

# **Culture of Pakistan;**

Culture is product of society which encompasses the ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group. The culture is also a series of related structures which comprise social forms, values, cosmology, the whole of knowledge and through which all experience is mediated. Culture plays far more decisive a role in the evolution of man as a social being as compared to nature. Man's body and his culture evolved in direct response to one another. For example, tool using and the addition of hunting to hominid subsistence pattern contributed to the development of the human brain, and the development of brain in turn permitted increasing complexity both in tool making and hunting technique.

Thus, it is difficult to distinguish cause from effect in this continuous evolutionary process. Man's adaptability to his environment culturally as well as physically has given him the opportunity to extend his prowess beyond the natural range of other primates. All cultures change over a period of time, but however, some cultural symbols persist for centuries. They are bequeathed from one generation to another despite several changes of the society.

Pakistani culture has evolved diachronically. Starting from Paleolithic Age it transformed into Neolithic Revolution being the first manifestation of a settled society represented by the old sites of the lithic period which set into motion the urbanization process culminating eventually into the establishment of urban centers like Mehargarh (Baluchistan), Rehman Dheri (KPK), Harappa (Punjab), and Mohenjo-Daro (Sindh). Then it witnessed the Aryan and the Buddhist epochs evolving some new patterns of life. The Gandhara and the Hindu Shahi civilizations also emerged and reached pinnacle point here. Muslim Civilization advanced into the subcontinent and exposed this land to the Arabs, Ghaznavids, Ghorids, Sultanate of Delhi and the Mughal influences. All the salient cultural traits of the Buddhist and Hindu Shahis were absorbed first by the Arabs and then by the Muslim elite which still has their resonance in the present-day Pakistani socio-political and cultural setting. With the advent of Muslims, cultural formulations epitomized in the mystic episteme of the Sufi saints attracted majority of the people to the fold of Islam in the areas presently constituting Pakistan. Sufi traditions, basically oriented in the Islamic context, are at the heart of the Muslim cultural denominations who are also formed and influenced by the Hindu, Buddhist traditions thus giving Pakistani culture a pluralistic character. The British

established their rule in the 18th century. Thus colonialism ushered into the whole of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Colonial dispensation impacted profoundly, the political and economic structures as well as cultural patterns. Education and legislation had been the main instruments of cultural change. That peculiarity of Muslim culture became the fundamental reason for the creation of Pakistan. It is represented through its Islamic faith, Sufi instruction, historical, and socio-political traditions, etc. which called for the establishment of a modern Muslim state of Pakistan so that these could be developed further by liberating people from the British imperial rule. While explaining Islamic concept in this connection, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal in his address at Allahabad (1930) said:

***“I therefore demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam. For this, it means security and peace resulting from an internal balance of power; for Islam, an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its laws, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times. ...Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian homelands is recognized as the basis of a permanent communal settlement. ... Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that India is perhaps the only country in the world where Islam, as a people building force, has worked at its best.”***

Addressing the historic Lahore Session of All India Muslim League on 23 March 1940, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said:

***“Muslims are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their State. We wish to live in peace and harmony with our neighbors as a free and independent people. We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best, and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of our people.”***

Hence the curriculum of Pakistan Culture has been designed keeping in view the historical and cultural heritage of Pakistan along with its exhibits in the present culture. This curriculum, it is hoped, would go a long way in cultivating the requisite understanding of Pakistani culture among the students so that they can appreciate the multi-layered composition of our cultural heritage which is exposed to the challenges of different times. **Aims and Objectives:**

- 1. To provide basic conceptual understanding about culture, its definition, scope**

**and Significance.**

- 2. To acquaint students with the importance of culture as an instrument of forging unity and creating harmony in different ethnic and regional groups.**
- 3. To understand the role of Islam in influencing different traits and patterns of Pakistani Culture. To discuss and understand the essential ingredients of Pakistani Culture.**
- 4. To disseminate requisite knowledge about the diverse (national, regional, and local) cultural patterns, highlighting their salient features.**
- 5. To pinpoint multiple modes of cultural expressions in the forms of fairs, art performances and literary articulations in the country.**
- 6. To explain the sub-culture of minorities as part and parcel of Pakistani Culture.**
- 7. To delineate the tolerant aspects of Pakistani culture, reinforcing Sufi social ethos whereby love for humanity is professed and practiced.**
- 8. To understand unity in diversity of Pakistani Culture.**
- 9. To impart consciousness amongst the students about ‘geography’ of different regions affecting the growth of diverse cultural trends.**
- 10. To educate the students about the evolution of divergent patterns of Pakistani culture from the Indus Civilization to the Modern times.**
- 11. To understand the identity and uniqueness of Pakistani Culture in the global context.**
- 12. To comprehend how the Pakistani culture is amenable to the modern thoughts and trends especially in the fields of media, science and technology.**
- 13. To understand how Pakistani culture cooperates with the international institutions for the purpose of peace, tolerance and promotion of human rights.**
- 14. To perceive various manifestations of cultures of different regions in terms of their language, literature, religion, customs, traditions, arts, architecture, historical experience, etc. as parts or sub-cultures of Pakistani culture.=====.**

## **Pakistani Culture::Pakistani Culture is very diverse.**

Thanks to its historical, geographical and ethnic diversity, Pakistan's culture is a melting pot of Indian, Persian, Afghan, Central Asian, South Asian and Western Asian influences. There are over 15 major ethnic groups in Pakistan, which differ in physical features, historical bloodlines, customs, dress, food and music. Some of these include Punjabis, Sindhis, Baloch, Pashtuns, Kashmiris, Hazaras, Makranis and Baltis, coming from regions as close to home as the Indus Valley or as far as Africa or Tibet. Other than ancient ethnic elements, the religious influence of Islam has also strongly shaped Pakistani culture since it first came to the region in AD 700.

Many different languages are spoken in Pakistan

The official number of languages actively spoken in Pakistan is between 73 and 76. This means that within hours as you travel between the country's districts, there are languages that other groups in different regions do not speak. The most popular languages, however, belong to the largest ethnic groups with their own modern and ancient literature. Most languages in Pakistan belong to the Indo-Iranian language group, including Urdu, the national language.

The people are friendly, but gender segregation still exists

Due to Islamic and tribal influences, non-urban regions of Pakistan have varying levels of gender segregation, while big cities too have conservative expectations in terms of interactions between men and women. Couples usually don't hug or kiss in public in a non-platonic way. Regardless of that, the people of Pakistan are helpful, friendly, approachable and humble.

Pakistanis love to listening and making music

Diverse culture has exposed Pakistani musicians to many different poetic forms and styles, along with languages and literature. Qawwali and Ghazal are the nation's auditory treasures. Building on that, Pakistani TV shows, like *Coke Studio*, have amassed millions of fans internationally and locally, from non-Pakistanis to non-Urdu speakers. The nation has also produced legendary singers, like Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and poets like Faiz Ahmed Faiz, who have left a tremendous influence on the culture and the collective conscience of the people. Contemporary musicians too play with modern styles and develop fusions in the Urdu language, of blues, funk, rock and jazz.

Family bonds are strong in Pakistan

Family comes first in Pakistan due to religious, cultural, economic and societal values. Pakistani society is not led by individualism but rather by collectivism, where family and other relationships stand strong.

Pakistani culture includes excellent craftsmanship

Pakistani truck art is not the only world-famous example of craftsmanship. Passed down through generations, Pakistani craft includes a plethora of styles, materials and aesthetics. Calligraphy in Arabic is one of the most prominent skills found in many local buildings and sites and wall hangings, like copper work, paintings and carved wood. Pottery, especially blue pottery, typical of Sindh and Multan, is loved all over the world for its look. Naqashi, or the art-making of camel-skin lamps, is another example of local craft, along with colorful tile work, which is a Mughal legacy.

Sufism has given birth to beautiful poetry and music

Mainstream Islam and Islamic mysticism are both prevalent in Pakistan, but often, hard-line clerics, who follow the Wahhabi school of thought, reject the tradition of mysticism or Sufism that has added great beauty to the already unique Islamic flavor of the country. Sufis show their devotion through many means like dance, poetry, whirling, meditation, etc. Some of the country's most spiritually advanced and unifying messages of love are found in Sufi poetry. The hard-liners may try to isolate them, but the population cannot help but be entranced by them.

Pakistanis love chai a little too much

Chai is everywhere in Pakistan, probably in a similar sense to how beer is in alcohol-consuming countries. In fact, Pakistan is the third-largest importer of tea, although some tea is grown locally too. Pakistanis make their tea strong and sweet in either milk or diluted milk depending on their preference. Sometimes cardamom and other spices are added to tea on special occasions. Black tea was introduced to the country by the English during the colonial years, but green tea has been a part of the local culture for thousands of years. Tea time is such an important time of day that many people enjoy high tea in five-star hotels, which basically include a buffet of teas and all the complimentary snacks that go with it.

Pakistanis are very hospitable

Guests, tourists and visitors, whether domestic or international, are always welcomed with open arms. Even the poorest laborers go out of their way to help new visitors. Cultural and religious

beliefs encourage Pakistanis to show love and respect towards guests. In Islam especially, a guest is a blessing from God, and it is taught that they must be given the best treatment possible.

Pakistanis love sports, especially cricket

Cricket may have been a sport that was introduced to Pakistan by the British, but today, the country has not only made it its own but has also raised one of the world's best cricket teams. Other sports, like hockey, squash and badminton, are also widely played and appreciated. Polo has a special place in northern Pakistan too, with one of the highest polo grounds in the world situated here.

Pakistanis are resilient and hard-working

It is common knowledge that the Pakistani nation has suffered from the country's economic situation with rampant poverty and high illiteracy. Terrorist attacks and misgovernment have also led to terrible consequences. Regardless of these sufferings, Pakistan's spirit lives on and the nation continues to hope and work for a better future. The people of Pakistan would soar high if they got the sincere political effort and leadership they deserve.

Pakistanis have big weddings

Pakistani weddings epitomize the richness of the culture. A single wedding will introduce you to the many elements of these local traditions. Pakistani weddings are laden with a multitude of colors, beautifully embroidered flowing fabrics in silks and chiffon, tantalizing food, traditionally decorated stages and a lot of music and dance. Weddings in Pakistan are a serious deal, with preparations starting months before. After all, most local weddings last anywhere from three to six days. The celebrations usually start with a day dedicated to henna application, followed by a musical night and a night of traditional rituals to bless the couple. Then, there are dinner parties that last two days thrown by the bride and groom's side of the family.

Pakistanis don't keep calm and have no chill

Pakistanis are a passionate, emotional, expressive and colorful people – just like their culture. Whatever they love, they do with plenty of zest and excitement. They love to celebrate, no matter the occasion, and feasting, giving presents, throwing parties and having regular large gatherings with friends and family are all very common.