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Khussa as an Eco-Friendly Footwear Form

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
History: Accepted 30 August 2021 Available Online September 2021	<p><i>The research aims to document the progress of the vegetable tanning of leather hides, involved in the making of local footwear products in Pakistan. The analysis is done specifically on the introduction of Khussa as an environmentally friendly product suitable for the needs of the present target groups. The overall empirical question is to decrease the amount of industrial pollution created in the manufacturing of leather goods through synthetic procedures, especially in the tanning of the leather skins. The observations are based on the pollution intensive environment and spatial urban issues related to trends in technological, economic, social, and political scenario in Pakistan. In the beginning of the paper vegetable tanning and its existence in the leather market of Pakistan will be discussed. Then the involvement of vegetable tanning and manual laborious skills involved in the making of Khussa will be observed to promote ecofriendly procedures in the footwear market. A SWAT analysis at the end of the paper will determine the positioning of Khussa in the present market and how it could be improvised to make it better in future.</i></p>
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1. Introduction

In the present age ecofriendly products are the need of the hour due to the continuous pattern of climatic disruption taking place on an alarming rate. In such a situation introduction of vegetable tanned leather products are the best solution for decreasing industrial pollution and other hazardous issues regarding synthetic material's waste. Such product is already existent in the Pakistani footwear market, locally mass-produced with the name of *Khussa*. As from the very basic material to the manufacturing procedures it is throughout a manual laborious activity. The transitional phases of *Khussa* as an ethnic footwear involves a basic functional form protecting from climatic hazards to a source of pride, fashion, status symbol and objects of beauty.

The study reviews the material, making and situation of *Khussa* in the present Pakistani footwear industry. The first half of the paper will establish *Khussa* as an ecofriendly product by studying the natural procedures involved in its manufacturing. The second half of the paper will be based upon a PEST analysis done on the positioning of the *Khussa* in the present footwear scenario.

Leather is the skin extracted from a vertebrate. Nearly any skin of an animal can be reproduced into leather (1). Throughout history it has acted resistant to humid conditions due to a number of processes applied on it. Thus its non-putrescible nature under soggy situations made it an appropriate shield from the weather for the prehistoric men. It is also referred in *Genesis*, 3.21(2).

It states, “Unto Adam also and his wife did the lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them.” From then onwards over the years to come leather has prospered into a regular industry. The international industry has sustained largely on the meat eating factor. As most of the skins used to extract leather are from livestock, sheep, pigs and goats. Skins or Hides are one of the byproducts of this industry.

Hides are extracted from large and hefty animals like cow, while skins are taken off from smaller animals like sheep or goat. The protein collagen is the main element in the skin. The chemistry between the protein and the properties it converses upon the skin is the most important concern for the tanner (3). There are primarily four important treatments given to a hide. They are air dying, curing with specific salts or enzymes, curing by a mixer and curing through a raceway. The hide is around 4% to 11% of the weight of an alive animal. So after the removal process of the skin has been done it should be cured swiftly in order to avoid deterioration by microorganisms and enzymes (4).

Now the question rises that what are the important factors that are seen by a shoe maker during his selection of the leather. When the similar question was asked to the people from Royal Leather tannery located in *Sheikhupura*- Pakistan, they answered that for the manufacturer of a shoe the leather should have two important characteristics. First it should be water proof and secondly it should allow the air and vapor to pass through the cross section of the upper. These are the important factors involved in shoe making to provide foot comfort to the user.

The selection of the skin would ultimately define the quality of the shoe as the product could be hard or soft, dry or rigid. Leather as a material is always preferred over synthetics due to its durability and aesthetic quality.

2. Types of Leather

The selection of the hide or skin also vary upon what the end product is desirable for the manufacturer. The commonly used types of leather are Goat Skin, Lamb Skin, and Cow Hide. The textural quality of the goat skin is pebble grain on touching upon its surface, however it's lighter than the cow skin. Its leather is used for most of the products. The lamb skin on the other hand is preferred less for most of the structured products due to its supple quality. The advantage of using a lamb skin is its tear resistance quality, as it becomes softer the more it is in use. The hardest of all these leather is that of the cow hide that is strong and heftier than the rest. As the *Khussa* consists mostly of a leather sole and it has a structured upper that is why cow leather is preferred for its making. The color of the leather is light brown and it has a smooth texture.

In the Pakistani market *Chamberlāin* near *Chowk Gowālmāndi*, the vendors of the local market give an insight into the manufacturing of leather locally. The information was given by Lahori *Khussa Mahal* near *Taxāli* Gate, Lahore that the material leather is known as *Chmrā* locally and the cow leather is called *Gocā*. For the manufacturing of *Khussa* in Lahore, leather is tanned in Kasur and then supplied to the cottage industries. Similar pattern of working is used all across Pakistan where small districts tan the leather and then it is transported to the cottage industries where it is manufactured and then supplied to the big cities for the market.

A visit to the Saeed Leather tanneries situated in Karachi, Sindh and Royal leather tanneries in Lahore gave an insight into the further information regarding the industrial processes involved in the tanning of the leather used in *Khussa* making. The initial process involves the splitting up of hides into a number of layers according to the requirement of the product. There are four types of leather categorized according to its layering processes, that is, Full Grain, Top Grain, Corrected Grain, and Split.

3. Manufacturing of Leather

The manufacturing process for leather could occur both through the cottage and heavy industry. In the case of *Khussa* making, however cottage industry is mostly established in countries like Pakistan and India. Majorly, two industries are involved in the leather making processes.

1. Leather Industry
2. Fur Industry

The main difference between the two industries is that in the leather industry, meat has more importance as the product is commercially more valuable. Fur and skin are the byproducts. On the contrary, the skin and hide is of more importance in the fur industry and there the meat is the byproduct.

3.1 The Leather Production Process

The technique of leather tanning has undergone many changes but it is one of the oldest method to preserve and utilize leather from the prehistoric times. Major changes in this field of leather processing occurred in the twentieth century when new machines were introduced after the industrial revolution, in order to utilize the toxic chemicals and perform the tanning and finishing methods in an advance way.

The process of tanning is to soak the hide/skin into a liquid comprising of tannic acid or any other types of chemicals which as a result then transform it into leather (5). According to Javed Akhtar Mir, a designer for footwear in Royal leathers there are a number of production processes involved to tan the leather:

1. Vegetable tanned leather
2. Chrome tanned leather
3. Aldelyde tanned leather
4. Synthetic tanned leather
5. Alum tanned leather
6. Raw hide

The most commonly used process for leather used in *Khussa* making is Vegetable tanning. For this method hides and skins which have underwent the delimed process are treated in a liquid of tannin made up of vegetable substances. These tannins are extracted from barks, fruits, woods or leaves. Such materials are known as tanstuffs from which the tannins are extracted. Water is used to extract the tannins from the tanstuffs (6). Concentrated vegetable extracts are used in the modern procedures of vegetable tanning.

The process of vegetable tanning was evolved in the ancient times when most probably a raw skin was left soaking in a pond of water and accidentally leaves fell upon it. The tannins leached from the fallen leaves resulted in the very earliest form of vegetable tanning (7). In Egyptian times hints of skin procedures could be evident in the evidences found from the Egyptian tombs and chapels. Skins were treated with urine or ash or pastes of flour were made for this purpose (8). Preservative methods were simple yet effective at that time. However most of the scholars are of this view that vegetable tanning started off from the Greco Roman period (9). In the Greek time period in around the 4th century BC there were some examples of the Oak galls usage in tanning procedures. There is also vegetable tanning mentioned in the Theophrastus classical literature. So there must be some form of vegetable tanning being executed in this time period (10). Then in the New Testament era in Greco-Roman times skins were used for products like tunics, shoes, armors and shields. The tanning was done with tannic acid which was extracted from lime juice or other plants. They usually performed this task near the seashore as they used salted water for tanning. Also the tanning process was performed outside the city due to its strong odor (11).

Over the years tan stuffs changed to perform the vegetable tanning process. For example Oak bark was used by the primeval Hebrews (12). While fish oil was used by the American Indians, Hemlock and Chestnut trees were also used for tanning by the American colonists. With the passage of time the Europeans formulated leather guilds in the middle ages, where tanners and leather workers combined with other artisans promoted this field. In the 1620s the knowledge was passed onto the American colonies where leather tanning began in that time (13). It was after the Industrial revolution in the 19th century machines were used to perform the tanning processes. American scientists introduced a tanning process, which involved the usage of chromium salts. With the addition of chromium salts the procedure of tanning became much faster and instead of weeks and months, results were gained within a few hours. The method in which synthetic tannins were used is called Chrome tanning. Mostly Chrome tanning is used in the industry today as it is cheaper and less time consuming for mass production (14). However, leather used for *Khussa* making is traditionally vegetable tanned. Vegetable tanning makes the leather durable, environmental friendly and unique. As natural materials like plants or trees are used as a tannin, so the colour of the leather is a natural brown colour.

3.2 Vegetable Tanning Process

Process of vegetable tanning fig.1 requires great skill and technique. Before the tanning process there are some pre-tanning steps as well.

The Process

Fig.1. Process of vegetable tanning.

3.3 Skinning the Animal

For the tanning process firstly a skin needs to be obtained. As most of the industry involved in *Khussa* making is cottage industry, mostly these makers tan their own leather especially in remote areas. In cities where they are more advanced and have more demand for *Khussa*, they purchase the leather in bulk which is vegetable tanned from the industry.

3.4 Pre-tanning Processes

When a domestic skin is being tanned, the animal is slaughtered and skinned before the body heat leaves the tissues. Then the skin is removed from the animal. The two skinning methods are

1. Open skinning
2. Case skinning

Larger animals are open skinned while smaller animals are case skinned. In case skinning the skin is removed from the animal like a sock. Usually smaller animals are skinned in this manner as mostly it remains undamaged. In this process the animal is hung upside down and the cut is made from one foot leading up to the leg. Then the skin is pulled down from the animal (15).

3.5 Putrefaction

In order to decay the non-collagen material in the raw hide, process of soaking and curing was performed in the past. Traditionally, biologically active materials such as beer, urine, dung or alkaline (lime) baths were used to fasten the procedure. However, in modern times this process is entirely done with alkaline baths.

3.6 Hair Removal

The process of chemical purification makes this procedure easier, however in the olden times hair was removed with a dull double handled knife for scraping the hair side of the skin. Nowadays mechanical cylinder rollers and knife cylinder are used for hair removal.

3.7 Fleshing and Scudding

In the old times remaining flesh was removed from the flesh side of the pelt through the sharp double handle knife. On the other hand a pressing machine is used to remove the flesh tissues from the flesh side in the industry in the modern times.

3.8 Deliming

In order to avoid damage to the major tissues deliming procedure is performed. Basically it slowly neutralizes the alkali in the pelt, avoiding changes in pH which could be destructive to the tissues. A solution of weak lime is composed of weak ammonium sulfate, ammonium chloride and sodium bisulfate to remove excess lime after immersing the skin in it.

Two more processes have been added in modern times.

1. Bating
2. Drenching

Bating is a step further in which the delimed skin is submerged into a liquid solution consisting of proteolytic enzymes. In order to lower the pH level and break down the protein structures, the skin is also soaked in solutions of acidic liquid consisting of lactic, acetic or formic acid. This process is called Drenching.

3.9 Tanning Process

Vegetable tanning is performed in two ways and they are the following;

- Slow tanning
- Rapid tanning

3.10 Slow Tanning

The skins are soaked in tanks with solutions made up of concentrated tannins in this method. The procedure is slow and therefore, it takes around thirty to forty days to tan the leather. Usually, leather produced through this exercise is hard and thick, suitable to be utilized in soles of the *Khussa* shoe.

3.11 Rapid Tanning

Other process is that of rapid tanning in which the skins are immersed in rotating drums to get tanned. The leather produced is thus flexible, a quality obtained due to the rotation of the drums. This leather is mostly suitable for the upper of the *Khussa*. This is a fast action process which hardly takes thirty six to forty eight hours.

3.12 Drying Process

After tanning the leather in the required time, the hides are taken out from the pit or the cylinders and thoroughly rinsed and smoothed. Then these hides are left to be dried in the dark slowly. The above drying method is however used in cottage industries, while in factories the skins are dried mechanically through a rolling machine. The skin is pressed between two cylinders, thus eliminating any access water left in the skin through pressure.

3.13 Finishing

Buffing and Brushing are a part of the finishing process. These are basically steps performed in order to create a suede effect or to make the leather piece thinner and eradicate any extra dust.

Other tasks which are a part of the finishing step are the following:

- Levelling of the colour
- Repairing of the grain defects
- Minimize the glossiness
- Create a protective/waterproof surface (which is resistant to water)

3.14 Final Grading

The leather piece is then graded if the tanning is done industrially before delivering it to the customer. This procedure will determine the balance and uniformity of the colour, the finishing of the leather, visual appearance, thickness and natural defects such as spots or burned marks.

3.15 Dyeing of the Leather

There are nowadays many examples of *Khussas* made with dyed colourful pieces of leather. These skins are dyed in a complex manner as it is a challenging job to achieve a single one colour tone due to the raw nature of the leather chemical matrix of the collagen. In the dying process the colour enters the cross section of the leather piece and it is secured within the leather fibers. The dying method adopted by the industries is quite conventional in which a number of chemical processes are involved. In fact the wet process used for dying leather is possible with a heavy amount of chemicals, water and energy. The industrial colours are generally synthetic dyes which are made with industries generating lot of pollution during its creation (16).

Thus, now more of the alternatives for dying leather are being sorted out for reducing pollution. The substitute to synthetic dyes are the natural dyes and pigments. These are already used in the making of *Khussa* traditionally. Especially in areas like *Sāngāla* and Multan, where cottage industry for *Khussa* making is existing, natural dyes are made and used for colouring the leather pieces.

But this is done only when it is required for any specific design, mostly *Khussas* are made with the natural skin colour of the cow leather.

4. Production of the *Khussa* Shoe Form

After the leather is prepared the shoe is developed through three stages;

- Designing and construction of the shoe last
- Designing and making of the upper pattern
- Designing and manufacturing of sole and other accessories

4.1 Construction Method of the *Khussa*

In the local cottage industries, which are usually comprised of small workshops, there are group of people together working on the production of the *Khussa* shoe form. The construction methods are the same yet the craftsmanship changes the ornamentation regarding the taste of various regions. The information regarding the construction method relative to *Khussa* making had been observed from interviewing workers at Dada Pota *Khussa* house located in Chamberlain, Old Lahore and small shops in *Sāngāla*.

Usually, in small districts located outside Lahore, like *Sāngāla* and Kasur, there are multi-storied shops, where the upper floor or the basement fig.2.is used for the making of *Khussas*. The shop is generally on the ground floor and a variety of *Khussas* are displayed there.

Fig.2. Workshop for the making of the *Khussa*.

In the Old Lahore, Chamberlain Road the storage space for the product of *Khussa* is known as the *Gāudām* (17) locally. It is a little away from the shop or the display center. There are only a few retailers of *Khussa* who own their own workshops and these are a part of the storage area. Mostly the retailers are in the main city centers like Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar. The making of *Khussa* is done separately in small cities or districts like Multan, *Sāngāla* and Kasur etc. Similarly in Sindh, the main centers are Karachi and Hyderabad which are the selling point, yet they are made by artisans from small tribes. The whole family is mostly involved in the process, where the men do the structural work of the shoe form with hand, while the female mostly make the ornamentation on the upper of the *Khussa*.

The construction of *Khussa* is usually done step by step which are explained below. The first step is to make the upper of the *Khussa* shoe form.

4.2 Preparation of the upper (*Pānna*)

The upper of the *Khussa* is known as *Pānna* locally by the workers. The pattern for the upper fig.3.along with the lining is traced on a leather piece. This leather piece is mostly cow leather or dyed camel skin. This leather is soften by soaking it in the water. Then a rounded knife known as *Rāpīs* used for cutting the upper.

Now the upper fig.4.is ready to be embroidered. The embroiderer punches holes in the upper with the help of a pointed hook or a *āari*. Then a cotton thread is drawn between the holes with the help of a pointed needle.

Fig.3. Pattern of the upper and the tracing process.

Fig.4. Upper ready for embroidery.

If in case an upper lining is used, then it is stitched with the topline edge with the help of a sewing machine to make it neater or otherwise it is glued. However the seam allowance is trimmed with hand and folded inside. Sometimes a thin leather binding is stitched to the topline edge fig.5.

Fig.5.Stitching of the topline edge on the upper of the *Khussa*.

The ornamentation is done mostly on different kinds of fabrics like Velvet or Bānārsi. They are used mostly as the top lining. They are ornamented with different embroideries and printing techniques. These pieces for the upper are usually given to separate artisan. Mostly in the rural areas or the southern Punjab they are done by the women at home.

4.3 Sole (Tala)

The sole fig.6.of the *Khussa* is locally known as *Tala* n Pakistan. It is cut according to pattern. Usually the leather used for it is buffalo hide with a thickness ranging from 1.8 to 2.0 millimeter. There are usually more than two or three layers of pattern cut which are joined together with a glue. A mallet is used to pound this assemblage of glued leather in order to make it smoother.

Fig.6. Sole of the *Khussa*

The same process is followed for the heel. Buffalo hide layers of one or two pieces are glued together and then attached to the sole with glue or a nail. The same pattern is used for the insole to cut it out from a thick piece of leather with the help of a knife. Then it is glued together with the sole and the heel. The insole is dyed red. After wards the whole construction is nailed together for strength. The insole is mostly covered with fabric like velvet to give it a smoother and finished look. The upper which is ready to be used is turned in and further stitched with a cotton thread to the sole. Afterwards the shape is given to the vamp using a last, keeping it for a few days.

4.4 Finishing

The finishing of the *Khussais* usually done by hand .The extra pieces of leather are trimmed off the bottom and any loose cotton threads are hammered flat fig.7.

Fig.7. Finishing of the *Khussa*.

4.5 Threads Used for *Khussa* Making

In the process of *Khussa* making, the thread locally known as “*Dh’agā*” is used for stitching. Normally 50/3mm thick Nylon thread is used. However, decorative stitching is done with a thread of 50/6 thickness. The industry usually uses the synthetic thread and if the *Khussa* is not made manually then it would not have the hand stitch pattern on the sole. Mostly the original and the durable form of *Khussais* made with hand stitching. The hand stitch could be detected at the back side of the sole or on the insole. The thread which is used in manual *Khussa* making is mostly prepared by the workers themselves and is called the cotton polyester thread known as *suttār*. This is of the maximum thickness 50/12 and the stitch made with this thread is done by an “*āār*”.

5. PEST Analysis

This analysis is based upon four major aspects that are the political, economic, social and technological factors (18). A product environment is measured with the PEST analysis to evaluate the market scenario in which it is sustaining. In order to go deeper into the business of these market contenders a Swot analysis is then piloted (19). For the present study a PEST Analysis would be convenient to look at *Khussa* as a sustainable product in the Pakistani market. PEST analysis is also known as general environmental analysis. It focuses upon the peripheral atmosphere in which a business prospers (20). As the *Khussa* has a diverse market in Pakistan from a very traditional approach to a contemporary outlook, this analysis could give a comprehensive view on how it is

ranging.

It is not only important to investigate the four factors that are mentioned above but also the degree of impact they are having on the *Khussa* market in Pakistan and to a certain extent even abroad. Nearly every business is delimited by conservational reasons (21) and if they are studied in detail one can see the hurdles and the prospects in its development. This investigation could also showcase the present positioning of *Khussa* from a traditional craft to a brand product and the features that are catalyzing this shift. As one of the important results from this study can bring out the causes that effects the buying decisions of the people (22). Thus a 'big picture' of the product could clearly define the threats and opportunities underlying this business (23). These factors are an interplay that are dependents on each other, for instance the economy is stronger if the political scenario is stable (24).

5.1 Political Scenario

The first feature is the Political situation of a society that set the regulations for the business, have an impact on the buying power of the targeted consumers and set a competitive arena with the other similar dealings (25). As the political stability of a government and the countries' general condition like a war or a critical situation also determines the growth of a product market (26). If we look upon the history of Pakistan it is full of military takeovers, corrupt democratic rulers, assorted economic and trade strategies and regional conflicts (27). As a result the investors had been hesitant to come over here and invest in large projects. To add fuel on fire the Fight against terrorism has also caused hindrance for major investments in Pakistan due to the security threat faced by the foreigners. An evidence is the decline in the leather exports especially from the year 2015 when the war against terrorism was on its climax. According to a report made by the 'Bureau of Statistics' the leather footwear industry faced a decline of 2.49 percent in that particular year (28). Still, currently the industry is now gaining its momentum and trying to flourish after the government has announced an incentive package and lenient trade policies (29).

This situation has obviously become an obstacle in the upgrading of a craft like *Khussa* and thus made it difficult to promote itself on international arenas. At present according to Shafiqbrother's enterprises who have a factory in *Korāngū* industrial area in Karachi and deal with leather import and export of footwear, the reason why *Khussa* is struggling to have a mainstream market like sandals or stilettos is that somehow it is made with the same old traditional mechanisms. To meet the international standards it has to be finished on latest machines or with a more refined raw material. The art of *Khussa* making is still subjected to small workshops with labour who are performing these tasks manually. Government has not taken initiatives in upgrading their skills by giving them trainings or introducing enough institutes who prepare designers or technicians who could in future plan to perform such a task. Although there are academic government organizations like Tevta and PIFD (Pakistan Institute of fashion and design) who are striving to give both technical and design education, but they are not enough in comparison to the growing population of Pakistan. The government has also started projects with International organizations like UNIDO and UNDP for different training courses in the field of leather manufacturing and designing to update the skills of the people working in this sector.

There is an important connection between trade linkages, competitive environment and an urban setup, as these logistics set the cost for finished product (30). In an interview with a designer Farooq Adnan working at the Royal leather industry which is located on *Sūndārdās* road, Lahore, the

industry has to face lot of challenges before launching a particular footwear type. The design team thus has to be careful at what they design for a particular market either locally or globally. The major concern is the cost as the industrialist is primarily concerned with this aspect. At present the energy crisis that is being faced by Pakistan has made it very difficult to make a product cost effective and thus new ideas to explore Pakistani heritage or traditions is thus become more and more difficult. Higher energy prices lead to raise in the production cost that obviously affects the exports. As a result, the industrialists are not easily willing to invest in an experimental design which could be a blend of western and local footwear or redesigning of eastern footwear types. But this doesn't mean that such designs are not being manufactured. They are still being made and slowly gaining popularity amongst the crowds, which is an encouraging situation. In another interview with the head of the production team at Siddiq Leather Works (Pvt) limited, located in *Sultānpūrā*, *Misrīshāh*, Lahore, there are no mechanisms of collaboration between the industries, the local market, small cottage industries and the academic institutions. Thus no such initiatives of any promotional activity of launching *Khussa* in an effective manner could be organized. Abrupt political changes in Pakistan have also affected the footwear sector with negligence towards infrastructures and transport facilities. The private industries are able to reorganize their own resources and work for their improvement but other small scale businesses such as *Khussa* making needs help from the government to support their cause.

Another important consideration are the taxing laws and trade restrictions that are implemented in this region (31) that had been putting an effect on the overall trading environment for the ethnic footwear like *Khussa*. Although, Pakistan has taking a number of reforms in custom clearance and tax facilitation that have improved the channelization of import and export recently. Now all the documentation is computerized and even the transportation of goods have been improved through better networking of logistics (32). As a result although there is a more competitive atmosphere for a local product like *Khussa*. There are now more international store chains opened at reasonable prices in the footwear sector in Pakistan. Also trade with the neighboring countries like China has also provided low cost shoe options for the buyers locally. An observation within industries like the Royal leather and the Siddique leather shows that the material which is locally available is now manufactured effectively with machinery imported internationally. Consequently, the leather industry is able to provide shoes locally at an effective price range and even produce a shoe range that is imported abroad. But there are no reforms that are helping to keep a handmade craft like *Khussa* get upgraded or certain policies to promote such skills. For example the government laws regarding the employment of the labors and the introduction of price controlling policies could be an important step in this regard. As the working conditions of the labour involved in this craft are very poor. In comparison to their effort in the manufacturing of the *Khussa* the price of the labor is also very low. The most important things are the progressive steps that a government can initiate like the funding, grants and the initiatives (33). The impact created by the home market and the pressure groups also add up to this category (34).

5.2 Economic factor

Economy plays an important role in the boost of an industry or a market in any country. In this analysis the economic factor covers the overall economic situation and the one that particular industry is facing in the promotion of *Khussa*. The expanse of export activities in terms of leather trade are growing fast in Pakistan, more than sixty countries are provided with leather products by the Pakistani footwear market. But the yearly export numbers of the leather industry are only \$110 million which makes the global share in the footwear market of only 0.001 percent. It is a much

slower pace in global trade when compared to countries like India, Bangladesh and Srilanka, as it has more potential than what it has already achieved (38).

At present economy of Pakistan in terms of (PPP) which stands for Purchasing Power Parity is twenty fifth largest entity in the global arena and in the nominal gross domestic product market it is ranked on the forty second number. In 2018 the population of Pakistan is over 200 million, providing a nominal GDP per capita of \$1,641. Thus Pakistan being the producer of top quality leather is a great contributor in Pakistani economy with exporting leather products and raw material internationally. An example of our popularity of local footwear forms is a design by Paul Smith which was inspired by a Peshawari Chappal and sold for 300 pounds (39). A data based on the statistical situation of export of leather and leather goods in Pakistan from the past five years, sourced by the Statistical department of Export Promotion Bureau are shown in the table below (40).

Value in (000US\$)						
	Substances	Cost 1993-94	Cost 1994-95	Cost 1995-96	Cost 1996-97	Value 1997-98
1.	Tanned and Cured leather	257,887	241,139	222,615	224,302	272,227
2.	Leather Garments	204,826	256,791	322,211	338,718	294,602
3.	Leather gloves	40,468	65,946	61,992	37,532	44,869
4.	Leather manufacturers N.S.	7,645	10,628	14,611	12,284	8,976
5.	Leather footwear	9,827	16,252	15,002	15,630	27,135
	Total Value	502,433	590,756	636,431	628,466	647,809

According to the above data the raw material that is the hides of the animal are the most exported item in Pakistani leather industry. Eight hundred tanneries in Pakistan which are registered with the Pakistan Tanners Association are involved in manufacturing export quality leather and finished products which meet up with the global standards (41). There are all types of leather including goat, cow, buffalo and sheep hides. The sheep skin in Pakistan is one of the best in grains, body and fiber (42). Other largest commodity are the leather garments that have the highest revenue to generate in the leather sector after the hides. But as per the table above the leather footwear industry is also trying to compete in the global market and its markup has increased over the last five years. This means that better export opportunities in the country will increase the chances of local footwear types to be developed and gain popularity amongst the masses. This is the present situation of leather sector in Pakistan, however it is not something which is established recently.

Conferring to Roy Tirthankar in his book 'Traditional Industry in the Economy of Colonial India' the craft of this region could be divided into two categories, commodities and non-commercial services. It was rare to find a market outside the village (43). In an interview with an old worker Ghalib working in the trade of *Khussa* in the region of Sanghala, he informed that before the colonial regime there was a group of workers in each village working for a specific number of people. They used to tan, cure and dye the leather themselves. Mostly these groups manufactured army boots or *Khussas*. It was in the colonial period when the commercial activity began. The region of the subcontinent was responsible for trade with the European market, exporting tanned leather and importing European boots (44). However, the local small scale businesses like the *Khussa* workers were at first resilient to this import and export trade systems and feared their market to be affected. These activities did somehow lessened the popularity of *Khussa* in the market due to availability of

other varieties, such as boots for the male population. The owner of the English shoes Nauman Afzal in *Anārkalī* bazaar whose father previously sold *Khussas* told in an interview that their family had to wrap up the business due to great loss in its sales. They had to face this situation towards the beginning of the nineteenth century. They switched to sell male imported shoes like the Boots, Derby and Oxford, etc. which were more in demand at that time.

The situation changed in the later half of this century when the equipment and technology to give a fine finishing to leather goods manufactured here came into the market. The product was then produced according to export trade standards due to advance in technology and production techniques. According to an industrialist who have a setup of Siddique leather in the outskirts of Lahore near Kasur, this situation took some time but then when the standard for international trade was achieved, most of the leather industry got engaged in exporting most of their products. The reason were the high rates that they got internationally in the leather sector. In such circumstances the market of *Khussa* suffered a lot and from being a mainstream footwear of this region it became a craft. However, the scenario changed when footwear designers experimented with its forms and decoration. Nowadays it is again gaining popularity as an ethnic product and even there are brands which have promoted it on international level.

5.3 Social factor

Another important factor playing a key role in the establishing of the business regarding *Khussas* is the social environment. This aspect covers a range of norms from the consumer buying patterns to the demographics involved in its designing and ranging (35). It also covers the marketing strategies, cultural values and lifestyle trends that are leading to develop a certain brand image and market for this product (36).

Khussahad been a complete package for the masses for centuries, footwear made entirely of leather or with an infusion of other materials like a sole made of rubber or plastic. They had been a symbol of value, reliability and durability in the subcontinent. In fact, till the nineteenth century this shoe type was popular as an elite shoe. Even in the present scenario these footwear types are worn in abundance, heavily ornamented for specific festive events and in expensive, protective and no-nonsense shoes for casual wear. In one way or the other these leather slippers are famous locally and now even globally for their protective and comfortable nature.

Initially *Khussa* was meant to be a leather slipper for the nawabs or the early Mughals. As the word slipper implies it was designed specifically for indoor environments. It was designed as a cover in which the foot could easily slip in. Luxury that was intended for the feet to suit the hot climate of the subcontinent region. As socially *Khussawas* intended to be a luxurious item so its outlook was highly ornamented and as the indoor activities that were being subjected to the Mughals or the Nawabs were the royal feasts or the weddings not the wars, these *Khussas* were bound to generate a certain grandeur. An example of such decoration are the diamond studded slippers possessed by a vazir's wife Jafar Khan in the court of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (37). However, *Khussa* did not remain the property of the elite only, the commoners used to wear them but with obviously less decoration or fine material. Eventually in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, when it was the age of the masses *Khussa* became common for every one and at that time it also started losing its value as a precious shoe, as the elite were now more inclined towards the newly trending heels. The society was moving towards an age of the popular culture and traditional wear thus started to struggle with keeping its originality and uniqueness.

According to a worker Nawaz from Multan working for *Khussa Mehāl*, whose ancestors were also involved in this business, there was a time when one piece of *Khussa* took a whole month for its production as the demand of the wearer was finesse and uniqueness. But now he states that one design becomes common and floats amongst the markets due to its popular demand.

The target group changed from the royal to the more general public who were politicians, professionals, commoners, youth and the adults. The market of the twentieth century was highly demanding. With a variety of footwear in the market it became harder for the manufacturers to retain the value of *Khussa* same as it held previously. In an interview with the owner of the *Khussa Mehāl* in Lahore he stated that they also had to modify the price range, designs and the comfort of the shoe according to the demand of the customer. As the consumer now had choices, shoes which were being easily mass produced with machines like stitching machines, sole attaching machines etc. Thus, the machine manufactured shoe was more durable, comfortable and less in price. Although a product like *Khussa* which was entirely handmade and less comfortable than pumps and sandals suffered in such a situation. Still the manufacturers of the *Khussa* kept it sustaining with lowering its prices and making it more easily accessible in the common market. Also, to increase the level of comfort the producers of *Khussa* like the *Khussa Mehāl* in Lahore and the *Khussa Chappal* house in Karachi introduced rubber or PVC soles for the humid situations, making it more convenient for the outdoor usage. Another thing that was added for the convenience of the consumer was a padding of foam between a double leather sole and the back counter. That added the ease from preventing the foot to be directly getting in contact with any inconvenient surfaces outside. These adaptations in the creation of *Khussa* made it a suitable footwear for the outdoor use as well. As it provided air vent for the feet in hot weather specifically.

In the twenty first century where we are existing, it's an age where there is a lot of variety and the marketing strategies have changed. The variety offered to the target group has made it more design conscious and thus need specific as well. The target group at present wants a specific shoe for each occasion and purpose. Such an environment is created by the flooding of brands in the market. They advertise according to every occasion and make the buyer feel the importance of their product as their need. At present there are now a number of brands that are introducing *Khussa* as a revived product. In order to know how the concept of branding became necessary for the sustainability of *Khussa*, it is important to know the history of how footwear was treated like an enterprise from the very beginning.

In the current global fashion setup 'Made in Italy' is an indicator of design, quality and highly defined inventiveness. It is although interesting to notice that this development is rather recent, beginning in the second half of the 20th century. Yet in such a small amount of time Italy has defined itself as the leader in the world of footwear, internationally. The first major step towards the Italian success was the innovation of runway parade in 1951 in the city of Florence. Then a sequence of small events and gatherings were arranged for promoting leather goods locally in Italy. A fashion magazine named 'Footwear News' was also launched as a follow up of these events. It used to cover all the important happenings related to footwear in the nearby vicinity. These developments lead to the major restructuring of the old-fashioned Italian footwear industry and in result minted a major boost in their economy. Consequently in 1950s Italians exported two hundred million worth shoes and just after four years later its export was of the value of 2.3 billion lire. Small scale businesses to congested workshops in Italy are now renowned brands. The concept of marketing and branding changed the entire industry of footwear and leather accessories in Italy. This strategy is now used

internationally for selling products and much more advance in its approach.

Branding is a method which is nowadays used to promote *Khussa* as a sustainable product. With the changing times *Khussa* has also evolved as a product. *Khussa* as a customary product has been relaunched by different brands. It has been offered as an accessory by means of a part of styling for everyday usage in the small ordinary shops, in the popular market places of the leading shopping areas of Pakistan. Its promotion with different outfits like the Kurta Jeans and ChūridārPaijāmā has made it popular in the urban youth. Then its identity as an occasional shoe had become a part of the metropolitan setup of the city life. However, it still holds its cultural value in the rural areas of Punjab and Sindh.

The fashion scene in Pakistan is quite confusing with conflicting ideologies and revolutionary fashion tendencies. Mostly these trends are followed with the preferences of the Western dominant shoe designs. As the western footwear has become the ultimate fashion accessory preferred by the elite and the higher middle class, it has also become a trend in the general public due to its comfort and variety. Labels like Hub and Charles and Keith offer a range of leather shoes with the most contemporary global trends, thus such a collection of shoes is available in all the major city centers of Pakistan. Other than this vendors sitting in the market areas of Pakistan offer an assortment of shoes imported from Taiwan, China or locally manufactured. Thus the virility of the craft like *Khussa* is retained from extinction in such a scenario with the designers who keep experimenting with it and the middle class and the lower class who still value its traditional worth.

Casual *Khussain* such a market was an initiative done by many brands who were launching printed lawn successfully and getting huge success in alluring their target audiences. With the increasing use of social and electronic media the society of Pakistan are aware of what is happening globally in the footwear fashion world. Thus in order to cater such an audience the shoe designers working under different brands created amalgamations of traditional hand crafted *Khussa* with western shoe elements like the soles, materials and the silhouettes, Accessories like the studs, laces and the sequins which were mostly used in converse, pumps or moccasins were also added onto the ornamentation of the *Khussa*. Thus at present in designs of *Khussawestern* design elements have crept into the regional flavors making it an interesting hybrid product. Other than the elements the textile material added on the upper of the *Khussa* along with different playful or traditional patterns has made it an ideal summer attraction for the general public. Nearly all the major brands like Chinyere, Keyseria and JunaidJamshaid have made them a part of their accessories. Thus although there is a lot of room for more exploration in its design formations yet this is a major step in the characterizing of the new phase of the *Khussain* the near future.

Other than the printed textile *Khussas*, there are also *Khussas* that are ornamented with traditional yarns and jacquards. These type of *Khussas* are created with a blend of modern motifs and adornments like pompoms and tassels to add a regional ethnic zest to the design of the *Khussa*. Brands like Khaddi and Rang ja offer such collections that are offering modern yet funky accessories to their target audience. Other than the brands such *Khussas* are also popular in common market places as the college girls or the youth prefer them on daily basis due to its vibrant look.

Although the shoe trends in Pakistan are evolving at the pace with the global fashion styles, yet indigenous footwear is still the part of the modern wardrobes, especially in the female footwear sector. The reason is the traditional costume worn by the Mughals in the past being still in trend for

formal occasions like weddings or get together or religious events like eid. The textures, colours ornamentations styles and jewelry is appreciated for its photographic reflection of a bygone nawab era.

The richness in such designs of the *Khussa* and the variety is there due to the culture of Pakistan stemming from the diversity in climatic conditions, geographical and regional boundaries and constant influx of the foreign invaders throughout the history. Different invading races from the Persians, Mughals, Afghans and the Mongols have inspired the *Khussa* patterns of this area. Silhouettes of the toe shape, colour schemes, ornamentation and the quality of material had determined the rank of the regional distinctiveness of the wearer as discussed in the earlier chapters. The extensive range of the *Khussa* styles echoes the set strata of the Pakistani society, since social standing dictated that what panache and flamboyance was reserved for the elites even in the case of *Khussa*. According to Sadia Ansari who is the designer of Chapter 13, a prospering brand in footwear sector, expensive use of leather, heavy ornamentation done in silver or gold, use of costly fabric or classy studs or sequins, all are still used in the making of *Khussa* when it is designed for a specific wedding from the higher class. Although its alternatives are there and thus *Khussa* is also used as an occasional shoe in the important affairs of the middle and lower class as well. This is the beauty of this ethnically diverse craft that as a product it fulfills the needs of every class and caters to a wide audience. One of the major reason of *Khussa* to be popular in Pakistan as an occasional shoe are the attires of the wedding functions. As these dresses are heavily embroidered tailored in mostly bright colored palette with fabrics like silk, velvet or fine muslin. These outfits are usually adhered in Mughal dresses' silhouettes like the Angrakha, Lehanga or the CholiGhagra etc. for female and Sherwani or achkan for men. They are worn as a fashion trend in the urban centers and traditional custom in the rural areas. Another accessory that is going along with such outlook is the jewelry.

5.4 Technological Factor

In the contemporary prospect *Khussa* is manufactured with a minimalist approach with a zero-drop heel, roomier toe box and less decorative components to make it easier for the consumer to walk in it. Pakistani factories are at present are producing suitable footwear for a wide range of buyers which include people from all traits of life including the disabled. The machinery installed in the Pakistani shoe factories and the labor combined produces 2,500 pairs per day while bigger units manufacture 10,000 pairs of shoes each day. These shoes are made of diverse materials like leather, textile and synthetic fabrics. The industry is equipped with all the latest machinery and always keen on updating their technology with being constantly in touch with the international market, especially Europe. Footwear industrialists are now even collaborating with Chinese traders to have latest technology for more suitable footwear production.

These factories are producing *Khussa* in abundance and trying to update it with cutting edge technology where the sole is made better with usage of thick leather and uppers are treated with a fine finishing to meet up with the export quality. The upper and its lining is stitched in high quality leather, stitching units for a fine finishing are used for its manufacturing. However the upper and the sole is still attached with the traditional manual stitching methods. Apart from large factories even the small cottage industries use the sewing machine for the making of the upper. The hub of leather industry lies in Lahore, Karachi, Faisalabad and Multan. The less ornamentation reduces the weight of the *Khussa* and thus there is little weight on the consumer's foot. Thus making it easier for him or her to walk in it.

6. Conclusion

Footwear is something that is associated with the safety of the feet, more as a necessity in the present lifestyle. Over the years it has become more and more complex in terms of association with different societies, cultures and identities. This factor has created other utilitarian purposes of this product other than its basic need of protection. It is not only interesting to observe these manifestations of meanings and symbolic representations linked with shoes, rather a whole picture of how the society has developed such notions and what evolved them can be an interesting query.

Consequently, as a whole if the manufacturing and the situation of the *Khussa* is analyzed, it is a product that could be ideal for the environment and the consumers of this region. The only requirement is to design it according to the needs of the contemporary fashion scene and the present market, which is already in progress in the light of the above analysis.

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