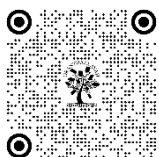


AN ANALYSIS OF FRAMING STRATEGIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT IN HISTORIC CITIES: AN ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

Redeveloping historic cities is an attempt to recognize the social and cultural value of a city and tries to safeguard the authenticity of the city. The cultural heritage of cities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging, while also providing insight into the history and heritage of previous generations. Unfortunately, current development processes are not integrated with the cultural context of cities. The speed and manner of urbanization and modernization disregard the notion of preserving the cultural heritage of cities during redevelopment and instead advocate for a uniform approach to redevelopment that undermines both the existing essence, identity, and atmosphere of the location and the standard of living of the city's residents. Such an approach ignores the importance of preserving heritage. Therefore, there is a dire need for the government to encourage sensitivity toward heritage preservation while redeveloping historic cities.

Keywords: Historic Cities, Redevelopment, Strategies, Heritage, Urbanization

1. INTRODUCTION

Historic cities are regarded as the physical representation of the culture, values, heritage, and accomplishments of the communities residing there over the ages. Such a representation makes these cities akin to living beings, as they also evolve and transform over time just like real human beings. Cities are not just physical structures; they are also a display of the history of human development because they have a social value to which the communities connect and shape their relations with the urban environment. In addition to having cultural and social value, historic cities also have a significant role to play concerning economic aspects, which helps in building the identity of civil society and its growth. Interpreting a city's character

requires examining its evolution over time [Singh et al. \(2020\)](#). Historic cities embody the identities that have existed throughout history and preserve the cultural layering and imprint of human intervention. Thus, the redevelopment of these cities should aim not only to conserve physical structures but also to sustain social patterns and cultural traditions, adapting them to changing conditions [Kaur & Bhandari \(2022\)](#). An amalgamation of the experience and the spaces shaped by that experience is what contributes to the uniqueness of historic cities. With time, due to natural and man-made factors, some parts of the historical layers decay or get damaged but others remain intact. For this reason, revamping historical cities is crucial and delicate. Also, the redevelopment approaches for all such historic cities are not only focused on preserving their physical structure but also on maintaining the cultural values of these cities. Technically, “redevelopment involves demolishment and rebuilding or considerable improvement of existing buildings or structures on a previously developed site [Zhu & González Martínez \(2022\)](#). It may include any new construction on a site that has pre-existing uses as per the current demands [Roberts and Sykes \(2002\)](#). The redevelopment of historic cities with their heritage and universal values passed down from previous generations, can play a role in promoting economic growth and sustainable development [Steinberg \(2011\)](#). It is important to examine the city's development throughout history to understand its character. Therefore, the essence of historic cities cannot remain unchanged and must be rejuvenated to remain relevant amidst evolving external circumstances. The complications lie in maintaining the essence of historic cities on one hand and revitalizing them, so they remain significant in the present context. Such a challenge or complication can be minimized by understanding the daily necessities and the underlying desires of its residents [Petronela \(2016\)](#).

2. HISTORIC CITIES

Historic cities are, usually, built with indigenous belief and wisdom which reflects human legacy and its human settlement considering the traditional, economic, political, and spatial aspects [Licciardi \(2010\)](#). [Mason \(2002\)](#) posited that “historic cities are dynamic settlements, intensely conditioned by a built-up structure and living styles that formed in ancient times and is today identifiable as symbolizing the growth of its people’. It is integral that a historic settlement be colonized and depict a living cultural essence [Mason \(2002\)](#). The development of the earliest cities dates back to ancient times when the growth of horticultural and pastoral societies allowed individuals to settle in one place instead of constantly having to relocate in search of food. The history of city development in India dates back to 2500 B.C. and includes the flourishing of the Indus Valley civilization's cities, Harappa and Mohanjo Daro, between 1700 B.C. and 600 B.C. [Dasgupta & Chattopadhyay \(2004\)](#). India has a rich history of town and city evolution that has been shaped by various invasions and conquests by different rulers over time, leading to transformations in the cities and their architecture [Petronela \(2016\)](#).

2.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF HISTORIC CITIES

The study of the cultural and morphological features of Indian historic cities cannot be ignored or underestimated as India is abundant in historic cities that speak of its historic settlements and their rich culture. Some previous scholarly studies on historic cities revealed the following characteristics of many of the historic cities in the Indian scenario [Dhingra et al. \(2017\)](#), [Kumar et al. \(2020\)](#), [Singh et al. \(2020\)](#):

- 1) **Compactness:** The arrangement of dwelling units into clusters creates neighbourhoods, and multiple clusters then result in compact development.
- 2) **Mobility:** The streets in the neighbourhoods are connected through a network of narrow and winding roads, which interconnect with each other. The primary thoroughfares offer access to significant community locations, the palace of the city, and the central temple complex. The street network is organic and has a non-uniform design, offering great connectivity to the innermost neighbourhood communities. The narrow streets did not accommodate vehicles, thus making walking the preferred mode of transportation.
- 3) **Density:** The grouping of housing units was common, particularly among close family members, resulting in highly concentrated settlements.
- 4) **Land Use:** Land use in historic cities highly depends upon the categories to which it comes. The division of land into private and public sectors brought about a distinction in land use. The central part of the cities comprised the majority of the activities. All the necessary public services and amenities were available in local areas which made the communities living in those areas self-sufficient. Land usage got classified with further division of land into private, semi-private, and public spaces.
- 5) **Diversity:** Cities often comprise clusters of neighbourhoods and each neighbourhood has its distinct tradition and culture each contributing to the wholesomeness of the urban form. Social classes are the determining factor in tracing the growth pattern with the center of the city expanding in a circular or spiral fashion. Wealthy families lived near the central areas of the city which accounts for its growth in a circular and spiral fashion. The working class majorly occupied the area closer to the periphery, and the agricultural land was in the area lying beyond those peripheries.
- 6) **Passive solar design:** The design of dwelling units was intended to limit direct sunlight and create shade on the streets through intricate arrangements. The courtyard style of planning was prevalent, which was designed to face inward to maximize privacy for family activities. The openings were positioned inward and were provided at height to maintain isolation. The prevalent building material in the region was mud, which provided a cool temperature for the houses and was easily obtainable locally.
- 7) **Green Urbanism:** The presence of open spaces, courtyards, and well-defined circulation patterns was a defining feature at all levels of the city. The old settlements were well-equipped to handle drainage, and practices like collecting rainwater for later use were common. Chowks served as gathering places for the community, hosting local events, celebrations, and rituals, and facilitating interaction and dialogue among the public.

This typical form of city structure persisted until beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The expansion of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century brought about significant alterations in urban planning across many cities worldwide. During the industrial revolution, the traditional settlement patterns of historic cities became inadequate, leading to the development of newly planned urban areas and the creation of different occupations. The growth of factories in cities led to a swift expansion and alteration of historic cities [Grabowski \(2019\)](#).

3. ISSUES AND NEED FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIC CITIES

As cited in [McGranahan & Satterthwaite \(2014\)](#), with the increasing pace of economic growth, growing populations, and changing needs, and lifestyles, many historic cities have encountered difficulties in adapting to these changes. The trends in the rising population put immense pressure on the delicate cultural heritage of historic cities, which could result in permanent damage and loss. Both developed and developing countries possess historical cities with valuable cultural and economic assets that have the potential for sustainable growth. Preserving urban heritage and landscapes is critical for human advancement, economic prosperity, and job creation, making the protection of these resources not just a moral obligation, but also a key financial investment toward constructing inclusive and sustainable cities.

The cultural heritage of historic cities, including physical structures and intangible elements, is a crucial part of the people's identity, promotes a sense of community, and strengthens social capital. It is therefore important for the international community to prevent the loss of the unique character of these cities and prioritize their redevelopment. When redeveloping historic cities, it is essential to take into account the views of the residents and the intricate nature of the cities, including their various values. Both local and national governments recognize the substantial economic impact that revitalizing historic cities can have on regional growth and prioritize its consideration.

A study published by UNESCO in the year 2016 has outlined the challenges that the redevelopment process of historic cities is facing in India and are as follows [Ertan & Egercioglu \(2016\)](#):

- 1) Absence of urban guidelines regarding the preservation of cultural heritage. Because of an increase in the national population undue priority has been given to essential urban amenities and the eradication of urban poverty. This leads to a reduced focus on the preservation of heritage in the development process. and hence it calls for an integration of approaches to protecting heritage along with urban planning legislation and practice.
- 2) The absence of knowledge about the cultural and heritage values of a city and a lack of people's participation in local governance contributes to the destruction of urban heritage and the alteration of the character of historic areas, often leading to gentrification.
- 3) Ineffective and poorly regulated tourism. Tourism, although a valuable economic opportunity, should be handled with consideration for local resources, it can lead to the erasure of local memories, and cultural identity, resulting in the commercialization of heritage sites. The infrastructure and services for preserving India's heritage fall far below the standards for accessibility, quality, and accountability. The major hindrance to developing world-class heritage tourism in India is due to inadequate governance systems and inadequate knowledge management [Dangi \(2017\)](#). To effectively manage heritage tourism, there needs to be access to information regarding various factors such as spatial mapping and the presence of strong IT infrastructure for making informed decisions about creating supplementary services and facilities.
- 4) More expertise in urban cultural heritage is needed. The capacity for conserving urban heritage is insufficient and there is a pressing need to

enhance skills in this field, including traditional methods for preserving buildings.

- 5) In India, while there is recognition of the pressing urban issues, there is also a desire to leverage the opportunities provided by current government urban initiatives. To effectively revitalize historic cities, the focus must be on enhancing the quality of life for residents through adequate infrastructure and a recognition of the cultural significance of the cities [Stovel \(2004\)](#).

4. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIC CITIES IN INDIA

In India, urbanization has generally occurred in an unstructured and random manner, leading to numerous urban issues that hinder the country's goal of promoting balanced and equitable development in historic cities. To address these challenges, the government of India has launched several systemic reforms and strategies aimed at redeveloping these cities. International bodies and institutions have shown a keen interest in the development of historic cities, as evidenced by the numerous international charters and guidelines established to guide their redevelopment. These principles serve as the foundation for redevelopment efforts in many countries.

In India, the main focus of urban development has been on building up urban infrastructure, neglecting the historic inner-city areas. To tackle this problem, the JNNURM (Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission scheme launched in 2005) was introduced to help local authorities to incorporate heritage considerations while preparing master plans and undertaking heritage-inclusive development projects [Vaidya \(2009\)](#). Several administrations, including INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage), Delhi Urban Art Commission (DUAC), Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), and the Indian Heritage Cities Network Foundation (IHCN), have made significant efforts to preserve heritage resources sustainably while promoting urban development. The UNESCO/UN-HABITAT toolkit, "Historic Districts for All," offers a means of improving the skills and knowledge of urban local bodies. Another initiative led by UNESCO, the "Indian Heritage Passport Programme," emphasizes heritage-based tourism as a means of local development. This program supports Indian states in promoting their high-quality tourism destinations, amenities, and efforts to protect and enhance cultural and natural heritage, while also taking into account the local environment and job creation [Kaur & Bhandari \(2021\)](#).

International development agencies have also played a crucial role in supporting heritage conservation efforts in India. The Asian Development Bank's "Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism" in states such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu adopt a comprehensive approach that emphasizes the preservation of cultural and natural heritage and its connection to municipal services, tourist infrastructure, and improved connectivity to tourist destinations. The World Bank has also worked with several state governments to fund sustainable development and revitalization initiatives in historic areas.

Previous attempts at developing historic cities were often carried out independently and without proper consideration of the needs and desires of local communities. To promote these urban settlements as vibrant, competitive, and equipped to handle the challenges of urbanization in the modern age, a more

structured and comprehensive approach was necessary. The Indian government introduced the HRIDAY (HERITAGE CITY DEVELOPMENT AND AUGMENTATION YOJANA) Scheme in 2015, intending to promote a holistic approach to urban planning, economic growth, and heritage conservation, preserving the unique character of each designated Heritage City. This scheme aims to facilitate inclusive growth and development in these heritage cities and supports the upgrading of infrastructure linked to heritage sites. Its goal is to rejuvenate the urban infrastructure of areas surrounding heritage and religious sites. The HRIDAY Yojana also focuses on enhancing drainage, sanitation, water supply, roads, waste management, street lighting, citizen services, and other tourism-related necessities in the selected historic cities. The cities selected for this scheme are Amritsar, Ajmer, Amravati, Gaya, Badami, Dwarka, Velankanni, Kanchipuram, Warangal, Mathura, Puri, and Varanasi. HRIDAY is a government-funded initiative, with 100% of the funding provided by the central government of India. The duration of the scheme is from December 2014 to March 2019, and it will be implemented in a mission-oriented manner. The total budget for the scheme is INR 500 Crore.

The cities with historical value have been disregarded, leading to overcrowding and a lack of basic services and infrastructure, including water supply and sanitation, as well as roads. Additionally, essential facilities such as toilets, signages, and streetlights are absent. The challenges of managing historic cities are significant due to the presence of numerous institutions and confusing regulatory frameworks for funding and overseeing urban heritage assets and landscapes. Additionally, the capacity of Urban Local Bodies is limited. However, the introduction of the HRIDAY scheme has offered fresh hope for the growth and development of these cities.

5. STRATEGIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

The current research is built on the redevelopment works done in Indian historic cities such as Amritsar, Varanasi, Mathura, etc., under the HRIDAY (Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana) scheme taking reference from CHPs (City Heritage Plan) prepared for each city. Also, some international cities have been assessed to list down the strategies that have been adopted for the redevelopment of historic cities. The common factor found in all these redevelopment initiatives is to maintain the cultural values of the historic cities by taking into account the aspirations of the local citizens. To attain this goal, a focus on conservation and environmental sustainability, social development, urban infrastructure improvement, and local economic development is necessary. The below table (Table 1) shows strategies adopted for urban conservation and urban redevelopment in the selected historic cities:

Table 1

Table 1 Strategies Adopted for Redevelopment of Historic Cities		
Case Study	Issues Faced	Strategy Adopted
Historic District of Kajaani, Finland <i>Rysayeva et al. (2015)</i>	Urban decline of Kajaani city center and traffic congestion on main high street	Pedestrianization of congested high street and city square enhancing commercial activities in city center.
Walled city Amritsar <i>Singh (2012)</i>	Traffic congestion and lack of infrastructure facilities	De-congesting the inner city by proposing a completely pedestrian zone. One way looping strategies on the outer road around the walled city.

Historic Center of Mexico, Mexico Kanai & Ortega Alcazar (2009)	Up gradation of the economic status of the citizens along with enhancement of the quality of life in the city center	Many of the local business were re-established to enhance the local trade. Large scale private investment leveraged.
Varanasi Tomar & Gupta (2019)	Urbanization pressure due to increasing tourism and declining urban heritage	The Government has regulated development along the riverbanks and enforced legislations for old buildings.

Learning from these case studies indicating that the redevelopment strategies should cater the aspirations of the citizens of the historic cities. Each of the redevelopment plan should focus on the historical significance of the city by considering the local citizens demands. Based on the approaches adopted in the case studies, the following must be considered and can prove helpful in achieving the aim for redevelopment of the historic cities [Eyyamoglu & Akcay \(2022\)](#), [Basha \(2021\)](#):

- 1) First and foremost, it is extremely important to take into account both physical and non-physical aspects of cultural values and must be incorporated in every action plan targeted toward historic cities and urban areas.
- 2) The standard and well-being of the communities living in these areas and the environment surrounding these areas should also be focused and efforts should be made to enhance and improve the lifestyle and the surroundings of the citizens.
- 3) Only all those alterations, whether numerical or qualitative, should be allowed to be made that are significant in enhancing the cultural values and the overall urban environment and no others.
- 4) The focus should always lie on preserving and protecting the historical, cultural, environmental, social, and spatial value of the city.
- 5) The pace at which the changes are occurring must be tracked so as to keep a check on the harm brought about by these changes on the authenticity of the cultural and historical values of the city.
- 6) The frequency and compatibility of interventions must be considered as part of feasibility studies and planning efforts.
- 7) The preservation and administration of the city must be carried out using a structured methodology, an in-depth understanding of the location and its surroundings prior to implementing any protective measures, and ongoing monitoring and upkeep. Direct engagement and ongoing communication with residents and stakeholders are essential.
- 8) Effective governance necessitates collaboration among all parties involved, thus measures to safeguard historic cities should facilitate the dissemination of adequate information and afford residents adequate time to give informed feedback.
- 9) The protection of historic cities requires collaboration between various disciplines and stakeholders, including researchers, private organizations, and the general public.
- 10) The cultural richness resulting from the diverse communities that have lived in historic cities throughout history must be honoured, with a delicate balance being struck to ensure the preservation of their historical heritage.

6. CONCLUSION

In today's time, diverse Indian cities are under urban pressure to become a part of the globalized cities. The importance of these cities lies in their core values that come from their heritage. Historic cities, with a collection of architecturally and historically significant buildings and monuments, exhibit a unique city character. The redevelopment strategies for such historic cities require a comprehensive synthesis of the core development practices that will fill the gap between the traditional and contemporary developments. The historic core in all of these historic cities contributes to one or more of its traditional, spiritual, social, technological, and ethical significance. There are multiple historic layers accumulated across generations within these historic core areas that gave these cities a unique identity. The idea behind redevelopment plans in these cities should strive for not just improved efficiency through the integration of technology, but also retention of the city's cultural identity and should cater to the needs of its citizens. For incorporating the citizen needs all redevelopment initiatives need to be carried out with community participation approach wherein the involvement of local people/community shall be done in various projects/initiatives to solve their own problems.

The future vision recognizes the connection between cultural heritage and the people who live there. Redevelopment should prioritize the needs and wants of the people, and not just the physical spaces. The local community should be given a priority to maintain its unique identity and its interests with a flexible and accommodating approach. The current research also reinstates the importance of public/private partnerships and the importance of local neighbourhood groups in guiding redevelopment initiatives and decision-making at various levels. The local government, heritage professionals and various other organizations/stakeholders involved need to be more socially inclusive in its redevelopment approach for an effective sustainable development.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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