Exploring Hospitality as a Cultural Tradition: A Qualitative Study of Pashto and Hindko Customs

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Abstract
The research investigates changes in hospitality customs of Hindko along with Pashtun cultures by studying the effects of modernization coupled with economic limitations and technological advancements and gender role changes. Qualitative research methods were used to obtain data from in-depth interviews that explored generations' practices regarding hospitality. Research shows moral duty exists as an essential principle for hospitality in the older generations but younger people consider hospitality through financial constraints and social acceptability. The economic difficulty has prompted people to choose their hospitality guests carefully and digital communication methods have replaced traditional person-to-person meetings. Men are now actively participating in activities that relate to hospitality duties as gender roles transform within society. Since traditional hospitality norms continue to persist in Mexican culture they now follow modern rules which enable flexibility in practice. The research emphasizes that traditional hospitality must be preserved by adding contemporary needs to the practice. Economic sustainability and traditional cultural standards need appropriate balancing to sustain hospitality traditions between the two. The research outcomes extend knowledge about cultural change processes present in current social environments.

Keywords: Social values, Community, Spiritual Duty, Digital Age, Symbolic Rituals

Introduction
Hospitality demonstrates the core cultural practices which define the social values and traditional behaviors in various human societies. Human social relationships take shape through hospitality which exists fundamentally in human-to-human relations as well as community and national affairs. The practice of hospitality manifests through generous behavior while displaying kindness as people observe a moral responsibility to provide hospitality to visitors. Hospitality functions as a multifaceted social dynamic that shows cultural and socioeconomic plus time-related variations between different nations. Throughout history to present times hospitality has remained an

essential organizational element for societies and power relations as well as economic exchanges. The concept of hospitality exists as both a spiritual duty following religious and ethical laws in some societies while in others it became a core part of commercial tourism and hospitality management services (Savic & Dariescu, 2022).

The core value of hospitality exists prominently throughout different cultural tales and traditional practices throughout the globe. The people of ancient Greece alongside Rome together with the Middle Eastern world considered hospitality as an essential quality that demonstrated societal moral conduct. Demonstrating the noble connection between hosts and guests forms an essential part of Greek mythological beliefs where Zeus Xenios protects travelers and strangers (Kaim & Dominik, 2025). The Islamic religious teachings require a practice of karam which obligates hosts to respect and care for their guests without any regard for their social status (Shryock, 2012). The South Asian cultural tradition views hospitality as a social status indicator because guest treatment reflects on family reputation (Kimpinde, 2024).

The modern world has transformed hospitality beyond traditional duties into an organized business sector which adds substantial value to worldwide economies. Both hospitality and tourism industries produce billions of dollars per year through employment of worldwide millions of people (Bilgihan et al., 2024) Different forms of traditional hospitality typically merge with commercial hospitality services which reshape how hosts and guests interact with each other. Cultural exchanges alongside rising international travel have modified societal approaches toward both definitions and delivery of hospitality because of globalization. New-age hospitality businesses exist alongside traditional social hospitality customs since most cultural groups preserve their cultural standards which keep personal expressions and traditional values essential in hospitality.

Hospitality exists as a practice which displays both innocent charitable acts and pragmatic relationships that shape power dynamics between individuals. Various scholars study the political nature of hosting guests while examining situations including colonial contacts and immigrant and refugee program administration. With hidden social requirements embedded in guest-host relationships one finds issues about who counts as part of the community and who determines membership criteria. Derrida (2000) proposed "conditional hospitality" as a concept to explain why hospitality arrangements have conditions which stem from economic and political and social influences. The current immigration and asylum-seeking dialogues demonstrate notable relevance because they use specific governmental policies to welcome certain groups yet deny entry to others for national benefits (Kimpinde, 2024).

Problem Statement
Both the Pashtun and Hindko communities base their customs of hospitality on their rich cultural traditions as well as their established social codes and ancestral historical practices. The traditional customs have started to evolve because of modernization forces and globalization trends and urbanization processes which create conflicts between traditional principles and contemporary personal choices. Moral gestures of hospitality practice as marks of respect yet conventional practices generate financial and social expenses that stress sustainability considerations. Analyzing Pashtun and Hindko cultural hospitality

values alongside their adaptations and expected obstacles to these traditions helps maintain their identity while society experiences contemporary change.

Objectives
1. Examine generational changes in Pashtun and Hindko hospitality.
2. Analyze economic constraints affecting traditional hospitality customs.
3. Explore the impact of technology on hospitality practices.
4. Investigate shifting gender roles in guest-host interactions.

Literature Review
The section analyzes important literature about hospitality which includes essential aspects of the field. The article investigates the historical development of hospitality through different cultural periods. Differences in hospitality practices exist between distinct societies based on Cultural Variations in Hospitality. This part analyzes the current hospitality dynamics encompassing modern trends with technological progress and sustainability within the industry framework.

Historical Background of Hospitality
Since primitive human societies humans relied on hospitality as an essential practice. The beginnings of human civilization relied on hospitality in order to obtain mutual protection and support because their environments were not stable. Anthropological research shows that before modern times human communities used hospitality as a means to create social connections with other groups (Pohl, 2024). Tribal host codes in anthropology ensure that hosts supply food and protection along with shelter to strangers and travelers while receiving loyalty or future help back from them (based on Kumar et al.'s 2024 research).

The traditions of ancient civilizations reorganized hospitality as an institutional practice. Hospitality known as xenia remained a sacred responsibility in ancient Greece because both guests and hosts maintained mutual obligations to each other. Breaking these rules against hospitality led to divine punishment from Zeus Xenios who presided over such relations (Gamsakhurdia 2025). The Roman Empire required both legal and moral practices of hospitality through patron-client systems which brought wealthy patrons together with clients who received travel assistance in return for political or economic backing (Camargo, 2021).

Traditional religious teachings have formed essential components in developing social rules regarding hospitality. The Christian faith recognizes hospitality as an essential moral virtue because believers must extend fellowship to strangers identical to how they embrace Christ according to Coulson et al. (2014). Muslim cultural practices view hospitality through divine standards so hosts need to display respect and generosity to their guests regardless of social position (Kuokkanen 2008). Hindu traditions value hospitality as their customs demand guests should receive the highest respect through the belief that "The Guest is God" (Korstanje, 2024).

Cultural Variations in Hospitality
Hospitality practices differ between cultures because of various historical factors combined with religious beliefs together with established social traditions.

Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures strongly link hospitality practices with both honor traditions and honoring their guests. Providing comfortable hospitality facilities and elaborate culinary feasts to guests serves both moral obligations and represents social status (Camargo, 2021). The Western capitalist economy together with other Western societies transformed hospitality into formal business industries that include hotels and restaurants and tourism activities. (Kuokkanen, 2008). The practice of personal hospitality remains but professional hospitality management and paid service delivery have become principal hospitality operations.

Japanese hospitality culture known as omotenashi teaches people to provide attentive services with politeness and to fulfill guests' requirements before their requests become known. Omotenashi reflects Japanese social expectations which drive hospitality providers to deliver precise and customized service to their customers (Dieser & Hafermann, 2025). Additionally, African hospitality accepts its responsibility to host guests through extensive kinship ties that differentiate their functions from Japanese omotenashi customs (Elliott, 2025).

Hospitality in the Modern World
The present age brings substantial changes to hospitality because of globalization economic shifts and technological developments. Hospitality management has undergone commercial transformation since the tourism boom took hold as standardization of services has gradually replaced human contact (Ghaderi et al., 2024). Traditional hospitality maintains its strength in several cultures yet it operates with contemporary hospitality businesses that include hotels airlines in addition to online hospitality services like Airbnb.

Modern times have brought about political along with ethical dilemmas regarding hospitality practices. The refugee crisis together with migrant patterns have brought attention to Western countries' hospitality boundaries since their immigration policies control access for newcomers over those they reject (Dieser & Hafermann, 2025). Modern hospitality diligence has worsened due to economic factors together with national security requirements and cultural preferences according to Sauls (2024).

Materials and Methods
This study employed a **qualitative research method** to explore hospitality practices among Pashtun and Hindko communities in District Mansehra. A **phenomenological approach** was used to understand participants' lived experiences with hospitality. **Purposive sampling** was applied to select **15 participants**, including elders, hosts, guests, and women. Data were collected through **semi-structured interviews** conducted in **Pashto, Hindko, and Urdu**, along with **participant observations** of hospitality rituals. Interviews lasted **40–60 minutes** and were audio-recorded with consent. Data were analyzed using **Braun and Clarke's six-step thematic analysis**, which involved **familiarization with data through transcription and repeated reading, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes for coherence, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.** Ethical considerations included **informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity.** Trustworthiness was ensured

through **member checking, triangulation, and thick description** to enhance credibility and reliability.

Result and Discussion
The Results and Discussion section displays research findings with an assessment using defined themes. The research results are presented while comparing them against relevant literature which reveals different patterns and shows distinctive differences along with their significant implications. A Conclusion part presents essential findings from the study by meeting research goals and indicating possible research directions for future work.

Evolving Religious and Moral Interpretations of Hospitality
The customs of hospitality in the Pashtun and Hindko cultures used to deeply embrace religious values as well as moral standards. Religious beliefs about hospitality persist even though changing economic factors and life patterns affect how society practices this custom. Hospitality represents a fundamental duty to older generations but younger people maintain a practical approach to hospitality by considering both financial limitations and their individual needs, respondent Narrated:

"During our era accepting a guest functioned as a divine examination. According to my father you should think of turning away a guest as an act of denying God's divine purpose. We never doubted the reason behind visitor arrivals so we immediately provided them service. We would welcome any traveler who arrives during night hours and provide him with both food and lodging. Modern society reveals a trend where young individuals examine their mobile devices just before answering their entrance or downright disregard visitations when they have ongoing responsibilities. Hospitality maintains its original state of purity at a diminishing rate."

Another respondent added

"Hospitality remains essential yet the modern world demands us to recognize that things have evolved since the past. Today's lifestyle requires that we do not host guests for extended periods as family members used to during their time. The duties of my employment along with my individual space needs conflict with my ability to host guests. I welcome guests who visit yet they need to understand their stay should fit within particular boundaries. According to my religious beliefs God wishes for people to be hospitable yet practical. Hospitality services should have defined duration because an extended stay turns into a weight for the host. According to my belief our religion does not require suffering simply to show hospitality."

The examples indicate a growing split between generations about how hospitality should be understood as both divine and ethical requirement. Different age groups see hospitality through opposing perspectives since older generations view it as a religious obligation without limits yet younger individuals treat it as a flexible ethic based on their life situations. Hospitality faces an identity crisis because younger generations are redefining its cultural norms to match current societal values.

Symbolic Rituals and Their Transformation in the Digital Age
Sharing qehwa among guests and performing animal sacrifices together with

allocating the most desirable seating positions remain traditional customs in Pashtun and Hindko regions for bestowing respect. Changes arising from urbanization and globalization together with digital communication technologies now impact traditional practices of these rituals. The traditional customs persist in rural areas whereas urban families adapt these practices by using contemporary methods that save time, respondent Shared

"Qehwa serves as a manner of showing respect because we offer it to guests first. We make special preparations of lamb karahi and chapli kabab whenever an important guest arrives. During the past many households would welcome a guest by placing them in the 'Hujra' (guesthouse) to stay indefinitely. Numerous modern houses located within cities have eliminated the traditional Hujra space from their structures. Hosts make dining choices because most people prefer eating out instead of inviting guests to their residences. Although the respect remains unaffected the methods through which we demonstrate it have transformed."

Another respondent shared
"The rituals which make up hospitality practices have undergone significant changes since my birth. My mother used to manually grind wheat for making fresh roti as a personal gesture when guests arrived in past times. Ordering restaurant food serves as my current response to unexpected guest arrivals. During our time female guests received ittar applications from female hosts before sharing personal stories with each other. Modern life maintains such a fast pace that all interactions including unexpected guest encounters now happen through formal WhatsApp messages."

The traditional evolution of cultural hospitality practices shows how elaborate community-based rituals transformed into private convenient guest experiences. Guest respect remains important but its social display has evolved into standardized protocols compared to previous years. The digital process of extending hospitality invitations represents a new phenomenon needing investigation within studies of cultural evolution.

Economic and Technological Impacts on Hospitality Practices
Economic limitations along with technological progress have transformed the way people practice hospitality. The responsibility to host a guest used to belong to the community as a whole thereby ensuring the comfort of each guest. The current economic landscape together with shifting financial values has created an environment of selective hospitality focused on resource management. People reduced their hospitality practices due to improved technological convertibility through social media. respondent Narrated

"Hospitality holds its natural beauty however expenses must be available to achieve it. My grandfather used to provide lodging to strangers without charge yet my financial situation does not allow me to do the same. I need to assess my monthly expenses when uninvited guests show up since I must prepare food for them. The practice of extended hospitality is uncommon in urban settings where people extend invitations to guests only through dinner events. The habit of generous hospitality survives in villages yet people now count their spending before asking travelers to spend much time."

Another respondent added

"Technology has changed hospitality completely. My mother's generation received unexpected guests without hesitation because our family would warmly receive them regardless of any difficulties. People now prefer to send digital requests before visiting their family members even for basic social interactions. When I am occupied I have the ability to decline and Social media has reshaped the way we maintain contacts with others. Through technology I can express greetings along with good wishes despite lacking the need to host guests in person. This convenience provides flexibility although we sometimes sense that genuine hospitality experiences grow fainter."

The results indicate that both economic elements and technology developments have changed the classic model of hospitality. The limitations of finances on hospitality distribution exist alongside technological solutions for social interaction maintenance. We need to answer whether hospitality has become more exclusive because of budget limitations or whether the modern cultural practice has changed hospitality.

Shifting Gender Roles in Hospitality

Throughout most of hospitality history different roles belonged to men and women where men-maintained guest greeting responsibility but women managed both food preparation and hospitality organization. The development of cities and expanded education and women's workforce entry has begun to reshape traditional gender-driven responsibilities. Modern families either practice traditional hospitality customs or they are adjusting these customs to match contemporary gender roles in hospitality, respondent Narrated

"Men from our tradition welcome guests outside the home space although women stay within household boundaries. While my family prepares the food my wife and daughters do not join male guests at the dining table. It's about honor and tradition. Certain modern households encompass male-female collaborations during hosting activities. During my time women never used to handle food service duties whereas today they can directly deliver meals to guests."

Respondent narrated

"As a working woman I cannot dedicate my whole day to elaborate guest meal preparation as my mother once did. My family partners with my husband to prepare meals but we alternately request restaurant delivery instead of typical home cooking. The free interaction between male and female guests has become more common among our contemporary social networks. The practice of hiding women from male guests when they arrive is becoming obsolete in metropolitan regions."

The hospitality industry has evolved to show equal contributions between genders when it comes to household responsibilities in urban urban families. Active male participation in home hospitality duties demonstrates both cultural transformations regarding gender roles and new societal expectations about male responsibilities.

Discussion

The study discovers that hospitality within Pashtun and Hindko societies experiences major transformations because of new generations and economic difficulties and technological progress and shifting gender dynamics. According

to tradition hospitality existed as a sacred responsibility which religious and moral principles deeply rooted within it. Senior members of society maintain their belief in total hospitality toward guests because they view this duty as a sacred expectation. Modern youths in the hospitality sector establish their hospitality practices by considering their individual financial needs together with personal space requirements and time limitations. (Savic & Dariescu, 2022). Today hospitality exists as both an absolute divine duty for some people and an adaptable modern life practice for others. The changing attitudes between different generations prove that fundamental hospitality principles persist yet their day-to-day implementation has made significant progress. The traditional rituals of hospitality include preparing qehwa and providing excellent seating choices while performing animal sacrifices to demonstrate respect for visiting guests. The practice of traditional rituals adjusted because of present-day living standards combined with urbanization and technology. The traditional customs of hospitality continue to be practiced by rural families but urban families frequently choose modern more practical substitutes for traditional practices. People now opt for restaurant dining or digital communication instead of traditional hosting at home premises. The practice of scheduled hospitality which requires advance notification from guests is currently superseding the previously standard spontaneous guest arrivals. The traditional symbolic hospitality practices survive but modern societies implement more scheduled efficient formats in their execution. (Camargo, 2021). Hospitality faces economic as well as technological influences which are a substantial part of current research findings. The economic burden on families leads them to reduce their hospitality spending patterns toward sustainable practices. Modern families tend to restrict their hospitality duration according to financial considerations since guests previously were welcome to stay indefinitely. The emergence of technological communication methods has cut down physical visits between people. (Kimpinde, 2024). The combination of social media and phone calls and video chats enables people to uphold their relationships even when they cannot offer physical hospitality. Society need to address whether hospitality diminishes in modern life or adjusts to alterations in cultural values. The traditional roles between males and females during hospitality activities evolved significantly. In traditional society the man owned guest reception duty but women fulfilled responsibilities for cooking and handled all household hospitality operations. Cumulative professional participation by women alongside male involvement in family tasks leads to changes in traditional gender-based roles. (Pohl, 2024). The practice of dividing hospitality labor between multiple household members especially comes from younger urban residents of Pakistan who want to challenge cultural norms that have persisted for years. Hospitality now offers flexible approaches to social interaction because it has become an opportunity to honor guests alongside efforts to adapt modern gender norms. (Bilgihan et al., 2024). The cultural practice of hospitality signifies a vital tradition in Pashtun and Hindko communities as these customs develop according to present-day social changes. Traditional practices of Pashtun and Hindko hospitality continue to thrive yet their presentation displays increased order selection as well as technological implementation. The cultural practice has undergone change but it preserves its core values to reflect a wider societal evolution in traditional customs.

Conclusion

This research shows that hospitality remains fundamental to social practice in both Pashtun and Hindko cultures yet it has evolved considerably due to genealogical changes together with economic alterations and technological evolution as well as gender-related impacts. The moral and religious obligation to show hospitality embraced by seniors exists along with younger generations who adapt traditional customs into relevant modern practices. The combination of economic conditions and technological innovation produced hospitality structures that adopt digital communication networks over personal entertaining traditions. Traditional gender rituals in hospitality adjust as wider cultural transformations take place. The study demonstrates that hospitality plays a fundamental role as an element of Pashtun and Hindko identity but continues evolving to meet current economic and cultural developments.

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