

Punjabi Proverbs and Gender: Construction of Multiple Identities

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Abstract

This research began with an assumption that Punjabi proverbs are ideologically patriarchal. Therefore, proverbs of different languages including Punjabi language were explored to find gender representation in them. However, on close analysis it was found that a no such study was conducted on Punjabi proverbs. Thus a sample of 588 Punjabi proverbs specifically dealing with/mention of gender was collected from *Saadey Akhaan* (Our Provverbs) (Shahbaz, 2004), a dictionary of proverbs. Proverbs were selected through purposive sampling with the help of NORMs. Subject specialists were consulted to transcribe and translate the finally short listed proverbs and to divide them into categories on the base of gender of the characters targeted in them. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis is used as a theoretical framework. Both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to analyze the data. The findings reveal that a large number of proverbs are targeted at female characters as compared to male characters. Most of the proverbs targeting females portray them in face threatening manner while those targeting males are mostly face saving. However, proverbs targeting mothers are mostly face saving. This study concludes that Punjabi proverbs hold fast to the principles of traditional society and strengthen patriarchal social set up. Punjabi proverbs not only reflect but also conserve, propagate and perpetuate gender bias. Punjabi proverbs are ideologically loaded rather than being accurate and precious sources of cultural depiction. Further research can be done on the actual use of Punjabi proverbs by native speakers to find the differences between the reported proverbs in written sources and those being actually used to perpetuate gender bias and patriarchy.

Keywords: *proverbs, representation, identity, patriarchy, gender*

Introduction

The value of proverbs increases manifold in a traditional society like the Punjabi society where folk wisdom is considered to be the highest form of wisdom. Daily speech of Punjabi people is never devoid of proverbs as markers of traditional wisdom. Being admittedly insightful, the previous studies about Punjabi language remain silent on the ideological possibilities of proverb-oriented oratory. These studies ignore the point that in traditional cultures, maxims are adopted by males to sustain themselves as

creators and guardians of knowledge which females are believed to be incompetent of. This research intends to explore the subject of gender stereotypes and inequalities as reflected through the language of Punjabi proverbs.

The reasons for selection of Punjabi proverbs are both academic and personal. Proverb users depend greatly on similes and metaphors from their environments so it is essential for investigators to have an understanding of the customs, norms, traditions, and values of the culture that they propose to investigate. Therefore, an investigator from the community under investigation is in the best position to replicate what is internal to the external world. This research aims to achieve an in depth understanding of Punjabi proverbs from the perspective of gender and feminism. Furthermore, it will ultimately help to bring this gendered aspect of Punjabi proverbs at conscious level. Following research questions are addressed in the present study:

1. How do Punjabi proverbs represent men and women in multiple identities?
2. How do Punjabi proverbs perpetuate patriarchy and asymmetrical power structures?

This article is organized into main and sub-sections. The first section gives a short background and introduction of the study. The second section provides a brief review of recent and related literature and researches done on proverbs with reference to gender in different languages. The third and fourth sections consist of the theoretical framework and methodology, respectively. The fifth section presents data analysis and its description under several sub-headings along with findings and discusses answers to the research questions in the background of theoretical framework. The sixth section is conclusion. The last section contains for further research.

Review of Related Literature & Recent Researches

Punjab and Punjabi Language

Punj (five) and *ab* (water) are two Persian words which are combined to make *Punjab*. Therefore, the meaning of *Punjab* is believed to be “the land of five rivers.” *Punjabi* people are a tribe of Indo-Aryan peoples, from the Punjab, found amid northern India and eastern Pakistan. Due to the strategic location of Punjab, it has been a part of numerous reigns and empires throughout the antiquity, comprising the Civilization of Indus Valley, Aryans, Scythians, Kushans, Greeks, Arabs, Persians, Turks, Timurids, Ghaznavids, Mughals, Sikhs, Afghans, and the British (Ayers, 2008).

The Ethnologue (2005) estimates that in the world, Punjabi is the 12th most widely spoken language having 88 million native speakers. In

Pakistan, it is the largest spoken language. 2008 Census of Pakistan claims that, there are 76,335,300 native Punjabi users which constitute approximately 44.15% of the total population of Pakistan. Of the native Punjabis in Pakistani Punjab, 97.21% are Muslim and 2.31% are Christians. Other subgroups consist of Hindus, Ahmedi, Sikhs, Bahá'í and Parsis. Punjabi is the 11th largest spoken language in India with 29,109,672 primarily Sikh and Hindu speakers with a small number of Muslim and Christian speakers. It is spoken by approximately 2.85% of the population of India (ibid.).

Proverbs and Gender

According to Kohls (2001), watching at adages, axioms and proverbs of a nation offers an approach to “get at the concrete yet evasive values that guide our lives” (p. 40). With regard to the function of proverbs, Monyai (2003) believes that endowed with authority, proverbs help model people’s roles and identities. The men and women, who do not fit the prescribed behavior, are stigmatized.

Most of the existing literature focuses on the artistic nature of proverbs, their structure, form and features, and the wisdom they impart from one generation to another, as well as their ability to persuade people to adopt a more positive way of thinking (Magwaza, 2004). Some traditional roles of proverbs recognized in some studies are: conveying the message “in the most inoffensive discreet and economic method”; performing as “advices for effective action and living” and demonstration of “the expression of the persons” (Nwala, 1985, p. 36). Being admittedly insightful, these studies keep quiet on the ideological possibilities of proverb-oriented oratory. These studies ignore the point that in the traditional cultures maxims are adopted by males to sustain themselves as creators and guardians of knowledge of which females are believed to be incompetent.

The research done on the language of proverbs is mostly on African languages with similar findings. Despite the differences between societies and methodological differences, common themes emerge from these studies about representation of men and women. Women have been presented in a degrading manner while men as the positive side of humanity. Men are reinforced as “self” while women as the “other” (Asimeng-Boahene, 2013; Balogun, 2010 Dogbevi, 2007; Ennaji, 2008; Hussien, 2004, 2009; Machaba, 2011; Mariam, 1995; Mpungose, 2010; Ncube & Moyo, 2011; & Oha, 1998.)

Ambu-Saidi (2010) has studied Omani proverbs and concluded that negative images associated with women in Omani proverbs may be found in men also. Furthermore, the interviews with native people have verified that a lot of gender biased proverbs have been extinct from Omani society.

American proverbs are analyzed by Kerschen (2012) and he noted that proverbs about females are loaded with cutting drollness and pungent remarks. While some proverbs seem to be positive or neutral, most of them portray female as a long-winded, sharp-tongued, toy-like, and empty-headed creature who is untrustworthy to the male by whom she should be ruled (p. 8). Ennaji (2008) studied Moroccan, Arabic and Berber proverbs and Mohammed (1999) analyzed Darfur proverbs and reached at similar findings.

Storm (1992) analyzed some Japanese proverbs that present women in an inferior manner. Women are presented as being unintelligent, devilish, talkative, having lack of physical strength, and ill-nature. Yemeni proverbs have been explored by Shvitiel (1996) to convey positive and negative distinctiveness of females. However, positive characteristics are much less in number than negative ones. He has found such themes about women as meddlesomeness, extravagance, unreliability, chattiness, hypocrisy, brainlessness, craftiness, slothfulness, greed, intrigue and trouble-making, as reflected by researched proverbs. Zhang (2002) provided some Chinese proverbs that reflect women's low status in the Chinese community. He also reported that Chinese proverbs show that women are trouble-makers.

Gikuyu oral literature being explored with reference to gender by Njogu, Wanjiru, & Kaburi (2015) reveals resistance and subversion to male dominance in narratives, proverbs, and songs. It is noted that these proverbs being a male genre emphasize on the inferiority of women. Resistance to the established patriarchal order has also been found in the analysis of these proverbs. It is evident from this study that proverbs are predominantly a male genre which often evaluates the characteristics of women negatively.

Ntshinga (2015) studied Xitsonga proverbs and concluded that severe negation of females is prevalent in these proverbs. He also explored some newly coined proverbs which challenge the stereotypical images presented in traditional proverbs. Hagos (2015) analyzed Tigrigna and found both sympathetic and hostile images of females. There is no balance found in the number of proverbs showing positive and negative images. Most proverbs of Tigrigna mention that women are evil, dependent and inferior in both their intelligence and self-esteem. Furthermore, women are also depicted as talkative, irrational, unfaithful, jealous sub-species of humanity.

Khan, Sultana, & Naz (2015) argue that Pakhtun proverbs not only reflect but also conserve, propagate and perpetuate gender bias. Their study concludes that Pakhtun proverbs depict women in stereotypically demeaning manner and men in traditionally accepted exalted way. On the

other hand, corpus of Pashto proverbs is divided into positive, negative and contextual categories by Sanauddin (2015). He concludes that Pashto proverbs endorse a traditional thought about female's function in the communal field, support established principles of hegemonic maleness and women's sexuality, approve hostility towards women, and communicate a more constructive representation of sons over daughters.

Siddiqui (2013) analyzed Urdu proverbs and suggested that in oracy-based societies, verbal tradition is strong and narratives, proverbs and sayings are considered as vital means of logic and reason. They become a part of the folk wisdom, which acts as the authority of knowledge that gives legitimacy to certain notions, beliefs and stereotypes. Urdu is a language which is widely used as lingua franca in Punjab and Pakistan. Many similar and recurrent themes and stereotypes as found in Punjabi proverbs have been identified in Urdu proverbs by Siddiqui (2013, p. 80): *Taryamat mein jo nar aawe-wo to apni lag ganwawe* (a man who falls victim to a woman's advice loses his respect); *Budhi ghori laal lagam* (an old mare wearing a red bridle, an old woman donned as a young girl); *Aurat ki aqal guddi peachy* (in the nape rests a woman's wits/a woman is dim witted).

The goal of this research is to fill the gap found in the previous research on Punjabi language from the perspective of gender construction as Cameron (2007) concurs, "one legitimate goal for language and gender scholarship is political: to contribute to the wider struggle against unjust and oppressive gender relations, by revealing and challenging the ideological propositions which support and naturalize those relations" (p. 16).

Theoretical Framework

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) is used as the theoretical framework for the present study. According to Lazar (2005), the focus of FCDA is on how gender ideology and gendered relations of power are (re)produced, negotiated and contested in representations of social practices, in social relationships between people, and in people's social and personal identities in texts and talk. The central concern of FCD analysts is with critiquing discourses which sustain a patriarchal social order – relations of power that systematically privilege men as a social group, and disadvantage, exclude, and disempower women as a social group. Gender has been accomplished through active, iterative and ongoing practices all the way through discourse (Lazar, 2004; West, Lazar, & Kramarae, 1997).

In CDA, where there is an understanding of social practices as reflected in as well as constituted by discourse (Fairclough, 1992), a feminist perspective reminds that many social practices, far from being neutral, are in fact gendered in the same way.

Methods and Procedures

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are employed. Quantitative method is used to determine the percentage of proverbs representing men and women positively and negatively in different characters. Their numerical value will also determine the attitude of Punjabi society towards male and female characters. Qualitative method (content analysis) is employed to identify gender specific stereotypes and develop thematic categories of the selected proverbs. A dictionary of Punjabi proverbs *Saday Akhaan* (Our Proverbs, 2004) containing 12000 proverbs by Malik Shahbaz was selected to get all the proverbs related to gender directly or indirectly. Initially, 1056 proverbs were identified through purposive sampling. 4 NORMs were selected to narrow down this sample to the proverbs being heard or used at some point. These NORMs helped to identify 588 proverbs which are still alive in their speech communities.

The finally selected corpus of 588 Punjabi proverbs about gender was initially divided into 2 major categories: males and females. Additionally, these two groups of proverbs were classified into three major categories: Face Threatening, Face Saving, and Neutral/Contextual — based on the insight gained from Brown & Levinson's (1987) Face Theory. These three major categories were further divided based on the specific characters targeted in the proverbs. The categorized proverbs were then transcribed and translated into English with the help of research participants/subject specialists who were professional degree holders in linguistics and translation having Punjabi as their mother tongue. These transcribed and translated proverbs were grouped under certain headings. As the scope of this paper does not allow a detailed entry of all the proverbs so only sample proverbs have been analyzed textually and discussed to give a brief discussion of almost all the stereotypes and themes presented (explicitly or implicitly) in these thematic units.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Initially, proverbs were assigned to different categories on the basis of characters targeted in them, i.e., male or female. Then these proverbs were further grouped under certain relations associated with the initial categories. Percentages were then elicited to find out which gender was targeted more and which relations were more under scrutiny.

Table 1. Targeted Characters in the Proverbs by Gender

Targeted Character	No. of Proverbs	Percentage
Male	117	(19.9%)
Female	471	(80.1%)
Total	588	(100%)

Total number of proverbs depicting gender was 588. Out of which a large number of proverbs targeted women, i.e., 80.1%. On the other hand, the lesser number of proverbs targeted men, only 19.9% of the total proverbs. Similar percentages 84% about females and 16% about males have also been found by Sanauddin (2015) in Pashto proverbs.

Table 2. Face Saving, Face Threatening & Neutral/Contextual Proverbs about Females

Category	Face Threatening		Face Saving		Neutral/Contextual		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Women in general	86	(76.7%)	2	(1.8%)	24	(21.4%)	112	(23.8%)
Wives	123	(77.4%)	4	(2.5%)	32	(20.2%)	159	(33.8%)
Mothers	8	(10.3%)	59	(75.6%)	11	(14.1%)	78	(16.6%)
Daughters	70	(82.3%)	10	(11.8%)	5	(5.9%)	85	(18.04%)
Sisters	--	---	--	---	4	(100%)	4	(0.9%)
Co-wives	4	(80%)	--	---	1	(20%)	5	(1.06%)
Step Mother	8	(88.9%)	--	---	1	(11.1%)	9	(1.9%)
Mother-in-law	5	(100%)	--	---	--	---	5	(1.06%)
Daughter-in-law	10	(71.4%)	--	---	4	(28.6%)	14	(2.9%)
Total	314	(66.7%)	75	(15.9%)	82	(17.4%)	471	100%

Total number of proverbs mentioning female characters is 471. The highest percentage of proverbs about women 33.8% targeted wives. Among which, 77.4% are face threatening and only 2.5% are face saving. Second highest number 23.8% is allotted to women in general category. Here again, 76.7% proverbs about women are face threatening and only 1.8% are face saving. The third highest percentage 18.04% is about daughters. This category has shown a comparatively higher number 10.8% of face saving but an even higher percentage 82.3% of face threatening proverbs. Mothers have been presented in 16.65% of the total proverbs. This is the only category where the percentage of face saving proverbs 75.6% is higher than that of the face threatening ones. Daughters-in-law are given only a share of 2.9%. Out of which 71.4% are face threatening and 28.6% are contextual or neutral. Co wives, Step Mothers, Mother-in-law, and daughter-in law have shown relatively lower percentages, 1.06%, 1.9%, 1.06% and 2.9%

respectively. All of them are mentioned in face threatening manner more than face saving way.

Table 3. Face Saving, Face Threatening & Neutral/Contextual Proverbs about Males

Category	Face Threatening		Face Saving		Neutral/Contextual		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Men in general	2	(5.9%)	26	(76.5%)	6	(17.6%)	34	(29.05%)
Husbands	4	(28.6%)	6	(42.8%)	4	(28.6%)	14	(11.9%)
Fathers	5	(45.5%)	4	(36.4%)	2	(18.1%)	11	(9.4%)
Sons	4	(12.9%)	22	(70.9%)	5	(16.2%)	31	(26.5%)
Brothers	1	(20%)	4	(80%)	--	---	5	(4.3%)
Step-son	5	(100%)	--	---	--	---	5	(4.3%)
Son-in-law	10	(66.7%)	2	(13.3%)	3	(20%)	15	(12.8%)
Father-in-law	--	---	--	---	2	(100%)	2	(1.7%)
Total	31	(26.5%)	66	(56.4%)	20	(17.1%)	117	(100%)

Total number of proverbs which targeted male characters is only 117 which is 19.9% of the total proverbs. Highest percentage 29.05% is targeted at Men in general category. Out of them, 76.5% proverbs are face saving and only 5.9% are face threatening. Second highest percentage 26.5% is taken by Sons. Here again, 70.9% proverbs are face saving and 12.9% are face threatening. Fathers and sons-in-law are two categories which are presented more in face threatening manner than in saving one. Step-son is depicted in only face threatening way. Husbands are presented more in face saving 42.8% than in face threatening 28.6% manner.

In a bird eye view, proverbs mention women in negative light are more than those in which men are mentioned. However, it is clear from the comparative analysis of these percentages that not all proverbs about men are positive and not all about females are negative. Their positivity, negativity and number are affected by the character targeted in them.

Table 4: Face Saving, Face Threatening & Neutral/Contextual Proverbs by Gender

Targeted Gender	Face Saving		Face Threatening		Neutral /Contextual		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	66	(56.4%)	31	(26.5%)	20	(17.1%)	117	(19.9%)

Female	75	(15.9%)	314	(66.7%)	82	(17.4%)	471	(80.1%)
Total	141	(23.9%)	345	(58.7%)	102	(17.3%)	588	(100%)

Percentage 56.4% of face saving proverbs about male characters is higher than those of female characters 15.9%. On the other hand, percentage 26.5% of face threatening proverbs about males is lower than that 66.7% about female characters. Quantitative analysis has confirmed the findings reached by previous researchers that women are presented in proverbs as having more negative connotations as compared to men depicted in other proverbs (e.g., Hussein, 2004; Kerschen, 2012; Khan, 2015; Nakhavaly & Sharifi, 2013; Oha, 1998; Sanauddin, 2015; Schipper, 2004; Sumner, 1995).

Qualitative Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion

The research questions are answered in this section about the representation of gender based multiple identities in Punjabi proverbs and the perpetuation of patriarchy. The findings of the study are arranged on the basis of target characters mentioned (explicitly or implicitly) in them. The main concern of FCDA is meted out here to critique the discourse of Punjabi proverbs which disadvantage, exclude, and disempower women as a social group (Lazar, 2005). These findings have verified the research outcomes of previous studies done in Pakistani context (Khan, Sultana & Naz, 2015; Sanauddin, 2015; Siddiqui, 2013) and other traditional societies with reference to proverbs and gender.

1. Construction of Femininity in Multiple Identities

A. Women in general

Generally the depiction of women in Punjabi proverbs is face threatening with exception of a few proverbs. The findings of this study in this respect have also verified the researches done by Asif (2010); Khan, Sultana & Naz, (2015); Sanauddin, (2015) and Siddiqui, (2013). Three major forms of sexism in the language of proverbs have been identified: language disregards womenfolk, it describes them as unimportant, and it completely denigrates them (Yusuf, 2002, p. 8). Women are generally portrayed in all three forms in the following stereotypes:

- i. **Destroyer:** *Mard gher nu kahiyan nal dhana chahy ty nhi dha sakda, per zanani sooi nal dha sakdi ay* (Shahbaz, 2004, p. 338) (A man cannot destroy a house with utmost effort, a woman can destroy it with least effort.)
- ii. **Quarrelsome:** *Aa gwandnay larriye* (p. 26) (O female neighbor! Let's fight.)

- iii. **Does not Accept her fault:** *Paen kokan, meney apny, dewey lokan* (p. 121) (A lady blames others instead of accepting her own faults.)
- iv. **Unintelligent:** *Aurat di mutt gut pichy*, (p. 268) (Wits of a lady rest under her ponytail.)
- v. **A wealth to keep at home:** *Aurtan gharan diyan doltan* (p. 269) (Women are a treasure to be kept at homes.)
- vi. **Intruders:** *aag len ai ty ghar wali ban bethi* (p. 26) (She came to take fire and became the owner of the house.)
- vii. **Cooking and household:** Chores are emphasized as basic duties of a woman. If she fails to fulfill her duties in an expert manner, she is rebuked by such proverbs: *utton hoye sota, kachajji kunna dhota* (p. 33) (When it gets dark, the artless woman starts washing her cooking pots.)

A proverb explicitly wishes for the protection of men and destruction of wives: *admiyan di door balaa, tinwiyan nu khoe khuda* (p. 26) (The curse must be removed from men, and women should be destroyed by God). Only a few proverbs have mentioned women in a relatively face saving manner: *buddhiyan bger wahian pooriyan nhi hundyan* (p. 80) (Without women, plans (at home) cannot be succeeded). Death of a woman is not a matter of much concern as compared to that of a man: *aurat mary tan gittay di sutt, mard marey tan sir dee sutt* (p. 269) (Death of a woman is like an injury of ankle, and death of a husband is a head injury).

Spender (1985, pp. 23-24) claims that dual job is done through semantic subjugation and derogation of females in proverbs: it supports to hypothesize female subservience and it aids to sanction it. Frequently it is claimed that language is biased against womenfolk, reviewing Punjabi proverbs verifies this statement. The present analysis reveals that proverbs are not statements, but a means of socialization (Lazar, 2005). The “truths” about themselves that women have been told through the proverbs in the course of times are likely to have left their stamp on women’s self-esteem. The stereotypical marginalized depiction of women in Punjabi proverbs have verified the findings of previous researches done on other languages such as Asimeng-Boahene’s (2013) findings about sub-saharan women; Hussein’s (2000) study of proverbs in Jordan and Palestine; Schipper’s (2003) research on the proverbs of languages around the world; Sharifi and Nakhavaly’s (2013) feminist analysis of Persian proverbs and Wang’s (2012) comparative analysis of English proverbs and their translation.

Freire (1998) suggests that self-abnegation stems from the internalization of the adverse behaviors by the persecutors. It is also claimed that being frequently told about their unproductiveness and worthlessness, the subjugated groups become convinced of their uselessness and

ineffectiveness. Researchers like Disch (1997) and Sapiro (1994) consider that womanly characteristics such as the frail persona, lack of autonomy and unnecessary subservience to males are unwanted results of an extended hegemonic patriarchy.

B. Wives

Wives are portrayed stereotypically in very face threatening manner in Punjabi proverbs as unintelligent, disloyal, selfish, troublesome, dangerous, unmanageable, recalcitrant, and ungrateful as is shown in the following examples:

- i. **Brainless:** *Ranna di khuri pichy matt* (p. 226) (Wives have their wits in their feet.)
- ii. **Unfaithful:** *Rannan di zaat bewafa ay* (p. 226) (Wives are unfaithful creatures.)
- iii. **Selfish:** *Runn tohy jaeb, maan tohey paet* (p. 224) (A wife looks for your money and a mother takes care of your belly/food.)
- iv. **Trouble makers:** *Aun praiyan jaiyan, wachoran sagyan bhaiyan* (p. 25) (Wives come and create division among real brothers.)
- v. **Dangerous and unmanageable creatures** who are difficult to control by the male members: *Runn do dhari churi hundi* (p. 225) (Wife is a double edged knife.)
- vi. **Recalcitrant:** *Runn di zidd aukhiyan karan wali hundi ay* (p. 225) (A wife's recalcitrance is irritating.)
- vii. **Her beauty creates problem:** *Runn sohni ty jaan da azab* (p. 225) (A beautiful wife becomes a trouble for her husband.)
- viii. **Trouble makers:** *Runn nu runn cherry ohtun Khuda darey* (p. 225) (When a wife teases another one, even God gets afraid of them.)
- ix. **Ungrateful:** They don't acknowledge the facilities given by their husbands. *Khana khasam da ty geet mapyan day* (p. 298) (To eat of husband's and to praise her parents.)
- x. **Cause of Grief and Worries** Wives like a new shoe give pain while settling: *Naween juti naween Runn, downen dukh dendyan ny* (p. 364) (A new wife and a new shoe: both irritate.)

Only physical beauty and being able to bear a number of children are basic traits to become a successful wife: *Sir ty gutt ty kucharr baal, menu kadi parwa* (p. 247) (Ponytail on head and a child in lap, what else should I care about?). Even this beauty of a wife is considered as very short lived: *Kujh din runn ty kujh din dhan* (p. 281) (Both beauty of a woman and wealth (of anybody) are short lived). The pleasure of husband is the ultimate target to

be achieved by every wife because he is the reason of her existence: *Oho ranian jo khasman bhanian* (p. 31) (Only those wives are queens who are liked by their husbands).

Wife is held responsible to maintain the respect of her husband in society: *Jana Zanani day sir ty jana hunda ay* (p. 148) (A man becomes a MAN on the base of his woman); *Bherra keeta khasam nu galh* (2004, p. 102) (If a wife commits a mistake, the blame would come to her husband). She must keep her husband's honor intact by being more careful in her actions: *Anhyan diyan wohtian nu singhar naal keeh?* (p. 25) (A blind man's wife doesn't need to decorate herself). It means a blind man's wife should not decorate and beautify herself as her husband is not able to look at her charms. Wife is held responsible of making a house: *100 mard ty gher dara, ik runn ty gher sara* (p. 253) (100 men make a home as an inn and a single wife can change it into a home).

Wives are compared and bracketed with despicable objects and animals to show their status in society as compared to their husbands: *Runn tan mard dy chooly di joon ay*, (p. 225) (A woman is just like a louse at her husband's dress); *Makhi machi istri, tinen zaat kzaat* (p. 341) (Fly, fish and wife: all are despicable). Even a wife who has nothing to do is called as a satanic machine: *Wehli run shetan da charkha* (p. 378) (A wife is just a satanic machine); *Run do dhari churi hundi ay* (p. 217) (Wife is a double-edged knife). Wives are severely dangerous creatures, and one needs to be careful in dealing with them.

Gilligan (1982, p. 18) has viewed that in a male-controlled culture "the conclusion has generally been that something is wrong with women," when the standards set by males are not met by women. The bias loaded in the Punjabi proverbs can also be explained by Ryan's (1976) phrase "blaming the victim," which he created "to describe how some people essentially justify inequality by finding defects in the victims rather than examining the social and economic factors that contribute to" their faults (Schaefer & Lamm, 1995, p. 227). The devastating consequence of such a representation is that womenfolk may adopt the deleterious outlooks held against them and persuade themselves that they are not capable of performing worthy and significant tasks (Lazar, 2005).

C. Co-wife

Co-wife is presented as more like a disease and a person having hundreds of faults, who can never be sincere and who is unbearable: *Sokan dil da rog* (p. 255) (A co-wife is a disease of heart); *Sokan saheli nhi, dushman beli nhi* (p. 255) (A co-wife cannot be a friend just like an enemy); *Sokan mitti di vi nhi maan* (p. 255) (A co-wife made of even clay cannot be tolerated); *Sokan nu 100 kunn* (p. 255) (A co-wife has 100 ears/faults).

D. Bride

Bride (*nooh*) is also depicted as an evil being who should work hard to please her in-laws and husband: *nooh manjay sass dhanday koi deharra such da langhay* (p. 364) (A bride sits at the bed and the mother-in-law works, there can be no day at peace). She is expected to take the responsibility of the entire household and is rebuked if she does not do so in an excellent way: *Peerrah hillay per nooh na hillay* (p. 121) (A couch would move but the bride would not).

After working so hard she is termed as a creature who is inherently bad: *Dhee kisey di mandi nhi, ty nooh kisy di change* (p. 206) (No one's daughter is bad and no one's bride is nice). However, sons are held responsible if their wives do not live peacefully with their in-laws: *Putter howey changa ty nooh larrey kiun?* (p. 106) (Why would a bride fight if the son (her husband) were good?)

E. Mothers

i. Positive proverbs

Mothers are a single character who is presented more in face saving proverbs and less in face threatening ones. Presence of mothers is equated with cool shady trees and their relation as the most sincere. Their representation in the following proverbs is in a very positive light:

- a. *maawan thandian chawan* (p. 340) (Mothers are cool shades)
- b. *maan razi ty rub razi* (p. 332) (The pleasure of God is in the pleasure of mothers)
- c. *maawan day pera haet jannat ay* (p. 341) (Paradise lies under the feet of mothers)
- d. *Maan pather di v nhi maan* (p. 330) (Mother even made of stone is important)

ii. Importance of mothers

Mother is represented as the most sincere and caring relation for her children and is given more value than the father of her children: *Pyo lakhi manda, maan bhatyari change* (p. 121) (A beggar mother is better than a millionaire father).

iii. Procreation

A large number of children are expected of a woman and are celebrated. *Baanjh achi ikwanj buri* (p.76) (An infertile lady is better than a mother of a single child). It is so because a childless lady would allow her husband for second marriage. There seems to be a competition of giving birth to sons: *Reesin putter nhi jamday hor sabhay gallan* (p. 230) (Giving birth to sons is not possible while following others, everything else is

possible). Sanauddin has also found a similar proverb in Pashto language (2015, p. 158). Mothers of sons feel more confident as compared to those of daughters: *putran diyan maawan day waddey waddey jeerey* (p. 107) (The mothers of sons have great confidence) (as cited in Shahbaz, 2004).

iv. Responsible for training of children

Mothers are solely responsible for the good or bad nature and habits of their children: *Jeha doodh, tehi budh* (p. 162) (The nature of a kid takes after the milk he/she takes). Childbearing has been viewed by Western feminists as a cause of dominance and suppression but it grants empowerment and authorization to Punjabi women (Nfah-Abbenyi, 1997). Both clinical and social psychologists have thrown light on the life augmenting value of mothers for their off springs as is accentuated in many of the Punjabi proverbs.

v. Mothers-in-law

Mothers-in-law as compared to mothers are presented completely in face threatening manner: *Sakki maan bnai saas, ohnu mithi mithi kass* (p. 248) (A real mother becomes cruel when she is turned into a mother-in-law). They are shown as inherently bad characters: *Saas kisay di change nhi ty maan kisy di mandi nhi* (p. 249) (no mother is bad and no mother-in-law is nice). They are also portrayed as hypocrites who behave with their daughters-in-law differently before and after their marriage.

vi. Step mothers

Step mothers are also presented in face threatening manner in these sample proverbs: *Badal di dhup buri ty matrai di jhirrak buri* (p. 75) (The sunlight coming through a cloud is not good so is the rebuke of a step mother). Even the real father turns into a cruel person for the children of his ex/first wife when he brings a step mother at home: *Maan matrai ty pyo qasai* (p. 333) (A step mother turns a father into a butcher).

vii. Daughters

Daughters are presented mostly in face threatening manner and sometimes in face saving manner. Their birth and arrival in family are considered as a curse and beginning of bad days (Ennaji, 2008) for parents: *jutta tere naal buri hoi, gher ayan nu kurri hoi* (p. 144) (O Young man! You have to face a curse as a daughter is born in your home). Daughters are presented as cause of worry (Dogbevi, 2007), depression, tension and disgrace for their parents: *Dhee walyan dy ghar phoorri* (p. 206) (The home of a daughter's parents is like a place of mourning).

Even their death is mentioned as a time to celebrate: *Kurri kurri di mar gai, kurri kurryan wich ral gai* (p. 285) (Daughter of a daughter dies and makes her mother a virgin again).

Daughters are mentioned as outsiders and unwelcomed guests (Siddiqui, 2013) at their parents' place: *Dhee un bhauna parohna ay* (p. 205) (Daughter is an unwelcomed guest): *Wayahi dheer perdesiyan dakhil* (p. 377) (A married daughter is just like a foreigner).

Daughters are considered to be the honor of family so any mistake at their part should be punished severely as compared to that committed by a son: *putter howey nadan ty beh smjhaiye, dheer howe nadaan ty nadi rurrhaiye, dhiyan lajjan hundiyan ny* (p. 108) (A son should be advised in a peaceful manner if he violates some rule, while if a daughter does so simply throw her in the stream).

These proverbs offer ideological validation for the continuance of discriminatory handling of kids founded on their gender. Punjabi proverbs indoctrinate sons into maleness and daughters into femaleness so that each would adjust character mannerisms, conducts, and inclinations that are socially measured as suitable for each sex (Western, 1996).

Three different types of verbal aggression can be demarcated in these proverbs: indirect, relational and social. Firstly, indirect aggression happens when the object (woman) is criticized by concealed and covert efforts to reason societal grief, i.e., chatting, ignoring or exclusion of the object. Unlike indirect, relational aggression is more stanch in its considerations as a threat to dismiss a relationship or dispersion of fabricated rumors. On the other hand, social aggression is focused toward injuring another's self-respect, societal position, or both, and may take straight procedures such as stated denunciation, negative body language, or more incidental forms such as social rejection and defamatory rumors. All three types of aggression are visible in the proverbs objectifying females and depriving them of their humanity. By and large, the image of women in proverbs is scarcely empowering, with the exception of a few proverbs. Proverbs which offer a positive picture of women are those which are about mothers and daughters. By contrast wives, mothers-in-law, widows, step-mothers spinsters, divorced or old women, etc., are depicted in exaggerating depreciative images.

2. Representation of Masculinity in Multiple Identities and Perpetuation of Patriarchy

The central concern of feminist critical discourse analysts is with critiquing such discourses which sustain a patriarchal social order – relations of power that systematically privilege men as a social group (Lazar, 2005). The findings of this study about representation of masculinity in multiple identities have provided a critique of gender bias in Punjabi proverbs and also verified the researches done by Khan, Sultana & Naz, (2015); Sanauddin, (2015) and Siddiqui, (2013) in Pakistani context. Men in

general have been portrayed as essential members, authoritative, powerful, and ready to accept challenges.

A. Men in general

As compared to women in general, men in general are presented more in face saving manner and less in face threatening one. Even when they are presented negatively, it is in those proverbs where they are mentioned in reference to some female member (Khan, Sultana & Naz, 2015; Siddiqui, 2013).

Men are depicted as the most important member of the family: *Mard dee juti dee vi barkat ay* (p. 339) (Even the shoe of a man has its value in the house); *Kantan bajh na sohndiyan naran, pawen lakh hooran ty pariyan* (p. 290) (After (the death of) her husband no wife can have peace despite having heavenly beauty).

The age and strength of men are presented as long lasting and eternal: *mard ty ghorrey kadi budday nhi hunday* (p. 338) (Men and horses enjoy eternal youth and strength). As compared to the death of women, the demise of men is considered as an irreparable loss: *Mard marey tan sir di sutt* (p. 310) (The death of a man is like a head injury).

Men are presented as challenging and ready to take risks. They don't indulge in useless talk. Whatever they speak has a value in itself. It can be argued that the proverbs that directly strengthen female subjugation indirectly approve of the male superiority. These descriptions, which are employed in the sayings as legal social creations, in fact appear to defend the feminist linguistic statement that language has been seriously masculinized and is employed by men in isolating females, in accentuating her dissimilarity, and in sustaining his power (Butler, 1990).

B. Sons

Sons are presented as the most important and precious gift of God. Their birth is celebrated and their existence is mentioned as a source of pleasure and strength: *Putran jehey mewey, rub her ik nu dewey* (p. 108) (Sons are sweet fruits so should be given to everyone by God). It is said that sons cannot be produced while in competition, everything else can be done. The physical beauty of sons is not emphasized. The death of sons is mourned and treated as a great loss for the parents: *Putan baajh na sohndian mawan* (p. 107) (Death of sons deprives mothers of their peace). Sons are valued because they are believed to continue the name of their parents and become a source of comfort in their old age. They also increase the economic prospects by helping their fathers in financial matters. A lazy son is despised because he is supposed to share the burden of his parents (Khan; Sultana & Naz, 2015; Sanauddin, 2015).

C. Brother

Brothers are presented in a face saving manner. They are mentioned as protectors for their sisters: *Bhai behn di izzat da rakha hunda ay* (p. 94) (A brother is a guard to his sister's honor). Sisters are advised to never take their brothers for granted as they can help them at any stage of life: *Meenh nu rarra na janeen, bhai nu maarra na janeen* (p. 344) (Rain and brother should not be taken for granted).

D. Husbands

Husband is mentioned as the bread winner so a well earning husband is dear to all the females. He can wish for the most beautiful and charming lady even if he himself has an average look. Husband is more concerned with the physical looks of his wife than her inner beauty: *Khasam husn saathi, maan dukh saath* (p. 189) (Husbands accompany beauty, while mothers accompany the worried).

3. Socializing Gender and Patriarchy

There are a lot of proverbs which advise men about their dealings with females and warn females about their attitude towards males. Most of the proverbs are pregnant with meanings which have been used as a socialization tool that advise men to snub their ladies and advise women to be obedient and supportive to their male members. *Runn nu bhed na dey* (p.225) (Don't reveal your secrets to your wife).

A. Advice to men

Men are advised about different aspects of their lives involving females in different relations and most importantly as wives. They are forbidden from accompanying woman by giving a warning: *Ranna wich baho ty rannao akhwae* (p. 226) (A man who accompanies women much becomes womanish). In another proverb, men are explicitly advised to avoid the friendship with women: *Chudd rannan di dosti, khureen jinan dee mutt, hans hans landian yarian ty ro ro denian dus* (p. 182) (Leave the friendship of wives, they become friends happily and then leak out the secrets while weeping).

Men are further warned from consulting their wives in important matters and sharing any important information with them: *Runn dy mureed da muu sharminda* (The follower of wife will be embarrassed and those men who remain cooperative and supportive to their women are ridiculed as submissive and hen-pecked).

Men are also asked not to give authority to female members as they are not able to handle and manage it tactfully. They are bound to make the situation worse: *O chuuga weeran, jithy dheer perdhaan* (p. 148) (A home where daughter rules, is bound to be barren). It is advised to men that they should keep a strict control on the female members: *zaal, mal, baal, jithan*

hilaen othan hil seen (Wife, animals and kids are trained according to the wish of their owners). Nyembezi (1990, p. 140) analyzed Zulu proverbs and found that a man who keeps women in "their own place" is a good master.

In the matter of marriage, men are advised to marry a virgin and avoid marrying a divorced lady: *Chutter runn kadi na kariye pawen hower hoor* (p. 373) (Don't marry a divorced lady even if she is extremely beautiful). Polygamy is recommendable for sons: *Puttar wyahiye waar waar, dhe wyahiye ikko war* (p. 107) (Son should be married multiple times, while daughter should be married only once). Deckard (1979) regards marriage as one of the primary institutions guilty of perpetuating the oppression of women.

Only a few proverbs have advised men to treat female members in a positive way: *Runn da ty ann da naan nhi rakhi da* (p. 224) (Don't name wife and food in a bad way); *Ker praiyan aun jaiyan* (p. 283) (Misbehave which is done with others' daughters is paid by your own).

Being powerful, proverbs have assisted in molding identities and roles of the people. The threat of the prescriptive and authoritative nature of maxims is males and females who do not opt the recommended conduct are denounced (Schipper, 2003).

B. Advice to women (Socialization)

Women are explicitly advised to stay inside their homes and avoid roaming outside and mixing with strangers: *Ander bethi lakh di, bahir gai kakh di* (p. 45) (She is worth million when she is at home, while becomes worthless if goes outside). Deckard (1979) argues that the problem, then, is the "sex class system" which has relegated women to being "breeders" and has prevented them from having any real participation in cultural life.

Secondly, they are advised to remain reserve while dealing with strangers who are male: *hassi ty phassi*, (p. 355) (A girls is easy to trap when she smiles). The girl who exercises her will while deciding about whom she would marry without the will of her father and brothers is rebuked and no dowry is given to her as a punishment: *Udhal gaiyan nu daaj keha*, (p. 27) (A girl who elopes does not deserve a dowry) (Siddiqui, 2013).

Thirdly, females are advised to live in their husband's home till their death: *doli kaddan mapey, ty manji kaddan sohrey* (p. 324) (A girl should leave her parents' home at her marriage and her in-laws' after her death). They are further advised to do everything to achieve her husband's pleasure: *Jay shoh akhay fittey muu, tan mein jeewi* (p. 158) (I get life when my husband rebukes me) (Nakhavly & Sharifi, 2013).

A lady's conduct is customarily under scrutiny because it is generally supposed that she cannot cope with her responsibilities and life properly

without the direction of a male. It seems as if responsibility to preserve the marriage lies solely on the wife. As a result, women are the only ones to undergo scrutiny both before and during marriage, while men's behavior goes unchecked. Once she becomes part of her in-laws' family, she is required to yield to her in-laws' conditions and to "surrender her pride, and become as tame as a lamb" (Nyembezi, 1990, p. 132). These proverbs implicitly or explicitly tell Punjabi women not what she is rather what she should be. It is principally a glimpse of how she is 'wanted' and 'seen' and not the way she is. These socially enhanced and imposed stereotypes, ultimately, intend at acclimatizing the females' opinion of themselves and others (Ssetuba, 2002).

A wife should accord status and homage to her husband, somebody who stands "higher in the hierarchy of gender" (Bartky, 1996, p. 268). Elusive in the maxims and in the inter-discursive and inter-textual fabrics (ties) among them is the male-controlled inculcation of loyalty and obedience by infusing, inferiority, fear, conformity compliance, and even remorse in womenfolk.

Conclusion

Lazar (2005) suggests that one of the principles of Feminist CDA is deconstructing the hegemony and symbolic violence of gender in our societies and contesting the prevailing gender ideology by making it transparent. So this research concludes that language (here of proverbs) is systematically employed in asymmetrical social structures of Punjabi society to perpetuate inequality and patriarchy. According to the data analysis of this study, women are portrayed in a biased manner that contributes towards the perpetuation of stereotypes and patriarchal social order that characterize women as housewives, dependent, weak-minded, not capable of taking decisions, etc. which is in contrast with the depiction of males as the honor, grace, the challenge takers, responsible and solvers of all the problems due to their possession of physical and mental strength, intellect and insight. Moreover, women are portrayed as and compared to animals, insects, and even inanimate objects to dehumanize and objectify them. Men are mentioned in negative terms only in the proverbs where they are mentioned in relation with women. So the proverbs depicting female characters in negative light are indirectly perpetuating patriarchy while mentioning males in extremely positive manner are directly reinforcing it.

Recommendations

Creation of awareness about the constructive function of this authoritative source of societal knowledge is necessary to challenge these stereotypes. There should be national sensitivity exercises directed toward the articulation that women's cultural role, status, positions, and dealings

as projected through Punjabi proverbs, which more often than not assign inferior or lesser identities to women, have no biological basis and are, instead, the product of socially constructed beliefs.

There should be national sensitivity exercises directed towards the articulation that women's cultural role, status, position and dealings as projected through Punjabi proverbs, which more often than not assign inferior identities to women, have no biological basis and are, instead, the product of socially constructed beliefs.

A transformational procedure can be adopted by legal, educational, cultural and political approaches and establishments set up to spread gender parity. Firstly, recognition of beliefs, attitudes and practices of a culture and their effects on gender equity should be achieved. Secondly, recognition of the fact that cultures adapt and evolve as persons and societies do. As such, it can be shaped in methods through which gender imparity is augmented.

A language management program is needed to eliminate instances of gender discrimination in the use of proverbs. Proverbs that promote gender equality and sexual parity should be disseminated. The curriculum also needs to be made more gender-sensitive and teachers should receive training to teach in a gender-sensitive manner. Further research can be done on actual use of proverbs in daily conversations.

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