



## Risk of Deprivation of Local Culture in Tourism Destination: A Case of Khaplu Valley



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### Abstract

*Over the years, tourism has become an international business as well as a source of acculturation for tourist community and local population GB. Numerous social and cultural changes are reported harming the local and indigenous culture and specifically the local norms, values and traditions in unwanted manner. The research methodology was exploratory. Data was collected through survey method. There were 50 respondents, belonged from Balti community. Data was analyzed by using SPSS This research is a detailed case study of effects of national and international tourism on the local Balti culture that is entirely different the others in Gilgit Baltistan. The study explores the loss of cultural traits due to increased tourist activities. The tourism opportunities have opened access to outsiders as tourists while the impacts are seen as a threat to influence, rather change the local cultural traits.*

**Key Words:** Social and Cultural Change, Identity Crisis, Tourism impacts. Indigenous Culture, Local Community

### Introduction

Culture is one's identity; it varies from area to area. People promote their culture through tourism whereby their cultural elements are explored like food, dress, language, living style and their religious beliefs as well as the natural and historical places. Hence tourism play role as explorer, but alternatively shows its impact on their livelihood. People prefer to live in modern way life when they become economically strong. These facilities change their livelihood that directly impacts culture. Gradually, culture becomes part of past and becomes art pieces.

Gilgit Baltistan has rich land of natural beauty, lofty mountains, green lush valleys, glaciers, waterfalls and the most important rich local cultural diversity. These all are the major attraction for the local and foreign tourists, 'Art and crafts, archeological sites show the rich diversity of northern areas, historical inscription and famous rocks discovered in the area gives it more value to conserve, preserve and promote their cultural heritage. Thus increasing the economic stability through tourism. ([Ahmed, 2003](#)).

The tourism system is also a major element constituting the way in which the environment, develop places and cultures, this environment creates a mirror for other, representing daily life style of a particular area In the modern world, tourism and connected activities play an important role in the construction of world views and idea.

The tourism industry influences local people directly or indirectly. 'Tourism is impacting on daily life and directly and indirectly impact on other industries, it acts as social force in society. Tourism brings peace and happiness in life of people' ([Mathur, 2011](#)). Tourism is a link that brings faith and interaction with human in society. Global changes impact people through tourism because people from different cultural backgrounds and of different religion and values connect each other.

### Literature Review

From the socio-cultural perspective, tourism brings together people from different backgrounds, cultures and traditions and promotes peace. But at the same time, due to Globalization, many communities have lost their cultural identity and gave way to a Disney fiction in their village or town.

[Liu \(2003:468\)](#) states that "tourism is not the main culprit for the loss of cultural identity and Traditions: "The globalization and homogenization of culture, often referred to as Cocacolaisation, Hollywoodisation or

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McDonaldisation may not be caused only by tourism. The media, by means of modern communication and information technology often play a more important role in shaping the values, opinions, lifestyle and fashion of the world."(Liu, 2003). Globalization is mainly impacts on cultures, people globally connect with different communities, interact each other and create a global harmony, culture exchange, but indirectly it generalized the local culture and turn into hybrid culture.

This is basic fact that without education lives do not change. "Based on the previous research, it was found that Tourism was able to broaden the way of thinking of community, but in this research, the quality thinking of the people in Pasir Angin village didn't become better. This condition was corollary of their low educational background. Most of them only passed elementary school" (Pramanik & Ingkadijaya, 2018). Tourism bring changes in socio economic condition, raise the life standard through education.

Pokhara-Ghandruk community in Nepal, local traditional fashion, lifestyle and behavior of young people affected by Tourism. They are modern dresses instead of local dress, follow western hairstyle, do not respect their elders, and organize parties outside home. Old people worry about their behavior. Not only tourism, Indian movies, dress and communication vehicles are also those factors which impacts on cultural change (Shahzadal, 2016). Culture is way of life, identity but in modern era young generation ignores it. Old people prefer to stay with their identity and hardly accept the modern way of life.

(Wicken 1994) highlighted the concept of hybrid culture 'the concept of hybrid culture is mixture of western and native culture. Fusion of traditional and non-traditional cultural elements like artificial element added into traditional dance, music, events and activities. Food is changed serving hybrid cuisine. Dance bars and disco opening' (Shahzadal, 2016). This common in eastern societies, they are trying to adopt the west culture with native elements like in Pakistan girls wear jeans with local Kameez.

Cole (2007) found that in Indonesia, villagers feel pride in tourism because it strengthens and promote their cultural values. Tourism is way to display their culture identities like house, clothes and megalith dress as their identity. This also gives recognition to political power through marketing their photos as well promote it at provincial level' (ibid, 2007). Tourism is basic tool to promote culture by adopting cultural elements. Unfortunately, culture is adopted for commercial purpose to get benefit as it attracts tourists.

In modern era, people desire a comfortable life. That's why with passage of time when trends change, people's way of thinking and living standard changed. "Despite their cultural loss, local people are feeling happy due to their new life and increase in wealth. They feel tourists provide those benefits more than the local people so they have to satisfy tourists"(Herrero, Sanz, Bedate, & Barrio, 2011). The non-native people have no concern with local people, local culture, they only concern to happy tourist especially the foreigner for sake of economic benefits.

Local art and craft is main part of cultural identity (Menon, 1993) 'Local art and craft are not produced in local village of Jaisalmer in India, instead of local stone used potter material, for the attraction of tourist the colorful photography of women's body of the decent monuments in advertising materials'(Menon, 1993). Ignorance to local art for sake of benefits is the main reason of cultural loss.

Cultural identity is main issue of Balti people. According to Shah "There are clear implications of issues of cultural identity of the Balti people for equal opportunities (or lack thereof) in employment. Given the lack of economic development of the area by the Government of Pakistan, and the equal lack of interest expressed by Private investors and banks, many Balti people are forced to migrate to Pakistan's urban areas of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad or to the Arabian Gulf in search of employment" (Dryland & Jawad, 2011). When people migrate toward other areas, they struggle to adapt their own culture.

## **Material and Method**

### **Local**

Khaplu is headquarter of district Ghanche. Famous tourist sides in Khaplu are Chaqchan Mosque, Khaplu Khanqah. For trekking, Thoksikhar Fort trek, Khaplu Broq. Khaplu is capital of Ghanche. Distance is 110 km away from Skardu city. Khaplu is culturally rich and naturally beautiful place. Tourism activities, like trekking, visit historical places, natural pastures are common in summers. Hotel industry is also growing in Khaplu. (Tibat-Encyclopedia, n.d.). Balti is ethic group of the Himalayan region,

Two tourist spot sites of Khaplu that are Thoksikong and Chaqchan Colony were selected. There were a lot of differences in both areas like native norms, behavior and attitude toward culture. Thoksikong is near Main Bazar, there are Government high schools, colleges and department also near it. Also, there is trekking

point to Thoksikhar, along with availability of Hotels. Chaqchan Colony is near to Chaqchan Mosque which is historical mosque of Ghanche. These sites were being visited in December 2018

## Materials and Method

The research methodology is exploratory. It is quantitative and descriptive method, Data was collected by using questionnaires and observations. There were two parts of the questionnaire; one consisting of respondent basic information, while the second part variables of cultural elements. Likert scale of 1 to 3 was used. The value 1 stated yes, 2 stated No and 3 stated don't know. 50 respondents, 25 respondents belonged to Lower area of Khaplu "Thoksikgruong" near Karakoram lodge and other 25 upper area of Khaplu. In survey, there were 35 unstructured and informal questions related cultural elements. Observations were about the surrounding of Khaplu and which main covered Bazar, government sectors and living areas near the tourist point and hotels. The unit of analysis was residents of Khaplu. Respondent were chosen by non-random sampling. Data analysis includes descriptive analysis by using SPSS 16.0.

## Respondent profile

Variable	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	• Male	10	20.0
	• Female	40	80.0
	• Total	50	100.0
Age	• 15-25	15	30.0
	• 26-35	12	24.0
	• 36-45	7	14.0
	• 46-55	6	12.0
	• 56-65	8	16.0
	• 66-75	2	4.0
	• Total	50	100.0
Education	• uneducated	23	46.0
	• primary	6	12.0
	• middle	2	4.0
	• matric	5	10.0
	• intermediate	10	20.0
	• Bachelor	4	8.0
	• Total	50	100.0
Occupation	• Housewife	28	56.0
	• Student	10	20.0
	• Employ	5	10.0
	• Pensioner	2	4.0
	• Labor	1	2.0
	• Selfbusniess	4	8.0
	• Total	50	100.0
Marital status	• Married	40	80.0
	• unmarried	8	16.0
	• widow	2	4.0
	• Total	50	100.0
Resident	• Local	47	94
	• Non-local	3	6
	• Total	50	100

## Result and Discussion

In respondent profile, 30% were young respondents between 15-25 years. There were 24% belong to 26-35 years. 14 % of respondents belong to 36-45 year. 12 % were 46-55 year of respondent. 16% of respondents were 56-65-year-old. 4% of respondents were 66 to 75 year old.

there were 80% female and 20% male respondent. 80% married, 16 % UN married and 4 % were widow. the occupation of respondent in which 56% respondents were house wives. 20% were studying higher studies. 10 % were doing jobs, 2 % were labor and 8% had own business.

46% were uneducated, 12 % got primary education and 4 % middle, 10 % matric passed, 20% did intermediate and 8 % did bachelor. There were 94 % respondents were belong from Khaplu valley and 6% were came from other valleys and lived on rent.

Survey questions were related to cultural elements, their daily life and factor effects on cultural adaptations. Mostly of respondent were house wives and uneducated, therefore I communicated all of respondent in Balti. Variables related cultural element, like Food, Dress, Language, Shelter and Beliefs.

Food is main part of life. *Balti* culture have variety of food like *Pau Cha*, *Bhally*, *Prapu*, *Zan* and many other. I asked question related traditional food then 90 % respondent showed they likes traditional dishes and 10% had no interest. 64 % respondent told traditional food item used daily and 36% told that there is no trend of traditional food items on daily bases. On daily basis, intake of *Pau Cha* (salty Tea) and local bread called *khurbaa*.

Non-local food like biryani, macaroni, Karai are famous and data showed that 70% of respondent were interest in non-local food as well and 30 % were not like non-local food as much. 80% respondent were interest to introduce their traditional food to other, 20 % showed no interest to introduce it. Traditional food is main hub of culture results shows that majority of respondents like local food as well as to introduce it but on the other hand non-local food is becoming common in culture, it may change the local taste of people.

During stay in *Khaplu*, I daily ate non-local dishes like *Prantha*, *Goorma* etc. I observed that people prefer non-local dishes more than local. Because local dishes need effort. *Khaplu Achar* (pickle) is famous, which is not traditional but famous as traditional. *Khaplu* is mountainous area, which environment mostly cold and dry. In mountainous culture, people prefer proteinases food like meat but boiler chicken is commonly used. There is one main market

Building are main part of local culture its shows the local living style and choices of people. As I mentioned above *Khaplu* is combination city and village. Because there are government sectors, offices, District hospital and renowned hotels are part of their infrastructure. Houses designed were the mixture of old and new design. In old house proper used of wood and large stone but now there is trend of use of cement and tiles are common in construction. Local art is seeming less near commercial areas. 56% of respondent lived old design houses in which local *Balti* toilet, small room and separate place for cattles were available. 44% lived in new design house, in which cemented rooms, tiles work. Wood work in house construction is must to keep house warm. 70% of respondent houses made of wood and 30% had no wood work. Like cemented houses were 34% and 66% were not properly cemented.

"*Kacha*" is main part of *Balti* houses, it is underground part of house. Trend change with time. In *Khaplu*, old time people were shifted to underground portion but now they changed their living style mostly kept their cattle in "*Kacha*" 38% respondents told they were shift to underground in winter but 62% were not shifted to "*Kacha*".

During survey I asked question related old way life the 40 % of respondent were like the old way of life, 58 % responded that they do not like the old living system and 2 % had no idea about the old living system. This shows people want change with time mind set of people changed, they want to adopt the new modern and comfort life. Mostly working ladies in *Khaplu* are avoid to move in villages, I met the lady police, she was modern, talkin Urdu with kids and husband. The educated people mostly to show off. She did not like the old way life. She became aggressive when her husband joke to her about village. Mostly educated and working women are not like the village life. They get facilities in *Khaplu*. They are conscious about the future of their children.

Wood usage is common in winter 98 % respondent used wood for fire and 2% are not used. To make life easy people used electrical appliances (oven, rod, kettle mostly) more like 52% were rely on electrical appliances and 48% were not used. 46% used washing machine and 54 % have no machine. 14% have refrigerator and 84 % have no refrigerator 2% do not know Mass communication is playing role in change of culture 82% of respondent watched TV and 18% are not interested. In *Khaplu*, there is availability of dish which shows different local and non-local channels which badly impact on the mind of new generation mostly. There is trend of mobile phone is fast in *Khaplu*, people have awareness about the usage of phone as result shows 66% awareness about cell phone and 34% have no awareness about usage of cell phone. It is

necessary to aware about new thing but these things directly and in directly impact on culture, in past, there was a tradition in *Balti* culture that people were come together at *Chara* ( an open place) ,they were discussing their matters, solved issues and celebrate festive together. Especially in *Ramadan*, every day one man recited holy verses of *Quran*. But now this is gradually finish. In *Khaplu*, I saw neighborhood was not too good unless if your neighbor is from other village. If neighbor belong from same village it become family but if it from other village or non-local then avoid to talk in *Khaplu*.

In *Balti* houses garden (locally called *Sharbuu*) is main part of houses in which grow flowers, grasses or some seasonal vegetable, but now this is gradually become less. 66% respondent showed their garden and 34% had no garden. The most shocking thing was that 24% were grow vegetable 76% were buy from market mostly. *Khaplu* is cold area, people grow less vegetable in summer, until winter it comes to finish, but mostly of people get from market, this shows dependency on market things becoming more. In past, there was no local market. People were grow wheat, barley, buckwheat and millets. Pure organic vegetables potato, pea and spinach were used. They got milk, butter and meat from their cattle. But now usage of powder milk and packed meat is common.

Taxi is available in *Khaplu*. There is no specific local transport inside the *Khaplu*, so people rely on taxi. Mostly People preferred to taxi instead walk, it save time but also make people use to. They do not walk. In main bazar, ladies who comes from villages, preferred to go *Landa*, because it is cheap than other shop.

*Balti* is local language of *Baltistan* region. Unfortunelty it is gradually become losing their identity. "The *Balti* language, along with the language spoken in the *Kargil(Purig)* area and in certain areas of Amdo, represents the most archaic of Tibetan dialects (Tibat-Encyclopedia, n.d.). However, today, with the Government-directed influx of *Pathans* and *Punjabis* into *Baltistan*, Pashto and the Arabo-Persianised Urdu language, are now spoken alongside *Balti*. English is spoken by the few who are educated (mainly men) (Dryland & Jawad, 2011) It was shocking that this language is gradually merge in other non-local language like Urdu or English. 56% respondent understand other language like Urdu easily and 44% could not. 88% speak *Balti* regularly and 12% do not speak regularly.

Although the percentage shows people could speak and understand more but only 2% respondent knew about *Balti* writing and 98% were unaware about write. Actually *Balti* is write in Tibetan style and there are rarely people know about write this style. *Balti* poetry is written in Urdu style, there are a lot of literature in *Balti* with Urdu style. 38% of respondent showed interest in literature and 62% showed no interest in *Balti* literature.

*Balti* dress locally called "*Balli Gonchas*" means wool cloth. In *Khaplu*, these cloths will found in museum. There is no trend of typical wool clothes in *Khaplu*. "*Qaar*" is traditional Shawl which is made of wool. *Balti* Women wear on their shoulder, it keeps warm it. I saw some Shawls in market which prices was high and quality was poor. There are rare wool shawl makers. Today people finds materialist thing like in *Khaplu* there are no of clothes shops you found lawn, velvet and other non-local fabrics. Traditional dresses found rarely. People like their tradition but not want to follow. 62% respondent were like local traditional dress and 38% were not like. 46% were wear traditional dresses like *Qaar* mostly old women and 54% were not wear especially young generation. Instead of *Qaar*, women used Kashmiri shawl and other design shawls.

Fashion is not only word *Balti* community aware about it how to adopt it so 66% respondents' interest in new fashion dresses and 34% had no interest. Mostly young women were showing their interest. Young men and women are trendy in *Khaplu*. They do fashion in their cultural limits for example men wear jeans and shirt and women stitched clothes with latest trend and young girls wear stylish hijabs. I visited shop and observed that normally warm cloth is on reasonable price. The use of warm cloth is more in winters, so its price is normal. There no local trade market of cloths so cloth are bring from *Manshera* KPK. This shows the modernize way of life.

*Balti* Music is very famous locally called" *Luu*" 62% Respondents were like *Balti* music and 38% were not interest. as well as 60% were like traditional dance and 40% have no interest. *Balti* "*Tarmo*" a musical activity in group. "*Mon*" *Balti* musical band. In past there was special performance of *Mon* on wedding and festival but now it merges into musical night. Non-traditional occupy on local culture gradually. There is less local artist seems

In *Khaplu*, there are majority of Muslims belong to different sect like Shia, *Noorbakshia*, *Sunni*, and *Whabi*. There are large no of Shia and *Noorbakshia*. Generally, the *Balti* people are religious. 100% of respondents had believes on religious values and follow religious activities. In *Khaplu*, religious places *Masajid*, *Khanqaa* are found. People have right to perform their religious activities freely.

*Balti* culture have beautiful customs like wedding customs, *Nooraz*, *Mefang*, *Choli mendok* (spring Festival) etc. result shows 52 % were know about their old customs and 48% had no idea about it old customs. Only 30% follow old traditions, customs and 70% were not follow old *Balti* customs. Customs are basic identity of culture, result show majority have idea and know about old custom but not follow. On wedding, there trend of *Mehandi* which is non-traditional but it is common in Khaplu. There is trend in Khaplu to marry with non-local. Khaplu people are educated and trendy.

*Balti* community are aware about cultural change but with passage of time they are moving forward with world. I asked question about cultural change and technology then 20% thinks change in culture is good and 80 % against the change of culture. 94% favored the culture conservation and 6 % were not. As well as 54% in favor of technology and 46% were not in favor. Technology is main tool which change the mind set and change the culture, Respondents were 100% agreed that technology change the culture.

### **Khaplu as Colonial Area: way Toward Modern Society**

Colony is government servant residential place of *Khaplu*. There are servant quarters, government offices in Colony. Mostly non-local families are live in quarters. Quarters are consisting of two rooms, one bathroom, one washroom and kitchen. There is small garden place.

In Khaplu there are many government and private sectors and offices. The behavior of local and non-local officer are different. The district administration of Ghanche is active and cooperative. The environment of DC office was very cooperative. The behavior of clerk in LG&RD office was humble, he was belonging from Khaplu. Agriculture department is active in Ghanche, officer was very humble. He was explaining the activities of department, they conduct training, workshop. They are promoting the advance technology in Ghanche. Agricultural department officer was very cooperative, he provided me literature. Water management department is also active department of *Ghanche*. They do many project with collaboration of NGOs in *Ghanche*.

Forest officer was non-local belong from Astore, he was talk me in Urdu. He also showed very rudely behavior in first to us. In last his behavior changed, showed that he is broad mind. Taxation department is active in *Ghanche*, with in limited resources they do their work. Officer was very confident and explain about the department activities. They issue number plates. They take action against violation and do Challan. People of *Ghanche* are aware about rule. According to officer there are up to 100 NCP automobiles are registered in *Ghanche* on season. All the payments are submitted in revenue.

Normally shops are run by local and non-local peoples. Non-local are mostly *Pathan*. They do business in *Khaplu*. *Khaplu* is now become the place of multiple communities. I talked to *Pathan*, he told me, they are lived in *Khaplu* with family, in earlier they faced problem regarding language but now they understand *Balti* and adjusted in Khaplu. One shocking thing I observed in *Khaplu* was names of shops and hotels. It indicated how other cultures impacts on local like *Karachi cloth*, *Pakeza hotel*, *Zaiqa hotel* and *Geo hotel*. This is indicator of cultural hybrid.

### **Commercial area as Indicator of Socialchange**

Thoskoug is commercial site of Khaplu near Karakoram lodge, Main Bazar and government school and colleges. People showed interest in culture. One old man showed aggressive behavior on survey, and said what you people give us? He thought that everyone get data and don't help them. Non-local also lives in Khaplu on rent because in Khaplu all facilities are available so people of other remote areas lived family on rent. They used *Kacha* for Cattle. There are moved toward the modern life style and don't shift to *Kacha* in winter. There were no proper pathways to walk. People normally build houses on their fields. That why' houses are randomly in Khaplu. Young girls were stylish, they were grinding the wheat. Girls seems trendy and more stylish in Khaplu than other area of Ghanche. Normally job holder and worker in Khaplu are keep in contact with their friends and relatives by video chatting.

### **Non-Commercial area as Indicator of Cultural Existence**

In *Chaqchan groung* Khaplu near Chaqchan Mosque were friendly community. There is tourist spot, they showed kind behavior to outsiders. Mostly houses were old design. Chaqcha Mosque is historical Mosque and resident near mosque seem still follow the culture. People were cooperative and jolly. They were response quickly and enjoining the discussions. They were show their hostility. They offered to tea and someone offered to lunch, tis act show they do not any hesitate to talk the outsider. They were broad mind, appreciated the

work. This shows that people of Chaqchan group were love to culture and they understand about culture. Chaqchan Mosque has historical importance, the upper portion is under Noorbakshis and lower portion is under Shia sect. Imam Masjid was humble and nice man.

### “CHO PI KHAR” Khaplu Palace an Effort to Conservation Balti Culture

Serena Hotel is 2 km away from Thoskounq *Cho pi khar* means palace of king. *Cho pi khar* is also known as Yabgo palace. Yabgo a family name of old local ruler family. *Shahi Polo Grounds* famous ground of Khaplu opposite of palace. One part of Khaplu Palace is convert Serena hotel. Entry ticket was 70/ Rs per head. Surfar Restaurant located in left side of place. There was huge garden of Apricot, cherry.

Khaplu Palace complex is reuse and conserve. In 1840 palace was built by Yabgo Raja Doulat Ali Khan after Dogra of Kashmir. There is large wood door, have large local woody lock. Old Guns located on walls, this indicate hunting was famous in royal family. US-Aid helped in conservation of palace. Agriculture tools are found inside, which all were woody in old times. *Chakham*, *kachy*, *para ching* were found. There were a lot of congested rooms' insides, which are small.

In old time due to harsh coldness people build small rooms. There were small woody utensil found, large utensil made of rocks. Haal instrument used in softening land. Large woody boxes *Grom*, used for storage of crops. Jewellery were silver embedded with stones. Sleeping place was made of wood. Mature stem of apricot tree found inside. Which was bring from Ladakh. *Sanawar* is traditional thermos. Pola shoe was made of wool. Colth of king and queen were made of wool.

In kitchen there are small windows for light. There are official letter, stamp papers of king. Letter comes from king of Srinagar and other areas. Influences of British government also in Ghanche. There was separate jug and small glasses for Lassi. There are two large sitting places. Large *Rabsal* for guests. There is Family meeting place, where king and queen met their relatives, did discussions and decision. There are 3 portion of palace. Underground portion was for servants upper two for king. In Sarfer Restaurant, there are 25 rooms for tourist. Fateh khan was last king of Yobgo family. Last king was studied in Srinagar University and married with British women. There are two large Chanar on both side of main entrance.

### Conclusion

Tourism is becoming main industry in Khaplu. This article shows there are many factor which are responsible of cultural losing like migration, non-local culture, and media. Local people adapt non-local culture easily. Cultural identity is main thing to preserve for next generation. In modern era, it is essential to move with world as well as promote culture. Old people are seeming conscious about cultural identity. Tourism is main tool to explore the culture but not only as show case. Adapt the cultural thing like in food, dress and living style and conserve it. Balti community should promote the local art, music and customs by adopting in life not only through conduct festivals. Highlight the local crafts through tourism as well used in houses. They should less rely on cemented, because environmentally it is risk of global warming promote the local architecture. Balti language should teach at school. As Tourism perspective Cultural tourism will be a good strategy for culturally sensitive people. Government should take initiatives in conserving cultural material as well as formation of cultural research Centre for cultural education, workshops, training for exploring culture.

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