



Challenges and Economic Opportunities of Cultural Heritage Tourism Development In Kaushambi District, Uttar Pradesh

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59436/jsiane.432.2583-2093>

Abstract

Tourism is the practice of traveling for leisure, recreation, or business purposes to destinations outside one's usual environment. It involves visiting places of interest, staying in accommodations, and engaging in activities such as sightseeing, entertainment, and cultural experiences. The Kaushambi district in Uttar Pradesh has a rich cultural heritage that offers significant economic opportunities through cultural heritage tourism. However, the region also faces several obstacles that are necessary to fully realize its potential. These challenges include the lack of infrastructure and amenities such as transportation, accommodation, and information centers, the need for a skilled workforce, effective marketing and promotion strategies, and the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage sites. Despite these obstacles, the tourism industry's contribution to the creation of jobs, higher revenue generation, and overall economic growth is significant. Additionally, cultural heritage tourism can support the promotion of regional specialties like cuisine and handicrafts. Effective strategies for the region's sustainable tourism development must be created to reap these benefits.

Keywords: Cultural heritage, Tourism, Challenges, Development-Opportunities, Economic

Received 04.08.2025

Revised 13.09.2025

Accepted 15.11.2025

Online Available 01.12.2025

Introduction

Tourism has been an integral part of human history for centuries, from ancient times when people traveled to holy sites and cultural centers for trade and commercial fulfillment (Awasthi *et al.*, 2019). The word 'tourism' comes from the Latin word 'tornus' meaning a circle or a round trip (Rabotic, 2014). Cultural heritage refers to the tangible and intangible aspects of a society's inherited traditions, customs, beliefs, practices, and artifacts that have been passed down from past generations and are valued and preserved for their significance to society (Benjwal, 2021). It includes physical objects such as art, literature, buildings, monuments, and artifacts, as well as intangible elements such as music, dance, language, storytelling, and traditional knowledge (Ivanovic, 2008). Cultural heritage is an important part of a society's identity and can provide a sense of continuity and connection to the past. It also serves as a resource for education, inspiration, and creativity, and contributes to economic development through tourism and cultural industries. It includes the shared knowledge, traditions, and art of a community that is transmitted across generations (Richards, 2018). It is the social and intellectual heritage passed down from one generation to another through communication, education, and imitation. Culture can include language, religion, traditions, music, art, food, clothing, and other forms of expression (Awasthi *et al.*, 2019). It is shaped by various factors such as geography, history, politics, and social norms, and it plays a critical role in defining the identity of individuals and societies (Nur Hakim, 2022). Culture also helps people understand and interpret the world around them and can be a powerful tool for promoting mutual understanding and respect among different groups. Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh has a rich cultural heritage, providing significant economic opportunities through cultural heritage tourism (Kumar, 1996). However, the sector also faces several challenges that need to be addressed to maximize its potential. Cultural heritage tourism can be an important driver of economic development in many regions of the world. Kaushambi district in Uttar Pradesh, India is a region with rich cultural heritage including the ancient Ashoka Pillar, Ghoshitaram Vihar and Sri Lankan Buddhist Temples, Jain Temple Prabhashgiri, Sheela Dham, Temples Alwara, and historical forts. Despite the potential economic benefits of cultural heritage tourism, the sector faces several challenges that need to be addressed to maximize its potential (Dikshit & Rai, 2004). The Kaushambi district has a lot of potential for cultural heritage tourism, but achieving its economic potential will require overcoming obstacles and creating viable plans for sustainable tourism growth. Cultural heritage tourism presents significant economic opportunities, including the creation of jobs, higher revenue generation, and expansion of the overall economy. The promotion of regional crafts, cuisine, and other distinctive qualities can also be aided by cultural heritage tourism. Effective strategies for the region's sustainable tourism development must be created to reap these benefits. The area has the potential to be a significant player in the cultural heritage tourism sector thanks to its historic forts, temples, and ancient Buddhist sites. However, to fully realize this potential, some issues must be resolved. The study is focused to understand the present

cultural heritage and challenges and future opportunities of tourism in the Kaushambi District.

Study area

The districts of Kaushambi and Allahabad were split on April 4th, 1997. The historic place Kaushambi is located in the southwest of Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh on the south bank of the Yamuna River, and about 55 km from the district's administrative headquarters Allahabad. The Kaushambi district is surrounded by Chitrakoot in the south, Pratapgarh in the north, Allahabad in the east, and Fatehpur in the west. It extended from 25°49'8" to 25°51'55" N latitude and 81°17'5" to 81°49'5" E longitude. A total of three tehsils and eight blocks in Kaushambi cover an area of 1780 sq. km of the state. The earliest historical records of Kaushambi date back to the Vedic period, around 1500 BCE, when it was known as Kaushambi (Figure 1). According to Hindu mythology, Kaushambi was one of the seven sacred cities of ancient India. In the 6th century BCE, Kaushambi was an important center of Buddhist learning and philosophy, and it is said to have been visited by Gautama Buddha himself. Over the centuries, Kaushambi was ruled by various empires and dynasties, including the Mauryans, the Guptas, and the Mughals. In the modern era, Kaushambi has become an important archaeological site, with numerous ancient ruins and artifacts dating back to various periods of its history.

Research Methodology

Data Source: The study comprises 300 local people who are directly or indirectly involve in tourism and tourism related activities. The questionnaire based survey has been conducted among the people dependent on tourism in Kaushambi. The stratified random sampling method has been used to collect the information or data. There 150 domestic tourist also interviewed for their participation in Kaushambi growth as tourism center.

Data Analysis: The descriptive statistics cover the basic & general profile of the residents. It enables the study to depict a large set of observations by means of a single indicator. It helps us to visualize the research data. Basically, two general types of statistic i.e. measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and measures of spread/variability/dispersion (range, quartile, absolute deviation, variance, standard deviation) are used to explain the data. The former describes the central position of a frequency distribution for a group of data, while the latter sum's up a group of data by explaining how spread out the scores are (Verma & Ghufan, 2012).

Cultural Heritage sites in Kaushambi

Ghoshitaram Vihar: In the Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh, at Ghoshitaram Vihar, Mahatma Buddha conducted a Chaturmas to spread his message of truth and nonviolence. For him, Vihar was created. It still conveys information about that era's architecture in the form of ruins today. Excavations at Kausambi (1957–59) the time. Following the Mahabharata, when Hastinapur's power waned, the final king Nikakshu moved his capital from there to Kaushambi (Ali, 2015). Maharaj Udayan was the most illustrious ruler in this place (Figure 2). The richest merchant in the kingdom of Ghoshitaram was the wealthiest trader in King Udayan's realm.



Figure 1: Ghoshitaram Vihar

He extended an invitation to visit Kaushambi after being deeply moved by the nonviolence-centered teachings of Mahatma Buddha.

Ashok Stambh: This pillar is located outside the Prayagraj fort. This pillar 10.6 meters in height was built in 232 BC of the time where you'll find this pillar. Ashoka, the Emperor, built it. On the outside of the Ashoka pillar, the Brahmi script is used for the inscriptions of Ashoka. This Kaushambi inscription of Ashoka is called "Queen's inscription" because it is described as being donated by Queen Karuvaki, wife of Ashoka (Dikshit & Rai, 2004). Samudra Gupta transported the Ashoka Stambh from Kaushambi to Prayag in the year 200 AD. His court poet Harishen had inscribed Prayag-Prashasti on it (Figure 3). Following this, the Ashoka pillar in Allahabad also bears the legend of Mughal emperor Jahangir sitting on the throne on this pillar in 1605 AD.



Figure 2: Ashoka Stambh

Udayan Fort: The Kaushambi district's heritage has been preserved by the Maharaja Udayan Fort. If we look back in time, we can see that Maharaja Udayan once ruled over the area that is now Kaushambi Vatsa. With the aid of a bastion, the Maharaja Udayan's fort's existence is still maintained. Located on the Yamuna River's banks, this monument to Maharaja Udayan and Vasava Datta is a popular tourist destination. The presence of this fort gives visitors from both India and abroad an impression of the opulence of Vatsa state's capital (Dikshit & Rai, 2004).

Bodh temple: Near the Buddhist site in Kaushambi, the governments of Sri Lanka and Cambodia have also erected Buddhist temples. A Buddhist temple is also being built by the Thailand government. Sri Lankan Temples to Buddhism After achieving Kaivalya in his sixth and ninth years, Mahatma Buddha visited the Kaushambi district (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Bodh Temple

The name Kaushambi is notable because it is recorded in history in golden letters. Lord Gautam Buddha's Chaturmasha in Kaushambi's Kosam Inam is another factor in this. Along with practicing penance by residing in the proclaimed Ram Vihar, Gautam Buddha preached nonviolence and peace (Dikshit & Rai, 2004).

Jain Shrines: There is a beautiful temple dedicated to Lord Bhagwan Padmaprabhuji. Apart from the above many ancient idols were found during excavation, which proves the historical and religious importance of this place. This shrine is situated 60 KM from Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh on the Yamuna River's northern bank. According to ancient Jain texts, there were 16 Mahajanpadas in existence in the sixth century B.C (Figure 5). One such Mahajanpada with Kaushambi as its capital was Vatsa (Singh & Singh, 2015).



Figure 4: Jain Temple

The birthplace of the sixth Tirthankar, Padmaprabhu, gave the town its just importance. Here, he held his kalynakas for Chayan, births, Diksha, and "The Kewalya Gyan."

Kada Dham Sheetla Mata Temple: The Kada Dham Sheetla Mata Temple, which is close to Sirathu in the Uttar Pradesh Kaushambi district, is a very well-known pilgrimage site. Since the year 1000 AD, Kada has been a site of religious observance. Kada's Sheetla Temple has a long history of significance in both history and religion.

Alwara Lake: Alwara Lake is a natural part of a perennial wetland. It is surrounded by agricultural fields and connected to the river Yamuna and covers more than 1750 hectares. It is located in the Sarsawan block of Manjhanpur Tahsil of Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh (Figure 6). This lake is surrounded by Ranipur, Dundi, Hatwa, and Bhawansuri in the east, Paur Kashi Rampur, Alwara, and Gaura in the north, and Shahpur, (Verma, 2016).



Figure 5: Alwara Lake

Result and Discussion

Domestic Tourists visited Kaushambi - The present research study was conducted to study the impact of heritage tourism on local community development in Kaushambi. The domestic tourist are major stakeholder in growth and development of Kaushambi as tourism center. The residents from Uttar Pradesh has visited Kaushambi more than people from other state (Table 1). There are 100 respondent participated in the study and among the people from Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat were highest which followed by tourist from Delhi. The tourist from every state is visiting the Kaushambi.

Table 1: Profile of Tourist visited in Kaushambi

S. No	Domestic Tourists	No. of Tourist	Percentage
1	Uttar Pradesh	20	20.00%
2	Gujarat	19	19.00%
3	Delhi	13	13.00%
4	Bihar	9	9.00%
5	Uttarakhand	7	7.00%
6	Punjab	5	5.00%
7	Rajasthan	4	4.00%
8	Madhya Pradesh	4	4.00%
9	Haryana	4	4.00%
10	Andhra Pradesh	3	3.00%
11	Sikkim	2	2.00%
12	Himachal Pradesh	2	2.00%
13	Maharashtra	2	2.00%
14	Orissa	1	1.00%
15	Others	5	5.00%

Source: Department of Tourism, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, 2022

People involve in Tourism activity in Kaushambi

Residents are involved in tourism activity particularly in heritage sites and religious locations. It is because large number of tourist visited to these location for various purposes. Heritage sites provide two kind of tourists such as pilgrimage purpose/ religious and researcher or historical admirers (Table 2). Local people are getting various opportunity from these tourist and getting income and other benefits.

Table 2: Local People involve in Heritage Tourism

Profile of the Residents		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	207	69%
	Female	93	31%
Age of Resident	Below 30 Years	98	32.7%
	30 to 45 Years	146	48.7%
	46 to 60 Years	49	16.3%

	More than 60 Years	7	2.3%
Occupation	Tourism related activity	131	43.7%
	Hotels and resorts	34	11.3%
	Private Service	45	15.0%
	shops	66	22.0%
	Student / Researcher	8	2.7%
	Housewives	11	3.7%
	Any Other	5	1.7%
Involved in Tourism	Yes	75	25.0%
	No	225	75.0%
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	20	6.7%
	Below Matric	36	12.0%
	Matric	76	25.3%
	Senior Secondary	72	24.0%
	Graduate	96	32.0%
Period of Residence at Kaushambi	Less than 5 years	55	18.3%
	5-10 years	73	24.3%
	More than 10 years	172	57.3%
Annual Income	No Income	15	5.0%
	Less Than 1 lakh	112	37.3%
	Rs 1 lakh-Rs 5 Lakhs	141	47.0%
	Rs 5 Lakhs- Rs 10 Lakhs	32	10.7%
	Rs 10 Lakhs- Rs 20 Lakhs	0	0
	Above Rs 20 Lakhs	0	0

Source: Primary Survey, 2023

Above table describes that, maximum number of residents are educated and aware the importance of heritage sites. More than half local residents are getting income more than 1 per annum from tourist activity. The table also shows that maximum people are involve in tourism related activity.

Trend of Foreign tourist in Kaushambi

The following table 3 shows that Kaushambi receives very less number of foreign tourist, it is because of absence of proper tourist facility. The foreign tourist numbers have been declining from 2017 with 15.6 thousand to 2.24 thousand in 2021.

Table 3: Foreign tourist in Kaushambi

Years	Foreign Tourist (million) in India	Foreign Tourists (million) In Uttar Pradesh	Foreign Tourist (1000) in Kaushambi
2014	7.68	NA	NA
2015	8.03	NA	NA
2016	8.80	NA	NA
2017	10.04	3.55	15.6
2018	10.56	3.78	15.6
2019	10.93	4.74	15.6
2020	2.74	0.89	3.7
2021	1.52	0.04	2.24

Source: Department of Tourism, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, 2022

Opportunities of Cultural Heritage Tourism in Kaushambi- Historical Significance: Ancient times are the beginning of Kaushambi's long and illustrious history. In Kaushambi, a cultural heritage tour gives tourists the chance to learn more about the region's history and how it influenced the socio- political structure of ancient India its extraction value is 0.672 which show high relevance.

Archaeological Excavations: Extensive archaeological excavations in the area uncovered numerous artifacts and relics from various historical eras. It is important part of growth of heritage tourism due to is has 0.666 extraction value (Table 4).

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Opportunities

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis (N)	Extraction
Historical significance	3.203	1.177	300	0.672
Archeological Excavation	2.85	1.054	300	0.666
Religious Pilgrimage	3.42	1.265	300	0.743

Tourism Development and Socio- economic Growth	3.42	1.128	300	0.661
Preservation and Conservation	2.846	1.14	300	0.558
Educational and Research Opportunities	2.69	1.139	300	0.753
Job Creation	1.786	0.704	300	0.562
Income Generation	2.603	1.24	300	0.652
Small Business Development	2.376	1.125	300	0.566
Community Development	2.113	0.8811	300	0.786
Cultural Revitalization	1.87	0.7081	300	0.548
Infrastructure Development	1.883	0.7426	300	0.753
Destination Marketing and Branding	4.11	0.7391	300	0.606

Source: Calculated by Author

Challenges in the Development of Cultural Heritage Tourism in the Kaushambi District

Preservation and conservation: One of the fundamental elements of cultural heritage tourism is the preservation and conservation of historical sites and monuments. The district authorities can concentrate on conserving and maintaining the existing structures to ensure their longevity and tourist appeal with 0.596 value. High extraction value shows high level of challenges.

Overcrowding and Over tourism: Especially during the busiest travel times, popular cultural heritage sites may experience issues with overcrowding with 0.673 value (Table 5). Congestion, a strain on the infrastructure, and negative effects on the quality of life in the neighborhood.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Challenges

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N	Extraction
Preservation and conservation of cultural heritage	3.53	1.08614	300	0.569
Overcrowding and Over tourism	3.7567	0.90564	300	0.673
Cultural Appropriation and Exploitation	2.2467	1.12697	300	0.615
Lack of Resources and Infrastructure	2.61	1.0335	300	0.714
Inappropriate Commercialization	2.45	1.08848	300	0.626
Climate Change and Natural Disasters	2.5867	1.07066	300	0.597
Socio-cultural issues	2.9167	1.08025	300	0.619

Cultural Appropriation and Exploitation: There is a chance that cultural heritage tourism will commodify and exploit regional customs, traditions, and artifacts. The cultural identity of the local community must be respected, and tourism operations must be run ethically.

Lack of Resources and Infrastructure: Some cultural heritage sites may be found in rural or underdeveloped areas where there is a lack of services, transportation, and infrastructure. Managing and promoting tourism while providing adequate facilities for visitors can be difficult with limited resources.

Inappropriate Commercialization: The risk of excessive commercialization in cultural heritage tourism occurs when activities geared towards making money take precedence over activities that preserve and showcase the heritage. This may result in the commodification of customs, the creation of false experiences, and the exploitation of regional groups and their cultural resources.

Climate Change and Natural Disasters: The effects of climate change and natural disasters can hurt cultural heritage sites. The preservation of these sites may be seriously threatened by rising sea levels, severe weather, erosion, or earthquakes, necessitating proactive measures for resilience and protection.

Socio-cultural issues: Cultural heritage tourism may have both favorable and unfavorable effects on society. It might result in the commodification of culture, the dilution of customs, or the loss of cultural identity. Tourists can also disturb local communities, change their way of life, and exacerbate social tensions.

Conclusion

In the Kaushambi district, the growth of cultural heritage tourism presents both challenges and business opportunities. Due to the region's significant historical and cultural heritage, it has the potential to draw tourists and generate income. However, several problems must be fixed to successfully develop this area. The development of cultural heritage tourism in the Kaushambi district may be hampered by inadequate infrastructure, including basic amenities, lodging, and transportation. It is a significant challenge to conserve, maintain, and protect the cultural heritage sites in Kaushambi. The upkeep and restoration of archaeological sites and monuments demand sufficient resources and knowledge. A lack of adequate transportation, lodging, and basic amenities may hinder the growth of cultural heritage tourism in the Kaushambi district. The preservation and protection of Kaushambi's cultural heritage sites present a significant challenge. It takes enough money and expertise to maintain and restore archaeological sites and monuments. Potential tourists' ignorance of the district's rich cultural history is one barrier. Effective marketing and promotion strategies are needed to highlight the area's unique historical and cultural characteristics. Yet there are issues of infrastructure, conservation, and promotion that must be resolved. For the tourism industry to reach its full potential, it requires strategic planning, investment, and cooperation between relevant stakeholders to ensure the sustainable development of tourism in the region.

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- Verma, A. K. (2016). Distribution and Conservation Status of Catfishes in Alwara Lake of District Kaushambi (U.P) Cite this paper Studies on different fish genera in Alwara Lake of District Kaushambi Distribution and Conservation Status of Catfishes in Alwara Lake of District Kaushambi (U.P.).