

## Folk Wisdom in Oral Cultures: A Linguistic and Cultural Analysis of Animal Metaphors in Punjabi Proverbs

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### Keywords

- Proverbs
- Metaphors
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### Abstract

*This research was undertaken assuming that proverbs provide a glimpse of the cultural connotations attached to different animals. In the study, 730 animal-related proverbs were collected from a dictionary of Punjabi proverbs through purposive quota sampling. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has been used as the theoretical framework to elicit traits, characteristics, status, and values associated with different animals. The analysis revealed that animal metaphors had been predominantly used to denote face-threatening human attributes and actions. Male animals had been given a higher representation as compared to their female counterparts. Most of the negative connotations had been attached to the dog, donkey, cat, monkey, elephant, and bull. It is concluded that animal metaphors have been generously employed in Punjabi proverbs to comment, rebuke, warn, advice and counsel the listeners in a culturally and traditionally accepted, to the point, concise and targeted manner.*



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## 1. Introduction

Proverbs are never out of season as they draw a picture of the culture and the behavior of the people of a society. These pieces of folk wisdom are the actual sources through which the reflection of a specific society and its culture can be attained. Even more, they are informative for anyone who wants to have access to the traditions and popular beliefs of a speech community. Several studies define the proverb metaphorically as “the voice of the people” (Ikenga-Metuh, 1983) and as “guidelines for successful action and living” (Nwala, 1985). The terms ‘products’, ‘voice’ and ‘guidelines’ are metaphors used to portray the role of proverbs in a society.

Since the time of Aristotle, humans have always been ranked higher than animals, such as on the ancient great chain of being. The sociozoologic scale, a term coined by sociologists Arluke and Sanders (1996), does the same thing with animals. It categorizes and then ranks animals based on their benefits to human society, which allows humans to define them, reinforce their position, and justify their interactions with other beings. In Punjabi proverbs, many negative and positive connotations are associated with animals, and these animals are also used as metaphorical tools to delineate human attributes. Animals are commonly used in figurative expressions, such as proverbs and idioms. Their features, characteristics, and behaviors are employed as metaphors to convey intended meanings.

“The potential for any philosophy to make sense of a person’s life depends directly on the fact that all of us are metaphoric animals” (Johnson, 2008, p. 39). Shepherd (1978) contends that “symbolic images of animals enable humans to objectify qualities and traits” (p. 247). Hsieh (2006) asserts, “In a word, the meaning of an animal word in our mental lexicon contains the components from the animal’s nature, habitat, behavior, appearance, and human-animal relation” (p. 2209). The common usage of animals and animal-human relationships in a society can be explored through language as Lawrence (1993) asserts that human need for metaphoric expression finds its greatest fulfilment through reference to the animal kingdom as “no other realm affords such vivid expression of symbolic concepts; symbolizing through use of animals is preeminent, widespread, and enduring” (p. 301).

The Punjabi language is one of the languages which are heavily loaded with animal-related proverbs. The connotations attached with different animals are based on their specific nature, behavior, traits or cultural concepts and status. There are literal as well as metaphorical connotations for different animal metaphors. Hence, the present study explores the animal identities when used as metaphors for human attributes, actions, and situations. It has focused on unfolding the images and connotations, i.e. positive or negative, associated with different animals in the Punjabi proverbs. The research also intends to elicit the semantic density (frequency/percentages of occurrence) of these animals. The analysis focused on the description of domestic and wild animal images used in the expressions and their connotations – involved in metaphors. Their distinctive characteristic features that motivate their metaphorical interpretations have been highlighted.

### 1.2. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do animal metaphors in Punjabi proverbs represent cultural schemas regarding human traits and actions?

2. How do these metaphorical connotations reveal similar or contrastive conceptual patterns in the cross-cultural perspectives?

## 2. Literature Review

Different studies have been identified and reviewed while investigating the nature of research conducted in the domain of animal imagery and metaphors. Through a questionnaire, Nesi (1995) analyzed the figurative meanings attached to different animals in 38 different cultures. The analysis revealed that most of the commonly used animal terms ('mouse', 'cow' and 'cat') had various meanings attached to them in different cultural contexts. The researcher concludes that most animal metaphors have been used to depict negative connotations compared to positive ones. Fontecha and Catalan (2003) analyzed if animal metaphors are treated similarly in English and Spanish cultures. He executed a Contrastive Cognitive Analysis (CCA) to find out the usage of conceptual metaphor through two pairs of words 'fox/vixen' and 'bull/cow' from English and 'zorro/zorra' and 'toro/vaca' from Spanish. It is established that though semantic derogation is prevalent in both languages, most of the negative connotations are attached to female animals' figurative meanings than male animals. The findings of this research have significant similarities with the research findings by Estaji (2011).

Resetar and Radic (2003) investigated different animal terms in Serbian society as address terms. Their names were used for both negative and positive purposes (show affection/hatred). Native Serbian students from 100 universities were selected to fill out the questionnaire, which consisted of 40 different animal names. It was affirmed that most animal names were used to show people's unappreciated traits, while only a few were employed to show their positive characteristics. Hsieh (2004) investigated the fixed expressions of animals used in 2928 Mandarin Chinese and 2630 German proverbs. The research aimed to observe and highlight the underlying conceit and check the metaphorical tenor related to these expressions. It is observed that the Chinese respondents recognized the animals by their appearance while the Germans analyzed them by their behavior. Additionally, the Chinese people developed most of the tenors that fall in the social category, while the Germans put an effort to develop their tenors in the domain of emotions.

Estaji and Nakhavali (2011) analyzed the Persian proverbs related to animals to explore the level of gender-related semantic derogation present in them. The data were collected using different dictionaries, while questionnaires and daily life conversations were used to gather oral data. The research identified that Persian proverbs had no semantic derogation in their structure, but they had some derogation when used in a metaphorical sense. Animal metaphors were used to portray negative traits, but more negative connotations were associated with female animals. In another study, Estaji and Nakhavali (2011) have also investigated the expressions related to the 'dog' in Persian and English languages using the semantic-pragmatic framework. Nakhavali(2011), in another independent research, conducted a contrastive analysis of the meanings and the use of different animal names in the English and Persian societies from the perspective of translation. Many animal expressions showed the characteristics of both societies, but these proverbs might cause cultural misunderstanding when they were translated from one language to another.

Rashidi and Ghaedi (2013) administered a discourse analysis of specific animals such as the 'donkey', 'cat' and 'dog', and the comparison of their characteristics was

depicted in both English and Persian languages. Fatemi, Tahmasebi, and Aghabeigi (2015) also identified that most of the negative connotations were attached with the 'dog' in both languages while the 'cat' has been delineated with lesser negativity and the 'horse' was found in the neutral category. In another study, Fatemi, Tahmasebi, and Aghabeigi (2015), through a discourse analysis of animal proverbs in English and Persian, revealed that about 70% of the proverbs were contrastive while only 30% were similar in their content.

Ismail, Samian, and Muslim (2016) investigated the animal symbolism in Malay proverbs by employing semiotic theory to analyze the characteristics and behaviors of different animals as metaphors for human attributes and conducts. It was unfolded that animal symbols were used in Malay proverbs to conceptualize human characteristics where the "fox" was identified as a symbol of evil, the 'pig' as a symbol of humiliation, the 'cow' as a symbol of stupidity and, 'ant' as a symbol of hard work. Shabani, Sorahi, and Sadeghi (2016) have explored the effect of gender and age on different animal names in English and Persian languages and concluded that English and Persian societies had no difference in the usage of animal names regarding age and gender. Pourhossein (2016) tried to put an effort to know the ways through which the neighbor folks can be similar conceptually. For this purpose, the researchers collected metaphorical animal proverbs from Turkish and Persian languages using Conceptual Metaphor Theory. It was identified that animal metaphors were abundant in both languages to conceptualize human characteristics, the things lying around, and highlight different cultural aspects.

The review of the existing research reveals that animal connotations concerning diverse languages generally and with proverbs specifically have been studied to gain insight into different social and cultural thought patterns in different societies. Most of the studies have focused on English and Persian and a few on Spanish, French, Malay, and Turkish. A similar study could not be found in the Pakistani context in general and in the Punjabi language in particular, so this study tries to fill this gap and explore the cultural connotations attached with different animals in Pakistani society through Punjabi proverbs.

### 3. Research Methodology

The researchers have adopted both qualitative and semantic density-based quantitative methods. The data collected from *Saadey Akhaan* (Our Proverbs) by Malik (2004) provided 730 proverbs with the mention of an animal. The analysis is limited to proverbs mentioning mammals as the scope of this paper does not allow adding and analyzing all the animal hierarchies, like insects, reptiles, and birds. The quantitative analysis helped to elicit the frequency of appearance of different animal metaphors. At the same time, the qualitative method has been adopted to categorize the proverbs selected through purposive quota sampling based on the themes and traits communicated through the animal metaphors in Punjabi proverbs. The vitality of the selected proverbs have been identified and verified, selected proverbs have been translated and interpreted with the help of Punjabi cultural insiders who were proficient in English. Furthermore, positive and negative animal connotations were also affirmed by taking insights from these natives' consultations.

### 3.1. Theoretical Framework

The researchers have selected the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that deals with the metaphorical nature of a concept. Li (2010) contends, "...the major contribution of the CMT (Conceptual Metaphor Theory) is that conceptual metaphor enables us to organize metaphorical expressions, including idiomatic expressions in a systematic way. The conceptual metaphor hypothesis assumes many motivated idioms are based on conceptual metaphors" (p. 206). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) acknowledged that metaphors are mandatory and play a significant role in establishing human language and thoughts. The theory also points out that metaphors are used to connect two conceptual domains: the source domain and the target domain. Metaphors can conceal the message as well as emphasize the main aim. In this paper, the use of different animal metaphors in Punjabi proverbs has been explored to uncover the connotations attached to animals and the representation of human traits and behavior.

## 4. Data Analysis

- i. **Dog 10.4%:** Greedy, opportunist, impious, thankless, ill-natured, and valueless

*Ik boti soo (100) kuty* (Malik, 2004, p.46)  
One piece of meat and a hundred dogs (Greed)

*Aaya kuta kha gaya tou bethi dhol baja* (p.31)  
The dog came and left after eating; you keep on beating the drum.  
(Opportunist)

*Kuta nadi nahawey, kadi na howey paak* (p.279)  
A dog can never be clean even after taking bath in a stream. (Ill-natured and Impious)

*Rajey kam na aondey: naai, kuty, doom* (p. 222)  
Barber, the dog, and minstrel can never be sincere once their bellies are full. (Insincere)

*Anna kuta saeen noo bhonkey* (p.61)  
Blind dog barks at its owner. (Unfaithful)

*Haakam, weri, kutey da: wasanakhayesutey da* (p.185)  
Do not trust the ruler, enemy, and the dog even when they are asleep.  
(Untrustworthy)

### Analysis:

In these Punjabi Proverbs, the dog is mentioned in 10.4% of the total animal-related Punjabi proverbs and is one of the most frequently mentioned animals. It is connoted as a greedy, cunning, mean, impious, notorious, insincere, and disrespectful creature. In Punjabi society, it is also used as a metaphor for a person who is ill-natured, dishonest, opportunist, ungrateful, valueless, and dependent on others. Additionally, the analysis revealed that several negative connotations are attached to the dog in Punjabi proverbs. Contrastively, English proverbs about dogs portray more positive

connotations as unfolded in comparative studies with Persian and Persian proverbs about animals.

- ii. **Horse 7.8%:** Sign of prosperity, respect, and racial superiority, challenging task performer, and courageous

*Ameer da ghora ty ghareeb da boora* (p. 59)

The rich men's horse and the poor men's straw. (Status symbol)

*Ghorey gher sultan tey, Majan gher waryaman* (p. 318)

The kings have horses, and the businessmen have buffaloes in their homes. (Royalty and Nobility)

*Mardan tey ghorriyan kam pain awaley* (p. 338)

Men and horses have to perform challenging tasks. (accepts challenge)

*Ghorey apni sharman nu aap pajdey ney* (p. 318)

The horses run for their own self-respect. (High self-esteem, self-pride)

#### Analysis:

In the selected Punjabi proverbs, the 'horse' is mentioned in 7.8% of proverbs and is one of the few animals associated with positive connotations. It metaphorically depicts an influential, courageous, active, energetic, respected and noble person. It is also considered as an animal that has to perform complex and courageous tasks. It is also employed as a metaphor to delineate someone's prosperity and magnificence because having a horse has been considered a sign of affluence.

- iii. **Buffalo (6.61%), Cow (4.52%):** Valuable and Useful

*Majj thaly doohd kiny chadya ae?* (p. 336)

Who has left milk under the buffalo? No one leaves a benefit coming from an easy source. (Beneficial)

*Gaan noo gha ty chadi da ae, roorri tey nai* (p. 304)

A cow should be left on the grass, not in the trash. (Worthy)

*Doodal gaan diyan latan wi sai diyan ney* (p. 193)

One has to bear the kicks of the milk giving cow. (Beneficial)

#### Analysis:

In Punjabi proverbs, the 'buffalo' (6.61%) and 'cow' (4.52%) metaphors have been employed to portray someone who is benefiting and hardworking. The Punjabi people use these metaphors to convey a positive sense of a beneficial and dependable person. The two animals are also used to delineate the simplicity and innocence of a female.

- iv. **Camel 5.06%:** Challenge-seeker, plaintiff, arrogant, insincere and isolationist

*Oonth ladya wi arraey tey khali wi* (p.66)

A camel cries both at the time of being loaded as well as being unburdened. (Complainant)

*Oonth apney aap nu tans amajda ae jidon pehaar thaley aaway* (p.65)  
A camel recognizes its status when it comes in front of a mountain. (Proud)

*Oonthan, merdan, ghoreyan; kumm pain awaley* (p. 67)  
Camels, men, and horses have to face challenging tasks. (Strength, Challenge seeker)

*Oontha oontha kisey da ho key char* (p. 67)  
Camel! Camel! You should graze, being attached to someone! Belong to and be sincere with someone. (Insincere)

#### Analysis:

In the Punjabi society, the ‘camel’ metaphor is mentioned in 5.06% of proverbs and represents a thankless, arrogant, insincere and isolationist person. It is also used as a metaphor to delineate a person from the upper strata of society or a person who is courageous or arrogant and recognizes his actual worth when he comes across a person who has an even higher status in society. It is also employed for an introverted person who does not like to socialize.

- v. **Donkey 4.65%:** Insensible, indolent, insignificant, thankless, and irresponsible

*Khoty tey kataban ladeyan o aalam nai ban janda* (p. 302)  
The donkey will not become a scholar by the books loaded on its back. (Ignorant)

*Rab diyan be perwai yan khoty khan karaiyaan* (p. 219)  
God’s heedlessness, the donkeys are eating tasty/special meals. (Low-status, Mean)

*Khotynoo ghee dendy san akhay mery kan kyun marror day o* (p. 302)  
The donkey is given organic fat, and it says, ‘why do you twirl my ears?’ (Ungrateful)

*Mat khoty kolon wi laiye* (p. 335)  
Learn a lesson even from a donkey. (Insensible)

*Matlab lai kisy khoty noo payo akhaya si* (p. 340)  
To attain some aim, even the donkey is called ‘Daddy’ (Unimportant and Mean)

#### Analysis:

The Punjabi people use this animal for different agricultural and burden carrying functions, mostly in rural areas, so the donkey is mentioned in 4.65% of proverbs. For having intimate knowledge of its behavior and attitudes, the Punjabi people associate negative connotations with this animal. It represents a foolish, sluggish, trivial, ungrateful, and insensible person in the Punjabi society. The donkey is considered such an animal that can only be used for carrying the load because it cannot do any other

work demanding higher intellectual skills and quite similar to Pourhossein (2016), who has found the 'donkey' as a 'weak', 'insignificant', 'ignorant', 'stupid' and 'careless' animal in both the Persian and Turkish societies.

**vi. Sheep 4.1%:** Weak, infamous, lazy, idle and imitator (to copy others)

*Bhaid de mager lagyan, na urar na paar* (p.101)

Following a sheep is neither damaging nor beneficent. (Insensible, unable to lead)

*Hun tey bhedan wi Makkay chaliyan ney* (p. 389)

Now even the sheep are also going to Makkah. (Characterless woman)

*Saby bhedan moonh kaaliyan* (p. 240)

All sheep have black faces. (Bad-tempered)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi proverbs, the 'sheep' metaphor is mentioned in 4.1% and is mainly used to depict a characterless woman and weak, lower status and insignificant person whose even death is not an incident to be mourned. It is also used to demonstrate the idleness, weak-mindedness, innocence and powerlessness of people.

**vii. Goat 3.15%:** Powerless, oppressed and gluttonous

*Do shairan wich bakri badhi* (p. 201)

A goat is tied between two lions. (Powerless)

*Khawy bakri wango sukey lakrri wango* (p. 298)

Eats like a goat, shrinks like a wood. (Gluttonous but skinny)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi proverbs, the goat is mentioned as a powerless and gluttonous animal in only 3.15% of proverbs. Both the sheep and goat have been given similar metaphorical senses except a few ones when the sheep is displayed as a person who likes to copy others blindly, but no such trait is associated with the goat.

**viii. Cat 3.83%:** Cruel, notorious, canny, imposter and amoral

*Bili de gal tallikonpayega?* (p.84)

Who will bell the cat? (Cruel)

*Bili de naon lukey hundy ney* (p. 84)

The cat has hidden nails. (Imposter)

*Sut so choohykha k bili haj no chali* (p. 242)

After eating seven hundred rats, the cat is going to offer pilgrimage. (Amoral)

*Bili khaeyginahi roar de gi*(p. 30)

If the cat does not eat, it will surely waste. (Mischievous)



**Analysis:**

In Punjabi society, the 'cat' metaphor is employed in 3.83% of proverbs to signify a notorious, wicked, coquettish, deceiver and mischievous person. The people use the cat metaphor when they want to highlight a characterless woman who wanders around aimlessly and does not stay at home. It also depicts a cruel and impious person who claims to be a good person while doing many evil deeds.

**ix. Lion 3.6%:** Provider, brave, powerful, cruel, authority, and control

*Shair shakaar kery sara jangal rajey* (p. 264)

When a lion hunts, all the others who live in the jungle eat to their fill. (Provider)

*Shair ney sada maas ee khana ae* (p. 264)

A lion will always eat meat. (Intransigent and cruel)

*Shair jungle da badshah ae marzi aaway tey baal jamy marzi away tey aandey dey* (p. 264)

Lion is the jungle king; he may lay eggs or give birth to babies according to his wish. (Authority and Control)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi society, the 'lion', depicted in 3.6% of proverbs, is known as the bravest and the most powerful animal. It is depicted as a positive animal in some proverbs, but on the other hand, it has also been portrayed as a cruel and single-headed animal that hunts other animals by fair or unfair means. This shows a negative point in its character and is used as a metaphor for a person who does cruel acts in society and deprives the poor of their fundamental rights by using his/her social and financial power.

**x. Jackal 2.05%:** Coward, dependent, worthless, lazy, and idle

*Gider di 100 din di zindgi toun shair di ikk din di zindgi behtar ae* (p. 304)

A single day of the lion's life is better than a hundred days life of a jackal. (Worthless and Coward)

*Ikshairmarda ae 100giderkhandeyney* (p. 49)

One lion kills, and a hundred jackals eat. (Dependent)

*Gidder diga khoohay, aij aethey hi rahwan gey* (p. 305)

The jackal fell into the well, and it decided to pass the whole day there. (Rambling, frivolous and lazy)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi society, the 'jackal' metaphor is employed in 2.05%proverbs and refers to highly coward, unproductive, worthless, lazy, and frivolous people. It is also used for a person dependent on other people's earnings instead of putting in some effort to support oneself.

- xi. Elephant 2.05%:** Authoritative, High status, All-powerful, and double-faced

*Hathi dey bhaar hathi sambhey* (p. 379)

An elephant's weight is held only by another elephant. (High status, Power)

*Hathi dey pair which sary ee paer aa jandy ney* (p. 379)

All the feet are set in an elephant's foot. (All-powerful and authority)

*Haathi dey dand khaan dey hor tey wakhan dey hor* (p. 379)

An elephant does not have the same teeth for eating and showing. (Double-faced and Duplicitous)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi data, the 'elephant' metaphor has been used in 2.05% of proverbs to indicate an authoritative, dual-natured, influential, and atrocious person. It is used as a metaphor for a hypocritical person who has double standards in talk and action. Furthermore, it is also used for a person who has authority over all the people in society and is difficult to control and manipulate.

- xii. Bull 1.91%:** Powerful, hot-tempered, exterminator, gluttonous, revengeful, and cruel

*Juttrey sandy da wair nahi janda* (p. 143)

*Jutt* and bull's vengeance/anger cannot be over. (Revengeful and hot-tempered)

*Sandeyan dey bhairr tey booteyan da khoh* (p.252)

Bulls' fight and the destruction of the plants (Powerful and destroyer)

*Jutt,sanda, sansaar: qabeelagaalna; kukar, kaan, kamboh: qabeela paalna*(p.144)

*Jutt* and bull ruin their tribe while the cock, crow, and *Kamboh* help their tribes to grow. (Self-centered, narcissistic)

*Zoor pidi da ty bhookh sandey di* (p.233)

Efforts like a little locust and hunger like a bull (Gluttonous)

**Analysis:**

In Punjabi society, the 'bull' metaphor is used in 1.91% of proverbs to represent an influential and hot-tempered person. It also represents a gluttonous person who indulges in a fight readily and does not take care of the loss he may cause. A person who can prove destructive due to the harmful use of his power is also compared with a bull.

- xiii. Monkey 1.78%:** Careless, ungrateful, untalented and low status

*Bandran noo banat diyan topian* (p. 76)

The monkeys are given expensive caps. (Low-status, Undignified)

*Bander keeh janey adrak da sawad* (p. 76)

How can a monkey know about the taste of garlic? (Ignorant)

*Kakhan di beri bander malah* (p. 275)

The monkeys drive the ship of the straw. (Incompetent and incapable of doing intellectual and exigent tasks)

**Analysis:**

The ‘monkey’ is mentioned in only 1.78% of proverbs to represent a careless, insensible, and incompetent person in Punjabi society. It is also employed to exemplify a person who snatches and steals others’ belongings unfairly and then spoils them.

## **5. Findings and Discussion**

In Punjabi society, the usage of animal imagery and metaphors is widespread. That is why; the Punjabi language is also loaded with animal-related proverbs. After analyzing the data, it is noticed that most of the animals have been used to convey negative traits. These negative connotations are not only attached to them when they are used metaphorically but also when they are used literally in the Punjabi society. The analysis of the data also revealed that various secondary metaphorical meanings and images related to the behavior or characteristics of animals are manifested within the expressions of the Punjabi language. The data were analyzed qualitatively using the Lakoffian framework (1980, 1989), focusing on the images, mapping, and assessment entrenched in the meaning of the perspective expressions. Animal metaphors are used in a language in symbolic ways to speak about different aspects of human beings in a particular environment as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 146) affirm that much of our social reality and identity is understood in symbolic manners and our perspective for the physical world is also metaphorical. Hence, metaphors play a mandatory role in determining what is real and authentic for us.

The analysis revealed that most negative connotations are associated with the ‘dog’, ‘donkey’, ‘cat’, and ‘bull’. The dog is one of those animals with which most of the negative connotations are attached. Contrastively, Barasa and Opande (2017) have put an effort to show the status and value of women in Bukusu and Gusii Proverbs used in Kenya through the usage of animal metaphor where they identified that ‘the dog’ is determined as a noble and reliable animal and is also considered man’s best friend in Bukusu proverbs that does not match with the findings of this study. On the other hand, it is also pointed out that the ‘dog’ also was used to show someone’s negative character, behavior, and attributes when it signifies a woman. The ‘dog’ in most of the studies has been mentioned with negative connotations, which reinforce evidence of culturally shared conceptual metaphors. The ‘dog’ is an animal that is considered entirely worthless and characterless, and no positive connotation is attached to this animal in Punjabi proverbs. Estaji and Nakhavali (2011) also presented the same negative expression with the dog in their research on dog expressions in English and Persian proverbs. Wang and Dowker (2008) observed when the animal-related metaphors were interpreted by the English and Chinese adults and children that the children translated the name of the dog such as “big”, “hairy”, and “ugly” while the adults used it as a “stupid”, “rude” and “loyal” animal which is not similar with the findings of the present research where the dog is considered disloyal, insincere and worthless.

The 'camel' is considered a symbol of social and professional height because of its tall height. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) reported the 'camel' metaphor as a sign of willingness in English and Persian, which is different from the current study's results. It is also observed that the 'dog' has been observed as having the exact ill nature and sharing the same negative characteristics such as greedy, insincere, and dependent. It is also analyzed that female animals are mentioned less frequently in Punjabi proverbs than their male counterparts, similar to Rodrigues (2009), who observed and evaluated symbolic names applied to females. This study also highlighted that the proverbs negatively reinforce the stereotypical view of the female gender, just like Hsieh (2006), who has also studied linguistic discrimination against females and made a strong argument about the metaphor 'women are animals.'

On the other hand, the; 'horse', 'buffalo,' and 'cow' are those few animals that are associated with positive connotations. Ismail et al. (2016) explored different animal symbols in Malay proverbs where the 'cow' is used as a symbol of stupidity, which does not match with our findings where the 'cow' is mentioned as a symbol of innocence and productivity. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) also presented 'cow' as a symbol of fertility, which is similar to the present research findings. Rodríguez (2009) analyzed the animal metaphor related to women in English and Spanish where 'cow' was used to show a fat woman and her ugliness that does not match the present research where the 'cow' is considered to show someone's prosperity. Kilyeni and Silaski (2014) investigated animal-related metaphors for women in Serbian and Romanian languages where 'cow' was used for a stupid and fat woman, which contrasts with the present findings. In the same study, 'cat' possessed many positive connotations such as pretty, beautiful and gentle, which does not match the findings of the current study.

The 'donkey' is depicted in the Punjabi corpus as the most foolish and insensible animal; no other animal equates its negative characteristics. Hsieh and Jucker (2003) pointed out that the semantic function of 'donkey' was to show stupidity in Chinese and English. These findings also match with the present research where the 'donkey' is used as a metaphor to show stupidity. Furthermore, the 'elephant' is considered an authoritative and influential animal in Punjabi proverbs, corresponding to its enormous weight and size. Ismail et al. (2016) also described a similarly attached connotation with it. Muhammad and Rashid (2014) investigated the 'cat' metaphor in English and Malay proverbs where the 'cat' is used as an authoritative, lazy, coward, dangerous and useless animal that is not similar to the present study where the 'cat' is considered as a cruel, notorious, deceiver, characterless and double-faced creature. Hsieh (2006) has also identified the animal expressions through a corpus-based study in Chinese and German where he highlighted that the 'cat' was considered as a gluttonous, hunting, false, and weak animal in Mandarin Chinese while as lazy, careful, double-faced, unimportant and, unlucky one in German which does not match with the findings of the current investigation.

Rashid, Hajimaming, and Muhammad (2012) analyzed the metaphors attached to the 'farm' animals used in Malay and Arabic. The 'horse' had been used for a person who was impolite, rude, undesirable, and manipulative that notion does not match with our findings where the 'horse' is considered one of the most positive animal metaphors. It is also used as a metaphor to show a compelling, courageous, challenging task performer and noble person, while in Arabic, the 'horse' is used for an obedient, powerful and courageous person that somehow matches the present research. The 'goat' is revealed as an innocent but gluttonous animal. It is also noticed that sheep and goats have been depicted as having, to some extent, similar natures in Punjabi

proverbs. On the other side, the 'cow' and 'sheep' are also depicted similarly. Roberto and Shahabi (2015) indicated that 'chicken' is used to show cowardice in the English language while the 'goat' and 'chicken' both are associated with cowardice that does not match with the findings of the current study where the goat is considered as an innocent and gluttonous animal and chicken is considered as a foolish, ordinary, harmless and miserly bird.

In Punjabi proverbs, the horse, buffalo, and cow are considered the sign of prosperity, while the jackal is known as an ominous sign of disaster. Derrida (1978) notes that no word or sentence does not start and end with a metaphor by describing and highlighting the importance of metaphors in language and thoughts. It controls human life through the proverbs of a particular language. So, the researchers uncovered that the names of different animals have been used in a variety of metaphorical expressions referring to people indicating some disparaging and insulting characteristics. This tendency shows the extensively understood similarity, familiarity, and closeness of human beings and animals.

## 6. Conclusion

This research aimed to show the metaphorical identity of the animals in Punjabi proverbs and concludes that animal-related proverbs sustain great importance in Punjabi society and culture. These animal metaphors are used as a mitigating device to comment on different human characteristics, natures, and behaviors. The varied images of animals mapped onto the expressions reflect the experiential nature of the Punjabi speech community, which constitutes different metaphorical extensions of the respective animals. This paper has also discussed the implications of the meaning and image differences related to animal metaphors of the Punjabi language. The conceptual metaphorical analysis of animal-related connotations revealed that most animals are attached with unproductive and unfavorable connotations with only a few exceptions, including the horse, cow, and buffalo. Subsequently, the content analysis of conceptual metaphors delineated that the 'lion,' 'elephant,' and 'horse' have been associated with power and authority. At the same time, the 'dog,' 'jackal,' 'cat,' and 'monkey' are presented as less valuable and destructively bad-natured metaphors, and the 'goat,' 'donkey' and 'sheep' as insensible and worthless members of the Punjabi society. So the animal expressions refer to undesirable characteristics and traits of man and low and inferior aspects of human life, so most of them carry negative connotations. Punjabi speech community, as a traditional nation shows herself in the form of proverbs. In other words, proverbs, like other linguistic vehicles, reflect Punjabi speakers' views, beliefs, values and thought patterns because what matters to a nation, that and only that receives verbal clothing.

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