

From the Editors

Tourism Management Research in Asian Context:
Gaps and Recommendations

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Over the past few years, the trends for tourism in Asia and particularly the Pacific have been changing, and the region has seen high growth in travel over the last 30 years, as it is positioned to be the center of tourism in the future. In response to this, tourism management research has seen unprecedented growth since the start of the 21st century. Nevertheless, much of the research on tourism management has been dominated by a US-centric or a Western-centric view. The research studies on this area are mainly conducted in the US and European countries, and/or comparisons between the US and Asian countries are made. The tourism and hospitality schools in the Asia Pacific region are in the middle of research development and expansion. Unfortunately, researchers in South Asian countries, especially Pakistan, have ignored this emerging and looming trend.

Researchers in Asian countries mostly depend on the theories developed and tested in North America and Western countries. While testing the Western-developed theories across cultures, one of the most important aspects to examine is cultural behavior. However, cultural theories in Asian countries are still a matter of some debate and a complex area. It has also become essential to investigate cultural theories from Asian perspectives and go beyond the traditional US or Western contexts. To examine culture at the individual level, we have a robust, exhaustive, and widely accepted cultural framework named Schwartz's theory of personal values.

Here, the question is how to measure a cultural behavior change and an emerging trend. We have three key terms used to describe changes: "fad," "trend," and "megatrend." "Fads" are short-lived and typically do not have broad social implications or significance. "Trends" have a greater impact on society that is typically long-lasting. Methods for trend analyses encompass quantitative analysis of statistical data and survey results, qualitative analysis of interviews, and/or the Delphi approach. Quantitative methodologies are more prominent in demand modeling and forecasting. However, the reliance on past data to forecast the future may be unreliable due to changing political, social, and economic environments and unforeseeable crises. Researchers can use scenario planning to discuss what future tourism by 2030 and 2050 will look like on the qualitative side. This approach usually aims to understand key factors and/or uncertainties impacting on a phenomenon. The key factors driving global changes in tourism are

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often derived from economic, political, environmental, technological, demographic, and social/societal scenarios.

Regardless of what methods and tools researchers use to conduct research, Pakistani researchers should adopt a focused and consistent strategy to contribute to global research productivity. A few researchers have published in tourism journals such as *Current Issues in Tourism*, but we still have a long way to go to be included in the list of quality research-producing schools. Besides, more generous support is still needed from higher education bodies and research agencies to enhance the confidence among management scholars.