

Chapter 4

Crafting an Experiencescape for Sustainable Cultural Tourism: A Case Study of Udaipur's Craft Village "Shilpgram"

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ABSTRACT

India, known for its rich and varied cultural heritage, hosts numerous fairs and festivals as vibrant platforms to showcase its diversity. Events like the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, Ellora-Ajanta International Festival, Surajkund Crafts Mela, Pushkar Fair, and many others celebrate the country's artistic and cultural wealth. This book chapter explores sustainable culture and heritage development in Udaipur's craft village, 'Shilpgram.' The village hosts an annual craft fair during the peak tourist season, attracting artists across India to showcase their unique crafts, folk dances, and paintings. This chapter assesses Shilpgram's feasibility as an experiencescape model using a case study method. Interviews with key stakeholders provided insight into the destination's difficulties, strengths, and best practices. The study adds to our understanding of cultural locations' responsibilities in cultural tourism by balancing historical preservation with current expectations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Festivals and fairs in India, such as Diwali and the Kumbh Mela, provide considerable economic possibilities while reinforcing cultural values. Despite India's long history of handicrafts dating back to the Indus Valley civilisation, the industry has failed due to a lack of exposure and marketing. Artist Villages are a possible option, providing workshops and design studios to foster creativity while linking artisans to national and worldwide forums. They give artisans a global platform to present their work, bridging

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-9957-3.ch004

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the gap between tradition and modernity and helping preserve and prosper India's distinct handmade legacy. According to Shastri (2017), an artist village is aptly characterized as

A space for recreation and interaction, where the general masses can come, see the displayed art form, watch the performing Art and interact with the artists. Artisans can reside and enlighten others about their skills. (Shastri, 2017 p. 25)

Shilpgram, Udaipur, is an exceptional illustration of an artist community that is self-sustaining. The art and craft of India, preserved in the hands of rural artisans and explored for potential connections to the modern world today. Moreover, with "Shilpgram - a Craft Village" in Udaipur, the West Zone Cultural Centre (WZCC) embodies this aim by displaying the different cultural traditions of Western Zone states. Shilpgram also holds the annual "Shilpgram Utsav," which attracts over 500,000 visitors and hundreds of artists and entertainers. WZCC's headquarters, 'Bagore-Ki-Haveli,' also has a museum dedicated to conserving royal legacy (Mehmood & Aazem, 2002). These facilities are critical for preserving and appreciating India's diverse cultural mix.

According to UNESCO, oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices, and traditional handicrafts are all areas of ICH (UNESCO, 1989). In reality, another implicit feature strongly related to the previous domains produces a liveable place for appreciation (i.e., an experiencescape). The significance of ICH lies not only in its cultural form but also in the social and economic worth of culture and tradition transmission for communities or specific social groupings. This chapter aims to apply a case study technique to determine the viability of Shilpgram as an experiencescape model. This evaluation will mostly depend on qualitative interviews with significant Shilpgram stakeholders. Finally, this chapter aims to contribute to a broader understanding of how cultural destinations such as Shilpgram can effectively serve as experiencescape models, preserving and promoting cultural heritage while addressing contemporary challenges and opportunities in the field of cultural tourism.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Understanding Cultural and Heritage Tourism

'Heritage' is defined as "our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations," as enshrined in an international treaty known as the 'Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage,' which was ratified by UNESCO in 1972. 'Cultural heritage' is defined as "the irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration that include monuments such as architectural works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements of archaeological structures, inscriptions, cave-dwelling and combinations of features; groups of buildings, groups of separate or connected buildings; and sites including archaeological sites of outstanding historical, aesthetic, ethnological, or anthropological value" Articles 1 and 2 of the *World Heritage Convention*. As a result, more than half of the proportion of 'cultural heritage' in the tourist sector is concerned with intangible cultural heritage, which (a sub-type of tourism) is immeasurable (Halder & Sarda, 2021). Intangible cultural heritage, on the other hand, refers to "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills—as well as the instruments,

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