


Chapter 4

Building Community Resilience Through Cultural Festivals in Mountain Tourism

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the important functions of cultural festivals as the key instruments of developing community resilience in mountain tourism are revealed. The social therapeutic importance of these festivals focusing on the impact of promoting local arts and crafts, supporting the increase of the livelihoods of people in the community, and most importantly the factor of economic boost. The chapter also deals with the different examples of perfect festivals that have kept such approaches as a part of their sustainability policy, as waste management, local procurement, and people's participation are described. The role of local actors while planning festivals are elaborated stressing the fact that only they can represent cultural values properly. Chapter suggests that cultural festivals result in the enhancement of sustainability in mountain tourism by committing people to environmental conservation, assisting local economies and enhancing relations among people, giving the communities many tools to manage tourism to preserve their cultural heritage for future generations.

1. INTRODUCTION

As any other part of the country the various festivities of India stands testimony to the diverse culture of the country particularly the northeastern hill region. From mere cultural and traditional oversight, such festivals transform into needs in the social and economic life of those particular societies (Bhardwaj, 2020). The mountain festivals provide spectacular views into cultural practices, ceremonial practices, and way of life, which has remained relatively untouched for many a years due to geographical constraints and unfavourable climate (Singh&Tommy Sharma, 2018). Mountain areas as specific territories have their peculiarities and opportunities regarding both tourist activities and challenges. Since these fields work to attract tourists who are interested in both the landscape's and the culture's richness, people in these areas find themselves in a position where they have to protect and promote their roots while developing their economy (Rana, 2019). In this regard, cultural festivals becomes useful in increasing community resilience as they increase togetherness, cultural values and environmental issues (Thakur et al., 2021). Cultural celebrations are 'living symbols' where people's

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portrait exhibitions are held in colourful form through performing arts, visual arts, music, and food and beverages (Kumar, 2020). These events give opportunities to the local artists /craftsmen and performers which would preserve the knowledge for the future generations (Dasgupta & Roy, 2022). Besides the above-mentioned advantages, festival greatly contribute to mountain culture and economy as it creates employment openings and attract tourists to the region (Verma, 2021). Festival related tourism income generates employment, augments facilities and drives economic development that is a sustainable (Jain & Mehta, 2020). However, festivals can also be strategies for cohesion in the community. They gather together people and they imagine the same purpose and the same fate for all the individuals of particular community. Regarding the festival organisation, the cooperation fosters cohesion and lends the communities collective agency (Chauhan and Prakash: 2020). Festivals have also been held with the aim of examining or perhaps addressing problems as related to social and ecological matters regarding the objectives of sustainable development, with focus on sensitization to call for and increasingly embracing the chief goals toward the cause of developing sustainability (Sharma et al., 2021).

The environmental aspect of these festivals is another, and it is particularly significant for the territory conventionally referred to as the 'mountain region'. Sustainability success cases also are observed in the communities implementing festival policies and approaches that raise awareness of waste management, sourcing, and community participation (Saxena, 2021). Such strategies lower effects on the biophysical environments and promote sustainable behaviour; they commemorate an intended goal of maintaining the mountains (Rao, 2020)

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the economic impact of cultural festivals on local communities, with a focus on promoting local arts, crafts, and livelihoods.
- To investigate the environmental practices adopted by cultural festivals and their contribution to sustainability in mountain tourism.
- To highlight the importance of local actors in planning and executing cultural festivals, ensuring the authentic representation of cultural values
- To provide case studies of festivals that successfully integrate sustainability practices and contribute to community resilience
- To discuss the overall impact of festivals on preserving cultural heritage and promoting sustainable tourism in mountain regions

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a secondary data research methodology, integrating several methods to achieve its objectives:

- Literature Review: The existing literature on cultural festivals, community resilience, sustainable tourism and mountain regions are reviewed in this section. This creates the frame of reference and also outlines certain areas of study and research components and deficits in the literature (Bhardwaj, 2020; Verma, 2021).
- Document Analysis: Sustainability practices can be construed by assessing other forms of festival reports including the sustainability policies and strategies that festivals are required to adhere to (Rana, 2019).
- Case Studies: Cultural festivals in mountain tourism destinations are discussed in depth, and best practices of sustainability-inclusive festivals and their support of community development are presented using several case studies (Sharma et al., 2021).
- Secondary Data Sources: Secondary research information is collected through government publications, non-governmental organization publications, official tourism statistics, and other databases (Jain & Mehta, 2020).
- Comparative Analysis: A cross-sectional examination of cultural festivals in different mountainous areas is made with emphasis being placed on observed practices and strategies towards building up community capitals (Dasgupta and Roy, 2022; Saxena, 2021).

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