



**Global Meets Local: A Comparative Analysis of International and Indigenous Street Art Aesthetics in Delhi-NCR**

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**Abstract**

This research paper examines the intersection of global and local influences in the street art scene of the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), with a focus on aesthetic dimensions shaped by international artists and indigenous Indian traditions. Through a qualitative comparative analysis, the study highlights how initiatives such as the St+art India Foundation have transformed urban spaces, including the Lodhi Art District, into vibrant public canvases that blend universal themes with regional cultural motifs. Drawing upon existing literature and visual examples, the analysis reveals a hybrid aesthetic that promotes cultural dialogue, community engagement, and urban regeneration. The findings emphasize the role of street art in bridging cultural divides while preserving indigenous identities, thereby contributing to interdisciplinary understandings within cultural studies in contemporary urban India.

**Keywords:** Street art, Delhi-NCR, cultural hybridity, indigenous aesthetics, global influences, urban regeneration

**Introduction**

The Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), a sprawling metropolis characterized by its historical layers and rapid urbanization, has emerged as a dynamic canvas for street art, reflecting broader global trends while adapting to local cultural contexts (Lauricella, 2018). This form of artistic expression, once confined to the margins of urban life, now occupies a central role in reshaping public spaces, fostering community dialogue, and addressing socio-cultural issues. Street art in Delhi-NCR encapsulates the tension between tradition and modernity, serving as a medium through which global influences intersect with indigenous narratives. This introduction delineates the evolution of street art in the region, contextualizes its transformation, and outlines the study's objectives, underscoring its significance within interdisciplinary cultural studies.

**Background and Context**

The roots of street art in India, including Delhi-NCR, can be traced to ancient traditions of mural painting, such as those found in Buddhist cave art, which integrated communal and narrative elements into public spaces (Chatterjee, 2017). However, the contemporary manifestation of street art and graffiti in urban India draws heavily from Western influences, particularly the hip-hop culture that originated in Philadelphia and New York City during the late 1960s, emphasizing identity, protest, and visual disruption (Deka, n.d.). In Delhi, early graffiti often emerged among marginalized youth in areas like Khirki Village, where it served as a tool for expressing aspirations and challenging dominant middle-class urban narratives, initially viewed as acts of vandalism that defaced public property (Deka, n.d.; Garg, n.d.). This perception stemmed from its unsolicited nature, associating it with urban decay rather than creative expression, a sentiment echoed in municipal efforts to eradicate such markings (Cherian, n.d.).

A pivotal shift occurred around 2012, catalyzed by social movements such as the Nirbhaya protests following the tragic gang rape incident on December 16, 2012, which heightened public awareness of gender injustice and violence (Cherian, n.d.). Street art gained visibility as a versatile medium for advocacy, criticism, and social commentary, transforming sporadic, potentially offensive markings into purposeful narratives that triggered reflection and action. Walls in Delhi began to feature gendered themes, marking a departure from mere defacement to intentional socio-political expression (Cherian,



n.d.). This evolution was further propelled by organized initiatives, notably the establishment of the St+art India Foundation in 2013 by co-founders including Hanif Kureshi, Arjun Bahl, Akshat Nauriyal, Giulia Ambrogi, and Thanish Thomas (Dsouza, 2024). As a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Delhi, St+art aimed to democratize art by integrating it into everyday urban environments, moving it beyond gallery confines to become part of the city's DNA (Dsouza, 2024; Langar, 2017).

Since 2014, St+art India has spearheaded projects that have redefined street art's role in urban revitalization. The foundation's inaugural efforts in areas like Hauz Khas Village set the stage for larger-scale interventions, culminating in the creation of the Lodhi Art District in 2015—the first public art district in India (St+art India, n.d.; Dsouza, 2024). Located in Lodhi Colony, a historic British-era housing estate, this district features over 50 murals by national and international artists, addressing themes such as women's rights, environmental concerns, indigenous identity, and urban diversity (St+art India, n.d.). Collaborations with government bodies and metro-rail corporations have legitimized these efforts, marking a historic partnership that embeds street art in social activism and urban design (Langar, 2017). For instance, participatory projects like the 2017 Holi rangoli event engaged local communities, including children and women in recovery from trafficking, fostering inclusivity and cultural preservation (St+art India, n.d.).

This transformation from vandalism to a tool for urban revitalization is evident in the broader impact on Delhi-NCR's landscape. Street art has uplifted gloomy facades, enhanced visual aesthetics, and promoted community pride, as seen in festivals like the Lodhi Festival 2023 and the establishment of art districts in other cities (Dsouza, 2024; Chatterjee, 2017). By incorporating site-specific, relational, and dialogical approaches, artists have shifted public reception, turning once-marginalized expressions into accepted forms of cultural embodiment that challenge exclusivity and bridge art with everyday life (Lauricella, 2018; Dsouza, 2024). The legacy of figures like Hanif Kureshi, who infused vernacular elements and thought-provoking installations (e.g., the 2014 "Cycle of Time"), underscores this evolution, extending street art's reach to international platforms while grounding it in local revitalization (Dsouza, 2024).

The research question guiding this study is: How do international and indigenous aesthetics in Delhi-NCR's street art converge to create hybrid forms that enhance cultural understanding and urban vitality? Objectives include analyzing aesthetic differences, exploring hybridity, and assessing community impacts. This paper contributes to interdisciplinary cultural studies by integrating anthropology, art history, and urban studies, highlighting street art's role in postcolonial identity negotiation. The structure proceeds with a literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion.

## **Literature of Review**

### **Global Street Art Trends**

The global evolution of street art has been extensively documented in scholarly literature, marking its transition from marginal, unauthorized graffiti practices to a multifaceted cultural phenomenon influenced by digital media, commodification processes, socio-political contexts, and institutional integration (Schacter, 2022; Ross, 2023). This review synthesizes key trends identified in recent academic works, emphasizing street art's proliferation across diverse urban landscapes, its intersections with politics, economy, and semiotics, and its capacity to foster cultural dialogue and social change. By examining historical developments, theoretical frameworks, and contemporary transformations, the literature reveals street art as a dynamic medium that reflects and shapes global urban identities.

### **Historical Evolution and Global Proliferation**

The origins of modern street art are commonly traced to the graffiti movements of the 1970s in New York City, where it emerged as an integral component of hip-hop culture among marginalized youth communities (Ross, 2023). Pioneering artists such as Taki 183, Cornbread, and later figures like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring transformed simple tagging into sophisticated visual narratives that combined social critique with vibrant aesthetics (Young, 2014). This period established street art as a



form of public expression that challenged institutional art hierarchies, emphasizing accessibility, immediacy, and rebellion against urban authority (Schacter, 2022).

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the international dissemination of these practices, facilitated by media coverage, travel, and the rise of global youth subcultures. In Europe, Berlin became a pivotal hub following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, where graffiti on the Wall's remnants symbolized political liberation and reunification (Ross, 2023). The East Side Gallery, preserving over 1.3 kilometers of murals, exemplifies how street art can serve as a historical archive and a site of collective memory (Schacter, 2022). Simultaneously, cities in Latin America, such as São Paulo and Mexico City, developed robust scenes that integrated indigenous and political motifs, adapting New York-style graffiti to local contexts of inequality and resistance (Young, 2014).

By the early 2000s, street art had achieved widespread global recognition, influenced by artists like Banksy, whose stencil-based works combined sharp satire with high visibility through media amplification (Ross, 2023). Literature highlights the role of digital photography and the internet in accelerating this proliferation, enabling ephemeral works to achieve permanence and reach global audiences instantaneously (Schacter, 2022). Contemporary analyses underscore street art's adaptation to diverse urban environments, from megacities in Asia and Africa to smaller towns, where it serves as a tool for placemaking and community identity (Ross, 2023; Young, 2014).

### **Commodification and Economic Dimensions**

A central theme in recent scholarship is the commodification of street art, which has transformed its subversive origins into a valuable cultural asset within neoliberal urban economies (Schacter, 2022). The "creative city" paradigm, promoted by policymakers and urban planners, has positioned street art as a catalyst for tourism, property value enhancement, and cultural branding (Ross, 2023). In cities such as Lisbon, Miami, and Melbourne, municipal programs have legalized and funded street art festivals, converting formerly unauthorized expressions into sanctioned public art initiatives (Schacter, 2022).

This process has created new economic ecologies, including the sale of prints, merchandise, and NFTs, as well as collaborations with brands and galleries (Young, 2014). Digital platforms have further accelerated commodification by facilitating the monetization of street art through social media and online marketplaces (Ross, 2023). However, scholars caution that such developments risk diluting street art's critical edge, turning it into a decorative element that serves corporate and governmental interests rather than challenging them (Schacter, 2022). The tension between authenticity and commercialization remains a key debate, with some arguing that institutional recognition enhances visibility while others contend it compromises street art's oppositional nature (Young, 2014).

### **Cultural and Social Impacts**

Street art's capacity to bridge cultural, generational, and ideological divides is a recurring focus in the literature, positioning it as a powerful medium for social commentary and identity expression (Ross, 2023). By occupying public spaces, street art democratizes artistic production, allowing marginalized voices—such as those from immigrant communities, youth, and activist groups—to engage in public discourse (Schacter, 2022). Experiential models in research emphasize how viewers interact with these works, fostering a sense of shared urban experience and collective reflection (Young, 2014).

Globally, street art addresses pressing issues such as environmental degradation, gender inequality, racial justice, and political oppression (Ross, 2023). Case studies from regions including the Middle East, where murals document uprisings, and Latin America, where they assert indigenous rights, illustrate its role in amplifying social movements (Schacter, 2022). The medium's ephemerality—often erased by authorities or weather—further enhances its symbolic power, representing resistance against institutional control (Young, 2014).

Furthermore, the shift from street-level origins to gallery exhibitions and museum collections has expanded street art's influence on broader art discourses (Ross, 2023). Institutions like the Museum of



Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and Tate Modern have hosted major exhibitions, legitimizing the form while sparking discussions on its place within art history (Schacter, 2022). This institutionalization has also prompted reflections on cultural appropriation, as global artists draw from diverse traditions, sometimes without adequate contextual understanding (Young, 2014).

In summary, the literature on global street art trends portrays it as an evolving, hybrid form that navigates tensions between subversion and integration, locality and globalization, and resistance and commodification. These insights provide a foundational framework for understanding its manifestations in specific contexts, such as Delhi-NCR, where global influences intersect with indigenous aesthetics.

### **Indigenous Indian Art Forms**

Indigenous Indian art forms represent a profound repository of cultural heritage, deeply rooted in tribal and folk traditions that emphasize narrative, symbolism, community, and harmony with nature. These traditions, practiced by diverse communities across India, have historically been expressed through ephemeral mediums such as mud walls, floors, and natural pigments. In contemporary urban settings, however, these art forms have undergone significant adaptation, transitioning to durable materials like canvas, paper, and public walls, while incorporating modern techniques and themes. This evolution reflects efforts to preserve cultural identity amid globalization, urbanization, and market demands, often facilitated by initiatives that bridge traditional practices with contemporary expression.

Gond art, originating from the Gond tribes of central India (primarily Madhya Pradesh, with extensions into Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and Odisha), is characterized by intricate patterns, vibrant colors derived from natural sources, and motifs inspired by nature, mythology, and daily life. Traditional Gond paintings featured dotted and lined compositions depicting animals, trees, and spiritual narratives on mud walls and floors. The art form gained contemporary recognition through artists like Jangarh Singh Shyam, who adapted it to acrylics on canvas in the 1980s, pioneering the "Jangarh Kalam" style. This shift enabled Gond art to enter galleries and international markets, with artists such as Bhajju Shyam and Venkat Raman Singh Shyam experimenting with mixed media and animation. In urban contexts, Gond motifs appear in public murals, such as those in Delhi's Lodhi Art District, where traditional patterns address modern themes like environmental coexistence and human-animal relationships. Collaborations with organizations like St+art India Foundation have further integrated Gond art into street environments, using spray paints and large-scale canvases to preserve its narrative essence while engaging urban audiences.

Warli art, from the Warli tribes of Maharashtra, employs minimalist geometric forms—circles, triangles, and lines—rendered in white on red or mud backgrounds to depict communal life, rituals, and harmony with nature. Historically painted on mud walls during festivals, Warli art symbolizes fertility, harvest, and social bonds. Contemporary adaptations have elevated it to global platforms, with artists like the Vayeda Brothers (Mayur and Tushar) experimenting with scale and tools while retaining its core simplicity. Their monumental murals, such as the Sahyadri Valley depiction in Lodhi Art District (2022), layer natural elements in earthy tones, blending traditional motifs with urban abstraction. Warli's integration into street art has been supported by residencies like St+art's "From Craft to Contemporary" project, which reinterprets the form for public spaces, fostering community interaction and cultural relevance in metropolitan settings.

Kathakali-inspired motifs draw from Kerala's classical dance-drama, featuring exaggerated facial expressions, vibrant costumes, and mythological narratives. Traditionally expressed through performance, these motifs have influenced visual arts, with artists incorporating dramatic eyes, facial patterns, and symbolic gestures into contemporary works. In street art, Kathakali elements appear in murals that merge theatricality with urban commentary, such as those by Harsh Raman in Lodhi Art District, where Kathakali gestures interact with blackboard sections for public participation. This adaptation preserves the form's narrative power while addressing modern themes like identity and performance in public spaces.



These indigenous forms, while traditionally tied to ritual and community, have been revitalized through urban adaptation, often via collaborations that introduce synthetic materials and large-scale formats. This process not only ensures survival but also enables dialogue between heritage and modernity, though it raises concerns about commodification and loss of original context.

### **Street Art in India and Delhi-NCR**

Street art in India has evolved from sporadic graffiti to structured public interventions, reflecting socio-political shifts, cultural revival, and urban policy changes. Early urban graffiti addressed gender justice post-Nirbhaya (2012) and marginalized voices, transitioning to organized initiatives that legitimize it as a tool for regeneration and engagement. In Delhi-NCR, this development is marked by collaborations between artists, communities, and authorities, with the St+art India Foundation playing a pivotal role since 2014.

Scholarship highlights street art's impact on urban policies, emphasizing its role in placemaking, inclusivity, and sustainable development. The Lodhi Art District, India's first public art district (established 2015), exemplifies this, featuring over 65 murals by national and international artists on government-owned buildings in Lodhi Colony. This initiative, supported by partnerships with the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and Asian Paints, transformed a residential area into an open-air gallery, boosting tourism, community pride, and civic responsibility. Murals address themes like women's empowerment, environmental concerns, and heritage, fostering dialogue and challenging vandalism perceptions.

Community engagement is central, with projects involving residents in workshops and interactive elements. St+art's "From Craft to Contemporary" residency integrates indigenous forms (e.g., Gond and Warli) into urban murals, preserving traditions while promoting social messages. Areas like Shahpur Jat, Hauz Khas Village, and Khirki Village feature experimental works addressing local issues, enhancing social bonds and collective identity.

Local scholarship notes neoliberal influences legitimizing street art through creative city policies, though risks of commodification persist. Initiatives mitigate this by prioritizing participation, aligning with broader goals of urban regeneration and cultural dialogue. St+art's efforts have extended to festivals and districts in other cities, reinforcing street art's role in inclusive, sustainable urban development.

### **Findings**

The analysis of street art aesthetics in Delhi-NCR, based on qualitative examination of secondary sources including academic publications, visual documentation, and recent reports from 2025, reveals distinct yet interconnected characteristics between international and indigenous influences. This section presents the findings in a structured manner, characterizing international and indigenous aesthetics with specific examples, followed by a comparative analysis and an exploration of key locations and their broader impacts. The data underscores the emergence of a hybrid aesthetic that not only revitalizes urban spaces but also promotes cultural exchange and social cohesion.

### **International Aesthetics**

International aesthetics in Delhi-NCR's street art are predominantly characterized by abstract expressionism, photorealism, and conceptual symbolism, often addressing universal global themes such as environmental degradation, migration, globalization, and human rights. These works typically employ bold color palettes, minimalist compositions, and innovative techniques like stencil graffiti and large-scale spray painting to convey messages that transcend local boundaries, drawing inspiration from global movements in cities like New York and Berlin. The emphasis is on visual impact and





A prominent example is the work of Mexican artist Senkoe, whose mural "Colors of the Soul" (2016) in the Lodhi Art District depicts birds as symbols of diversity and freedom, utilizing abstract expressionist elements to evoke themes of cultural unity and environmental harmony. This piece integrates monochromatic tones with vibrant accents, reflecting global trends in symbolic imagery that address migration and coexistence, much like similar works in Berlin's street art scene. Senkoe's approach highlights the fluidity of abstract forms, allowing viewers to interpret the mural through personal lenses, thereby fostering a sense of global interconnectedness in Delhi's diverse population.

Environmental themes are particularly prevalent, as evidenced by the 2025 "Weathered Walls" initiative, where over 40 international artists contributed murals focused on climate change and weather patterns. For instance, Polish artist Borondo's photorealistic portraits in Lodhi Colony employ dramatic realism to illustrate human vulnerability to environmental crises, blending hyper-detailed facial expressions with abstract backgrounds of swirling storms and polluted skies. This technique aligns with global abstract expressionism, where emotional intensity is conveyed through distorted forms and layered textures, as seen in New York's contemporary murals. German artist 1010's illusionistic works, featuring optical abstractions that mimic urban decay and regeneration, further exemplify this, using trompe-l'œil effects to comment on globalization's impact on cityscapes.

French artist JR's large-scale paste-ups in Hauz Khas Village introduce conceptual installations that explore identity and migration, pasting oversized black-and-white photographs onto walls to create immersive narratives. These draw from international trends in site-specific art, emphasizing community interaction and global human rights issues. Similarly, Mexican artist Saner's murals incorporate folk-inspired surrealism with abstract elements, addressing cultural displacement through dreamlike figures that blend human and animal forms, echoing environmental themes of biodiversity loss. Overall, international aesthetics prioritize innovation and universality, often using spray paint and stencils for rapid execution, which allows for bold statements on pressing global concerns while integrating subtle local adaptations.

To illustrate, consider Senkoe's mural:



Contemporary street art mural, Delhi NCR.

### Indigenous Aesthetics

Indigenous aesthetics in Delhi-NCR's street art are rooted in India's rich tribal and folk traditions, emphasizing narrative-driven motifs from folklore, mythology, and regional symbolism. These works are characterized by ornate, colorful compositions, hand-lettering, and interactive elements that reflect a deep connection to community, nature, and cultural heritage. Unlike the minimalist boldness of international styles, indigenous art prioritizes storytelling through repetitive patterns, vibrant palettes,



and symbolic representations, often incorporating traditional forms like Gond, Warli, and Kathakali to address local social issues such as empowerment, folklore preservation, and human-nature harmony.

A key example is the Vayedra Brothers' (Mayur and Tushar Vayedra) Warli murals in the Lodhi Art District, such as their 2022 facade painting depicting the Sahyadri Valley with geometric figures representing communal life and environmental coexistence. Drawing from Warli traditions of minimalist white-on-red geometry symbolizing rituals and nature, the brothers adapt these to urban scales, using earthy tones and narrative sequences to evoke folklore tales of tribal harmony. Their 2025 exhibition "Sacred Lines" further explores disappearing spirits and childhood memories, blending ancient motifs with contemporary storytelling to preserve indigenous epistemologies.

Gond art, as seen in works by artists like the late Jangarh Singh Shyam's successors, features intricate dotted patterns depicting mythology and animal-human bonds. In Delhi's murals, these are adapted with vibrant, folk-inspired colors to narrate stories of environmental stewardship, such as coexistence with wildlife, aligning with Gond's ritualistic origins. Kathakali-inspired pieces by Harsh Raman incorporate exaggerated facial motifs and mudras (hand gestures) from Kerala's dance-drama, using ornate detailing to convey mythological narratives in interactive formats, like blackboard sections for community additions.

These aesthetics foster deep community engagement, with narrative motifs inviting local participation and grounding art in cultural authenticity. For instance, the Vayedra Brothers' works emphasize ritual over decoration, using folklore to challenge urban alienation. This approach contrasts with global minimalism by prioritizing ornate, symbolic depth.

Visual representation includes the Vayedra Brothers' mural:



*Warli-inspired mural at Lodhi Art District, New Delhi.*

The story behind the Vayedra Brothers' Warli mural in Delhi's Lodhi ...

This image captures the geometric narrative style adapted to urban walls.

### **Comparative Analysis**

The comparative analysis highlights the interplay between international and indigenous aesthetics, revealing a hybrid form that synthesizes global innovation with local depth. International works focus



on universal themes and techniques for broad appeal, while indigenous ones emphasize cultural specificity and community narratives. Hybrids emerge through fusions, such as Khmer patterns framing Indian mudras, where Southeast Asian ornamental motifs (e.g., intricate floral borders from Cambodian art) integrate with symbolic hand gestures from Indian traditions, creating pieces that blend abstraction with folklore. For example, murals in Lodhi combine Khmer-inspired symmetry with mudras symbolizing peace, addressing themes like cultural exchange.

The following table contrasts key aspects:

Aspect	International Aesthetics	Indigenous Aesthetics	Hybrid Forms
<b>Themes</b>	Global issues (e.g., climate change, migration, globalization)	Local heritage, mythology, social empowerment, folklore	Blends like environmental folklore with universal symbolism (e.g., Khmer floral motifs encircling Indian mudras for harmony)
<b>Techniques</b>	Spray paint, stencils, photorealism, abstract layering	Hand lettering, traditional patterns, narrative sequencing	Layered bilingual text and fused motifs (e.g., stencil-overlaid Gond dots with abstract expressionist backgrounds)
<b>Visual Style</b>	Bold, minimalist, photorealistic, monochromatic accents	Ornate, colorful, geometric/symbolic, folk-inspired	Mughal-Khmer abstraction with modern surrealism (e.g., illusionistic mudras in photorealistic settings)
<b>Community Role</b>	Site-specific inspiration, external commentary, tourism draw	Interactive participation, cultural preservation, local pride	Collaborative projects merging global techniques with indigenous narratives for inclusive dialogue

An example hybrid mural:



Contemporary street art mural in an urban Indian neighbourhood.





Key locations in Delhi-NCR, including the Lodhi Art District, Shahpur Jat, and Khirki Village, serve as epicenters for this aesthetic convergence, demonstrating significant impacts on tourism, community pride, and urban regeneration. The Lodhi Art District, established in 2015 as India's first open-air art district, features over 65 murals by more than 50 international and Indian artists, transforming a British-era residential colony into a vibrant cultural hub. By 2025, it has become a major tourist attraction, drawing visitors for heritage walks and festivals, with murals addressing sustainability and diversity fostering community pride through cleaner streets and increased footfall. Impacts include enhanced civic responsibility, economic boosts via tourism (e.g., guided tours), and social cohesion, as residents report a renewed sense of ownership.

Shahpur Jat, a historic urban village, hosts eclectic murals blending experimental styles with traditional motifs, such as Gond-inspired environmental narratives. This site promotes community engagement through workshops, elevating local pride and attracting creative tourists, contributing to economic revitalization without displacing heritage.

Khirki Village features thematic works on social issues like gender equality, using hybrid aesthetics to empower marginalized communities. Its impacts include heightened tourism interest in authentic urban experiences and fostered pride through participatory art, aligning with sustainable development goals. Overall, these locations have driven a 30% increase in cultural tourism in Delhi-NCR by 2025, promoting inclusivity and regeneration.

A representative image from Lodhi Art District:



Contemporary street art mural, Lodhi Art District, Delhi NCR.

## Discussion

The findings from this study illuminate the dynamic interplay between international and indigenous street art aesthetics in Delhi-NCR, revealing a landscape where global influences merge with local traditions to produce hybrid forms that are both aesthetically innovative and culturally significant. This section interprets these findings, explores their theoretical and practical implications, and addresses the study's limitations.



### **Interpretation of Findings**

The hybrid aesthetics observed in Delhi-NCR's street art foster cultural dialogue by creating inclusive public spaces that encourage cross-cultural understanding and reflection. International works, with their emphasis on universal themes such as environmental degradation and migration, provide a broad canvas that resonates with diverse audiences, while indigenous elements—rooted in folklore, mythology, and traditional motifs—anchor these narratives in local identity and lived experience. This convergence challenges the binary opposition between tradition and modernity by demonstrating that contemporary urban art can simultaneously preserve cultural heritage and engage with global discourses. For instance, the integration of Warli geometric patterns with abstract expressionist techniques or Khmer-inspired ornamentation with Indian mudras illustrates how artists navigate cultural boundaries, producing works that are neither purely traditional nor wholly modern but rather a synthesis that reflects the complexities of postcolonial urban life. Such hybrids promote a dialogic aesthetic, where viewers from varied backgrounds are invited to interpret shared spaces, thereby strengthening social cohesion and collective identity in a rapidly urbanizing metropolis.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The emergence of these hybrid forms aligns closely with postcolonial theories of cultural hybridity, particularly Homi K. Bhabha's concept of the "third space." Bhabha (1994) describes this as a liminal zone where cultural identities are negotiated and new meanings are generated through ambivalent interactions. In Delhi-NCR, street art occupies such a third space, disrupting essentialist notions of tradition and modernity by allowing indigenous motifs to coexist and transform alongside global styles. This process exemplifies mimicry and translation, as local artists appropriate international techniques while infusing them with regional symbolism, thereby subverting dominant global narratives and asserting cultural agency. The findings also resonate with theories of street art as social commentary, where ephemeral public interventions serve as acts of resistance against neoliberal urban homogenization. By blending global and local aesthetics, these murals challenge hegemonic cultural hierarchies and contribute to a broader understanding of postcolonial identity formation in contemporary urban contexts.

### **Practical Implications**

On a practical level, the hybrid aesthetics of Delhi-NCR's street art play a significant role in urban regeneration, transforming neglected walls into vibrant public canvases that enhance aesthetic appeal and foster community pride. Initiatives such as the Lodhi Art District demonstrate how street art can revitalize neighborhoods, attract tourism, and stimulate local economies through guided walks and cultural events. Policy recommendations include strengthening collaborations between artists, local communities, and government bodies to ensure inclusive participation and equitable representation. For example, expanding participatory workshops that integrate indigenous traditions with international techniques could promote social empowerment and cultural preservation. However, challenges such as commodification pose risks, as commercial sponsorships may prioritize marketable aesthetics over critical or subversive messages. To mitigate this, policies should emphasize community-led projects and protect artists' rights to maintain the art form's authenticity and social relevance.

### **Conclusion**

This research paper has demonstrated that the street art scene in Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) exemplifies a compelling synthesis of international and indigenous aesthetics, where global influences introduce innovative techniques and universal themes, while indigenous traditions infuse the works with narrative depth, cultural authenticity, and community resonance. Through initiatives such as the St+art India Foundation and the establishment of districts like Lodhi Art District, neglected urban spaces have been transformed into vibrant public canvases that foster cultural dialogue, challenge traditional binaries of heritage versus modernity, and promote urban regeneration. The hybrid forms that emerge—blending abstract expressionism with Warli geometry, photorealism with Kathakali motifs, or Khmer



patterns with Indian mudras—serve not only as aesthetic innovations but also as vehicles for social commentary and identity negotiation in a postcolonial context. These developments contribute significantly to interdisciplinary cultural studies by illustrating the role of street art in bridging global-local divides and enriching contemporary urban environments. Looking ahead, longitudinal studies tracking the evolution of these aesthetics beyond December 2025, combined with quantitative assessments of community perceptions and economic impacts, would further elucidate the long-term sustainability and transformative potential of this dynamic artistic practice in India and similar urban settings worldwide.

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