

THE PARADIGM OF ETHNICITY & RITUAL: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LUCKNOW

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ABSTRACT

For Lucknow, ethnicity is not just in its structural design but in its all niche and spot. It is in the speech, outfit, food, folklore, music and the life of its people. This ethnicity comes across extensively at whatever time given a chance. A City which held on to its turf during the premiere war of independence in 1857, also known as the Mutiny of 1857, and still keeps the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb close to its bosom as a mother keeps her most beloved child. But the regrettable authenticity is that it has never been given even half a chance. The city carries on with the same image of just being the capital city of Uttar Pradesh with a couple of momentous Imambaras to its credit. It is time to refurbish the city not only literally but also in the minds of people in general and potential visitors in particular. This needs to be achieved through various harmonized efforts which include stepping up the infrastructure level and positioning the city constructively through promotional campaigns, creating a heritage zone which offers an absolute familiarity to the visitors and makes them hang around for more.

Keywords: *Legacy, Ethnicity, Position, Showcasing, Amalgamation, Mutual-Benefit.*

I. CONCEPT

The impression of the study is to significantly place Lucknow on the vacationer atlas and encourage tourist flow to the city. To develop a structure that is adequate, sustainable and advantageous for the locals. Concurrently, it must be striking, enjoyable and comfortable for the tourists and profitable to the industry. This would involve highlighting the history, culture, art and cuisine of the region through showcasing them at strategic points, creating heritage zones and developing heritage walks with different themes, around the historically and culturally rich areas of the city.

II. OBJECTIVE

- The aim of this research paper is to develop a model that creates a niche in the Tourism market for the ‘City of Splendours: Lucknow’.
- To develop marketing strategies for brand Lucknow so that it encourages tourists, domestic as well as international, to take a walk through the splendid history of the Constantinople of the East.
- To draw out ways to highlight our local heritage to the world.
- To protect the significance of our city from fading into oblivion.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first step was to carve down everything of cultural importance, tangible and intangible, that is already recognized and popular about the city. This was done through books, brochures and websites on the city. The subsequently step was to take to the streets and walk around the older areas of the city like Chowk, Aminabad, Hazratganj, Nakkhas etc. where I came in contact with some very old timers of the city and who shared their reminiscences as well as the stories told to them by their forefathers. There were ghost stories, songs, sayings and a lot of information. This gave a real insight into the cultural lifeline of city. Some well known personalities of the city were also interviewed, especially those who are either culturally linked with city or are endeavouring to promote the city and its culture in their own capacities. Apart from the above, we also asked questions to the locals, tourism industry personnel and the tourists to the city to gain insight into their thought process and develop workable solutions for etching Lucknow on the tourist map.

IV. INTRODUCTION

Crossways the world and through the ages, human civilisations have created a varied and vast heritage associated to their religious beliefs and practices. Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, lifestyle, language, attire, habits, practices, objects, values, places, and artistic expressions. Cultural Heritage is often conceptualised as either Intangible or Tangible Cultural Heritage. As part of human activity Cultural Heritage produces tangible representations of the beliefs, value systems, lifestyles and traditions. As an important, essential and inclusive part of culture on the whole. Cultural Heritage, contains these very prominent, visible and tangible traces form antiquity to the recent past. Driving force behind all definitions of Cultural Heritage is: *it is a human creation intended to inform*. Today, when we discuss heritage conservation we are not only talking about the monuments and the handicrafts. Rather it is the all-round preservation of the tangible as well as intangible heritage. This includes the cuisine, handicraft, lifestyle, attire, language, culture and historical milestones of the region. The definition of culture and heritage is incomplete if the intangible components are taken away.

V. HERITAGE CLOCK

The Heritage Clock tries to evolve and generate a concept, as to how we can make the past an intrinsic part the years to come.

The Heritage Clock portrays the mutual benefits that heritage, locals and gain from each-other and how it leads to the satisfaction of all three.

The clock starts when people make an effort to understand their heritage. It leads to creating a sense of value for the heritage. This leads to a feeling of care for the heritage and once this relationship of caring via valuing and understanding is developed the result is enjoyment through the various tangible and intangible components of heritage.

VI. LUCKNOW

Lucknow is a one of its kind treasure trove. A city with unparalleled charm and well-loved monuments, it is known with good reason as 'The City of Splendours'.

Amir Hasan wrote of Lucknow that, 'No other city can perhaps claim to have won a larger measure of love and loyalty from its citizens ...'. Hazrat Narikh rhapsodized: '*Lucknow Hum Pe Fida, Hum Fida-e-Lucknow, Kya Hai Taqat-e-Aasman Ki Jo Humse Chhurdaye Lucknow!*' This means: Lucknow is in love with me and I am in love with Lucknow; no force can part us twain. Among the most culturally rich cities in India, Lucknow or *Oudh* is one of the most exclusive combinations of various *ganga-jamuni tehzebs* which are poles apart on their own yet merge to form a unique culture and way of living here. From time immemorial, this alluring city has inspired men of importance. From the age of mythology to the British era, Lucknow has been the centre of attention for all.

VII. MYTHOLOGICAL BEGINNINGS

The city finds mention in literature of the *Ramayan* era, as the kingdom of Lakshman the most beloved younger brother of *Maryada Purushottam Shri Ramchandra*, the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Hence it is believed that the city was originally known as *Lakhan Puri* or *Lachchman Puri*.

7.1 The City of Nawabs

During the *Mughal period*, the emperors began to appoint Nawabs to ensure good governance of their provinces. *Mohammad Amir Saadat Khan* was appointed as the viceroy of Lucknow, one of the crucial provinces' of that time. Under the leadership of the fourth *Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula*, the city flourished remarkably. The artistic tendencies went through a turnkey change which is still strongly felt in present Lucknow. From poetry to dance to music to brilliant architecture, everything discovered a place for itself.

7.2 Lucknow Today

This calm and composite city has carved a unique place for itself. With its composite historical past, the city is been witness to many changes. Its close association with *art, craft, music, dance, architecture and ada* has sown the seeds of many interesting forms of arts and crafts. From magical *mushairas* to the mouthwatering *awadhi* cuisine, from architectural delights to the heart-warming people, Lucknow is an intriguing mystery yet an open book to whoever wants to solve it. The one thing which came across time and again is that Heritage means the things people have inherited and Lucknow has so much of inheritance to offer. Our heritage is not just in the schools to learn, it moves and lives along the streets, sometimes forgotten and waiting to be rediscovered.

7.3 Culture

'Lucknow', this name is a reflection of architectural wonders of '*Lakhauri*' bricks, the fragrance of '*itra*', soothing-lyrical notes, the tinkling of dancing bells, the mouth-watering '*dussheri*' mangoes, and of course its unparalleled tradition '*Mehman Nawazi*'. Known for its cultured language, attire, etiquette and lifestyle Lucknow is also known as the 'City of Ada and Adab'. The pillar on which this *tehzeeb* raises itself is the *Urdu* language.

Gazals, Urdu poetry, drama, dance forms, festivals, milling chowks and various exciting games like *Kabutarbazi*, *Patangbazi* and *Baterbazi*.

Lucknow became the focal point of a cultural new age with the shifting of capital from Faizabad to Lucknow in 1776. Under the royal patronage the various arts forms which originated here, namely the, *Kathak*, *Thumri*, *Khayal*, *Dadra*, *Gazals*, *Qawwalies* and *Sher-o-Shairi* reached never before heights. Lucknow also came to be recognized as an important centre of Islamic learning. The Urdu language was polished and gained an important and irreplaceable place in the culture of Lucknow. The art of training pigeons which was perfected by the nobility of yesteryears is prevalent even today. No account of Lucknow is complete without a mention of the famous area '*Chowk*'. It is the originating point around which arts, artists and traders grew. This main bazaar of bygone era has not changed much. But subtle changes are there. Its unique and exclusive traits represent Lucknowi culture even in today's context.

7.4 Crafts

For centuries Lucknow has been popular for its varied handicraft works. The Nawabs of Lucknow were great patrons of arts and artists. The most well known of them are the Chikankari work, hand embroidery, basically done on textiles like muslin, silk, cotton etc. Besides *Chikan* work the *Zardozi* and *Kamdani* works of Lucknow are also world renowned, these are hand embroidery work done with gold and silver thread on various Indian attires and accessories. Jewellery, enameling work, *Bidri* and *Zarbuland* silver works of Lucknow also finds its place on jewel pieces utility items and showcase articles. There are some other crafts like *gota* weaving, dyeing and calico print, *chandivarq* (Siver) making, Ivory work and bone carvings of Lucknow is also widely appreciated. Fine pottery, '*Attar*' (*Itr*) or perfumes, *Lucknowi Paan*, *Zarda* (tobacco), and *Khamira* produced by the local tobacconists hold an exclusive attraction among guests and customers. Kite flying as well as making is popular throughout India, yet this activity has attained perfection only in Lucknow. Woodwork and construction of *tazias*, made of *zari work*, gold and silver papers are creations of master craftsmen to commemorate the solemn occasion of *Moharrum*.

This makes Lucknow a shoppers' delight that's hard to resist. This is a clear indication of the capacity these arts and art forms have of generating employment, attracting tourists and conserving the invaluable traditions of a spectacular city.

7.5 Heritage Conservation Zone

Heritage Conservation zones are areas of heritage value, whose character needs to be protected, conserved, maintained and enhanced. These are identified and developed when a need is felt to improve the 'quality of life' which had suffered due to neglect, ignorance and unplanned development of an area which needs to be protected and re-nurtured, thus restoring its sense of pride and heritage. These are areas under threat from unplanned growth or endangered by development projects.

VIII. THE PLAN

8.1 Explore, Research and Revive the Tangible and Intangible Heritage

The first and foremost aim of the plan is revive the tangible and intangible heritage of the area. For all practical purposes a small section of the city will be initially targeted. This involves detailed studies of carrying capacity so that a continuous sustainable plan is developed. The success of the first phase will automatically lead us to considering larger sections. To commence, the heart of the old city, Chowk is considered to be the best option to put the planning into action.

8.2 To Cordon off and Convert the Heritage area into a Pollution free Zone

The second step of the plan is to declare the chosen area into a pollution free green zone. This is proposed by cordoning off the selected area and turning it into a walking zone where motorized vehicles will be prohibited from entering. Only horse driven tongas and manual rickshaws will be allowed as conveyance within the area.

8.3 To Recreate the Style and Ambience of the Oudhi Era with its Art and Architecture through Intermittent Shops and Shows

The third and the most important step of the plan is to merge the tangible and intangible heritage of the area to form a complete package. The proposed area includes Lakshman Hillock, Bara Imambara, Roomi Darwaza, Picture gallery, Clock Tower, Hussainabad Gate I, Chota Imambara, Hussainabad Gate II and Jama Masjid. All these monuments are intermitten with gardens and parks. The proposal involves maintaining these green zones and converting part of these areas into amphitheatres, arenas, theatres etc. These areas will be used by artisans for performances like kathak recitals, tabla recitals, sitar recitals, quawwali and mushayaras, folk dance and music, ethnic fashion shows and many more events. The space will also be used to organize and revive the old time arts and events like Kite flying, Cock fights and pigeon fights.

8.4 The Complete Heritage Zone

The heritage zone must be an experience which should put the culture, heritage and arts of Lucknow at ready display for the tourists. The set up must be attractive and portray a vibrant atmosphere to catch the imagination of the visitors and compel them to stay and come back for more. The arts whether handicraft, fine arts or cuisine must be authentic and produced by masters of their trade in order to impress the visitors by their masterpieces.

8.5 The Heritage zone apart from the architectural heritage of the city must include:

Dance Recitals: This could include both folk dances as well as classical dances. Kathak must take precedence as it has its origins in the city itself. On the other hand folk dances belonging to the state of Uttar Pradesh like Nautanki can also be put on show for visitors with a more rustic taste.

8.6 Music Recitals: The city boasts of a cultural background which includes a rich musical heritage. The *Tabla* and the *Sitar* are musical instruments which have their roots in the city itself. Other than these the *Thumari* and the *Qawwali* can also prove to be crowd pullers.

8.9 The Gomti: The river banks and the river itself can be turned into a happening cultural spot for the evenings. Beautiful and vibrant barrages can be used to stage musical *mehfils* in the evenings with a limited number of audiences to cater to the niche market. These barrages can also be used to host restaurants which prepare authentic Awadhi food. The lighting along the river banks and the landscaping must compliment the beauty, liveliness and vibrancy of the barrages or the bajras.

8.10 Kite Flying: Another craft that has reached a zenith of artistry in Lucknow is Kite making and kite flying. The early evening sky or the brightly lit night sky used for arranging kite flying and kite cutting competitions. Craftsmen can also put the art of kite and its strings making at display to satisfy the curiosity of the onlookers.

8.11 Light and Sound Show: Son et lumière is a form of night-time entertainment that is usually presented in an outdoor venue of historic significance. The show should be professionally produced and directed to bring forth the historical story of the city and convey it to the audiences.

8.12 Heritage walk: Lucknow is not just any other city, but a mystery that folds and unfolds itself every time we visit its lanes and bylanes. The Heritage Walk is an experience especially designed for not only the tourists but also for the locals as well.

8.13 Cuisine: Attention must be given to not only non-vegetarians but to vegetarians too as their number is growing by the day. Original recipes must be used to prepare the delicacies which would be offered to the visitors. Every item on the menu should have its origin in the Awadh region.

8.14 Kabootar bazi: This was a *shauq* or hobby that many a Lucknowalas shared in the olden times. This is a sport which involved a fight between a pair of pigeons. People betted on their favorite bird and watched their preferred bird loose or win. The excitement during these matches was infectious and created an atmosphere of zeal and enthusiasm.

8.15 Mushayara and Dastaan goi: It is of utmost importance to revive the Urdu language and bring it back to its olden glory. The language, although, still in use in Lucknow is now restricted to a smaller percentage of population only. Cultural events like the art of storytelling in a creative and individualistic style (Dastaan-e-goi) and a mehfil of Urdu poetry (Mushayara) can just do the trick of not only reviving these almost lost arts but also to generate an interest in the younger generation towards Urdu and many an arts and way to life associated with it.

8.16 Haat or Bazaar: The old city already has quaint bazaars and shops that are centuries old and are selling wares that have their technique of production being handed from father to son since generations. The bazaar or *haat* must be developed on this pattern only. The bazaar must include authentic cuisine shops for both non-vegetarians and vegetarians. Apart from selling of the artifacts the technique of their production must also be put on display which really intrigues the viewers. The aesthetics of the bazaar must be such so as to bring to mind the days gone by and illicit in one the feeling of nostalgia and reminiscence.

8.17 The Ambience: The Heritage zone must be an epitome of the classical eras of the Ram rajya, Nawabs and the Britishers who have left the various legacies of language, cuisine, handicrafts, architecture and way of life. The green areas of the heritage zone must be utilized to create these areas and the parks can be named after the Nawabs who have stamped the city with their culture and name.

For this whole plan to fall into place the few very basic requirements would be:

- The Gomati River and its banks must be cleaned and maintained to look inviting to the tourists.
- The encroachment around the city is an issue which must be dealt with without stalling anymore.
- Awareness regarding the protection, preservation and conservation of the buildings and the older parts of the city are essential to execute any plans based on heritage and cultural Tourism.
- Mutual consensus and cooperation between the various departments would be the oil for the smooth running of the machinery of the plan.

8.18 To Revive the Famous Sham-e-oudh

The fourth step is to evolve and organize a heritage walk through the area to relive the famous Sham-e-oudh, the evenings of oudh by the side of river Gomti. This walk would be conducted by certified, professional and trained guides who will not only share their knowledge and experience but will also recreate the ambience of the era gone by.

8.19 To Rejuvenate the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb of the City

Another very essential part of the plan will be to recreate the ganga-jamuni tehzeeb of the past. This will be presented through an exquisite dance drama that would take the audience back into the periods of the Aryans, the Sheikhs, the Nawabs and the Britishers.

8.20 To Intermingle Pleasure with Business

The sixth step of the plan is to develop, in an organized manner, outlets throughout the area which would serve for the purposes of demonstration, exhibition and sale. These shops and outlets will be approved and licensed for quality control and would guarantee authenticity. The products would include Handicrafts (chikankari, zardozi, kites, musical instruments etc.), cuisine (mughlai and oudhi) and trinket shops that sell postcards, jewellery, books etc.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Primarily, this study concludes that in order to have a successful and manageable urban cultural heritage tourism destination—especially in the context of *nawabi* and colonial heritage—management must include synchronised planning, re-evaluation of the heritage, sustainable and protective implementation programs, and the participation of all levels of stakeholders.

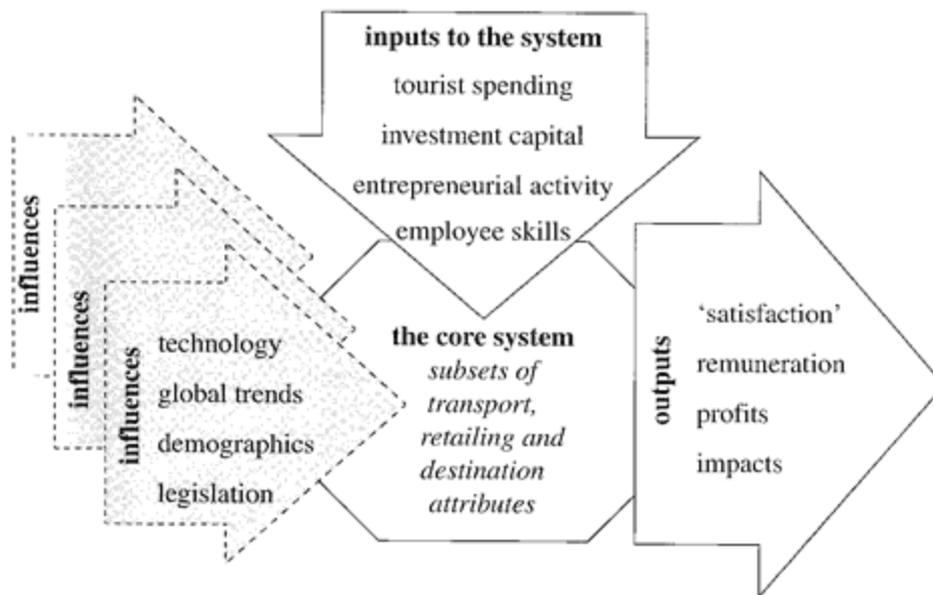


Figure 1. Systematic Approach to Development.

Finally, this study concludes that the give-and-take relationship between heritage conservation and tourism development should be central for all revitalization and reinterpretation of the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage and its development. The all round influences on the core system also have an impact on the inputs to the system. Therefore, synergy, in the way the influences and the inputs affect the core system will impact the outputs (Fig. 1).

This study provides steps for creating a cultural heritage tourism destination. Additionally, cooperation among stakeholders in managing a destination and developing it through encouragement to its arts and artists is the focal point of this study.

Based on the analysis and conclusions, the paper proposes some recommendations to improve the management of Lucknow as follows:

1. Establishing a roadmap with timeline for short, middle, and long term.
2. Strengthening of guidelines at the management level.
3. Improving attractions and visitor management.
4. Enhancing human resources management in term of quality and quantity.
5. Empowering and managing volunteer (NGOs) heritage organizations.
6. Improving accessibility, infrastructure, superstructure and ancillary services.
7. Improving the quality of visitors through spreading awareness regarding heritage and sustainability.

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