



The Hindi Swear Words Used by Indians: A Descriptive Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to (1) identify swear words used by Indians, (2) analyze their forms, (3) examine their functions, and (4) explore their references. It employs a qualitative descriptive method and was conducted in Nusa Penida, Klungkung Regency, Bali. Data were collected through document analysis and interviews with three informants selected based on specific criteria. The researcher acted as the main instrument, supported by an analysis sheet and interview guides. The findings reveal a total of 33 Hindi swear words. In terms of form, 15 are monomorphemic, 12 polymorphemic, 3 noun phrases, and 3 independent clauses. Regarding function, 18 swear words are used to discredit others, 7 to provoke, and 8 to provide emotional catharsis. As for references, the words relate to sex activity (8), excrement (2), animals (4), personal background (4), bodily functions (8), and death (1). These results show that Hindi swear words are varied in structure, purpose, and reference, reflecting both the emotional intensity and cultural context in which they are used. This study enhances the understanding of Indian sociolinguistics by demonstrating how swearing serves not only as verbal aggression or expression, but also as a reflection of societal values, interpersonal dynamics, and cultural identity.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a vital part of human life, serving not only as a tool for communication but also as a reflection of cultural identity and social norms. It changes over time, both in vocabulary and meaning, shaped by cultural, social, and emotional needs. While traditional expressions like proverbs and idioms convey cultural wisdom (Peter & Simatupang, 2022), informal expressions such as swear words also

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play a significant role in expressing strong emotions like anger or frustration (Allan & Burrige, 2006). Swear words are context-dependent and often serve different purposes from emotional release to social critique varying in acceptability based on the situation and culture (Jay, 2009). Informal elements such as swear words also hold significant communicative and sociolinguistic roles in everyday interactions. Swear words are often used to convey strong emotions such as anger, frustration, or annoyance, and their usage reveals both personal expression and broader social dynamics (Allan & Burrige, 2006). Previous research has explored the use of swear words in various languages. Studies comparing Vietnamese and English, or Balinese and American English, have shown common patterns in both reference categories such as animals, sex, and religion and functions like expressing anger or humiliation (Tran, 2025;). Other research, such as Sajarwa's (2021) work on French, highlights how social class and gender affect profanity usage, with different groups favoring different references. In the Indian context, although Hindi is widely used especially in emotional expression even among bilingual speakers (Agarwal et al., 2017) few studies have explored the forms, references, and functions of Hindi swear words in everyday conversation in a comprehensive manner. This study addresses that research gap by examining Hindi swear words in natural conversation, focusing on their linguistic forms, reference categories, and communicative functions. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach to understanding how Hindi speakers use swear words as a form of cultural and emotional expression. By doing so, it contributes to the broader field of sociolinguistics and enhances our understanding of how language reflects and shapes cultural identity in Indian society.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore the forms, references, and functions of Hindi swear words. Data collection included document analysis and interviews, providing an in-depth understanding of how Hindi-speaking individuals use swear words in real-life contexts. The research was conducted in Nusa Penida, Klungkung Regency, Bali, a popular tourist destination known for attracting foreign visitors including Indian tourists, which made it a suitable location for encountering native Hindi speakers. The study involved three Indian informants selected through convenience sampling based on the following criteria: native Hindi speakers, fluent in English, aged between 18 and 65 years, able to speak Hindi with native accents and dialects, available at the time scheduled for interviews, and willing to participate in the study. Primary data were obtained through interviews with the informants, while secondary data were collected from online sources such as blogs and articles discussing Hindi swear words. Research instruments included the researcher as the key instrument, a document analysis sheet used to organize and categorize swear words found from secondary sources, and an interview guide to structure and direct the interview process. Data were analyzed using the model by Miles and Huberman from

1994. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and simplifying raw data. Data display involved presenting information in tables to help reveal patterns in word usage. Drawing conclusions and verification were performed by interpreting the data on the form, reference, and function of Hindi swear words, while validating the findings through triangulation to ensure accuracy and reliability

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion in this research focus on the swear words used, the forms of Hindi swear words, and the references of Hindi swear words used by Indians and also present the functions of Hindi swear words used by Indians.

Results

1. Hindi Swear Words Used by Indians

Table 1. Hindi Swear Words Used by Indians

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning
	<i>ullu</i>	idiot
	<i>bahenchod</i>	sisterfucker, bastard
	<i>bakchod</i>	blabbermouth
	<i>suar</i>	pig
	<i>bevda</i>	alcoholic
	<i>bevakoof</i>	idiot
	<i>bhadua</i>	pimp
	<i>bhosada</i>	Pussy
	<i>bhosdike</i>	son of a whore
	<i>bhenchod</i>	idiot, fuck, sisterfucker
	<i>chutiya</i>	fuck
	<i>lund</i>	penis, dickhead
	<i>nalli</i>	shit
	<i>hagna</i>	bastard, shit
	<i>harami</i>	cunt, dick
	<i>laand</i>	cunt, dick
	<i>kutiya</i>	bitch
	<i>bakwass</i>	bullshit
	<i>dhandhe valee</i>	escort
	<i>randi</i>	whore
	<i>narak</i>	hell
	<i>goti</i>	balls, testicles
	<i>chusna</i>	suck
	<i>muth</i>	piss
	<i>moot</i>	piss/pee
	<i>kutta</i>	dog
	<i>phatele nirodh ke natije</i>	you are the result of a torn condom
	<i>tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya</i>	The rest of you was left in the condom
	<i>hazaar lund teri gaand main</i>	Thousand dicks in your ass
	<i>rundi ko chod</i>	Go fuck a prostitute
	<i>teri ma gandi rundi</i>	Your mother is filthy whore
	<i>madarchod</i>	motherfucker

<i>tatti</i>	shit
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2. The Form of Hindi Swear Words Used by Indians

There are three forms of swear words which consist of swear words in the forms of words, swear words in the forms of phrases, and swear words in the forms of clauses. The following are related data that will be explained specifically as follows.

A. Swear Words in The Form of Words

a. Monomorphemic Words

Table 2. The Hindi Swear Words Used by Indians in Morphological structure of Monomorphemic

No List of Swear Words	Meaning
<i>ullu</i>	idiot
<i>suar</i>	pig
<i>bevda</i>	alcoholic
<i>lund</i>	penis, dickhead
<i>bhosada</i>	pussy
<i>nalli</i>	shit
<i>hagna</i>	bastard
<i>laand</i>	Cunt, dick
<i>randi</i>	whore
<i>narak</i>	hell
<i>goti</i>	balls
<i>muth</i>	piss
<i>moot</i>	piss/pee
<i>kutta</i>	dog
<i>tatti</i>	shit

The results above show that there are 15 swear words in the morphological structure of monomorphemic, this is because these words function as single morphemes that cannot be broken down into smaller units of meaning. These words include *ullu*, *suar*, *bevda*, *lund*, *bhosada*, *hagna*, *land*, *randi*, *narak*, *goti*, *muth*, *moot*, *kutta*, and *tatti*, which are words that can convey meaning independently without the need for affixes or additional morphemes.

b. Polymorpheimc Words

Table 3. The Hindi Swear Words Used by Indian in Morphological structure of Polymorphemic

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Morphemes
1.	<i>bahenchod</i>	sisterfucker	<i>bahen + chod</i>
2.	<i>bakchod</i>	blabbermouth	<i>bak + chod</i>
3.	<i>bevakoof</i>	idiot	<i>be + vakoof</i>
4.	<i>bhadua</i>	pimp	<i>bhada + ua</i>
5.	<i>bhosdike</i>	son of a whore	<i>bhosdi + ke</i>
6.	<i>bhenchod</i>	idiot, fuck sisterfucker	<i>bhen + chod</i>
7.	<i>chutiya</i>	idiot, fuck	<i>chut + iya</i>
8.	<i>harami</i>	cunt, dick	<i>haram + i</i>
9.	<i>kutiya</i>	bitch	<i>kutta + iya</i>
10.	<i>bakwass</i>	bullshit	<i>bak + wass</i>
11.	<i>.chusna</i>	suck	<i>chus + na</i>
12.	<i>madarchod</i>	motherfucker	<i>madar + chod</i>

The results above show that there are 12 swear words in the morphological structure of polymorphemic, namely *bahenchod*, *bakchod*, *bevakoof*, *bhadua*, *bhosdike*, *bhenchod*, *chutiya*, *harami*, *kutiya*, *bakwass*, *chusna*, and *madarchod*.

B. The Swear Words in The Form of Phrase

Table 4. The Swear Words Used by Indian in The Form of Phrase

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Classification
1.	<i>dhandhe valee</i>	escort	Noun phrase
2.	<i>phatele nirodh ke natije</i>	you are the result of a torn condom	Noun phrase
3.	<i>hazaar lund teri gaand main</i>	thousand dicks in your ass	Noun phrase

The results above show that there are 3 swear words in the form of noun phrase, namely *dhandhe valee*, *phatele nirodh ke natije*, and *hazaar lund teri gaand main*.

C. The Swear Words in The Form of Clause

In the form of words, this study found that swear words are classified as independent clause and dependent clause.

Table 5. The Swear Words Used by India in The Form of Clause

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Classification
1.	tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya	the rest of you was left in the condom	Independent Clause
2.	rundi ko chod!	go fuck a prostitute!	Independent Clause
3.	teri ma gandhi rundi	your mother is filthy whore	Independent Clause

All three clauses are independent clauses that can be analyzed for subject, and predicate. Like the clause “*tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya*”, the subject of the clause is “*tera adha nirodh*” (your half-condom), the predicate “*rah gaya*” (left behind), “*mein*” (inside) as a description of place. Next is the clause “*rundi ko chod*”, the subject of this clause is not stated directly, namely referring (you) which is explained implicitly in the command, the predicate “*chod*” (have sex), and “*ko*” indicates the object that receives the action. Then the clause “*teri ma gandi rundi*”, the subject is “*teri maa*” (your mother), the predicate is explained implicitly and there is an adverb “*gandi rundi*” (dirty whore).

3. The References of Swear Words Used by Indians

There are several references to Hindi swear words used by Indians. Some references of swear words in Hindi come from sexual activity, excrement, animal names, personal background, mental illness, bodily functions, and death. The following are details of references to swear words in Hindi.

Table 6. The Reference of Hindi Swear Words Used by Indian

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Reference(s)
1	<i>bahenchod</i>	sister fucker	Sexual activity
2	<i>bhenchod</i>	fuck	Sexual activity
3	<i>madarchod</i>	mother fucker	Sexual activity
4	<i>chusna</i>	suck	Sexual activity
5	<i>phatele nirodh ke natije</i>	you are result of a torn condom	Sexual activity
6	<i>tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya</i>	the rest of you was left in the condom	Sexual activity
7	<i>muth</i>	piss	Sexual activity, Bodily functions
8	<i>rundi ko chod</i>	go fuck a prostitute	Sexual activity
9	<i>tatti</i>	shit	Excrement
10	<i>hagna</i>	bastard, shit	Excrement
11	<i>kutiya</i>	bitch	Animals
12	<i>suar</i>	pig	Animals
13	<i>ullu</i>	idiot	Animals
14	<i>kutta</i>	dog	Animals
15	<i>dhandhe valee</i>	escort	Personal background
16	<i>teri ma gandi rundi</i>	your mother is filthy whore	Personal background
17	<i>harami</i>	cunt, dick	Personal background
18	<i>randi</i>	whore	Personal background
19	<i>bevakoof</i>	idiot	Mental illness
20	<i>nalli</i>	shit	Mental illness
21	<i>bhosdike</i>	son of a whore	Bodily functions
22	<i>laand</i>	cunt, dick	Bodily functions
23	<i>lund</i>	penis, dickhead	Bodily functions
24	<i>chutiya</i>	idiot, fuck	Bodily functions
25	<i>moot</i>	piss/pee	Bodily functions
26	<i>bhosada</i>	pussy	Bodily functions
27	<i>goti</i>	balls, testicles	Bodily functions
28	<i>hazaar lund teri gaand main</i>	thousand dicks in your ass	Bodily functions
29	<i>narak</i>	hell	Death

Based on Table 6, there are twenty-eight (28) swear words that can be categorized according to their references: sexual activity (*bahenchod, bhenchod, madarchod, chusna, phatele nirodh ke natije, tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya, muth, rundi ko chod*), excrement (*tatti, hagna*), animal names (*kutiya, suar, ullu, kutta*), personal background (*dhandhe valee, teri ma gandi rundi, harami, randi*), mental illness (*bevakoof, nalli*), bodily functions (*bhosdike, laand, lund, chutiya, moot, bhosada, goti, hazaar lund teri gaand main*) and death (*narak*).

4. The Function of Swear Words Used by Indians

There are several functions in the use of Hindi swear words used by Indians. Some of these functions include to discredit someone, to provoke, and to provide catharsis. The functions of swear words in Hindi based on the data that has been found will be displayed in the form of a table below:

Table 7. The Function of Swear Words Used by Indians

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Function(s)
1	<i>ullu</i>	idiot	To Discredit Someone
2	<i>bahenchod</i>	sisterfucker, bastard	To Discredit Someone
3	<i>suar</i>	pig	To Discredit Someone
4	<i>bevda</i>	alcoholic	To Discredit Someone
5	<i>bevakoof</i>	idiot	To Discredit Someone
6	<i>bhadua</i>	pimp	To Discredit Someone
7	<i>bhosada</i>	pussy	To Discredit Someone
8	<i>bhenchod</i>	idiot, fuck	To Discredit Someone
9	<i>chutiya</i>	fuck, idiot	To Discredit Someone
10	<i>nalli</i>	shit	To Discredit Someone
11	<i>laand</i>	cunt, dick	To Discredit Someone
12	<i>harami</i>	cunt, dick	To Discredit Someone
13	<i>kutiya</i>	bitch	To Discredit Someone
14	<i>kutta</i>	dog	To Discredit Someone
15	<i>randi</i>	whore	To Discredit Someone
16	<i>goti</i>	balls, testicles	To Discredit Someone
17	<i>dandhe valee</i>	escort	To Discredit Someone
18	<i>madarchod</i>	motherfucker	To Discredit Someone
19	<i>bhosdike</i>	son of a whore	To Provoke
20	<i>chusna</i>	suck	To Provoke
21	<i>phatele nirodh ke natije</i>	you are the result of a torn condom	To Provoke
22	<i>tera adha nirodh mein gaya</i>	the rest of you was left in condom	To Provoke
23	<i>hazaar lund teri gaand main</i>	thousand dicks in your ass	To Provoke
24	<i>rundi ko chod</i>	go fuck a prostitute	To Provoke
25	<i>teri ma gandi rundi</i>	your mother is filthy whore	To Provoke
26	<i>bakchod</i>	blabbermouth	To Provide Catharsis
27	<i>hagna</i>	bastard, shit	To Provide Catharsis
28	<i>bakwass</i>	bullshit	To Provide Catharsis

No	List of Swear Words	Meaning	Function(s)
29	<i>narak</i>	hell	To Provide Catharsis
30	<i>moot</i>	piss/pee	To Provide Catharsis
31	<i>tatti</i>	shit	To Provide Catharsis
32	<i>lund</i>	penis, dickhead	To Provide Catharsis
33	<i>muth</i>	piss	To Provide Catharsis

Based on the function, there are thirty-three (33) Hindi swear words that can be categorized into three main functions: discrediting someone, provoking, discrediting someone, provoking, and providing catharsis. There are eighteen (18) swear words that function to discredit someone, such as *ullu*, *bahenchod*, *suar*, *bevda*, *bevakoof*, *bhadua*, *bhosada*, *bhynchod*, *chutiya*, *nalli*, *laand*, *harami*, *kutiya*, *kutta*, *randi*, *goti*, *dhandhe valee*, and *madarchod*. Next, there are seven (7) swear words used to provoke others. Examples include *bhosdike*, *chusna*, *phatele nirodh ke natije*, *tera adha nirodh mein rah gaya*, *hazaar lund teri gaand main*, *rundi ko chod* and *teri ma gandi rundi*. Lastly, there are eight (8) swear words that serve to provide catharsis, such as *bakchod*, *hagna*, *bakwass*, *narak*, *mooth*, *tatti*, *lund*, and *muth*.

Discussion

This study successfully identified thirty-three Hindi swear words used by Indians, categorized by their form, function, and reference. It supports previous findings that swear words exist in all languages and are culturally unique. In terms of form, this study aligns with Budasi (2012), identifying swear words as monomorphemic (15), polymorphemic (12), noun phrases (3), and independent clauses (3). Regarding references, the study supports Hughes (2015), finding categories such as animals, sexual activity, personal background, mental illness, and excrement, though it did not find references related to sex. Compared to Wardhaugh (2006), who identified seven reference categories, this study only matched four: animals, death, excretion, and bodily functions. Therefore, the results are more consistent with Hughes (2015). Functionally, the study confirms Rothwell (1971) theory of five functions but only identified three in practice: discrediting others (18), provoking (7), and providing catharsis (8). It did not observe swear words used for attracting attention or creating interpersonal identification. Compared to earlier research such as Yani et al. (2017), Dewipayani et al. (2017) and Saniada et al. (2023), this study shares methodological similarities and findings on forms and some functions. However, differences arise in reference categories and the interpretation of swear word functions. Notably, this study discovered unique swear words like *bakchod*, *bevda*, *badhuwa*, and *bakwass*, which do not fit traditional reference categories but instead reflect insults based on behavior, morality, or actions. These findings highlight the dynamic nature of swearing and expand existing categorization frameworks.

CONCLUSIONS

This study identified 33 Hindi swear words used by Indians and categorized them by form, reference, and function. These include 15 monomorphemic words, 12 polymorphemic words, 3 noun phrases, and 3 independent clauses. The references fall into categories such as sex, excrement, animals, personal background, mental illness, bodily functions, and death, with some words (e.g., *bakchod*, *bevda*, *bhadua*, *bakwass*) not fitting existing reference categories but instead reflecting human behavior or morality. Functionally, 18 swear words discredit others, 7 are used to provoke, and 8 provide catharsis. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of Hindi swearing practices and shows both similarities and differences with previous studies. The study is limited by its small sample size of three Indian informants in Nusa Penida, whose speech may not fully represent broader usage among Hindi speakers. Future research should include a wider range of participants in more varied contexts and could benefit from a comparative approach across languages to explore cross-cultural similarities and differences in swearing.

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