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RESEARCH TOPIC: REPRESENTATIONS OF DELHI'S CULTURAL HERITAGE IN MEDIA AND TOURISM (1950-2020)

FINDINGS

Monuments have become lightning rods for wider conflicts between competing visions and versions of history. With the fall of Hitler in Germany, for example, Nazi monuments throughout the former Reich were hastily pulled down. Presenting India as culturally homogeneous—that is exclusively Hindu— is a fundamental component of Hindu nationalism. Various strategies involving heritage have been utilised to accomplish this goal. The most recent example is the Delhi's unsuccessful attempt to become India's first World Heritage City. Thus, the central assumption of this thesis asserts that the preservation and protection of Delhi's built heritage is being influenced by a multitude of factors, encompassing ideological, political, economic, and human resource considerations.

This thesis aims to enhance our understanding of the connection between heritage and integrated development by conducting an analysis of the relationship between politics of preservation and politics of development. The above mentioned issues are not novel; rather, it has a profound historical origin and has been sustained by the ruling elite under the influence of a certain political and ideological consideration.

The negative consequences, such as the lack of interest in cultural and historic structures, their deteriorated state, uncontrolled and unregulated development in close proximity to heritage sites, and the disparity in civic and social infrastructure, can be ascribed to insensitivity of the officials, poor planning, inadequate allocation of resources, complicated legal frameworks, and ineffective execution.

Besides, there exists a scarcity of comprehensive and systematic multidisciplinary research that thoroughly investigates their interplay from a holistic and integrative standpoint. The

significance of investigating and elucidating the aforementioned link is evident, as it holds paramount importance for both cultural heritage and the broader societal context. Hence, this research aims to address the issue of the lack of a shared theoretical and analytical foundation across the fields of heritage, preservation, and sustainable development. It seeks to propose potential avenues for conceptual convergence.

The analysis and subsequent findings contributes to the objective of examining the impact of social, economic, and political factors on the condition of built heritage and the surrounding communities. The discussion in thesis focuses on the approaches that should be implemented to mitigate negative consequences and promote integrated development, based on the inferences derived from the analysis. The integration of preservation objectives with developmental goals is expected to contribute significantly to the attainment of sustainable conservation for heritage sites and buildings located in different parts of Delhi.

These monuments have been deteriorating due to insufficient financial backing and a lack of adequate physical infrastructure. The finding anticipates that local communities will experience various advantages, including enhanced quality of life, economic expansion through the development of capabilities, and potentially, inclusive growth as well. Hence, it is imperative to establish a mechanism that can efficiently harness the extensive potential of heritage monuments in Delhi, while simultaneously fostering socioeconomic and cultural development within the surrounding environment of these structures.

Hence, the integration of cultural heritage, its conscientious preservation, and sustainable development are anticipated to contribute to both theoretical advancement and the practical applicability of the current scattered study. The notion of cultural heritage in the context of sustainable development remains relatively nascent, with limited scholarly investigation conducted thus far. Researchers from various academic disciplines and fields have demonstrated considerable interest in this matter. However, it is important to note that investigations into the suggested correlation are still in their preliminary phases, necessitating the development of more substantial theoretical foundations and the acquisition of more extensive empirical evidence.

Finally, heritage should not be detached from its immediate context, should not be disengaged from active involvement in the present, and should not be disassociated from the potential for appropriation and everyday interpretation. Instead, it should be elevated, revered, preserved and protected as these heritages belong to humankind.