



## **Sociocultural Factors Determining the Reproductive Behavior of Nomads: A Case Study of District Bhakkar**

Ali Raza Khan<sup>1</sup>, Shumaila Raheem<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Arslan<sup>3</sup>, Sajida Parveen<sup>4</sup> & Taimoor Tabasum<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BS Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Sargodha Sub Campus Bhakkar

<sup>2</sup> MPhil Scholar, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan (Pakistan)

<sup>3</sup> MPhil Scholar, Sociology Department University of Agriculture Faisalabad

<sup>4</sup> BS Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Sargodha Sub Campus Bhakkar

<sup>5</sup> MSC Scholar, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University of Sargodha (Pakistan)

Email: [taimoortabasum1414@gmail.com](mailto:taimoortabasum1414@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*This study aims to evaluate nomad's reproductive behavior and identify the key determining sociocultural factors. A cross-sectional investigation was carried out using a quantitative methodology. Data was gathered in three tehsils of district Bhakkar through Purposive sampling technique. The sample size was 105. The statistical results show  $r^2 = 68.8$ , the majority of nomads indicated that son preference is highly widespread in their groups and that trends of early marriages are a part of their unique culture. Their females were confronting unwanted pregnancies due to customary views. Large numbers of nomads concur that socio-cultural variables determine their reproductive behavior. The hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between sociocultural factors and the reproductive behavior of nomads is supported by the correlation result of 0.830\*\* with a significant value of 0.00. This indicates a strong positive correlation between sociocultural factors and the reproductive behavior of nomads. The regression results provide support for the hypothesis that there is a positive effect of socio-cultural factors on reproductive behavior among nomads. The sociocultural factors that determine the reproductive behavior of nomads are as follows traditional beliefs, early marriages, forced marriages, unplanned pregnancy, son preference, fertility preference, unsafe abortion, sex without marriages and influence of suppose on childbearing. The study highlights the importance of sociocultural factors in determining the reproductive behavior of nomads in District Bhakkar. The desire for male children, cultural beliefs about the value of fertility, limited access to modern contraceptive methods, and traditional gender roles are among the factors that contribute to high fertility rates among nomads. This study provides valuable insights into the reproductive behavior of nomads and can inform policies and programs aimed at improving their reproductive health and well-being.*

### **Keywords**

Nomads, Reproductive Behavior, Sociocultural Factors

### **Introduction**

The nomadic population's reproductive behavior has always been a research topic of interest mainly because of their cultural practices and how they are socially ostracized. Fertility patterns in the pastoralists/acquiring societies have therefore continued to be shaped by sociocultural factors that include practices, religion, and culture (Wulifan et al., 2022). Pastoral communities have been known to exist at the periphery of sedentary communities in that they have evolved two compatible reproductive behaviors that fit their way of life (Honeychurch & Makarewicz, 2016). Similar to the general culture, childbirth control, birth control intervals, and child-rearing plans of nomadic families are determined by their abilities to adapt to unfavorable environments and the unavailability of proper

healthcare facilities (Gebrerufael & Hagos, 2024). For example, the nomadic people of District Bhakkar, Pakistan are socially and geographically marginal and do not have any professional knowledge and techniques about family planning and reproductive behavior and depend only on traditional norms and beliefs (Ali et al., 2019). Reproductive behavior can be described as the choice made as well as the actual steps being taken about conception, pregnancy, birth, sterility, and contraception. Sociocultural elements refer to the cultural, social, and religious beliefs within people or culture, morality, and etiquette among others (Arousell & Carlbom, 2016). These factors may include gender roles, system of kinship, religion, and traditional practices of health among the nomadic populations since they are foremost determinants of reproductive preference as well as the results yielded. Some research works done by researchers from different parts of the world include reproductive behavior among marginalized and / or nomadic peoples with more emphasis on cultural view related factors (Cattaneo, 2019). Some examples include: compare studies of nomadic groups in the Africa where the constraints such as; poor accessibility to health care, low education standards and preset perceptions of cultures lead to low use of contraception's and high fertility. Research in South Asia has pointed to effect of culture of patriarchy and religious beliefs on women's decision making on reproductive matters. In Pakistan, although accented to health crises in rural and tribal areas, minimal studies have precisely targeted the reproductive health status of nomadic people including District Bhakkar (Asif et al., 2023). Although there has been research into the reproductive health problems faced by women living in rural and tribal areas, little has been done for nomadic women. While the scholarly literature focuses largely on the inability to obtain medical treatment or birth control as key facets of nomads' reproductive strategy, they do not describe the nuanced sociopolitical factors behind the latter. Also, the particular focus on the nomadic communities in District Bhakkar has not been explored usually (Abdirisak, 2023). There is a persistent knowledge gap on how community culture, social structure, and migration affect the reproductive health of women. This research therefore seeks to address this gap by identifying concrete sociocultural determinants of reproductive behaviour in the identified communities, as well as recommending culturally suitable interventions. The topic of RH among Nomadic populations especially within District Bhakkar is the least researched and least served; particularly in the domain of healthcare, family planning, and education. Cultural factors exert maximum influence on reproductive behavior; however, the extent and effects of such factors on nomadic populations' contraceptive practices, and fertility rates still represent questions.

### **Research Question**

Keeping in view the issue, there are two main questions of this study.

- i. What is the reproductive behavior of nomads?
- ii. What are the sociocultural factors determining the reproductive behavior of nomads?

### **Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relation between socio-cultural factors and the reproductive behavior of nomads.

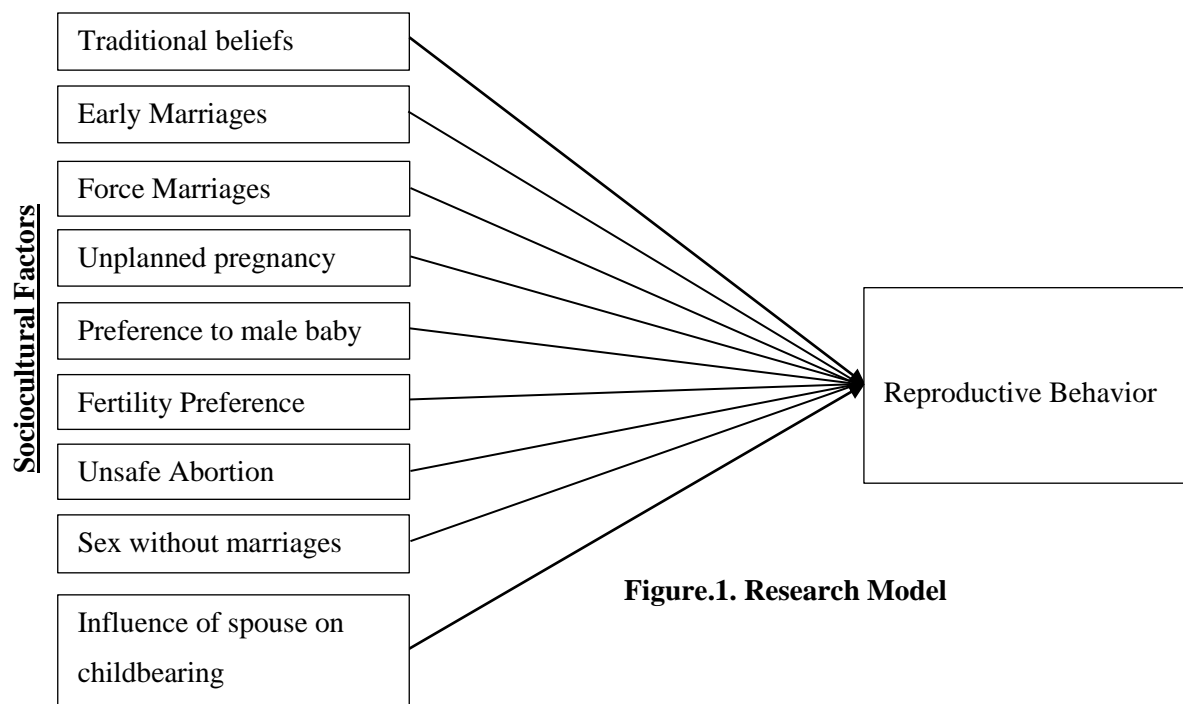
**Hypothesis 2:** There is a positive effect of socio-cultural factors on the reproductive behavior of nomads.

### **Research Objective**

- i. To assess the reproductive behavior of nomads.
- ii. To determine the significant socio-cultural predictors that shapes the reproductive behavior of nomads.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is by understanding the sociocultural factors that impact the reproductive behavior of nomads, this study can inform the development of culturally sensitive interventions that can improve their access to and utilization of reproductive health services, ultimately promoting their reproductive health and well-being. The study will provide valuable insights into the disparities in reproductive health outcomes experienced by nomads and help to address the challenges that limit their access to their reproductive behavior. This study will increase understanding of the unique sociocultural factors that shape the reproductive behavior of nomads, promoting cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. It can lay the foundation for future research on the reproductive behavior of nomadic communities and provide a basis for comparative studies across different regions and populations.



**Figure.1. Research Model**

**Review of Literature**

Nomads are individuals primarily dependent on livestock herding, and for whom spatial mobility serves as a vital survival strategy. Across different ethnic groups, nomads are often perceived as homogeneous communities. It is possible to find some resemblance between one or another nomadic tribe. Though maintaining that ‘all nomads’ are different and that it may be virtually impossible to understand why they choose the lifestyle, we may still pinpoint some features they share (Chan, 2017). That is why when it is considered incredible that some individuals reside in camps and travel from town to town during their seasonal migration in modern towns and cities. These communities are integrated in this environment and with their hundreds of animals – sheep and goats that are vital for their existence (Snorek, 2016). Some nomads move through beautiful painted horses and mules during their translocations, while the bulk move on foot doing thousands of kilometers in a few weeks when migrating. Here, we discuss several cultural determinants that affect reproductive behavior and health among nomads. An important influence on reproductive behavior is traditional practices not only because of traditional beliefs stereotyped in these societies (Fareo & Ateegu, 2020). Family planning choices are made matter-of-fact developments collectively with traditional values having considerable effects on fertility preferences, marriage practices, and child-rearing choices. In most nomadic communities, high fertility is usually associated with the retention of oral culture and a patrilineal system of governance in which children are critical to the sustainability and success of a group of people (Gammino et al., 2020). If the research is done in certain areas such as the Bhakkar province, then there yet exist culturally defined family sizes, and the roles and status of male children are prioritized due to the perceived productive capabilities of the bachelors. Families try to gain greater size to ensure offspring to support aging parents and extend family lineage for labor in the pastures, considering high fertility as insurance (Baker et al., 2016). Another practice that is very prevalent in the nomadic groups is early marriage this being instigated by sociocultural beliefs and economic factors. Early childbearing is normally deemed appropriate especially in families everybody feels that families have to marry off daughters early to ensure they sustain the dignity of their family (Abdikadyrova et al., 2018). It causes high birth rates at the same time as limiting education and employment of women, early and often pregnancies, and little access to birth control. Tribally influenced forced marriages add another layer of decision-making to reproductive ones. As in most traditional cultures, the freedom of an individual especially the woman is not easily exercised (Kipgen, 2020). Women in forced marriage are encouraged to prove easily that they are capable of bear children hence contributing to high fecundity. Sexual decisions are not fully in the hands of young people, and as such, there seems to be high teenage-pregnancies because in countries with low

levels of education and access to health facilities, the number of unwanted pregnancies is high (SINDAYIHEBA & NIYOMUKIZA, 2022). The issue is that once clients become nomadic, it becomes much harder for them to get contraceptives and reproductive health information, as people in those circumstances strictly segregate them and societally stigmatize modern contraceptive use. Another factor that has been found to affect reproductive behavior is the desire to have male children. Boys children are always expected to be breadwinners in the family thus very important (Kale & Aslan, 2021). Such a preference can compel families to keep on childbirth until an heir is produced, a male child, a factor that fuels high fertility levels. They may lead to neglect of female children and selective practices that exacerbate situations that alter sex ratios. Knowledge of human fertility is dominated by myths and practicability as it reflects what is always preferred by families; large numbers of labourers in pastoral activities (Talinbayi et al., 2019). High fertility is further boosted by cultural beliefs and perceptions about children being proud and future security. Terminating pregnancy in searching for unsafe abortions puts women at a very high risk, particularly in regions where there is poor access to health. Again conventional culture is used when women have to resort to some dangerous procedures to deal with pregnancy because they are frowned upon (Danaenia & Eilbeigipoor, 2018). Coupled with these ethnicity-related stigmas are restricted access to health care and a consequent increased risk of performing unsafe abortions with considerable implications for maternal health. Pre-marital or extra-marital sex for instance which is frowned upon in most traditional nomadic societies is practiced but secretly. This kind of conduct may result in unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion—thus demonstrating a powerful compatibility with the traditions (Ali et al., 2022). Spouses also play an important part in decisions regarding childbearing, especially in patriarchal cultures. In the Bhakkar district, the authority for reproductive responsibilities rests mainly with the male head of the home (Brannen & Moss, 2023). Consequently, women hardly make decisions regarding fertility and contraception but obtain pregnancy when they have it, leading to increased fertility.

### **Theoretical Framework**

**Life History Theory:** Life history theory is a theory that aims at explaining the choices people undertake of either growth and development, reproduction, and existence. It proposes that people apropos distribute assets in a way based on their future reproductive value. The concept of life history theory posits that humans are cursed with a finite amount of resources that an individual can utilize for growth, survival, and reproduction in their lifetime. For example, whereas an iTero parous species foraging for food will expect to have limited reproductive opportunities in the future, he or she will have little choice but to grow and survive in the present, whereas a species that expects to have many reproductive opportunities in the future will fare better by reproducing now in the present time. LHT has widely been used to explain the life behavior of various species, including humans. It has been employed to predict the course of reproductive activities such as the initiation of menstruation, the conclusion of menstruation, and the rate of childbearing throughout the lifetime. In human populations, the peripheral life history approach indicates that people use different priorities in the allocation of resources for growth and development, reproduction, or survival depending on a set of factors which the most significant are biological, social, and cultural. When it comes to understanding the reproductive choices and behaviors of the nomadic people, life history theory can come in handy to explain how factors like mobility and resource scarcity that affect nomadic people can affect the formation of life history strategies. For instance, commitment to the nomadic lifestyle may mean that a community lacks certain raw materials that they can use to cultivate and develop on or may mean they cannot get jobs to support and raise children. They may affect the rhythm and frequency of reproduction on the nomads' part. It also means that the level of existing risk and uncertainty might change with this lifestyle, and this may affect the reproduction strategies. For example, in some nomadic populations of people, the utilitarian need to survive and find food, or reduce the population in reaction to food shortage or environmental pressures may be more important than reproducing. On the other hand in stability and resource availability, everyone strives for reproduction rather than survival or resource acquisition. In broader conclusions, this study shows that life history theory is a beneficial framework for analyze reproductive behavior with regard to nomads because this theory reveals how biological aspects interact with social and cultural factors and predict transitions in values between growth, survival, and reproduction. It is also worth to point that proliferative nomadic culture

is rather diverse, thus, to get an understanding of the reproductive behavior of definite nomadic populations the study of their cultural characteristics and ecological environment is required.

**Methodology**

The current study used a cross-sectional and quantitative research approach in identifying sociocultural factors determining the reproductive behavior of nomads in District Bhakkar. The target population was nomadic males and females between 16 to 49 age from three tehsils: Darya Khan, Bhakkar, and Mankera. For this study, the sample size of 105 was determined from the total population of 350 individuals, using Krejcie and Morgan’s table, after which a purposive sampling technique was conducted to collate the data from respondents. Data was gathered between 15, January 2023 and 15, February 2023, through a well-structured Lickert scale questionnaire designed to capture key variables such as traditional beliefs, early marriages, unplanned pregnancies, and fertility preferences. Given the nomads' limited education and mobility, the researcher administered the survey personally to ensure accurate data collection. The study adhered to ethical principles including cultural sensitivity, informed consent, and respect for participant autonomy. For data analysis, SPSS software was used to perform both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis was used for demographic characteristics, while Pearson’s correlation and linear regression were conducted to explore the relationships and predictive power and to check the effect of sociocultural factors on reproductive behavior.

**Data Analysis and Results**

**Table No.1**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Main Findings (Percent)</b>
Gender	Male: 35.2%, Female: 64.8%
Age	18 to 25: 36.2%, 25 to 30: 44.8%, 30 to 35: 15.2%, 35 to 40: 3.8%
Education	Illiterate: 86.7%, Primary: 8.6%, Middle: 4.8%
Marital Status	Single: 8.6%, Married: 69.5%, Separated: 10.5%, Divorced: 6.7%, Widow: 4.8%
Age at Marriage	18 to 25: 48.6%, 25 to 30: 27.6%, 30 to 35: 18.1%, 35 to 40: 5.7%
Occupation	Beggar/Trash Picker: 57.1%, Shepherd: 16.2%, Labor: 11.4%, Craft: 8.6%, Other: 6.7%
Personal Income	5,000-10,000: 53.3%, 10,000-15,000: 36.2%, 15,000-20,000: 10.5%
Family Type	Joint: 44.8%, Nuclear: 21.9%, Extended: 33.3%
Gender of Household Head	Male: 87.6%, Female: 12.4%
Family Members	10-12 members: 38.1%, 5-7 members: 19%, 7-10 members: 13.3%
Number of Children	8-10 children: 54.3%, 2-4 children: 15.2%
Locality	Rural: 93.3%, Urban: 6.7%
Love for Spouse	Agree: 66.7%, Strongly Agree: 6.7%, Disagree: 9.5%
Mate Selection (Own Choice)	Agree: 79%, Strongly Agree: 9.5%
Love Spending Time with Spouse	Agree: 70.5%, Strongly Agree: 5.7%, Disagree: 5.7%
Group Protects Privacy of Couples	Agree: 64.8%, Strongly Disagree: 14.3%
Care for Pregnant Women	Agree: 63.8%, Strongly Disagree: 8.6%
Family Supports Social Well-being	Agree: 62.9%, Strongly Disagree: 16.2%
Support for Newly Married Couples	Agree: 63.8%, Strongly Disagree: 18.1%
Son Preference	Agree: 65.7%, Disagree: 17.1%
Prenatal/Postnatal Care	Agree: 62.9%, Strongly Disagree: 16.2%
Early Marriages	Agree: 63.8%, Strongly Disagree: 23.8%
Forced Marriages	Agree: 64.8%, Strongly Disagree: 11.4%
Unplanned Pregnancy	Agree: 52.4%, Strongly Disagree: 26.7%
Desire for Male Baby	Agree: 54.3%, Strongly Disagree: 25.7%

Fertility Preference	Agree: 58.1%, Strongly Disagree: 17.1%
Unsafe Abortions	Agree: 59%, Disagree: 21.9%
Commonness of Premarital Sex	Strongly Disagree: 61%, Agree: 20%
Large Family Preference	Agree: 71.4%, Disagree: 8.6%
Influence on Childbearing	Agree: 59%, Disagree: 21.9%

This table.1 summarizes the demographic, social, and cultural characteristics of nomads in District Bhakkar. The population is predominantly female (64.8%) and falls mostly within the 25 to 30-year age range (44.8%). Education levels are extremely low, as 86.7% of respondents are illiterate. Most individuals are married (69.5%), with nearly half marrying between 18 to 25 years old (48.6%). Occupations primarily consist of begging or trash picking (57.1%), and personal income levels are low, with over half earning between PKR 5,000-10,000 (53.3%). Joint family systems are common (44.8%) and the majority of households are male-headed (87.6%). Families are typically large, with 38.1% having 10-12 members, and more than half of families have 8-10 children (54.3%). All respondents practice Islam, and most live in rural areas (93.3%). Social and cultural attitudes reveal strong family and marital values, with 66.7% agreeing they love their spouse, and 79% stating they chose their mate. However, traditional practices persist, as 63.8% support early marriages and 64.8% agree with forced marriages. Care for pregnant women is generally supported (63.8%), though there are concerns about prenatal and postnatal care (62.9% agreeing, but 16.2% strongly disagreeing). Son preference remains prevalent (65.7%), and 54.3% expressed a desire for male children. The community shows a preference for large families (71.4%), with 59% reporting social influence on childbearing. Unplanned pregnancies (52.4%) and unsafe abortions (59%) are also notable concerns. Despite these traditional values, 61% strongly disagreed with the prevalence of premarital sex. Overall, the findings highlight the community’s strong adherence to cultural norms, emphasizing large families, male dominance, and early or forced marriages, while facing challenges in reproductive health and education.

**Table No. 2 Correlations**

		D.V	I.V
D.V	Pearson Correlation	1	.830**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	105	105
I.V	Pearson Correlation	.830**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	105	105

The above mention table 2 shows the results of the Correlation between the Dependent variable Reproductive behavior of nomads and the Independent variable sociocultural factors. Thus the Resultant shows that there is a significant relationship between the Dependent variable Reproductive behavior of nomads and the Independent variable Socio-cultural factors as correlation values are 0.830\*\* for both the Dependent and Independent with a significant value of 0.000 less than 0.05 for both independent and dependent Variable. This is confirmed by the findings that display a correlation between Dependent and independent variables suggesting a robust connection between Sociocultural factors (independent variables) and Dependent variable, (Reproductive Behavior).

**Table No. 3 Data Distribution of Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.830 <sup>a</sup>	.688	.685	3.43797

a. Predictors: (Constant), I.V

**68.8 percent.**

Table 3 calculated sociocultural factors that causes for the reproductive behaviour of the nomads which indicates **68.8%**. Whereas there are farther factors which needs to be identified for the cause of reproductive behaviour of the nomads.

**Table No. 4 Data distribution about ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2685.967	1	2685.967	227.246	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1217.423	103	11.820		
	Total	3903.390	104			

a. Dependent Variable: D.V

b. Predictors: (Constant), I.V

Table 4 shows the results of the regression analysis depicted in the ANOVA table which points to differences in the data sets and provides evidence to suggest that the I.V has a positive impact on the D.V. There is strong evidence that this model brings into consideration a significant level of variance present in the D.V as calculated from the regression sum of squares which comes to 2685.967 and the residual sum of squares which is 1217.423. An F-statistic is equal to 227.246, where the regression degrees of freedom are 1 and that for the residual is 103. The p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, implying that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant. In all these findings, the study confirms that the hypothesis stating that the independent variable is a significant determinant of the dependent variable is valid and, therefore, makes the model very suitable for capturing the dependent variable.

**Table No. 5 Data distribution about Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.619	1.324		8.777	.000
	I.V	.672	.045	.830	15.075	.000

a. Dependent Variable: D.V

The coefficients table provides important insights on the strength of the I.V-D.V nexus having a correlation coefficient of 0.366. It shows that I.V. has a strong positive correlation as the beta of I.V is 0.830 and since, Beta>0 as independent variable increase, dependent variable also increases significantly. The significance value (Sig.) obtained for I.V is.000 which is less than 05 which indicates that the relationship is very significant. This has made I.V. emerge as a significant factor determining D.V. in the regression model.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study reveal multiple interacting social-cultural conducts that determine the reproductive behavior among nomadic communities in District Bhakkar. Reproductive behavior was also influenced by traditions and cultural factors and those included Early marriages, forced marriages, unplanned pregnancy, preference towards the male child, fertility choice, unsafe abortion, sexual behavior without marriage, and impact of suppose on childbearing. Some demographic factors were also found significant impact on the reproductive behavior of nomads and one of them was the economic importance of the child in district Bhakkar. Consequently, the results of this study present sociocultural variables and reproductive behavior of District Bhakkar nomads correlate. The obtained value is 0.830, which testifies to the strong positive relation between these two factors; this means that sociocultural factors remain highly important when analyzing reproductive behaviors in nomadic populations. Further support for this relationship can be found in the p-value, which is statistically significant and equals 0.000, below the threshold of 0.05. It is such strong empirical evidence that correlates with previous empirical works as a study of cultural norms, values, and social structures that influence reproductive behaviors in different settings. A research study further denies the influence that cultural beliefs exert over reproductive decisions, and thus the differences in family planning among demography (Achen et al., 2021). Likewise, this study also corroborates whereby female reproductive health in nomadic and semi-nomadic societies remains influenced by education social norms, and health care (Obingo, 2023). The present study supports these conclusions through confirmation that the sociocultural factors are indeed dominant as 68.8 % of the variance in reproductive behavior indicates; at the same time, it raises a possibility that additional factors might also play a role.

A regression analysis presented in Table 4 also shows that sociocultural factors are not only associated with reproductive behavior but also have a direct positive effect on it. The F-statistic obtained (227.246) and the regression sum of squares of (2685.967) indicate that total variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model. This is because sociocultural influences and reproductive behaviors are intricate and dynamic and therefore require overall understanding. The consequences indicate that when sociocultural factors become more entrenched, the reproductive behavior of nomads also changes, which is consistent with previous work on how flexible nomadic populations are in their sociocultural context. Looking at the coefficients table, we have what can be termed a beta coefficient of 0.830 which indicates that as the sociocultural factor rises there is also a corresponding rise in reproductive behavior (Miocevic, 2024). This is in agreement with the assertion that in most preindustrial cultures, more social support and

emerging cultural identity predict improved reproductive performance (Hareven, 2018). Moreover, the P value of the studied relationship of 0.000 confirms statistical relevance and underlines the importance of selected independent and dependent variables for understanding reproductive behavior as part of nomadic populations.

Although this study is informative of sociocultural factors, it also makes a suggestion that raises the need for exploring other factors that influence reproductive behaviour. As mentioned before, there are other levers outside the above discussed sociocultural factors Hence, future research could examine issues like economic factors; environmental issues; or healthcare access. A works also support these expectations which demonstrate that economic stability and access to health care are critical factors for reproductive decision making (Sangare et al., 2021). In this view, an extension of such variables in future research can enhance the understanding of the reproductive behaviors in nomadic communities. Consistent with the prior investigation, this study confirms that sociocultural factors are choice drivers of reproductive behavior among nomads in District Bhakkar. The findings also stress the relationship between sociocultural factors and reproductive behavior with a strong probability and the significance level proved in the analysis, which supports the hypothesis. Therefore, policymakers and researchers need to have the above sociocultural factors in mind as they develop the interventional and support structures for the nomadic people. Subsequent research on reproductive control should consider the nature and detail of the myriad of factors that affect people's reproductive decisions, developing further the discussion on this issue amid new social conditions.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that the current research examines the sociocultural factors that determine the reproductive rate of nomads in District Bhakkar, Pakistan and the quantitative data were gathered from different areas of District Bhakkar. This paper shows that social and cultural aspects greatly influence the reproductive behavior of the nomads. In particular, the findings of the study point to the reproductive inconvenience of pregnancies among nomadic women due to the lack of adequately equipped healthcare centers and traditional culture that limits their access to antenatal services. Reproductive behaviors that are analyzed in the study are traditional beliefs, early and forced marriages, unwanted pregnancies, preference for the male child, fertility preferences, unsafe abortions, premarital sex, and spousal involvement in childbearing decisions. These findings further attest to the need for programs that can target such sociocultural factors concerning the reproductive health of the nomad population in District Bhakkar. Interventions of this nature should also follow cultural and community-relevant approaches since the nomadic people are bound by different practices and beliefs which are different from the rest of the community. Hence, constraints such as financial, geographical, access to health facilities, qualitative cultural beliefs, and the role of women in decision-making sharply played a crucial role in the reproductive behavior in these societies.

### **Implication of Study and Contribution**

The present research has several theoretical implications. It can enable policymakers and other healthcare givers to learn some of the cultural beliefs held by the nomadic community regarding reproductive health. From this knowledge, policies and culturally appropriate and need-fulfilling reproductive health programs and services can be designed to reach out to these cultures. For instance, when a study reveals that cultural factors regarding family planning methods hinder its utilization, then cultural beliefs may be targeted in anticipation of inspiring the right culture that would be fitting to nomadic groups regarding family planning. The study can also contribute to an increased understanding of the health issues of the nomad population and the role of improving actions in this regard adequate to the contexts of such communities. This can go a long way toward addressing inequalities in the penetration of healthcare services, especially in nomadic populations.

The findings of the study about sociocultural factors influencing the reproductive behavior of nomads in District Bhakkar will help to add to the existing body of knowledge regarding reproductive health amongst nomads. In a way, it can contribute to the existing knowledge about the cultural norms and practices that the nomadic populations attach to reproductive health and the consequent barriers the community encounters on the path to the needed healthcare services. The study can also be of significant benefit in the formulation of culturally acceptable and appropriate interventional approach in order to address some of the needs of nomadic people. In this manner, the study can help design cultural relevant interventions by identifying certain cultural beliefs of nomadic people that may affect their reproductive health behaviors. This can go a long way in helping increase the usage of



reproductive health services as well as encourage healthier reproductive practices. Last, the study will also help the area of sociocultural studies, and therefore the significance of cultural belief systems and practices within the development of health behaviors cannot be overlooked. It can also guide the improvement of culturally appropriate and appropriate approaches to the enhancement of health in numerous aspects other than reproductive health for culturally diverse groups of people.

### **Recommendations**

- i. **Governmental Actions:** Increase availability and utilization of quality Family Planning services, enhance equity for genders and advance women's freedoms. Launch agency-initiated community-based programs and ensure reproductive health education in schools and colleges.
- ii. **Institutional Initiatives:** Promote culturally sensitive information on reproductive health and constantly educate doctors and nurses about it. Provision of contraceptives and supervision of the program with the aim of satisfying the nomadic population's requirements.
- iii. **Family Engagement:** Discuss issues to do with birth control, rights, and the need to be attended to by professional healthcare givers.
- iv. **Personal Responsibility:** Empower communities particularly females on reproductive health, combat societal cultures that limit women to being baby-making machines, and encourage family planning.

### **Limitations of the Study**

- i. **Sample Size:** In the current study the sample size was 105 nomads of their reproductive age the study may have been limited by its small sample size, therefore the results cannot be generalized to all nomads in district Bhakkar.
- ii. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Because of the nature of the study, one might picture a few challenges in gaining appropriate data from participants especially that section focusing on sexuality and reproductive behavior.
- iii. **Generalizability:** The results of the study can only be generalized to other nomadic communities across the country and to the settled populations in the following manner.
- iv. **Language Barrier:** There might have been some challenges in the study in terms of language with some of the nomadic groups in the district because they speak different dialects or languages.
- v. **Not applicable for all Locations:** The current study has been carried out in the different tehsils of the district bhakkar so there is no confining that the result for this study may be appropriate for all the regions of Pakistan.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors of the present research study declared that there are no potential or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to this research. The authors have no financial or personal interests that might affect the outcomes of this study.

### **Reference**

- Abdikadyrova, Z., Kadyrov, Z., Talaspayeva, Z., & Sharypkazy, N. (2018). THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN KAZAKH NOMADIC SOCIETY. *Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art & Communication*, 8.
- Abdirisak, A. A. (2023). *Characterization of Camel Production Under Pastoral Management in Benadir Region, Somalia* University of Nairobi].
- Achen, S., Atekyereza, P., & Rwabukwali, C. B. (2021). The role of culture in influencing sexual and reproductive health of pastoral adolescent girls in Karamoja sub-region in Uganda. *Pastoralism*, 11(1), 25.
- Ali, B., Niaz, A., & Zafar, M. U. (2022). SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE REPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOR OF NOMADS. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 4(2), 399-405.
- Ali, M., Cordero, J. P., Khan, F., & Folz, R. (2019). 'Leaving no one behind': a scoping review on the provision of sexual and reproductive health care to nomadic populations. *BMC women's health*, 19, 1-14.
- Arousell, J., & Carlbon, A. (2016). Culture and religious beliefs in relation to reproductive health. *Best practice & research Clinical obstetrics & gynaecology*, 32, 77-87.

- Asif, M., Kazmi, J. H., & Tariq, A. (2023). Traditional ecological knowledge based indicators for monitoring rangeland conditions in Thal and Cholistan Desert, Pakistan. *Environmental Challenges*, 13, 100754.
- Baker, J. R., Lobley, M., & Whitehead, I. (2016). *Keeping it in the family: international perspectives on succession and retirement on family farms*. Routledge.
- Brannen, J., & Moss, P. (2023). Dual earner households: Women's financial contributions after the birth of the first child. In *Give and Take in Families* (pp. 75-95). Routledge.
- Cattaneo, V. (2019). Key influential factors impacting access to primary healthcare among nomadic communities.
- Chan, A. (2017). *Out of Place: Stone Architecture and Pastoral Nomadism in Prehistoric Inner Asia*. University of Pennsylvania.
- Danaeina, A., & Eilbeigipoor, F. (2018). The Characteristics of the Cultural Landscape of the Bakhtiari Nomads and its Impact on the Structure of Nomadic Architecture. *Bagh-e Nazar*, 14(57).
- Fareo, D. O., & Ateegu, W. (2020). Determinants of girl child education among the Nomads in Nigeria. *East African Scholars Journal of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences*, 2(5), 30-37.
- Gammino, V. M., Diaz, M. R., Pallas, S. W., Greenleaf, A. R., & Kurnit, M. R. (2020). Health services uptake among nomadic pastoralist populations in Africa: a systematic review of the literature. *PLoS neglected tropical diseases*, 14(7), e0008474.
- Gebrebrufael, G. G., & Hagos, B. T. (2024). Prevalence and predictors associated with modern contraceptive method utilization among women in the nomadic community of Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study. *Contraception and Reproductive Medicine*, 9(1), 11.
- Hareven, T. K. (2018). *Families, history and social change: Life course and cross-cultural perspectives*. Routledge.
- Honeychurch, W., & Makarewicz, C. A. (2016). The archaeology of pastoral nomadism. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 45(1), 341-359.
- Kale, M., & Aslan, D. (2021). The caregiving practices of nomadic Yuruk Turkmen families for their children in terms of developmental well-being: an ecocultural perspective. *Early Child Development and Care*, 191(9), 1376-1391.
- Kipgen, J. (2020). *Sex-Selective Abortion in India: Social Structures, Women's Agency, and Media Discourse*. University of Kansas.
- Miocevic, D. (2024). Baby come back: Resident-digital nomad conflicts, destination identification, and revisit intention. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875231220945.
- Obingo, E. A. (2023). *Factors Influencing the Persistence of Female Genital Mutilation Among the Maasai Community: A Case Study of Maili 46 Location, Kajiado West County* University of Nairobi].
- Sangare, M., Coulibaly, Y. I., Coulibaly, S. Y., Dolo, H., Diabate, A. F., Atsou, K. M., Souleymane, A. A., Rissa, Y. A., Moussa, D. W., & Abdallah, F. W. (2021). Factors hindering health care delivery in nomadic communities: a cross-sectional study in Timbuktu, Mali. *BMC public health*, 21, 1-8.
- SINDAYIHEBA, E., & NIYOMUKIZA, E. (2022). *ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY AWARENESS ON IMPACT AND FACTORS TO UNWANTED PREGNANCY AMONG TEENAGERS BETWEEN 15-19 YEARS* Kibogora Polytechnic].
- Snorek, J. (2016). Contested views of the causes of rural to urban migration amongst pastoralists in Niger. In *Understanding Migrant Decisions* (pp. 59-79). Routledge.
- Talinbayi, S., Xu, H., & Li, W. (2019). Impact of yurt tourism on labor division in nomadic Kazakh families. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 17(3), 339-355.
- Wulifan, J. K., Dordah, A. D., & Sumankuuro, J. (2022). Nomadic pastoralists' experience accessing reproductive and maternal healthcare services in low and middle-income countries: a contextual scoping review. *Pastoralism*, 12(1), 47.