



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

The Influence of Destination Image on Revisit Intention Through Tourist Satisfaction: A Study of Night Heritage Tourism at Takht-I-Bahi a UNESCO World Heritage Site

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in the context of night heritage tourism at Takht-i-Bahi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Night heritage tourism has emerged as an innovative approach to enhancing visitor experiences and promoting sustainable tourism development. However, limited research has explored how destination image affects tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in heritage tourism settings, particularly during nighttime visits. This study adopted a quantitative research approach based on the positivist research philosophy and deductive reasoning. Data were collected from 250 domestic tourists through a structured questionnaire using purposive sampling. The questionnaire measured destination image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention using a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), including reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis. The findings revealed that destination image has a significant positive influence on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. The results further indicated that tourist satisfaction significantly affects revisit intention. Moreover, tourist satisfaction was found to partially mediate the relationship between destination image and revisit intention. These findings suggest that tourists who develop positive perceptions regarding the historical significance, safety, infrastructure, cultural richness, and night-time atmosphere of Takht-i-Bahi are more likely to be satisfied with their visit and demonstrate a stronger intention to revisit the destination. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on destination image and tourist behaviour by extending these concepts to the context of night heritage tourism. Practically, the findings provide valuable insights for tourism authorities, heritage site managers, and policymakers in designing strategies to improve visitor satisfaction, strengthen destination image, and encourage repeat visitation. The study recommends enhancing night-time infrastructure, safety measures, heritage interpretation



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

services, and promotional activities to support the sustainable development of night heritage tourism at Takht-i-Bahi.

Keywords: Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Night Heritage Tourism, Takht-i-Bahi, Heritage Tourism, Pakistan.

Introduction

Background of study

The tourism industry which is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world greatly helps in the economic development, cultural exchange and community. Tourism is among the fundamental factors in the economic structures of several nations, serving as a crucial factor for income generation and job creation. Tourism is regarded as one of the most rapidly growing industries in the global service industry (Zhou & Yao, 2023). Tourism had already predicted that by 2020 there would be about one billion tourist arrivals annually (Libre et al., 2022). In addition, tourists gain new experiences through traveling to other places away from their usual living environments, offering novel experiences (Libre et al., 2022). Presently, tourism serves as one of the key elements of economies in many nations, considered a vital sector of economic development and job creation (Libre et al., 2022; Zhou & Yao, 2023). Environmental aspects play a critical role in the marketing power of tourism destinations (Zhou & Yao, 2023).

Under Law No. 10 of 2009 regarding Tourism, the definition of tourist destination is that "it consists of a special geographical location within one or more governed territories which include attractions, tourism services, accessibility and a community that works in coordination to support tourism activities." This means that tourism destinations are not merely places that have the capacity for developing tourism activities due to their geographic features or culture, but rather places which have had their tourism potentials exploited in a way that creates charm and attraction for the tourists. Tourism has different forms, among which heritage tourism stands out owing to its capacity for taking tourists through historical sites, cultures and civilizations.

As stated by UNESCO (2019), heritage sites are not merely places of significance from a historical perspective; they are also important as agents of sustainable tourism and intercultural dialogue. As such, heritage tourism can be developed based on Pakistan's rich cultural and archaeological heritage. Of all the heritage sites in Pakistan, perhaps the most famous would be Takht-i-Bahi. This is a Buddhist monastery complex which lies in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is a UNESCO world heritage site dating back to the 1st century CE and famous for being one of the best-preserved monasteries in Buddhism.

However, in recent times, there has been a change in the pattern of tourism in that night tourism has emerged. Night tourism refers to a form of tourism in which destinations are explored at night through lighting and performance shows. In other words, night tourism is the continuation of day tourism but conducted during the night (Wang et al. 2024). Night tourism contributes significantly to sustainable economic development by stimulating urban consumption and extending economic activities beyond daytime hours. Within the framework of the experience economy, it has become a crucial component of the Night-Time Economy (NTE), enhanced city vitality and supporting continuous economic growth (Acuto et al. (2021). Reports further indicate that night tourism has emerged at an opportune time to strengthen cultural consumption and diversify tourism markets (Shen et al. 2019). Night tourism creates a unique atmosphere that may influence how tourists perceive a destination. These perceptions are commonly referred to as



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

destination image. Destination image refers to the overall perceptions, ideas, and impressions that individuals form about a particular place. In tourism, it represents how tourists mentally picture and interpret a destination based on the information they receive and the experiences they anticipate. These perceptions are important because tourists often make travel decisions based on what they believe about a destination rather than the objective reality of the place itself. As a result, the image that tourists develop can strongly influence their attitudes and behaviours toward a destination and can ultimately contribute to its success or failure in the tourism market (Kurian, 2023; Amalia, Wibisono, & Elliott-White, 2023). Since its introduction into tourism research, destination image has been widely recognized as an important factor influencing tourists' attitudes and behavioural responses. Researchers from different fields, including tourism management, marketing, and hospitality, have given considerable attention to understanding how tourists perceive destinations and how these perceptions shape their travel decisions (Duan & Wu, 2024; Wantara & Irawati, 2021). Although many studies have examined the concept of destination image, there is still no single universally accepted definition. Scholars often interpret and define destination image based on the focus of their particular research field or study context (Duan & Wu, 2024; Wantara & Irawati, 2021). A positive destination image plays a crucial role in shaping tourist satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction refers to the overall evaluation of a travel experience based on whether expectations are met or exceeded (Amalia, Wibisono, & Elliott-White, 2023). When tourists perceive a destination positively and their experience matches their expectations, they are more likely to feel satisfied. Previous studies have shown that destination image significantly influences tourist satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Sitepu & Rismawati, 2021). Satisfaction attributes were analysed by cognitive image of natural resources, cognitive image of service quality, cognitive image entertainment and affective image (Tung, Tse, & Chan, 2021). Research has consistently demonstrated that a favourable destination image contributes significantly to tourist satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens revisit intention and destination loyalty (Chi, Meng, Zhou, & Han, 2022; Su, Hsu, Huang, & Chang, 2018). In many international tourism contexts, appealing images-shaped by elements such as scenic landscapes, quality infrastructure, and cultural authenticity have been associated with higher levels of visitor satisfaction and repeat visitation (Sitepu & Rismawati, 2021; Amalia et al., 2023). In the specific setting of night heritage tourism, where atmosphere, lighting, and the sense of novelty are central to the experience, examining how destination images are constructed and how they influence tourist perceptions and experiences becomes particularly important (Tung et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2022).

Revisit intention is another important concept in tourism research. It refers to a tourist's willingness to return to a destination in the future or to recommend it to others. Revisit intention refers to a tourist's expressed likelihood or willingness to return to a previously visited destination, and it is widely regarded as a crucial behavioural outcome because it enhances destination sustainability, fosters visitor loyalty, and generates sustained economic benefits for local communities and stakeholders (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Revisit intention is essential for the long-term sustainability of tourism destinations because retaining previous visitors is often more cost-effective than attracting new ones. Research suggests that satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit a destination and spread positive word-of-mouth (Chi & Qu, 2008).

Although many international studies have examined the relationships between destination image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention, limited research has focused on night heritage tourism in Pakistan. In particular, little attention has been given to



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

understanding how the image of a heritage site at night influences tourists' satisfaction and their intention to revisit. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in the context of night heritage tourism at Takht-I-Bahi. The findings of this study will provide useful insights for tourism authorities and site managers to improve visitor experiences and promote sustainable heritage tourism development.

Despite the growing popularity of heritage tourism in Pakistan, many sites including Takht-I-Bahi, primarily cater to daytime visitors, missing out on the potential of night tourism to attract diverse audiences and extend economic benefits. Existing literature, the positive effects of destination Image on satisfaction and revisit Intention in general tourism contexts, but there is remarkable gap in studies specific to night heritage experience at the ancient sites like this one (Takht-I-Bahi). Factor such as perceived safety, lighting, infrastructure and cultural programming during night hours could significantly alter tourist perception. Yet this remains under researched in the Pakistani context. This oversight limits the ability of Managers to develop targeted strategies that enhance visitor satisfaction and encourage repeat visits potentially hindering the sites contribution to local development and cultural preservation.

Night Heritage Tourism

Night heritage tourism is an emerging niche within the broader tourism sector that involves visiting cultural heritage sites during the evening and nighttime hours. This form of tourism takes advantage of the distinctive atmosphere created by darkness and artistic illumination, which enhances the visual appeal and emotional experience of historical landmarks. By presenting heritage sites in a different light both literally and symbolically night tours can strengthen visitors' perceptions of a destination and positively influence their intention to visit (Sound Diplomacy & Ariel Seijas. 2018). According to China Tourism Academy (2019) night cultural heritage tours not only provide aesthetic enjoyment but also contribute to shaping regional image and encouraging visitation, particularly among domestic travellers and tourism professionals. The concept of night heritage tourism is increasingly recognized for its potential to enhance the visitor experience and contribute to regional image and visitation intentions. The studies show that the attractiveness, uniqueness, educational value and convenience of the cultural heritage night tour have a positive impact on regional image and the intention of visitors to return. For example, research targeting domestic travel agency professionals has shown that these attributes significantly shape perceptions and intentions regarding night tours at heritage sites. However, the implementation of night heritage tourism involves several important challenges and management consideration. One major concern is the preservation of cultural heritage resource, particularly stone monuments and archaeological remains. Environmental factors such as moisture condensation and fluctuations in humidity can significantly accelerate the deterioration of stone materials, leading to long-term structural damage.

Therefore, effective conservation strategies and environmental monitoring are essential when organizing nighttime activities at heritage sites (Jihye Kang, Nara Park, & Minji Kim. (2024) Within the wider framework of destination image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention, night heritage tourism fits well with established theoretical perspectives. A favourable destination image strengthened by the distinctive experiences and atmosphere offered through night tours contribute to increased levels of tourist satisfaction (Greater London Authority. (2018). A key objective of heritage tourism is often the experience of authenticity. Contemporary perspectives, however, have evolved



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

from focusing on tangible, object centred authenticity to emphasizing personal, experience-based authenticity. In this way, authenticity serves as a bridge linking both the supply of heritage attractions and tourists' experiential expectations (Zhou, Chen, & Wu, 2022).

Research Context

Takht-I- Bahi is one the most important and well- preserved Buddhist monastic complexes in south Asia. Located near the city of Mardan, the monastery was established in the 1st century during the rule of the Kushan Empire and used till 7th CE. The word Takht-I-Bahi is a Persian word Takht mean Top or Throne and Bahi mean Spring or Water, combinedly it is known as Throne of the Spring or Throne of Water, referring to the natural spring found in the surrounding hills. Built on a hilltop, the monastery remained an important centre of Buddhist learning and religious activity for several centuries. The monastic ruin of Takht-I-Bahi a composed of several structure such as meditation cells, assembly halls, stupas, courtyards and secular building. The foundation wall of Takht-I-Bahi was strong fortified on its bright day. The enclosure of a monastery has it is main entrance to the South. Furthermore, a renowned village named Saria Bahlol is located a distance of just two and half mile. The people from Saia Bahlol used to come Takht-I-Bahi across from the hill and bring foods and other offerings for the monk and nun of the monastery. The are four main areas of the Takht-I-Bahi:

Stupa court: Cluster of stupas located in the courtyard.

Monastic Chamber: consisting of individuals cell arranged with Courtyard, Assembly Hall and Dining area.

Temple Complex: Consisting of Stupas similar to Stupa Court.

Tantric Complex: which consist of small dark cell with low opening which may have used to tantric meditation.

The Monastic Takht-I-Bahi is reflecting the architectural and spiritual tradition of the Gandhara Civilization. Due to its historic and cultural significance, the site was designated as a UNESCO World heritage in 1980. Today Takht-I-Bahi is an important archaeological and tourist attraction that provides valuable insight into the region's Buddhist heritage and the spread of Buddhism in ancient Pakistan.

Literature Review

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention is widely recognized as an important concept in tourism research because it reflects tourists' willingness to return to a destination they have previously visited (Zaitul et al; 2022) explain that repeat visitation plays a significant role in the sustainability and performance of tourism destinations. Unlike drawing the attention of new tourists, having repeat tourists come back will be very advantageous because satisfied tourists tend to make purchases worth more money, go back again, and even spread the good word among other people. Moreover, (Zaitul et al; 2022) assert that tourists' past satisfaction with their trips is highly related to the intent to return to that destination. (Zaitul et al; 2022) argue that an increase in tourist satisfaction would have a considerable impact on revisit intentions and positive word-of-mouth publicity. Revisit intention is the willingness of the individual to visit the same destination again and refer friends to the same location (He et al., 2021). Returning to a destination and sharing positive word-of-mouth can contribute significantly to tourism revenue (He et al., 2021).



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Tourism studies suggest that tourists often reflect on their experiences after visiting a place (Backman et al., 2022). The intensity of these emotions largely depends on the destination's attributes that shape the overall tourist experience (Su et al., 2018; Backman et al., 2022; Al-Dweik, 2020). Such post-consumption evaluations may generate emotional attachment and positive feelings, which ultimately increase tourists' willingness to revisit the destination (Al-Dweik, 2020).

Revisit intention generally refers to a tourist's willingness to visit the same destination again in the future, which is largely influenced by their evaluation and experiences after the visit (Respati, 2025; Nguyen Viet et al., 2020). Post-visit evaluations relate to the value perceived by tourists and their level of satisfaction (Respati, 2025). Generally, revisit intention refers to tourists deliberate decision about the probability of returning to the same destination in the future which is largely influenced by their previous travel experience (Som et al., 2012). Additionally, revisit intention also includes tourists' willingness to recommend the destination to others, which acts as a form of social endorsement for the place they have visited (Ryu et al., 2010). Revisit intention is an important issue that should be understood by tourism researchers in order to determine how travellers behave during their travel activities. Revisit intention means the intention of a tourist to return to the destination because of his or her travel experience. There are many things that could affect whether a traveller would like to go back to the same place again. For instance, the level of satisfaction of a tourist with the first experience is very important for him/her to decide on whether or not he/she should go back to the place again. Therefore, there is much literature focusing on the connection between tourists' experience, their satisfaction, and revisit intention (Ratih & Noer, 2024) Revisit intention is defined as the desire of a tourist to return to the same destination within a certain period of time. Revisit intention reflects a tourist's likelihood of returning to a destination, serving not only as a crucial dimension of tourist behaviour but also as a key measure of a destination's development success (Zhou, Chen, & Wu, 2022).

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction can be viewed as a multilayered phenomenon which is of paramount importance in tourism studies. Tourist satisfaction serves as an evaluation mechanism through which tourists assess their travel experiences and contributes significantly towards determining the performance, development, and sustainability of destinations. Higher levels of tourist satisfaction contribute to positive behavioural outcomes such as repeat visitation, destination loyalty, and favourable word of mouth (Asmelash & Kumar, 2020; Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022). Tourist satisfaction has been widely discussed in tourism research. It is generally defined as a visitor's evaluation of the products and services they experience during their trip (Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022; Asmelash & Kumar, 2020). Overall customer satisfaction plays a key role in shaping customer loyalty. When customers are satisfied with a service, they are more likely to use the same service again and show positive intentions toward future behaviour (Iglesias et al., 2019). From the tourist's perspective, the destination image is the key player in the tourist destination choice, the information search of a potential tourist, the selection of the destination, satisfaction, and the revisit intention (Libre et al., 2022; Zhou & Yao, 2023). These studies indicate that the image of a destination is positively related to travel satisfaction. A more favourable destination image tends to result in a higher level of tourist satisfaction (Libre et al., 2022; Zhou & Ya, 2023).



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Tourists' overall satisfaction is developed through their evaluation of a destination's attributes in relation to their expectations. It is also considered one of the key factors influencing tourists' intentions to revisit a destination (Libre et al., 2022; Zhou & Yao, 2023). A thorough understanding of tourist satisfaction requires a cross functional perspective (Ho, 2023; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Shatnawi et al., 2023). Tourist satisfaction is frequently understood as a cognitive and emotional reaction that arises when traveller compare their pre-trip expectation with the actual experience during their trip (Ho, 2023; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Shatnawi et al., 2023). Satisfaction may be described as the positive reaction resulting from an evaluation of the experience as favorable (Ratih & Noer, 2024). In the context of tourism, it is a result of the traveller's evaluation of the travel destination based on their experience. In essence, tourist satisfaction is an indication of how well the destination meets the needs of the traveller in terms of enjoyment (Ratih & Noer, 2024). Tourist satisfaction represents a type of post-visit response. It can be understood as the degree to which tourists' experiences align with their prior expectations. Evaluating tourist satisfaction is crucial, as it serves as a rational indicator of non-financial performance and reflects the quality of the service provided to visitors (Ridho, Paisal, Mellita, & Roseno, 2021). In tourism, satisfaction is another factor that influences tourists' intention to revisit because it is one of the most important determinants predicting revisit intentions (Al-Dweik, 2020; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Shatnawi et al., 2023). Tourists' expectation prior to visiting the destination plays an influential role in generating visitors' satisfaction when such expectations are fulfilled (Ho, 2023; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Shatnawi et al., 2023). Tourist satisfaction can be described as a feeling of enjoyment of tourists during traveling or tourists' evaluation of their overall travel experience (Ho, 2023; Al-Dweik, 2020; Phakdeephrot, 2021). The factors affecting tourist satisfaction in wellness tourism include leisure and entertainment, service quality, and environment among others (Shatnawi et al., 2023; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Al-Dweik, 2020). Tourist satisfaction can be described as a feeling of enjoyment of tourists during traveling or tourists' evaluation of their overall travel experience (Ho, 2023; Al-Dweik, 2020; Phakdeephrot, 2021). The factors affecting tourist satisfaction in wellness tourism include leisure and entertainment, service quality, and environment among others (Shatnawi et al., 2023; Phakdeephrot, 2021; Al-Dweik, 2020).

Destination Image

Destination image has been long recognized as a central concept in tourism studies because it shapes how tourist perceive, evaluate and remember a place. Destination image can create through the positive response of the tourist about a destination. Empirical studies show that tourism experience significantly influences how tourists view and image a destination (Wang et al., 2023; Sitepu & Rismawati, 2021). Destination image includes different dimensions and features that shape how tourists see a place. Visitors from various countries may interpret these features differently. As a result, tourists from different national backgrounds often develop unique perceptions of the same destination. Consequently, the evaluation of destination image attributes can vary depending on the tourist's source market (Wang et al., 2023). Several related subfields have emerged within destination image research. These include studies examining the specific attributes of destination image, as well as research exploring the relationship between destination image and travel intention (Tung et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2022; Lee & Park, 2023). Other scholars have investigated how destination image influences tourists' travel behaviour (Tung et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2022). In addition,



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

researchers have studied destination image in specific tourism areas like gastronomy and wine tourism (Chi et al., 2022; Lee & Park, 2023). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on shaping destination image has also gained significant attention (Lee & Park, 2023; Liu et al., 2024). Furthermore, researchers have carried out quantitative studies to find the main factors that influence destination image (Tung et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024).

Destination image has been widely examined in tourism research, and numerous studies have significantly enhanced the understanding of tourists' attitudes and behavioural patterns toward destinations (Stylidis et al., 2017; Chaulagain et al., 2019). Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the influence of modern information technologies, particularly social media, on the formation of destination image (Xiao et al., 2022; Chaulagain et al., 2019). In the contemporary media environment, researchers have started to explore new perspectives on how destination images are created, giving greater attention to tourists' subjective capabilities and the role of digital technologies in shaping their perceptions (Xiao et al., 2022; Stylidis et al., 2017). Tourism managers and decision-makers still encounter difficulties in gaining a complete understanding of how tourism destinations are perceived, which limits their ability to design effective marketing and management strategies for destinations (Stylidis et al., 2017; Chaulagain et al., 2019). Tourism destination images have evolved from being shaped solely by supply – side factor to being influenced by the interaction between both supply and demand forces (Stylidis & Cherifi, 2018; Alcañiz et al., 2009). However, destination images generated through TGC (Tourist Generated Content) remain relatively under researched. Moreover, many existing studies mainly concentrate on identifying tourism scenes from photographs while overlooking other types of visual information (Stylidis & Cherifi, 2018; Alcañiz et al., 2009). Aesthetic experience is a fundamental component of tourism and plays an important role in enhancing tourist loyalty (Alcañiz et al., 2009; Stylidis & Cherifi, 2018).

Destination image is widely recognized as one of the most extensively studied concepts in tourism research (Chaulagain et al., 2019; Atadil et al., 2017). Furthermore, a strong and distinctive destination image can positively influence foreign direct investment and also helps a destination stand out from its competitors (Chaulagain et al., 2019; Atadil et al., 2017). According to (Chaulagain et al. 2019 and Atadil et al. 2017), there are two primary approaches to examining the structure and components of destination image. The first approach, proposed by Echtner and Ritchie (1993, 2003), suggests that destination image can be analysed along three overlapping continuums (Chaulagain et al., 2019; Atadil et al., 2017). The second, more widely used approach, proposed by researchers such as Beerli and Martín (2004), conceptualizes destination image as a three-component construct (Atadil et al., 2017; Chaulagain et al., 2019). The cognitive component reflects tourists' knowledge and beliefs about the destination's physical attributes, while the affective component captures tourists' emotional responses toward the destination (Atadil et al., 2017; Chaulagain et al., 2019).

Moreover, research in tourism consistently highlights destination image as a key factor influencing tourist satisfaction (Zhao et al., 2024; Amalia et al., 2023; Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022). Pike reported that numerous studies on destination image were published over several decades, highlighting its importance in tourism research (Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022; Amalia et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024). According to Alcocer and Ruiz, the cognitive and affective components of destination image function as a psychological framework that individuals use to form social judgments (Amalia et al., 2023; Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2024). Tourists make purchasing decisions



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

based on the mental image they hold about a destination (Zhao et al., 2024; Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022; Amalia et al., 2023). Destination image is important because it influences tourists' behaviour when choosing to visit a particular destination or event. It is also a significant topic in marketing, as it plays a key role in shaping tourists' decision-making processes (Amalia et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024; Luvsandavaajav et al., 2022).

Conceptual framework

Independent Variable
Destination Image

Mediating Variable
Tourist Satisfaction

Dependent Variable
Revisit Intention



Research hypotheses

- H1: There is positive significant relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction.
- H2: There is positive significant relationship between destination image and revisit intention
- H3: There is positive significant relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention
- H4: Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Research methodology can be understood as a structured and organized approach used to address research problems and answer specific research question through systematic methods. It provides a foundation for selecting appropriate techniques for collecting and analysing data. In this regard, research design serves as a comprehensive plan that outline the procedures and strategies required to conduct a study effectively. It acts as a guiding framework that ensures the research is carried out in a logical and coherent manner. (Kumar, 2018). One of the most important decisions in the research design process is the selection of a suitable research approach, as it determine how relevant information for the study will be obtained. Moreover, research design is not based on a single decision; rather, it involves a number of interconnected choices that collectively influence the overall direction and quality of the study. (Sileyew, 2019). This study adopts a positivism research philosophy, which focuses on measurable variables and



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

objective analysis. The study follows a deductive approach, where hypotheses are developed based on existing theories and then tested using collected data.

Unit of Analysis

According to the Saunder and Lewis (2017) the unit of analysis refers to the individuals from whom data is collected. In this study the unite of analysis consist of domestic tourist visiting Takht-I-Bahi during night heritage tourism activities. In the present study, the unit of analysis is the individual domestic tourist who visits Takht-I-Bahi during night time hours.

Population & Sample Size

This population involves all Pakistani citizens belonging to any province or region of Pakistan, who tour this site during their evening and night-time tours of the site, whether there are any officially organized night programs held at the place or not. Determining an appropriate sample size is a critical step in quantitative research, directly impact the reliability and validity of statistical findings (Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2019). In the present study the sample frame consists of domestic tourists present at Takht-I-Bahi during night time visitors. The sample size of study is 250.

Sampling Technique

In tourism research, purposive sampling is commonly employed in research studies (Bhat and Darzi, 2018). Purposive sampling, also referred to as judgmental sampling, involves the deliberate selection of participants based on pre-defined criteria relevant to the research objectives (Tongco, 2007). It is an efficient technique when the researcher aims to study a specific group of people with relevant experience or interest. For this study, Purposive sampling was employed to select domestic tourists who had visited or were visiting Takht-I-Bahi for night heritage tourism. This ensured participant had direct experience with the sites night time attributes. The inclusive criteria for this study were: (1) the respondent must be a Pakistani national (domestic tourist); (2) the respondent must have visited Takht-I-Bahi during night time at least once; and (3) the respondent must be 18 years of age or above. Respondent who had only visited Takht-I-Bahi during daytime or who were foreign tourists, were excluded from the study.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire distributed through two complementary channels: on site administration at Takht-I-Bahi during night time visiting periods, and Google Forms (for online responses). On site data collection was carried out during designated night events and illuminated heritage visits at the site, where trained research assistant approached eligible domestic tourist and requested voluntary participation. The questionnaire was made available English. Before administering the questionnaire, respondents were briefed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Table 1 summarises the key data collection parameters.

Table 1: Summary of Data Collection Parameters

Category	Details
Unit of Analysis	Individual domestic tourist



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Target Population	Domestic tourists visiting Takht-I-Bahi at night time
Sampling Frame	On site visitors during night time visits and night heritage events
Sampling Technique	Purposive sampling
Sampling Size	250
Questionnaire Type	Structured self-administered questionnaire
Data Collection Strategy	On site administration and Google Form

Research Instrument

A research instrument refers to a tool used for collecting data from respondents in a systematic manner, such as questionnaires, interviews, or observation checklists (Babbie, 2020). The questionnaire was carefully designed in alignment with the research objectives and theoretical framework and was adapted from validated scales previously employed in related destination image and tourism satisfaction studies. The questions are divided into sections A to E. A five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) was used for all items in Section B, C, D and E.

Destination Image Items

Table 2: Items relating to Destination Image

No.	Items
1	Takht-I-Bahi has a great historical significance.
2	Takht-I-Bahi is considered a secure place for night visits.
3	Night lighting at Takht-I-Bahi improves the heritage value.
4	Night visits to Takht-I-Bahi make me feel delighted.
5	Takht-I-Bahi is an interesting destination for Night Heritage Tourism
6	People of Takht-I-Bahi are friendly

Tourist Satisfaction

Table 3: Items of Tourist Satisfaction

No	Items
1	My visit to Takht-I-Bahi was exactly what I expected
2	I am satisfied with my decision to visit Takht-I-Bahi
3	I really enjoyed my visit to Takht-I-Bahi
4	Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Takht-I-Bahi



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Revisit Intention

Table 4: Items of Revisit Intention

No	Items
1	I plan to travel again to Takht-I-Bahi sometime within the next 2 years
2	I want to revisit Takht-I-Bahi again within the next 2 years
3	Takht-I-Bahi could again be my vacations place

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents Table 5

Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	152	60.8
Female	98	39.2
Total	250	100
Age Group		
18–25 Years	95	38.0
26–35 Years	82	32.8
36–45 Years	46	18.4
Above 45 Years	27	10.8
Total	250	100
Education		
Education	Frequency	Percentage
Intermediate	48	19.2
Bachelor	126	50.4
Master	63	25.2
MPhil/PhD	13	5.2
Total	250	100

The results indicate that the majority of respondents were male (60.8%), while female respondents constituted 39.2% of the sample. The findings show that most respondents belonged to the 18–25 years age group. The majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree (50.4%).

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales.



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Table 6 Reliability Statistics

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Destination Image	6	0.872
Tourist Satisfaction	4	0.891
Revisit Intention	3	0.857
Overall Scale	13	0.903

The reliability values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument.

Descriptive Statistics Table 7

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Destination Image	4.12	0.63
Tourist Satisfaction	4.08	0.68
Revisit Intention	4.01	0.72

The results indicate that respondents generally had positive perceptions of Takht-i-Bahi as a night heritage tourism destination.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships among the study variables.

Table 8 Correlation Matrix

Variables	DI	TS	RI
Destination Image (DI)	1		
Tourist Satisfaction (TS)	.682**	1	
Revisit Intention (RI)	.631**	.745**	1

**p < 0.01

The results indicate significant positive relationships among all variables. Destination image is positively associated with tourist satisfaction (r = .682, p < .01) and revisit intention (r = .631, p < .01). Tourist satisfaction is also strongly associated with revisit intention (r = .745, p < .01).

Regression Analysis

H1: Destination Image → Tourist Satisfaction

Table 9 Regression Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)	R ²	F-value	Result
H1	Destination	0.682	14.72	0.000	0.465	216.67	Supported



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

	Image → Tourist Satisfaction						
H2	Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0.631	12.84	0.000	0.398	164.89	Supported
H3	Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.745	17.61	0.000	0.555	310.12	Supported

The results reveal that destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.682, p < 0.001$). Therefore, H1 is supported. The findings indicate that destination image significantly influences revisit intention ($\beta = 0.631, p < 0.001$). Thus, H2 is supported. The results show that tourist satisfaction has a strong positive effect on revisit intention ($\beta = 0.745, p < 0.001$). Therefore, H3 is supported.

Mediation Analysis

To test H4, mediation analysis was conducted following the Baron and Kenny approach.

Table 10 Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Result
DI → RI	0.631	0.508	Significant
DI → TS → RI	0.282	0.349	Partial Mediation

The findings indicate that tourist satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention. The direct effect of destination image on revisit intention remains significant after including tourist satisfaction, while the indirect effect through tourist satisfaction is also significant. Therefore, H4 is supported.

Discussion and Findings

Relationship Between Destination Image and Tourist Satisfaction

The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction, supporting Hypothesis 1. The results indicate that tourists who perceive Takht-i-Bahi positively as a night heritage tourism destination tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their overall experience. A positive destination image reflects tourists' perceptions regarding the historical significance of the site, quality of night-time lighting, safety, cultural richness, accessibility, and emotional atmosphere. When visitors perceive these attributes favorably, their expectations are more likely to be fulfilled, leading to greater satisfaction. These findings are consistent with previous studies that identified destination image as an important predictor of tourist satisfaction. For example, Amalia et al. (2023), Jebbouri et al. (2022), and Luvsandavaajav et al. (2022) reported that tourists who hold favorable perceptions of a destination generally experience higher levels of satisfaction. Similarly, Zhao et al. (2024) emphasized that both cognitive and affective dimensions of destination image contribute significantly to visitor satisfaction. In the context of Takht-I-Bahi, the unique combination of heritage



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

authenticity, archaeological value, and night-time ambiance appears to play an important role in shaping visitor satisfaction. The illuminated environment and cultural atmosphere provide visitors with memorable experiences that enhance their overall evaluation of the destination.

Relationship Between Destination Image and Revisit Intention

The results demonstrated that destination image has a significant positive effect on revisit intention, supporting Hypothesis 2. This finding suggests that tourists who develop favorable impressions of Takht-I-Bahi are more likely to revisit the destination in the future. Destination image influences how tourists evaluate a destination both before and after their visit. Positive perceptions regarding safety, heritage value, attractiveness, and emotional experiences increase tourists' willingness to return. The findings support the argument that tourists often rely on their overall perceptions and memories when making future travel decisions. This result is consistent with the findings of Abbasi et al. (2021), Duan and Wu (2024), and Hurdawaty et al. (2025), who reported that destination image significantly affects revisit intention. Likewise, Nurazizah and Marhanah (2020) found that tourists with positive destination perceptions exhibit stronger intentions to revisit and recommend destinations to others. For Takht-I-Bahi, the development of a positive night-time destination image can therefore become an important strategy for encouraging repeat visitation and strengthening destination competitiveness.

Relationship Between Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention

The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, supporting Hypothesis 3. This indicates that satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit Takht-I-Bahi and recommend it to others. Tourist satisfaction reflects visitors' overall evaluation of their travel experience. When tourists perceive that the destination has met or exceeded their expectations, they develop positive feelings toward the destination and become more willing to return. These findings are consistent with previous tourism studies. Torabi et al. (2022), Morshed et al. (2022), and Wusko and Kharisma (2025) concluded that tourist satisfaction is one of the strongest predictors of revisit intention. Similarly, Al-Dweik (2020) and Nguyen Viet et al. (2020) found that satisfied visitors are more likely to demonstrate destination loyalty and positive behavioral intentions. The results suggest that ensuring visitor satisfaction should remain a priority for tourism authorities and site managers. By enhancing visitor experiences and maintaining service quality, Takht-I-Bahi can encourage repeat visitation and strengthen long-term tourism sustainability.

Mediating Role of Tourist Satisfaction

The mediation analysis revealed that tourist satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention, supporting Hypothesis 4. This finding indicates that destination image influences revisit intention both directly and indirectly through tourist satisfaction. A positive destination image not only encourages tourists to revisit directly but also improves their satisfaction, which further increases their intention to return. The result supports the theoretical assumption that satisfaction acts as an important mechanism linking tourists' perceptions with their future behavioral intentions. Similar findings were reported by Jebbouri et al. (2022), Amalia et al. (2023), and Kurian (2023), who concluded that tourist satisfaction serves as a significant mediator between destination image and loyalty-related outcomes. For Takht-I-Bahi, this means that simply creating a positive image is not sufficient. Tourism managers must



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

also ensure that visitors' actual experiences align with their expectations so that satisfaction can be achieved and repeat visitation encouraged.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in the context of night heritage tourism at Takht-I-Bahi. Furthermore, it investigated the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the relationship between destination image and revisit intention. The findings demonstrated that destination image significantly influences tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Tourists who perceive Takht-I-Bahi positively are more likely to be satisfied with their experiences and express stronger intentions to revisit the destination. The study also confirmed that tourist satisfaction significantly contributes to revisit intention and partially mediates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention. The study highlights the importance of both cognitive and affective aspects of destination image in shaping tourists' perceptions and behaviors. Factors such as historical significance, safety, accessibility, night-time lighting, cultural authenticity, and emotional experiences contribute significantly to visitor satisfaction and future travel intentions. Overall, the findings suggest that the successful development of night heritage tourism at Takht-I-Bahi depends on maintaining a strong destination image while simultaneously ensuring high levels of tourist satisfaction. By doing so, tourism stakeholders can encourage repeat visitation, strengthen destination loyalty, and contribute to sustainable tourism development.

Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Improve Night-Time Infrastructure

Tourism authorities should improve lighting systems, pathways, directional signage, parking facilities, and visitor amenities to enhance tourists' comfort and safety during night visits.

Enhance Heritage Interpretation

Digital guides, storytelling sessions, projection mapping, audio-visual presentations, and guided heritage tours should be introduced to create more engaging visitor experiences.

Strengthening Safety and Security Measures

Adequate security personnel, surveillance systems, emergency response facilities, and visitor assistance services should be provided to ensure a safe tourism environment.

Develop Cultural Night Events

Special cultural festivals, traditional performances, heritage exhibitions, and educational programs can enrich visitors' experiences and strengthen the destination image.

Promote Effective Marketing Campaigns

Tourism organizations should use social media, destination branding, influencer marketing, and digital tourism platforms to promote Takht-i-Bahi as a unique night heritage tourism destination.



Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

Focus on Visitor Satisfaction

Regular visitor feedback surveys should be conducted to identify areas for improvement and ensure that visitor expectations are consistently met.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to tourism literature by extending destination image theory to the context of night heritage tourism. The findings provide empirical support for the relationships among destination image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention. Furthermore, the study confirms the mediating role of tourist satisfaction, supporting previous theoretical frameworks that emphasize satisfaction as a key mechanism connecting tourist perceptions and behavioral intentions. The research also contributes to the limited body of knowledge concerning heritage tourism in Pakistan, particularly within the emerging field of night heritage tourism.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations:

The study focused only on domestic tourists visiting Takht-i-Bahi and did not include international visitors.

Data were collected from a single heritage destination, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

The study used a cross-sectional research design, which captures perceptions at a single point in time.

Only three major constructs were examined: destination image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention.

Responses were based on self-reported perceptions, which may be subject to respondent bias.

Future Research Directions

Future researchers may consider the following suggestions:

Conduct similar studies at other heritage tourism destinations in Pakistan to compare findings.

Include international tourists to examine differences in perceptions and behavioral intentions.

Investigate additional variables such as destination loyalty, perceived value, place attachment, authenticity, service quality, and memorable tourism experiences.

Employ longitudinal research designs to examine changes in tourist perceptions over time.

Utilize Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) or Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to provide deeper analysis of complex relationships among variables.

Explore the role of social media, electronic word-of-mouth, and digital marketing in shaping destination image and revisit intention.

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Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

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Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

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Vol. 4 No. 4 (April) (2026)

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