

Department of Development Studies

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Thematic Focus: Tourism and Development
Cultural Tourism Sites as Cultural Identity Makers: A Case Study of District Swat

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This study aims to ascertain relationship among cultural tourists' sites and community's sense of belongingness, in a renowned cultural tourism destination of Swat. Qualitative research strategy is utilized to theorize the marginalized perspective of the locals', sturdy association among the tangible and intangible presentation of sites and the cultural identity of the populace has been exhibited by the respondents of the study.

Key Findings:

1. Significant relationship between the sites and cultural identity has been established by the community living and working nearby.
2. Cultural hierarchy in a continual passion from ancestors to contemporary epochs was justified by the local population in an evident manner.
3. Members of the community presented and celebrated some novel commonalities and resemblances among the tangible and intangible elements of their culture and the sites.
4. Revival of the faded memory through display and exhibition of cultural artifacts in physical and managed cultural sites was asserted by the locals as worthy of applause and contribution.
5. Religious sentiments were emphasized as central and radical entity in commemoration of an historical event or premises.

Policy Implications:

1. Community - oriented emic approach should be the prime subject of discussion both in academic and industrial discourse.
2. Policies of cultural tourism either on district level or national should reflect the perspectives of community in both letter and spirit.
3. Equal consideration on the marginalized sub – cultural groups and their representation in the social arena should be ensured to mitigate the exclusion experience.
4. Perspectives of locals should be utilized to layout the ethical set of rules for incoming visitors at these cultural tourism sites to have minimum cultural shock.