

ARMS CREATIVE INDUSTRY OF DARA ADAM KHEL: OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

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Abstract

Creative industry is an emerging concept in Pakistan and some of the other Asian countries. This industry is providing employment opportunity to a big chunk but on the other hand, it's a vehicle for cultural identity as well. The study's aim is to investigate those elements which are responsible for the establishment of this non-registered arms and ammunition units (traditional production factory) in Dara Adam Khel (DAK), a creative industry of Pakistan which is providing employment opportunities to thousands of families in DAK, a town situated 29kilometers south of Peshawar. The study examines the technical aspects of the unit workers and focuses the possible irritant factors which hamper this arms industry from further development. For the study,30 unit workers and owners were interviewed. According to the respondents, these units are capable to make all sorts of arms if proper protocol and attention is given to this industry. People adopt and carry arms and the arms industries as custom of the area but currently these traditional production units are the main sources of earning for hundreds of families. Some of the businessmen involved in the production of arms, started registering their illegal businesses (Un-Registered) with the government of Pakistan and due to this flow, some of the owners switched/shifted their units to the

Industrial area, Small Industrial Development Board (SIDB) situated on the Kohat road Peshawar.

Keywords: *Creative Industry; Arms and Ammunition; Dara Adam Khel; culture; Pakhtun*

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Creative industry is an emerging concept in Pakistan and some of the other Asian countries (Shahzada, 2012). UNESCO (1986) took the initiative to document the cultural industries but the term “Cultural Industry” was first use in UK in 1980s (O’Cornnor 1999; UNESCO 2006). Going parallel with the main stream economic sector this creative sector in other words “Alternative Economic” (O’Cornnor, 1999) is not only providing employment opportunity to a big chunk but it is vehicle for cultural identity (UNESCO 2006). New Zealand has identified the creative industries one of three industries, Scottish Government identified as one of six key sectors that offer the greatest potential for employment growth and economic growth.

Human by nature tend to identify themselves with their ethnic group, national groups, family and with specific environment. The connectivity of their relation is due to their attachment and internalization of specific traits of culture in their personalities, and personalities are the wholesome of their actions, attitudes and their outer look (Hall, 2012). The outer look gives the individual a specific name and tag. The ground for this social affiliation is their culture, which influence the mind of the community and induce them to behave and act in the guided way. The experienced people provide not only the situation for one’s learning about himself and his world but also definition and interpretations of the situation. This interpretation makes them the part of the specific culture.

Culture is referred to a "patterned way" (Mead, 1970) of the people of specific area. These pattern behaviours are first adopted in a limited area and through recurrence of these actions; the populace give a place to these behaviour in their tradition. These traditions are then moved to the other approachable areas, but these are considered the property of the explicit people whom they create. ¹Sindhi Cap&²Ajrak, *Blue pottery in Multan*, ³Charsadda shoes (Peshawari Chapple), ⁴Wazirabad cutlery (Afridi, Kamran 2012) and Arms of ⁵Dara Adam Khel are some of the cultural production of the mentioned specific areas. Creative industry thus is the production and commercialization, of the creative and innovative products (Garnham 2005) which is the individual and communal property of specific people (DCMS 1998; Garnham 2005).

What are Creative industries and what similarities it has with Cultural Industry? Creative industries are those industries that are small in nature including self-employed units which have no formal hiring and other setting and holding strong networking. Creative industry is a term which encompasses "Cultural Industry" and other creative or artistic production of goods and services wither produced in a cluster environment or individual unit (DCMS, 1998). UNESCO through Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) identified ten categories of cultural industry while the UK expands it number through mapping them. According to that mapping culture industry includes: Advertising, Architecture, Arts and antiques, Crafts,

¹ Sindhi cap is specially designed cap which is mostly use in Sindh

²Ajrak is special traditional shawl having specific lines and designed and belong to the Sindhi culture

³Charsadda Shoes is traditional open shows mostly recognize as (Peshawari Chapple) in other regions

⁴ The cutlery products of the Wazirabad tehsil of district Gujranwala, Punjab

⁵ Dara Adam Khel is a small town like village near Peshawar famous for Production of indigenous weapons

Design, Designer fashion, Film and video, Interactive leisure software, Music, Performing arts, Publishing, Software and Computer services, Television and Radio (*UNESCO 2006*).

The human culture explosion I often explained in terms of 'liberating events', or of a newly acquired flexibility in mental representations. Humans receive vast amounts of information from cultural elders and peers (Boyer, 2000). While Tylor (1871) define culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society. Similarly, economic aspects of a specific phenomenon are taken into account in economic anthropology mainly as a context where material activities occurred. Every society has its own unique culture that might be opposite to other, transferred to both intra and inter generationally to make the members familiar to that society. Gudeman (1986) proposes to study how each society culturally models the processes by which it secures a livelihood and shows that some societies have multiple articulated models of economic activity. Focuses the creativity in the cutlery industries of Wazirabad however, a full understanding of creativity in complex social settings requires that we go well beyond a focus on individual actors and carefully examine the situational context within which the creative process takes place. A variety of social and contextual influences affect creativity at both the group and organizational levels (*Afridi, Kamran 2011*).

Creative industry is not only responsible to produce the products and tagging (*O'Connor 1999; UNESCO 2006*) but can play a vital role in economic development of the country (*CDMS 2001, Garnham 2005; O'Connor 1999*). During the last few decades plenty of countries are developing friendly policies to boost the culture industries (*UNESCO 2006*). In face to the economic competition and challenges many countries like, Hong Kong,

Singapore, India and even China is mobilizing the creative industry (*Ibid 2006*). Through bridging their knowledge and technology, they are trying to allow the technologically advanced countries to unlock the economic and social potentials of creative industries. Technology has made many changes in the labor life; there are new job opportunities in the industry where experience and skilled workers were provided opportunities, while the employee having less experience and low level of skills were at stake. The use of the technology in the industries has affected the manpower resultantly the unemployment and poverty among the affected workers (*Afridi Kamran, 2012*). The arm manufacturing was taken over by the highly mechanized factories of the government by leaving and skilled workers and the masterminds in a state of ignorance and loneliness while some of them were hired by the arms manufacturing factories (*Rashid, 2005*)

The cultures boost and perpetuate the creative industries by providing favourable historical trends (*Markusen, et al. 2008*). These materials are recognising with its place of origin. In the modern domain, these are called the creative products (*Cunningham 2001*) and the industry is called creative industry (*Garnham 2005; O’Cormnor 1999*). Arms have a social value in DAK, as it was used in different social, and cultural parties and considered a respect and honor (*Kamran 2012*). Creative industries are those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property and are responsible for the production of creative products (*UNESCO 2006*). The intellectual property is the outcome of their inner forces, the traits of personality which is also shaped by the culture (*Amabile, 1996*).

This study explores the nature of arms business in general and the culture of weapons in *Dara Adam Khel* in particular with reference to the influence of this culture on the overall culture of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). It explores the opportunities and possible threats to this industry and explores those circumstances which paved ways for flourishing this creative industry particularly in the barren land of *Afridi* tribe. The research focuses on the environment, the surviving industry, and the people's attitudes and their perceptions about this industry which influence this creative industry. Furthermore, it describes the productive capability of the local skilled men and their access to the market. The lives of the people, the technical knowledge of the worker, who are working in arms Industry and the influence of their work on their daily life and family also discussed in this study. Lastly, the lag in the way of advancement of this creative industry of *Dara Adam Khel* is focused from political, economic and social perspective, how they are treating, what are the economic reasons behind this static status and other social irritants in the way of development.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the obstacles in the way of arms industry
2. To study the productive capacities of arms industry and its access to the market
3. To study the status of potential actors in the import of training and technical knowledge

1.2. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in *Dara Adam Khel* (DAK) situated in Frontier Region (FR) Kohat (FATA). The locale is an unsettled tribal area locally called *Ilaqa Ghair*, having different cultural traits in contrast to the other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The selected area is famous for their arms industry and has a specific bazaar especially famous for arms production and it was related to the topic of research. It contains lots of skilled workers, who

provided relevant information in respect to the researcher's aims and objectives. The data was collected by using the appropriate combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The researchers gathered relevant data by conducting formal and informal interviews by exploiting the interview guide and acquired the case studies of relevant people.

For this study, the researchers stratified the whole arms industry into 05stratums to collect uniform data about all of the production of arms and ammunition. Variety of arms and ammunition producer were interviewed including 30-bore pistol maker, 12-bore short guns, the manufacturers of AK-47 machineguns, 9-mm pistol producers and the ammunitions (Bullets) makers. The researchers randomly selected the respondents of the 30 bore and bullets maker and use the snow ball sampling for AK-47 and 9MM pistols. The participant's observation technique for rapport building. In snowball sampling, one or more key individuals are basically selected as a reference to identify others as the likely candidates for research.

The researchers are mainly local inhabitant and acknowledged the arms industry, but it is a militant prone area too. Due to the security situation and fear of respondents, the researchers selected those respondents, which the interviewee or the researchers have some link with to ignore security risk and get fruitful information from these arms makers regarding the research topic.

1.3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Dara Adam Khel (DAK) is known for its indigenous gun smiting tradition. These guns smiths manufacture from simple bullets to automatic guns and other weapons. In *DAK*, there

are hundreds of arms industries which manufacture different products. Some industries focusing on the manufacturing of parts, some are specialized for dye, others are working on the wooden grips of a gun, while multiple units are responsible for finishing and fitting of these parts. There isn't such a single unit which could entirely manufacture and produce the arms products at one place.

DAK galvanize the traditional sector and make them the part of the main stream economy. Arms production units, traditional economic sector, provide employment opportunities to thousands of local craftsmen. Two to three craftsmen are busy working in each traditional production units. According to Shahzada (2012) while quoting PHSADC, there are more than 1200 traditional craftsmen unit who are producing one gun each day through engaging and benefiting more than 30 thousand beneficiaries, directly and indirectly. When a gun is ready then it goes through all the necessary measures like size, weight and by firing a few rounds in the air to make sure it's working properly. Once it passes all these tests then it is send to the main Dara market which is again a big employment sector for thousands of other families. Because of the DAK arms production the registration number printing sector is also active part of this process.

People consult the arms registration authority for various guns licenses i.e. (30 Bore, 9MM, Short guns). Due to this license and registration, licensee tends to middle men for help and hence it becomes a source of income for the middle men families. This is not only surviving industry for the guns smiths but for the rest of other people living in DAK. In addition, the lather factory workers and owners who are manufacturing specialized leather pouches and covers for guns and the barkers who are selling the arms leather products depending on this industry.

It has a close connection with the DAK arms manufacturing industry because majority of Pakistani people are unable to purchase expensive imported guns. Due to the high prices of imported guns, people opt the DAK guns which are low-cost, beautifully made and looks like original imported gun. The handmade replica gun of Dara could be hardly distinguished between the original imported ones. In DAK, craftsmen produce the product according to the demand of the customer. They are highly specialized in arms making industry that they could use the barrel of 30 bore in 09 MM pistols and it would work impeccably.

In DAK there are specific shops for certain parts of a gun but there is no single shop which has inclusive product in one unit. All these units are working as a network; things are passed on to the next shop for their respective job. O'Connor mentioned that the small clusters are highly networked and through these networks they learn many things (*O'Connor 2005*). According to a respondent, a gun must go through different phases of production. These stages include, gas cutting, milling machine, finishing, watering, coloring and finally polishing. There are several sub processes in each stage i.e. in milling machine stage the raw products are passed from several machines depending on the demand of the product.

Similarly, there are various sub processes in finishing units. All these processes are accomplished with the help of simple traditional method except milling machine in which comparatively advance technology is used as mentioned by the *O'Connor (1999)* that the cultural industries are based on technology. There are various numbers of craftsmen in each unit. The numbers of workers vary in different units. Majority of the unit is composed of 02-03 workers each. The number is not fixed, there are 10-15% of unit who are operating by a single expert worker in the words of *O'Connor (1999)* "Artist Centered". In UK 40% of

culture sector firm are operated as self-employed while 56% firm which is considered the big business were run by under 25 people (*Ibid 1999*). In majority of the units the traditional students are working who receive the knowledge of arms making through traditional and informal way (*Garnham 2005*). The hardest part of the work is assigned to those craftsmen who are experts in this field. If there is one person in a unit, he controls the whole process single handedly. It is significant to mention that the workers, who once enter into a specific production, can't quit their respective jobs until and unless the market demand comes to an end.

The attachment with the specific production enhances their proficiency to a level and the community recognizes them and refers to them if somebody needs the services of those experts regarding that specific product. All these units' manufactures are specialized in different types of arms making industry and they receive orders from their respective customers. The production units receive order from the customer, contractors, and wholesale dealers and from different security companies. The customer uses their links to collect these arms. Some give direct order to these craftsmen while some use the contacts of the arms dealer in various areas. It is astonishing that the well-known security firms in Pakistan and even in Afghanistan give orders for the short guns to DAK arm dealers. It is because of their specialties that produce quality products in a very short time with low price.

The workers, who are engaged in different production units argued: according to 66.7% of the respondents, their unit producing quality products, 13.3% answered in favor of low cost, while 20% of the respondents gave different responses. They argued that they are specialized in fulfilling the demands of the customers in specified time. These units consume different time in production: 30% taking 03 days, 33.3% making one product in 04-07 days while

36.7% are making it in one week. It is based on their exposure and the potential that a unit producing a product in the defined time. Workers in creative industry are producing opportunities for their employment through a hard work. It is then become a source of earning (*Markusen, A. et al. 2008*). The products produced in the DAK arms industry holding different prices, depending on the quality and looks of guns. The products which attract customers because of its quality receive greater amount. While conducting the interviews the researchers learnt that in DAK, Zafar (a famous craftsman) is specialized in the production of 9MM (Beretta, Zingano, Glock etc.) pistols. Shah Nawaz arm factory is specialized in bullet production while Khalil Khan is an expert of AK-47 machineguns production.

The craftsmen get paid from a customer after they finished making a pistol or gun. If the craftsman is the owner of the unit takes the full price from the dealer. The products are collected by the customers and dealers (mostly) with nominal amount. This is also mentioned by, *Adorno, T, & Horkheimer, M (1979)* that it is the process of “Alienation” in which the producer of the product is unaware about their product where it is (*Garnham 2005*).

Furthermore, about the industry they argued that the actual producer entrusts their control in the hand of “Bourgeois” and the elite section of the society (*Garnham 2005*). This makes the producers a marginal group of the society. This happens in DAK arms industry in which the craftsmen consider their work a source of survival. According to a notable respondent’s view, the industry is just a surviving industry for most of the craftsmen, 90% of the respondents argued. There are three main bodies involve in the gun manufacturing industry in DAK: The Craftsmen, the Dealers and the Contractors. The latter two bodies are the middle men parties who receive greater amount than the actual producers (*Adorno, T, & Horkheimer, M (1979 & 2002)*). Some of the dealers are the actual producer as well who are in units produce the products and then doing their manufacturing process in the local bazaar

or in remote areas. This lag in the market price and in the actual price is because of the fear exist in the mind of the customer. The respondent (40%) argued that the general customers feel fear while visiting the area, 25% mentioned that for the product the license is necessary which is hard to find by common people while the remaining respondents argued that now the customers from other districts and provinces are hesitant to visit Dara because of the Army check posts and Talibanization (militancy).

The production units couple with the mentioned problem facing some other issues concerning government. This industry uses very poor iron which is supplied by the contractors. The non-availability of quality steel gives bad name to the DAK arms manufacturing industry. In other areas, their firms are producing arms with a good quality of steel. The steel quality is not the only reason but 50% of the respondents claimed that metallurgy knowledge is another element responsible for the stagnancy of this industry. The workers are really working hard to create a good product and to continue their unit and support their families (*Markusen, A. et al. 2006*). Creative industry is the alternative and the key of the new economy at every level, so this should be strengthened by the provision of proper policy and support by government and other related authorities. Creative product could be a source of employment (*UNESCO 2006*) and export of the country (*Garnham 2005*). It is not happening with *DAK*, but the creativity industry is not that much supportive that it should be? Many respondents in the targeted area shared a mix approach behind the stagnation.

They were of the view that some costumers demand low price arms for which relies on poor methods (consume less time and energy) and even low-quality iron, as customers tends to the *DAK* arm industry because of the low-price arms. *O'Connor (1999)* mentioned that it is hard

for the small and self-employed creative firm to encompass, cultural aspect with innovation and market demand. In DAK beside the problem of the low price, technology and electricity but proper guidance is another threat to the arms Industry. Electric breakdown and power shortage is a big problem in DAK that people face every day, although the products are mostly prepared by hand but for milling machines that can't be run without electricity. There are no proper training centers for the craftsmen and no other privileges from the government.

Focusing on the same theme *Garnham (2005)* while mentioning *Myerscough (1988)* argued that proper training and guidance is necessary for the Creative industry. Beside the plethora of challenges, the DAK arms Creative industry is not only producing the arms but culture products. Arms are very important component of the Pakhtun culture. Pakhtun beside the use of arms in their petty issues, arms are the symbol of status (*Shahzada, 2012*). In Pakhtun culture arms are used for honor as arms are considered the ornament of Pakhtun (*Ibid 2012*).

1.4. CONCLUSION:

Arms creative industry is providing opportunity to thousands of families across the country. This industry is capable of manufacturing variety of arms and ammunitions. The craftsmen of DAK not only manufacture guns but transmitting the gun smiting tradition to the disciples across the country. This creative industry fulfils the needs of the local people and craftsmen producing guns which are very cheap, good quality and beautifully created. It is the need of the time that government should give proper attention and appreciation to these small industries. These industries can improve the country's economy up-to a level. Parallel with government protocol, these industries need the attention of the researchers which will reciprocally tend the attention of the policy makers to design friendly policies. By doing this, the government will mainstream those marginal sectors of economy which have the potentials of further economic development.

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