

Preservation and Dissemination of Indigenous Knowledge in Pashtuns' Culture: The Role of Hujra as a Learning Hub

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Abstract

In Pashtuns' culture, Hujra represents a unique facet of communal development and social uplift. It is a platform for the villagers for discussing various issues including but not limited to problems related to their personal and family matters, agricultural and farming, education and politics, and business and trading, with their focus on the immediate solutions, based on the community's viewpoints, wisdom and inherited knowledge. The present era has misrepresented the role of Hujra as a forum of cultivating miscreants and ill-mannered posterity. Hence, the fact has been kept at the back burner that cultural codes of Pashtunwali, the unwritten/traditional norms termed as indigenous knowledge, have been transferred to the young generations through a communal Hujra. The present study aims at discussing and unveiling the multi-dimensional roles of Hujra. The study was an exploratory research for which qualitative method was used. The primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with the local/indigenous people, Maliks (Masharan, elders) and youngsters of the village, Daman Afghani, district Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The target population of the study was sixteen (16) individuals randomly selected from the population through Convenience Sampling Technique. The finding of this research focused not only on the role of a communal Hujra but also threw light on the status of a personal Hujra in dissemination of indigenous knowledge. Both play fundamental roles in the preservation of the cultural heritage, aims at promoting indigenous knowledge.

Keywords: *Hujra, Pashtunwali, Indigenous knowledge, Dissemination, Preservation, Cultural heritage, Miscreants, Communal Hujra, Cultural codes, social uplift.*

1. Introduction

Indigenous knowledge is the traditional/local knowledge, which enhances one's

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acquaintance with cultural, educational and traditional values. It provides connection to one's social norms and values, which one learns from his/her surroundings through experiences and observations. It is acquired from the local communities and might easily be transferred from one generation to another. However, the local knowledge distinguishes one neighborhood from another as each community promotes its own indigenous knowledge, which adds certain points of intellectual skills to community services. Indigenous knowledge is maintained, controlled, protected and developed by the local people of any community. These wise people of the local community focus on developing their cultural values and heritage, traditional and conventional knowledge, manifestation of science and technology, human and genetic resources, medicines, old and traditional folklore, stories, sports related cultural norms etc. (Agrawal, 1995; Anderson, 2010).

Postcolonial theorists have played a very important role in this relatively new departure towards inclusion of the voices of marginalized local people for development research as their cultures, histories and struggle for knowledge and power are now being addressed and accepted (Said, 2014). These postcolonial writers are of the view that tacit knowledge is based on systematic observations and oral transmission of knowledge. Pidgeon (2019) argues that indigenous people are culturally diverse despite sharing similar experiences and inequitable health and social outcomes compared to other groups of people, living in their respective countries.

Similarly, Chilisa (2012) discusses that an indigenous research paradigm is also an act of reclaiming and restoring traditional indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge while simultaneously including contemporary knowledge and realities. Agrawal (1995) presents his reflections on indigenous knowledge that it is not simply about language and expression. It also takes into account the other material conditions such as economic, social and political conditions through which people of a particular area must survive. Classification of the same form of knowledge can be made in different ways depending upon the manners in which it is generated and the purpose for which it is harnessed or the interests it serves.

Joranson (2008) argues that indigenous knowledge is the collection of localized expertise such as the ability to assess the fertility and infertility of soils by scent and color, and complex fishing tactics designed to produce fish with highest possible vitamins and mineral content. Moreover, Morris (2010) added that such indigenous knowledge is not only valid, but it has been indispensable for the survival of the human beings. It has been the basis of livelihood for human beings over many centuries. It establishes the underlying basis for other forms of cultural knowledge.

The youngsters need to learn from local communities to enrich the development

process going on in any society/culture (Gorjestani, 2004). The Indigenous knowledge and practices are very sophisticated as they are built upon gradual observations of environment, adaptation to the changing environmental patterns, and learning from mistakes spanning over millenniums and passed over generations (Ali et al., 2021).

Therefore, the above definitions of indigenous knowledge helped the researchers to identify the following characteristics of indigenous knowledge, shown in the table that follows:

Table 1: Classification of Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous ReKnowledge in view of Post-colonial Theorists (Agrawal, 1995; Morris, 2010; Chilisa, 2012, Joranson, 2008; Pidgeon, 2019; & Said, 2014)	Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge.
	Indigenous knowledge is shared knowledge.
	Indigenous knowledge is empirical knowledge
	Indigenous knowledge is practical knowledge.
	Indigenous knowledge is informal knowledge.
	Indigenous knowledge is constantly changing knowledge.
	Indigenous knowledge is not just confined to conservation of natural resources; it may or may not have conservation ethics.

Keeping in view the importance of indigenous transmission of knowledge and sharing experiences, Pashtuns protect the different manifestations of traditional knowledge in the form of their cultural codes of Pashtunwali. They preserve the indigenous knowledge through the formation of a personal and communal Hujra as their cultural heritage. Hujra disseminates the community's understanding, knowledge and education regarding various subjects within reach, including farming methods, security of food stuff, management of natural resources, code of Pashtunwali, local games, health issues of humans and animals, and natural remedies etc.

Therefore, Hujra serves as a center of inherent knowledge and a hub of cultural values, preserved by the indigenous people of a local community. The indigenous knowledge does not come from books, magazines, organizations or teachers directly; it rather comes from the wise suggestions and cultural codes of Pashtuns in the form of the eminent pillars of Pashtunwali. Indigenous knowledge is an integral part of the culture and history of a local community of Pashtuns. The selection of Khan or leader (Mashar) adds a political implication to the indigenous knowledge, which paves the ways for political leadership, and is further signified in this conceptual study. The Hujra can also be viewed as a communication tool/discussion forum at natural disaster and psychological problems/settlements. All the above roles of a Hujra somehow represent the indigenous knowledge through the social norms of Pashtuns' traditions and unwritten code, the Pashtunwali.

1.1 Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research are to:

1. Signify the role of a communal Hujra as a source of promotion and preservation of indigenous knowledge in such a way as to bring awareness among the people regarding their traditional values and cultural heritage.
2. Explore and analyze the communal Hujra as a tool of educating the local community through local/inherent knowledge and wise experiences.

1.2 Research Questions

The main research questions of the study are:

1. How Hujra helps in promoting and disseminating local knowledge?
2. Is Pashtuns' community aware of indigenous knowledge developed in their culture and afterwards preserved through the cultural codes of Pashtunwali, in a place, known as Hujra?
3. What basic functions/responsibilities of indigenous services and traditional values are performed by Hujra?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This exploratory research signifies the role of Hujra as a learning center in Pashtuns' society. The study delineates the scope of traditional knowledge of Pashtuns' cultural heritage, which needs to be preserved and disseminated through sharing and transferring the local knowledge to the coming generations. These cultural inheritance and norms are termed as indigenous knowledge, which are found in Pashtuns' community at a communal Hujra, run by the 'Maliks' or 'Masharan.' In Pashtuns' traditions, there are many customs, which promote the indigenous knowledge from home environment through organizational learning to religious institutes. However, all those institutes as learning centers cannot be encompassed in the present research. Hence, the researcher has selected communal Hujra from Pashtuns' culture as a learning center for preserving and disseminating local and indigenous knowledge, which is the main focus of the research along with its remarkable significance.

2. Literature Review

Hujra, in Pashtuns' culture, is used as a guesthouse where people serve and entertain their guests open heartedly. People from the whole village at times gather

in Hujra for the purpose of entertainment, discussion and consultation of a variety of topics at hand. It is a center of hospitality and preservation of cultural codes. It is also used as a type of community hall, where people discuss their issues and search for their prompt solutions. It is associated with Pashtuns' society and consider as pivotal and integral part of their cultural identity. The rest of the community has no such place, where they can sit together without any personal bias and discriminations except drawing rooms, hotels, restaurants, motels etc.

The social and environmental impact of the changing status of Hujra can never be ignored. In one of research studies, the Swat district has been used as a case study through which the system of Hujra is presented as a managerial and developmental unit. It has a very positive impact on the lives of people living there. The members of Hujra control water pollution; they take collective actions for any problem at hand. Hence, Hujra is opened for everyone, and it helps in decision making for the betterment of community at stake (Khan, 2008).

Hujra is essential and indispensable for any tribal area. It plays several roles in connecting and uniting the people residing in villages. It is essential for arranging consultative meetings of the inhabitants' inter- and intra- family groups. All the residents of a village take part in one another's happiness and sadness in the form of gathering in Hujra. It is regarded as a permanent place of jury, which helps in facilitating the people by providing solutions to their problems. The decisions which are made by the elders in the Hujra are quick, judicious, cheap and unbiased. All the decisions made by elders are owned and honored by the people as they are based on collective viewpoints. It also acts as information sharing center and an informal training, learning and teaching institute (Khan, Ghumman & Hashmi, 2008).

Pashtuns symbolize mutual respect, sympathy, hospitality, unity and bravery. The above characteristics are depicted in their Jirga and Hujra system. They welcome everyone irrespective of their caste and colors to their community center. The Hujra plays a strong and effective role among their villagers and fellow beings, which further maintains their strong coordination with each other. Hujra is a symbolic building, which symbolizes fraternity and conventional brotherhood. This symbolic building is also beautified by beautiful fragrance of multiple growing flowers, plants, fruit and vegetables (Ghumman, Khan, Hashmi & Tahir, 2009).

Hujra is a place of social gathering, which provides exposure to the local people about different socio-political, cultural and religious scenarios. It is considered one of the paramount characteristics of Pashtuns' culture and pride. Its purpose is to provide shelter, food and entertainment to the people. Its basic factor is hospitality, which is granted to everyone entering the Hujra. It transfers knowledge from one

generation to another, and shares the secrets about business, ailing the diseases and forecasting weathers (Israr, 2014).

The term Hujra is associated with Hujrat (Surah Al-Hujrat in Holy Quran) and it gives religious significance to the Pashtuns' cultural values. It is symbolized in the way the Holy prophet received guests in a hall for religious and social purposes, in the similar way, Hujra also serves as a meeting place where people meet and entertain guests and tourists for social discussion and multiple perspectives and viewpoints. However, people are now ignoring its importance. The Pashtuns' culture once enriched with hosting the guests in the communal Hujra has now been diminished due to migration of rural community to urban society for education, bread winning and socialization (Khattak, Naeem & Fatima, 2015).

Further, it is also used as a place where people initiate Jirga for sorting out personal and communal issues (Yousaf & Poncian, 2018). Pashtuns adopt various resilience strategies to protect their indigenous and traditional identity. They maintain their cultural values like brotherhood, kinship, family bonds, friendship, and reciprocity and are still trying to tie themselves with their cultural institutions like Hujra and Jirga (Khan & Shah, 2021).

Similar viewpoint is shared by other researchers that Hujra is used in Pashtuns' society as a judicial complex. It is a type of court room in the tough and hard tribal system in order to ensure and maintain justice. A type of Jirga is being called in the Hujra and all the issues at hand are put forward for discussion and further pave ways for resolutions. In order to get quick justice all the inhabitants of Hujra including the youngsters attend Hujra regularly. In this way, the moral values and code of conduct are learnt by the youngsters by following their elders as their role models (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019).

Hujra, an essential symbol of Pashtunwali, promotes the culture of music, art, poetry, and values. It also promotes the cultural values of Pashtunwali. It is a sleeping and solemnizing place for the guests and the bachelors. The guests are welcome by entertaining them with folk music, dance and songs. It is also an established forum for decision making and counseling. It gives others a vivid picture of what Pashtuns actually are. However, the Hujra's tradition in Pashtuns' society is on the verge of collapse, as now most of the decisions are made in mosque rather than in Hujra (Zalmay, 2016).

Therefore, Hujra's culture in Pashtuns' society is near to die as the local people give no more homage to their traditional values. The materialistic and technological aspects surrogate the cultural values, which are of vital importance nowadays. People

are no more interested to sit together at a sole location. The Pashtuns have two palaces to sit together: the mosque and the Hujra; the former shows the religious attachments while the latter shows the social, cultural and political attachments of Pashtuns with each other. However, the modern technology has broken the interests of the people to sit in a mosque and Hujra, respectively; as both are losing their importance these days (Hassan & Ghulam, 2011).

Hujra is termed as a socio-cultural institute, which plays a pivotal role in Pashtuns' culture. In communal Hujra, the guests are received as the guest of the whole inhabitants of the village and tribal areas. In Pashtuns' culture, the Hujra and Jirga systems are the unique representation of Pashtunwali. Hujra is symbolized as Pashtuns' socio-cultural hub: a house of peace, a village of judicial complex and a village parliament.

Hujra is used as a mean for transmission of peace building knowledge, a place of catharsis and counselling, a center of storytelling, music and poetry, space for hospitality and communal relationship and agency of communal harmony and communication hub (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019). Hujra is used a center of social gathering; therefore, people from far flung area sit together and celebrate the ceremonial festivals, gathering etc. It is also used as a center of male's performance because women cannot participate and enjoy gatherings arranged in Pashtun's' Hujra (Ahmad, 2004).

The unique characteristics of Pashtuns' culture, Jirga system and monolingual identity may be attained through Pashtunwali, the system of hospitality in Pashtuns' society. They are known for their righteousness, preservation of cultural entities, bravery, dignity and values. They are staunch believers in their cultural code, i.e., Pashtunwali, and they are known for their loyalty with their friends and giving refuge to others even their enemies once they enter their Hujra or even their houses (Rehman, Khan & Wali, 2017).

Hence, it is proved from the above reviews that Hujra plays a very significant role in self leaning and educating. However, despite its important role and contribution, the local community still prefers the educational institutes for enhancing their learning and civilizational approaches. They are walking away from their cultural rituals and social value and forgetting the value of Hujra as an integral part of their society. Hence, this present research aims at highlighting the multi-dimensional role of a Hujra in the preservation of local knowledge, which people fail to learn from books and educational institutes at times. The study is unique in the sense that no research has been conducted up till now on Hujra as a source of disseminating indigenous/tacit knowledge.

3. Methodology

This research is exploratory for which qualitative approach was used. Primary data was collected through direct interaction with the indigenous people of the Village, Daman Afghani, district Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted as a tool of data collection. Keeping 'theoretical saturation' in view, as suggested by Glaser, Strauss and Strutzel (1968), two focus group discussions were conducted on the significance of Hujra as a knowledge hub in Pashtuns' society. In first focus group discussions, there were total four (04) participants and their age groups were 25 to 60s. In the second phase, a focus group discussion was arranged with seven (07) Masharan (Maliks and Leaders) of the village. They were selected among the individuals having the age group of approximately, 60s-70s.

Furthermore, to confirm the theoretical saturation, semi-structured interviews were conducted/taken from five (05) individual participants. Among these participants, two were students, one farmer, one a retired government employee, and the last one was a Hujra's owner. The selected participants had strong affinity and proximity with Pashtuns' culture, values and traditions as they themselves were born and grew up in the same culture among their elders. They shared their experiences and observational knowledge about Hujra as an educational institute and discussed a multitude of topics from burning issues through political sphere to global issues and natural remedies for diseases.

All the interviews were then recorded with the permission of the interviewees. Their responses were first transcribed and then translated into English as the interviews were given in Pashto, the local/mother language of the inhabitants of the village. After collection of data through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the data was then analyzed using thematic analysis technique (Huberman & Miles, 2019). All the sub themes and organizing themes were drawn and elaborated in this study in the form of figure and analysis.

The sample used for these interviews was Convenience Sampling Technique (Taherdoost, 2016). Convenience sampling technique is non-probability sampling through which the researchers are able to select the sampling population from easily accessible participants. This sampling technique was used because it was easy and convenient for the researchers to collect data from a population easily available and living in the same village and have affinity and strong bond with their cultural codes and values. Using this technique, the researcher was able to observe the local people's habits, viewpoints and opinions in readily easiest possible way. It was also convenient for the researcher to dig into the minds of the local community and know how the

traditional/local knowledge is produced, disseminated and preserved through indigenous people of a small village of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

4. Analysis and Discussion

For the present research, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted and recorded from sixteen (16) inhabitants of the local community, among which seven (07) were the 'Masharan' near 60-70s, and all of them were of marital status. All of them were asked to discuss the significance of a Hujra as a learning center, based on their own experiences, knowledge and observations. The various global themes and vignettes (Huberman & Miles, 2019) were drawn from the focus group discussions and interviews. The themes were logically connected and presented in the analysis.

The eight (08) main themes were drawn from the discussions, which are shown in the following figure, followed by detailed analysis.

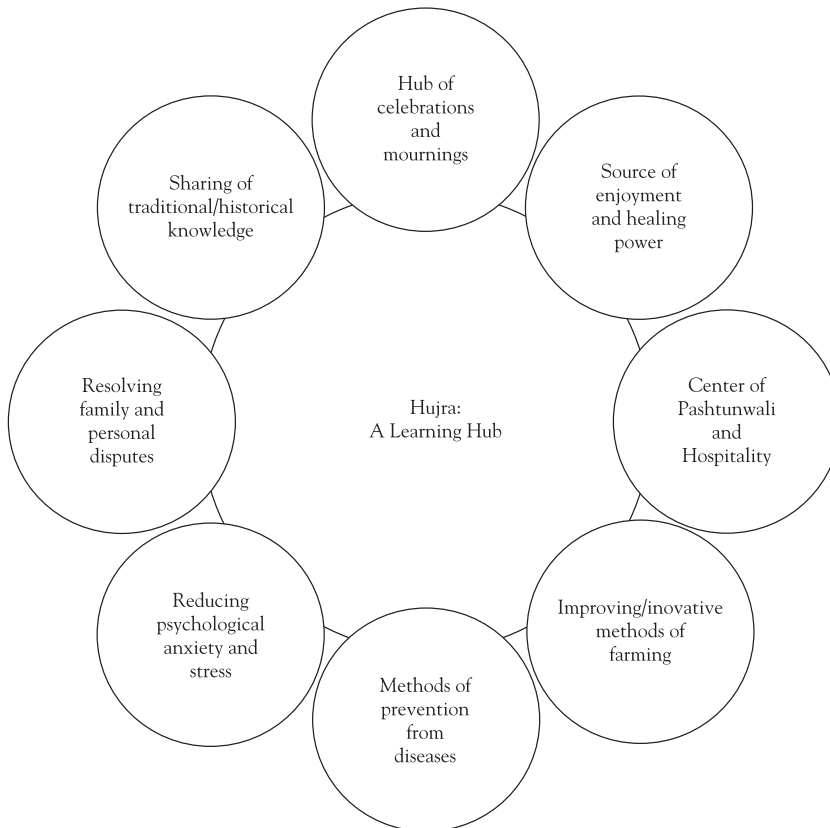


Figure 1: Major Themes

An owner of the communal Hujra was of the opinion that Hujra is an open forum for discussion. It gives a vast knowledge of Pashtuns' traditions to the individuals while observing the heroic deeds of the wise/experienced people of the villages, residing and spending most of the time in Hujra. The Hujra in Pashtuns' culture is termed as a *Mehmankhana* (guesthouse) where guests are entertained and warmly welcomed any time, and any day without any discrimination and cultural hindrances. The Hujra teaches the young posterity the lessons of hospitality. In Hujra, hospitality is offered to every guest irrespective of his own status and family's position. The Pashtuns provide them with healthy foods, shelter, and fresh vegetables and fruits. He further stated:

“Hujra promotes and preserves the traditional codes of Pashtunwali. The five pillars of Pashtunwali are considered the bloodstream of running and maintaining a Hujra. The key tenets of Pashtunwali, which are learnt primarily in Hujra, include: hospitality, asylum or protection to even enemies, honor and pride, *Jirga*/council and *Badal* (revenge).”

For learning the pillars of Pashtunwali, a Pashtun does not need to turn the pages of historical books; he rather gets indigenous knowledge from the local people, which enhance his traditional learning in the early phase of his educational career. While discussing the Pashtunwali, the youngsters learn about the preservation of honor and dignity from their elders, termed as *Nang* and *Namoos* (honour and dignity), adhere to the Pashtuns' cultural and traditional norms/needs. An elderly participant stated that “The Hujra is a center of sharing cultural values, conventional knowledge, politics of a country, general knowledge, social rituals and traditional norms.” They learn about the practices of chivalry, bravery and courage from each other. They learn how to give respect to women and maintain their place/chastity in a society. They learn how men support the family and work outside, while the women remain at home, securing their chastity from the outside ruthless world. According to an elderly villager:

“The Hujra itself is one of the significant pillars of Pashtunwali. All these cultural codes are learnt by a Pashtun through his connection with Hujra and observational powers rather than opening a historical book for deep insight over cultural values and code of conducts.”

A Hujra provides protection to a person who asks for safety against his enemy, which in Pashto language is termed as ‘*Nanawatey*.’ The Pashtuns promise this protection even with the enemies as well at hard times. The *Khan*/*Masharan* convenes a meeting in the form of *Jirga*, which decides whether the enemy has to be granted forgiveness, ensure asylum or to be taken revenge/*badal* from, as a result of disagreement between the two parties at conflict. All and sundry in the tribe or clan has to attend the *Jirga*, where refreshments are also served as a symbol of peaceful co-relation/

co-existence among the Pashtuns' tribes with each other.

Another participant responded that the knowledge of wise old people are used for prevention of various diseases as the local remedies are suggested for diseases when the people sit together in Hujra. It performs the role of a democratic institute. It serves the role of a council, where people meet and discuss dynamic problems by proposing solution to them as well. When a dispute occurs, a meeting is convened in the form of a Jirga, where the issues from kidnapping through murders to forceful marriage and elopements are decided, and disputes are resolved. Similarly, the "Masharan" share their knowledge about how to prevent from diseases by applying many herbal methods to diseases. In order to cure the diseases like Malaria, typhoid and fever, many home remedies and herbal medications are suggested by the experienced indigenous community, who regularly visit a Hujra. He stated:

"Attending Hujra daily provides people with understanding of many methods of prevention from diseases; as the experienced people discuss many home remedies not only to prevent oneself from diseases but also share the views to cure them timely."

The next person (40 years old) highlighted the significance of the traditional agricultural knowledge, which the local farmers discuss with each other. He argued that: "When the people, especially the farmers, visit the Hujra, they meet many of their counterparts and discuss the issues relating to farming and fertilizing the fields/corps. The farmers in rural areas take many measures to improve their crops through local knowledge from the elder people. Whenever they visit the Hujra, they discuss the various methods of farming, where they are suggested ways for improving their farming practices. He elaborated the point by saying, "Ways of farming like land's selection and preparation, and harvesting and fertilizing the crops, are shared with each other, and how to save the crops from insects and diseases etc. are discussed."

A farmer shares his experiences and gives knowledge to the youngsters in the communal Hujra about different process of farming: preparation and irrigation of Land, the selection of best seeds and methods of sowing them, harvesting and fertilizing. They discuss all the above factors with their fellow farmers in a communal Hujra with special focus on using various pesticides and insecticides in order to minimize the effects of plants and crops' diseases. Once, this knowledge is learnt by the youngsters from his elders, the same is then disseminated to the future posterity.

Similar to the above response, another person viewed that "Hujra is a center of enjoyment at the time of leisure. Instead of wasting our time while watching TV and doing Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp etc., Hujra is much better than those useless games and rubbish activities. Everyone is served with 'Qahwa,' green tea, and traditional

games are played with each other by the local people. Likewise, the three essential tools of enjoyment/music are being placed in a Hujra: the 'Mangay', the 'Dolkay' and 'Rubab.' These musical instruments release us from stress and tensions and give us some time to forget about our personal and social conflicts."

The above viewpoints of the participant show that in urban areas people squander their time by watching televisions, CDs, etc., and using cell phone, while in rural areas, the same time has been utilized by sitting in a single location with experienced people, learning from them how to live a best life. Though the advent of information technology shrunk the values of traditional heritage of the Pashtuns, the communal Hujra performs its role in one way or the other by promoting the social values. The psychological stress due to labor and hard work in fields is being reduced while sitting and relaxing in a Hujra for some time. Everyone at Hujra participates in the "Tang-Takor" music after dinner is being served. A young university graduate was of the opinion that:

"When we visit the Hujra and spend some time there with the guests or local people, we feel relaxed, and our mental stress and tension is reduced."

The Pashtuns have a variety of traditions, which they express through their folk songs. Music is the soul of Pashtuns' culture, and the Pashtuns die for music. The Hujra entertains the local people along with the guests with the folk music: Tappa, Sandara, and Charbeta. These songs are sung by using the musical instruments, Rabab and Guitar, and through beating the water pot. The songs address the heroic efforts and courageous stances of the national heroes, martyrs and the male community of Pashtuns. The choral songs are also sung in Hujra during wedding ceremonies. The group folk dance, known as 'Atan' is also performed by the young boys at leisure time in Hujra, and thus they walk away from the poisonous influence of technology in their life by spending time in a Hujra with the learned and indigenous people.

Hence, another participant shared the following viewpoint: "The Hujra in Pashtuns' way of life is a center of celebrations and mourning." All the local people meet each other in a religious ritual, as well as when the wedding celebrations take place. They embrace each other on such events with greetings. The wedding and mourning lunch or dinner is also served in the communal Hujra, and the guests are received all and sundry without any bias. The nikah and funeral functions also take place in personal or communal Hujra, where the people recite the verses from the Holy Quran and wish the best prayers for the couples who wed, in their life ahead, and those who die, in their life hereafter.

The youngsters learn from such events the lessons of celebrating the religious and

social rituals with zeal and happiness with their focus on the cultural and denominational values. On the events of Milad: the two religious festivals (Eid ul Fitar and Azha and Eid ul Azha), the local people meet and present their wishes to each other in a Hujra. These festivals are celebrated in urban areas as well outside Hujra, but in rural areas, under the influence of Pashtuns as conventional lovers, Hujra serves as an assembly point on such religious rituals. They are socialized in Hujra and hence, they share their happiness with others and highlight the significance of religious celebrations and sacrifices on the above occasions.

Another person responded that a communal Hujra is run by the Masharan (Elders) or a significant tribe in Pashtuns culture. It is a place of academic and practical knowledge without any proper educational institute. The global politics are discussed by the members of a Hujra, which strengthen their general knowledge, and update them about the current scenario of the national and international politics. Whenever the youngsters visit the Hujra, they learn something from the elders and experienced people, who have never been to schools, but have the practical experiences, which they share with the youngsters. The experienced local people have the indigenous knowledge to forecast weathers as well. They also advice the youngsters to attend the Hujra after prayers are being performed on time, and the prayer sheets are placed in every room of a personal/communal Hujra, which signify the religious teachings as well.

A young man of 25-30 years age shared his own experience that how the Hujra is a formal place for informal education, and how the education is transferred from one person to another through preservation of historical knowledge. He stated that when he was preparing Pakistan Studies' paper in his B.A, he was confused in the issue of separation of East and West Pakistan. He was in the room of a communal Hujra at that time, when an elderly/experienced person narrated the whole story of Shiekh Mujib Ur Rehman's conspiracies and diplomatic attitudes along with other basic factors, responsible for the separation of the two regions. The man said that he was astonished when he found the same points accurately written in the book, which the elder man narrated/explained with proper instances and elaboration from the past history. He further explained:

“The Hujra transfers knowledge from one generation to another. The historical events which took place centuries ago may easily be transmitted from one person to another, based on one's experiences and observations.”

Therefore, in Hujra, the youngsters raise on their seats when the elders enter it, considered it as a sign of respect/reverence. They exchange greetings/salutations with each other through the words, “Har kala rasha” which means, you are always welcome. The youngsters are not allowed to talk too much in the presence of their

elders. No one interrupts the person who is speaking. They learn/promote the culture of open-heartedness, inherent dignity and intellectual humility. This indigenous knowledge assists in developing/promoting the moral values of the youngsters, which further help in building their characters.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The result of this research indicates how Hujra serves as a learning hub by preserving and disseminating the local knowledge. It is a forum which shares the knowledge of dynamic subjects from food storage, fertilization and cultivation of the crops, preservation of natural resources through health issues and natural remedies to transmission of cultural values and local knowledge to others. It is an informal educational hub, which promotes the cultural values and traditional knowledge, helps in building youths' characters and promotes their acquaintance with their own traditional rituals.

Furthermore, the result shows that how indigenous knowledge is achieved and transferred from one generation to another. The codes of Pashtunwali: courage, pride, dignity, hospitality, and protection to others are also part of Hujra's traditions, analyzed in the present research. This research further recommends the revival and re-constitution of the Hujra system in villages. Reforms need to be conducted for making this cheapest institution a hallmark educational institute.

What the researchers infer from the whole study is that the role of Hujra as an informal educational institute is of pivotal importance, and a landmark educational foundation for the villagers. It is a discussion forum and a management unit where a multitude of people sit together, enjoy a cup of tea, play cultural games, make wise decisions, and discuss various issues at hand. It enhances the fundamental cultural and traditional learning skills of individuals.

The concept of Hujra as a hub of sharing tacit indigenous knowledge and practices can also be replicated by establishing such centers of learning in different industrial and business hubs like different industrial zones and markets etc., where the businessmen and employees can sit together and share their business knowledge and experiences. It is of vital importance for the organizations operating in such local community to learn from the indigenous knowledge for attainment of sustainable competitive edge. Though in the present era, most of the local people prefer to migrate from rural to urban areas for formal education in various well-established institutes, the education in Hujra somehow is in the process of transmission, dissemination and preservation of indigenous knowledge through some conventional lovers of Hujra's tradition.

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