wine tourism: wine is the main reason for people to travel, and they can do this in many different places, like a single winery or a big wine festival. These days, wine tourism is all about exploring the world of wine, from the grapes that grow in the vineyards to the finished product in the wineries. It's not just about drinking wine, but also about learning about the culture and history behind it. People who love wine can visit wine festivals, go on wine tours, and even stay in wine regions to really get a feel for the place. The idea of wine tourism has grown to include all sorts of experiences, from tasting wine at a small family-owned winery to attending a big wine show with hundreds of wines to try. Overall, wine tourism is a great way for people to connect with the world of wine, learn about its history and culture, and just have a good time. Whether you're a serious wine lover or just someone who enjoys trying new things, wine tourism has something for everyone.

Sparks (2006) defines wine tourism as "visits to a wine region for recreational purposes that highlight the destination dimension of wine tourism over the product dimension", while Getz (2000) states the most theoretically refined tripartite perspective, saying that "wine tourism must be understood simultaneously from the viewpoint of wine producers, tourism development agencies, and consumers." This three-way model establishes wine tourism as an inherently relational phenomenon that involves the active co-creation of value among producers, destinations, and visitors which acts as a framework of particular relevance to the Kalash valleys, where the wine-producing community, the destination of Chitral, and the festival visitor interact in the creation of the Chilam Joshi wine tourism experience.

The academic study of wine tourism did not exist until the mid-1990s (Um et al., 2018), but has since expanded rapidly into a substantial body of literature spanning motivations, behavior, destination image, brand loyalty, and regional economics. As Back et al. (2021) observe, wine tourism has evolved well beyond its original focus on winery visitation for tasting and purchasing, with contemporary wine tourists seeking culinary offerings, cultural and recreational attractions, retail choices, and picturesque rural landscapes as part of a holistic destination experience.

The Wine Escape Framework

Theoretical frameworks developed in the wine tourism literature, the wine escape concept has proven the most influential and the most useful for the present study. Introduced by Bruwer and Lesschaeve (2012) and subsequently refined through a series of empirical studies including Bruwer and Joy (2017), the winescape framework conceptualizes the wine tourism experience as a multidimensional

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environment rather than a simple transactional encounter. It identifies five principal dimensions: the natural landscape of vine cultivation and the surrounding scenery; the sensory experience of wine tasting, aroma, and the physical engagement with wine; the social interactions between tourists and wine producers, local community members, and fellow visitors; the service quality and hospitality offered in the wine tourism context; and the overall atmosphere or ambience of the wine region, which encompasses the accumulated cultural and historical associations that give the place its character.

What makes this framework particularly valuable for the present study is its recognition that the wine tourism experience is fundamentally spatial and social which means that it is rooted in a specific place, shaped by specific people, and inseparable from the cultural meanings that circulate within that place. Joy et al. (2022) extended the framework in an important direction when they analyzed over 2,500 TripAdvisor reviews of winery experiences in the Okanagan Valley and found that social interactions (both with winery staff and with other visitors) were among the most emotionally salient and most frequently mentioned elements of the experience, alongside esthetics. Their finding that social dimensions may be as powerful as sensory ones in shaping the overall wine tourism encounter has direct implications for the Kalash context, where the entire festival is organized around communal participation and where the wine experience is inherently collective rather than individual.

Sthapit et al. (2024) brought a different theoretical lens to bear on wine tourism experience in their study of Chinese wine tourists, drawing on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework to identify the antecedents of memorable wine tourism experiences. They found that winescape quality, experience co-creation (the active participation of tourists in wine-related activities), wine education, and sensory engagement, all contributed to the formation of memorable experiences, which in turn predicted tourists' eudaimonic well-being and behavioral intentions. The emphasis on co-creation and education is particularly relevant here because the Chilam Joshi Festival offers extraordinary opportunities for tourist co-creation through participation in communal dances and ceremonies, and the oral histories and praise songs performed during the festival constitute a form of wine-related cultural education that is available nowhere else.

Research Gap and Justification

A review of the existing literature clearly highlights a significant research gap that this study aims to fill. Sekhniashvili (2021), in a systematic review of 21 studies on wine tourism destination image, found that almost all research remains heavily concentrated in a few Western wine-producing countries such as Spain, Australia, Canada, Portugal, and the United States. Strikingly, no studies appear to have explored this topic in South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, or within indigenous cultural settings. This limitation has been repeatedly acknowledged by scholars. For instance, Yuan et al. (2008) stressed the need to test wine tourist behaviour models in more diverse, non-Western wine festival contexts. Likewise, Lee and Kwon (2021) noted that their findings on food and wine festivals may not apply to international or indigenous settings and explicitly called for further research in such environments.

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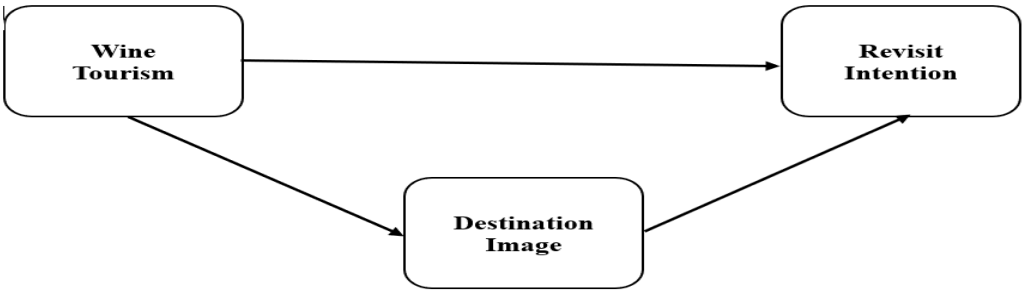
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The Chilam Joshi Festival of the Kalash community in Chitral offers a unique and highly relevant case in this regard. Here, unlike in conventional wine tourism destinations, wine is not merely a commercial product or tourist attraction but forms an integral part of religious rituals and cultural identity (Mohyuddin et al., 2014; Ali & Chawla, 2019). Despite the festival's increasing popularity and cultural importance, no empirical study has yet examined how the wine tourism experience during Chilam Joshi shapes tourists' destination image of Chitral or influences their intention to revisit. This gap matters both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, it weakens the cross-cultural applicability of current wine tourism and destination image models. On the practical side, tourism authorities in Chitral, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority, and the Kalash community currently lack evidence-based insights needed for sustainable festival development, effective marketing, and cultural preservation. The present study addresses this gap by providing the first empirical investigation into the relationships between wine tourism experiences at the Chilam Joshi Festival, destination image, and revisit intention.

Conceptual Framework of the study

Independent Variable **Wine Tourism** | Mediating Variable **Destination Image** | Dependent Variable **Revisit Intention**



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is the individual tourist who attends the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival in Chitral during the data collection period. Each respondent is treated as an independent observational unit, and the data collected reflect that individual's personal experience of the festival, their personal perception of Chitral's destination image, and their personal intention regarding a future visit. The unit of analysis explicitly excludes Kalash community members, festival organizers, tourism operators, and government officials. These stakeholders have important perspectives on the Chilam Joshi and its tourism impacts, but those perspectives are not the subject of this study. The study is concerned with tourist-side perceptions and intentions, not supply-side views or community attitudes.

Population and Sample Size

The target population of this study consists of all adult tourists (both domestic Pakistani visitors and international visitors) who attend the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival in Chitral during the festival period. This population includes all individuals who travel to the Kalash valleys specifically for the purpose of attending the festival,

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as well as those who are visiting the area for broader tourism purposes but participate in at least one festival activity during their visit. The population is bounded temporally to the Chilam Joshi Festival period between 13 to 17th of May, 2026 and geographically to the Kalash valleys of Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir in Chitral district). The Sample size for this study is 250.

Sampling Technique & Data Collection Procedure

This study adopted a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that only relevant participants were included. Respondents had to be tourists who had actually attended at least one activity of the Chilam Joshi Festival. A simple screening question was asked at the start of the questionnaire to confirm this. Primary data was collected during the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival, which was celebrated between 13th to 17th of May in the Kalash valleys of Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir in Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Research Instrument

Wine Tourism Items

Table 1. Wine Tourism

Code	Items
WT1	The wine-related traditions of the Chilam Joshi Festival enhanced my overall festival experience.
WT2	I found the local wine culture of the Kalash community interesting and unique.
WT3	Learning about Kalash wine traditions increased my understanding of the local culture.
WT4	The wine-related activities and rituals were enjoyable to observe or experience.
WT5	The wine traditions made the festival atmosphere more attractive and memorable.
WT6	Interacting with local people regarding their wine traditions enriched my visit experience.
WT7	The wine-related experiences made me feel connected to the Kalash cultural heritage.
WT8	Overall, the wine tourism experience at the Chilam Joshi Festival was satisfying.

Destination Image Items

Table 2. Destination Image

Code	Items
DI1	Chitral has a positive image as a tourist destination.
DI2	Chitral is an attractive destination for tourists.
DI3	Chitral offers unique cultural and heritage experiences.
DI4	Chitral has a favorable reputation among tourists.
DI5	Chitral is a memorable destination to visit.
DI6	Chitral is a destination that I would recommend to others.

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DI7	My overall impression of Chitral is positive.
DI8	Chitral stands out from other tourist destinations in Pakistan.

Revisit Intention Items

Table 3. Revisit Intention

Code	Items
RI1	I intend to revisit Chitral in the future.
RI2	I would like to attend the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival again.
RI3	Chitral would be one of my preferred destinations for a future trip.
RI4	I will recommend Chitral and the Chilam Joshi Festival to others.
RI5	Given the opportunity, I am likely to revisit Chitral within the next few years.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 4: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 250)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	155	62.0
	Female	95	38.0
	Total	250	100.0
Age Group	18–25 Years	105	42.0
	26–35 Years	78	31.2
	36–45 Years	42	16.8
	46–55 Years	17	6.8
	Above 55 Years	8	3.2
	Total	250	100.0
Education Level	Secondary	35	14.0
	Undergraduate	142	56.8
	Postgraduate	63	25.2
	Other	10	4.0
	Total	250	100.0

The demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents were male (62.0%), while females constituted 38.0% of the sample. Most respondents belonged to the 18–25 years age group (42.0%), followed by the 26–35 years age group (31.2%). Regarding educational background, the majority of respondents were undergraduate degree holders (56.8%), followed by postgraduate degree holders (25.2%). These findings suggest that the respondents were predominantly young and relatively well-educated tourists attending the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival.

Table 5 Reliability Analysis

Variable	*No. of Items*	*Cronbach Alpha*
Wine Tourism	***8***	***0.884***
Destination Image	***8***	***0.901***
Revisit Intention	***5***	***0.873***

The results indicate that all constructs have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, demonstrating satisfactory reliability.

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Table 6 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Wine Tourism	4.12	0.61
Destination Image	4.18	0.57
Revisit Intention	4.09	0.65

The findings show that respondents generally held positive perceptions regarding wine tourism experiences, destination image, and revisit intention.

Table 7 Correlation Analysis

Variables	WT	DI	RI
Wine Tourism (WT)	1		
Destination Image (DI)	.681**	1	
Revisit Intention (RI)	.625**	.734**	1

p < 0.01

The correlation results reveal significant positive relationships among all study variables.

Table 8 Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Relationship	β (Beta)	t-value	Sig.	R^2	Decision
H1	Wine Tourism → Destination Image	0.681	14.72	0.000	0.464	Accepted
H2	Wine Tourism → Revisit Intention	0.625	12.61	0.000	0.391	Accepted
H3	Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0.734	17.35	0.000	0.539	Accepted

H1 accepted: Wine Tourism significantly influences Destination Image.
H2 accepted: Wine Tourism significantly influences Revisit Intention.
H3 accepted: Destination Image significantly influences Revisit Intention.

Table 9 Mediation Analysis

Effect	β (Beta)	LLCI	ULCI	Decision
Direct Effect (WT → RI)	0.261	0.152	0.372	Significant
Indirect Effect (WT → DI → RI)	0.240	0.171	0.326	Significant
H4	Destination Image mediates the relationship between Wine Tourism and Revisit Intention	—	—	—

The regression results indicate that Wine Tourism significantly influences Destination Image (β = 0.681, p < 0.001) and Revisit Intention (β = 0.625, p < 0.001). Furthermore, Destination Image significantly influences Revisit Intention (β = 0.734,

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p < 0.001). Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 are accepted. The mediation analysis shows that the indirect effect (β = 0.240, LLCI = 0.171, ULCI = 0.326) does not include zero within the confidence interval, indicating a significant mediation effect. Thus, Destination Image partially mediates the relationship between Wine Tourism and Revisit Intention, and H4 is accepted. All proposed hypotheses were supported, confirming the theoretical framework of the study. Detailed interpretation: All proposed hypotheses were supported, confirming the theoretical framework of the study. Detailed interpretation: All proposed hypotheses were supported, confirming the theoretical framework of the study. Detailed interpretation: All proposed hypotheses were supported, confirming the theoretical framework of the study.

Discussion of Findings

Wine Tourism and Destination Image (H1)

The first hypothesis proposed that there is a positive and significant relationship between wine tourism and destination image. The results of the regression analysis revealed that wine tourism significantly and positively influences destination image (β = 0.681, p < 0.001), thereby supporting H1. These findings indicate that tourists who reported positive experiences regarding the wine-related traditions, rituals, social interactions, and cultural atmosphere of the Chilam Joshi Festival also developed more favorable perceptions of Chitral as a tourism destination. The findings are consistent with the theoretical assumptions presented in the literature review. The Experience Economy Framework developed by Pine and Gilmore suggests that memorable experiences consisting of esthetics, education, entertainment, and escape contribute significantly to tourists' evaluations of destinations. The wine tourism experience at the Chilam Joshi Festival incorporates all of these dimensions through cultural ceremonies, traditional wine practices, community participation, and unique festival settings.

The findings also support the work of Wu and Liang, who found that wine involvement positively influences both cognitive and affective destination image. Similarly, tourists attending the Chilam Joshi Festival perceived Chitral as culturally rich, attractive, and distinctive due to their participation in wine-related activities and interactions with the Kalash community. Furthermore, the results align with the findings of Joy et al., who demonstrated that social interaction and esthetic experiences significantly contribute to destination image formation. In the context of Chilam Joshi, tourists are exposed to authentic cultural performances, communal celebrations, and traditional hospitality, all of which contribute positively to their perception of the destination. Therefore, the study confirms that wine tourism experiences serve as powerful destination image-building mechanisms within indigenous cultural tourism settings.

Wine Tourism and Revisit Intention (H2)

The second hypothesis proposed that wine tourism has a positive and significant relationship with revisit intention. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between wine tourism and revisit intention (β = 0.625, p < 0.001). Therefore, H2 was accepted. This finding suggests that tourists who enjoyed the wine tourism experience at the Chilam Joshi Festival expressed stronger intentions to

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revisit Chitral in the future. The unique combination of traditional wine culture, community interaction, cultural performances, and festival atmosphere appears to create memorable experiences that encourage repeat visitation.

The findings support previous studies conducted in wine tourism and festival tourism settings. For example, Yuan et al. found that visitor satisfaction at wine festivals significantly predicts future visitation behavior and loyalty. Their research demonstrated that positive festival experiences encourage tourists to revisit destinations and participate in future events. Similarly, Back et al. concluded that winery reputation, visitor satisfaction, and quality experiences positively influence revisit intention. Tourists who perceive a destination as unique and emotionally rewarding are more likely to return. The results also support the findings of Lee and Kwon, who reported that emotional satisfaction and involvement are stronger predictors of revisit intention than physical facilities. This finding is particularly relevant for the Chilam Joshi Festival because the attraction of the festival lies primarily in its authenticity, rituals, and cultural atmosphere rather than modern infrastructure. Thus, the study confirms that wine tourism experiences significantly contribute to tourists' loyalty and future visitation intentions.

Destination Image and Revisit Intention (H3)

The third hypothesis proposed that destination image positively influences revisit intention. The results showed that destination image significantly influences revisit intention ($\beta = 0.734$, $p < 0.001$), making it the strongest relationship in the study. Therefore, H3 was accepted. This finding indicates that tourists who hold favorable perceptions of Chitral are more likely to revisit the destination and recommend it to others. A positive destination image creates emotional attachment, trust, and confidence in the destination, which ultimately translates into future travel intentions. These findings are consistent with destination image theory, which argues that tourists' perceptions and evaluations of destinations influence their post-visit behaviors. Positive destination image reduces uncertainty and increases destination loyalty.

The findings support previous tourism studies that identified destination image as a major predictor of revisit intention. Tourists who perceive destinations as attractive, unique, culturally rich, and memorable are more likely to return and engage in positive word-of-mouth promotion. The results suggest that tourism stakeholders in Chitral should prioritize maintaining and enhancing the positive image of the destination through cultural preservation, quality visitor experiences, and effective destination marketing.

Mediating Role of Destination Image (H4)

The fourth hypothesis proposed that destination image mediates the relationship between wine tourism and revisit intention. The mediation analysis revealed a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.240$, LLCI = 0.171, ULCI = 0.326), confirming that destination image partially mediates the relationship between wine tourism and revisit intention. This finding suggests that wine tourism not only directly influences revisit intention but also indirectly influences revisit intention by improving tourists' perceptions of Chitral. The results indicate that wine tourism experiences create

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positive impressions about the destination, which subsequently motivate tourists to revisit. In other words, destination image acts as a psychological mechanism through which tourism experiences translate into future behavioral intentions. The findings provide empirical support for the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 2 and demonstrate that destination image is an essential factor linking tourism experiences with tourist loyalty.

Conclusion

This study examined the impact of wine tourism on destination image and revisit intention in the context of the Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival, Chitral. The findings revealed that wine tourism significantly influences destination image and revisit intention. Furthermore, destination image significantly influences revisit intention and partially mediates the relationship between wine tourism and revisit intention. The study demonstrates that authentic cultural experiences associated with wine traditions can enhance tourists' perceptions of destinations and strengthen their intentions to revisit. The Kalash Chilam Joshi Festival therefore represents a valuable tourism asset capable of contributing to sustainable tourism development and destination competitiveness in Chitral. Overall, all four hypotheses were supported, validating the proposed conceptual framework.

Theoretical Implications

The study extends wine tourism literature into an indigenous South Asian context. It validates the Experience Economy Framework within festival-based wine tourism. It contributes to destination image theory by demonstrating the image-building role of cultural wine tourism experiences. It provides empirical evidence supporting the mediating role of destination image. It addresses the research gap identified in previous wine tourism literature regarding non-Western destinations.

Practical Implications

Tourism authorities should promote the Chilam Joshi Festival as a distinctive cultural tourism attraction. Marketing campaigns should highlight authentic wine traditions and cultural heritage. Local communities should be actively involved in tourism planning and development. Tourism operators should design experiential packages centered on cultural immersion. Destination managers should preserve the authenticity of the festival while improving visitor services.

Recommendations

Develop integrated marketing campaigns promoting Kalash cultural heritage. Improve transportation and visitor facilities in the Kalash valleys. Organize cultural interpretation programs for tourists. Strengthen community participation in tourism decision-making. Enhance digital promotion through social media and tourism websites. Encourage sustainable tourism practices that preserve local traditions. Establish partnerships between tourism authorities and local communities.

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Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to tourists attending the Chilam Joshi Festival. The research employed a cross-sectional design. The study relied on self-reported questionnaire data. Only three variables were examined. The findings may not be generalizable to all tourism destinations.

Future Research Directions

Future studies should examine tourist satisfaction as a mediator. Researchers may investigate destination loyalty as an outcome variable. Comparative studies across different cultural festivals should be conducted. Longitudinal studies may provide stronger evidence of causal relationships. Future research should explore the perspectives of local communities and tourism stakeholders. Additional variables such as perceived value, authenticity, and cultural involvement may be incorporated.

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