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Unpacking Cultural Values through Kalasha Proverbs: A Sociolinguistic Study of the Kalash Valleys, Pakistan.

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Abstract

This study explores the rich intangible cultural heritage of the Kalasha people by analyzing a selection of their proverbs to uncover their cultural values and wisdom. The research uses qualitative and textual analysis of 30 proverbs, chosen through a purposeful sampling technique from both oral sources and the book *Kalasha Matal*. As the first study of its kind, it aims to illuminate the cultural significance embedded in Kalasha proverbs. The research is expected to help Kalasha students learn social and cultural values through these meaningful sayings. Furthermore, the study serves as a guide for future generations, presenting Kalasha proverbs in various contexts to educate readers about folklore, cultural history, and linguistics. Ultimately, the goal of this paper is to preserve and promote Kalasha's proverbs for future generations.

Keywords: Kalasha Culture, Kalasha Proverbs, Kalasha Language., Proverbs and Society, Cultural Wisdom, Sociolinguistics, Oral Tradition, Cultural Heritage

Introduction

Literature plays an essential role in every culture, serving as a vehicle for transmitting societal norms, historical narratives, and shared identities across generations. Among the various forms of literature, oral traditions hold particular significance. These traditions passed down through generations via spoken word, serve not only to preserve linguistic heritage but also to express the core philosophies, wisdom, and cultural values of a community. Language, in this regard, is key to understanding a culture and its way of life. Sociolinguistics focuses on the interplay between language and society, acknowledging that language shapes and reflects cultural norms and dynamics. It encapsulates the opinions and values of a community through idioms, lexicons, semantics, and oral traditions (Dominguez, 2010). Sapir (1921) further asserts that language connects individuals to specific racial or ethnic groups, reinforcing the mutual exclusivity of language and culture. Culture, in turn, refers to the socially transmitted customs and beliefs that define human existence (Jamshid et al., 2024).

The Kalasha people, an indigenous tribe nestled in the majestic mountains of



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Chitral, Pakistan, have preserved a rich and unique cultural heritage. At the heart of this heritage lies a collection of proverbs, which have been passed down through generations and continue to play a vital role in their oral tradition. Proverbs, often defined as concise expressions of wisdom or truth, are integral to daily life within the Kalasha community. These sayings convey not just practical wisdom but also embody the community's values, cultural norms, and perspectives on life. Kalasha proverbs stand out among the diverse linguistic traditions of the world as an exclusive representation of the community's beliefs and practices. Despite centuries of external influences, the Kalasha people believed to be descendants of an ancient civilization, have managed to preserve their language, customs, and religious beliefs. However, these proverbs and cultural values remain largely undocumented and unexplored, leading to a loss of cultural heritage and a limited understanding of the Kalasha worldview. Given this context, immediate action is required to preserve and promote these invaluable expressions of cultural identity. Therefore, this study aims to analyse and interpret Kalasha proverbs, reflecting, preserving, and promoting the cultural values and wisdom inherent in Kalasha society.

Literature Review

A proverb is commonly defined as a brief, well-known phrase that conveys a universal truth or offers advice. Microsoft Student 2009 and the Microsoft Encarta Dictionary define it as a short, memorable saying that imparts clear wisdom about daily life or widely accepted realities. Similarly, the Dictionary Word Web emphasizes that a proverb is a brief, impactful phrase embodying significant life lessons widely accepted as accurate. According to the Standard Dictionary, proverbs are short phrases that convey a well-known reality or experience, often encapsulating collective wisdom. Paczolay (1996) further elaborates that proverbs serve to express relationships, general principles, or features of both static and dynamic systems. Addo (2001) describes proverbs as concise, sometimes humorous, yet profound philosophical statements that reveal both evident and subtle wisdom, contributing to the beauty and richness of African languages. Abubakar (2015) and Barasa (2017) argue that proverbs, as an integral part of oral traditions, have long been used for communication and interaction, serving as powerful tools for conveying wisdom and knowledge about human nature and the world at large. Mieder (2004), a renowned philosopher, states that proverbs belong to the category of "wise sayings" and are an effective means of communicating universal truths across languages and cultures.

Noor Sanaudin's (2015) study on Pashto proverbs examines their role in expressing gender relations within Pashtun society. While earlier research has romanticized proverbs as cultural treasures and symbols of ethnic pride, Sanaudin highlights how they often reflect and perpetuate patriarchal values, especially regarding gender roles. His analysis of over 500 gender-related proverbs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reveals that proverbs, commonly perceived as "wisdom texts," reflect a biased, patriarchal worldview. However, the study also indicates that proverbs can be context-dependent, with women occasionally using them to challenge or subvert these gender norms. Sanaudin's work suggests that proverbs should not simply be viewed as cultural expressions but as dynamic, performative tools capable of reinforcing or contesting societal power structures, particularly in terms of gender (Sanaudin, 2015).



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In a broader exploration of proverbs, Ahmed (2005) conducted a comparative study of proverbs from Sudan and England. His research explores how proverbs offer insight into the cultural values, manners, and worldviews of people from different regions. Through extensive fieldwork, Ahmed illustrates how proverbs serve as expressions of cultural and societal beliefs, shedding light on both shared values and cultural variations. Similarly, Dagneu and Wodajo (2014) emphasize the social and cultural functions of proverbs in Ethiopia. Their study highlights how proverbs not only preserve societal values but also serve to correct deviant behaviour and sustain the customary beliefs and practices of the community.

Otiso (2016) further explores the role of proverbs in preserving cultural wisdom, specifically through Ekegusii proverbs, which help maintain societal order and reflect on different human experiences. He examines the cultural values and beliefs embedded in these proverbs, noting that they are an essential part of the community's moral framework. Lapasau (2017) also underscores the role of proverbs in transmitting life lessons and wisdom across generations. He explores German and Indonesian proverbs, shedding light on how they communicate profound insights into philosophy and human nature, thus serving as a lens for understanding cultural values.

Ramin (2019) explored the cultural values embedded in Pakpak proverbs, focusing on social norms related to flora, wildlife, and interpersonal relationships in Indonesia. The study illustrates how proverbs in the Pakpak community are used to promote discipline, responsibility, and positive behaviour, serving both as a tool for social cohesion and a means of preserving cultural traditions. In a similar vein, Simanjuntak (2020) analysed the wisdom contained in proverbs from the Book of Proverbs, highlighting how these sayings can provide insight and solutions to challenges. His research underscores the pragmatic function of proverbs in guiding people toward achieving satisfaction and solving life's difficulties.

Ali (2020) conducted a comparative study of Kalasha and Khowar proverbs, focusing on how proverbs influence the outlooks of their respective speakers. His work reveals cultural similarities and differences between the two communities, suggesting that language reflects distinct worldviews. This study, however, did not delve into the cultural values and wisdom of Kalasha people, which this research aims to address. By analysing thirty Kalasha proverbs, this study will uncover and interpret the cultural values and wisdom inherent in Kalasha sayings, preserving these traditional expressions for future generations.

While research on proverbs has been extensive globally, studies focusing specifically on Kalasha proverbs are limited. Nawab et al. (2025) highlight how the commodification of Kalasha handicrafts, particularly through tourism, has alienated artisans from their cultural roots. This trend has impacted Kalasha proverbs as well, as both the crafts and the proverbs face marginalization due to external influences. The shift toward mass-produced goods has led to a decline in local handicrafts, and similarly, proverbs and other cultural expressions are at risk of being lost or misunderstood. Nawab et al. (2025) and Shahab et al. (2024) advocate for community-driven initiatives to preserve Kalasha cultural heritage, including efforts to promote access to markets and platforms that empower artisans and ensure the survival of Kalasha proverbs.

Despite the existing studies on proverbs, the cultural values and wisdom



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embedded in Kalasha proverbs remain insufficiently explored. This research seeks to fill this gap by analysing thirty Kalasha proverbs, shedding light on their role in reflecting and promoting the cultural values and worldview of the Kalasha people. The study will contribute to the preservation and promotion of Kalasha proverbs, ensuring that these cultural treasures are safeguarded for future generations.

Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach to explore and interpret the cultural significance of Kalasha proverbs. The study aims to describe and analyse these proverbs to uncover the cultural values and wisdom they convey. An ethnographic and textual analysis is employed to understand the proverbs within their social and cultural contexts, with a particular focus on the Kalasha community's worldview, traditions, and values.

Primary sources include written collections of Kalasha proverbs, with the majority of the data drawn from the book *Kalasha Matal*. Secondary sources include scholarly articles, studies, internet resources, and research on Kalasha culture, traditions, and values. To supplement these sources, semi-structured interviews are conducted with Kalasha elders, cultural experts, and community members who are knowledgeable about Kalasha proverbs and cultural traditions. Participants are selected based on their deep understanding of Kalasha oral traditions and their familiarity with proverbs.

The study places particular emphasis on the older generations and cultural leaders within the Kalasha community, as they hold significant knowledge of the oral traditions. A selection of approximately thirty proverbs is targeted to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the Kalasha cultural heritage.

The collected proverbs are categorized into themes such as cultural values, moral values, family values, gender values, nature, and wisdom. Each proverb is carefully analysed to uncover its cultural significance, revealing how it reflects the values, worldview, and wisdom of the Kalasha people. Both contextual and textual analyses are employed to understand the situational contexts in which these proverbs are used, offering insights into their pragmatic functions within Kalasha society.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The textual analysis of *Kalasha* proverbs using different written as well as spoken proverbs of the *Kalasha* language, which are depictions of cultural values and historical wisdom. This research aims to analyse and explore the proverbs through different lenses of analysing. The basic aim of this research is to preserve and promote the *Kalasha* proverbs. It also provides awareness to people all around the world, how these proverbs are depictions of cultural values and wisdom. To analyse the proverbs, the researcher used *Kalasha Matal* as well as a few collected through interviews. This material helps the researcher to complete her thesis.

Cultural values

Cultural values are core traits and beliefs that influence a community's identity, traditions, and behaviour. They define a community's history, religion, customs, and experiences and are passed down through the generations. Each community



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has its own cultural values, which reflect its traditions and beliefs. The Kalash people are an indigenous tribe of Chitral, Pakistan. They strongly preserve and promote cultural values that describe their unique culture. These values are the foundation of the Kalash people's identity.

Table: 1

<i>Kalasha</i> proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>S'ing Ani suri zhe moa Barabar</i>	The maternal uncle is equal to the sun.	The maternal uncle is higher value than the parental uncle.

This proverb compares the maternal uncle to the blazing sun standing for the respected status that he holds in *Kalasha* culture. Other cultures have their own perspective. Some community gives high status to parental uncle rather than maternal. But in *Kalash* culture maternal uncles have extremely high status. His insight, encouragement, and direction light up his nephews' and nieces' lives. The importance of the maternal uncle is deeply proven by *Kalasha* customs, where his participation is needed in several ceremonies. Notably, he ensures proper burial and ceremony completion by playing a vital part in funeral rites. Furthermore, the maternal uncle starts the "Goshnik " rite, a major coming-of-age celebration for children aged five to six, by dressing his nephew or niece in traditional clothing. This deep cultural meaning highlights the maternal uncle's essential function as a protector, mentor, and spiritual advisor, gaining him a sacred position akin to that of the shining sun. When the niece gets married, she must give (*Moa gati*) which means an ox or money, to her maternal uncle. This is also an important ritual in the *Kalasha* community. Because they give an extremely high rank to maternal uncle.

Table: 2

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Basun Amal una didayonk rachika desh genaw pe praw haw prust kaw hiw, kuho sora pe praw haw daran kaw.</i>	Western thunder in spring means a good year; eastern thunder means floods.	Prediction of future.

This phrase says that prediction of the direction of thunder during spring season is about the upcoming year's prosperity or weather patterns. According to *Kalasha* tradition, the fortune of the next year is decided by the direction of spring thunder. According to the elders, thunder from the west shows a successful year full of good fortune and plentiful crops. On the other hand, thunder in the east show's disaster, showing the possibility of floods and difficulties. This traditional custom is still an essential part of *Kalasha* mythology, helping communities predict the future of the year. *Kalasha* culture still relies heavily on this traditional idea, which helps in community preparation for the coming year. There is also a ritual at *Chawmos* festival, where the people



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capture fox then left her. If the fox goes to the shade side, it predicts a bad year and if the fox goes to the sun side it predicts a prosperous year.

Table: 3

Kalash Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Pashi momal'a dehar</i>	<i>Momala</i> people become <i>dihar</i> (Shamon) by seeing others	To imitate one action

The proverb "*Momala* people become *dihar* (Shamon) by seeing others" emphasizes the significance of motivating deeds. It implies that people are inspired to imitate good activities when they see them. This saying underlines how our deeds might motivate people to follow us for inspiration. According to *Kalash* culture, the people of *Bumburate* often imitate the behavior of the *Rumboor* people, who are respected for their kindness, bravery, and knowledge. When we do something well, others notice and try to do the same. We thus become role models, encouraging others to embrace moral principles and productive activities. We can gain respect, fame, and legacy by setting an example.

Table: 4

Kalasha proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Rukmul' as c'onk bitahi.</i>	The beard of <i>Rumboor's</i> people is dense.	<i>Rumboor</i> folks always manage to convince others.

This proverb highlights the remarkable attributes of *Rumboor* people, who are known for their courage and ability to convince. They have a special charm that makes others like them and makes it easy for them to complete things. This proverb states that the people of *Rumboor* are fortunate to have destiny on their side, guiding them to success. They stay persistent and unstoppable when they have an optimistic outlook. *Bumburate* and *Birir*, two nearby settlements, view the *Rumboor* people as lucky, blessed with a remarkable power that enables them to fulfil their goals. This saying emphasizes the value of having a positive outlook and the part fate plays in finding success.

Table: 5

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Se kia moc'ik ashis e brabai dyal.</i>	That is not rain that falls effortlessly	<i>Dizaw</i> (Allah) shows everything step by step.

This saying offers valuable guidance on faith and dedication, encouraging believers to put their confidence in Allah's (*Dizaw*) kind direction. It makes a distinction between natural rain and intentional divine guidance. Idiomatically,



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it gives people comfort in knowing that Allah shows his purpose gradually and progressively. Given that patience and endurance are the keys to success and solutions, this saying encourages people to find a balance between hard effort and faith. In *Kalasha* culture, prayer and hard work go hand in hand, and faith and commitment are deeply connected. Even in the face of uncertainty, believers have faith in Allah's plan, and they overcome obstacles with patience and perseverance. This saying conveys important lessons; trust replaces worry, allowing divine involvement; slow development produces long-lasting effects; and faith in Allah's guidance reduces tension. By adopting this knowledge, people develop resilience and patience and concentrate on their work. Believers who trust in Allah's timetable face life's obstacles with assurance, understanding that significant achievements come gradually.

Table :6

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Bac'hoyak asta pe abashaw haw, ayas c'uc'u dyel</i>	Even when a calf cries, the cow feeds it milk	Do not be quiet, express yourself.

This simple but powerful proverb serves as a reminder that, just as a calf communicates its demands to its mother, so too, must people speak for themselves and convey their wants. A calf's mother will not be able to tell if it is hungry if it does not cry out. In the same way, if someone does not speak up, others cannot understand their needs or rights. This saying encourages people to speak up and make their opinions known. Speak up for their interests and rights. Make sure you express their needs clearly. Self-defence is regarded in *Kalasha* culture as an essential step toward justice and equity. Individuals can empower themselves by speaking up. Encourage others to follow suit. Build a society that is more equal and just. This ageless insight serves as a reminder that our opinions count. Like how a calf's cries provide food, our spoken words can bring positive change and ensure our rights are respected.

Table: 7

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Sho'an zhe l'awak thi koai, s'a zhe Mir thi zhun</i>	Gather like a fox and dog and eat like a king	Never feel humiliated by challenging work

This proverb highlights the importance of attention and hard work. On a literal level, it describes resource collection to the cunning of foxes and the hunting behaviors of dogs. On an idiomatic level, it inspires people to accept demanding work without feeling ashamed. The clever fox and smart dog represent the value of carefully gathering resources, regardless of how minor or unimportant they may appear. One can eventually reap many benefits by collecting little by little. This saying encourages a strong work ethic by serving as a reminder that hard



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labor will eventually result in a prosperous and plentiful existence, like a king's feast. The people of *Kalash* are hardworking; they believe in quality work and dedication. They spend most of their lives working.

Table: 8

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Kia s'a as zulum a</i>	This is not the oppression of a king	There is no oppression

The short sentence reminds us that we have the freedom to do what we want. In the past, kings and rulers forced people to work against their will. But today, we are free to decide what we want to do. This proverb encourages us to take responsibility for our own lives and work willingly, without repression. It celebrates the end of forced labor and the beginning of personal freedom. In ancient Chitral, people were bound to follow the *Mehtar's* orders, whether they liked it or not. But now, we can choose to work or not, without fear of oppression. By remembering the past, we appreciate the freedom we have today.

Table: 9

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Zhon't neji pis'i ba'i thek</i>	To grind before making a millstone	Prepare before taking shape

According to the saying, one should not assume success without first preparing. Millstones are used to process corn and wheat in the *Kalasha* Valley. The owner accepts payment in the form of a piece of flour. This procedure highlights the value of preparation. Life takes costs and consequences into account, just as grinding involves taking the millstone owner's part into account. This saying warns against "making castles in the air". It is the idea that things will happen on their own without any effort. Rather, it promotes careful decision-making, initiative-taking planning, and taking outcomes into account. People can effectively influence their futures by planning, avoiding unreasonable goals and unexpected results.

Table: 10

<i>Kalasha</i> proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Du baza thi c'a hiw</i>	Claps are taken with both hands	Harmony and unity

This proverb clearly highlights the power of harmony and unity. In *Kalasha* culture, unity is a foundation of their community, where cooperation and collective efforts are built into everyday life. From farming and trade to festivals and conflict resolution, *Kalasha* people stand for this proverb. They work together with enthusiasm and solidarity. Their unity builds powerful social ties, collective resilience, and cultural preservation, allowing them to live in harmony with nature. By valuing collective success over individual interests and respecting diverse viewpoints, the *Kalasha* community shows that unity is the foundation of a colourful, strong, and flourishing society. They remind us that true progress requires harmony and cooperation, and that true progress requires both hands.



Moral Values

Moral values are principles that help an individual in making moral decisions. Self-awareness and moral awareness are essential for proving fair, honest, and credible interactions and judgments in day-to-day living. Moral principles include things like being honest, being nice, respecting others, helping others, being disciplined, treating everyone fairly, and modelling other virtues. It is often known that a person owning these attributes has a high moral standard. Honesty, kindness, respect for others, helping others, discipline, treating everyone equally, and imitating other positive traits are examples of moral principles. It is well acknowledged that someone with these qualities has a high moral standard. The *Kalasha* proverbs highlight the moral values of the community. These values and principles are core traits of the *Kalasha* community which are highlighted through wise sayings.

Table: 11

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Tai Kai mondr dek zhe dhighay Kai bribo uzakik ek</i>	Talking to you is like throwing walnuts against a wall.	Conversing with you is a waste of time.

This saying describes the irritation of chatting with someone who does not pay attention or show interest. Walnuts bounce off walls when thrown against them, leaving no trace. In the same way, it seems useless to express your opinions to someone who does not appreciate them. Words matter in *Kalasha* culture, and it can be painful to be ignored. This saying emphasizes the importance of respect for one another and engaging in dialogue. It is like tossing walnuts at a wall; nothing changes if someone does not listen or react properly. This wise counsel serves as a reminder to appreciate deep discussions, know when someone is not having any interest. Make polite communication a priority. We may conserve our energy and feelings for interactions that are important if we pay attention to this understanding. We are worthy of being heard.

Table: 12

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>S'ing china pay rhomuna ne hiw.</i>	A goat with cut horns does not come into the group.	A weakened individual cannot thrive in a group setting.

The *Kalash* saying, "A goat with cut horns doesn't come into the group," provides a powerful lesson in the value of moral character and sustainability. It depicts a weak goat that finds it difficult to fit in with its group. Idiomatically, it pays attention to the difficulties faced by people who lack inner strength, creativity, and manners. This saying, which says that hornless goats find it difficult to fit in, is inspired by observations of animal behaviour. Like this, people with faults or unspoken errors are unlikely to succeed in social situations in human cultures. According to the proverb, inequality in society can result from weakness and



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poor behaviour. One needs to develop inner strength, creativity, and ethics to achieve. This age-old knowledge empowers people to cultivate virtues that will make them welcome and prosperous in their community.

Table: 13

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Uguna bat histi mon'dr dek</i>	To talk throwing stones in water	To Stubbornly insist on a point

This proverb warns against communication that is rigid and stubborn. In the same way, tossing a stone into water produces waves but does not change the river's nature. It recommends that people keep away from forcing their opinions with force. In an equivalent way, obstinately pursuing a position may undermine productive discourse and disturb unity. This information fosters tolerance, enabling people to express their viewpoints and develop their own beliefs. In most societies, being stubborn is seen as harmful to positive discourse and relationship building. We set up an environment where different viewpoints may develop by emphasizing adaptability and attentive listening, which promotes mutual respect and understanding. In addition, for a different tone. This wise saying warns against strict communication, comparing it to tossing a stone into water. It creates turmoil but achieves little.

Table: 14

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Tay Kay mondr dai Kawa ne s'ataw</i>	Talking to you is useless.	Beating a dead horse

This short sentence describes that if a person does not give an ear, words are useless for him. It is an ethical principle that you should listen carefully and obey the orders of the elderly. Most of the time people do not give importance to your words. It is considered bad in most societies. This proverb highlights the importance of full attention toward someone while talking. Try to understand the words of someone and follow his instructions.

Table: 15

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Ma'ik pashi gogas pis't'aw adyaik</i>	To chase after a snake upon seeing a pearl	Greed is a curse.

This proverb shades light on the greedy nature of human. It describes the worldly desires. There is a myth that snakes own a pearl and if there are two snakes, they will play with it. If someone gets this Pearl, he will become extraordinarily rich. Humans are always concerned with having money and making money. It is considered bad to be greedy. If a person is selfish and greedy people do not like him. This proverb warns against the greedy nature of humans and instructs people to be not greedy.

Table: 16

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Prus't mondr ta</i>	Good words are	Good words are



<i>prust't mi</i>	always good.	golden.
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This saying emphasizes the eternal importance of speaking the truth and being kind. Idiomatically, it emphasizes the value of good words by equating them with gold, while it highlights the everlasting worth of positive words. Being honest and kind is crucial in *Kalasha* culture. Positive words could encourage and inspire people, convince, and prove trust, encourage admiration and reverence. On the other hand, dishonesty is seen with disrespect. Truthfulness is highly valued in the *Kalasha* community, which disapproves of dishonesty and deception. By using polite language, people show consideration for others, develop solid partnerships and set up a helpful atmosphere. This insight serves as a reminder that the words we use have a lasting effect. By using positive language, we provide happiness and optimism, show a solid reputation and make our community better. Words can become a priceless gift to ourselves and others if we may promote a culture of kindness, compassion, and truth.

Table: 17

<i>Kalasha Proverb</i>	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Rauz as pistaw daran nehelik</i>	one should not become a flood following the flow of water.	one should not follow the path of others.

This proverb gives helpful advice on decision-making and personality. In a literal sense, it warns against imitating the terrible path of a flood, which carries away everything in its wake. Idiomatically, it warns against unthinkingly copying people, especially those who are currently having difficulties. The same way that a flood carries undesired particles, following someone down the wrong path can cause needless problems. People are encouraged to think critically rather than obey without question by this saying, which promotes self-awareness and wisdom, avoid mimicking others' mistakes, set their direction. This wisdom encourages independence and competent decision-making in *Kalasha* culture. It serves as a reminder that inspiration and imitation are not the same thing. True strength exists in individuality. Autonomous decisions promote development. We can avoid needless hardships and develop an intense sense of self by following this proverb, which will help us navigate life's obstacles with confidence and wisdom.

Table: 18

<i>Kalasha Proverb</i>	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Daran ta lago'yak hariw madrak o istonaw</i>	Floods bring wood with it while frog only groans.	Those who are busy conduct more, while those who are idle talk more

The short sentence draws clear lines between idle speech and purposeful work. It draws attention to the distinction between people who put in a lot of effort and produce obvious outcomes and those who just talk without doing anything. Just like a flood carries and changes its surroundings. The flood symbolizes an



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industrious worker who quietly completes duties and produces observable results. The frog, on the other hand, stands for the chatty individual who is always moaning but never getting anything done. These saying highlights that concentrated work is the key to real advancement. It pushes people to put action before words, allowing their accomplishments to speak for themselves.

Family values

Family values are the principles, customs, and traditions that influence interactions, relationships, and behaviours that occur inside a family. These principles form the basis of a family's identity, unity, and well-being and often pass down through the generations. The *Kalasha* proverbs describe family values, which are the core characteristics of any family as well as society.

Table: 19

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic meaning
<i>Aya zhe dada hakdari pe ne ajonan haw Dizaw asta ne jonin</i>	He who does not recognize the rights of his parents will not recognize the rights of God either	Disrespect to parents is disrespect to the Divine

This proverb has come under the category of family values. This is a timeless saying that emphasizes how important it is to love and respect one's parents. In the *Kalasha* culture, taking care of aging parents is a precious custom, and filial devotion is strongly rooted. From an early age, children are taught to respect and care for their parents, which will ensure their comfort and well-being, particularly as they age. Disrespecting parents is regarded as disobedience, which carries social and spiritual consequences. The *Kalasha* people show that respect for one's roots is necessary for a peaceful existence and a solid spiritual base by placing a high value on parental care. Alternatively, for a slightly different tone: This saying reminds us that respecting and loving our parents is a vital part of our moral and spiritual development. Children in the *Kalasha* community are taught to put their parents' needs first, giving them empathy, committed care, especially during their golden years. It is believed that one's dedication to God is reflected in this selfless love. By respecting their parents, *Kalasha* people develop modesty, thankfulness, and a sense of duty, strengthening their tightly connected family ties.

Table: 20

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Dada s'is' tharai chak</i>	Father is the shade over one's head	A father is the ultimate protector and provider

Fathers are highly valued, especially in the *Kalasha* community, as the phrase



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beautifully portrays. From a daughter's point of view, her father is her pillar of support, shelter, and beacon, offering her unconditional affection, protection, and direction. She looks up to him with respect and appreciation because he is her hero and is always there to help and inspire her. Fathers are regarded as protectors of family values and customs in *Kalasha* culture, being power, protection, and knowledge. They are viewed as guardians, providers, mentors, and role models who instil moral principles and cultural heritage in their children. The community sees fathers as the backbone of the family and society and places a strong emphasis on parental authority and duty. Strong family ties, respect for customs, and strong kinship are all encouraged by this cultural worldview. Fathers take place in such esteem by the *Kalasha* community, which highlights their vital part in safeguarding peace in society, cultural continuity, and family unity.

Table: 21

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Gardok tan k'on ne joniw</i>	A donkey does not recognize its own ears	Some people do not recognize their own family

This short sentence underlines the essential value of family and familial connections. This stage advice emphasizes the grave consequences of disrespecting one's family ties. It highlights the fact that a child's failure to recognize their parents is an obvious sign of their own identity crisis. Family ties have great significance in the *Kalasha* society, and people take immense pride in getting to know their relatives and respecting their relationships. But in certain cultures, the importance of family is sadly overlooked, which results in a worrying disrespect for parental authority and respect. This saying is an alarming signal that one's identity, satisfaction, and personal growth all depend on recognizing and honouring one's family. It develops a sense of responsibility, gratitude, and unity by highlighting the child's duty toward parents.

Table: 22

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Pariw pariw e aw'eyak siw</i>	No matter how far you go, the bridge will still narrow.	Blood is thicker than water.

This proverb says that blood ties are unbreakable. It proves the notion that family bonds are more powerful than any other bonds. The love and help of your family are confined to those nearest to you, much like a fragile bridge. Your family will always be there to support you, no matter where life takes you. Your loved ones may understand you better than others. Family connections get respect in *Kalasha* culture. Blood ties are extremely valuable; cousins and other extended family members are regarded as close relatives. The relatives and cousins are always ready to support you in every condition. Family members place a high value on mental support. This saying serves as a reminder that family comes first; blood bonds cannot be cut off. Respect and appreciate the



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people you care about.

Table: 23

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Suda werani lu'y wer</i>	Blood clots from the words of children	Big chaos arises from the quarrels of children

This saying offers a reminder that minor arguments between children can be taken to key issues. This wisdom warns that, if ignored, small arguments can turn into serious conflicts and even produce protracted conflicts between families. Little problems can easily grow into major ones, harming people and destroying relationships. This *Kalasha* saying urges parents to act and settle children's disputes before they become out of control. Families can avoid the development of unpleasant rivalries by resolving minor conflicts at once. We learn from this adage to: Take childish arguments seriously, resolve disputes before they get out of hand, encourage peace and understanding. We can promote a more peaceful environment for our kids' growth and development by paying attention to this wisdom. Recall that minor acts taken now can avert key issues.

Table:24

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Aya khu'yakani pi, Dada a khu'yakani pi</i>	Drink from your father's plate, drink from your mother's plate.	Take lessons from your father and mother.

This phrase highlights how important it is to learn from one's parents. Eating from the same plate means sharing in one's family resources, money, and labor. Idiomatically, it exhorts kids to take in the morals, life lessons, and wisdom that their parents have taught them. This saying recognizes parents as the main guardians of tradition, culture, and knowledge. Parental guidance is highly valued in *Kalasha* culture. Parents teach cultural heritage and vital life skills. Youngsters pick up responsibility, obedience, and respect. Individual character and social identity are shaped by family values. Children gain important knowledge and experience by "drinking from their parents' plate," and they also create solid moral foundations. Develop appreciation and respect for their upbringing. The saying ensures that family values are supported by reminding kids to value and respect their parents' lessons.

Table: 25

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Chua hatya pe kahari hawi haw bahu a k'on una dal</i>	If you disrespect your daughter, your daughter-in-law will follow suit.	Respect both daughter and daughter-in-law.

The community's deep respect for female family members is shown in this



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proverb. Daughters are valued and raised in *Kalasha* culture, showing a standard for future generations. Given that it has a direct impact on how their daughters-in-laws will be treated, this tip encourages parents to treat their daughters with compassion, kindness, and dignity. The specific combination of traditional and modern principles in *Kalasha* culture ensures women's involvement in economic activity, cultural festivals, and decision-making. The boundaries between biological and marital ties dissolve as daughters-in-law are accepted as adopted family members. Strong family ties and unity; gender equality and respect for one another; empathy and understanding among family members; and the preservation of cultural heritage and customs are all promoted by this cultural ideology. The *Kalasha* people create a peaceful, welcoming society where women are respected by adopting this philosophy. This ancient wisdom emphasizes the value of caring for and respecting female family members. It also serves as a powerful message to communities everywhere.

Nature

People have always been moved interested in life by nature. The power and beauty of nature are expressed in proverbs from all over the world. These proverbs serve as a reminder of peace of life and our connection with the planet.

Table: 26

<i>Kalasha</i> proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
Hardi g'on zhe bat an som asta s'ataw	A heart can get affected even with stone and wood	Emotions can arise unexpectedly

This proverb Clarifies how random our emotions may be. Idiomatically, it emphasizes how unpredictable emotional reactions can be and how suddenly and unexpectedly feelings might surface. This proverb has a powerful impact on *Kalasha* culture, especially when it comes to relationships and love. The importance of feelings is highlighted by the community's preference for love weddings over arranged ones. This method recognizes that real connections can arise naturally and that emotions cannot be forced or controlled. This insight transcends romantic love, ordinary encounters, music, art, and even nature can evoke feelings. The ability of the human heart to form deep connections rejects logic. The *Kalasha* culture acknowledges the power of emotions and celebrates emotional intelligence. By accepting the meaning of this proverb, people recognize the unpredictable nature of emotions. Develop compassion and understanding, encourage deep connections. The saying serves as a reminder that emotions are uncontrollable, and that the beauty of life is found in its unpredictable nature.

Table: 27

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
Pay asta koc'i o nisiw	Even a goat scratches around its own resting place	Cleanliness is a universal need, understood by all living being



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This saying successfully conveys how important cleanliness is to everyone. This simple but deep proverb serves as a reminder that all living things, regardless of how basic, cherish a clean environment. Humans should place a high priority on supporting their personal and environmental cleanliness, just like a goat naturally keeps its sleeping area clean by scratching around it. The *Kalasha* culture places a high value on hygiene. People are urged to make sure their surroundings are clean before going to bed. This saying stands for responsibility and self-care in addition to physical hygiene. The lowly goat is a symbol of simplicity, and its scratching is a sign of meeting one's own needs. Important lessons learned: Self-care and personal accountability are critical; cleanliness is necessary for all living things. Adopting this age-old saying will help us live a better, more conscientious life, merely the goat tending to its resting place.

Table:28

<i>Kalasha</i> Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Siw nouna pe uk paraw haw Geri ne ew</i>	When water flows over the bridge, it does not return	The past is gone, let it go and understand, just as we should listen and value others' words.

This proverb provides deep information about the transient nature of words and time. Idiomatically, it reminds us that "the past is gone, let it go," but it depicts the constant flow of water beneath a bridge. In *Kalasha* culture, where time is highly valued, this phrase has significant meaning. The *Kalasha* people are well-known for their dedication, trustworthiness, and wise time management, following the notion that "time is money." Every moment is valued in this community, and wasting time is discouraged. Spoken words cannot be taken back, time cannot be stopped, and water flowing beneath a bridge cannot return. This saying encourages people to concentrate on the here and now and move forward, warning against moping about earlier errors. The *Kalasha* people value time management, purposeful communication, and initiative-taking thinking by adopting this wisdom, which reflects the characteristics of commitment, trustworthiness, and awareness that are valued in their community. This traditional saying serves as a reminder that time is unchangeable and that the effects of our words and deeds are long-lasting. By paying attention to its message, we can develop a greater understanding of the value of time and the impact of our words, leading to more deliberate living and maximizing each moment.

Gender values

The customs, beliefs and standards that come with being male or female in a society are known as gender values. These values have an impact on how people view themselves, deal with others and make decisions in life. Proverbs can be an effective method for introducing gender norms and fostering ideas of empowerment, equality, and respect. Our identity and values are shaped by our gender values. Some of the proverbs describe gender roles and values.

Table: 29



Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Istrixas c'onk ne</i>	women do not have a Beard	it is challenging for women to have wisdom

The proverb points out an inaccurate stereotype that women are foolish or naive because they trust others easily. It shows that women are too quick to believe what others say without carefully examining the information. Historically, women have been viewed as weak and naive, lacking the judgment and wisdom associated with men. This mindset created gender-based discrimination, weakening women's freedom and decision-making ability. The proverb suggests that trusting others can be a sign of empathy, compassion, qualities that are valuable in any individual. Promoting critical thinking and wisdom for all individuals This proverb serves as a reminder to Challenge harmful gender biases, empower women to make informed decisions, encourage critical thinking.

Table: 30

Kalasha Proverb	Literal Meaning	Idiomatic Meaning
<i>Mura'yakas batsay bisa ush atruaw</i>	The beauty of a girl is like the beauty of a short_lived flower.	Physical beauty is temporary and fragile.

The short phrase portrays a tragic love story from *Birir* Valley. A young woman secretly used fire signals to communicate with her son-in-law after falling in love. He found that she had passed away one day when he did not detect her signal. He committed suicide at her tomb after becoming heartbroken. Strangely, the remains were discovered together the following day after the villagers had separated them. The locals buried them together out of respect for their love. This genuine tale was turned into a proverb that was sang during the *Dagainai* ceremony of the *Zhoshi* festival of kalash as a warning. it is said that Beauty is fleeting, like a flower. Beauty is destroyed by young death. The saying serves as a reminder to treasure beauty and life since they can be taken away in an instant.

Major Findings

Cultural Significance of Proverbs:

Kalasha proverbs are deeply rooted in the community's cultural identity, expressing core values such as respect for elders, family ties, gender roles, and connections with nature. These proverbs reflect the cultural ethos of the Kalasha people, conveying wisdom that has been passed down through generations. They serve as a mechanism for preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge and values.

Role of Proverbs in Social Structure:

The analysis revealed that proverbs play a significant role in shaping social and cultural norms within the Kalasha community. Proverbs highlight the importance of social cohesion, the respect for elders, the roles of men and women, and the wisdom that guides decision-making. These sayings reinforce societal values such as responsibility, respect, and fairness, influencing behaviors



and relationships within families and the larger community.

Family and Gender Values:

Proverbs underscore the centrality of family values, such as respect for parents, especially fathers, and the importance of maintaining strong family bonds. Proverbs like “He who does not recognize the rights of his parents will not recognize the rights of God either” emphasize the importance of filial piety and moral responsibility.

Gender roles are also reflected in proverbs, with some reinforcing traditional views, such as the proverb that women are perceived as less wise, indicating a need for challenging gender biases in the culture. However, the gender-based roles are not rigid, and proverbs also suggest respect for both male and female family members.

Moral and Ethical Wisdom:

The proverbs impart ethical lessons on respect, patience, honesty, and resilience. Proverbs such as “Good words are always good” highlight the Kalasha people's emphasis on positive communication and moral conduct. Wisdom in these proverbs encourages kindness, fairness, and self-restraint as vital qualities that help sustain the community's values and social fabric.

Connection to Nature:

Many proverbs emphasize the community's deep connection to nature, with proverbs predicting the future based on natural events, such as the direction of thunder and the behaviour of animals. For instance, the proverb “Western thunder in spring means a good year; eastern thunder means floods” reflects the Kalasha people's reliance on nature to inform their cultural practices and preparations for the year ahead.

Role of Proverbs in Gender Empowerment:

Although some proverbs perpetuate gender stereotypes, others empower individuals by promoting the idea of self-expression and challenging oppressive structures. Proverbs like “Do not be quiet, express yourself” and “Good words are golden” emphasize the importance of speaking up, which is crucial for fostering gender equality and encouraging women to take more active roles in their communities.

The Intergenerational Transmission of Values:

The research indicates that Kalasha proverbs serve as a medium for the intergenerational transmission of values, with elders passing down knowledge through oral tradition. Proverbs thus act as a means of cultural continuity, ensuring that the younger generation inherits and upholds the core principles of Kalasha life, including respect for elders, the importance of family, and the guidance of nature in daily life.

Pragmatic Function of Proverbs:

The study reveals the pragmatic function of proverbs in Kalasha society. Proverbs are used not only as wisdom texts but also as performative tools to influence and guide behaviors. They offer practical advice for navigating life's challenges, from



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decision-making and conflict resolution to predictions about the future.

Preservation of Kalasha Culture:

The research underscores the importance of preserving Kalasha proverbs as an essential part of the community's cultural heritage. The findings suggest that the continued use and understanding of these proverbs are vital for maintaining the cultural identity of the Kalasha people in the face of modern challenges such as tourism and globalization.

These findings suggest that Kalasha proverbs are an essential cultural resource, encapsulating the community's values, ethical principles, and worldview. They are not only used to preserve cultural heritage but also serve as tools for teaching, guiding, and shaping social norms, gender roles, and moral conduct.

Conclusion

This research has provided an in-depth analysis of Kalasha proverbs, uncovering the layers of cultural, moral, familial, gender, and natural values embedded within them. The study reveals that these proverbs are essential carriers of cultural wisdom, offering profound insights into the Kalasha community's worldview, beliefs, and identity. Through the exploration of thirty selected proverbs, it has become clear that Kalasha proverbs play a vital role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of unity, cooperation, and respect for traditions.

Kalasha proverbs are deeply interwoven with the social fabric of the community. They emphasize the values of respect for elders, the pivotal role of family in shaping individual character, and the crucial relationship between the Kalasha people and their environment. The proverbs also serve as moral compasses, instilling virtues such as honesty, hard work, compassion, and resilience, while also reflecting on the traditional gender roles and responsibilities within the community. Moreover, the proverbs highlight the Kalasha people's adaptability, resourcefulness, and strong ties to nature, offering valuable life lessons that transcend generations.

Importantly, this research underscores that Kalasha proverbs are not static; they evolve with time, reflecting both traditional beliefs and modern influences. They continue to play an indispensable role in the lives of the Kalasha people, functioning as tools for socialization, moral guidance, and cultural preservation. By examining these proverbs, the study reveals how they have helped shape the community's identity and continue to foster cultural continuity in an increasingly globalized world.

Furthermore, the research highlights the significance of oral traditions in maintaining cultural heritage, emphasizing the need for further studies on the evolving role of proverbs in preserving cultural wisdom. As societies become more interconnected, understanding the impact of such cultural expressions in shaping identity and promoting unity is crucial. Kalasha proverbs not only reflect the community's deep-rooted cultural values but also provide timeless lessons that resonate far beyond their geographical context.

In conclusion, this research offers a window into the soul of the Kalasha people, illustrating the wisdom, values, and experiences that define them. The proverbs serve as a testament to the enduring cultural legacy of the Kalasha community, providing valuable lessons that transcend time and geography. As we continue to



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preserve and study these proverbs, we gain a deeper understanding of the Kalasha people's heritage and the universal truths embedded in their traditional wisdom.

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