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A Study of Management Approaches to the Architectural Heritage of Royal Palaces in the Shimla Region of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The architectural heritage in the Western Himalayan region of India has cultural identity, the continuation of history, and tourist value. However, due to urbanisation, an increase in the number of visitors, and environmental instability, the royal palaces of the region, like the Chail Royal Palaces, are under mounting pressure, and this is where good governance of the heritage becomes essential. This paper looks at the management styles, namely government policy, conservation practices, financial management, community participation, and tourism management, of the government in relation to the success of managing architectural heritage in the Shimla-Chail region. Data were analysed in SPSS 26 using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation, ANOVA, and multiple regression with the help of a cross-sectional primary survey of 552 stakeholders and a structured questionnaire with 37 items measured on five points Likert scale. The results indicate that the policy of the government, conservation practice, community involvement, and tourism management are the strongest predictors to manage the heritage management, whereas financial management is not, and tourism management and conservation have the strongest predictors. Such findings suggest that enhancing regulatory frameworks, scientific conservation, participatory governing, and sustainable tourism approaches are more significant than a budgetary increase by itself towards the protection of royal palace heritage.

Keywords: Architectural heritage; Governmental management; Heritage conservation; Public policy; Sustainable tourism; Chail Royal Palaces.

1. Introduction

In India, architectural heritage becomes one of the crucial points of contact between material culture, historical continuity and living social identity in the areas of the Himalayas, where royal power, religious iconography, and colonial legacies intertwined in the precarious ecological and urban environments (Anand, 1997; Singh, 2021; Halperin, 2025; Suvrathan, 2023). Heritage buildings in Himachal Pradesh serve not only as historical landmarks but are also active places where regional identity, tourism economies, and community memory are negotiated on a daily basis (Sharma, 2015; Mahal, 2022; Venkateswaran, 2021). State policies, institutional ability, financial processes and planning policies contribute greatly to the management of such heritage, indicating how conservation is carried out and how development stresses are managed especially within hill towns, such as Shimla where tourism and urban sprawl represent a great threat to architectural integrity (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma and

Pathak, 2024; Chakravorty, 2022). Being a major cultural resource, royal palaces reflect not only the architectural and artistic heritage but also the political history, ritual authority, and regional prestige, so their preservation is the core of the cultural continuity and the heritage-based tourism (Anand, 1997; Halperin, 2025; Sharabi, 2025; Parmar, 2012). In this greater framework, the Chail Royal Palaces and the adjacent Shimla area can be seen as a unique heritage landscape that was developed as a heritage site due to princely inertia, colonial planning, and modern geoheritage projects, but now faces threats through ecological vulnerability and the effects of tourism-driven development (Sharma, 2015; Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025; Pradesh, 2025). Even though recent research has considered conservation trends and urban ecology as well as smart heritage management in Shimla, they are all policy-oriented or environmentally centred and fail to capture the perception of government management approaches and the success of the latter in practice (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Sambher and Sharma, 2025; Chakravorty, 2022). To fill this gap, the current research paper is aimed at investigating how the governmental management addresses the architectural heritage of the Chail Royal Palaces, following the subsequent objectives:

- **RO1:** To analyse the role of government policy and regulatory frameworks in shaping heritage conservation.
- **RO2:** To assess conservation and maintenance practices adopted for the royal palaces.
- **RO3:** To evaluate financial management and resource allocation for heritage protection.
- **RO4:** To study the extent of community participation and stakeholder involvement.
- **RO5:** To analyse the role of tourism management in influencing the effectiveness of architectural heritage conservation.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Architectural Heritage Conservation

The idea of the conservation of architectural heritage rests on the understanding that the built environment reflects historical continuation, cultural belonging, as well as the communality of memory, which is why they are primary issues in the study of heritage and policy endeavours (Anand, 1997; Singh, 2021). Ritual landscapes, royal power, and sacred geography are the key concepts related to architectural heritage in the Indian and Himalayan context, and this kind of definition offers conservation a meaning that goes beyond the physical buildings to symbolic and social values (Halperin, 2025; Sharabi, 2025; Suvrathan, 2023). Modern-day heritage management is growing to focus on techniques of co-existence known as material conservation, and community-oriented practices that support sustainable use, especially in culturally superimposed areas such as Himachal Pradesh, where colonial, princely, and indigenous cultures overlap (Sharma, 2015; Weise, 2025). The global and regional literature also acknowledges that heritage conservation should be responsive to current social and environmental factors, which underlines the necessity to introduce governance systems that are adaptable, participatory, and context-dependent (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). Urban development, environmental sensitivity, and commercialisation related to tourism are the complicated issues of heritage conservation in hill areas that put more and more pressure on the historic buildings and cultural landscapes (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Chakravorty, 2022). Uncontrolled construction, pressure on the infrastructure, and environmental transformation have led to the degradation of old structures and the elimination of the architectural character of old buildings in Shimla and its surrounding heritage districts (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma, 2015). Such pressures are

further exacerbated by inadequate technical skills, economic limitations, and fragmented administrative accountability, which in most cases lead to reactive instead of proactive conservation measures (Sambher & Sharma, 2025; Pradesh, 2025). Consequently, even more heritage sites like royal palaces are under the two-fold risk of both physical and cultural erosion, which compromises their long-term sustainability (Anand, 1997; Singh, 2021).

2.2 Governmental Management and Heritage Governance

The government policy and the institutional structures are decisive in influencing the heritage outcomes through defining the process of conservation priorities establishment, the allocation of resources, and the enforcement of the regulations (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). Heritage governance in Himachal Pradesh is incorporated into the larger structures of urban planning, tourism development, and environmental management, so the coordination of activities between departments is necessary to successfully protect the environment (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Chakravorty, 2022). The digital monitoring systems, planning tools and regulatory mechanisms currently being employed to enhance heritage management have been shown to be successful in current geoheritage projects in Shimla; however, their effectiveness requires continued implementation and institutional capacity (Sambher and Sharma, 2025). Therefore, heritage governance is becoming more of a multidimensional management issue, not a technical conservation one (Singh, 2021; Sharma, 2015). The challenge of administrative inefficiencies and financial constraints is one of the biggest barriers to heritage management, especially within the context of hill towns, where infrastructure needs and tourism pressures collide with the needs of conservation (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Chakravorty, 2022). Timely conservation interventions are usually derailed by delays in funding, inadequate skills and bureaucratic complicacies that result in reactive managing heritage instead of proactive conservation (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). In addition, although the government is the main contributor towards heritage safeguards, other development agendas often decrease funds towards long-term preservation and care (Parmar, 2012; Pradesh, 2025). These limitations underscore the need to promote financial responsibility, strategic budgeting and institutional reform in enhancing governmental heritage governance (Anand, 1997; Singh, 2021).

2.3 Community Participation and Stakeholder Engagement

The concept of participatory governance has become an important principle of heritage management, as it acknowledges that local communities, cultural practitioners, and stakeholders are an essential part of heritage site maintenance and the social meaning of the heritage sites (Weise, 2025; Mahal, 2022). The Himalayan context has a very strong connection between heritage and ritual, memory, and local identity, and in this respect, community engagement is the only way to achieve meaningful and sustainable conservation (Halperin, 2025; Sharabi, 2025). According to studies on Shimla and the surrounding areas, the lack of involvement of local voices in the process of making heritage decisions undermines the results of conservation and predisposes people to opposition to regulatory measures (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Chakravorty, 2022). Thus, the idea of participatory governance is becoming an imperative of efficient heritage management (Singh, 2021; Sharma, 2015). Community-based heritage management paradigms are centred on local stewardship, shared responsibility, and heritage conservation coupled with livelihood possibilities, especially in the form of tourism and cultural industries (Weise, 2025; Parmar, 2012). Community involvement has been demonstrated to enhance the sustainability of culture and economy as it connects the heritage sites to the locality and the creation of local jobs in Himachal Pradesh (Chakravorty, 2022; Bansal and Chhabra, 2023). These kinds of models

also aid in conserving intangible cultural traditions that are related to royal palaces, temples, and historic settlements so that heritage cannot only be preserved as monuments but also remain socially relevant (Mahal, 2022; Venkateswaran, 2021). These strategies emphasise the need to utilise community involvement in long-term heritage management (Anand, 1997; Singh, 2021).

2.4 Tourism Management and Sustainability

The Shimla region is a primary economic force based on heritage tourism and entails enormous challenges to the integrity of architectural heritage, environmental stability, and cultural authenticity (Parmar, 2012; Chakravorty, 2022). The flow of tourists to royal palaces and historic hill towns drives physical decay, commercialisation of heritage spaces, which, in the absence of control, intensifies social changes and the processes of physical deterioration (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma and Pathak, 2024). Tourism, therefore, presents a paradox where heritage is maintained by generating revenues and being compromised by excessive usage and infrastructure pressure (Singh, 2021; Sharma, 2015). These impacts need to be managed by having coordinated government planning and regulatory controls (Sambher & Sharma, 2025; Pradesh, 2025). The conservation versus tourism development is one of the most awful problems in the sphere of heritage management, especially in the ecologically sensitive hill areas like Shimla and Chail (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Chakravorty, 2022). Sustainable tourism models have highlighted that there should be harmonisation between visitor management, infrastructure planning, and conservation to ensure that the heritage sites are not permanently destroyed (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). The governance mechanisms must be efficient and effective in order to see to it that the revenue earned from the tourism activity is used in conservation and not in deterioration, more so those that are royal palaces and complexes that are used both as a cultural site and a commercial one (Parmar, 2012; Singh, 2021). It is a balance that is critical to the sustainability of heritage tourism in Himachal Pradesh (Sharma, 2015; Pradesh, 2025).

2.5 Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

Despite the significant amount of literature on heritage conservation, tourism, and urban ecology within the Shimla area, the majority of the existing literature is based on the policy narrative, environmental change, or historical interpretation, but does not empirically assess the effectiveness of governance through the lens of stakeholders (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Chakravorty, 2022). The literature on geoheritage management focuses on technological and planning responses without relatively capturing the perception and actual application of the interventions in practice (Sambher & Sharma, 2025; Pradesh, 2025). On the same note, cultural identity, ritual, and heritage symbolism studies lack adequate involvement with current administrative performance and institutional responsibility (Halperin, 2025; Sharabi, 2025; Mahal, 2022). In addition, the chosen government policy, conservation practices, financial management, community participation, and tourism management are major variables due to the available literature that points to these dimensions as the most important in the context of effective heritage governance (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025; Sharma and Pathak, 2024). Specifically, financial and administrative limitations are proven to have a strong impact on conservation outcomes, whereas community involvement and tourism control define the sustainability of heritage utilisation (Chakravorty, 2022; Parmar, 2012; Weise, 2025). Collectively, these variables create a broad framework of the impact of the governmental management on the conservation of architectural heritage within the Shimla Chail area (Singh, 2021; Anand, 1997).

2.6 Hypotheses of the Study

- H1: Government policy and regulatory framework have a significant effect on the effectiveness of

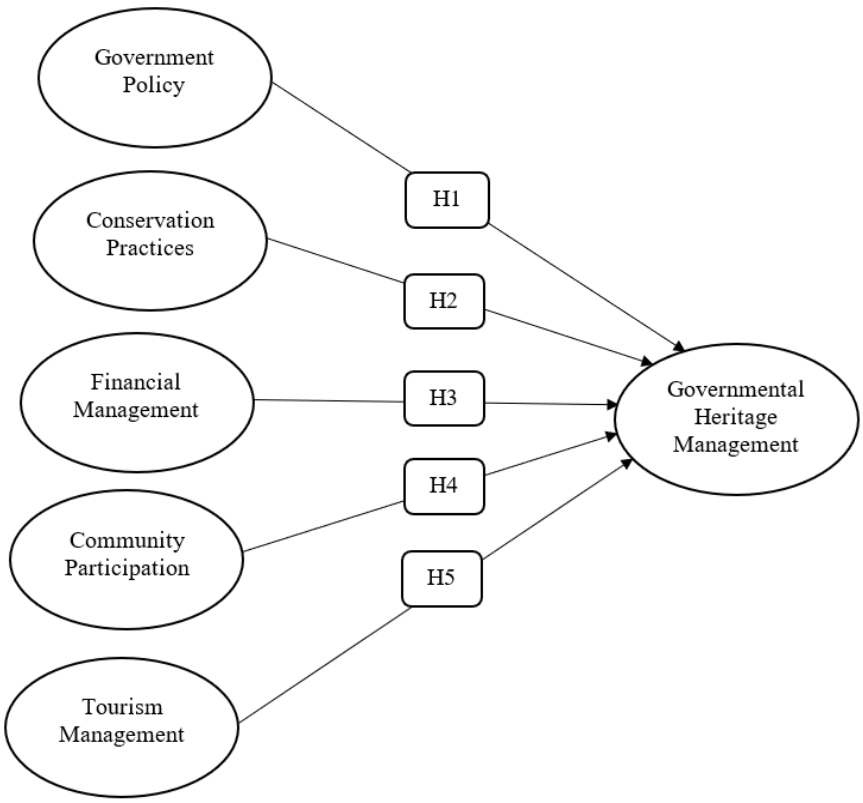
architectural heritage management.

- H2: Conservation and maintenance practices have a significant effect on the effectiveness of architectural heritage management.
- H3: Financial management and resource allocation have a significant effect on the effectiveness of architectural heritage management.
- H4: Community participation and stakeholder involvement have a significant effect on the effectiveness of architectural heritage management.
- H5: Tourism management and sustainability have a significant effect on the effectiveness of architectural heritage management.

2.7 Proposed conceptual framework

The proposed conceptual framework in figure 1 has placed governmental management methods, including policy and regulatory strategies, conservation practices, financial management, community involvement, as well as tourism governance as central factors to the success of the architectural heritage management, in accordance with the integrated nature of heritage governance that has been found in the past research (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sambher and Sharma, 2025; Sharma and Pathak, 2024). The framework in Figure 1 addresses the observations that more holistic and empirically based models of heritage management are needed in the contexts of the Himalayas by connecting administrative, financial and social, and tourism-related aspects to heritage outcomes (Chakravorty, 2022; Singh, 2021; Weise, 2025). This framework offers the analysis basis of understanding how governmental activities are making Chail Royal Palaces sustainable as architectural and cultural resources.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Research



Source: Author(s) Compilation

3. Research Methodology

The research design used in this study was a descriptive and analytic, cross-sectional research design, which is broadly suggested as the most optimal form of research when studying relationships between governance practices and perceptual outcomes in one specific point in time through primary data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Hair et al., 2019). These aims served to discuss government management practices in relation to architectural heritage, identify the dimensions of conservation, institutional, financial, community, and tourism, and evaluate their impact on the overall effectiveness of heritage management, which resulted in the hypothesising of five dimensions of the relationship between them and the dependent variable through the inferential test (Field, 2018). The purposive and stratified sampling technique was used to collect data on 552 participants, comprising government officials, heritage experts, local stakeholders, and communities in the Shimla-Chail area, since it is suitable where the study focuses on knowledgeable groups of stakeholders in heritage and governance studies (Saunders et al., 2019). The independent variables (policy, conservation, financial management, community participation, and tourism management) and dependent variable (effectiveness of governmental heritage management) were measured using a structured questionnaire of 37 questions based on a 5-point Likert scale, which is the most appropriate way to measure perceptual and governance studies (Likert, 1932; Hair et al., 2019). Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate reliability, and scale development and factor analysis were used to evaluate content and construct validity as suggested in quantitative research of social sciences (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2019). Data were analysed with SPSS version 26, where descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple regression, and ANOVA were used to test the relationship between variables and differences between demographic groups, which is a time-tested method of analysis in hypothesis testing of relationships and group effects on behavioural and management research (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020).

4. Result and Analysis

4.1 Statistical Description of the Respondents' Profile

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 552)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	345	62.50
	Female	200	36.23
	Other	7	1.27
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Age Group	Below 25	78	14.13
	26–35	162	29.35
	36–45	150	27.17
	46–55	96	17.39
	Above 55	66	11.96
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Educational Qualification	Up to Higher Secondary	118	21.38
	Graduate	176	31.88
	Postgraduate	156	28.26
	Doctorate	62	11.23

	Other	40	7.25
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Occupation	Government Employee	128	23.19
	Heritage/Archaeology Professional	64	11.59
	Tourism Professional	92	16.67
	Academic/Researcher	76	13.77
	Local Resident	156	28.26
	Other	36	6.52
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	124	22.46
	5–10 years	168	30.43
	11–20 years	162	29.35
	More than 20 years	98	17.75
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Place of Residence	Shimla Region	210	38.04
	Chail Region	122	22.10
	Other parts of Himachal Pradesh	152	27.54
	Outside Himachal Pradesh	68	12.32
	Total	**552**	**100.00**
Visited Chail Royal Palaces	Yes	468	84.78
	No	84	15.22
	Total	**552**	**100.00**

Source: Author(s) Compilation

As Table 1 demonstrates, the sample of 552 respondents is various and applicable to the study context. It is well represented with males (62.50) and females (36.23), and the majority of the respondents fall within the 26-45 years age bracket, which depicts a working-age population. A large percentage of them have graduate or post-graduate degrees, and the occupational group with the most significant percentage is the residents. The respondents possess a lot of experience, and the majority of them (84.78) have toured the Chail Royal Palaces, hence they have informed and credible impressions.

4.2 Analysis of Reliability and Validity

Table 2: Factor Analysis and Reliability Summary

Constructs/ Factors	No. of items	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	% of Variance	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Government Policy (GPRF)	6	0.853	$\chi^2 = 1227.395$ Sig = 0.000	56.93	0.848	Valid and Reliable
Conservation Practices (CMP)	6	0.867	$\chi^2 = 1591.710$ Sig = 0.000	62.52	0.879	Valid and Reliable
Financial Managemen	6	0.879	$\chi^2 = 1267.619$ Sig = 0.000	58.38	0.856	Valid and Reliable

t (FMRA)						
Community Participation (CPSI)	6	0.911	$\chi^2 = 1958.530$ Sig = 0.000	68.41	0.908	Valid and Reliable
Tourism Management (TMS)	6	0.858	$\chi^2 = 1914.979$ Sig = 0.000	66.22	0.897	Valid and Reliable
Governmental Heritage Management (GHM)	7	0.855	$\chi^2 = 1896.315$ Sig = 0.000	73.63	0.863	Valid and Reliable

Source: Author(s) Compilation

Table 2 establishes that all the measurement scales that were utilised in the study are statistically valid and sound. The values of KMO are very large, which means that the adequacy of sampling is excellent, and the significant values of the tests of Bartlett mean that the items are correlated enough to use factor analysis. The factor structure and construct validity are strong, with each construct explaining a larger percentage of the variance than recommended. Furthermore, the alpha of 0.80 or more in all the variables shows that the internal consistency is high, and the items in the construct all measure the same construct. On the whole, the factor and reliability findings justify the application of such scales to the next regression and test hypothesis.

4.3 Analysis of Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Government Policy and Regulatory Framework

Variables	Total	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Policy Clarity	552	4.19	0.871	-1.201	1.887
Legal Protection	552	4.18	0.830	-1.122	1.833
Authority Coordination	552	4.04	0.861	-0.886	1.120
Regulation Enforcement	552	4.08	0.909	-0.896	0.766
Policy Support	552	4.13	0.826	-0.922	1.062
Architectural Respect	552	3.99	0.934	-0.960	0.849

Source: Author(s) Compilation

As displayed in Table 3, the respondents feel that the government policy and regulatory mechanisms are very favourable to the management of architectural heritage, with all the mean values being close to or more than 4. The clearest policy and legal protection is most agreed and this indicates that there is trust in the regulatory framework. The negative skewness values used consistently show that the responses were concentrated around the agreement parameter, and kurtosis is positive, which means that there is a small spread. In general, the findings affirm that stakeholders believe in the capacity of government policies to shape heritage conservation.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Conservation and Maintenance Practices

Variables	Total	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Regular Maintenance	552	4.21	0.871	-1.367	2.468

Scientific Standards	552	4.19	0.883	-1.071	1.221
Heritage Restoration	552	4.09	0.975	-0.997	0.597
Preventive Measures	552	4.03	0.985	-0.828	0.067
Structural Safety	552	4.26	0.917	-1.282	1.393
Environmental Planning	552	4.23	0.959	-1.336	1.572

Source: Author(s) Compilation

Table 4 shows that respondents are highly agreeing on the effectiveness of conservation and maintenance leading practices with all the mean values higher than 4. The highest ratings are given to structural safety and environmental planning, which emphasises the technical and ecological confidence of conservation. The negative skew values indicate that the responses have been grouped towards the agreement, whereas moderate to high kurtosis indicates that there is stability and consistency in the perceptions among respondents. In general, the results indicate that the measures of conservation are viewed as systematic, well-executed, and helpful in the preservation of architectural heritage in the long-term.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Financial Management and Resource Allocation

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Fund Allocation	552	4.25	0.945	-1.467	2.014
Timely Release	552	4.32	0.880	-1.444	2.199
Resource Utilisation	552	4.24	0.898	-1.271	1.693
Budget Alignment	552	4.20	0.984	-1.230	1.073
Public Funding	552	4.11	1.015	-1.233	1.278
Financial Accountability	552	4.11	0.980	-1.122	1.101

Source: Author(s) Compilation

Table 5 shows that there is a high level of agreement among the respondents over the issue of sufficiency and efficiency of financial management in conserving heritage, with the value of the mean above 4. On-time release of funds and an adequate allocation of funds get the top ratings, as there is trust in funding procedures. The negative value of skewness values shows that the responses are clumped around the agreement, and the positive value of kurtosis shows that the perceptions of respondents were fairly stable. Generally, these findings prove the perception that financial planning, allocation, and accountability support the long-term heritage sustainability.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Community Participation and Stakeholder Involvement

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Community Involvement	552	4.24	0.875	-1.344	2.144
Government Support	552	4.15	0.952	-1.081	0.788
Heritage Awareness	552	4.13	0.978	-1.236	1.434
Stakeholder Consultation	552	4.12	0.988	-1.122	0.933
Economic Benefit	552	4.09	0.983	-1.176	1.262
Sustainable Participation	552	4.18	0.929	-1.182	1.378

Source: Author(s) Compilation

As evidenced in Table 6, the respondents have a positive regard towards community participation and

stakeholder involvement in heritage management, and all the mean values are above 4. The highest agreement is with community involvement and government support, which will mean the active involvement at the local level. The negative skewness values indicate that the responses are clustered on the agreement, and the positive values on kurtosis demonstrate the consistency of the responses across the respondents. In general, the results indicate that participatory governance and community involvement are viewed as significant factors of sustainable heritage conservation.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Tourism Management and Sustainability

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Tourism Regulation	552	4.09	1.030	-1.077	0.615
Visitor Control	552	4.10	0.994	-1.074	0.706
Sensitive Development	552	4.14	0.970	-1.313	1.752
Tourism Revenue	552	4.07	1.003	-1.201	1.260
Infrastructure Impact	552	4.09	0.975	-1.106	1.060
Sustainable Promotion	552	4.13	0.992	-1.402	1.935

Source: Author(s) Compilation

As shown in Table 7, the respondents feel that the tourism management and sustainability practices are effective as all the mean values are over 4. The highest ratings are given to sensitive tourism development and sustainable promotion, as it points to the awareness of the heritage-friendly tourism practices. The negative values of the skewness indicate that answers are concentrated towards agreement, and the moderate to high kurtosis indicates that there is uniformity in perceptions of respondents. Generally, the findings are an indication of confidence in the fact that tourism is being regulated and aligned with the conservation goals in the management of the heritage site.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of Effectiveness of Governmental Management of Architectural Heritage

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Overall Effectiveness	552	4.15	0.932	-1.266	1.739
Physical Improvement	552	4.19	0.916	-1.289	1.852
Sustainability Assurance	552	4.10	0.986	-1.182	1.251
Heritage Standards	552	4.01	1.063	-1.035	0.631
Policy Balance	552	4.03	1.004	-0.911	0.362
Governance Quality	552	4.08	0.957	-1.141	1.397
Public Trust	552	4.05	0.887	-0.996	1.300

Source: Author(s) Compilation

Table 8 shows that the respondents have a positive opinion towards the general effectiveness of how the government manages the Chail Royal Palaces, and that all the mean values are above 4. The greatest agreement is on physical improvement and general effectiveness, which has confidence in government interventions. The negative values of skewness mean that the responses are skewed towards agreement, whereas the value of kurtosis is moderate, which means the perceptions are not very different. In general, the evidence supports the idea that the heritage governance mechanisms are perceived to be effective in the conservation quality, sustainability, and the trust of people.

4.4 Analysis of Correlation

Table 9: Correlation Matrix Analysis

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Policy	1					
Conservation Practices	.484**	1				
Financial Management	.366**	.700**	1			
Community Participation	.420**	.750**	.716**	1		
Tourism Management	.327**	.577**	.567**	.600**	1	
Governmental Heritage Management	.531**	.739**	.627**	.709**	.682**	1

Source: Author(s) Compilation, Note: **p = 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlations between all constructs are significant and positive, as it has been shown in Table 9, which means that there are strong interrelationships between the aspects of governmental management and heritage outcomes. The government policy is moderately related to overall heritage management, whereas conservation and community participation have the strongest links with the dependent variable. There are also very strong positive correlations between financial and tourism management, which indicate that they can be used to support heritage governance. The intercorrelations between the independent variables are high, which implies that heritage management is a multidimensional process where effective heritage management is a combination of institutional, social, and operational conditions that interact to determine the effectiveness of conservation.

4.5 Regression Analysis

Table 10: Summary of Regression Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.833	0.693	0.690	2.562

Source: Author(s) Compilation, Note: Predictors: Government Policy, Conservation Practices, Financial Management, Community Participation, Tourism Management.

Table 10 indicates that the regression model has a high percentage of explaining the heritage management effectiveness with an R^2 of 0.693, meaning that 69.3 per cent of the value is explained by the five predictors. The large value of R is the confirmation of a very strong general relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 11: ANOVA Analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8094.526	5	1618.905	246.640	0.000***
Residual	3583.861	546	6.564		
Total	11678.387	551			

Source: Author(s) Compilation, Note: *** p<0.001.

According to Table 11, the regression model is statistically significant since it reflects the high F-value and the p-value of 0.000. This establishes the fact that the overall impact of the independent variables is a strong predictor of the success of architectural heritage management.

Table 12: Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	−0.690	0.821	—	−0.840	0.401	—	—
Government Policy	0.260	0.037	0.191	7.023	0.000***	0.757	1.321
Conservation Practices	0.359	0.048	0.299	7.453	0.000***	0.349	2.869
Financial Management	0.038	0.045	0.031	0.844	0.399	0.413	2.420
Community Participation	0.215	0.045	0.193	4.793	0.000***	0.345	2.899
Tourism Management	0.338	0.033	0.313	10.081	0.000***	0.583	1.715

Source: Author(s) Compilation, Note: *** p<0.001.

Table 12 of the coefficients indicates that the government policy, conservation practices, community participation, and tourism management have a great effect on the effectiveness of heritage management, but not the financial management. The strongest predictors are tourism management and conservation practices, and all the VIF values are less than the critical ones, which means that there is no multicollinearity issue.

4.6 Hypothesis Testing Analysis

Table 13: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardised Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. (p)	Result
H1	Government Policy → Governmental Heritage Management	0.191	7.023	0.000***	**Supported**
H2	Conservation Practices → Governmental Heritage Management	0.299	7.453	0.000***	**Supported**
H3	Financial Management → Governmental Heritage Management	0.031	0.844	0.399	**Not Supported**
H4	Community Participation → Governmental Heritage Management	0.193	4.793	0.000***	**Supported**
H5	Tourism Management → Governmental Heritage Management	0.313	10.081	0.000***	**Supported**

Source: Author(s) Compilation, Note: *** p<0.001.

The results of testing the hypothesis in Table 13 show that four hypotheses (H1, H2, H4 and H5) are accepted, and this proves that policy, conservation, community participation and tourism management play an important role. But H3 is not considered, demonstrating that financial management does not play a significant role in the management effectiveness of heritage under these circumstances.

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings show that the policy of governments, conservation and maintenance practices, community involvement, and tourism management have a strong impact on the effectiveness of architectural

heritage management of the Chail Royal Palaces, but financial management does not, which means that the quality of governance and working mechanisms play a more significant role in the results of heritage than the money (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Chakravorty, 2022). The strong influence of conservation and tourism management is in line with the previous evidence that the hill-town heritage is under severe ecological and visitor stress, and any form of architectural and environmental conservation and controlled tourism is the sole way to stop the degradation of the architectural and environmental forms (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Parmar, 2012; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). Likewise, community involvement is also important, which concurs with the idea that the sustainability of heritage relies on local ownership, cultural involvement, and participatory governance in place of top-down management (Weise, 2025; Mahal, 2022). Conversely, the unimportance of financial management confirms the fact that additional funding in the absence of workable institutions, coordination, and enforcement strategies does not result in better heritage protection (Pradesh, 2025; Bansal and Chhabra, 2023). These results suggest that the governmental management of heritage in the Shimla area-Chail region should focus on regulatory clarity, scientific conservation, stakeholder involvement, and sustainable tourism models rather than focusing on the budgetary interventions to preserve the architecture of the royal palaces in the long term (Singh, 2021; Sambher and Sharma, 2025).

6. Implications of the Study

6.1 Policy Implications

The results indicate that the policies governing the heritage attractions in the Shimla-Chail area should be enhanced by enforcing better regulation regimes, making sure that the conservation priorities are implemented in the urban and tourism plans to ensure that the royal palace buildings are not impacted by the developmental needs (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Sharma and Pathak, 2024). No critical role of financial management in the heritage outcomes implies that policy changes need to focus on institutional accountability, performance-based funding, and monitoring systems to tie financial distributions to conservation outputs instead of infrastructure development (Sambher & Sharma, 2025; Pradesh, 2025). This policy alignment is required to take place so that public investment is translated into architectural and cultural sustainability in the long term (Singh, 2021)

6.2 Managerial and Administrative Implications

The high importance of conservation practices, community involvement, and tourism management means that heritage agencies should have a better technical capacity, professional training, and administrative performance to develop conservation policies (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). Scientific restoration and environmental management, as well as digital monitoring capacity building, can enhance the quality of conservation efforts, and better coordination of tourism, urban development, and heritage departments can lead to better policy outcomes and better governance results (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Chakravorty, 2022). Sustainable heritage administration in the context of hill towns is thus mainly based on managerial integration

6.3 Community and Tourism Implications

The high emphasis on community involvement and community-based tourism management explains the significance of participatory heritage governance and sustainable tourism policies in the preservation of the cultural and architectural integrity of the Chail Royal Palaces (Weise, 2025; Mahal, 2022). Engaging the communities in the decision-making improves the cultural ownership and adherence to conservation standards, whereas managed tourism is such that the visitor activity promotes, instead of deteriorating,

the heritage values (Parmar, 2012; Singh, 2021). These combined strategies can enable heritage sites to earn economic gains and, at the same time, maintain their historical and symbolic values within the Western Himalayan environment (Halperin, 2025; Sharabi, 2025).

7. Conclusion

This work gives a complete picture of how government management strategies influence the success of architectural heritage conservation in the case of the Chail Royal Palaces, showing that the clarity of the policy, scientific conservation practice, the involvement of the community, and tourism management are the factors leading unconditionally to the success of preserving the heritage, and moreover, the financial resources are not sufficient to achieve higher results (Bansal and Chhabra, 2023; Chakravorty, 2022). The empirical relationship between governance mechanisms and heritage management effectiveness makes the research relevant to the literature on heritage and governance, whereas the previous studies provide descriptive and policy-oriented accounts of and about the subject, the current study suggests evidence-based assessment of royal palaces management in a delicate Himalayan setting based on stakeholder-related considerations (Singh, 2021; Sambher and Sharma, 2025). The findings support the previous arguments that the hill-town heritage needs coherent planning, balancing ecological sensitivity, tourism pressures, and cultural continuity with the help of coordinated institutional and community-based methods (Sharma and Pathak, 2024; Weise, 2025). Practically, the research provides useful recommendations to policy makers and administrators by demonstrating how the architectural and symbolic significance of the Chail Royal Palaces should be conserved by regulators, conservation, participatory governance practices, and sustainable tourism practises in future generations (Parmar, 2012; Halperin, 2025).

8. Limitations and Scope for Future Research

The research lacks a broader geographical area, which is the Shimla -Chail region, and it might not be generalisable to other contexts of heritage in India and the Himalayan belt (Sharma, 2015; Singh, 2021). Secondly, the survey data relies on the perception-based method, which might not show objective conservation results or the performance of the institutions (Chakravorty, 2022). Future studies must thus utilise qualitative research methods including interviews and archival review, longitudinal designs to monitor change over time and comparative research in other hill towns and royal heritage sites in order to get a better understanding of how governance, community and sustainability relate to architectural heritage management (Weise, 2025; Sambher and Sharma, 2025).

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