Exploring the Cultural Differences in Perception and Expressions of Emotions: A Comparative study of Saraki and Pashto Culture

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Abstract
*This qualitative study **examined** questions regarding the nature and differences between the manifestation and demonstration of feelings in the Saraiki and Pashto-speaking cultures in Pakistan. An exploratory research design **was used**; eight interviews **were conducted,** with half of the participants **being** female and male, and half **belonging to** both Saraiki and Pashto speakers (four representatives from each group in the interviews). The results **indicated** that each culture **had** a distinct pattern for the expression of emotion, informed by linguistic, social, and traditional values. Respondents from the Pashto group **focused** on honor and courage as well as hospitality, and as a group they **showed** their emotions in simpler and more direct ways. Conversely, Saraiki speakers **had** deeper hearts and higher aesthetic emotions, which **led** to a less explicit manifestation. The themes **found** through the analyses **were** the role of cultural norms in emotive behavior, gender variations in emotive behavior, age variations, and the place of the native language in emotive behavior. This case **shed** light on the importance of using cultural triggers for interpreting moods and **highlighted** issues relevant to systems of multicultural health care, education, and social adjustment in communities with widely varying cultural backgrounds.*
Keywords: *Expressing emotions and perceiving emotions, cultural variation, mental health, linguistic effects in expressing emotions.*

Introduction
Feelings are a universal phenomenon and come in various forms that are all directed towards cultural norms, customs and beliefs. These liberal influences have far-reaching cultural effects on expression, behavior and well-being. Societies around the world have different traditions, values and historical conventions that impact on the

feelings of individuals. Knowledge of how individuals control their emotional actions concerning culture is vital considering that there are specific perceptions, mental derailments, and sociological circumstances involved in all cultures.

Culture was said to be the idiomatic life that included beliefs, art, society, norms, and heritage. It was stated that culture was a collection of accumulated bodies of knowledge that humans used to obtain interpretations of experiences and to affect human behavior (Hodgetts et al., 2006). This common ground was what guided beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. According to Tayeb, M.-J. (2003), culture could be defined as the product of the relation between two or three individuals in a time-span until they reached a particular cultural identity. Cultural diversity included variations in customs, values, norms, beliefs, and practices.

Emotions gave subjective experiences that included impressions, thoughts, and bodily feelings that guided behavior and influenced health and well-being. Scholars offered many definitions of emotion. Kleinginna (1981) proposed ninety-two definitions and several skeptical statements. Emotion was defined as a sudden challenge or disturbance caused by fear, surprise, joy, or similar feelings (Larousse Dictionary, 1990). It was also defined as an internal experience such as pain, desire, or hope (Oxford English Dictionary, 1987). Perception was the process through which human's organized sensory information to change how they thought, behaved, and expressed their emotions. Emotions gave subjective experiences that guided action and affected overall well-being.

Countries had unique cultures, languages, and populations that maintained heritage, customs, and history through social practices, attitudes, behavior, emotions, and personal philosophies. Pakistan was a diverse country with four provinces: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab, and Baluchistan. These provinces had different cultural groups such as Sindhi, Baluchi, Pashtun, and Punjabi.

Pashtunwali, a major feature of Pashtun culture, served as a code of conduct that emphasized hospitality, heroism, dedication, and fairness. Music played a major role in preserving Pashtun cultural heritage and values. Folklore and oral traditions acted as channels for passing down cultural knowledge, customs, and moral lessons (Yusufzai et al., 2014). Pashtun poetry by Rehman Baba and Khushal Khan Khattak reflected cultural emotions and preserved cultural identity. Clothing such as shalwar and long-sleeved kameez remained common among men and women. Pashtun weddings followed strong traditions and emphasized gender separation, hospitality, and family bonds.

The culture of the Saraiki people originated from the Indus Valley Civilization. Arabic, Islamic, and Persian cultures influenced Saraiki traditions. Saraiki culture included distinctive customs, language, literature, and music. The Saraiki-speaking region eventually became known as "Saraikistan." The language belonged to the Indo-Aryan group and had nearly 18 million speakers. Festivals such as Sang mela and Pir mela celebrated Saraiki identity. Saraiki music reflected the beauty of desert life. Traditional dances like Saraiki juhmar showed regional culture. Chola was the traditional dress for both genders, while men wore loose trousers and women wore dupatta. Shakir Shuja Abadi gained the title "Godfather of Saraiki" due to his contributions to Saraiki poetry.

The quantitative research study by Lie-Jun Ji et al. (2009) titled Looking into the Past: Cultural Differences in the perception and depiction of past information is published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

The authors examined differences in cultural perception and attitude towards the past information perception and presentation between Chinese and European-Canadian subjects. Their results show that Chinese participants scored Chinese information as more salient, remembered more information as time moved on, and held a cyclical perception of time, as compared to the Canadian participants who held a linear and present quite orientation. Based on this, it is possible to learn that the features of culture may be useful in communication and marketing. The notion of the sufficiency of culture appreciates its significance in the information processing and in aspects capture. Ji et al. (2009) also show that the culturally induced background has the impact on how people recollect the past experience that can consequently lead to the perceived details and the further expression of emotional experience by people represented in different cultures.

Emily A. Butler et al. (2007) in their article titled Emotion regulation and Culture: are the social consequences of emotion suppression culture-specific is based on a mixed-method policy, combing both quantitatively and qualitatively. This is a two-part study analyzing the relationship between emotional control, cultural contexts, and social engagements. Butler and other people investigated 166 women of a mixed culture at the University of Stanford. Conclusions allow seeing that cultural values mediate the social effects of emotion suppression: females who confirmed European values reported more negative results compared to those with bicultural Asian-European values. The article thus outlines the critical role of cultural norms in determining emotion regulation strategies and their connotation. Western European culture with its traits of independence and self-assertion promotes expression of emotion in the majority of situations but, at the same time, constrains the application of emotion suppression to solely self-defensive withdrawals presented by social threats (Butler et al., 2007).

Published in 2013 by Jan B. Engelmann the article titled, "Emotion Perception Across Cultures: The Role of cognitive mechanisms," is a cross-cultural psychological experiment involving perception of emotions under the influence of culture. Using survey and eye-tracking techniques, the researcher, Engelmann, evaluated emotion perception interculturally. The data indicate that, compared to Japanese and Russian participants, American participants performed better when differentiating between high- and low-intensity expressions; this implies that Japanese people and Russians tend to interpret the intensity of emotional statements differently. The role of cultural difference in the process of emotion perception as demonstrated in the study is important. Thus, Engelmann suggests that belief sets, values, knowledge, and behavior practices which are culturally specific may influence the processing of cognitive and neural activity related to the interpreting of emotional displays (Park and Huang, 2010).

R. Thora Bjornsdottir et al. (2017) conducted an investigation called Cultural Differences in Perceiving and Processing Emotions: A Holistic Approach to Person Perception to examine how cultural styles of thinking affect emotion recognition. Based on the methods of the experiment, the research engaged both Japanese and Canadian participants to evaluate their attention and interest to faces as compared to bodies and combinations of emotional responses to face-body composites. Results suggest Japanese participants who inevitably use a holistic thinking style are more focused on bodily cues and are more sensitive to emotional incongruence or congruence than Canadians who focus on facial cues and have an analytic thinking process. This study shows

cultural difference in the field of emotion perceptions and its effects on cross cultural communication. Culture broadly influences cognition and perception and is documented by the works of Markus and Kitayama (1991), Miyamoto (2013), Na et al. (2010), and Nisbett and Miyamoto (2005) and revised by Bjornsdottir and Rule (in press).

The journal article being reviewed is titled Cultural Differences in Emotions; A Context of explaining Emotional Experiences, by B. Mesquita et al, conducted in 2002. The authors look into the ways in which the cultural norms and frameworks of self and interrelationships influence the development of the set of emotions. On the basis of existing literature, they cite the differences in emotional antecedents, appraisals, expressions, and behaviors on a cross-cultural basis. The United States is an individualistic and Japan is a collectivistic society and culture because each focus on emotions associated with personal agency and harmony and interdependence, respectively. Thus, it is advisable to understand emotional disturbances through a culturally-competent perspective because what is considered to be normal experiences of emotions by one community, is not necessarily the same in another. Knowing the applicability of events, which trigger emotions, on cultural models, makes emotional activities more explicit (Mesquita et al., 1997).

The University of Michigan, Perception Publix, University of Michigan, Empirical Hills, Clinton, 2003, publisher offers the following article, in which the authors prove that emotions are universal recognitions, but variations in culture influence the accuracy of recognition, which is called the ingroup advantage. The consequence is that cultural differences can impact the perceived and correct recognition of cross-cultural universal tendencies in emotion recognition. This also identifies the importance of being aware of these differences in order to enhance effective communication between people of various cultures.

Xiaoqian Yan (2016) in their study, Cultural Differences in Perceiving and Recognizing Facial Expression of Basic Emotions, analyzes the similarities and differences in cultural perceiving and categorizing facial expression of basic emotion between the Chinese and British participants. The findings suggest that similarity in perceptual ratings is high, yet, when categorizing, cultural variations occur in the task of expression of emotions (lower portion of the face). This is an experimental and comparative research that involves the application of cross-cultural psychology in that a system of experiments carried out is performed on perception and categorization. The sample includes both Chinese and British participants. This omission allows seeing the general and culture-specific aspects of emotion recognition. Cultural relativism theories used in the earlier parts of the twentieth century assumed that facial expression was primarily cultural and learned (Elfenbein et al., 2002). This is actually true even employing forced-choice recognition techniques, individuals of their own culture portraying emotion are better recognized by their group mates (Izard, 1971; Ekman, 1972; Ekman et al., 1969).

In the article titled Placing the Face in Context: Cultural Differences in the Perception of Facial Emotion, the authors conduct their research in order to examine cross-cultural perceptions of emotion (Takahiko Masuda et al., 2008). The methods of this comparative and experimental study were cross-cultural psychology, Study 1 enrolled and involved S = 39 Americans and S = 36 Japanese as university students whereas Study 2 had S = 22 westerners S = 27 Japanese as participants. Cartoon stimuli with variability of central and background expressions of emotion were introduced and the respondents were asked to rate the central character. Eye

tracking data was used to analyze distribution of attention patterns. The results demonstrated a great difference regarding the cultural aspects, since Japanese participants used much more contextual appeals than Westerners, who paid much attention to facial expression of the central figure. It found a gradient of cross-cultural recognition of facial expression where in some expressions cross cultural convergence was higher than in others (Haidt et al, 1999).

Subsequent research has also established systematic cross-cultural variations in the ratings of intensity (Yarizari et al., 1998) and complexity (Biehl et al., 1997). Furthermore, recognition is more accurately reflected by the extent of exposure to the culture posed (Elfenbein et al., 2002; Russell et al., 1997).

Klaus R. Scherer et al, (2011) In the Eye of the Beholder: Universality and Cultural Specificity in the Expression and Perception of Emotions, is an investigation of how other studies have studied emotion expression and perception. The study of the expression and perception processes in a revised model of the Brunswikian lens and has been published in the International Journal of Psychology. The review has embraced different cultural groups, both western and non-western. Our findings show both universal pattern of emotion recognition, as well as some cultural specificity in emotion recognition expressions, including an ingroup advantage that results from culturally specific 'dialects' of expressions. The paper finds that the debate on emotional universality should be resolved by a better theoretical backing and ecologically sound methods. In fact, the original cross-cultural research into possible cross-cultural differences in thought, language, and practices yielded the earliest more detailed paradigm of the possible culture-bound nature-of-emotion-expression (Lutz et al., 1986). Birdwhistell declared that the expression of emotion, like language, should be interpreted as a set of sign complexes, which are acquired and, therefore, enculturated (Barfield, 1997).

The article by Batja Mesquita etnéal. (2016) titled The Cultural Construction of Emotions is a review of anthropological and psychological academic works; the synthesis combines the insights gathered on the influence of the culture on emotional feelings. The review identifies group and personal process that builds up emotions that are designed to suit cultural values. Results show that different cultures experience emotions differently, depending on cultural tasks and goals, and some emotions like anger or happiness are appropriate according to the way people ought to feel. It concludes the study that emotions are culturally constructed, and when people can reach culturally relevant goals, as well as propose future studies focus on cultural processes that make people have different emotions in different environments.

The article authored by Itziar Fernandez and others under the title Differences between Cultures in Emotional Verbal and Non-Verbal Reactions (2000) describes cultural differences in emotional expression evoked by 21 countries. The study examined verbal and non-verbal responses to joyousness, anger and sadness depending on cultural values which included individualism/collectivism and masculinity/femininity. The result was that feminine, individualistic cultures were open to expression of emotions, compared to masculine cultures where negative emotions were repressed. Women were said to be expressive generally than men and geographical tendencies showed that European and North-American members were more expressive. The researcher concludes that cultural aspects play a significant role in emotional expressions and that future research is recommended on within-country cultural diversity. Rules of display influence not just facial expression, but also

the perception and expression of most elements of emotions (verbal and non-verbal behavior) (Matsumoto et al., 1988). One situation may be given different interpretations by various cultural rules (Mesquita et al., 1992). In the article by Jiri Sasinka et al. (2015), Cross uncultured differences of visual perception, the ultimate goal is to consider the cultural differences of visual perception with a thorough literature surveillance and experiments. The researchers combine nativist/empiricist methods including Framed-Line Test methods. It is found that Westerners are more likely to be a focal object-oriented people wherein art-ka tied to the East Asian culture are more inclined towards context rather than focal objects; suggestions on the culture characteristic of East Asia is also presented on the vulnerability to visual illusions, object recognition as well as threshold visual memory. The importance of cultural conditions for the development of perceptual and cognitive styles as well as the necessity of cultural adaptation of maps and revisualization are fundamental to the research.

The article by Richard E. Porter et al. (1996) titled Cultural Influences on Emotional Expression investigates how people who belong to different cultures express emotions. Within the framework of this theoretical analysis, bulk of literature has been synthesized, cultural dynamics, i.e. display rules, individualism collectivism and nonverbal communications have been discussed. The researcher determines six major emotions embraced in a similar manner across different cultures, with secondary emotions differing based on age, gender, and culture. The authors point out that to become competent in intercultural communication, it is important to know the cultural peculiarities, so display rules, situation, and non-authoritative signals should be remembered.

The article by Krystyna 2 Aune et al. (1996) is titled Cultural Differences in the Self -reported Experience and Expression of Emotions in Relationships, the researchers examined the differences in emotional experience and expression in romantic relationships due to cultural differences. A survey of 134 Japanese Americans, Filipino Americans and Euro Americans indicated that the Filipino Americans reported the greater intensity of experiencing and expressing positive emotions, and of feeling their expression more appropriate. There were no major cultural variations on negative emotion. The research reveals cultural differences in positive emotional experience and expressions in romantic relationships.

The article by Tonglin Jiang et al. (2019), titled Cultural Differences in Humor Perception, Usage and Implications, examines differences in humor perception and humor use in Eastern and Western cultures. The methodological basis of the systematic review of the existing literature showed positive perception of humor in the Western culture, and also, ambivalence in the Eastern cultures. The use of humor is also different as Westerners use it often, whereas Easterners use it only when there are experts. Adaptive humor styles generate positive effect on mental health in both cultures albeit the Eastern cultures show lesser association between maladaptive humor and mental damage. Humor is a survival mechanism of individuals because it helps them to withstand the intense competition (Wilson et al., 1977; Martin et al., 2018). The article notes the necessity of empirical research on cultural differences in humor and the creation of culturally appropriate humor scales. To be specific regarding cultural differences in humor usage, we turn to the four types of humor: self-enhancing, affiliative, self-defeating, and aggressive humor (Martin et al., 2003).

Rationale

Emotions did not depend only on individuals, but perception and expression of emotions mostly did. People interpreted and regulated emotions according to personal experience and cultural norms. This study examined differences in how Saraiki and Pashto groups in Pakistan perceived and expressed emotions. The two ethnic groups shared unique linguistic, social, and cultural characteristics, which made them suitable for comparison. The Saraiki community was expected to be more restrained and indirect in emotional expression because they were known for literary sophistication. The Pashto community was known for ideas of honor and survival, which made them more open and direct in expressing emotions. These cultural differences gave an opportunity to study how traditions, social values, and cultural structures influenced emotional expression and communication. The study contributed to cross-cultural psychology by improving understanding of how cultural orientations shaped emotional expression. It also helped reduce cultural gaps between Saraiki and Pashto groups. For Pakistan, this understanding supported social inclusion. The study created new knowledge about how cultural background influenced emotional processes in these two communities.

Research Questions

- How do you cope with emotions in a multicultural environment?
- How the emotional expression of the Saraiki people and Pashto people do are differed?
- How do you make yourself comfortable when you are around people belonged from a different cultural background?

Methodology

Research design

The study followed an exploratory research design to explore how cultural differences shape emotional understanding and expression among people from Saraiki and Pashto backgrounds. Participants were required to be native speakers of either Saraiki or Pashto, aged 20–39, and to have lived within their cultural community for at least five years. Individuals with mixed cultural backgrounds, limited language proficiency, neurological or psychological conditions, or significant exposure to multiple cultures were excluded to maintain cultural clarity and authenticity in responses.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A purposive sample of eight students from Gomal University was selected, ensuring that participants had relevant cultural knowledge and experiences.

Demographic Information

Sr. No	Code	Gender	Age	Education	Culture
Summary Table 1: Table of study sample (N=8)					
1.	FS1	Female	23	BS Psychology	Sariki
2.	FP2	Female	21	BS Anesthesia	Pashto
3.	FS3	Female	22	BS Dental	Sariki
4.	FP4	Female	20	BS Sport Sciences	Pashto
5.	MS5	Male	25	BS Psychology	Sariki
6.	MS6	Male	23	BS Computer sciences	Sariki
7.	MP7	Male	23	BS IT	Pashto
8.	MP8	Male	22	M Phil English	Pashto

Note: M=male, F=female, P=Pashto, S=Saraki.

Data Collection Strategies

The interview assessment method was used to provide data. Semi-structured interview procedures were adopted and included open ended questions that were aimed at getting qualitative data at length. The study included informed consent before the interviews were carried out to ensure that each interviewee understands the agendas of the study and his or her rights as an interviewee. The interviews were carried out in an intimate and yet comfortable environment (between 45 to 60 minutes). Members were advised to share their ideas, experiences, and perceptions without negativity, in a free and unrestricted environment. The interviewer actively listened to the interviewee, engaged with all the questions as well as taking detailed notes. The semi-structured format allowed the framework to become flexible and ask follow-up questions, thus providing a complex understanding of the participants.

Procedure

Ethical approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Department of Psychology, Gomal University in D.I. Khan prior to data collection to ensure adherence to research standards and to protect participants' rights and well-being. The process began with the development of an interview guide, which included open-ended and semi-structured questions designed according to the study objectives and informed by a comprehensive review of the literature. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of participants to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and effectiveness of the questions in eliciting meaningful responses. Feedback from stakeholders led to revisions, which were incorporated into the final Ichigo country report.

Eight participants were then purposefully and conveniently selected based on inclusion criteria, ensuring representation from both cultural groups. The sample consisted of four males and four females: two Saraiki females, two Saraiki males, two Pashto females, and two Pashto males. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and how their responses would be utilized. Written informed consent was obtained from

all participants to confirm voluntary participation, and they were assured of confidentiality, with no personally identifiable information being disclosed.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted in a safe and confidential environment using the finalized open-ended questions. Each interview lasted between 35 and 50 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy in both data collection and subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis

The thematic analysis was used to provide a more detailed insight into the obtained data. Instead, the methodology is inductive, and no preconceived notions were presented. The main goal of the analysis was to determine and define the cultural contrast of emotional perception and expression of Saraki and Pashto cultures.

Ethical Considerations

The research strictly followed ethical standards aimed at enhancing the privacy of the participants and encouraging their well-being. All participants had signed informed consent before the data collection, and the informed consent contained information about confidentiality. The investigator acted in an objective and nonbiased way, thus guaranteeing the credibility and validity of the findings during the research. The experiment was carefully designed so as not to negatively affect the subjects and all the necessary controls were established to ensure that subject well-being was not compromised. All the information regarding the participants was stored safely with respect to the relevant regulations where all confidential information is kept secure. In addition, the data collection was carried out only after receiving the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which ensured all the relevant ethical norms were met.

Results

The results of the study the cultural differences in perception and expression of emotions a comparative study of Saraki and Pashto culture were arranged by providing separate tables and thematic maps of codes, subthemes and main themes discussed on latent level. The data were collected using open-ended, semi-structured interviews and the inherent responses were coded to draw up on repeated patterns, underlying depths, and experiences. The themes illuminate how members of both cultures perceive, express and interpret emotional states based on existing norms and manipulative messaging tools, as well as the relationship between individuals.

Table 2: Themes, super subordinate themes and codes from participants perspectives (N=8)

Theme	Subthemes	Codes
Cultural Framework Shaping Emotional Expression.	Gender-Based Emotional Expressions Age and Emotional Expression Language as a Medium of Emotional understanding	culture restrict emotions, culture effect emotions, happiness, hospitality, anger is not acceptable males suppress, female express, gender different emotions, emotions Changed with age Older people are less expressive, language help in expressing emotions. Easier to express emotions with same culture,
Cross-Cultural Interaction and Psychological Impact.	Social Interaction and Cultural Compatibility Perception and thought Differences Due to Culture. Cultural Conflict and Misunderstandings.	same emotions, same culture, prefer same culture, comfortable with same cultural people, Cognitive influenced by cultural, deviation, cultural dissimilarity.
Language and Communication of Emotions.	Language barriers. Same cultural connection. Stronger native emotional Perception.	misunderstandings, comfortable, intracultural, precisely conveyed, understandable, correct delivery of emotions,

Emerging themes of the study

Thematic analysis of the interviews highlighted key cultural patterns in how Saraiki and Pashto individuals perceive and express emotions. Three major themes and their brief subthemes emerged from the data.

Theme-1: Cultural framework shaping emotional expression

The theme cultural framework shaping emotional expression illustrates sociocultural contexts which shape the sentimental feeling, sentential perception, and most importantly, expression. In any given society, distinct emotional reactions are projected in specific events and thus, they are sanctioned as either right or wrong.

"In my opinion, culture determines the expression and interpretation of feelings." (FS3)

"I believe that it is the role of culture that influences our ways of expressing feelings." (FS1)

Subtheme-I: Gender based emotional expression

To illustrate a case, to be a man, in most societies, is to be less emotional than to be a woman, and therefore, to prescribe a separation in the range of emotions that are ever manifested at any time.

"Gender in my culture is quite important." (FS3)

"As a woman, I have realized that we are given space to express our personal feelings more, whereas men are demanded to conceal their feelings" (FS1)

Subtheme-II: Age and emotional expression

Similarly, the age can serve as a moderating variable in emotional communication, with the younger generations being more expressive (or more active on the Internet) or old generations being persistent in the use of more restrained forms of communication of feelings.

"The elderly tend to be more introverted and it is accepted- it is regarded as wise and powerful" (FS3)

"My community does not have sentimental older people. That would be respectable and grown up. The same cannot be said of younger individuals like me... we are more open." (FS1)

Subtheme-III: Language is a medium of emotional understanding

Language is a significant means of communication and cognizing feeling; more specifically, the absence or lack of lexicon of a particular emotion within an individual can shape how an individual feels and expresses that emotion. The cultural framings of N. u. determine the emotional behaviour of a person, how he or she relates with other people and the bondage and attachment of feelings within a bigger community.

"I am able to communicate when I use the Saraiki language." (FS3)

"My native tongue is rich in emotion that I do not find in other languages." (MS5)

"I most express myself when I use Saraiki" (FS1)

Theme-2: Cross-cultural Interaction and Psychological Impact

Cross-Cultural Interaction and Psychological Impact help to understand how other cultural groups influence emotional expression and psychological well, social integration and emotional and psychological health. The central theme indicates the necessity to enhance cultural sensitivity in order to maintain positive social and emotional interactions across cultural borders.

"I am more involved with others of my own codes and cultures, the Pashtun, since we share similar values and language." (MP7)

"My cultural background has a profound impact on my expressive affectivity and social life." (FS1)

Subtheme-I: Social interaction and cultural compatibility.

It assumes that people experience a higher degree of emotional comfortability when communicating with their own cultural group due to a common language and value system.

"Residing in other cultures is not easy" (MP7)

"The individual adopts a relatively protected style of expressing." (FS1)

Subtheme- II: Perception and thought differences due to culture

The cultures also determine the way in which the emotions are perceived and interpreted thus creating divergent interpretations to the same affective attribute or context.

"The cultural upbringing influences our perception of things" (MP7)

"The Saraiki community members are open-minded when expressing their feelings." (FS1)

"I have noted that different cultures perceive behavioural expressions in contrasting manner." (MP8)

Subtheme-III: Cultural conflict and misunderstanding

Sometimes these contradictions trigger misperception or confrontations, especially in the multicultural environment, including higher institutions of learning, thus affecting the affective discourse and connections.

"Language difference has also been a problem and leads to misunderstanding." (FS1)

"Possibility of misunderstanding owing to contrary interpretations." (MP7)

Theme-3: Language and Communication of Emotions

The theme "Language and Communication of Emotions" explores how language plays a central role in the perception, expression, and interpretation of emotions, especially within and across cultural contexts.

"It feels more comfortable to share the feelings using Saraiki due to its connection with personal experience." (MS6)

"Strong influence of my cultural identity over my cognitive and affective processes." (MP8)

"The ability to properly represent my feelings in Saraiki will provide me with emotional security and help me interact with other people more efficiently." (FS3)

Subtheme-I: Language Barriers

Language barriers hinder feelings of understanding particularly when one tries to express feelings in a foreign tongue, therefore this leads to the development of a misunderstanding or lack of emotions. The inability to express complicated emotions because of a lapse in fluency and the absence of emotional intimacy can be rejected as emotional intimacy.

Quite to the contrary, the lack of interlingually connections of the cultures simplifies the process of emotional communication and binds it down the alliance of shared vocabulary and scenes causing more sympathy and compression.

"Communication with the Pashtuns often works against us due to the inability to understand each other because of tonal and expressive differences." (FS3)

"These differences have, on some occasions, caused conflict." (MP8)

Subtheme-II: Same-Culture Connection

Participants feel more emotional protection and expressive when they interact among the native cultural and linguistic environment.

"There is a stronger relationship with those who share my cultural beliefs." (MS6)

"I prefer same cultural people." (FS3)

Subtheme-III: Stronger Native Emotional Perception

Good native perceptions of emotions mean that the sensitivity to emotional undertones in a native language makes native speakers more accurate and sensitive to the moods of other people, which, of course, augments and enhances the interpretive sensitivity. The given sentence is a useful remark on the role of language on the emotional perception of people. The author also confines that the capacity to respond on such a profound

emotional level, which people build the structure upon their experience, is reinforced by the way language organizes the thoughts of people.

"Culture has a great influence over displaying and deciphering emotions as it instils these processes within upbringing context." (FS3)

"Some of my cultural symbols like Jumar which have meant much to my culture but can be misconstrued by other people include these. This often contributes to my tendency to relate to people within my culture background." (MS6)

Discussion

The aims of the phenomenological research were to observe how cultural variability affected the perception of affective states and the articulation of the same, as well as to conduct a comparative study of the influence of cultural variability on the perception of affective states in the case of the Saraiki and Pashto communities. The influence of cultural determinants was also credited in the formation of affective appraisal, regulation, and expression; therefore, this study aimed at enlightening the contributions cultural variables had in regulating emotional behaviors in a multicultural environment. Through the acquisition of phenomenological data on undergraduate students at Gomal University, we attempted to establish the activities of affect and processes of these specific cultural structures.

The findings also showed that culture had a positive influence on affecting the perception and expression of feelings in a substantial manner. A different pattern of understanding and expressing emotions, especially in the aspects of sociocultural and family life, was revealed by participants of the Saraiki and Pashto groups. For example, affective openness and verbal expression for Saraiki respondents were much more common, while affective reticence and a tendency to rely upon nonverbal cues were found among Pashto respondents. These tendencies mirrored other cultural values (e.g., collectivism, honor, interdependence) that were central to these population groups.

Another interesting conclusion lay in emotional comfort within a multicultural environment. The respondents said that they felt more comfortable expressing emotions to others of their cultural cohort. This finding was consistent with the in-group advantage hypothesis of Elfenbein, Schoaler, Sinff, and Brschick (2003), who explained that people were more attuned to affective cues when these cues were embedded in one's own culture. In-group comfort led to the feeling of psychological security, while contact with culturally dissimilar individuals sometimes caused emotional inhibition or misunderstanding.

This research question affirmed that kinship and social networks dominated affective expression and perception. Interviewees explained that cultural conditionings (personal roles, social responsibility) were direct determiners of emotional communication. For instance, male Pashtun participants were more likely to report low levels of emotional expressivity because of strong masculine norms, while female Saraiki participants were more likely to report high levels of emotionality within the family.

These results justified the claims of Mesquita et al. (2002) that the accentuation of emotion was deeply rooted in cultural beliefs about who and how people related. Our results also agreed with those of Butler et al. (2007), who found that regulation styles of emotion and their social impact were culturally diverse.

Moreover, the data suggested that the importance of cultural differences in affective expression could affect mental health awareness and the effectiveness of interventions. Study subjects recognized that cross-cultural misunderstandings during communication might foster a sense of alienation or being misunderstood. This highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive psychological service delivery, especially in situations where Saraiki's and Pashtuns came together for frequent engagements and lived in diverse communities.

Limitations

The study sample was small because the inquiry was conducted qualitatively and the participants were selected purposively. This therefore meant that the results were not replicable to a wider population. Moreover, the sample did not effectively represent the participants because they were not selected within a broad age group and other backgrounds, which limited the representativeness of other cultures in a broader setting. Loss of objectivity due to self-reported data could have resulted in social desirability bias. Respondents might have expressed feelings that they felt ought to be so and not what they actually felt. The respondents were recruited in academic settings and their educational levels were relatively high. Their encounters with various cultures could have prompted their expression of affect to a level that neutralized the authenticity of purely cultural differences. The family environment, upbringing, and personal experiences were not addressed in detail, which might have influenced further the expression of affectivity along with cultural values.

Conclusion

this study provided an explanation of the ways Saraiki's and Pashto people understood and articulated their affective conditions. These findings revealed a conclusive impact of cultural setting on emotional behavior. People with different cultural backgrounds not only showed affection in different ways but also defined it differently based on traditions, language, and cultural beliefs. Respondents from the Saraiki group showed a preference for affective expression that was less intense and more circumspect with respect to the audience, while Pashtuns showed more indirect and upfront affective expression. The effect on gender was also observed, indicating that women were seen as more emotional as opposed to men who were expected to retain their composure. Another incidental factor was age, where mature participants were found to be more restrained emotionally, a phenomenon that was linked to maturity.

Language served as a mediator of critical function, and members were noted to have been more emotionally comfortable when communicating in their own language. This resulted in frequent misunderstandings in cross-cultural experiences in terms of different affective cues and communication styles.

The bottom line was that both Saraiki and Pashto participants had rich affective traditions due to their unique cultural backgrounds. These cultural differences were considered crucial in enhancing better interpersonal interactions and promoting harmony in multicultural communities like Pakistan. This information could be of great importance to educators, counsellors, and social workers working within different communities.

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