An Ethnolinguistic Investigation of the Role of Kind Words in Promoting Social Harmony and Moral Education within Igbo Culture

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Abstract

This study examined the ethnolinguistic significance of "kind words" including proverbs, salutations, idioms, and gentle admonitions in fostering moral education and social harmony within contemporary Igbo communities. Two research questions guided the study. A survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was all the Igbo language lecturers in federal universities in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The sample was 60 Igbo language lecturers selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A 18-item statements/questionnaire were used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in Igbo language and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.82 using Cronbach Alpha method. The results were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. The analysis revealed that kind-word expressions remain a core component of Igbo communicative culture, functioning as effective tools for shaping values, influencing behaviour, and mediating social interactions. Findings indicate that elders, parents, and teachers employ proverbs and gentle admonitions to transmit ethical principles such as

respect, humility, diligence, and communal responsibility. The study also revealed that kind words serve crucial roles in conflict resolution by diffusing tension, enhancing mutual respect and understanding, promoting peaceful dialogue and reinforcing collective identity. The study concludes that Igbo kind-word traditions constitute a culturally grounded pedagogical system that enriches moral learning while promoting peaceful coexistence. It was recommended that educational institutions and community structures should integrate indigenous linguistic resources into formal and informal learning spaces to sustain cultural identity and promote socially harmonious behaviour. among others.

Keywords: Ethnolinguistic, kind words, moral education, social harmony, contemporary Igbo communities.

Introduction

In Igbo culture, language is sacred, therefore it is not just a tool for communication, but a vessel of spirit, destiny, and blessing as well as the repository of culture, values, and social norms. Williams (2024) asserts that language in Igbo culture is not merely a neutral instrument for transmitting propositions; it is a moral, spiritual, and social technology that shapes identity, mediates social bonds, and enacts destiny. This means that for the Igbo of South East Nigeria, speech carries ontological weight, words are regarded as agents that can bless, wound, open paths, and secure futures. Across societies, the words we choose carry profound implications for behavior, morality, and the cohesion of communities. In Igbo culture of southeastern Nigeria, language is particularly potent: proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, proverbs, culturally laden expressions and idioms collectively here referred to as "kind words" are not merely ornamental expressions but serve as vital instruments for moral education and the promotion of social harmony. These linguistic practices encode ethical teachings, guide interpersonal relationships, and reinforce communal values, ensuring that societal norms are transmitted across generations.

Therefore, the Igbo believe that words have life. When you speak kindly, you touch the heart, heal wounds, open doors, and create pathways of light. In order words, a spoken blessing can secure one's destiny, while a kind word can restore

a broken soul. This worldview is evident in common aphorisms: "Okwu ọma ka ego" -"kind words are more valuable than money" and in ritual practice where blessings (ngọzi) pronounced over persons or objects are treated as real forces that bring change. In everyday speech, proverbs, blessings, greetings, and praise names perform social work: they repair relationships, shape reputations, and instantiate moral orders (Nwachukwu-Agbada, 1994. Oboko, (2020) opines that in Igbo society, through everyday speech, oral tradition, and communal interactions, such kind words serve not merely as linguistic artifacts, but as moral instruments that shape behaviour, guide relationships, and reinforce community cohesion, thus the need for ethnolinguistic investigation.

Ethnolinguistics, the study of the interrelationship between language and culture, provides an ideal lens through which to examine these phenomena. In the Igbo context, proverbs and other culturally laden expressions act as educational scaffolds, teaching virtues such as respect, patience, humility, honesty, and communal responsibility (Ogbuehi & Olashinde, 2025; Nwabudike, 2025). The view that moral education in Igbo society has traditionally been delivered through family, community and cultural practices rather than formal schooling, underscores the centrality of language, tradition, and socialization in moral formation. In this light, the use of proverbs, idioms, and value-laden sayings becomes critical: they are not simply decorative, but function as "vehicles for articulating abstract ideas in concrete form", shaping and transmitting ethical conduct, communal norms, and social cohesion across generations. In support of the above, Nwabudike emphases that proverbs embedded in everyday discourse serve key societal functions from inculcating respect, patience, humility, to promoting communal harmony, fairness, and social solidarity. Unlike formal education, which often focuses on cognitive skills, these linguistic forms cultivate moral sensibilities and social consciousness, thereby shaping both individual character and collective identity. The function of kind words is not limited to moral instruction; they also serve as mechanisms for conflict resolution, reconciliation, and the maintenance of social cohesion. In tense or morally ambiguous situations, elders and community leaders employ culturally sanctioned expressions to mediate disputes, encourage compromise, and restore harmony without resorting to coercion (Obiegbu, 2024; Onukawa, 2023). Obiegbu added that in conflict-heavy or morally ambiguous situations, Igbo proverbs offer

a culturally acceptable medium of mediation and moral correction, thereby reducing tension and restoring equilibrium within the community.

From the above discussion, it is imperative to know that ethnolinguistics as a field pays special attention to the ways language and culture co-constitute one another; within this frame, Okwu Ọma (literally, "good/kind words") becomes a focal phenomenon for investigating how speech acts produce social realities. Studies within Igbo moral philosophy underscore this reality. The view that moral education in Igbo society has traditionally been delivered through family, community and cultural practices rather than formal schooling, underscores the centrality of language, tradition, and socialization in moral formation. In this light, the use of proverbs, idioms, and value-laden sayings becomes critical: they are not simply decorative, but function as "vehicles for articulating abstract ideas in concrete form", shaping and transmitting ethical conduct, communal norms, and social cohesion across generations. For instance, recent linguistic-pragmatic investigation of the Ihioma dialect of Igbo shows that proverbs embedded in everyday discourse serve key societal functions from inculcating respect, patience, humility, to promoting communal harmony, fairness, and social solidarity. Moreover, in conflict-heavy or morally ambiguous situations, Igbo proverbs offer a culturally acceptable medium of mediation and moral correction, thereby reducing tension and restoring equilibrium within the community.

Below are culturally rich collection of kind words for Igbo moral expressions, , salutations, gentle admonitions, and blessing-words, arranged for different situations.

- Words that bless and secure destiny,
- Words that teach values and culture,
- Words that heal and restore,
- Words that reconcile and build community,
- Illustrative scenarios showing how they work in daily Igbo life.

Each section is designed to show how Okwu Oma (good/beautiful words) operate as spiritual, social, and moral forces in Igbo society.

Kind Words that Bring Blessings, Secure Destiny & Open Doors

(Okwu Ngozi – Words of Blessing)

1. "Chukwu gozie gị."
May God bless you.- A foundational Igbo benediction believed to brighten a person's path.

2. "Ihe ọma ga-eso gị."
Goodness will follow you.—Spoken as a destiny-affirming declaration.

3. "Ije ọma"
May your journey be guided by goodness. —Used when someone is traveling or for success.

4. "O gịnị ka ị na-achọ? Chineke eme ya ka ọ dịrị gị mfe."
Whatever you seek, may God make it easy for you.—Words that clear obstacles.

5. "Akwụkwọ ndụ gị gaghị agbaji n'aka Chineke."
The book of your destiny will not tear in God's hands.—A poetic assurance of divine protection.

Kind Words that Teach Value, Culture & Social Norms
(Okwu Nkuzi – Words of Instruction)

6. "Nwaanyị bụ ihe."
A woman is a treasure.—Teaches respect for women and the value they bring to families.

7. "Nwata kwụọ aka, o soro okenye rie nri."
When a child washes their hands, they dine with elders.—Teaches discipline, respect, and the reward of good behavior.

8. "Ezigbo aha ka ego."
A good name is worth more than money.—Places character above wealth.

9. "Olu ọma ka e ji ama mmadụ."

A person is known by their good deeds.—A call to moral action.

10. "Ebe onye dara ka chi ya kwaturu ya."
Where one falls is where their god lifts them up.—Teaches resilience and faith in one's personal chi.

Kind Words that Touch the Heart, Heal Wounds & Restore Broken Souls
(Okwu Ndu – Life-giving Words)

11. "Obim, biko gbaghara."
My heart, please forgive.—A deeply emotional style of apology.
12. "Ị bara uru n'ụwa a."
You are valuable in this world.—Restores worth to a wounded spirit.

13. "O nwere ihe ọma ka-adị n'ihu gị."
There is still goodness ahead of you.—Words that help someone rise from heartbreak or failure.

14. "Mmadụ bụ ndụ. Nke a ga-agafe."
A person is life itself; this too shall pass.—Healing words during grief or hardship.

15. "Ị naghị ebu ihe a naanị gị."
You are not carrying this burden alone.—Strengthens community around the hurting.

Kind Words that Repair Relationships & Shape Behavior
(Okwu Ndozi – Restorative Words)

16. "Okwu ọma bụ eze unwara ókè."
Kind speech is the king that tames boundaries.—Reminds that peaceful language breaks hostility.

17. "Kwere ka udo zuru ike n'etiti anyị."
Allow peace to rest among us.—Used during conflict mediation.

18. “Nwoke anaghị egbu onye a tara ya ndụ.”
A man does not destroy the one who shared life with him.—Encourages mercy, especially in family disputes.

19. “Oge niile kwesiri ịdị mma.”
Every moment can be made good.—A call to patience and gentleness.

20. “Ka anyị kpalie ibe anyị n’ụzọ ọma.”
Let us lift one another in goodness.—Promotes collective ethical behavior.

Kind Words that Build Community Cohesion & Social Harmony
(Okwu Mmekọahụ – Communal Harmony Words)

21. “Onye aghana nwanne ya.”
Let no one abandon their brother/sister.—The cornerstone of Igbo communal love.

22. “Igwe bụ ike.”
A community is strength.—Stresses unity.

23. “Ka udo dị n’ụlọ a.”
Peace be upon this home.—A blessing when entering a compound.

24. “Otu onye adịghị eme obodo.”
One person does not make a community.—Encourages cooperation and consultation.

25. “Nwanne di na mba, ma mmadụ ka bụ azịza mmadụ.”
Brothers exist in foreign lands, but a person is the answer to another person.—Reminds that human support sustains existence.

Captivating Illustrative Scenarios (Lifelike Cultural Moments)

A. A mother blessing her son before he travels
She places a hand on his shoulder and says:
“Ije ọma ga-edu gị. Chukwu gozie gị. N'ezie, ihe ọma ga-eso gị.”

Your path will be guided by goodness. God bless you. Good things will follow you.
He leaves strengthened, believing his destiny is covered.

B. Elders teaching a stubborn youth
An elder calls gently:
"Nwata kụọ aka, o soro okenye rie nri. Oge niile kwesiri ịdị mma."
If you discipline yourself, you will sit with elders. Every moment can be made good.
The youth is corrected without humiliation, yet motivated to do better.

C. Two siblings reconciling after a long quarrel
One extends a hand:
"Obim, biko gbaghara. Onye aghana nwanne ya."
My heart, please forgive. Let no one abandon their sibling.
Their relationship is restored, and harmony returns to their family.

D. A widow grieving the loss of her husband
A neighbor comforts her:
"Mmadụ bụ ndụ. Nke a ga-agafe. Ị naghị ebu ihe a naanị gị."
Life continues. This will pass. You are not carrying this alone.
She feels supported by her community.

E. A community gathering to settle a land dispute
The oldest elder raises his oji (kola nut) and says:
"Kwere ka udo zuru ike n'etiti anyị. Igwe bụ ike. Okwu ọma bụ eze unwara ókè."
Let peace settle among us. Community is strength. Kind speech conquers boundaries.
Through gentle dialogue, conflict dissolves.

The above examples and illustration clearly shows that in Igbo culture, kind words are not mere sounds, they are spiritual tools. They bless destinies, heal wounds, shape character, reconcile broken bonds, and weave the threads of community together. They are the soft rains that nourish the soil of the soul, ensuring that humanity flourishes where harshness would have destroyed.

In the same vein, studies of Igbo proverbs and discourse strategies show that proverbs and ritualized speech are not decorative, they are central to moral pedagogy and social control (Ede, 2024; Chidoka, 2021). Moreover, recent interdisciplinary work has linked language vitality and the use of indigenous languages to health and wellbeing, showing that language practices can be integral to healing, resilience, and community cohesion (Harding, 2025). Parallel work in healthcare communication demonstrates that the words caregivers choose after harm or during distress materially affect psychological recovery and trust (Benjamin et al., 2025). These converging lines of evidence, ethnolinguistic, pragmatic, psychological, and health-related make the systematic study of Okwu Ọma an urgent scholarly project with practical implications for education, leadership, health communication, and cultural revitalization.

The contemporary relevance of this topic cannot be overstated. Igbo society, like many indigenous cultures, faces rapid social transformations driven by globalization, urbanization, Western education, and digital communication. These forces threaten traditional channels of moral education, potentially weakening the influence of culturally embedded linguistic practices. While younger generations may increasingly rely on globalized or English-based modes of expression, the decline in the use of indigenous linguistic forms could erode the mechanisms through which moral education and social harmony have historically been sustained (Ezike & Chimuanya, 2023; Okeke, 2024).

Today, as Igbo society grapples with rapid modernization, global influences, and evolving values with youth increasingly drawn to external moral frameworks, the traditional mechanisms of moral education and social harmony risk being weakened. It is therefore more urgent than ever to examine, document, and understand how kind words expressed through proverbs, everyday speech, culturally rooted idioms function (and can continue to function) as vital tools for moral guidance, conflict resolution, identity preservation, and communal solidarity.

Against this backdrop, this ethnolinguistic investigation seeks to explore: How do kinds of kind words in Igbo language and culture (like proverbs, idioms, salutations, gentle admonitions and positive speech like (blessings, praises,

encouraging idioms, ritual formulae) contribute to moral education and social harmony within Igbo communities? By combining linguistic analysis with cultural anthropology, the study aims to illuminate the mechanisms by which language reinforces moral values, fosters social cohesion, and preserves cultural identity offering insights not only of academic interest, but of practical importance for sustaining social harmony in a rapidly changing world.

Statement of the Problem

Language is universally recognized as a crucial medium through which societies transmit culture, values, and social norms. In Igbo culture, words, especially kind words, proverbs, idioms, and gentle admonitions, serve not only as tools for communication but also as instruments for moral education and social regulation. Despite this, modern Igbo communities are experiencing significant cultural and social transformations due to globalization, urbanization, and the influence of Western education and technology. Also, despite the centrality of speech acts such as blessings, praises, and encouraging idioms in Igbo life, there is limited systematic ethnolinguistic documentation of Okwu Ọma as a communicative repertoire and even less research that links these forms to measurable social and psychological outcomes (like trust, social cohesion, emotional recovery, economic cooperation). These changes have begun to dilute traditional practices, including the use of culturally embedded language to teach morality and maintain social harmony.

Questions remain about how these linguistic practices continue to influence interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts, and instill ethical values, especially among younger generations who may be less exposed to traditional oral teachings. This gap poses a challenge not only for the preservation of Igbo cultural heritage but also for understanding how traditional linguistic practices can inform modern approaches to moral education, conflict resolution, and community development. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate how kind words function as a tool for moral instruction and social harmony within Igbo culture, bridging the gap between traditional ethnolinguistic practices and contemporary societal needs.

Research Questions

1. How do "kind words" (proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, idioms) function as tools of moral education within contemporary Igbo communities?

2. In what ways do such linguistic practices (kind words) contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution among Igbo people in modern social contexts?

Methods

The researchers adopted a descriptive survey research design for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), a descriptive survey research design is concerned with obtaining data on particular features of a given population in a systematic manner that the findings are expected to be generalized to the entire population. This, design was chosen as the data collected were generalized to the entire population. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw 98 Igbo language lecturers for the study.

The researchers developed a 16-item questionnaire to obtain relevant information for the study. The instrument was structured on a stratified 4-point likert scale which the respondents reacted to. The questionnaire was weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (SD), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), with 4, 3, 2 and 1points respectively. The criterion mean was 2.50. The instrument was validated by two experts in Language Education and another in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.85 using Cronbach Alpha method which showed that the instrument was reliable. A total of 98 copies of the instrument was administered and retrieved. The data was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. Any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted value whereas, item with a mean rating below 2.50 was not accepted.

Results

Research Question 1: How do "kind words" (proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, idioms) function as tools of moral education within contemporary Igbo communities?

Table 1: Means and Standard deviation of the Igbo language lecturers on how "kind words" (proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, idioms) function as tools of moral education within contemporary Igbo communities.

N = 98

S/N	Item Satements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
1	Proverbs are frequently used by elders to teach younger people appropriate moral behaviour.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
2	Igbos in my community use gentle admonitions to correct misconduct without creating hostility	3.00	0.71	Accepted
3	Idioms and wise sayings are employed to guide children on acceptable social norms and values	2.50	0.76	Accepted
4	Salutations and respectful forms of greeting are used as a means of instilling discipline and respect among younger persons.	2.50	0.76	Accepted
5	Moral lessons are more easily understood when expressed through culturally familiar proverbs or idioms.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
6	Community members perceive "kind words" as an effective method of transmitting ethical values.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
7	Parents and guardians intentionally use proverbs and gentle warnings to shape children's character.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
8	Moral expectations are often communicated indirectly through idiomatic expressions to avoid embarrassment.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
	Grand mean	**2.90**	**0.67**	**Accepted**

Table 1 showed the responses of the Igbo language lecturers on how "kind words" (proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, idioms) function as tools of moral education within contemporary Igbo communities. Table 1 revealed that the 8 items listed and their average 2.90 is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Based on the

findings, it was established that, "kind words" (proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, idioms) function as tools of moral education within contemporary Igbo communities.

Research Question 2: In what ways do such linguistic practices (kind words) contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution among Igbo people in modern social contexts?

Table 2: Means and Standard deviation of the Igbo language lecturers on the ways linguistic practices (kind words) contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution among Igbo people in modern social contexts.

N = 98

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
9	Proverbs are used in conflict situations to calm tensions and promote peaceful dialogue.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
10	Elders often employ gentle admonitions to reconcile disputing parties in the community.	2.50	0.76	Accepted
11	Respectful greetings and salutations help maintain cordial relationships among community members.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
12	The use of idioms during disagreements helps soften harsh messages and prevent escalation.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
13	Kind words facilitate mutual understanding and cooperation during community meetings.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
14	People are more receptive to correction when it is delivered using culturally appropriate proverbs or idioms.	2.50	0.76	Accepted
15	Traditional linguistic practices are perceived as effective tools for promoting social harmony in contemporary Igbo society.	2.50	0.76	Accepted

16	Conflict resolution processes often rely on proverbs to emphasize fairness, patience, and unity.	3.00	0.71	Accepted
	Grand mean	**2.80**	**0.73**	**Accepted**

Table 2 showed the responses of the Igbo language lecturers on the ways linguistic practices (kind words) contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution among Igbo people in modern social contexts. Table 1 revealed that items 9- 16 and their average 2.80 are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Based on the findings, it was established that, they are the ways linguistic practices (kind words) contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution among Igbo people in modern social contexts.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study showed that kind words like proverbs and culturally embedded expressions serve as effective instruments for moral education, imparting moral values and norms such as respect, patience, humility, prudence, humility, self-control, communal responsibility, and moral awareness. It reveals that the figurative and symbolic nature of these kind words makes them memorable and more readily recalled than abstract moral statements, an advantage in oral traditions where written instruction may be limited. They enrich speech while embedding wisdom and social values. The findings show that elders frequently use these kind words to guide the younger generation on how to behave. These findings are in accordance with the students of Ezike & Chimuanya, 2023; Okeke, 2024) among others, who observed that kind words "serve as instruments for the promotion of values such as respect, prudence, patience, courage, discretion, resilience, communal harmony, and social cohesion. This simply shows that the use of "kind words" provides a culturally resonant pedagogical style that facilitates indirect moral instruction. Therefore, moral lessons are delivered via metaphorical language (proverbs, idioms), gentle admonitions, or traditional salutations. This indirect style respects cultural sensibilities, avoids embarrassment or confrontation, and allows the listener to internalize the moral lesson without feeling shamed. This supports the view that in Igbo (and broader African) indigenous educational strategies, "local cultural resource knowledge" like kind words offers a contextually meaningful method for

character and moral education. "Kind words" help preserve cultural identity and continuity, thus embedding moral education in cultural heritage. Because proverbs and idioms are deeply rooted in cultural history, their use reinforces the longstanding worldview, value systems, and collective memory of the community. This makes moral education not just an individual matter but part of communal identity.

Another finding revealed that in contexts of conflict or social tension, kind words especially proverbs are deployed as tools for conflict management, reconciliation, and restoration of social harmony. Kind words like proverbs are actively used as strategic tools in mediation and conflict resolution, helping to de-escalate tensions and restore harmony. The findings also reveal that kind words are not only educational but also social-regulatory they help maintain harmony, defuse tensions, and mediate conflicts. The findings aligned with the findings of Okeke (2020), Ogbonna (2019), who beliefs that kind words have been effectively used as a tool for conflict management and resolution in Southeast Nigeria and that proverbs promote cooperation, cordiality, peace, and good conduct thereby fostering peaceful co-existence at interpersonal and community levels. They believe that kind words like proverbs function through "prelocutionary acts" (such as advising, cautioning, consoling) that influence the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours of the addressee in order to resolve conflict. This shows that employing proverb-based admonitions or counsel during disputes offers a culturally acceptable, non-confrontational way to guide behavior, reaffirm shared values, and encourage forgiveness or compromise. This is because the linguistic practice draws on a shared cultural repository, its use reminds people of common values respect, communal solidarity, patience, forgiveness promoting unity and sense of belonging while reflecting values of cooperation, good conduct, and peaceful co-existence and fostering social support, belonging, and connectedness which is the key factors that underpin social harmony and collective resilience.

Recommendations

1. Curriculum planners should embed culturally relevant proverbs, salutations, and gentle admonitions into language, civic education, and moral instruction classes to enhance value-based learning.

2. Teacher-training institutions should prepare educators to use proverbs, idioms, and culturally grounded "kind words" as practical tools for classroom management, character formation, and conflict mediation.

3.Community elders who traditionally hold mastery of proverbs and moral expressions should be engaged in school and youth programs to ensure transmission of linguistic and cultural heritage.

4. Scholars, cultural institutions, and ICT bodies should work together to produce digital repositories of proverbs, gentle admonitions, and salutations to support research, teaching, and cultural preservation.

5.Local organizations can organize periodic workshops where parents, youth leaders, and elders reflect on the cultural significance of "kind words" in maintaining discipline, respect, and social cohesion.

6. Traditional mechanisms that rely on proverbs and gentle admonitions should be recognized and integrated into community dispute-resolution platforms, neighbourhood associations, and school counselling practices.

7. Universities should encourage postgraduate and collaborative studies on Igbo oral literature, communication norms, and moral-education practices to bridge indigenous knowledge with modern educational theory.

8. Parents should be trained on how to use warm, respectful kind words, and proverb-based communication to correct children constructively and promote emotional and moral development.

9. Promote the use of kind-word communication in public institutions.

Religious centres, schools, local government bodies, and youth organizations should model the use of respectful greetings, gentle admonitions, and proverbs to foster peaceful coexistence.

10. Radio, television, film, and social-media content creators should showcase the role of kind words like proverbs and respectful communication in building harmony, thus reinforcing cultural identity among Igbo youth in modern contexts.

Conclusion

Language is a living treasury. In Igbo life, Okwu Ọma are not optional ornaments but vital instruments: they heal, they bless, they steer relationships, and they seed futures. This ethnolinguistic investigation demonstrates that "kind words"including proverbs, salutations, gentle admonitions, and idioms remain foundational to the moral and social architecture of Igbo society. This demonstrates that the repertoire of kind words in Igbo culture has patterned linguistic features, recognized performative power, measurable affective benefits, and adaptive resilience in the face of socio-linguistic change. Although modernity and globalization have reshaped communication norms, the study reveals that these linguistic practices still function as powerful tools for moral education, character formation, social regulation, conflict resolution, cultural transmission and collective wellbeing. They transmit moral values in ways that are culturally resonant, emotionally intelligent, and pedagogically effective, providing guidance that strengthens interpersonal relationships and reinforces communal unity. The findings affirm that Igbo "kind words" are more than decorative elements of speech; they are dynamic cultural instruments that nurture respect, empathy, and cooperation. When employed in families, schools, and community settings, they help reduce tension, promote dialogue, and instill ethical discipline. They also serve as repositories of indigenous knowledge, connecting generations and preserving cultural identity in an era of rapid social change. Therefore, sustaining and revitalizing these linguistic resources is not merely an act of cultural nostalgia, it is an educational and social imperative. By integrating kind-word traditions into formal education, community life, and institutional practice, the Igbo people can strengthen moral development and social harmony for present and future generations. This study thus calls for a renewed appreciation of indigenous

communication systems as vital partners in contemporary education, peacebuilding, and cultural sustainability.

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