

# UNRAVELING TRADITION: WOMEN'S PLACE IN PAKISTAN'S MODERN KNITTING LANDSCAPE

Atifa Azad<sup>1</sup>, Aiman Ali Syed<sup>2</sup>, Humaira Zulfiqar<sup>\*3</sup>, Rafia Syed<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M. Phil Scholar at the Department of Anthropology, Quaid e Azam University Islamabad;

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology, Fatima Jinnah Women University;

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer in the Department of Gender Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi,

<sup>4</sup>PhD Scholar, Gender Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore

<sup>1</sup>atifaazad001@gmail.com; <sup>2</sup>aimansyed@fjwu.edu.pk; <sup>\*3</sup>humairazulfiqar@fjwu.edu.pk;

<sup>4</sup>rafiasyed1990@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: \*

Received: July 10, 2024

Revised: August 10, 2024

Accepted: August 25, 2024

Published: September 09, 2024

## ABSTRACT

The culture of knitting addresses knitting as art, craft, design, fashion, and performance, and as an important aspect of everyday life. However, daily activities such as knitting can frequently provide valuable insights about society, culture, and people's lives. The purpose of this research was to discover the diverse culture of knitting and to understand people's perspectives regarding this art form. It also finds out how knitters have kept this art alive across different cultures of Pakistan. Furthermore, it explores the factors influencing respondents' preferences to revamp the art of knitting in this contemporary world. Qualitative research methods including in-depth interviews have been used to profoundly understand the views of respondents. The present study has been conducted at Gulzar Valley, Chakri Road Rawalpindi. The sample was collected through a purposive sampling technique. The findings suggested that as a traditional art knitting is practiced almost in every culture of Pakistan and every culture has different meanings that are attached to this traditional art. The results of this study found that modern knitting culture is perceived differently. The number of young women who knit has increased intensely in the past ten years but their perception of this art has now changed with the aspect of entrepreneurship. The learning practices, creativity, and social aspects have appeared in new ways. The study is essential for young knitters since it is one of the few attempts to comprehend and define their culture. Media also plays a key role in making this art more beneficial in many ways and also in promoting this art worldwide.

**Keywords:** Knitting Culture, Revival, Art, Entrepreneurship, Social Construct.

## INTRODUCTION

Knitting is a traditional art seen in many civilizations around the world. It is the "process of creating a fabric by looping a continuous yarn" (Barnhart and Stein, 1963). Knitting can be done on a machine, but it is commonly done by hand with needles. Knitting has been a traditional craft for generations. It is a sort of art that is mainly specified for ladies. Amazingly, very few men are active in this form of art in some western countries. Pakistani people continue to practice this craft, although its value to them has altered through time. To get a clear understanding and different

perspectives regarding this issue, the revival of knitting in the contemporary era needs to be studied from an anthropological perspective. New fashions and trends are introduced but it is true that fashion always repeats. Following this trend, knitting is a good example. So this study explored the art of knitting in the contemporary world and its social and cultural values in different cultures.

In anthropology of art, anthropologists explore the artists and how they relate their aesthetic work with social reality. The art of

knitting is a traditional art that is found in different cultures of the world. The object that is made through knitting is not only an object it has some social meaning and also portrays several meanings in the social world (Morphy& Perkins, 2006). It was once believed that knitting originated with the production of socks in Islamic nations around the thirteenth century or earlier (Bush, 2011). The earliest example of true knitting is a pair of knitting socks found in Egypt, dating back to A.D. 1100-just over 9 centuries ago. Knitting became a metaphor for playfulness and liberation among young women in Parisian nightclubs as knitting became synonymous with self-expression: one doesn't only clothe oneself, one expresses oneself (Anderson, 2013). Hand knitting has been practiced for thousands of years. Where and how this piece was created are still mysteries. Some claim that the basis of knitting was when in primitive time, men made roots that looked like webs. Others think that nomads from the Arabian Peninsula brought the craft to Europe. Others still maintain that Persia is where this art's roots lie. Whatever the origins of the art, knitting is the textile's little child (Degeniene, 2014). Knitting has come back into fashion as a hobby after falling out of favor as an art and craft. The vast array of material artifacts created by people all over the world is studied and analyzed by anthropologists. It was once believed that knitting originated with the production of socks in Islamic nations around the thirteenth century or earlier (Bush, 2011).

Knitting is expected to expand in popularity in the future years as a sustainable pastime that fosters community, healing, and even activism, especially as customers seek to avoid the fast fashion industry (Gregory, 1982). According to a study conducted by the New England Journal of Medicine and the Mayo Clinic, mental exercises such as playing board games, reading, and knitting can lessen the risk of dementia (Davina, 2019). In Pakistan, knitting is a form of cultural expression as much as a means of making clothing. Knitting has been done historically in several parts of the nation, each with its styles and methods. Knitting has been used as a medium for storytelling and the preservation of cultural identities throughout history, as shown in the elaborate patterns of Sindh and the vivid colors of Punjab. Knitting was a common social activity in rural communities,

bringing together women from various generations to exchange knowledge and anecdotes. Knitted products frequently have symbolic significance associated with their patterns and motifs, which are a reflection of the local societal values, beliefs, and folklore. Mothers teach this traditional practice to their daughters because the art is both unique and connected to social and cultural worlds and relationships that affect their life stories and life choices.

Knitting saw a downturn in the latter half of the 20th century, despite its long history. The decline in the popularity of traditional knitting was due to the development of mass-produced apparel, evolving fashion trends, and a move toward urban living. Moreover, many craftspeople were deterred from pursuing knitting as a livelihood by a lack of financial incentives and market access. Furthermore, the younger generation showed a lack of interest in traditional crafts because they saw them as outmoded or less profitable than new occupations. The existence of this ancient art form was further endangered by this generational divide. In hyper globalization era where people are commodified, the young generation is moving toward their old traditions which have different reasons such as the preservation of culture as well as generating new eco-friendly business ideas. However, the younger Pakistani generation is examining these traditional customs with a new lens. Instead of taking these traditions at face value, they are attempting to reinterpret them in light of contemporary society. Pakistani society has demonstrated its endurance and adaptability via this cultural evolution, which reflects both a strong regard for its cultural legacy and its willingness to welcome change and innovation.

Amazingly, very few men are active in this form of art in some western countries. To express artistic individuality, hand knitting, especially innovative hand knitting, proved effective. It was possible to generate an infinite number of patterns and variations. Clothes and household products including carpets, bedspreads, cushions, and tablecloths are all made by hand knitting. In this form of art, a hand knitter would combine the skills of a weaver with the practical knowledge of a dressmaker (The Nation, 2020). Knitting's popularity has risen in recent years as a result of increased technique versatility, the adaptability of

many new man-made fibers, and an increase in consumer demand for wrinkle-resistant, stretchable, snug-fitted garments, particularly in the rapidly expanding sportswear and other casual wear segments (Memon, 2019). Knitting is perceived as an art and craft in different cultures. People craft yarn as a popular activity because it is portable, relatively low-cost to start, and has a personal touch that produces projects that are meant to be worn, used, and enjoyed (Turney, 2009). Many years ago in Pakistan, the art of knitting had diminished but after some time the trends changed and the lost art has now risen. Knitting and crochet are somehow similar art but have a bit of difference (Thomas, 2018). People started moving back towards this art and using it as fashion. For knitters, the creation of tools that promote the monetization and promotion of individual accomplishments is significant. Since this new media tends to change a domestic craft that is the topic of private transactions into a socially satisfying kind of conspicuous creation, knitting is a particularly enticing activity for women striving for a happy work-life balance in the different cultures of Pakistan (Zabban, 2020).

### Literature Review

Knitting is undoubtedly one of the activities that technology growth has displaced. It is thought that we should work to maintain and promote such activities and teach the future generation the craft of knitting as a traditional culture of Pakistan (Safina, 201). The design becomes changed because the artists have changed now. Modern artists introduce this art with new trends and practices. Knitting is a simple method to start practicing mindfulness. Knitting has been discovered to be beneficial to our health in different ways by science. It can not only help you relax in stressful situations if you have the correct kind of yarn. Knitting's repetitive motions are also like a soothing salve for an individual's brain (Riley, 2013). In post-feminist culture, when some women fall short of new gender formations, knitting is a place of struggle. Particularly in the leisure of elderly women, traditional domestic craft activities continue to be significant, and some practitioners

find the "new knitting" alienating. Traditional knitting techniques have lost importance as a result of contemporary craft discourses, but this also demonstrates that they are useful tools for criticizing hipster<sup>1</sup> capitalist post-feminist culture (Harrison, 2019).

Knitting was not as common as crocheting since not everyone wore sweaters. In Punjab after independence, knitting became more common as demand for crochet art decreased over time. People began wearing sweaters more regularly, and knitting was required because ready-made sweaters were hard to get and, even if they were, quite expensive (Mathew, 2000). While some knitters can teach, others can create gorgeous outfits. Few, however, have succeeded in building a successful online business using their skills in teaching, design, and entrepreneurship like Staci Perry of Very Pink. Perry, who started her career teaching knitting in neighborhood yarn stores, now uses YouTube to connect with needlecraft enthusiasts all over the world with her entertaining instructional videos and innovative knitwear patterns (Snober, 2000). In the past ten years, both knitting and how society views the activity and the finished goods produced by knitters have undergone significant change. Although more people are using the method, less attention has been given to the academic community to comprehending the goals of knitters and the objects they produce. There is a lack of research on young, female knitters, who are among the craft's most prolific practitioners (Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007).

Knitted products hold a significant place in the makers' lives as a cultural tradition. Many women speak of strong emotional connections to current projects. These creations can then be sold, donated to a good cause, or given as presents to loved ones. Numerous knitters have also established online shops where they market finished products, hand-spun yarns, and knitting patterns on various websites. These online businesses further illustrate knitters' ease with technology (Chansky, 2010). In Punjab, there is an equal range of embroideries, such as the *Phulkari*<sup>2</sup> needlework for shawls and cushions, which is done

<sup>1</sup>Hipster is a person who keeps up with the newest styles and trends, especially ones that are thought to be unconventional.

<sup>2</sup> a flower pattern embroidery

in raw silk and dazzling colors. Swat needlework, specializing in cross stitch, is utilized for caps, belts, pouches, and purses on the Frontier. Women in Kashmir never failed to practice knitting throughout the cold months because it was one of their culture's specialties. It is a cherished and calming hobby that spreads warmth and affection across the room. Azad Kashmir is known for its embroidered Gabba (floor rugs or wall hangings). It highlights the legends and sceneries of that lovely country. Other topics for presentation on the Gabba include hunting scenes, wedding celebrations, and country life. Namada is another well-known embroidered rug from Azad Kashmir. Tribal rugs with unique motifs, such as Kelims from Balochistan and Sharman from the Northern Areas, are generally woven by women. Goat hair is utilized in the Sharmas and the Farasi, a Sindh-specific rug.

Pottery and ceramics have a millennia-old legacy in Pakistan and are rightfully famous even today. Many of the earthenware items produced by village potters now are comparable to centuries-old prototypes (Bahdur, 2014). People in Punjab did not typically wear sweaters in the 19th century, even though the winters there may be extremely cold. While the poorly used woolen *loois*<sup>3</sup> to wrap themselves in as well as for bedding, the wealthier chose Pashmina shawls. It is a surprising fact that only the lower classes on the plains turn to blankets during the colder months. Anyone who could afford it would much prefer to wear various densities of cotton material, and coats that are padded with cotton wool are worn everybody. Before the missionaries' efforts, knitting appeared to be unknown in Asia. In the book, Malcom Lyall Darling describes a high school in Moga where each girl was required to sew a handmade outfit for the school's yearly government inspection. Most girls produced goods that were useful for village life, others produced knitted socks even though they were rarely worn.

The Ajrak undergoes an elaborate process that consists of 18 separate steps. Deep blue and madder red are the colors employed in indigenous artwork. Ajrak is deeply ingrained in the community's mythology, and its applications are

numerous. The Sindhi guy wears it as a turban or slings it over his shoulder with dignity. The woman wraps herself in Ajrak chaddar. It was traditionally used as a blanket as well as for hauling the produce. It is used for ceremonial purposes, such as weddings, and as a holy covering for the dead. The combination of traditional clothing with modern trends is one of the most noticeable shifts. The iconic shalwar kameez, a symbol of Pakistani culture, is currently undergoing creative modifications that combine traditional embroidery with contemporary cuts and patterns. This change represents a peaceful coexistence of adopting modern fashion with conserving legacy (Zahid, 2020). Additionally, there is a growing entrepreneurial spirit among the Pakistani young, as seen by the rise in e-commerce platforms, creative endeavors, and tech start-ups. Economic anthropology is the study of how human societies provide the goods and services that enable people to survive. People relate to each other in ways that convey power and meaning during the supply of material goods and the fulfillment of final consumption (Safina, 2018). Within closely-knit kin groupings, a gift economy, or generalized reciprocity, occurs, and the more remote the exchange partner, the more imbalanced or negative the trade becomes (George, 1982). Notably, the literature on this traditional art of knitting in Pakistan is very scarce. This research elaborated on the contemporary importance of this art that will be beneficial for the young generation and also for culture preservation. The theory of art and agency by Alfred Gell had been used in this research which focused on the production and circulation of art. Gell tries to explain the power of art through his concepts of technology of enchantment and enchantment of internet technology. Craft technologies are bodies of knowledge, socially shared and collectively produced and reproduced (Gell, 1992). The theory of Alfred Gell formulates the circulation of knitting toward fashion knitwear. In the modern era, young people also take an interest in knitting and use this art as their passion and hobby or sometimes as a profession or a source of earning.

<sup>3</sup>Loii is a form of quilt used by the people of the village in winter instead of sweaters in the past times.

**Methodology**

The methodology of this research is based on qualitative methods because these methods are more focused on the quality of data rather than the quantity of data. An ethnographic study has been conducted for this research to examine the factors that have revamped the art of knitting in this contemporary era. Three key informants for this research were aware of the knitting communities in my locale. Also, they were aware of the locale so they made me contact relevant people for collecting the required data. The primary source of data collection was the in-depth interviews, group discussions, and the data collected through the process of observation during fieldwork. Participant observation is a method that enables researchers to gain knowledge about the state of those being studied while experiencing a natural phenomenon (Spardely, 2019). In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research approach that requires conducting in-depth individual interviews with a small group of respondents to learn about their opinions on a certain topic, concept, program, or issue (Boyce, 2007). The researcher used a purposive sampling technique for this study. Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful sampling, allows researchers to attract respondents and can also help them better comprehend the phenomena by getting precise and in-depth information from the respondents.

Further, the sample selected for the study includes 19 females of the age range 18 to 70 years belonging to diverse educational and economic backgrounds that were linked to the formal as well as informal knitting communities. Five of them were students and two of them were teachers of TEVTA Institute offers different short courses in knitting, stitching, computer courses, etc. The remaining 12 respondents were home-based knitters and residents of Gulzar Valley Chakri Road Rawalpindi. People with different characteristics may have different feelings or insights about the issue so the researcher kept her biases and thoughts aside while taking in-depth interviews because this might affect the respondents. Moreover, permission for audio recording was taken from the interviewees, and afterward, their recordings were used to transcribe the interviews which were further used for the analysis after data sorting. The data of this study is analyzed through thematic analysis, which is commonly used in qualitative research. Thematic analysis is used for the identification, analysis, and construction of themes after gathering data. The goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e., patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and to use these themes to address the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2013). In this way, this technique helped sort the data to analyze it without missing any detail given by my respondents.

**Table 01**  
**Sample profile**

<b>Demographics</b>		<b>Number of participants</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	Jobless	04
	Student	05
	Teacher	02
	Housewives	04
	Freelancer	02
	Professional knitter	02
<b>Gender</b>	Female	19
<b>Age</b>	18-24	06
	25-30	08
	31-60	05

Educational Qualification	Matriculation	03
	Intermediate	04
	BS	02
	B.A	03
	B.Ed.	02
	Illiterate	03
	Masters	02

**Results and Discussion**

Pakistan is a culturally diverse country with numerous languages, traditions, and festivals. Knitting is a traditional art in the world. It is found among all cultures of Pakistan but in every culture, it is practiced differently according to their traditions. The women of Gilgit-Baltistan are skilled in knitting. They knit sweaters, stockings, and gloves, among other things. Woolen clothing is crucial for dealing with the region's cold weather (Munawar, 2004). One of my respondents Alam a 34-year-old woman who belonged to Gilgit Baltistan said *“despite the widespread availability and popularity of machine-made clothes, women in Gilgit Baltistan have maintained the craft of hand knitting alive. After dinner, family members traditionally gather around the stove to spend time together”*. Ladies spend their time with their families while knitting wonderful products. Knitted objects become the demand of every person in cold weather (Wani, 2011) Research analyses that for them, hand-knit clothing is highly valuable and a symbol of local cultural pride. One of my respondents Maria, a 40 years old woman who belonged to Kashmir culture said that *“it is a ritual among them to make knitted items for all their family members, mostly for kids”*. Women in Kashmir never miss an opportunity to practice knitting during the winter, which is one of the culture's specialties. In Kashmir, the weather remains cold mostly so people use this skill to make sweaters for themselves (Bahadur, 2014). According to these responses, in cultures where the weather remains cold-like Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan art forms like knitting and pottery, are highly preferred among people. The most significant handicraft made by the people of Baluchistan is needlework. This art is highly preferred among the women of Baluchistan as a cultural tradition. Similarly, one of my respondents Areeba who was 30 years old and belonged to Sindh said that *“artworks like Sillai, karahi, and*

*Bunai remain part of their identity in their culture”*. In Sindh, the area of Tharpkar ladies make embroideries and knit complex designs as part of their daily routines. In their spare time, the women would sit in groups or alone to stitch or knit beautiful stuff with love and affection (Vani, 2020). These responses reflect that knitting is done as a sign of love and beauty by the women of these regions for their families. According to a few of my old age respondents knitting has long been practiced as a family activity and a handicraft profession. Mostly all the women of a family are skillful in the art of knitting. Every second woman is aware of this art and young girls were very keen to learn this art from their mothers or grandmothers. In Pakistan, knitting is considerably more than just a craft; it is a social activity with deep cultural, economic, and gender dynamics implications. Additionally, the study elaborated different parts of Pakistan that are known for their knitting styles; like Sindhi artwork and the simple patterns of Baluchistan. These regional fashions are a source of pride and a representation of the nation's rich cultural diversity.

Social constructivism states that people work together to construct artifacts. This idea also focuses on the artifacts that are created through social interactions of a group. According to Lev Vygotsky (1968) an individual's learning takes place because of his or her interactions in a group. According to this theoretical debate people learn from their shared experiences. Individuals share previous knowledge and participate in a reciprocal nature to negotiate and settle on a common created meaning in participatory or cooperative learning. Through the art of knitting, people not only shared their art but also shared their experiences and learn from them. They construct social bonds through sharing, creating, and learning the art (Cabeen, 2007). One of my 27-year-old respondents Anna who was a housewife said *“we shifted to a new house, and for two to three months I did not have*

*bonding with my neighbors' but one day when I was on the roof with knitting needles in my hand, my neighbors got to know about my knitting skill and then in few days, I become famous in my area because people started sending their daughters to me for teaching them the art of knitting and also for making knitted objects for them."* The study highlighted that in the contemporary era neighbor's culture is also becoming wiped out in some societies of Pakistan but these old traditions help people to trust each other by sharing their art and making bonds by teaching others and also making things for others.

Historically, knitting has been a female-dominated hobby in Pakistan. It is frequently related to conventional gender norms in which women are expected to participate in home crafts and activities. Some people do not wish to educate their women because they believe women do not need or deserve an education and that other domestic duties and skills are more suitable for them (Mavia, 2010). One of my respondents Amna who was 26 years old said that, "*I am a knitter just because my mother forced me to learn this art after passing 12<sup>th</sup> grade. I want to study further but couldn't do so because in our village household chores these traditional arts are more preferable than education."* In rural areas, people believe that a woman's life is mostly focused on getting married, having children, and being swamped with domestic details, but they fail to see the value of education for women, not just for themselves but for the entire family as women are the mothers of next generation. Future generations will confront several obstacles if there are not enough educated women (Parwaiz 2019). Crafts are a great cultural resource for any country since they reflect the culture and traditions of a certain location. Craft production is an important aspect of the economies of some emerging countries (Marter, 2010).

Knitting has recently gained popularity as a tool for women to achieve economic independence. Women are now encouraged to commercialize their knitting abilities through a variety of projects and social enterprises, boosting their household income and obtaining financial independence. As a result, women made knitting a synonym for promoting women's status in a modern capitalist society, which was recognized

and even praised, resulting in the collapse of male gender superiority in the industrial society (Chen, 2019). A 27-year-old graduate student said, "*Due to family restrictions I was not able to go out for a job. Then I started knitting as a freelancer and people approached me by themselves and I started earning from this art"*. This response shows the economic importance of art for women who are not allowed to go outside for jobs and also for women with low confidence who don't want to face society by going out. These women can use this art skill as their earning platform. One of my respondents Naseem who was 40 years old widow said, "*I am an uneducated woman. After the death of my husband I took care of my three daughters by selling knitted products and also stitching. These skills helped me to bring in income to help raise my family."* This response elaborates that people teach their daughters these traditional skills to stand for difficult times. According to few of my old age respondents sometimes parents cannot afford the education of their daughters so they teach them these skills like knitting, stitching, crochet, etc. because it helps them in their life economically. Knitting is one of many pastimes that people wish to turn into a profitable business. Selling your knitted items is the most obvious approach to monetizing your hobby of knitting (Times, 2021). According to the majority of respondents including both young and old, knitting has become a way of earning for them even if they are jobless and less educated.

Knitting is one of the hobbies and professions that many people wish to make money from. The ability to exchange ideas and communicate with other artists is especially significant for those who may have limited opportunities to contact others. One of the main beneficial points of saving heritage is local economic development. Women can earn from this art and become independent (Jokilehto, 2011). Transformations happen in every profession as time goes on. Whatever it is our way of life, what we eat, what we wear. However, some things should not be lost with the swing of time. These include the traditional arts and practices of our culture. They are treasures to be passed on to future generations, so they have to be preserved rightly. The majority of my respondents said that in past times to help keep the tradition alive, many women

felt obligated to teach other societies new stitches and ways of production. Learning from each other constructs bonds and affiliation. This is especially important now because many new knitters have learned through the Internet and books rather than from their moms or grandmothers, making it harder for them to make connections that can be very productive in the future.

One of my respondents Mehwish who was 30 years old said that, “*after making an Instagram page as a knitter I became more passionate about this art because of the appreciation I got from people all over the world*”. According to this response, knitters and designers use social media to share their efforts and products. These platforms promote the art of knitting in different cultures all over the world. Some of my respondents said that the television media is not promoting our traditional craft more broadly because there is a very limited edition of TV programs that promote this art through their content. The Internet played a significant role in the sharing of crafting knowledge in modern-day society and it had a role in the continuation of knitting. In this contemporary world where people mostly rely on technology, it is the best way to promote art by taking advantage of these platforms.

This research has analyzed that the cultural importance of knitting is found all over the cultures of Pakistan. Different social meanings and perspectives are attached to it. The art of knitting has a huge history and it is found in different cultures. Every culture is traditionally attached to this art; the old-aged women learned this art and transferred it to their generation. Among different cultures, of Pakistan, different perspectives are attached to the art of knitting. The majority of respondents were of the view that the culture of craft promotes the growth of knitting by transferring this skill from grandmothers or mothers to their daughters. Women of old age elaborated that knitting organizations were historically formed during periods when knitting was popular. When handcrafters present knitted handmade products to family or friends, it can be a visual statement of their impact on the lives of others, and handcrafted items can be passed down from generation to generation. As a result, knitting is an important aspect of the identities and lifestyles of different cultures of Pakistan.

The social and emotional importance of knitting is found among the women of Pakistan who belong to different cultures. One of my respondents Mukhtar Bibi who was 70 years old said, “*It was an old tradition in Kashmir that pregnant women were asked to knit for their babies. It is the most common and highly popular suggestion given to pregnant women because it can help them keep away from negative thoughts and removes stress.*” This response expanded the meaning in two ways: first, it demonstrates a mother's love and concern for her unborn child; second, it encourages people to use knitting as a form of therapy.

The findings indicate a significant correlation between knitting and experiencing happiness and calmness. Group knitting has greatly increased social interaction, communication, and perceived enjoyment for women in the past. Women in the past knitted for different purposes. They had strong emotional relationships that kept them connected with this art. It is because knitting requires a great deal of mental focus. It is a fantastic method for controlling our emotions. That's because unpleasant emotions (including sadness, rage, and resentment) find it difficult to take control while knitting. Before exploring, it was just considered a traditional and cultural art that had been practiced many years ago by our grandparents. Knitting teaches us so many important life lessons. By volunteering your time to share your love of knitting with others, you may give the gift of knitting so it provides countless opportunities for social interaction between people who share a love for the hobby. Learning to knit in person at craft organizations, classes, festivals, or through friends and family is the most effective way to master the trade. The advantages of personally studying an activity could be applied to other cultural pursuits that people wish to preserve. Knitters are willing to share their knowledge and are ready to introduce others to their craft.

In this modern world different institutes are constructed for learning this art but with new advancements, social media also provide a platform to learn knitting by staying at home. Young girls are now taking part in knitting to make different clothes with new designs because this art has now become popular as a fashion. New techniques and tools are used for knitting in the contemporary world as compared to the classical



world. People also use it as a source of earning for them because this art is very expensive and with new trends, it has also become more popular among the young generation. Knitting is converted from old to new generation, so the knitting that is found in past centuries is different from the knitting of the modern world. Now people use it as a relaxing therapy, a source of pleasure for the young generation, as well as a cause of constructing social bonds and building self-confidence. New tools and techniques are introduced that create changes in the art. Further, the art of knitting is also used for healing. When old people performed this art, they were not aware of its healing tendencies. As a result, in the modern world when scientists researched this art, they found that knitting is not just visual art but also has some hidden qualities that help individuals to stay mentally healthy and fit. The young generation faces depression and stress very much in this era so doctors recommend them to knit. It gives them relief from a stressful life. Knitting is also considered a traditional art because it is not a new art, rather it was found centuries ago in different cultures. The art of knitting has various cultural connotations as well. Individuals give this art respect because it becomes a source of their earnings in difficult times. It also has social and cultural attractions.

### **Conclusion**

Pakistan has a vast history, traditions, art, and craft that represent it all over the world. Knitting in Pakistan is much more than a mere craft; it is a social activity rich with connotations that reflect the country's cultural, economic, and social dynamics. With time cultures, traditions, and practices are changing. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to globalization people are more focused on technological advancement. Everyone is in the race to become modern, changing their lifestyles, attires, professions, houses, and much more. As time passes the era of hyper-globalization occurs where individuals face so many problems like health issues, competition, more labor fewer jobs, environmental degradation, climate change, etc. In this period, people are more focused on reviving their old traditions and old methods to live their healthy life standards. In the fashion industry, people are using old fashion dresses by adding a modern touch to them. This blend of old and new has produced unique and elegant products that

appeal to modern tastes while maintaining cultural history. Similarly, after conducting this research the funding revealed that the traditional art of knitting does not remain traditional anymore. Individuals use it for multiple purposes, including economic, medical, social, and cultural. All of these aspects contribute to the art's preservation. Handicrafts are kept alive by marketing and promotion. Media also plays a very effective role in this regard. Many female entrepreneurs create businesses to honor and promote their cultural heritage. They develop a distinct brand identity by emphasizing the story, traditions, and craftsmanship behind their products, which appeals to culturally concerned customers. The knitting culture is more linked than ever before in many ways. Knitters have been able to carry on their craft into the modern era and expand the information available on the subject through a variety of methods, including teaching others to knit, forming craft circles, interacting with the public, developing new patterns, and sharing them with others via mediums such as websites.

### **Recommendations**

The study suggests that such government policies should be devised in which knitting, as well as other art forms, must be taught in schools at a very early age so that students cannot only learn about different art forms but also may use them as a source of earning in future.

Moreover, this research can be expanded in the future to look at many additional aspects in more depth that were not included in this study due to the limitation of time and resources. Also, future research about the comparison between knitting and other traditional textile handicrafts could be highly beneficial. Quilting, for example, has had the same surge in popularity as knitting, and it would be interesting to compare the two crafts.

### **References**

- Anderson(2013) History of Knitting: The Paradox in a Pair of Socks Retrieved November 15, 2013 from [www.aprylza.com](http://www.aprylza.com)
- Barnhart, T. Stein, N. (1963.). How the British brought knitting to Punjab. Retrieved August 1, 1963, from Tribune india News Service website: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/how-british-brought-knitting-to-punjab-177371>

- Boyce, A. (2007). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bush, Nancy Folk Socks: The History and Techniques of Hand knitted Footwear, Retrieved (2012) from Edition. Interweave Press, LLC.
- Cabeen, L. (2007) 'Home work' in Livingstone, J. (ed.) *Art, cloth and cultural production*. London: The MIT Press
- Chen, Z. (2019). The Social Interpretation of Knitwear. *Journal of Textile Science & Fashion Technology*, 3(2). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://doi.org/10.33552/jtsft.2019.03.000560>
- Clarke, A., & Braun, J. (2013). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Davina, 2019 KNITTING BENEFITS, 6 Surprising Health Benefits of Knitting Retrieved June 9, 2019 by <https://sheepandstitch.com/6-unexpected-benefits-of-knitting>
- Gell, Alfred. (1992) *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory of Art*. Oxford: Retrieved from Oxford University Press ISBN 0-19-828014-9
- Gregory, Chris (1982). *Gifts and Commodities*. London: Retrieved from Academic Press. pp. 100–101.
- Jokilehto, J. (2011). World heritage: observations on decisions related to cultural heritage. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 1(1), 61–74. Retrieved July 12, 2011, from <https://doi.org/10.1108/20441261111129942>
- Morphy, K. Perkin (2006) 'Artist as insect' in Livingstone, J. (ed.) *Art, cloth and cultural production*. London: The MIT Press
- Munawar, A. (2004). *Working with qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Spardley, J. W. (2019). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Vani, B (2020). Measuring production efficiency of small firms in Pakistan. *World Development*,
- Vygotsky, L. (1968). *Mind in Society*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Zahid, R. (2020). *The Evolution of Pakistani Youth: Embracing change and tradition*. Imarat Institute of Policy Studies – IIPS. <https://iips.com.pk/the-evolution-of-pakistani-youth-embracing-change-and-tradition/>