

## **The Future Potentials For “Crochet” And The Enrichment Of Fashion Hand Knit Industry In Bangladesh**

Siddika Haque

*Faculty BGMEA University OF Fashion & Technology (Bangladesh)*

---

**Abstract:** *The basis of this project was to create a competitive scope of crocheting implying the representation of yarn craft in fashion knitting area. In terms of contributing to the field of fashion knit based products in Bangladesh which is solely based on machines in terms of manufacturing. But fashion is not confined in boundaries or can remain within limited scopes. Apart from the machinery manufacturing, hand knitting can place great remarks in this perspective. “Crochet”- the another significant construction of hand knitting group has a countless possibility to bring innovation in the fashion knit clothing industry of Bangladesh. The women particularly in the rural areas in Bangladesh can contribute their immense potentials towards the yarn crafting credibility to our industry. Crocheting has been conjoint in our culture blending and incorporating with our heritage and locals for centuries long. So this can create an immense opportunity to use our local’s talent involving them contributing in this enrichment of this fashion knit industry. The implementation to this purpose can start with the industry level initiatives, where the opportunity has to be created alongside the machinery manufacturing of fashion knit clothing. Designers can place a great attribute to this with their active involvement in this initiative. Designers have to facilitate the scope with the combining effort along with the industry. Thus a possibility will be established to incorporate the involvement of the talent of those women from our locals with the craftsmanship of crocheting.*

**Keywords:** *Crochet, Local Heritage, Yarncraft, Fashion Knit, International Fashion Value*

---

Date of Submission: 30-08-2017

Date of acceptance: 22-09-2017

---

### **I. THE CHANGING LOCAL CAPACITY OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY**

Historically, Bangladesh relied on the importation of apparel and textiles from the earliest 1980’s. This sector has emerged as the biggest earner of foreign currency. In 1972, the World Bank approximated the gross domestic product (GDP) of Bangladesh at USD 6.29 billion, in 2014, the GDP stood at USD 173.82 billion, growing by almost 27 times in a matter of four decades. Bangladesh’s exports industry alone comprised USD 31.2 billion in FY 2014-15, 81.69% of which was made up by ready-made garments. On its own, the knitwear sector encompasses 39.83% of total exports—a staggering USD 12.43 billion. The RMG sector has experienced an exponential growth since the 1980s. The sector contributes significantly to the GDP. It also provides employment to around 4.2 million Bangladeshis, mainly women from low income families.

In the 1980s, there were only 50 factories employing only a few thousand people. Currently, there are 4296 manufacturing units. Owing to the emergence of strong backward linkages within the country, the Knitwear Industry is adding up to 75% value, which opens up enormous potential for foreign and domestic investors to spend in the areas of spinning, weaving, sewing, packaging, and accessories manufacturing. In the last five consecutive fiscal years, knitwear constituted 7.2% of the national GDP on average, demonstrating that RMG continues to serve as a strategic and commercially beneficial sector to the country, which has had to overcome hurdles to compete in the changing international climate time and time again. This sector also contributes around 13 percent to the GDP, which was only around 3 percent in 1991. Of the estimated 4 million people employed in this sector, about 50 percent of them are women from rural areas. In 2000, the industry consisting of some 3000 factories employed directly more than 1.5 million workers of whom almost 80% were female. USA is the largest importer of Bangladeshi RMG products, followed by Germany, UK, France and other E.U countries.

RMG are the finished textile product from clothing factories and the Bangladeshi RMG sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in the Bangladeshi economy, with a growth rate of 55% from 2002 to 2012. Exports of textiles, clothing, and ready-made garments (RMG) accounted for 77% of Bangladesh’s total merchandise exports in 2002. By 2005 the (RMG) industry was the only multibillion-dollar manufacturing and export industry in Bangladesh, accounting for 75 per cent of the country’s earnings in that year. Bangladesh’s export trade is now dominated by the ready-made garments (RMG) industry. In 2012 Bangladesh’s garment exports – mainly to the US and Europe – made up nearly 80% of the country’s export income. By 2014 the RMG industry represented 81.13 percent of Bangladesh’s total export. Much of the tremendous growth of the sector and its role

as an economic powerhouse for the country is attributed to the availability of "cheap" labor. Of the four million workers employed by the RMG industry, 85% are illiterate women from rural villages. The working environments and conditions of the factories that produce ready-made garments have undergone criticism in recent years concerning worker safety and fair wages.

Subcontracting is a major component of the RMG industry in Bangladesh. Many Western companies contract different factories, only requesting that certain quotas be met at certain times. Companies prefer subcontracting because the degree of separation presumably removes them of liability of wage and labor violations. It also makes it easier to distribute production across a variety of sources.

## II. WHY CROCHET?



Why crochet? Why not? There are so many things we can do with the craft of crochet. With crochet we can make practical and useful items such as hats, gloves, doilies, scarves, sweaters, jewelry more. We can also create art with free form crochet. Crochet is an inexpensive hobby. With the cost of a skein of yarn and a crochet hook, we are good to go. Crochet is very portable and can be carried easily in a bag or purse - so it is always handy when we find ourselves with a few extra minutes, waiting for an appointment, or while watching television. Crochet is mainly just fun - it is fun to watch our creation develop, turning into something truly beautiful and useful. Many people crochet items for gift giving such as Afghans, hats, baby hats, mittens, just about anything. Some people enjoy selling their crocheted items at craft fairs and shows.

Another satisfying activity of crocheters is to crochet for charity. There are hundreds of charities that appreciate donations of crocheted items, especially hats, scarves and mittens. Crochet is easy to learn. Anyone can learn to crochet - there are many good books for beginners and online videos to get we started. Once we have our skein of yarn and a crochet hook, the first thing to learn is the Chain Stitch (CH). Next learn to do the Single Crochet Stitch (SC), Slip Stitch (Sl St), Half Double Crochet (HDC) and Double Crochet stitch (DC). With these basic stitches we can make many, many things. We can use a pattern or make up our own designs. Have fun with this great hobby!

## III. KNITTING & CROCHETING ARE TRENDING!



Designers have been feeling crafty lately. Over the last year, runways were dotted with artisan handiwork that came in the form of odd embellishments: modern quilting and, perhaps most visibly, crochet. Jonathan Anderson showed his affinity for grandmother's knits at his Fall 2017 menswear show, while Jeremy Scott wove colorful body-hugging dresses for Resort 2017. There was also Adam Selman, who crocheted cute miniskirts and polo shirts at his Spring 2017 outing. These designers made it clear that crochet isn't just for old ladies, and this season is ripe for taking the trend from the runway to the street. The material is offbeat and wildly experimental, and that's exactly what style risk-takers and Instagram It girls have been craving of late. It's about mixing and matching: Pair a crochet jumper with a leather moto jacket; a '60s silhouette dress with a fetish choker; or a knit top-handle bag and a pair of front-button track pants and sneakers. Getting artsy with your wardrobe is the name of the fashion game. Above, six ways to wear and rework the old school knit Celeb like Julia Roberts does it, so does Vanna White, Cameron Diaz, Sarah Jessica Parker, Daryl Hannah, Hilary Swank, Julianna Margulies and many others. Knitting or crochet is one of their favorite hobbies, but these crafts aren't just for celebrities. Learn why 20 and 30 year olds are turning on to crocheting and knitting, joining the 38 million consumers who enjoy doing these crafts.

#### IV. HOW TO CROCHET

Like knitting, crochet involves pulling loops through other loops in order to turn string into a two-dimensional fabric (or a three-dimensional garment). Instead of using two knitting needles, however, one uses a single crochet hook, producing a thicker fabric (using approximately 1/3 more yarn) at a faster pace

##### Steps

1. **Select your hook and yarn.** Generally, the thicker the hook, the thicker the yarn will need to be. Hook sizes are measured in millimeters or fractions of an inch. Choose a solid color for the yarn so that as you're learning, you can see how the stitches are made--patterned yarn would make this more difficult. If you have an easy pattern on hand, use the hook size and yarn recommended in the pattern, even if you're not going to crochet that particular pattern just yet.
2. **Hold the crochet hook in a way that feels comfortable for you.** While there is no *right* way to hold a crochet hook, there are two basic styles which can be reversed, depending on which is your dominant hand.



3. **Crochet a chain.** Every crochet project begins with a chain stitch, usually abbreviated as in instruction pamphlets. Form a slip knot around the hook, wrap yarn around the hook, and pull it through the loop in the knot. Now the yarn that you pulled through is wrapped around the hook, and you can pull another loop through that. Practice this for about 10 to 15 minutes a day until you are able to hold the yarn so that it's not too loose or too tight.
4. **Master the basic stitches.** The way you handle the hook will depend on whether you crochet right handed or left handed.
5. Slip stitch pattern



Slip stitch (sl st) - Pull a new loop through the loop that's already on the hook, as well as through the chain stitch. This stitch is used to join work, bind off stitches, reinforce edges or carry yarn to a different working position without adding extra height.

### Single crochet



Single crochet (sc) - Draw a new loop through the chain stitch (but not through the loop that is already on the hook). You should now have two loops on the hook. Pull a new loop of yarn through both, remaining with a single loop. Repeat.

### Double crochet



Double crochet (dc) - Produces a looser fabric than single crochet.

6. **Make a test swatch.** As you're learning, your tension may vary. Before you begin a pattern, make a test swatch as instructed.

7. **Try different projects.**

#### **Tips for Crocheting with Cotton**

Always make a swatch before beginning any project. This is especially true for cotton, as working with it is different than with most other yarns due to the lack of elasticity. Cotton stitches stand alone, unlike acrylic, microfiber and most other yarns where the stitches snuggle next to one another. The gaps created while forming stitches with cotton remain gaps and do not fill in.

Fancy stitches worked with cotton yarns tend to be more distinct and stable than those worked with other fibers because of the “stand alone” factor. Cables take on more depth, relief stitches stand out more, popcorns are more stable, and other fancy patterns are enhanced when crocheted in cotton. Soft and pleasant to work with, cotton yarn feels good running between your fingers as you crochet, and feels equally good worn next to the body.

A great choice for children, it readily releases soil when washed. Because of its easy-care factor, it's also the ideal fiber for kitchen items like pot holders, dishcloths and towels. Acrylic yarns should never be used for pot holders or hot mats because, unlike cotton, they tend to melt when exposed to high heat.

### Chain



An illustration of a chain.

A **chain** is a series of loops that serves as the foundation of most crochet projects.

#### **Procedure to Make a Chain**

1. Make a slip knot with your yarn. The resulting loop is where your crochet hook goes. Put the hook into the loop and pull the knot so it is able to slide easily along your hook but no looser.
2. Yarn over your hook. (This means essentially wrapping your yarn once around the hook so that it can hook it, but it is more usual to move the hook to wrap it in the yarn. See linked page for more instructions.)
3. Draw up a loop. This means hook the yarn you just wrapped on the hook and draw it through the loop already on the hook.

--- If you have trouble drawing the chain through your loop, this means you are holding the yarn too tightly. Achieving proper tension is one of the most difficult crochet nuances and will come with practice.

### Shell

A shell stitch is composed mainly of double crochet stitches into a chain space or previous stitch. The basic shell stitch looks 'stacked'; the shells are made in rows atop each other.



With any yarn and hook, make a multiple of 5 stitches + 3.

#### The 5 dc shell:

**Row 1:** Skip the 3 stitches from your hook, \*make 5 dc in next stitch (shell made), sk 2 sts\*, repeat across row, end with 1 dc in last ch or st.

**Row 2:** Ch 5, \*5 dc in 3rd stitch of shell below\*, repeat across row, end with 1dc in last ch or st. Repeat row 2. With any yarn and hook, make a multiple of 7 stitches + 4.

#### The 7 dc shell:

**Row 1:** Skip the 3 stitches from your hook, \*make 7 dc in next stitch (shell made), sk 3 sts\*, repeat across row, end with 1 dc in last ch or st.

**Row 2:** Ch 5, \*7 dc in 4rd stitch of shell below\*, repeat across row, end with 1dc in last ch or st. Repeat row 2.

### V Stitch

---

The basic V stitch uses double crochet stitches.



This is a simple and basic lace stitch. Using any type of yarn and hook, chain an even number of stitches, or have an even number of stitches. (Multiple of 2)

**Row 1:** Ch 4, dc in same st, sk 1 st, \*dc in next st, ch 1, dc in same st, sk 1 st\*, repeat from \* to end of row.

**Row 2:** Ch4, dc in same st, \*dc in ch 1 of last row, ch 1, dc in same space\*, repeat from \* to end of row.

Repeat these rows for pattern.

### Knit & crochet are good for you!

Knitters and crocheters experience many benefits from the craft. Top benefits include:

- Feeling of accomplishment (93%)
- Reduced Stress (85%)
- Improved Mood (68%)
- Sense of confidence (56%)

Almost all (90%) knitters and crocheters responded that the craft improves their mood. Similarly, nine-in ten knitters and crocheters claim the craft helps them to relax. Seventy-six percent of respondents who say they have health challenges answered that knit and crochet helps them cope. Of those who have health challenges, 85% say it helps them relax. For 81% it decreases stress and for 57% it decreases anxiety.

Seven-in-ten (69%) knitters and crocheters have participated in a knit/crochet group. Our respondents experience the following positive benefits when knitting and crocheting with others.

- Social (78%)
- Happy (59%)
- Sense of community (58%)
- Proud (53%)

Thirty-seven percent of respondents know a child who knits or crochets. They claim they have noticed a positive influence on children who participate in the craft. Forty-six percent have noticed a sense of accomplishment, 31% more self-confidence, 26% perseverance and 24% better concentration.

### **Younger Women Fuel Yarn Evolution- In USA**

Crocheters and knitters of all ages are an active and creative group. In Gastonia, City in North Carolina (NC) Young women ages 25–34 are the secret spark that's fueling knitting and crochet yarn sales across the country, according to research commissioned in Fall, 2004, by Craft Yarn Council of America (CYCA). Since 2002, participation in these crafts increased more than 150% in the 25–34 age categories, jumping from 13% to 33% and representing 6.5 million. The 18-years-and-under age group increased 100%, growing from 8% to 16% or 5.7 million women. Women ages 55–64, followed by a 74% increase in participation, or 7.8 million. Overall, 36% of American women—53 million-know how to knit or crochet, a 51% increase over the past ten years. Coincidentally, 13% of those surveyed can do both crafts.

The two-part market research study conducted for the Council by Research Incorporated of Atlanta, GA, closely paralleled research conducted by the CYCA in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2002. The 2004 study was designed to measure the incidence of U.S. women who know how to knit and crochet; describe yarn usage and shopping patterns among these women; identify which projects are popular and expenditures; and track changes over time. During October and November, 2004, Phase I of the study conducted 1200 telephone interviews from a random, nationally projectable sampling of U.S. households; and Phase II involved in-depth phone interviews among active knitters/crocheters (those who purchased yarn AND knitted or crocheted a project during the past year), again a nationally projectable sampling.

Not only is the incidence level up, but activity also is holding strong, as yarn purchasers made an average of 15.3 projects in 2004, virtually unchanged from 2002. Boding well for the future is the fact that 85% of crocheters and knitters interviewed said they will make as many or more projects next year. More than half of those under 35 years of age plan more projects in 2005.

The Craft Yarn Council's own programs may be a secret weapon in the growth of this lifestyle trend, as its marketing and promotion efforts have produced a steady stream of editorials on knitting and crochet, and a strong Internet presence in the form of message boards, free instructions and helpful hints.

The new research indicates that 30% of women who knit or crochet refer to pattern books for project sources, 25% refer to magazines, 20% get their ideas from friends, while one out of 10 use the Internet to find project ideas. A growing number are using the Internet to find patterns, seek advice, purchase supplies and chat with or meet other knitters and crocheters.

Up-to-date patterns are of major importance to respondents, as only 47% said they were "very satisfied" with up-to-date patterns available at their primary yarn retailer. More than 25% said they purchased "fashion yarn" in 2004 (defined as yarn with interesting textures, such as fur looks, metallics, chenille and boucle). The majority of knitters and crocheters, 37%, spend between \$4–\$7 per skein/ball of yarn, followed closely by 35% who spend between \$2–\$4 per skein/ball. 11% spend \$7–\$10 per skein/ball, and another 11% spend \$10 and up per skein/ball. CYCA's Chairman, Richard Brown, confirms that, "The investment that has been made in new yarns, new magazines and new patterns by our members is phenomenal, but it has paid off."

Throws and Afghans continue to be the favorite projects of both knitters and crocheters, with 53% reporting they made at least one in 2004, followed by baby blankets at 42%, and scarves at 35%. The top expenditures, however, were for shawl and poncho projects, which averaged \$36, an increase of more than 60% from 2002, followed by throws/afghans at \$32.40, and sweaters and vests at \$31.30. All project expenditures, except those for bazaar items, increased since 2002. These customers make an average of 2.8 visits to their primary yarn retailer per project, and buy other items when they're in the store as well.

What research has shown over time is that knitters and crocheters are passionate about their crafts and grow more so with age. "It's not a fad," says Richard Brown, "it's an evolution, a lifestyle phenomenon. And we at CYCA are committed to encouraging and developing this burgeoning craft network of devoted enthusiasts."

### **Possible employment opportunities in local**

In Bangladesh, The garment sector is the largest employer of women in Bangladesh. The garment sector has provided employment opportunities to women from the rural areas that previously did not have any opportunity to be part of the formal workforce. This has given women the chance to be financially independent and have a voice in the family because now they contribute financially.

However, women workers face problems. Most women come from low income families. Low wage of women workers and their compliance have enabled the industry to compete with the world market. Women are paid far less than men mainly due to their lack of education. Women are reluctant to unionize because factory owners threaten to fire them. Even though trade unionization is banned inside the *Export processing Zones (EPZ)*, the working environment is better than that of the majority of garment factories that operate outside the EPZs. But, pressure from buyers to abide by labor codes has enabled factories to maintain satisfactory working conditions.

By 2001 the textile industry employed about 3 million workers of whom 90% are women. By 2013, there were approximately 5,000 garment factories, employing about 4 million people, mostly women, part of Bangladesh's \$19 billion-a-year industry, export-oriented ready-made garment (RMG) industry. Bangladesh is second only to China, the world's second-largest apparel exporter of western brands. Sixty percent of the export contracts of western brands are with European buyers and about forty percent with the American buyers. It has been a major source of employment for rural migrant women in a country that has increasingly limited rural livelihood options, and where women migrants have been largely excluded from formal work in the cities. Although there has not been any significant steps taken to promote crochet but some local fashion houses and charity organization have step forward in this regard. Hajiganj Handicrafts

#### *Crochet Unit*



Hajiganj Handicrafts Crochet Unit was set up in 2005 by Prokritee to support some Behari families. This ethnical group in the North of Bangladesh had to flee their home twice, during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 and again after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. Their chances for healthy homes, education and income had become very low.

Upon receiving required management supports from Hajiganj Handicrafts, Prokritee decided to run this Crochet Unit in Saidpur by using the crochet skills of Bihari women. It is a traditional work that the women learned from their mothers and grandmothers.

Crochet Unit started its journey with 22 women. Together with the assistance and involvement of Prokritees Design and Marketing team, they were able to develop a couple of hundred samples by now and the women received special training on product quality maintenance and packaging. Crochet Producers have also developed their expertise in making different type of products with recycle and new fabrics. Their blankets are very popular in Australian and Canadian markets.

With support of Prokritee many women now have good financial supports, changing their livelihood and giving them chances to buy food, clothing and education for their children.

Another charity organization Pebble began as tiny non-profit, teaching young women how to knit in a spare room. It has since grown into a large-scale place of employment for female artisans, dedicated to providing sustainable work for young women of rural Bangladesh. The women of Pebble can work from their rural communities, eliminating the need to migrate in search of employment. This allows families to stay together, and support themselves with another source of income.

### **The challenge of sustainability**

While consumers continue to purchase more and more apparel as well as to discard it after a short active life, an opposite pressure is changing attitudes towards fashion as an industry and practice. Internet shopping is beginning to make inroads into bricks and mortar shopping with 10 per cent of internet shopping being for clothes and fashion at \$100 average spend for women's clothing, \$90 for men's clothing, and \$90 for shoes (Roy Morgan,

2013b; Player, 2013).

There has been significant growth of crochet retailers who focus on identifying specialist apparel types, crochet market segments and particular price points to grow a consumer base and develop loyal brand fans.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Clothing and fashion is indeed a modern phenomenon, and adaptation to fashions shows a consumer's commitment to modern values such as freedom, uniqueness, and youth. However, fashion consumption in developing countries is heavily influenced by the fashion innovations and trends in the Western part of the world. Accordingly, rather than being a free and unique person, the fashion consumer in developing countries has primarily been a person who is sensitive to, aware of, and conscious of Western fashions. The research highlights that the trending fashion of crocheting around the western part of the world can open the new promising future of knitting industries in Bangladesh, particularly using the craftsmanship of locals. However, it is to be noted that young women folks from our local are yet to be more recognized for what they have been delivering. Their potentials towards yarn crafts or crocheting can represent Bangladesh to be western fashion world in whole new level.

Due to less modernization and expression of freedom, uniqueness, youth and other characteristics of modern society. Both young males and young females in Bangladesh are considerably exposed to fashion-related statements flowing from Western part of the world. However, Bangladesh still has strong cultural roots and keeps members of its society within boundaries to a considerable extent.

## **REFERENCE**

- [1]. Latifee, Enamul Hafiz (2 February 2016). "RMG sector towards a thriving future". The Daily Star.
- [2]. Garment Workers in Bangladesh." Archived June 5, 2011, at the Wayback Machine.
- [3]. <http://www.rmghbd.net/>
- [4]. <https://www.etsy.com/seller-handbook/article/your-guide-to-selling-knit-and-crochet/26915505154>
- [5]. <http://www.vogue.com/article/crochet-trend-how-to-wear-it>
- [6]. <http://www.crochet-world.com/blog/?p=8170>
- [7]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile\\_industry\\_in\\_Bangladesh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_industry_in_Bangladesh)
- [8]. <http://crochet.wikia.com/wiki/Shell>
- [9]. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/264797653068907416/?lp=true>
- [10]. <https://www.thelittlemarket.com/pages/technique-crochet>
- [11]. <https://www.prokritee.com/>
- [12]. <http://www.craftyarncouncil.com/know.html>