

Cultural Spaces and Recognition of Cultural Heritage: A Study of Islamabad

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ABSTRACT

Culture is comprised of the traditions, customs, religious, social, and material traits of social groups. Cultural centers are the buildings and organizations that work for the dissemination of cultural education amongst the community. This study deals with the role and needs of cultural spaces and their activities for the recognition of cultural heritage. It documents four cultural centers of Islamabad to investigate their role in cultural heritage awareness and contribution toward the promotion of cultural heritage through their cultural activities and pieces of training. The cultural domain has immense potential in boosting the image and economy of Pakistan. As a result of this study, a framework of interpretation can be developed to understand the significance of cultural heritage. The data collection for this research was through analytical reasoning methods. Interpretive reasoning and analysis played a vital role in a better understanding of the data.

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Introduction

Culture is a primary element of socio-economic development. It serves as an invisible export.¹ August 14, 1947, saw the emergence of Pakistan as a separate nation. However, its history stretches thousands of years back. With the land having Pre-historic settlements, the earliest being to Lower Paleolithic (CA. 700,000 to 400,000 BC) and having been part of the Macedonian, Afghan, Turkic, Persian, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Mughal, and British Empires, its history and heritage consists of some extremely diverse sites that have contributed to the identity of the region.

The cultural heritage of Pakistan is one of the oldest and capable of the most generator of tourism. Sir Mortimer Wheeler relates Pakistan's roots with antiquity.² In its inception, Pakistan had fewer historians and archaeologists among whom Ahmad Hasan Dani became the most popular and influential figure. Dani's services and contributions turned him into a famous professional in the fields of history and archaeology. One of the professional tasks and scholarly interests, which Dani remained committed to till his last, was his relentless promotion of the popularization of history. Popularization is to be defined as the process and activity of disseminating scientific knowledge to non-specialists and laymen and women in their languages. In other words, it is the simplification of knowledge for the concerned sections other than belonging to the field and for the masses at large.

Pakistan, the house of great civilizations of the pre-historic world, is the land that produced remarkable art which blended the ideas of eastern and western world. These facts count much for the intellectual status of a modern nation. It

1 Mark Simon, *A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy* (Clingendael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2009), 1.

2 Mortimer Wheeler, *Five Thousand years of Pakistan: An Archaeological Outline* (London: C. Johnson, 1950), 3-4.

makes a difference in the cultural heritage of Pakistan and deserves the attention of the whole world.³

Archaeologist-Museologist, Dr. Asma Ibrahim in an interview with the British Council encouraged the need for exploration and highlighted the rich cultural history of Pakistan. She stated that “Pakistan has a rich cultural heritage, from the Stone Age and the earliest civilizations on Earth, via the first settlements at Mehrgarh in Balochistan, until today. One can easily trace the evolution of civilization while visiting Pakistan and enjoying the beauty of its landscape.”⁴

No doubt, Pakistan has been the foundation of civilizations. It is enriched with a large number of historic structures and ancient sites that present our direct link with the past. There is a duty of cultural centers that actively encourages this valuable culture of society. The paper focuses on the role of four significant centers of Islamabad which are determined to contribute to the recognition of cultural heritage. These centers are the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage-Lok Virsa (hereafter LV), International Council of Museums (ICOM), Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University (TIAC), and Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). An effort is made to highlight their efforts and contributions to heritage awareness in society.

National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage-Lok Virsa

Islamabad being the capital of Pakistan provides cultural attractions to its tourists. The LV, an eminent cultural center in Islamabad, has been contributing in preserving, conserving, and promoting cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible). In its initial phase, the main focus of LV was on the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage but

3 S. M. Ikram, *The Cultural Heritage of Pakistan* (Oxford University Press, 1955), 19.

4 Mark Simon, *A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy* (Clingendael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2009), 1.

currently, it emphasizes more the promotion of cultural heritage of Pakistan. The LV Cultural Center has also Pakistan's largest museum which displays a wide range of exhibits.

The Government of Pakistan has assigned certain duties to the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage that are mentioned below:

- Documentation, preservation, projection, and assimilation of oral traditions and other aspects of indigenous cultural heritage.
- To strengthen the roots of Pakistani culture.
- To increase cultural knowledge amongst masses through training, seminars, and workshops.
- Restore advanced knowledge of the public for escalating the cultural heritage of Pakistan.
- Initiate cultural industries, art and crafts galleries, and organize festivals on them.
- Search private partnerships to broaden the scope of cultural heritage.

National Institute of Folk and traditional heritage holds a 10-day folk festival every year in November that is known as Lok Mela. The main aim of this festival is to revive folk art, folk music, and endangered crafts and to promote the conventional practices that are linked with Pakistan's folk heritage. The ultimate significance of this Lok Mela is to provide pride to rural folks in their identity. Apart, the major features of Mela are to attract the public through work exhibitions, cultural pavilions of every province, classic and Sufi songs, traditional food stalls, and other stalls captivating the adults and children. All regions of Pakistan including Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh, Gilgit Baltistan have got a chance to exhibit their traditional customs, folk music, and cultural materials. The LV also arranges classical musical nights for the public. The people come there from all walks of life including, professionals, cultural experts, arts and crafts specialists, political figures, and general masses. The artisans at work manifest their talent in front of the public.

Through this Lok Mela artisans and artists that come from all across Pakistan generate revenue that takes part in local and regional employment. People of Islamabad and other provinces come and buy a lot of traditional food items and traditional embroidery dresses in other areas of Pakistan. (Plate: 1& 3).

The research and publication department in LV holds the *Muzakra*⁵ session fortnightly. The main aim of *Muzakra* is to invite scholars and authors from diversified fields to speak on their domains of expertise to impart knowledge to their audience. It is an interactive session, in which, after the lecture on specific topics, the floor is open for public questions. It is certainly, a literary session that is organized by LV research and publication department. The *Muzakra* session is mostly attended by the student and researchers. A team of research and publication departments through, this *Muzakra* session is focusing on the promotion of cultural heritage awareness amongst the people of Pakistan (Plate: 2).

The LV has also an official order to organize field surveys and village to village recordings for the documentation of folk heritage. The research and publication center conducts a field survey in all sub-fields of folk and traditional heritage. After their surveys, it publishes books on several aspects of Pakistan folklore and cultural heritage from every region and province. A survey on *folk geet* of Punjab is also being carried, and a group of writers, scholars, university students and research associates work at regional levels. It has published 200 books on the folklore and cultural heritage of Pakistan and many of these books are award-winning books at the national level. The purpose of the publishing house at LV is to make folk literature available in the vernacular language of culture to promote greater understanding and solidarity of Pakistan.⁶ Besides, they generate income by

5 Research and Publications, accessed March15, 2019, <http://lokvirsa.org.pk>.

6 Research and Publications, accessed March15, 2019, <http://lokvirsa.org.pk>.

selling their published books and reports on endangered and prevailing folk culture of Pakistan.

The LV is considered as the nucleus of cultural centers due to having a significant mandate to enlighten the masses through their regular functions on different cultural aspects. The functions that are fortnightly organized by LV's Research and Publications Department create awareness about the cultural heritage of Pakistan. The Ethnology Museum of LV, the first state museum of ethnology in Pakistan which presents the history and living traditions, engages youth in different activities that have cultural dominance aspects. In their way, they are struggling for preservation, assimilation, and imparting of cultural heritage knowledge. Besides these, LV, like any other institution in Pakistan has become a victim of ignorance and negligence in the field of research and publishing. Though it has a separate department for research work and one of the core objectives of LV is cultural research, but it can be observed that authorities are only focused on short term benefits. They are willing to organize fun activities and festivals, but they are ignoring the long-term and solid approach for cultural preservation i.e. genuine research. This issue is may be due to lack of funds, or incompetence of the LV administration. Research not only helps to identify the gaps and flaws of a phenomenon but also provides the material and foundation for future generations to work on. In short, there is a serious need for the revival of research department at Lok Virsa.

International Council of Museums (ICOM)

The ICOM is another cultural organization that persistently develops activities concerning the protection of cultural heritage; protecting intangible cultural heritage is its integral part of activities.

The main objective of the ICOM's establishment was to make an interactional community of museums. Chauncey J. Hamlin from the USA became its first president. It was established in 1946-1947. During the period 1947-1968 it developed the whole structure and geographical delineation.

After this tireless struggle of 11 years, the ICOM augmented its activities and increasingly became more compatible. At that time, it also publicized its three main concerns that were the educational role of museums, preservation and conservation of cultural things, and exhibition of specimens.⁷ Afterward in 1968-1977, the ICOM went into debt. Despite this situation, it continues to flourish and function. In 1998, it gained international prominence and initiated activities with developed countries. At that time, it also introduced its two main policies⁸ that are:

1. Policy for museum service and development
2. Proposed code of ethics

In 1996, after half a century of effort, the ICOM became financially self-sustainable. The general assembly, the decision-making body of ICOM, implemented new cultural policies, and introduced various ideas that support the economic development relevant to the cultural domain.⁹ 1996-2004 was the era of cultural activities. The member of ICOM introduced booklets on the techniques of preservation from the manmade hazardous activities for the museums.¹⁰

In 2004, the ICOM held its first conference in Seoul Korea that showed its main interest to start activities with the Asian continent.¹¹ It pledged to do work pertinent to cultural heritage's research, conservation, and continuation.¹² Mainly, ICOM has five objectives:

- Lead a diplomatic forum
- Develop a professional network
- Lead a global think tank
- Establish a standard of excellence

7 <https://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives>

8 <https://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives>

9 <https://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives>

10 <https://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives>

11 "ICOM", History of ICOM, Accessed Feb 15, 2019,
<https://icom.museum/en/about-us/history-of-icom>

12 <https://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives>

- Carry out international missions

Every year, since 1977, the ICOM celebrates International Museum Day, which constitutes an impetus for the promotion of the museum community. The main objective of the International Museum Day is to enhance the recognition of the museum's significance¹³. International Museum Day is celebrated on May 18 each year. All members of the ICOM from all around the world participate in this event. This yearly event contributes a lot to fill the gaps prevailing in museology.¹⁴

After every three year, since 1948, the ICOM has organized general meetings for national and international communities of museums to promote international cooperation and inspire the community to perpetuate their toil for a better role of the museum in society. In every general conference, more than 3000 officials of museums come together in debates, round table discussions, and presentations.¹⁵ The ICOM general conferences have three main moments that are as follows:

- Scientific discussions on conferences themes
- Managerial sessions relevant to upcoming events and improvements in ICOM layout
- Encouraging speeches by notable professionals in the international museum community.¹⁶

The ICOM has also published peer-reviewed journals that contribute knowledge and expertise in museums at the international level. The main purpose of this journal is to strengthen the knowledge relevant to heritage protection.

Training, workshops, and seminars enhance the scope of ICOM's museum professionals. To escalate the museum

13 "ICOM", International Museum Day, accessed Feb 15, 2019, <https://icom.museum/en/activities/events/international-museum-day>

14 "ICOM", International Museum Day, accessed Feb 15,2019, <https://icom.museum/en/activities/events/international-museum-day>

15 <https://icom.museum/en/our-actions/events/general-conference>

16 "ICOM", General conferences, accessed Feb 15, 2019, <https://icom.museum/en/activities/events/general-conference>

community, it organizes high standard museum programmes for their members and fresh graduates. The aim of these programmes and trainings is to introduce the solutions to problems that are facing by museum communities. (Plates: 4,5,6,7). Training topics of the ICOMS are:

1. How we manage the collection of museums
2. Education and services for visitors to museums
3. Exhibition management of museums things
4. Marketing and communication in the museums' field
5. Conservation and preservation methods of artefacts
6. Disaster management
7. Social inclusion towards museums¹⁷

Pakistan joined the ICOM in 2017 for the promotion of museums and their activities. The ICOM, introduced by International collaboration in Pakistan, is spreading awareness about museum education. Through their training and presentations on favoured aspects of cultural heritage, they influence the mind of people regarding cultural heritage importance. The ICOM has recently become functional and assiduously working for the promotion of religious and cultural tourism of Pakistan. As stated by the president of this cultural space, they are steadily introducing job opportunities and a cluster of other reinforcing activities that will increase the level of awareness about cultural heritage. After conducting the survey, the researcher came to this point that despite being an international organization, the ICOM is not a functional member in the promotion of the cultural heritage of Pakistan. It exists only in books and documents; it is not performing the tasks it stands for¹⁸. Though they have some solid objectives, but these objectives have lost all their purpose in Pakistan. The ICOM has disaster management and providing sustainable buildings for museums in its objectives. But in Pakistan, one can see that museums found here are nowhere near fulfilling

17 <https://icom.museum/en/our-actions/research-development/icom-learning>

18 <https://icom.museum/en/our-actions/research-development/icom-learning>

the criteria of a building fit for housing precious, rare, and delicate antiquities. The ICOM in Pakistan needs to play the role it was designed for, and this of course can only be possible when the concerned authorities take proper action and grant the facilities that would make it a properly functioning body.

Kinnaird College with the collaboration of ICOM Pakistan, organized a workshop on “Engaging Communities through Museum and Heritage in Pakistan” 24- 28 April, 2018. The primary objectives of this workshop were to:

- Introduce the role of the museum's education in the cultural heritage of Pakistan
- To develop professional skills relevant to museology
- To put forward theories of museology and cultural heritage of Pakistan
- Initiating a new institute for the museum and cultural studies¹⁹

Lahore College for Women University in collaboration with the ICOM-Pakistan arranged a series of lectures on museum studies. Three-day training of the faculty members was held in the light of the contents from the ICOM practical book.²⁰ After the training, certificates were also distributed amongst the faculty members.

The ICOM-Pakistan also launches a system of training for its members at its headquarter in Paris; making the music staff expert in museology. Besides training, it has also procurement that is following:

Museum education resource club contributing a lot to spreading the network of ICOM. It also facilitates its members by setting up certain awareness seminars and workshops on museum education. The ICOM-Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding with the museum

19 Muhammad Abbas, *interview by the author*, 2019.

20 P. J. Boylan, *Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook* (Paris: ICOM, 2004).

education resource club to strengthen their activities relevant to museum activities.²¹

Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University (TIAC)

The TIAC has established its name in the cultural and heritage propagation. The Ministry of Education, the Government of Pakistan, has accepted it as a center for the study of the civilizations of Central Asia to co-operate with the UNESCO, as a participating member, representing Pakistan in its programme on Central Asia. The main aim of the TIAC is to hold national and international seminars on different themes of Asian studies and to preserve the cultural heritage of Pakistan by its reclamation.²²

The Department of Asian Civilizations at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad is high-spirited and tirelessly working on different aspects of archaeology and cultural heritage of South Asia. The TIAC has five permanent faculty members and more than five hundred graduates and postgraduate students. Ahmad Hassan Dani was the founder of this institute. Earlier the name of this institute was Center for the Study of Central Asian Civilizations but later this name was changed to the Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations.

The TIAC has been printing its biannual research journal, the *Journal of Asian Civilizations* (JAC). It publishes the multifaceted archaeology of South Asia including, the art and architecture history of the Indian Subcontinent, Indus civilization, numismatics, splendid heritage of Gandhara, and Sufism in South Asia, etc. The students of TIAC take knowledge relevant to their research from this journal. The faculty members of the TIAC also publish their cluster of research papers on diverse aspects of culture in this journal.²³

21 <https://icom-pakistan.org>

22 <http://tiac.qau.edu.pk/objectives>

23 Dr. Ghaniur Rahman, *interview by the author*, 2019.

Dr. Ashraf Khan, Ex-Director of Taxila Institute excavated the *Badalpur* site with the collaboration of the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums. The team of the archaeologist has discovered eight coins and a bronze key dating back to the Kushan dynasty. Besides, they also discovered water tanks, pottery remains, nails and bones. Dr. Ashraf Khan and his team of Archaeologists completed the excavation of this site in three phases. After excavation, they preserved this site as well for promoting the cultural heritage of Pakistan.²⁴

The TIAC team also conducted their survey on Kashmir that was funded by the Thematic Research Grant Program, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan under the supervision of Professor Dr. Ashraf Khan. A detailed survey report was published after the completion of this project titled "*Threat to Cultural Heritage of Pakistan: Survey and Documentation of the Tangible and Intangible Heritage of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Northern Areas of Pakistan*"²⁵ covers the large area of research on survey and documentation of the region.²⁶

The TIAC has initiated to conduct Ahmad Hassan Dani Memorial Lecture Series in the memory of Dr. Ahmad Hassan Dani, a notable archaeologist, and linguist who was the founder of this institute. For this purpose, the TIAC makes a formal request to eminent scholars from the cultural field to deliver a lecture on specific topics (Plate: 12).

The lives of TIACians do not just revolve around lectures and seminars. The students of M.Sc., BS, M.Phil, and Ph.D. all are given the opportunity of excavations on different archaeological sites. For exploration of the site and main techniques of Archaeology, department organizes field trips

24 Dr. Ashraf Khan, *interview by the author*, 2019.

25 Dr. Ghani-ur-Rehman, *Threat to Cultural Heritage of Pakistan: Survey and Documentation of Tangible and Intangible Heritage of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan* (Islamabad: Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University, 2016).

26 Dr. Ashraf Khan, *interview by the author*, 2019.

once per semester. Teachers of the department who are experts in fieldwork techniques go with students to enlighten them or give them a brief lecture on-site and excavations techniques. Pottery is a pervasive thing that researchers can find in perfusions from archaeological sites. International Archaeology Day is also celebrated on the 20th of every October by the institute. The students and faculty members organize various activities relevant to the development of archaeology (Plates: 13, 14, 15). Techniques of trench formation, pottery making, drawing, and its analysis, photographic documentation of artefacts, etc. are demonstrated and students are encouraged to participate in such activities. The experts of archaeology and culture also give lectures on their field of expertise. Students try to make the whole day interactive and full of activities.

Students of this department through course work obtained basic knowledge about archaeology and culture. Each student also pursues his/her research work from all regions of Pakistan. Their dissertations are purely based on fieldwork and also contribute to South Asian Archaeology. Since 2016 the Director of Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations formed a building committee to expand the scope of this department. With the collaboration of Quaid-i-Azam University, he easily became a part of the university mega project. HEC released a 2.07 billion budget for universities' mega project. With the help of this fund, the head of the department of TIAC will build a separate building for TIAC. The building would be constructed in two components. One component would be to cover the academic block and the other one for the museum. Museums, the component would further be divided into researches labs for conservation, coins²⁷. Besides, they are working on upgrading the current curriculum and launch a BS in Tourism and Hospitality which is under the process of

27 <https://tiac.qau.edu.pk/activities>

approval by the Board of Faculty Social Sciences, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.²⁸

The Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations at Quaid-i-Azam University is one of the oldest institutes in the country that works for the study and promotion of the glorious South Asian Civilizations. This institute is one of the pioneers of its field, and is known all over the world. It has formed a splendid reputation on international forums, but it still needs a major growth spurt because it lacks some important aspects that would distinguish it from the other departments of the area. The students of TIAC do not have adequate facilities for proper fieldwork, and required proper research labs, tools, and equipment. The funding provided by the authorities is not enough for every student to have first-hand experience of the archaeological expeditions. Apart from lack of funding and facilities, the other major problem that the TIAC is facing is the non-serious attitude of people who are holding its reins. The TIAC has an objective of exploring and owning history, but once a pupil enters this institute, he is greatly disappointed when he does not get to experience the luxuries and demands that this subject entails. The curriculum of TIAC was designed to keep both theoretical and practical aspects in mind, but over time the focus has been shifted from practical to teaching and learning only theory²⁹.

Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA)

The PNCA is also located in Islamabad. Its main aim is to build a robust arts environment by creating an environment conducive to the flourishing of art, where it is accessible for everyone. Artists also attain financial support, and resources to excel themselves on the world stage³⁰. The PNCA organizes functions for children that are as following:

- Celebrations of Independence Day

28 Dr. Ghani-urRahman, *interview by the author*, 2019.

29 <http://tiac.qau.edu.pk/objectives>.

30 <https://pnca.org.pk/dg-message>.

- Pakistan's Resolution Day
- Universal Children Day i.e., November 21
- *Naat* Competition
- Speech Competition
- *Milaad*
- Singing competition³¹

Earlier, the visual arts division was known as the plastic art division in 1975. This division has two main parts; the national art gallery and the design section. This division purely works for the promotion of art. They formulate dialogue with artists, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars for young artists³².

Jamaal Shah, the Director of PNCA in 2016, established here a film division. The main aim of this is to promote the classical film culture of Pakistan. Earlier the national film development corporation manages film screening but it was closed down in 2002.³³ The film division screen French film every year with the collaboration of the French Embassy and through French films they promote and show a sense of unity with the French's. Chinese and Turkish movies are also screened by the PNCA. Besides, film division systematizes the women film festival and Asian peace film festival. They invite their viewers through the E-inviting system to minimize the financial burden. With the start of the film club, they used printed tickets for movies but later they started to use the E-inviting system. They are also trying for creating a financial fund for filmmakers and the national film academy with the collaboration of China³⁴.

The PNCA schedule hundreds of cultural functions around the year to recognize the diversity in the cultural heritage of

31 "Pakistan National Council of the Arts", events and happenings, accessed April 12, 2019, <https://www.pnca.org.pk/events>.

32 <https://pnca.org.pk/visual-arts>

33 Aijaz Gull, *interview by the author*, 2019.

34 Pakistan National Council of the Arts", events and happenings, accessed April 12, 2019, <https://www.pnca.org.pk/events>

Pakistan and different parts of the world that have a strong connection with Pakistan's culture. It scheduled the cultural shows, workshops, crafts training, youth activities, and drama and film screenings for imparting cultural education among masses and give them enjoyment (Plate: 8). A puppet show is the regular characteristic of PNCA. The performing art division performs this show every Saturday for the whole year. The operators of puppets amuse the audience by performing different songs, skits, and tableaux³⁵(Plates: 9 & 10). Visual art division exhibits its permanent collection for the advancement of artists' work. They organize these exhibitions with the collaboration of arts departments. Through their exhibitions, they introduce the art of artists at national and international levels³⁶(Plate: 11).

The national artist's convention was recently initiated by the PNCA to reinforce the issues that the artists' community is facing that has directly influenced the cultural field of Pakistan. This convention requests the notable artists of the country to come at one platform and define recommendations to overcome these issues that are existing in the cultural domain. This function lasts for three days in which they also formulate numerous functions and display cuisine stalls.³⁷

The PNCA, through its art exhibitions, is striving towards boosting the status of art in Pakistan. They are determined to make known the importance of visual and performing art among their masses. They have a rich mandate for the promotion of art and cultural heritage of Pakistan. The LV and the PNCA are working for the promotion of arts and trying to preserve the endangered cultural heritage of Pakistan. Through their activities, they are making a revenue that is solely beneficial for the growth of the cultural heritage

35 Amina Patudi, *interview by the author*, 2019.

36 'Pakistan National Council of Arts', Visual arts, accessed April 12, 2019, <https://www.pnca.org.pk/visual-arts-introduction>.

37 'Pakistan national council of arts', national artists convention, accessed April 16, 2019, <http://www.pnca.org.pk/events/national-artist-convention>.

domain in Pakistan and its local community. The PNCA is one of the major functional members of the heritage protection programme. It is active and holds a prominent position in the field, but like any other department of the country, it has become linear in its goals. It was built for the promotion of every genre of art that exists in Pakistan and its preservation, but now it is only focusing on specific fields of art. Performing arts are given priority over literary arts. When we say 'art' then it means that all the fields of art, but the PNCA has not played any sort of role in the promotion of linguistics, the art of the book or writing to name a few. Though it focuses on performing arts and it stands for the promotion of filmmaking but it has not contributed even a bit to the betterment of the film industry of Pakistan. What is the purpose of having such an institution, which was solely built for heritage protection, and has all the resources to do so, yet it is not playing the part it was established for. The problem once again lies in the incompetence of the stakeholders.

Conclusion

Cultural spaces are believed as the means of cultural development in the existing world and are tasked to improve the aesthetics of humanity. These spaces experience social significance in society and are expected to increase the literacy and cultural approach of societies. They play a significant cultural role and promote cultural heritage through exhibitions and visual performances. Pakistan's cultural heritage has great potential to assist the economy of the country and the cultural spaces can play a vital role in economic growth by creating awareness and promotion of our cultural heritage on national and international levels.

In this paper, the role of cultural centers of Islamabad has been explored as they are working for the awareness of the national cultural heritage of Pakistan. However, like other departments of the country, these centers are also suffering due to several factors. The present study identified the performance of cultural spaces in the development of

cultural awareness. The study shows that the promotion of cultural spaces leads to reducing the differences in various cultures of the country and encouraging proper social responsibility manners and subsequently, accessing national culture development.

One thing that needs a mention is that the cultural centers under focus are working meticulously for the recognition of the cultural heritage of Pakistan without the considerable reinforcement of the Government of Pakistan. They have high mandates and due to restricted funds they have not been able to work on all the aspects of their area of interest. The government's patronage of cultural heritage is need of the hour. The attention of concerned authorities to this neglected field could assist in generating more revenue from cultural tourism. No doubt, the cultural centers at Islamabad, impart cultural education to a great extent. It is recommended that in these cultural departments, cultural experts should be recruited, and the government should have strict check and balance on officials. The institutions should be provided full support and assistance for the exploration of techniques to strengthen the culture and heritage of the country.

PLATES



Plate 1: Artists exhibiting their Sindh culture during Lok Mela
source: <https://bit.ly/2KX1XNL>



Plate 2: Muzakra session on Sufis Mysticism Source: taken from Lok Virsa administrations

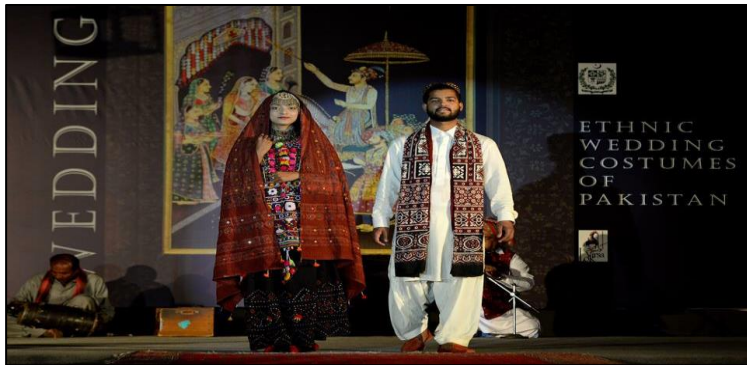


Plate 3: Demonstration of traditional wedding attire of Sindh
Source: <https://bit.ly/2KX1XNL>



Plate 4 during the training session. Source: <https://bit.ly/2KX1XNL>



Plate 5: Activities during the training session. Source: taken from ICOM Pakistan.



Plate 6: Training on museums at Kinnaird College with the collaboration of ICOM Pakistan. Source: taken from ICOM Pakistan.

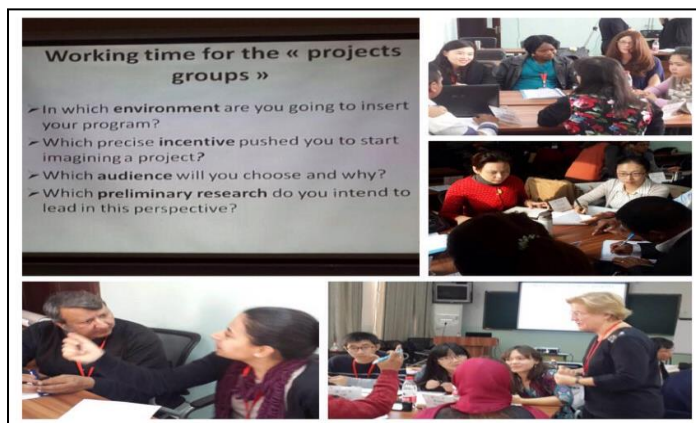


Plate 7 ICOM Pakistan member attending training in China source: ICOM Pakistan Management



Plate 8 Children while celebrating Independence Day at PNCA. Source: <https://bit.ly/2KX1XNL>



Plate9: Puppets Performance at PNCA.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2KX1XNL>



Plate10: Celebrations of Independence Day through puppet

Performance. Source: <https://bit.ly/2NYND7w>



Plate11: Display of art in a visual art exhibition.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2pCF3IK>



Plate12: Dr. Asma Ibrahim delivering her Lecture. Photo credit: Abdul Rashid Official Photographer of QAU



Plate13: Attendees of a pottery workshop. Photo credit: Abdul Rashid Official Photographer of QAU.



Plate14: Students taking part in the bead making activity of the workshop. Photo credit: Abdul Rashid Official Photographer of QAU.



Plate15: Demonstration of thuluth Alphabets during the training of Arabic calligraphy. Photo credit: Abdul Rashid Official Photographer of QAU.



Plate16: Students learning the basic skills of Sculpture making from Iftikhar Muhammad. Photo credit: Abdul Rashid Official Photographer of QAU.