

# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF ALTIT TOWN HUNZA, PAKISTAN**



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# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF ALTIT TOWN HUNZA, PAKISTAN**



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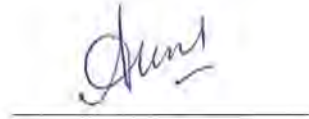
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## LIST OF ACRONYMES

GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
UN	United Nations
AKDN	Age Khan Development Network
RF	Rupani Foundation
KADO	Karakoram Area Development Authority

## **Formal Declaration**

I hereby stated that I have conducted this research study without any kind of assistance other than mentioned in the acknowledgment. The ideas that were taken directly and indirectly from the third party's work, have been listed in the below sources both incite and at the end of the study.

I also guaranteed and assured that this research work has not been published and succumbed to any other educational institute, any office concern, or any examination board for the degree purpose.

Finally, I am wholly answerable for the content of this research work that this is my own original work based on both primary and secondary resources.

Shanila Karim

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## **Abstract**

*The research analyzed Women Empowerment Through Tourism: A Case Study of Altit Town Hunza, Pakistan. Women in Hunza Altit are educated, socially empowered politically active, and independent in the decision-making process both in society and at the household level. Women of Hunza are more empowered as compared to the other districts of Gilgit-Baltistan. The reason behind women's empowerment in Hunza Altit is women's engagement in economic activities. As, Hunza, especially Altit village is considered as a hub of tourism, where thousands of national and international tourists are visits in summers. The reason behind the inflow of tourists in Altit village is due to the Altit Fort and old age mud houses. The research is qualitative and exploratory. The universe of the study was Altit villages. The respondents were those women who are engaged with tourism-related activities. The semi-structure questionnaire and interview guide were designed to collect the data from respondents. The face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with the respondents. The thematic analysis was done to explain the collected data in a systematic manner. The findings of the study showed that women of Altit are engaged with the tourism sector through different activities. Women along with their family members are facilitating tourists in the region. Many women have their own small cafes, hostels, shops of handicrafts, hotel management services, preparing local dishes, and working as a tourist guide in the region. The majority of the women are supported by their family members. The tourism facilitating activities able women t earn enough for themselves and the livelihood of their family members. Many Non-Governmental Organizations, including Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), Karakoram Area Development (KADO), and Rupani Foundation (RF) have provided different skill development training to women in different areas. The hostel management and cooking of among them. Women now in Altit use their own skills to empower themselves in society. Women empowerments mean the ability of women to take decision making which best serves their own interest and their families. Therefore, the tourism sector empowered women through their engagement in economic activities.*

Keyword's: Women's Empowerment, Gilgit-Baltistan, Tourism, Altit, Qualitative, Hunza, KADO, RF, AKDN

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# CHAPTER NO. 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has means to travel from one place to another place for the purpose of entertainment and fun. When someone leaves the region in which he or she leaves voluntarily and goes to a new place for some time it is called tourism (Lwoga, 2011). Millions of people across the world are traveling from one country to another annually, which not only enhances the overall livelihood of the destination place people but also gives them opportunities to involved in economic activities, like hosteling, food supply, and residential services to the tourists. Not only males are engaged in the economic activities, but women also side by side help their counterparts to serve tourists both nationally and internationally. Tourism is a source of economic earnings of the people through economic activities (Barkas, Honeck, & Rubio, 2020).

Similarly, tourism has many motives and purposes. It can be for just for, it could be to explore the beauty of another place, it could be understanding art, architecture, and monument of great artists times. Millions of people across the world visit other regions and countries for tourism worldwide for entertainment purposes and enjoyment. In our world in each continent, supercontinents, subcontinents, submerged continents, microcontinents, and botanical continents there are places that arouse the feeling and desire of a person to visit and see them and explore any new place (Newsdesk, 2017). There are many places for tourist destinations, like Northern areas of Pakistan, European countries, Neither land nor many other parts in Europe.

People visit North America to see skyscrapers and other natural and manmade things (Park & Leiper, 2009). People show interest in European art of the renaissance period (Zlopaša & Solarević, 2019). North Africa is visited by the people to see wonders of ancient worlds like the pyramids of Giza and the lighthouse of Alexandria rest of

Africa is visited to observe the life of indigenous people and natural beauty (Vignal, 2010). For this purpose, many people are serving these tourists and providing their services to these tourists and facilitate them positively and earn some money. Asia has some unique places to visit also. The medieval art of Central Asia is quite popular among tourists. Handicrafts and of South Asia and Southeast Asia are also famous because of their simplicity and raw beauty (Sarma & Chutia, 2016).

Tourism in Pakistan is now again an emerging phenomenon. In the past two decades due to unrest and political instability that the tourist showed a lack of interest in exploring the beauty of Pakistan, so due to these reasons and causes the tourism industry faced some hard blows and less attractive for the international tourists and visitors. But now the country is leading toward peace and peace brings some other good gesture with itself after some military operation and eradicated the menace of terrorism. Now local and foreign tourist are again visiting different areas of Pakistan, especially people are more likely visits to the northern areas of Pakistan, Swat, Kalam and Kaghan, and Naran and many other places of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Arshad, Iqbal, & Shahbaz, 2017). These tourists are being serviced by not only males, but females are also running a small business to facilitate them and enhance their livelihood and economic participation (Goheer, 2003).

Moreover, in Pakistan, all the provinces and other regions have some unique feature which appeals an outsider to dig into. For example, Sindh is renowned and famous for its cultural heritage and the Mausoleum of the great saints, Punjab is famous for its traditional food and art, and culture. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is visited by the tourist to see a natural beauty and Pashtun culture and small mountains. Baluchistan has also some important places to visit. According to historians the oldest civilization in the world was in Mehrgarh which is nowadays in Baluchistan (Khaira, 2020). These all have their own significance but a region that draws the attention of most people to look, and visit is the uppermost region of Pakistan which called Gilgit Baltistan.

Gilgit-Baltistan is at the center of three major mountain ranges namely the Himalayas, Karakoram, and Hindukush. The world's second-highest peak Austin Goodwin which is also known as K2 which is present in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan. Apart from mountains, there are other reasons which are among the deterrent of tourist's exploring behavior. For example, the beautiful landscapes, the glaciers, the art of that area, the diverse nature of the people, and the lifestyle of those who are living at the world's one of the highest points. Gilgit Baltistan is very diverse in nature there are more than five languages spoken in that sub-provincial region (Ali, 2011).

The culture is very diverse in Gilgit-Baltistan and it varies from district to district. However, district Hunza, Gilgit, Skardu, and Gilgit are very famous for the tourist destinations, not only from the national or local areas but also from the international level. However, district Hunza is very famous for even international level tourists and the overall tourist facilitation and management is systematically and better serve the needs and wants of the tourists. Due to the higher educational rate and women's empowerment in Hunza, women are also part of the tourist industry and offering their services to facilitate tourist in the forms of the establishment of hostels, food corridors, cafe, guiding services, rent care services and many other selling locals made product to the international tour which is also a source of attraction to the foreign tourist's Zain, 2010).

Tourism contributes to the national and local economy to a great extent and enhances the livelihood of the people of the destination country. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, the overall impact of tourism on the economy of a country is so vast and diverse. In the year 2019, the rate of employment and economic growth was clearly visible. The world travel and tourism council claimed that around 10.4% of its total gross domestic product were accounted for the tourism sector and it provided almost 319 million jobs world widely. 10% of people got their livelihood through tourism (Vetráková, et al., 2020). As the impacts of tourism are so huge that some

regions and countries are fully dependent on tourism and their economy is dependent on the tourism sector. Tourism on a communal level is also quite helpful to accommodate the very needs of the local community. Through tourism, not only economic benefits but also social status can be achieved their political and economic status as well (Ashley, 2000).

Pakistan is an e patriarchal society, where all the sectors have been held and controlled by males, and less likely chances for females to participate in economic activities. The authority of males in decisions making is clear-cut and considered as a final decision. The female of the society although provide services and share their part in all aspects of life but somehow their role is not that much appreciated as that of males. But in certain areas in Pakistan, the empowerment of women is keep going on through their involvement in numerous economic activities (Bhatti et al., 2011). Tourism is one of those factors which are allowing women to participate in economic, social, and political life.

As it is known that in developing countries one of the major barriers to progress is gender inequality. Tourism provides an equal chance to both genders in order to achieve their positions and economic and social standings. In tourism, gender issues have been discussed extensively in from last decade in their academic literature. Tourism has changed the quality of life of both genders. The females are now getting independence economically and politically. The gender ratio in each sector has been increasing through tourism. This idea has made my mind explore and evaluate the impacts of tourism on women, especially empowerment (Tucker, & Boonabaana, 2012).

Tourism indeed is a platform that has to provide women a chance to improve their living standards. Tourism can address those conditions which according to Kamla Bhasin (2004) is women empowerment. She argued that there are some aspects that determine the empowerment of women. First of all, is to recognize women's knowledge and contributions, Women should educate enough to fight their fears and

inferiority. Women have self-respect and self-dignity. Women should have enough power to control their bodies. Women should be economically independent, and they do have some sort of property. Women should be strong enough to oppose those decisions which are harmful to them. Women should have organizations and other groups which secure their rights. So, after discussing all these statements and arguments I come to know that tourism can provide them an opportunity to improve their living standards and it can bring empowerment among women.

The present research examines women's empowerment through the tourism sector in the District Hunza Altit village where the majority of women are involved in tourist facilitation services, like hotel management, tourist guiding services, rental car services, local handicraft shops, small café, and other tourist-related activities. Due to Altit fort tourist, both national and international are coming to the Altit villages where many women are operating hostels and café and earning economic wellbeing's.

### **1.1. Research Question**

Pakistani society, especially the society of Gilgit-Baltistan is patriarchal, where men enjoy different kinds of power and they got some specific privileges in the society like making their own decisions and free choice but when it comes to women, the situation is vulnerable and more likely dependently on men for even their daily life activities. They bound to pay some of their services to society in terms of their freedom. They cannot freely move from one area to another without the permission of a male partner. They cannot enjoy the right of property in some areas. With the end of the previous century, there have been some drastic changes occurred in the atmosphere of the world when it comes to equal right. Women in most countries enjoy equal rights.

One of the major fields which are responsible for the preservations of rights is tourism. Tourism in many countries across the globe has changed the lives of women. Women who are doing some sort of artistic work are now acknowledged by others who come to visit that area. Women are empowering their selves through tourism by

selling their stuff which they made. They participate in politics and their economic activities are also improved due to tourism.

Tourism is the backbone of the economy of Gilgit-Baltistan where 40% of people are directly and indirectly affiliated with the tourism sector. In the context of Altit which is a historic place in terms of tourism an old historic fort called Altit fort where millions of tourists came from both inside the country and from outside countries. Women along with men have set up their own small businesses in Altit like hostels, shops, handicrafts shops, café, restaurants, malls, tourist guide services which not only able women to maximize women's economic capacity and dependency but also empowered them socially, politically, and economically. How the participation in tourism activities enhance women's economic empowerment in the Altit village Hunza, Pakistan?

## **1.2. Objectives of Research**

The study examines the importance of tourism and impacts on the women empowerment in Altit village Hunza Pakistan where many women are involved in tourist sector, because the Altit has some historic places where millions of national and international tourists reached every year. The study has following objectives.

- To examines the tourism sector of the Altit village and its contribution in socio-economic development.
- To analyze the involvement of women in tourism sector and its relationship with their empowerment in the society.

## **1.3. Scope of the Study**

There are many studies in order to address the need for tourism and women empowerment in society. Different researchers have conducted their studies in these criteria, but all these studies have been either in the tourism sector or the economic sector. The purpose of this study is to look at this phenomenon through the lenses of



Anthropology. As we know Anthropology is a holistic approach when it originates to address something, and the most important aspect of Anthropology is to do field research. In other fields for example in the tourism or economic sector, a researcher did not engage with his/her respondent in order to point out some potential aspect but in Anthropology a researcher is supposed to spend his time with a respondent, and he is supposed to live there as native. I think this the main significance of the study. A respondent feels the security and a reciprocal relationship is developed between a researcher and a respondent.

The researcher also has tried to figure the perception of the people regarding this trend. Another important aspect of this study is that Anthropological research is still very few when comes to women empowerment through tourism. No Anthropological research is yet conducted on this changing spectrum. This will be the first study that will address this tendency of change. Similarly, the study has both practical and theoretical scopes. Theoretically, this research adds the existing body of knowledge and also enhances the literature review on the tourism and economic empowerment among women of Altit village Hunza, Pakistan. In the practice, it has also scope like this research can be used for the policy-making purpose and creation of awareness among the local women regarding their involvement in tourism and its relationship with empowerment.

## **1.4. Operational Definitions of Key Terms**

### **1.4.1 Women's Empowerment**

Women empowerment is a women's development and their empowerment in the society, where women get access to quality education, access to better health care, exposure to mass media, and her involvement in politics (Weiss 2013). The paid work is increased among educated women, which is almost started after the industrial revolution in Europe and the West as a whole. Whereas women employment is more on the peak from the year in the 1990s. Worldwide, the total number of women has

increased in job markets and access to employment, where women's participation in paid work increases from the year 1990s to 2010 was 52% respectively. Furthermore, Sultana (2019) stated that women who are earning their livelihood and are being part of paid work in the market, have said at the decision-making process at household levels as well as the society as a whole level. Finally, Lerner (1958) has explained women's empowerment as the women's employment, her entry into the job market irrespective of her education. Moreover, women's participation in public work. These are the indicators of women's empowerment. Women who are independent in their life and can take any type of decision making for the best interest of herself and for her family members.

In the present context, women's empowerment is the overall livelihood and economic accessibility to women when they participate in economic activity, like her involvement in the tourism sector and offering her services to tourists and in return earn some money. Women empowerment in the current context that women in Altit have opportunities to involvement in economic activities and earn their livelihood and decrease their dependency on males. Economic empowerment also gives the ability women to participate in other social and political activities and her involvement in social activities.

#### **1.4.2. Tourism**

Tourism is a kind of entertainment activity where people from one place move or visit another place for the purpose of research, fun, entertainment, and any other activity. Most people from developed regions are traveling from their places to another beautiful place to spend their leisure time. In the present context, tourism means people from different areas reached Altit village and spend their time and enjoy their life in Altit village. Moreover, tourism means people from other areas including both national, local, and international visitors come to Altit and purchase and take advantage of the local foods, products, and other related facilities.

## **1.5. Confidentiality**

Every research study has some ethics, to maintain these ethical concerns are vital while conducting a research study. The first ethics is to safeguard and completely ensure the privacy of respondents, all the interviews which were taken from respondents would be incomplete confidential and only can use for academic purposes. The hard reproductions of the study-related forms will be stored in a protected cabinet, and only the research student and supervisor will have access to this information. After the conclusion of the study, identifier information will be exposed, and only study IDs will be used during the analysis.

All identifier evidence will be demolished after the analysis is complete. Apart from this, it is the duty of the researcher to sureness the names of respondents, and the composed data is not used for any other purpose rather for education. The respondents only deliver information based on the privacy of their data. Finally, it is the researcher accountable to share information of respondents with anyone else. Sometimes many researchers found that something is illegal, but they do not interfere it.

## **CHAPTER NO. 2**

### **2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The purpose of reviewing literature is to know about what has been done and what need to be done in the existing body of knowledge through research.

#### **2.1. Tourism and Women Empowerment**

The concept of women's empowerment appears to be the outcome of the several important critiques and debates generated by the women's movement throughout the world and particularly by the third world feminist's world. Its source is traced to the interaction between feminism and the concept of "popular education" developed in Latin America in the year 1970s. According to Shusha Sahay, a prolonged resistance of women for their rights brought some changes in their lives and social status. She argues in her book "Women and Empowerment" that women's movement throughout the world specifically in the third world is responsible for the recognition which they got in society. During the year the 1970s in Latin America and also in South America a movement called "popular education" improved women's position and it was a good step for securing their basic rights through her involvement in numerous socio-economic activities (Murtaza 2012).

Similarly, expanding women's economic opportunities can have a wide-ranging benefit, which is including the benefits for women's own agency. Research on the norms and agency drawing on data from women and men in twenty countries in all regions stated that "women's ability to work for pay, maybe one of the most visible and game-changing events in their life of the modern households and all communities around." But not all work is equally empowering and enhances their working conditions matter, as does the type of work that women do in a society (Fernandez, 2014).

Miki Fernandez is of the view that delivering economic opportunities to women can carry multiple benefits. There is a concept that women are paid less than men in jobs and other life activities in society. In most cases this is true, but in a specialized field, where women are paid equally or sometimes more than men as per their experiences and expertise. Research in which data was gathered from almost twenty countries signifies the ability of women and the economic contribution which she does in a society. But again, it is totally based on the working condition and type of work which women are doing (Grzela, & Bouchard, 2010).

The tourism sector is a, however, a recent invention and development, especially among the developing countries. The word was unknown in the English language until the last century and increasingly came to have a somewhat suspect meaning, describing group travel of the cheaper kind, with an element of an inward-looking dislike of strangers and foreigners. In contrast, the words travel, and the traveler was respected, mirroring the quality of the earlier travelers who were associated with the rich, educated, or upper-class and society leaders.

Thus, travel for leisure and as an entertaining activity was a relatively new concept (Lickorish & Jenkins, 1997). In this paragraph, Lickrosh and Jenkins argue that tourism is considered a relatively new field compared to other economic fields. Although in the earliest times there were people who to travel and discover things, the word tourism is new. The word tourist was a suspected word, and its use was not mutual among literates but on the other, the word travel was accepted, and it was favored to a respectable job.

There is not any specific term that will conveniently identify those individuals whose function is to guide, inform and engage with groups of tourists and other visitors. Whilst some tourist guides and couriers may be working by carriers and tour operators, others may work independently or could provide freelance services to companies in the industry (Camilleri, 2017). As there are lots of women whose livelihood is founded on tourism, for example, they are doing jobs in touring

operating agencies or they are tour operators or guides so in these the researcher Mark Camilleri has discussed how they operate and how they make money by guiding tourists.

Moreover, women are encouraged to pro-actively participate in a tourism venture and sector and the main enabler comprises skill development and imparting education with the aim of accenting economic benefits from the tourism sector. The local authority has given consultative status to women to safeguard their dynamic participation and empowerment as well through which women are enhancing their status. Women do the roles of eco-guides, craft makers, cooks, homestay facilitators, and cultural organizers. They join up and enrolled in various capacity-building programmed which including the overall improvement of communication proficiency (Mohanty & Chandran, 2018).

Two Indian researchers Privakrushna Mohanty and Anu Chandran have evaluated outcomes of the Government plans about poverty alleviation and women's development through tourism and related activities. They argued that the local authorities have provided women with an opportunity to contribute their services for their economic benefits. They are now providing their services in different fields for example they sell their arts and crafts to the tourists, they are cooks at hotels and restaurants and they are tour guides and also women providing café services to the tourists.

However, the tourism sector presents both opportunities and challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment. The contribution of women in the business world has increased in recent years, although women are underrepresented in management and leadership positions in Government organizations and other business ventures. In the tourism industry, the percentage of women who work in the industry is high, but their function is dominated by unskilled, low-paid jobs due to the low socio-economic status of women in the society. The tourism sector provides various entry points for women's employment and opportunities for creating self-

employment in small and medium-sized income-generating activities (Ramchurjee, 2011).

Another Indian researcher Nicola Ramchurjee a professor at Mysore University in her articles claimed that tourism is beneficial for both genders. It provides an equal opportunity to both genders when both males and females participate equally in serving the tourists. The research also argued that now in the business sector the share of women quite significant. The ratio of property ownership is nowadays getting close to equality. In management and leadership positions, the role of women is not yet that vital but tourism their role appreciable. Tourism has made it possible for women to work for maximum wages which they deserve through their skills and efforts. Self-employment is a big plus point for women and tourism makes it possible to survive in society.

If tourism can be an effective tool in empowering women, subsequently, the question comes to 'In which perspective tourism as a 'tool' can empower women effectively?' It is potentially through the concept of entrepreneurship activities. Entrepreneurship is a critical factor in tourism development, both globally and regionally (Thien, Reader, & Peeters, 2009). As tourism has provided various ways for women for setting their goals, they can achieve that goal by their own level of effort. According to Faulkner and Russel, the main aspect of female empowerment is entrepreneurship activities. A woman nowadays due to lots of opportunities can start a business and can be self-employed by utilizing her skills and local level efforts. Entrepreneurship is a hot topic among researchers, and it has changed the ideas about the economic sources of women. People now prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than doing delivering services to other people. So, entrepreneurship is an outcome of tourism and women especially shifts toward the tourism sector and provide their skills and efforts to empower their selves in a society (Thien, Reader & Peeters, 2009).

## **2.4. Aspects of Women's Empowerment**

The equality of women to men is still not guaranteed in many social and legal institutions across the world. This influences the quality and implementation of their basic human rights, the access and/or control over land, in employment conditions and earnings status, and in the participation in decision making processes at the general level. During the implementation or management of tourism projects, this problem could be acknowledged by including women in the planning and organizational process, with the aim of giving them a voice in the process of decision making about tourism-related activities.

Tourism could empower women by giving them more power and the ability to control what happens to their community, their livelihood, and their daily life. Through the empowerment by the micro-credit programs could greatly contribute to the overall improvement the gender equality. Similarly, tourism can function as an instrument for economic empowerment by opening up new markets and opportunities for small and medium enterprises which not only give them economic empowerment to women but also empowered them socially and politically through their contributions (Ateljevic, 2008).

Women empowerment has been defining by many researchers and international agencies. However, a complete definition is given by the United Nations (UN 2010), that women employment and education is a process where women become part of the major workforce and start getting some sort of money, wages, or any type of salaries irrespective of the level of job, nature of job and level of education among women in a particular society (UN 2013., UN 2011). Moreover, women empowerment is a term, which uses for women development and their empowerment in society through any sort of economic activity, where women get access to quality education, admittance to the better health care system, exposure to mass media, and women's involvement in politics and social work (Weiss, 2013).



In the present context, the paid work is increased among educated women, especially freelancing and tourism-related activities, which is almost started after the industrial revolution in Europe and the West as a whole and currently among the women of Gilgit-Baltistan. Whereas women's employment and economic engagements are more on the peak from the year in the 1990s to the present era. Worldwide, the total number of women has increased in job markets and access to employment, where women's participation in paid work increases from the year 1990s to 2010 was almost 52% in developing countries and around 90% in developed countries.

Furthermore, Sultana (2019) founded that women who are earning their livelihood and are being part of their paid work in the markets and surrounded areas have said at the decision-making process at the household levels as we as the society as a whole level in society. In the present context, the conventional economies are converting into essential social services and industries, where women have more economic and social opportunities to participate in economic activities actively. Finally, Lerner (1958) has explained women's empowerment as the women's employment, her entry into the job market irrespective of her education and market skills. Moreover, women's participation in public work and social work in her capacity. These are the indicators of women's empowerment. Women who are independent in their life or livelihood and have the ability to take any type of decision-making for the best interest of themselves and for their family members independently.

Women's empowerment can be categorized in different aspects of life based on the women's access to the resources. The political empowerment of women is an essential phenomenon through which they can demand their rights more easily than by just doing protests and other activities. Women are ignored in different countries and their fundamental rights are not guaranteed by the state officials and other law-making bodies due to their low level of social status. As tourism provides them livelihood and empowerment so due to these aspects their political participation could be ensured in economic and social activities. Tourism makes empowers enough to

control their social will and demand their rights in a more sophisticated and positive way. Programs for women to make them entrepreneur is an example where women become able to move from one place to another for business and other social activities. Loans at a small scale are provided to women to make them economically stable and enhance their business (Nassani et al., 2019).

Economic empowerment is another aspect of women's empowerment where more and more women than men live in poverty. Much work within families and communities is unpaid and often falls on the shoulders of women and women are forcedly performed two ways duties both social and household. These women must deal with the discrimination in the economic aspect and also in there every day or are struggling for some economic independence. The narrowing the gap between men and women in the economic sphere, for instance through the empowerment by micro-credit programs which could greatly contribute to improving the overall gender equality. Tourism can function as an instrument for economic empowerment by opening new markets for small and medium-term enterprises (Ateljevic, 2008). Many women in tourist-rich areas have been set up business ventures like hostels, cafes, small shopping centers to facilitate the tourist and earn their livelihood.

Moreover, that economic dependency leads a woman toward poverty and vulnerable socially and politically as well as economically. Further, the majority of women across the world are not economically independent, so they have relied on the male members of the family (Overa, 2007). Women are exposed to poverty more than men because the type of work that a woman is supposed to do is usually considered a responsibility rather than work outside the home, so they are not paid for that work. Women who are doing their works are facing some serious discrimination when it comes to wages and returns. So, in this situation, tourism can play a crucial to identify the importance of woman's work and their contribution towards social and economic development. Tourism tries to eliminate the gender gap of economic participation and tries to overcome the barriers of women empowerment from society. Through small

scale loans and financial support, women can operate in a more prominent way and they can secure their future economically (True, 2012).

The third important aspect of women's empowerment is the educational empowerment of women. The statistics showed that almost two-thirds of the illiterate adults in the world are female and they are totally dependent. The level of education of women is strongly related to the levels of infant mortality and fertility, as well as the level of education and the economic opportunities for their offspring. The tourism sector can be used as a sector, where women from all hierarchies in society, with all types of educational backgrounds, can be trained and cultivated for certain skills within the tourism industry. Women can engage in different forms of imaginative entrepreneurship which gives women a whole range of skills, like speaking different languages, hospitality skills, guiding tourists, managing projects, and so on. Women's engagement in tourism activities can enhance their general ability to do some social level work with the partnership with other people in the society (Ateljevic, 2008).

## **2.5. Tourism and Women Empowerment Globally**

Women empowerment is now seen almost everywhere across the globe, especially the debate is higher in developing regions. World Travel and Tourism Organization has estimated that women are playing their vital role in tourism development in developing regions of the world. According to WTTC during the year 1990s around 16 million tourists come to Africa for visiting ancient cities and for exploration of indigenous culture. At the end of the decade, the number of tourists almost doubled reaching from 16 million to 31 million, respectively. Africa's share in the tourism industry is less than 5% of its total GDP. The number of tourists increased in the next decade and in the year 2007 there were almost 44 million tourists who visited Africa in the same year (Rabadán et al., 2020).

Many studies have shown that tourism contributed to the process of women's empowerment and able them to work outside their homes. In Africa, the violence

against women is at its peak, where women are deprived at every sphere of life and even very few in decision-making bodies. Women are sexually, economically, and socially exploited by men. Due to violence against women which is relatively less than what it was used to be. In countries like Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya the tourism ministries are very active, and they have organized different types of training programs for women to let women learn specialization in the field of tourism management and entrepreneurship activities (UNWTO Commission for Africa, 2020).

Moreover, women empowerment through tourism can be seen in Asia also, where a larger number of women in Pakistan and Bangladesh are so far been engaged in tourism-related activities. Furthermore, in Nepal, there are programs that are meant to prepare women for a better future through the tourism sector where women are more likely active in tourism-related activities. Similarly, advanced learnings and mobile training are among those programs are being involved by women (Akhter & Cheng, 2020). In Laos, the government is trying to secure the future of women by enabling them to improve their skills in the field of hotel management and tourism management. Ecotourism is the main source of economy and the government is trying to identify the possible capabilities of women in that field of tourism. Which is an important aspect of women empowerment and enhance their capacities to do better in their life (GVI Charitable Programs, 2020).

Moreover, women's empowerment through tourism is also common among the women of Latin America. Whereas countries like Brazil (2013) and Ecuador (2020) which are visited by the tourist most of the time have organized different types of training programs for women to facilitate international tourists where the hostel management and hospitality training have been conducted for women to facilitate international tourists. The technical and the vocation center are also made for women to empower themselves in society through economic activities.

In Europe and America, there are a lot of programs for improving the skills of women in the field of commerce and entrepreneurship especially hostel management skills. These programs lead towards to empowerment of women and most of them are related to tourism and hospitality. The results are quite significant and the living standards of the women through these programs has been improved the overall livelihood of women in the region. Globally, in many regions, like Swaziland and other tourist destination countries women are also along with the counterparts to work on the tourism sector.

## **2.5. Tourism and Women's Empowerment in Pakistan**

Tourism in Pakistan is emerging with the advent of modern information technology, and economic development. In the previous two decades, due to some instability and political uncertainty that the tourist demonstrated a lack of interest in studying the beauty of Pakistan, so due to these causes and effects, the tourism industry encountered some hard blows and less attractive for the global tourists and visitors. But at the moment the country is prominent toward the peace and the peace brings some other good sign with itself after some military action to destroy the mansion of terrorism from Pakistan. Now the local and also foreign tourist are again visiting several areas of Pakistan, particularly people are more probable visits to the northern areas of Pakistan, some areas of Swat, Kalam and Kagan, and Naran and several other places of the Khaybar Pakhtunkhwa (Arshad, Iqbal, and Shahbaz, 2017). These tourists are being repaired by not only males, but females are also operating a small business to expedite them and improve their livelihood and financial participation (Goheer, 2003).

Moreover, in Pakistan, all the regions have some distinctive feature that requests an outsider to dig into. For example, Sindh is famous and famous for its cultural heritage and the Mausoleum of the great saints, Punjab is notorious for its conventional food and art, and culture. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is stayed by the tourist to see a natural beauty and Pashtun culture and small mountains. Baluchistan has also some essential

places to visit. According to historiographers the oldest society in the world was in Mehrgarh which is currently in Baluchistan (Khaira, 2020). These all have their own importance but a region that draws the interest of most individuals to look, and visit is the most important region of Pakistan which called Gilgit Baltistan.

Tourism provides to the national and local market to a great extent and improves the overall livelihood of the people of the purpose country. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, the global influence of tourism on the economy of a country is so enormous and varied. In the year 2019, the rate of engagement and economic growth was obviously noticeable. The world travel and tourism commission asserted that about 10.4% of its total gross household product were reported for the tourism sector and it supplied nearly 319 million jobs world widely. Furthermore, 10% of people get hold of their income or employment through the tourism sector (Vetráková, et al., 2020). As the influences of tourism are so huge that some provinces and countries are fully dependent relative to tourism and their economy is reliant on the tourism sector. Tourism on a collective level is also quite helpful to assist the very needs of the local community. Through tourism, not only economic advantages but also social status can be attained their political and economic significance as well (Ashley, 2000).

Pakistan is an e male-controlled society, where all the sectors have been held and dominated by males, and less likely opportunities for females to contribute to economic activities. The influence of males in decisions making is clear-cut and deemed as a definitive decision. The female of the society although offer services and contribute to their part in all phases of life but in some way, their role is not that much understood as that of males. But in specific areas in Pakistan, the emancipation of women is keep going on through their participation in various economic activities (Bhatti et al., 2011).

Tourism is one of those considerations which are allowing women to contribute to economic, social, and political life. As it is understanding in developing countries one

of the main impediments to improvement is a gender imbalance. Tourism provides an equivalent chance to both genders in order to accomplish their positions and economic and social rankings. In tourism, femininity issues have been debated widely in from last period in their academic literature. Tourism has altered the condition of life of both genders. The females are now gaining independence economically, socially, and also politically due to their higher socioeconomic status. The gender ratio in each region has been growing through the tourism sector. This idea has made my thinking discover and assess the impacts of tourism on women, particularly emancipation (Tucker, and Boonabaana, 2012).

Tourism certainly is a manifesto that has to deliver women an opportunity to enhance their living guidelines. Tourism can address those circumstances which according to Kamla and Bhasin (2004) is women enfranchisement. The findings also stated that there are some characteristics that define the emancipation of women. The first is to acknowledge women's knowledge and their contributions. Women should be educated sufficiently to combat their fears and inferiority. Women have self-esteem and self-dignity. Women should have adequate power to control their bodies and possessions. Women should be economically impartial, and they do have property. Women should be strong enough to oppose those choices which are detrimental to them. Women should have associations and other groups which guarantee their rights. So, after reviewing all these declarations and reasons that tourism can offer them a chance to enhance their living requirements and it can bring emancipation among women.

## **2.5. Present Context of the Study**

The current research study was conducted to examines women's empowerment through the sector of tourism in the District Hunza Altit town. The majority of women in Altit town have been involved in the tourist facilitation services, such as hotel management services, tourist guiding facilities, rental car services, selling of local handicrafts, small shops, cafés, and other tourist-related activities. Due to Altit

fort tourists, together with national and international are coming to the Altit villages where many women are operating hostels and café and earning economic wellbeing's.

On the other hand, the society of Gilgit-Baltistan is patriarchal, where men adore various types of power and they got some particular freedoms in the society like making their own determinations and free choice but when it comes to women, the situation is susceptible and more likely weakly on men for even their daily life events. They bound to reimburse some of their public services to society in terms of their independence, freedom, and liberty. They cannot spontaneously move from one area to another without the consent of a male partner. They cannot enjoy the right of property in some areas. With the end of the previous century, there have been some radical changes happened in the environment of the world when it comes to equal rights.

Women in most countries appreciate the same rights. One of the most important fields which are accountable for the protection of rights is tourism. Tourism in several countries around the world has improved the lives of women. Women who are doing some sort of imaginative work are now accepted by others who come to visit that area and to enjoy the beauty of the region. Women are empowering their natures through tourism by offering their stuff which they made. They take part in politics and their economic activities are also enhanced due to tourism.



## **CHAPTER NO. 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

While discussing scientific methodology, Russell says: “Each scientific discipline has developed a set of numerous techniques for gathering and handling the data but here is, in general, a single scientific methodology used to conduct research in a systematical manner. The method is based on assumptions: a) that reality “out here”, b) that direct observation is the way to discover it, and c) that material explanations for observable phenomena are always sufficient, and that metaphysical explanations are never needed (Bernard, 2006).

The aim of the methodology lies in seeking answers and explanations to a question and finding true and useful information about this domain and research context. At many points in time in any discipline, there are many techniques and methods available for collecting the required data from the field. The researcher has used both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from the respective field. Because the study based on the reason, impacts, and social perception about women empowerment through tourism.

#### **3.1. Selection of study locale**

The selection and identification of the local is a very important step in the research process. The present study was conducted in the Altit village of district Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. The Altit village is considered as a hub of tourist, because of the historical places like Altit fort and old designed madhouses which are a source of attraction for the tourist from the national and international level. The Altit is historically rich in its history and fort in a town in the Hunza valley in Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan. It was initially home to the hereditary rulers of the Hunza state who carried the title Mir, although they relocated to the somewhat younger Baltit fort adjacent three centuries later. The Altit and the Fort and in particular the Shikari tower is around 1100 years

old and is the center of attention for tourists and visitors. Which makes it the oldest memorial in Gilgit–Baltistan. This fort has received the UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Award for Cultural Heritage Conservation in the year 2011.



### **3.2. Study Design**

For the present research, the mixed method was used as a research design. The design has opted for this research study as the exploratory qualitative design is usually conducted to explore the problem in a complete length and in-depth analysis (Ambert et al, 1995, pp. 881-884). This very approach helped to understand the concepts and variables from the anthropological perspective.

### **3.3. Study Duration**

The present research was conducted in the Altit village district Hunza from October 2018 to February 2019. The analysis of the data (transcribe) was carried out in the month of March 2019 to June 2019.

### **3.4. Sample Size and Techniques**

Sampling is a very important aspect of the research as it gives the choice to select a particular number of respondents from the relevant population. The basic idea behind sampling is the analysis of some of the elements in a population which provided useful information on the entire population. The sample was chosen by the means of non-probability sampling techniques. The sample was limited to thirty (30) female respondents. The purposive sampling technique was applied to get the relevant information from respondents in a systematic manner. Respondents were chosen according to the researcher's own judgment because the universe of the study was known to the researcher and native village of the researcher.

#### **3.4. 1. Purposive Sampling**

In the purposive sampling technique, the researchers purposely choose subjects matter who, in their opinion, are relevant to the project. The selection of respondents is driven by the judgment of the investigator. For this reason, it is also known as the judgmental sampling technique. There are no particular procedures involved in the actual choice of subjects in the research process. "In such cases, the significant criterion of choice is the relevant knowledge and the expertise of the respondents, and hence their appropriateness for the research study.

#### **3.4.2. Quota Sampling**

The quota sampling was also used to figure out the women of each specific field and their role in tourism development in the region through different related activities. This technique helped the researcher to find out what are the numbers of that field

and activities. For how many interviews are collected from artisan women, what are the numbers of interviews of entrepreneur women, and so on? Trainers at those centers will also be included in the current study. The qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with the following a proposed number of participants who were selected or specified by the researcher. However, the respondents were limited to the twenty-five (25) due to achievement of theoretical and saturation in responses.

### **3.5. Data collection Tools and Techniques**

The data collection is an important step in any research. In the current research study, the data was collected by means of participant observations, open-ended unstructured interviews through questionnaires, the standard measures of data collection were applied. Moreover, the data collection has done through various techniques. Kothari and Gaurav have discussed in detail the whole process of data collection. The primary data are those which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. The secondary data, on the other hand, are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process (Kothari & Garg, 2004).

#### **3.5.1. Interviews**

The interview is essentially used for collecting data from the selected sample through fieldwork. They are some ready questions that are intended by the researcher or interviewer. The interview may be valuable to examine their information and answers in a complete length (McNamara, 1999).

There are numerous types of interviews that were showed by the researcher during the stay in the field. Informal or in-depth interviews were led by the researcher during the fieldwork or the data collection process. The main advantage of this interview is that the researcher got useful data from the respondent, and the interview also helps the respondents in group discussions. The interview guide was being developed by keeping in the attention the purposes of the research.

### **3.5.2. In Formal Interviews**

Throughout the fieldwork, the researcher has conducted did informal interviews with selected respondents. These include daily chit-chat with the respondents and collected small-level information. The Informal interviews assisted the researcher to build rapport at the preliminary stage of the research. It also facilitated the investigator to know about their true sensitivity regarding the research objectives.

As the research study was on women's empowerment through tourism, where few informal interviews have been conducted which helped the researcher to understand the behavior and attitude of respondents and their level of involvement in the field of tourism.

### **3.5.3. Focus Group Discussions**

The focus group discussion is the form of group conversation that benefits from communication between research respondents in order to gather data. Although group interviews are often used merely as a quick and appropriate way to collect data from abundant people concurrently, the focus groups openly use group communication as part of the method. This means that instead of the researcher enquiring each person to reply to a question, in turn, people are heartened to talk to one another the asking different questions and observing each other's knowledge and points of view (Kitzinger, 1995).

Similarly, the focus group discussion is very important in research because every individual has a convincing point of view about the topic of research in a complete length. This is not conceivable for the researcher to take an interview with everyone. So, for this determination focus group, discussions are significant to conduct in which people freely, amenably, and without any hesitation express or participate. In the present study, few focus group discussions were conducted in the market areas, skill development center, and café which were running by women.

#### **3.5.4. Nonverbal Techniques**

Furthermore, the research used a nonverbal technique during the fieldwork that is helpful for writing notes or responses, like during interviews, a gathering, and participant observation methods. The reason behind the selection of different methods of data collection is the triangulation of the field work.

#### **3.5.5. Field Notes and Field Jotting**

A field notes were written and jotted by the researcher during fieldwork to inscribe the familiarity and personal level experiences of the day and the researcher also did field jotting in order to not miss any type of information in the research process. The researcher noted and noted the daily practice of respondents, their certain behavior towards a situation and thing that occurred in the research area. So, by utilizing these methods, the researcher has accumulated valuable and reliable data from respondents during work in the fieldwork.

#### **3.5.6. Audio Recording**

The method of audio recording was used by the investigator during the stay in the field and while conducted the interviews with the respondents, because it was abundant problematic to write each and the whole thing in detail inadequate time. So, to consume time and to get data, the technique of audio recording was used during field work. Further, the audio recording assisted to cover all evidence and information that was responded to by the respondent during interviews.

#### **3.5.7. Photography**

A photography is one of the vital techniques in research to collect the data on the spot. During the fieldwork, the researcher also used photography to record certain data about the local food items, cultural items, and other historic places.

### **3.6. Rapport Building:**

In anthropological research the rapport building is a fundamental and most important basic step used in the qualitative exploratory research, which involves the aptitude to

build a relationship of trust and level of understanding by interaction with the local respondents through interviews and observation (Ryan & Dundon, 2008). In the current research, the researcher belonged to the same local so that is why there is no such difficulty in the process of the rapport building process. The rapport building process can facilitate the researcher to get entered the local and motivate the local people to participate in the research process.

### **3.7. Participant Observation:**

In the anthropological research study, participant observation is considered the most important technique for data collection and understanding respondents according to their own settings. According to Russell: participant observation is both a humanistic approach and a scientific approach that give authentic data on the issue and problem. It produces numerous kinds of experiential knowledge which let the researcher talk convincingly, eat with them dance with them, and attend marriage ceremonies and other social events (Bernard, 2006). By using this technique, the researcher becomes a part of the environment of the local areas and becomes a member of that society. This helped the researcher in getting close to people and making them feels comfortable enough with my presence so that it would observe and record information about their lives and their activities and facilitation to the tourism and related activities.

### **3.8. Ethical Considerations**

The ethical deliberation is a very vital part of any research work. Retaining these ethical considerations is very important during the research process. In the present research, the informed consent was controlled before interviewing any participant during fieldwork. The researcher has evidently considered the study objectives and scope is of the study and the purpose of data collection. The researcher has assured all the respondents that the data which they will provide would be kept completely

confidential and only use for the purpose of research. Also, the personal identity will not be public, and after completion of the research, the data will be disposed of systematically so that it can be minimized the misuse of the data in future perspective. Secondly, the researcher has not asked any questions which are personal and hurt their culture, religion, and norms. All the respondents were participated according to their own will and they have the option to leave the interview at any time.



## **CHAPTER NO. 4**

### **4.1 The Field**

This chapter describes the researcher's brief and comprehension of the experiences of the fieldwork during the research work process. On the basis of the participatory observation and data collection from the field through in-depth interviews. This very chapter also introduced the study locale, its social organization, political setup, economic activities, the health system and its infrastructure, material culture as well as the non-material culture like religion, rituals, and language. The chapter covers all the related information and researcher experience of the research field.

### **4.2. Gilgit-Baltistan**

The region of Gilgit Baltistan is very sporadically populated, where approximately twenty persons per km<sup>2</sup> consisted of the high-mountainous area in the north of Pakistan. The area between the high peaks of the Himalayas, the Karakorum ranges, and the Hindukush is known as the Northern Areas of Pakistan before 2009. The longest glaciers outside of the polar region, home of the world's second-highest peak (K2), and four more eight-thousands are in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan is largely a high-mountainous desert area with beautiful tourist places. Further, geographically, it supports over three high mountain ranges, the Himalaya, Karakorum, and the Hindu Kush. It covers an area of 27,188 square miles (Nasir, Iqbal & Ahmad, 2020).

The area lies between 71 and 75 E while longitude and 32 and 37N respectively, where the settlements are focused on the main river of valleys and in the side-valleys. However, a major part of the region is merely dilapidated because of slope, aridity, or height. While agriculture varies on irrigation which is frequently fed by meltwater

watercourses from the glaciers. The majority of Gilgit-Baltistan surface area is very vast, but it is just dilapidated and uncultivable.

Over the last few decades, the refined area had been protracted with the help of developmental agencies, particularly the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), but in most parts, the delay has reached its limits now because of the inaccessibility of water for irrigation (Sökefeld, 2014). In the year 1972, the older states and political districts were compound into three newly formed districts, having their headquarters at Gilgit, Diamer, and Baltistan. Before, the northern area is divided into two agencies, the Gilgit and Baltistan. The Gilgit agency incorporated the autonomous states of Hunza and Nagar, the political districts of Ishkoman, Puniyal, Yasin, Ghizer, and subdivisions of Chilas and tribal areas Darel and Tangir.

Apart from this, Gilgit Baltistan is split up into ten districts as mention below.

Gilgit	Astor	Ghizer	Ganche
Skardu	Khurmong	Shigar	Nagar
Hunza	Diamar		

(Source: Author, 2019)

Due to better educational and economic opportunities, the Gilgit city is considering to be a government headquarter. The people of the northern area have no representation in parliament, but the provisional government that has been established is nominal after declaring Gilgit-Baltistan as the fifth province of Pakistan.

In the context of tourism and women’s empowerment, both sectors are developed privately. Many studies and reports have found that the female literacy rate in some districts, like Hunza, Ghizer, Gilgit is almost above the 90%. But some districts where still people are less educated and called these societies conservative. The literacy rate among women leads them towards establishing small-scale business and facilitation centers for tourists. a larger number of women have been engaged with the profession of tourism and earning their livelihood, and their families.

**Figure. Map of Gilgit-Baltistan**



(Source Google, 2019)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography\\_of\\_Gilgit%E2%80%93Baltistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Gilgit%E2%80%93Baltistan)

### **4.3. District Hunza**

The local of the current study is Hunza local and the village of Altit which is a historic place due to old age settlements of mud and Altit fort. It is in the northern part of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Hunza is renowned and famous in the whole world because of its high snow-capped peaks, the glaciers, and its historical and tourist sites or places. It is a mountainous region lie down in the extreme north in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan, situated at an altitude of approximately 2,500 meters (8,200ft) above sea level (Sökefeld, 2014).

Further, the Hunza is the name of a region/valley but not a city as many describes it. Hunza has not anything to do with Huns because previously it was a state ruled by a governing dynasty of Mirs and Rajas. It expands along with the Hunza river up to the Khunjab pass near the border with China and now the gateway of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The former ruler of Hunza had two forts generally

known as the Altit and Baltit fort which are 900 years old and declared as a tourist site. In between the forts is a barren spot known as Surya's which is currently used as a graveyard of the Mir family.

These two forts situated at the same height. Hunza was a heretofore primarily state to the northeast and Pamir to its northwest, which remained to survive until 1974 and finally disbanded by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan. The state bordered the Gilgit Agency to the south region, the former princely state of the district Nagar to the eastern side. The Baltit was the capital of the Hunza state has given the name of Karimabad village. The Hunza is divided into three parts, the upper, the lower, and the central part. The upper part is known as Gojal which shares a border with China, the Central part has many places like Aliabad, Karimabad, Altit, Ganesh, Hussanabad, and Murtazabad. While the lower includes Hussainbad, Nasirabad, and Khizerabad (Sökefeld, 2014).

#### **4.3.1. Languages**

The language is varying from the region to region, where in the Gilgit-Baltistan which is differing in terms of her religion, language, and ethnicity. There are five main languages are being spoken in Gilgit Baltistan which are as below.

- *Khuwar*
- *Balti*
- *Shina*
- *Wakhi*
- *Burushaski*

Apart from these, there are some additional languages that are also being spoken in Gilgit and Baltistan regions, which are Pushto, Hindko, Gujri, and Punjabi who had transferred to Gilgit Baltistan from different parts of Pakistan. Yet, the language which is commonly spoken in the region of Hunza is *Burushaski*. The *Burushaski* is the mother tongue of *Burusho's* who are living in the center. The people live in the

upper part of Hunza speaks Wakhi while the lower use Shina language respectively. While in the central some people (*Bericho, the blacksmiths and musicians*) who are less in the number used to converse a language known as *Domaki* which is dead now and very few people are speaking.

#### **4.4. Introduction to Altit Village Hunza**

The Atit village is famous for many important historic places and events, where the most famous is the Altit Fort where thousands of national and international tourists are visiting every year. The attractive fort overlooking the village of Altit beside the Hunza River was experiencing widespread renovation at the time of research and was closed to the public. The thousand-year-old village has been reconditioned and rehabilitated and you can be walked around the delightful village with the aid of a local guide. The fort is about to 1.5 km from Karimabad Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. Turn right after the Jamaat Khana (Ismaili Community Hall) and pass the old village pool to the fort gate. Moreover, the Fort is *gela* (*geh-lah*) in the Burushaski language (Sökefeld, 2014).

The land of Altit Hunza is fertile and seasonal cultivation is possible due to extreme cold weather from October to March and almost six months no chances of cultivation process in the Altit villages. Cultivation is only possible from May to September. In winters, almost one feet snow falling in the Altit village where people face numerous difficulties in the cold weather. Due to fewer opportunities in the agriculture sectors, both males and females are engaged with the tourism-related activities and almost 60% of women in Altit village are directly and indirectly engaged with entrepreneurial activities. Many women have taken the skills development training from many NGOs and Govt sectors, like Rupani Foundation, KADO, and Social Welfare Department Govt of Gilgit-Baltistan (Dilshad et al., 2009).

Similarly, a respondent has stated that “women of Altit village Hunza are producing many local made items for sale purpose and earning enough money and investing

money on their children’s education and health”. On the other side, a respondent founded that “many women have taken training of hospital management and tourism management and now these women are investing their skills and resources along with their family members. Women made local dishes and products and male sale those products”. Women in Altit village are more independent and strongly related to their culture and norms. Many educated females have established businesses in the region to promote economic independence in the village. “The Altit, Karim Abad and Aliabad are most developed villages in the whole Hunza due to both side efforts males and females are working together and these villages are the hubs of the tourism-related activities”.

#### **4.4.1. Climatic Conditions of Hunza**

The climate of Hunza is very tough in winters while in summers the temperature continues pleasant. People of Hunza relish four seasons and each season has its own specialty. The climatic situation in Hunza expresses below by each month.

Serial No	Time Duration or periods	English	Burushaski
1	March to May	Spring	Garu
2	June to August	Summer	Sheeni
3	September to November	Autumn	Daato
4	December to February	Winter	Bai

(Source Author, 2021)

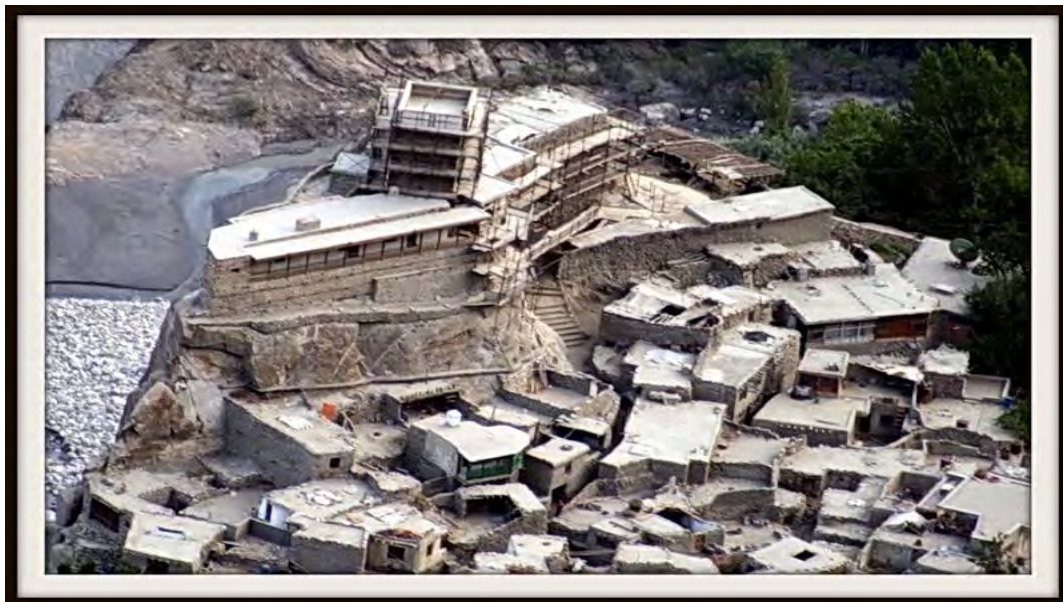
The climatic condition of Hunza valley is favorable in the summer season and very cold in winter. In winter, there is intense snow falling; therefore, people store things like meat, fruits, and dry fruits so that they could consume them in the winter season. In addition, they also store fodders, and dry leaves for their farm animals because the temperature reaches up to -10 to 20 degrees centigrade. However, the summer season is completely different from the winter season, where the temperature goes to 30 degrees in summer, and the whole valley is transformed into a lush green, which is a major source of attraction for the tourism sector. Because of the enjoyable weather

and greenery all around, both the local and the international tourists use to visit the Hunza region during summer and autumn as well.

#### **4.4.2. The Settlement Patterns of Hunza**

In every society, the settlement pattern is decided according to its climate conditions and environmental factors. Similarly, in the region of Hunza, most of the Houses are Pakkah made of cement while a small number of houses are made of mud, wherein Altit most of the settlements are with mud and people have not intervened them due to historic factor and which is also a greater source of attraction for tourists in Altit village. The settlement shape among (Hunzukutz) is now altered as they used to live in Katcha houses. Firstly, they used to live in mud houses but with the passage of time and improvement of society, people also changed their settlement patterns. But the architecture and designs of the houses remain the same. Even if they build any new house according to modern architecture, their internal design remains the same.

**Figure 2. The settlement pattern of Katcha Houses in Altit Village**



(Source Author, 2021)

#### **Settlement Pattern of Pakkah Houses**



(Source Author, 2021)

#### **4.4.3. Food Patterns**

Food is an important constituent of any society which defines their taste and culture of the region. Due to its extraordinary cultural cuisine, people from different countries visit Hunza Altit village. The durability of people in Hunza is also due to the integrity of their food pattern. People of Hunza ingest food corresponding to the temperature and season. For example, a drink that is used in the summer season is known as Diltar which is produced from yogurt. Sometimes it served with bread known as (fitty) in the local language of Hunzukurutz.

In the region of Hunza, every morning people use homemade bread called fitty a goal shape made up of eggs and flour and they also made a small thin bread for breakfast known as (Shero). The substances in their breakfast consist of salty tea, homemade bread, butter, eggs, and razor (made of flour fried in oil). However, in the early days, individuals used dry fruits, oil of almonds, apricot, and walnut in their food. They made serving dishes by using all these oils that kept them warm up during winter's season where the temperature goes below -10 in the Hunza. Similarly, in prehistoric



days and still by some people used to keep the dry meat for winter. Furthermore, they also make some juices from dry fruits which they consume in all seasons. But now some of these procedures have been declined but few conventional foods which are still accessible and usable by the people of Hunza below,

- *Giyalin*
- *Burusbarikux*
- *Mulida*
- *Khamulot*
- *Sharbat*
- *Haressa*
- *Mul*
- *Maltash cha giyali*

**Figure 3: Traditional and local dishes of Hunza**



(Source Author 2021)

#### **4.4.5. Facilities**

##### **4.4.5.1. Education and Educational Facilities**

The majority of people in the Hunza valley, especially in Altit are literate, every individual is well aware of the significance of education because of the leadership from their spiritual leader His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, where all the educational and health facilities have been provided by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). Whereas the majority of the parents in Hunza give more inclination to their daughters in the context of education because they think, if we teach our daughter, she will educate our whole society. Therefore, education among females is better than males in Hunza now as contrasted to the past few years. The system of schooling in the valley is also improved along with government schools and colleges. The religious leader of Ismaili, his highness prince Karim Aga Khan is performing a significant role in this domain of social, economic, psychological, and political development.

The first English medium school generally known as the Diamond Jubilee school which was established in the year 1915 was first founded in Gilgit by Sir Aga Khan. Almost, there are 15 Government schools and 10 Diamond jubilee schools that are operated under the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). There are more than 30 private schools and colleges in the whole Hunza and other adjacent villages. Apart from this, now people also start granting importance to skills developmental activities, where women are at a larger level contributing to the economy in different ways.

The majority of women in the Altit village are engaged with tourism activities and many other activities, like music, carpentry, and gems cutting, polishing of woods, hotel management, etc. There are some organizations that provide free skill development training to those youth who could not maintain their education, especially among the young females. Similarly, those students who are freshly

graduated, provide free services to their community in different community development programs.

#### **4.4.5.2. Transport Facilities**

The transport was an enormous problem in the early days because of the lack of appropriate roads and vehicles. About a few periods ago, people had to walk miles due to the lack of roads. Similarly, there was no correct transport system from the government which they could avail of. Because of life-threatening poverty, people cannot have enough money vehicles therefore, they prefer to walk. But now with the progression in the economy and construction of roads like the Karakorum highway, people can easily sway. Now each household owns a vehicle by which they use to travel but senior citizen still favors to walk by foot. Hunza being a mountainous place, still, there is no facility of airplanes, trains, and metros. There are two ways of traveling process, by foot or by road through vehicles.

#### **4.4.5.3. Electricity**

One of the major problems which locals of Hunza Altit are confronting is a lack of electricity. There is only one hydropower station which is located in Hussanabad that does not produce enough light to give to the whole region. But these days due to land sling and melting of Shish per glacier, the main hydropower station in Hussanabad is suspended. Therefore, locals use gas cylinders, candles, generators, and some UPS. People protested many times and demanded the government to provide them proper electricity, but nothing has happened.

#### **4.4.5.4. Communication**

The means of communication in Hunza Altit is not as sophisticated and advance as it is in other regions of Pakistan. There is no system of Wi-Fi and network internet, but now SCOM has launched a network but it is not working properly and also Army owned network. Only one mobile network, Scom can provide 3G services in Gilgit-Baltistan. While the rest of the networks are merely used for communication

purposes. However, there is a phone line phone service (PTCL) that continues banned throughout the year, especially during winters.

#### 4.4.5.5. Health Facilities in Hunza

There are few government hospitals in the valley while private clinics are large in number. Both private hospitals and clinics are playing an immense role in providing health care services to local people. Major hospitals in research locale are,

- Government Hospital Aliabad Hunza
- Aga Khan Health Centre Aliabad Hunza
- Family health Centre Hunza.
- Civil hospital Aliabad Hunza

**Figure 6: Civil Hospital Aliabad Hunza**



(Source Author 2021)

#### **4.4.5.6. Economic Conditions**

With the growing ratio of population, some people in the northern area are living below the poverty line due to a lack of employment opportunities. Agriculture is the main means of subsistence for local people where almost 40-50% of the total population is, directly and indirectly, engaged with agricultural activities. While the majority of youth are in the army which helps families in their survival. Apart from this people fulfill their domiciliary and educational expenses by selling fruits, and crops like potatoes. Tourism is another source of income for people in Hunza. In the summer season, many foreigners, and tourists from different cities of Pakistan move towards Hunza which increases economic stability. Now in Hunza, most of the people have shifted their economic activities from Agriculture to tourism sector.

#### **4.4.5.7. Dress Patterns**

The dress designs of Hunzai's include shalwar kameez, cap and long long coat, especially among the youth. The senior citizens particularly, men use to wear shalwar kameez along with a conventional or traditional cap called *farchin* and an over coat which they use to wear in the winter season called (*shoqa*). While old women also use to wear a traditional cap full of colorful sampler also known as (*farchin*). Both Cap and *shoqa* are handmade of pure wool by local artisans.

**Figure 5: Dress patterns of people of Hunza**



(Source, Author 2019)

#### **4.4.5.8. Religion**

The people of Hunza are Muslims who believe in the oneness of Allah, His last prophet, and the Holy book Quran which reviled on Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They are further divided into three sects, the Shia, Sunni, and Ismaili. Ismailis are in majority in Hunza, then there are Shia, and few are Sunni. Ismaili follows their spiritual leader His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan. Despite their belonging to different sects, all these three communities live happily and peacefully. In the Altit majority of all the population is consisted of Ismail Muslims.

#### **4.4.5.9. Religious Festivals**

The religious festivals which are famous and celebrated in Hunza Altit with full of zeal and zest are as follows.

- Eid ul Fitar
- Eid ul Azha
- Eid ul Qadeer
- Eid Melad ul Nabi (PBUH)

Apart from the above religious events, Islamli community is also celebrating the following events:

- 11<sup>th</sup> July Salgira (celebrate the day of Imamat of his highness prince Karim Aga Khan)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October Salgira (celebrate 1<sup>st</sup> visit if Aga Khan in Hunza)
- 13 December Salgira (celebrate the birthday of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan). ‘The leader of the Ismaili community also known as (Imam’

#### **4.4.5.10. Patterns of Marriages**

The pattern of marriage is varied from district to district. Mostly, the marriage pattern is divided into two major types, a) one is exogamy, and another is b) endogamy, where endogamy means the marriages within the family system or cast, and exogamy means marriages out of family or caste. Both patterns of marriages are practices in Hunza Altit village. In the Ismaili sect, the exogamy pattern of exogamy marriage is found, and they marry their children out of the family background and their awareness about marrying within family cause genomic problem, while among the Shia sect marriage pattern of the endogamy and marrying within the family is mostly practiced in the region of Hunza.

#### **4.4.5.11. Agriculture**

The region of Hunza is agricultural land where people's survival varies on convinced crops and fruits which comprises wheat, millet, buckwheat, turnips, carrot, beans, pumpkin, onions, cabbage, cauliflower, apricots mulberries peaches, cherries, pears, garlic, apples, walnuts, and pomegranate tree. Apricots are actual general among all

these because in summers people of this valley dry them for winters. They make soup and juices by using these dried apricots while oil is made of using the apricot seeds. The upper hard shelter of almond, apricot, and walnut are used in winters as fuel.

### **5.1. Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The socio-demographic profile means the overall livelihoods of the respondents in the Altit village Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. The demographic information included the age of the respondent, marital status, qualification, employment status, monthly income average, and religion. The results showed that all the respondents were Muslims and belonged to the Ismail community. The majority of the respondents were married and living in joint families and working together in firms and shops. The majority of respondents have full family support in their business.

The monthly income is depending on the seasons and weather conditions in the regions. In winters even the respondents or businesses women are not even earning a single amount. However, their business or earnings boost up in summers due to the excess flow of tourists in the region. A respondent has stated that *“in winters we have very less income because the weather condition in Altit Hunz is very cold and harsh with full of snow. Very few foreign tourists are visiting the Altit village. On the other side, in Summers’s thousands of tourists are visiting us and even our per day income cross to 10000 per day”*.

Similarly, the social bonds are very strong among the inhabitants of Altit village. The majority of respondents were living joint family system. few respondents were stated that they are living extended family system. Businesses run by females have been supported by their family members, especially husbands. On the other hand, women have multiple level responsibilities, such as household chores, business-related activities, and working in firms. In addition, the majority of the women were above intermediate level education. Only two women were under matric. Four respondents were master’s degree holders.



## 5.2. Tourism and Women's Empowerment in Altit Village

As many studies (Sökefeld, (2014), Zain, O. F. (2010). have shown that women of Hunza Gilgit-Baltistan are self-empowered, have engagements in businesses and entrepreneurial activities, highly educated, and access to modern education, and also politically empowered. Tourism is an economic activity, where almost 40% of the population of Gilgit-Baltistan is engaged with tourism activities. Whereas, Hunza is considered a tourism hub, where millions of tourists visit every year from national and international. The majority of tourism-related activities are run by females in Altit Hunza. Females have a small level hostel, shops of locally made products, small cafes, tourist guide centers, and beauty parlors, etc. These activities give women the ability to be independent in society.

*“tourism is our field, and we like both national and international tourists. However, a tourist from other countries is investing more money on tourism as compared to national tourists. Many tourists from Punjab also spend more money on tourism-related activities. Foreign tourist also purchases in the bulk of the local handicraft and other artifices”.*

*“I like foreign tourists more as compared to the local tourist because they are not even discussing the price reduction. The local tourists are debating on prices of foods and other handicrafts”.*

*“the foreign tourists are more profitable as compared to the local and national because they are literally enjoying the tourist sites and local foods”.*

In the Altit village Hunza, though, the majority of the population are Ismaili, a sect of Shia Islam in which women are relatively visible and empowered in everyday day life particularly in the tourism industry, where the Hunza's chief source of income and dependent of their livelihood on the tourism sector. The Hunza Altit, people are

educating, quite open-minded and also liberal background due to the higher literacy rates, especially among the females and exposure to international tourists' and visitors and daily based interaction with them and learn their culture as well. Against this socio-economic background, the tourism sector which started in the year 1970s, when some tourists started to visit this picturesque alpine valley along the Karakoram Highway (KKH) connecting Pakistan to China's Xinjiang Province which has to provide a unique route out of the home and into the employment for many local women, especially in the tourism sector (Smith, 2009).

A respondent has stated that *"Hunza is a hub of foreign tourists both males and females, where most of them are visits to Altit due to the famous Altit Fort and adjacent locals"*. Similarly, other women who were running a small handicraft shop stated that *"Foreign tourists purchase hand-made products and they never argued about price and also demanding the high-quality products, so that is why we are dealing high-quality handicraft products which are less salable to the local tourists"*.

In the past majority of Chinese tourists were visiting the Altit villages and they have promoted the tourism sector of Hunza. *"In the starting, a women tourist from China has donated some amount to renovate the Altit Fort and adjacent unpaved houses"*. Furthermore, the majority of women were doing businesses on their own personal choices and my all-family members are also engaged in tourism-related activities. A respondent stated that, *"most of the foreign tourist is profitable and more cooperative and engaging with the locally made products"*.

Another respondent also founded that, *"tourist from rich countries is playing their major role in women empowerment. Most of the women who have taken training from the local NGOs are engaged the local production of handicraft and selling out in the market at a larger scale"*. Tourism has affected the everyday life of the people of Altit village, where a larger number of women have been engaged with tourism activities. A respondent has stated that *"Women in many houses made local food dishes and selling in the local hostels"*. One of the home-made food items is *"Arzoq"*

*like a paratha which that is most famous among the tourist on their breakfast with tea”.*

Moreover, in the Karimabad, which is the capital of Hunza District, and the Altit village which is adjutant where local women have been learning male-controlled skills such as carpentry and stone masonry since the year 2003, when the CIQAM, a local nongovernmental organization previously known as the Women Social Enterprise Development, which started operating with the support from the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), a not-for-profit development agency founded in the year 1967 by the hereditary head of the Ismaili sect, along with the support of local people and local support organizations. The organization presently employs more than 90 women in heritage development activities and other tourism-related activities.

*“Tourism is an economic activity, which is very profitable in summers. Hunza is the hub of tourism and in summers thousands of foreign and national tourists are visiting Hunza and historic place of Altit, which is famous for historic cites”.*

*“tourism needs more time and support. Me and my husband as well as our children after school running a small café in our town, wherein summers we earn almost 15000 per day. In winters fewer tourists are visiting in our places. In winters we are supplying dry fruits in city side. There is a larger opportunity of investment in the field of tourism”.*

The Gulmit village, a scenic village in the Upper Hunza, is home to two other female-led initiatives: called Bozlanj, a cafeteria, and restaurant which was opened in the year 2016 to cater to foreign visitors to a nearby glacier, and the Korgah Carpet Center, opened in the year backed 2005, which employs the local women to weave the different handmade rugs and embroidered purses and wallets for sale to tourists and these are also a major source of attraction for tourist.

*“Self-empowerment of women is a concept where women are less likely dependent on men and other family members. KADO and AKDN have established a skill*

*development center in Altit village to facilitate women's skills development and involvement in social life. Women are now preparing local dishes for tourists, engaged in making handicrafts, stitching, Kushan making, home designing in the region. The locally-made products have high demand in the markets and majority of tourist purchase from the local shops”.*

*“Tourism independent women economically, which means women have less dependency on men. Those women who are engaged with any tourism-related activities have also other small businesses and they are also politically active in the region”.*

Women in Altit village have been engaged in the formal tourism sector after the year 2005 and earning enough for their livelihoods. Many NGOs like AKDN has support local women in the field of tourism and skill development. A respondent stated that *“women in Altit village are also engaged in firms and produce the foods items for hostels and guest houses as well. For example, women are producing local eggs, Salat, fruits, local oil, and also fry fruits along with the vegetables”.*

A respondent has stated that *“a local NGO name KADO and Rupani Foundation with the support of Aga Khan Development Network established many women skill development centers in the Hunza where many women from the Altit have taken training and enhance their skills, like Jem cuttings, hotel management and designing of woods and stones, etc. Women in Altit are less dependent on their male partners or on their families due to their economic engagements”.*

Other women in these regards founded that, *“Women of Altit are empowered. You would never find any house where women are sitting idle, and every woman has engaged in any type of small-scale business in the village. Due to the hub of tourism, many women, along with their husbands, working to facilitate tourists and earning enough to support their children’s livelihood”.*

Furthermore, these small-scale projects and tourism-related activities represent a significant ladder toward establishing a role for women in the local business community. Much remains to be done yet, however, the Altit, Hunza's tourism industry is still largely occupied by the men of the local region. A respondent stated that *“Women in the Hunza Altit are empowered and owning many higher positions where Mehnaz Parveen, a woman the first female Hunzai CEO of the 23-year-old of the Karakorum Area Development Organization (KADO), a local based NGO, in Aliabad, and Altit and work in the whole of Gilgit-Baltistan on the skill development and women empowerment through the utilization of the local resources”*. However, the secondary role of women in Pakistan is the conflicts sharply with the image presented by the mainstream tourism industry in present years, which has relied on foreign female influencers like Polish-born vlogger Eva Zu Beck and the Canadian Muslim convert Rosie Gabriel to present the country as a safe and friendly destination, which including for the women.

Due to the COVID-19, almost after a four-month lockdown, Pakistan has reopened its borders and ended the domestic tourism controls on August 15, prompting the fears in Hunza and surrounded regions about coronavirus risks from domestic tourists, many of whom are said by locals to be disregarding health requirements such as the results of the negative test. The pandemic has delivered a fresh business opportunity for female artisans and skillful women, however, which including the women trained by the KADO, a local NGO, who are producing reusable face masks in the region with the help of other national-level NGOs.

Moreover, the American travel blogger Alexandra Reynolds, who is also complicated in Root Network, the group wants to work with the existing organizations to amplify the influence of its efforts to help locals comprehend sustainable tourism and to ensure acceptance and enhance women's participation in tourism-related activities. With the support of other NGOs and the foundation, they have influences in the Gilgit-Baltistan, where it is also calmer to work as women than other areas of

Pakistan like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Reynolds says. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), which dishonesties along the border with Afghanistan, was formerly acknowledged as North-West Frontier Province respectively (Scaife, 2017).

*“Tourism is the best way to promote our local culture. We are selling local handicrafts to national as well as international tourists. Due to unique culture, hospitality friendly environment Hunza is famous among the tourist destination”.*

*“Through tourism, we are promoting our local dresses, foods, and other handicraft in the international markets. Many tourist dances on our culture music and uploading on the internet. Due to this cultural uniqueness, many tourists are coming to our region and enjoy their time. This promotes our culture and enhances the overall livelihood of those people who are engaged with the tourism sector”.*

Root Network says it confidences that its pilot project in Hunza will allow the organization to apply for backing and support from official sources, with the goal of duplicating its program in other risk-prone tourism areas of Pakistan such as the Kalasha Valleys area of Chitral District in northern Pakistan. A significant lesson of the pandemic, says Parveen, is that Hunza wants to rely less on tourism in the future, concentrating instead on emerging local businesses that can endure interruptions to the flow of visitors. The KADO has taken a step toward this goal by serving local women to sell their artisanal products online when local markets were closed throughout the lockdown. The KADO is now working to increase the capacity of both young males and females in IT-related fields, As the region's deprived internet capacity improves, the online sector beckons with huge potential to grow businesses in Hunza and Gilgit-Baltistan.

### **5.3. Respondents’ Perception about Women’s Empowerment**

Women of district Hunza, Altit village, Gilgit-Baltistan engaged in entrepreneurial activities due to the intervention of numerous NGOs and other civil society

organizations through skills development and programs of women's empowerment. Women of Hunza are economically empowered. Women empowerment has been defining by many researchers and international agencies. However, a complete definition is given by the United Nations (UN 2010), that women employment and education is a process where women become part of the major workforce and start getting some sort of money, wages, or any type of salaries irrespective of the level of job, nature of job and level of education among women in a particular society (UN 2013., UN 2011). Moreover, women empowerment is a term, which uses for women development and their empowerment in society through any sort of economic activity, where women get access to quality education, admittance to a better health care system, the exposure of mass media, and women's involvement in politics and social work (Weiss, 2013).

In the present context, the paid work is increased among educated women, especially freelancing and tourism-related activities, which is almost started after the industrial revolution in Europe and the West as a whole and currently among the women of Gilgit-Baltistan. Whereas women's employment and economic engagements are more on the peak from the year in the 1990s to the present era. Worldwide, the total number of women has increased in job markets and access to employment, where women's participation in paid work increases from the year 1990s to 2010 was almost 52% in developing countries and around 90% in developed countries.

*“Not only doing business and facilitating tourists mean women participate in the empowerment program. Many national and local level NGOs have conducted many other training programs for women in the region, like training in masonry, word work, carpenter, hotel management, etc. These training programs enhance women's capacity to earn and improve the overall livelihood of their children. Many women are supporting their children education”.*

Furthermore, Sultana (2019) founded that women who are earning their livelihood and are being part of their paid work in the markets and surrounded areas have said at

the decision-making process at the household levels as well as the society as a whole level in society. In the present context, the conventional economies are converting into essential social services and industries, where women have more economic and social opportunities to participate in economic activities actively.

*“women in Altit have their own small level LSOs and women on weekends save small money in these LSOs for saving purposes. These losses are working under the AKRSP and AKDN in the region. Few women who are leading these projects are also working as social mobilizers in the region to further enhance women’s saving level. Therefore, these LSOs are also providing small-scale loans to the women and contributing to their businesses. Further, these LSOs are providing loans on 5% only to facilitate women’s business. The majority of women in the Altit village are engaged in tourism-related activities”.*

Finally, Lerner (1958) has explained women’s empowerment as the women’s employment, her entry into the job market irrespective of her education and market skills. Moreover, women’s participation in public work and social work in her capacity. These are the indicators of women’s empowerment. Women who are independent in their life or livelihood and have the ability to take any type of decision-making for the best interest of themselves and for their family members independently.

The majority of the respondents have stated that women empowerment is a state and condition of women, where they are able to do work independently, educated, have to say in the household decision-making process, freely mobility from one place to another place, economic independence, contribution in household income and also participate in the educational and health expenses of their children. Similarly, women in Altit village are engaged in small-scale businesses, running cafes, hostel management, Jams cutting, and other activities. However, the majority of women in Altit are engaged with the tourism sector due to the historic importance of Alti were



forth and mud made houses which are the center of attention for the foreign and national tourists.

#### **5.4. Family Perception about Tourism Activities**

Presently, most of the educated women are engaged with tourism activities, where they have established small hostels, tourist facilitation centers, cafes, handicraft centers, and tourist guides in Altit village Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. Not only women are engaged in economic activities, but whole families in Altit village are combinedly working in the tourism sector. A respondent has stated that “my family is very supportive and especially me and my husband have a café where I am making local dishes (food) and my husband sale it out. Similarly, my children are also working on their side in our business. We have a small guest house and for our guesthouse, I am making food in my house”.

Similarly, the majority of women have considered that the tourism sector has empowered women in all respect of life. Tourism allowed women to earn their livelihoods and their children or family. Women who are earning has the ability to free mobility from one village to another and the capacity to talk about their children’s education as well. A respondent founded that “women empowerment means the ability of women to do and take decisions independently and less dependency on the family. Tourism has empowered women in the Altit village, where women are engaged with skill development work”. Women empowerment not only empowers women but also maximizes women’s participation in social activities.

Similarly, the majority of women in Altit village are doing business independently and with the close support of their family members. The majority of married women are doing tourism-related businesses. In this regard, a respondent said that “women who are doing small business are earning enough and also supporting their children and family”. Whereas the majority of married women are doing tourism-related businesses along with their husbands. The reason behind doing business is fewer

opportunities in other economic sectors of life. The only easy and best doorstep way is the tourism in the Hunza region where thousands of national and international tourists are visiting region, especially in summers A respondent said that “As for me and my husband both have businesses, my husband is engaged with the dry fruit business and I am working in a local LSO, where we are making handicraft for tourist. These are not only purchased by the tourists but also supplying these handicrafts to other cities of Pakistan as well as to China”.

As many reports have found that women of Hunza are well educated and the education rate is more than 90% in the region among women. Due to the intervention of different NGOs, including the AKDN, who have provided numerous skill development programs to women to empower them in society. There are limited opportunities in the Government sector and also the development sector is less likely functional in Hunza. On the other hand, people hold limited agricultural land. Due to all these reasons, women of Hunza Altit village are more likely to engage with the tourism sector. In this regards a respondent has stated that *“women of Hunza are highly educated and skillful. Although, the service industry is less likely to exist, and Government level job opportunities are also less. The way of livelihood is businesses and tourism-related activities because Hunza is internationally recognized tourist destination”*.

As stated, that almost 40% of people of Hunza are directly and indirectly engaged with the tourism sector. *“almost 80% of the total population of Hunza are engaged with business, agricultural and tourism-related activities. People have established tourist corteges and fish firms which is famous among both national and international tourists”*. Although women faced numerous challenges and problems in a male-dominated society. *“we are living in male-dominated society where men are all in all, but in Altit Hunza the education rate is high and most of the people are educated and have a higher level of awareness regarding the importance of women’s employment. Our society is less likely to encourage women to work outside. At the*

*starting when I was running the café, I feel shy and uncomfortable, but being time spend and faced numerous other issues I get to be used in business”. Apart from this another respondent stated that “there are many social barriers to the women empowerment. men in our society are not letting their females work Those women who are working in the society are stigmatize and labeling a bad”.*

On the other hand, women of Altit village not only doing businesses but also engaged with the agriculture sector. Agricultural products are being used as a subsidiary item in hostels and restaurants A respondent stated that *“Yes, I have a small firm as well where we are producing two types of crops and we are also selling potatoes in local markets. We are also using these crops in our hotels and I have also a small fruit firm (Chari) local fruit which has higher demand in the market”.* Women who are new in a business are facing many issues, like, finance issues, not easily availability of shops and higher rent of hops in Altit village due to excess flow of tourists in the village.

The above results showed that family perception is positive towards the women engage with the tourism sector, where the majority of women were working along with their other family members. Furthermore, males are busy outside the home dealing with the tourists, and females are preparing foods and other items and selling in the market and facilitate to their male counterparts. Women in Altit are educated and have social awareness and most of them have taken skills developmental training in the field of tourism. Therefore, women are equally contributing to the field of tourism and they are supporting their children’s education and health expenses.

## **5.5. Steps Towards Improving Tourism Business**

The results have stated that Government has no contributing to the promotion of tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan, especially in the Altit village. Although, Altit is a famous place for tourists due to the old age mud houses and Altit fort. There is a tourism department in Gilgit-Baltistan, but they are not working to promote tourism in Altit villages and other areas of Hunza. On the other hand, some other NGOs including the

AKDN and KADO are jotting down their efforts to enhance tourism through women, and they have provided numerous training in the field of tourism and entrepreneur. Due to these skills and support of NGOs women in Altit have established different businesses to contribute economically.

On the other side, women have established small type saving banks in the regions, where on weekends basis women are depositing money in their registration number. Many women withdraw money from these small societies at the minimum interest rate. A respondent in this regard stated that *“Yes, I have taken 150000 loans from a local LSO and also some amount from the First Microfinance Bank to further enhance the business. “I and my husband have purchased a shop in Aliabad where we are also dealing with the dry fruits business. I am working in Altit and my husband is in Aliabad. Before that, we were both working together in Altit to run a shop for dry fruits”*. Microfinance helps working women to enhance their economic capacity and further investment opportunities in the field of tourism. The provision of small-scale loans to women can overcome the barriers and improve the livelihood of women in society and further strengthen women’s business. Support from family members can be a way to overcome the social barriers to women’s empowerment.

Many NGOs and other women LSOs are active to empower women, but the Government is less likely interested to invest in the field of tourism. Although, Gilgit-Baltistan, especially Hunza is a hub of tourism and internationally recognized tourist destiny. The only department is there in Gilgit city, but their contribution is zero. It is the responsibility of the Govt to establish too easy in the visa process and establish tourist guide centers in every region. However, the Govt of Gilgit-Baltistan has no contribution in the field of tourism. Similarly, a respondent stated that *“In many tourist places where there is no paved road, due to this many tourists are not visited by foot. The Govt needs to pave the roads and further facilitate the tourist in the region”*. On the other hand, another respondent founded that *“there is not any tourist management training institute at the Governmental level so that the Govt needs to*

establish and training center with comprises of experts who can train the local people in the field of tourism”.

## **6. Conclusions**

The present research examines women’s empowerment through tourism in Altit village district Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. Women in Hunza, Altit are educated and socially empowered, and engaged with entrepreneurship activities. District Hunza is a hub of tourism where not only males but females are also equally participated in tourism-related activities. Females in Altit have small shops of handicrafts, cafes, hotel management activities, hostels, guest houses, Dasi foods items, and tourist guide services. Women of Hunza are more empowered as compared to the other districts of Gilgit-Baltistan. The reason behind women’s empowerment in Hunza Altit is women’s engagement in economic activities. As, Hunza, especially Altit village is considered as a hub of tourism, where thousands of national and international tourists are visits in summers. The reason behind the inflow of tourists in Altit village is due to the Altit Fort and old age mud houses. Women of Altit are engaged with the tourism sector through different activities.

Women along with their family members are facilitating tourists in the region. Many women have their own small cafes, hostels, shops of handicrafts, hotel management services, preparing local dishes, and working as a tourist guide in the region. The majority of the women are supported by their family members. The tourism facilitating activities able women t earn enough for themselves and the livelihood of their family members. Many Non-Governmental Organizations have provided different skill development training to women in different areas. The hostel management and cooking of among them. Women now in Altit use their own skills to empower themselves in society. Women empowerments mean the ability of women to take decision making which best serves their own interest and their families.

Therefore, the tourism sector empowered women through their engagement in economic activities.

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**ANNEXURE-INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**Women Empowerment Through Tourism: A Case Study of  
Altit Town Hunza, Pakistan**



**By**

**SHANILA KARIM**

**SECTION: A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Income: \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION: B: TOURISM AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

- Q. How do perceive women empowerment?
- Q. What was your opinion about women empowerment before self-sufficient?
- Q. How do you see tourism in this regard?
- Q. What is the importance of tourism in women's empowerment?
- Q. What was the criteria of empowerment in the time of instability in Pakistan?
- Q. How tourism sector has been changed after peace process?
- Q. What is your opinion about foreign tourists?
- Q. What is your opinion about Pakistani tourist?
- Q. Which kind of tourist you like and why?
- Q. What are the basic needs of tourists?
- Q. What kind of facilities are provided by the Government to the tourists?
- Q. What is the role of tourism in your everyday life?
- Q. Do you perform any other job aside from tourism sector?
- Q. How tourism is encouraging women to participate in self-employment programs?
- Q. How society perceive women's empowerment?
- Q. Is women's empowerment compatible with the society?
- Q. Are self-sufficient women accepted joyfully in the society.
- Q. What are the opinions of your family about your profession?
- Q. What is the attitude of your husband toward your job?
- Q. Is he supporting you in your job?
- Q. Is there any disturbance in performing your social duties due to your profession?
- Q. How much you rely on your husband's income after becoming self-sufficient?
- Q. Would you encourage other women to participate in empowerment programs?

- Q. What is your contribution to your society?
- Q. what are the consequences of this change?
- Q. How many hours you work per week?
- Q. Which months are more important for you categorized by tourist arrivals?
- Q. Do you sell any type of goods to tourists? If yes, then specify
- Q. Do you have any other source of income aside from tourism?
- Q. What kind of specialization are taught in technical and vocational center?
- Q. Is there enough expertise in technical and vocational center?
- Q. What is the role of education in empowering women through tourism?
- Q. What kind of programs are arranged by the Government for women's empowerment?
- Q. Do you take any steps related to improve your business?
- Q. Do you take loan for improving your business? If yes, then how much
- Q. What are the requirements for improving women's condition through tourism?
- Q. How do you promote your culture through tourism?
- Q. Are there any social barriers to women's empowerment?
- Q. Are there any financial barriers to women?
- Q. How these barriers can be addressed?
- Q. What is the responsibility of Government according to you to improve this sector?