ABSTRACT

The textile crafts of Pakistan are known all over the world as ethnic pieces of our cultures’ identity. Yet for most of us their importance is mostly limited to our thoughts. In practicality because of a lot of reasons, for the longest time people in Pakistan and globally did not have ample exposure to the beauty of these crafts or to the possibilities the crafts have within them. In fact despite the exposure, there is still limited awareness and knowledge for these crafts, which needs to considerably change. Today there are a few designers and NGO’s who have begun with the responsibility of promoting our crafts through their works in a manner where they can be accepted in urban markets. They have made significant efforts that have given age-old crafts a new lease on their outlook. Intervention and the influence of global trends have heavily impacted the crafts as they were a few years ago in their raw form. Efforts have been made to contemporize existing crafts in a way they can be sellable and attractive in mainstream urban markets. However, it is debatable whether external factors have come together to place negative impacts to the crafts identity and the craftsmen recognition. If whether during the process of change somehow the reality of our ethnic textile crafts have been altered and a negative impact has been placed on the way people perceive them.

Within depth research of articles, designers, NGO’s, previous intervention works, upcoming projects, and by gaining insight from the people involved with crafts I believe despite the ongoing debates, the journey of craft development has initiated, and the crafts have begun to evolve and come out in a new light where perceptions are positively changing. With the concept of ‘rural to runway’, intervention practices and borrowing from global inspirations has actually done the crafts and craftsmen wonders. The new dimensions of the modern interpretation of traditional crafts today have gone beyond expectations making the world stand up and take notice.