

# Sindhi and Dravidian Languages: A comparative Study



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***A comparative analysis of Sindhi and Dravidian languages thus shows that Sindhi was a Dravidian language. Later, due to the influence of Aryan languages and Semitic, Arabic, Persian and other languages, Sindhi was included in the group of Indo-Aryan languages***

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## **Abstract**

There are controversial opinions about Sindhi language. Some scholars are of the opinion that Sindhi language is Dravidian language while some are of the opposite opinion and consider it as Indo-Aryan system of languages. Undoubtedly, now Sindhi language is included in Indo-Aryan system of languages but there is huge amount of words of [proto](#)

[Dravidian](#) and [Dravidian languages](#) which are prevalent in Sindhi language as it is yet and some with little phonetic change as well. In the light of history and the words of proto Dravidian and Dravidian languages in Sindhi language it has been tried to prove that Sindhi language is Dravidian language but after influence of other languages from Vedic Era and onward it has been considered as Indo-Aryan language. The discussion has been done with comparative and analytic study in comparison to Proto Dravidian ,Dravidian Languages and Sindhi language.

### **Introduction**

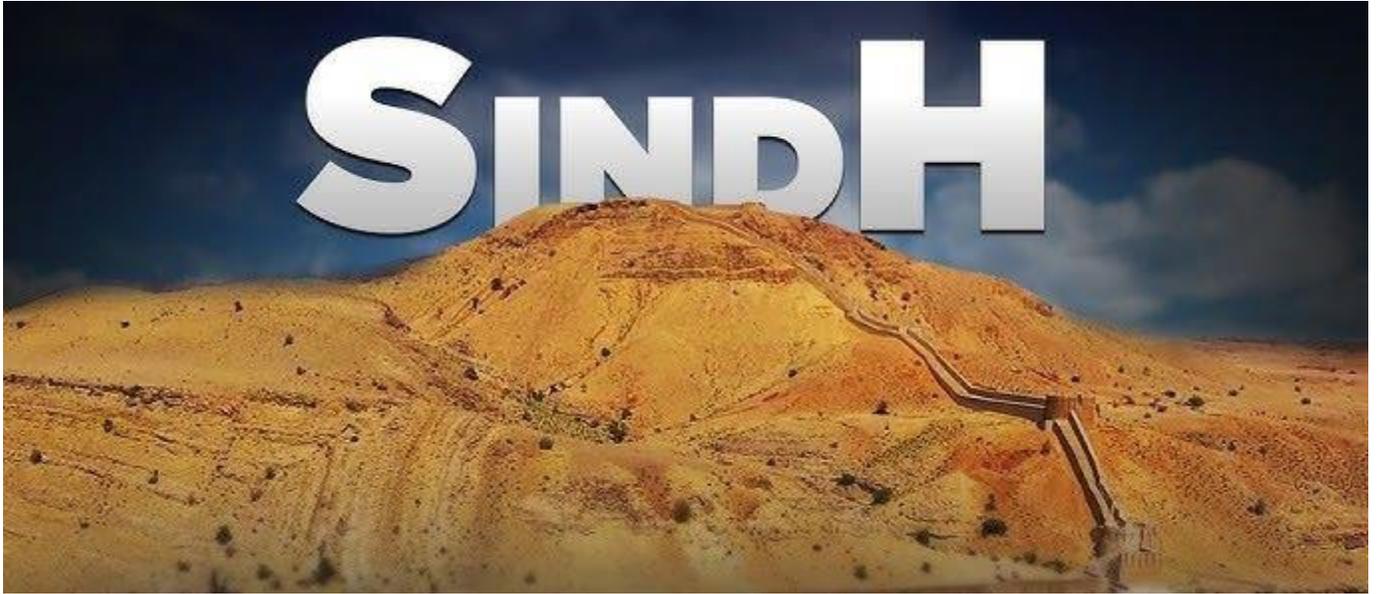
There are conflicting assumptions and ideas of researchers regarding the origin of Sindhi language. Some researchers believe that Sindhi is a Dravidian language, while others consider it a group of Indo-Aryan languages. Until historical and research evidence proves that Sindhi is a Dravidian language, Sindhi will remain in the group of Indo-Aryan languages. When studying the Dravidian languages, Tamil, Telugu, Gondi, Brahui and other Dravidian languages, the linguistic, phonetic and grammatical similarities and the presence of large vocabulary in Sindhi suggests that Sindhi is Dravidian. Some words as they are and some words with slight phonetic changes are still prevalent in Sindhi language.



The Dravidian language family, consisting of 80 varieties spoken by nearly 220 million people across southern and central India, originated about 4,500 years ago, a study has found.

By comparing the Sindhi language with other Dravidian languages and having a reasoned discussion, we will have to find the answer to the question of when and in what background the name of Sindh was given in the mirror of history and research. It is clear that only those who live in the Sindh region and speak the Sindhi language are called Sindhis, but other Dravidian languages living in the Indus Valley cannot be ruled out. Historians and researchers have expressed their own hypotheses regarding the name Sindh on the region of Sindh. Nazir Shakir Brahoi writes that, "Sindh is named after the Indus River (Brahoi: 2017: 47). Dr. Alana has written that, "The name of Sindh country is found as "Sindhu" in Rigveda,

Iranians called it Hindu" (Alana: 2004: 12). Siraj Memon believes that, "In the Vedic period people also called their kings or braves as 'Sindhs'" (Memon: 2009: 66). Some other researchers are also of the opinion that, "Sindh got its name because of the Indus River" (Mark: 2004: 78). However, most researchers are of the opinion that Sindh got its name because of the Indus River. But when it comes to Proto-Dravidian or Dravidian languages, it can be said with certainty that the name Sindh existed even before the Vedic and great Indus Valley Civilizations (Harappa, Mohenjo Daro) with a different background. It is believed that in the Proto-Dravidian period, the name of the Indus Valley was Sintu or Sintu (Sindhu?, Sindhu). Cintu or Cintu means palm tree (Kirishnamurti: 2003: 108). It can literally mean the land of palm trees. During the Dravidian period of the great civilization of the Indus Valley, Sint or Sintu underwent a phonetic change and Cintu was pronounced as "Sind", or "Sindi", "Hind", "Indi", which also means date-palm tree (Kirishnamurti: 2003: 108). In the terminological sense, the Indus Valley or the Sindh country must have been referred to, which had a date-palm tree as its background instead of the Indus River. During the Indus Valley Civilization, the Dravidian word "Indi" rejects the hypothesis that the Indus River was called Indus or Indus by the Greeks because before the arrival of the Greeks, the valley was The Dravidian word Indi (Indi) was popular during the civilization of Sindh. It should also be noted that in Europe Gypsies are called Sinti and Roma (Society Journal: 1998: 107), which may be the Proto-Dravidian word Sintu or Cintu. Gypsies still sing their song that "we are Sintis (Sindhis)". As far as date-palm trees are concerned, date-palm trees may have been abundant in the Indus Valley during the Proto-Dravidian and Dravidian periods. It is also highly probable that the geography of the Indus River and the ocean in the Proto-Dravidian and Dravidian periods was different from the current geography. Probably even then the Indus Valley covered vast areas with more date-palm trees. The regions of present Balochistan are Karkh, Zaidi, Khuzdar, Charu Machhi, Kanjhar Mari, Ari Pir, Lahut Lamkan and Rohri, Khairpur Meris, Kai, Naig, Jhampir Khajor in Sindh are the areas of date-Palm trees. During the Dravidian period i.e. Mohenjo Daro civilization, the Proto-Dravidian word Sintu or Cintu underwent a phonetic change but the meaning remained the same. The following are the words found in the Dravidian languages which also mean date-palm tree and these meanings support the opinion that the given words were terminologically applicable to the country of Sindh:



**Name of Sindh country: Proto-Dravidian (before 3300 BC)**

1, Sintu or Cintu (Kirishnamurti: (2003:168) palm tree (Kirishnamurti: (2003:168) literally meaning land with palm trees

The name of the Sindh country during the Dravidian period: (Period of Indus Valley Civilization) (3300 BC to 1800 BC):

1, Gondi: (Gondi) Siddi or Sindi (Sindi) Hindi (Hindi) Indi (Indi) Southern Dravidian language.

2, Kuvi: (Sindi) Sindhi or Sindi (Sindi) Southern Dravidian language.

3, Parji (Parji) or Sindi (Central) Dravidian language.

4, Gadaba Sindhi or Sindi Northern Dravidian language.

5, Telugu (Telgu) Idu or Idu

6, Cinti (Southern Dravidian language).

(Kirishnamurti: 2003: 168)

In the above Proto-Dravidian and Dravidian words that clearly indicate the name of the Indus Valley. Proto-Dravidian word Cintu became Sind or Sindi in Dravidian languages. Later, the phonetics of the word Sindh or Sindi changed again, but the meaning did not change. Later it was called Sindh (Sindh), which historians and researchers have also interpreted as Sindhu or Sindh in reference to the river Indus. It is assumed that the phonetic change of Sindu or Sind from Santu or Sindh and Sindhu or Sindh from Sind or Sind must have occurred in the Vedic period. The writer published the article "Sindhi Boli Jaun Vedic Dura Mein Jardon" (Kangrani: Sindhi boli Journal: 2022) of the Sindhi Language Authority, Hyderabad, mentioned as about the presence of the Sindhi language in the Vedic period and the name Sindh or Sindhu of the Indus Valley. In this way, in the earlier Dravidian period or Mohenjo Daro civilization period, the Sindhi language will have the same words and their same meaning, but later the name was derived from the river Indus. Thus it can be inferred that the name Sindh of the Indus Valley existed in every period with a slight phonetic change which must have been derived from the date-palm tree. Besides, the Sindhi language also existed before the Vedic period. It has been mentioned earlier in the light of references of historians in this regard. Asko Parpola writes that, "It is possible that during the period of the great civilization of the Indus Valley, many Dravidian languages were spoken by the majority, of which only one of the major Dravidian languages was written or exist in written form." According to the writing of this language, an old cylinder-shaped seal of Akkad (Samir) associated with Shu al-Shu who knew the language of Meloha/Meloha (Indus Valley) was found" (Parpola: 2010: 8). Asko Parpola's reference to the Indus script is believed to be Sindhi, as several seals found at Mohenjo-Daro resemble the seals or Indus script found in Meloha country (Indus Valley) from Akkad, rather we call it Indus script. The writer has written Mohenjo Daro is Meloha in the light of references (Kangrani: 2022: 30). Ahmed Hassan Dani has written that "Miluha/Miluha is actually derived from "sailor" (mahano) and those people used to sail boats in the sea or river" (Dani: 2007: 22). Also, there is a great similarity between the word Kanvati (𑀲𑀺𑀭𑀸𑀓) in Proto-Dravidian languages and the symbol for load bearer in Indus script. Kwati or Kanvati can be said to denote the Sindhi language with reference to the Indus script. The logical argument in this regard is also that Sindhi is a more royal language than other Dravidian languages. From this discussion it can be understood that Sindhi can be the only language whose writing can be Indus script. In the Dravidian period (civilization period of the Indus Valley), just as



J. Abbot has written Sindh as Sind or Sinda (Abbot: 2004: 29). This does not mean that the British copied the Proto-Dravidian or Dravidian languages but it is mentioned here only in term of spelling. Regarding the Indus script being of Sindhi language, this writer also found inscriptions of Indus script on stones in Kherthar mountain range of Sindh, which is near Wahi Pandhi town in Dadu district of Sindh and 200 km from Mohenjo Daro. This writer's book "Indus Script in Stones" has been published on Indus script. While R.S Bisht has found Indus script inscriptions on the hills near Dholavira (Daily Hindu: 2010). A large stone in the Khirthar mountain range of Sindh has several Indus script symbols carved on it, which may be the Rosetta Plate. In order to prove Sindhi as a Dravidian language, it is necessary to compare the synonyms and other similarities between different Dravidian languages with Sindhi language. Scholar of Sindhi language and researcher Dr. Ghulam Ali Alana writes that, "Five things are necessary to compare or study any two or more languages. (1) Similarity in phonetics (2) Similarity in word base. (3) Similarity in the rules of formation of verbs (4) Similarity in the classes of nouns and verbs (5) Similarity in pronouns and letters. If two or more languages have the above similarity. So it should be understood that one language is born from another language or both languages are branches of another language" (Alana: 2004: 65). If we consider this statement, Dravidian languages and Sindhi languages are similar to Dravidian languages except Arabic, Persian, Semitic, Sanskrit and other Aryan language words and some grammatical rules. The following are the words of the Dravidian languages spoken during the Proto-Dravidian period and the Indus Valley Civilization, which are still prevalent in the Sindhi language with the same meaning.

### **Proto-Dravidian Period**

1, (Ka-wati) (Kanwati) (On a shoulders by pole with rope fastened to both ends container on each) Sindhi:

Kanwati ( ) (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-9)

2, (Viri) or (Wiri) | (Space, conflict) Sindhi: veri withi, (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-190)

3, (Vair), (Vairu) (Enmity) Sindhi: vairu, enmity, (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-2)

4, (Vairi), (Enemy) Sindhi: Vairi (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-2)

5, (Ur), (Village, Town, Sitting Place) Brahui: house, village, Sindhi by phonetic change: aro, nest, sitting

(Steever: 1998: 210)

6, (Ase), (Desire), Sindhi: Aas, Hope (Steever: 1998:29)

7, (Katti), (Knife) Sindhi: Katti Chhuri (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-9)

8, (Nir), (Eye Water, water), Sindhi: Nir, Pani, Godha (Tear) (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-46)

9, (Kana), (Blind to one eye), Sindhi: Kano (Parola: 2015: 283)

### **Tamil:**

1, (Kar), (Blackish), Sindhi: kar, karsuro, karo (Steever: 1998:17)

2, (Viri) (Space), Sindhi: Viri, Vithi (Kirishnamorti: 2003: p-190)

### **Kannada**

1, (Priti), (Love), Sindhi: Prit, Pyaar (Steever: 1998:132)

2, (Kari), (Black) Sindhi: Kari, Karo (Steever: 1998:137)

3, (Amma), (Mother), Sindhi: Amma (Steever: 1998:148)

4, (Tarkkari), (Vegetable) Sindhi: Tarkkari, Sabzi (Steever: 198:148)

4, (Ase), (Desire), Sindhi: ase (Steever: 1998:154)

5, (Kure Kure). (Calling dog, dog) Sindhi: kur kur, kuto (Parpola: 2015: 283)

### **Telugu**

1, (Amma), (Mother), Sindhi: Amma (Steever: 1998:148)

2, (Uri), (Village, Town) Sindhi: Aru, Akhiru (seat) (Steever: 1998:190)

3, (Katu, Cuttu), (To cut, burn), Sindhi: cut, cutan, Jheer (Steever: 1998:217)

4, (Katti), (Knife), Sindhi: katti (Steever: 1998:239)

5, (Buba), (Father), Sindhi: baba (Steever: 1998:265)

6, (Katti-to), (With kknife), Sindhi: katti san (Kiriishnamurti: 2003:236)

### **Gondi**

1, (Yayal), (Mother), Sindhi: minor phonetic change: Aayul, Amma (Steever: 1998:265)

2, (Kunj), (Pick), Sindhi: Kunj (war kahnan) (Steever: 1998:26)

3, (Likhah), (Write), Sindhi: Likhah (Amur) (Steever: 1998:292)

### **Kolami**

1, (Kako), (Father's brother), Sindhi: Kako (Chachu) (Steever: 1998:308)

2, (Neku), (Headman), Sindhi: neku (good, good man) (Steever: 1998:308)

3, (Ba), (Father) Sindhi: Ba (Baba) (Steever: 1998:308)

4, (Ur), (Village .Town), Sindhi: Aru, Akhiru, Bithak (Steever: 1998:210)

### **Malto**

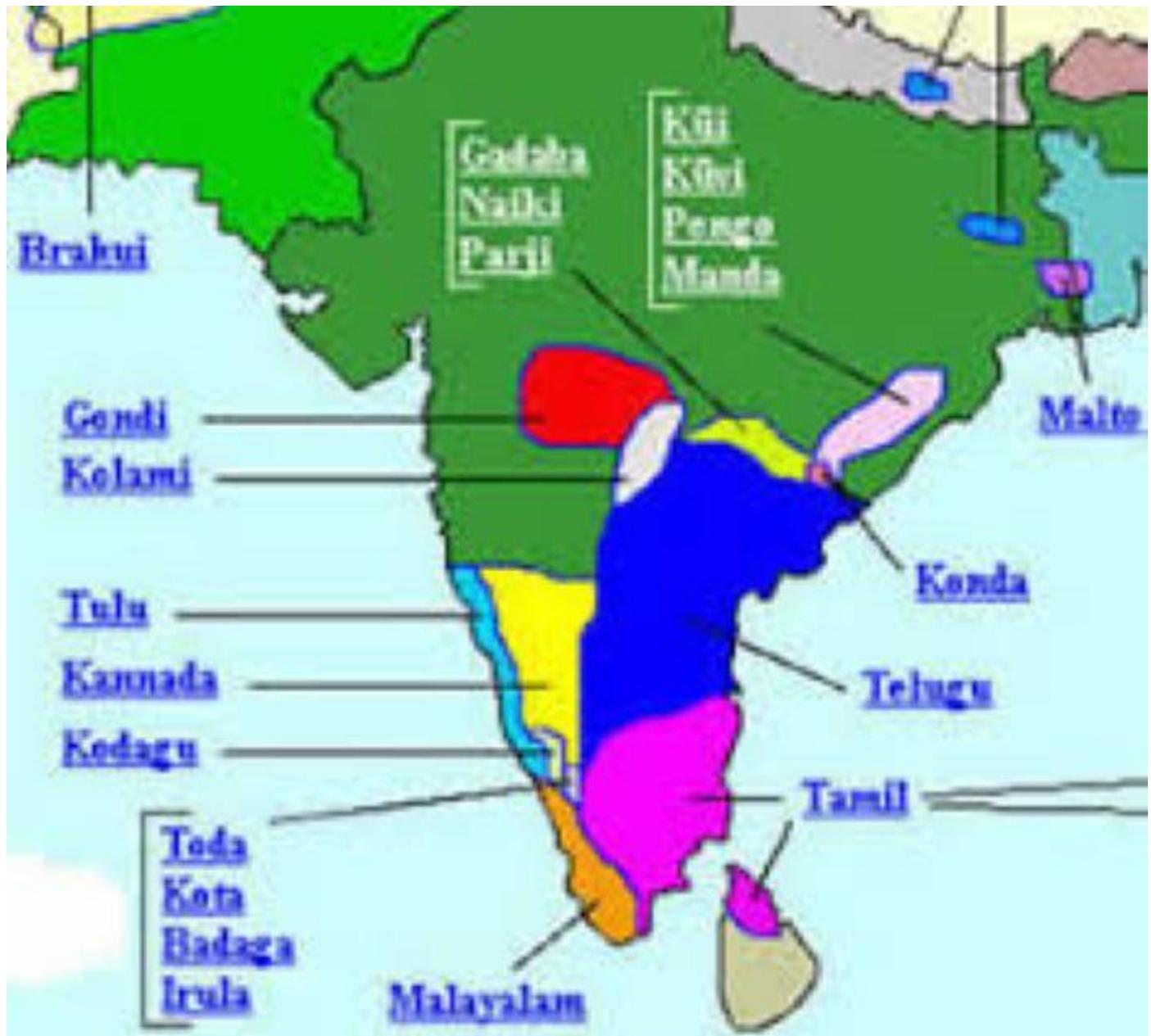
1, (Kur Kur), (Call to dog), Sindhi: kur kur (Parpola: 2015: 283)

2, (Viri), (Space), Sindhi: Viri, Vithi (Kiriishnamurti: 2003: 190).

### **Malayalam**

1, (Viri), (Space), Sindhi: Viri, Vithi (Kirishnamurti: 2003:190)

The above words are nouns, pronouns, verbs, letters, adjectives, etc. The Proto-Dravidian word Kana, Tamil Kan, Brahui Khan or Khan (Steever: 1998:88) and other Dravidian languages are prevalent in the sense of eye, but in Sindhi, it uses in the sense of blind to one eye, it is still prevalent today. Apart from this, there are many words which are included in the vocabulary of Sindhi language with a slight phonetic changes. Like Sindhi, Brahui has aspirates (lh) (Steever: 1998: 393), jh,th, kh aslo are included. For example, in the Brahui language, jhal (barrier, barrier), jhal (cloth made of cotton or any stuff for riding and put on the back of an animal), jhalawan (southern), mailth (sheep), halth (take), halth (fever), malth (son), kalath or khalth (hit, beat), khul or khal (stone), khun or khan (eye) etc. Sindhi and Proto-Dravidi, including Dravidian languages, also have a lot of similarities in terms of grammar. There is similarity in Vowels, Consonants and Denominators, Suffix, Prefix, Parts of Speech, Verb to Noun, Noun to Verb. Proto Dravidian had 5 short letters out of which 3 are similar to Sindhi language. Proto-Dravidian had 5 long letters, some of which are similar to Sindhi. While Proto Dravidian had 17 letters correct (Kirishnamurti: 2003:2). Sindhi and Dravidian languages are also similar in terms of linguistics and grammar. This means that the similarity between Sindhi and Dravidian languages shows that the roots of Sindhi language are rooted in Dravidian languages.



### **Conclusion**

A comparative analysis of Sindhi and Dravidian languages thus shows that Sindhi was a Dravidian language. Later, due to the influence of Aryan languages and Semitic, Arabic, Persian and other languages, Sindhi was included in the group of Indo-Aryan languages. On the other hand, the similarity between Proto Dravidian and the Dravidian word Kanwati or Ka-Wati (Ka-Wati) in the Indus Script symbol for a man with a Kanwati strongly indicates that the Indus Script may be Sindhi, a Dravidian writing system. This secret can only be revealed by reading the Indus script. On the other hand, The writer in his book "Indus Script

in Stones” in Khirthar mountain range of Sindh (Kingrani: 2019) and R.S Bisht near Dholavira in India (Daily Hindu) :2010) have discovered Indus script carvings on stones. A stone also has been found in Khirthar Mountain range in Sindh, which has many symbols carved on it, which are very similar to the Indus Script. This stone can be proved to be the Rosetta plate by reading the Indus script. This rock carving is located near Wahi Pandhi town in Dadu district of Sindh, about 200 km from Mohenjo Daro. However, Sindhi as a Dravidian Language can be fully proved when Indus script is read.

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