# Women in Punjabi Proverbs: Cultural Models, Gender Ideologies and Stereotyping

#### **Abstract**

A culture is well represented by its language, and within language, proverbs best summarize the cultural values and beliefs. This research is a study of Punjabi proverbs highlighting the embedded ideologies pertaining to male dominance in Punjabi culture. A collection of more than 500 gender-biased Punjabi proverbs are selected for the research from different archives. Out of 534 proverbs, sixty (60) are selected on the basis of stereotypical representation of women. The data is further divided into sub-categories: stereotype, gender bias, insult, objectification and violence. These sub-categories are analyzed in accordance with the cultural models to scrutinise the stereotypical attitude, predominantly with regards to women in Punjabi proverbs.

**Key words:** Punjabi proverbs, gender ideologies, cultural models, sexism, stereotypes, violence

#### INTRODUCTION

A proverb is a concise, commonly used traditional sentence which comprises morals, wisdom, truth and traditional interpretation in a figurative, secure and memorisable form which is passed on to the next generation (Wolfgang Mieder, 2015). In Urdu and Punjabi language, proverbs are termed as *Kahawat* and *Akhaan*. According to Ahmad (2004), a definition of proverb (Kahawat) in Punjabi language is, *Aakhi hoi gal* or *Aakhan*. Punjabi proverbs play a fundamental role in Punjabi poetry, drama, short stories etc. They exhibit different social themes such as cultural traditions, experiences, customs, rituals and norms. Punjabi proverbs mainly deal in the areas of domestic lifestyle which include the relationship of husband and wife, significance of household, authority of men over women especially the supremacy of husband or dominance of mother-in-law over the daughter-in-law; sometimes even showing the incompetence of women and their attitudes towards their parents and parents-in-law (Malik, 2004).

**Iram Sagheer** 

Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, Sir Syed College of Computer Science, Lahore E-mail: evumbhatti91@gmail.com

Dr. Shirin Zubair

Professor of English, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore

Sexism in Punjabi proverbs shows the exploitation and manipulation of females by males. This results in extreme form of differential gender roles for men and women as well as gendered division of labour which is promoted and reinforced through such "words of wisdom" as proverbs are usually deemed in lay culture. Although, almost 48 percent-- which is tantamount to half of the Pakistani population-- speak Punjabi which is the most widely used language across the country (Van Harssel, Jackson, & Hudman, 2014); this area of discrimination and bias against women through language proverbs having far reaching socio-cultural implications, has not been fully explored in research studies.

## **Proverbs and their origin(s)**

Proverbs are referred to as brief utterances which are witty and show authority in explicit or intentional expressions (Winick, 2003). A brief sentence capable of conveying a meaning is a proverb which is used in the family, then in the circle of friends or neighbours from where it spreads to the entire town, city, country and the globe (W. Mieder, 2004). The history of proverbs is far older than that of books as they were used by different communities in their verbal communications, when people didn't know how to read and write (Ahmad, 2004). Akhaan are the soul of Punjabi language and literature: they can be poetic, metaphorical in their own style and have deep cultural impact. Proverbs have a deep meaning which either shows a piece of advice or is based in history (Jain, 1976).

#### **Gender Constructions in Proverbs**

Gender is a social illustration of sex which is believed to be communally constructed by both sociologists and anthropologists whereas sex is the biological representation of reproduction (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013). This difference is reflected universally in the proverbs of languages from across the world since proverbs exhibit opinions and attitudes and these personal views sometimes lead to supremacy and superiority. The concept of sexism is present in every society and it varies from culture to culture and from gender to gender depending on their perspective (Adesida, 2007). An example from the American proverb "your mother wears combat boots" shows that fighting for your nation is unfeminine (Kerschen, 1998). Some examples of proverbs exhibiting gender biasedness from different regions of the world are given below (Safdar & Kosakowska-Berezecka, 2015)(see Table 1).

**Table 1: Gender Biased Proverbs from various countries** 

Sr.	Country	Proverb
No.		
1.	China	Men are talented to be virtuous; Women are virtuous to be talentless
2.	Turkey	Don't interfere in men's jobs when you have dough on your hands!
3.	Russia	The bird's strength is in her wings, the wife's strength is in her husband (sexist)
4.	Poland	Where the devil fears to tread, there he sends a woman
5.	Hungary	Good if money is counted and if woman is beaten
6.	Spain	Women in silence look prettier
7.	USA	Boys will be boys (different gender roles for men and women)
8.	Swahili	Being a husband means hard work, being a wife means fussing about clothes
9.	Central America	Men don't cry

Some of these proverbs construct differential gender roles for men and women. For instance, *men don't cry* puts pressure on men not to show emotions since showing emotions signals weakness and is associated culturally with femininity. Hence, men have to show a "brave face" even if they want to cry.

#### **Gender Roles and Cultural Models**

Within a speech community, different social and cultural groups, as well as different age groups and genders, have different explanatory theories about different things. Such theories are rooted in the practices of the sociocultural group to which the speaker belongs and in the practices of socio-culturally defined groups of people. Gee (1999) refers to them as cultural models. Cultural models are signalled by proverbs and metaphors (Zubair, 2007). Similarly, gender identity is a performance that is understood in a complex context that includes not only the immediate speech event, but knowledge of cultural expectations of gender and knowledge of social structures (Kiesling, 2001). One's identity or self-image is created through the use of language. One learns one's role in life, including one's place in the power structure, from the way one talks and is talked to. Verbal behaviour also reflects the role of women in the power structure. Hussain (1994) observes: "Language, which is both the tool and the site of this power struggle, becomes the means through which meaning is made and ideological hegemony established." Within any language, words are connected to a storyline or have a complete or partial description to it which is considered as a cultural model. Such words have various meanings or possible connotations based on peculiar social or traditional setting and social groups.

These cultural models posit how men and women are talked about, constructed in social languages and positioned by the dominant discourses (Paul Gee, 1999; Zubair, 2007).

### Sexism in Punjab and Punjabi Proverbs

Sexism is embedded in Punjabi culture. In Punjab, marriages play the role of social communication among the members of the family with the rest of the society. For integration and active participation within mainstream Punjabi Community, a woman must produce children after marriage; particularly sons.. Marriages mostly occur amongst families in order to avoid property disputes which are common in the Punjabi rural culture. The life of a new bride is very difficult in her new home since acceptance by her husband and family depends on her loyalty and honesty towards them. The dowry system is very common among Punjabis who expect a big trousseau from a bride. Such brides gain power and status in family when they give birth to sons who are symbolised as strength in Punjabi culture. Sons then marry to bring wives into the household who take care of their mothers in their old age; whereas, a daughter is symbolised as responsibility towards her parents who are supposed to spend money on her wedding with her virginity intact. Mothers are more close to the sons hence their influence on their sons is more than that of their wives (Blood, 1996). So, sexism is vividly present in the lifestyle of Punjabis.

Domestic lifestyle also depicts one's culture and customs. For instance, *Mard Mitti Da Vi Nahin Maan* shows that the men of Punjab are far better than the women. Even if men are incompetent to do any work, they are given superiority over women. (Malik, 2004).

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is usually based on information that is gathered through different observations, open ended interviews, focus groups, content analysis and archival research (Creswell & Clark, 2011). We have chosen archival research from amongst the various forms of data collection in qualitative methodology. The procedure for such research involves data identification and its categorization. For this research, 534 gender-related Punjabi proverbs were collected through different archives (books). Predominantly, many Punjabi proverbs are selected from "Punjabi Zarb-ul-Imsaal aur Kahawatien" written by Muzzammil Ahmad, first edition, 2004. Some domestic Punjabi proverbs are also taken from Dr. Shahbaz Malik's book "Saaday Akhaan" second edition, 2004. Another great work on Punjabi proverbs by Dr. Shahbaz Malik is "Punjabi Kahawatien" found in the curriculum of Bachelors of Arts in Punjabi department, Punjab University. A few stereotypical Punjabi proverbs related to women are also taken from this book.

All archives are completely based on Punjabi proverbs where from a corpus of 534 gender-based Punjabi proverbs, 60 are selected for analysis using purposive

sampling. All these proverbs relate to women's marginalisation, implicitly or explicitly. Proverbs are divided into groups in relation to these words and are analysed under the rubric or emergent categories of: stereotypes, gender bias, insult, objectification and violence. We have also quantified the corpus in percentages using descriptive statistics from quantitative research.

#### **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

In the remaining parts of this article, the categories will be elaborated and discussed. Also, percentages have been given in order to quantify the data.

# **Gender Stereotyping**

Stereotyping is a generalised preconceived notion about the characteristics or traits of a particular group. These groups are based on the individuals of any society or culture. Members of such society can be stereotyped on the basis of gender, age, language, religion, culture, race, sex or ethnic origin (Cook & Cusack, 2011). For instance, in gender stereotyping, all females of Punjabi society are considered worthless in any relationship (as mother, sister, wife or daughter) and all males are superior to females in Punjabi culture. Example of gender stereotyping in Punjabi society are:

# • Randiyan nu ander khawan chohy, bahir khawan kaan

The above proverb mean: a widow can spend her life by any means only if molesters allow it to happen.

Gender stereotyping is vividly observed in different professions and occupations worldwide (Cook & Cusack, 2011). Many more institutes and organizations in our society have male heads as compared to females since females are considered fragile and unintellectual when it comes to finance and commercial jobs. Similarly, in Punjabi culture, women are expected to do household work instead of going out for work. In many ways, women are presumed to lack cognitive abilities even in household work. For instance, "aata gunni hildi kyn aen" means why do you move while kneading the dough? They are being targeted in their work. Another example from Punjabi corpus is *Buddiyaan winj karendiyaan ghar buddhe tera*: inexperienced wives will destroy a man's home.

# **Sex Stereotyping**

Sex stereotyping is a bit different from gender stereotyping. Sex stereotyping is related to biological differences yet it is a subgroup of gender stereotyping (cultural differences). This type of stereotyping relates to categorisation based on sexual desire, attraction, sexual assault, possession, sexual exploitation and objectification of sex (Cook & Cusack, 2011). *Rann viyahi taan anday payi* means "if a woman gets married (loses virginity) she is of no use".

### **Gender Bias in Ideologies**

Gender bias is one's judgment or a certain attitude towards an individual or a group on the basis of his/her sex primarily related to gender roles. For instance, males are considered as independent, courageous and determined leaders whereas females are considered as weak, sensitive, talkative and dependent (Shaw, 1998). In Punjab, the gender bias towards males is a common issue and males are preferred over females due to various reasons. An explicit example is *Puttar na jammeya tan dhi tan watt te payi ae* explicitly means "if a son is not born then a daughter can be found on a narrow roadway of any field".

#### Insult

Insult is a statement which is disrespectful to any individual or group. It can be done consciously with certain intentions or not done purposely. In Punjab, for instance, *Zanaani mard di jutti nal hund jaandi ae* means "a woman can be used like a man uses his shoe". This proverb insults a female's identity of being a woman. Another example of physical appearance is *Jiss dee gutt nahin houndee, loukee jhaarru bann daynday nayn* means "a woman who lacks a braid, people attach a broom with her hair". *Zarr, joru, zameen teenain apradh da mool* means "wealth, woman and land are a reason for crime". In this insulting proverb, women are objectified as money and property which leads to many quarrels and bloodshed. Asteism means polite irony i.e. a sophisticated and creative way of mocking someone. *Aurat mard de cholley di joon ae* means "a woman is a louse of a man's drape".

# **Objectification**

Women in Punjabi culture are stereotyped as an object of attraction. It is believed by the people of Punjab that a woman should have a beautiful face, long hair and a slim physique to attract someone. For instance, *Tittar khumbi badli, randi surma paa, ae wasawe meghla, ous khasam da chaa* means "if a rainbow appears on the sky, it means it will rain and if a widow applies eyeliner to look beautiful, it means she needs a husband". This proverb is humiliating for a woman who wants to look beautiful but the society perceives her differently i.e. she wants to become an object of attraction for men in order to remarry. This proverb also insults the females of Punjab especially the widows who cannot spend their lives according to their will after their husband's death.

# **Violence against Women**

Violence can be of four (4) main types i.e. physical, sexual, and psychological and deprivation or neglect (Krug & Organization, 2002). An example of domestic violence is, *Mian biwi da aidda pyar, patt di jhulli te jandd da angaar* means "love between husband and wife is like a soft side of thigh and a fire in jungle". This stereotypical proverb shows that when a husband shows concern for his wife then he takes care of her but when he is enraged, he beats her to his heart's content. An

example related to physical violence is, o phire nath gharawan nu te o phire nakk katawan nu means "she is thinking of getting a nose ring and he is preparing to cut off her nose" which shows his possessiveness towards his wife. Similarly, an example of emotional violence is Rannan di khuri pichay matt targets the intellect of women of Punjab. It is perceived that they are not considered intelligent and can be fooled easily.

# **Explicit and Implicit Proverbs Explicit Proverbs**

Proverbs that leave no confusion or doubt resulting in a clear or obvious message show explicitness. In Punjab, women are marginalised directly as is evident from many Punjabi proverbs. A few examples are given below (see table 2).

Table 2: Punjabi proverbs that show explicit meaning

	<u> </u>			- 0		
Sr. no.	Statement	Stereotype	Gender Bias	Insult	Objectification	Violence
	1. Budhi rann purana gadda, murr gharr khaaway malik da hadda	√	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>		√
	2. Dhi jamdi hi mar jaye jidha dukh v na aye	✓	✓	<b>√</b>		$\checkmark$
	<b>3.</b> Doli kaddan maapy te manji kaddan sohry	$\checkmark$	✓		✓	

# **Implicit Proverbs**

The hidden or intended meanings in these proverbs show the sarcasm and irony which affects the beliefs of Punjabi society. A few examples are given below (see table 3).

Table 3: Punjabi proverbs that show implicit meaning

Sr. no.	Statement	Stereotype	Gender Bias	Insult	Objectification	Violence
	1 Jiss dee gutt nahin houndee, loukee jhaarru bann daynday nayn	√	<b>√</b>	√	√	
	2 Agg lain ayi te ghar wali bun bethi	✓	✓		$\checkmark$	
	3 O phire nath gharawan nu te o phi re nath katawan nu	<b>√</b>	✓	✓	✓	<b>√</b>

# Family Roles of Punjabi Women

Punjabi women are also targeted on the basis of their family roles (see table 4).

Table 4: Percentages of Family Roles of Punjabi women in the corpus

Table -	4: Percentages of Family Roles of Punj	abi women in	the corpus
Sr. no.	Statement	Percentage	Roles of Punjabi Women
	Budhy di rann na mary, te baal di maan na mary		.,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,
2.	Tinno rah karah mard nu chaki, rann nu raah, sunde nu gaah		
3.	Moi rann gitte di satt, mard mare tan sir di satt		
	Waagi aawe wagg tun pehlan, rann khaaway mard tun pehlan, donwan tarah bura honda ae		
	Raahon kurah na jaiye bhanwen door peya howay, lootay nal munh laa k na piye bhanwen noor peya howay, talaaq wali rann na keriye banwen hoor payi howay		
7.	Rann viyahi taan anday payi Rannan di khuri pichay matt	37 %	Rann or Ghar wali or Wotiye or Biwi or Joru or
	Rann sohni te jan da khooh	31 %	Buddi or Zaal or Zanani
9.	Kothy utty charh boldi, ay rann saray lok di		means wife
10.	ae Hochi rann di nath kadhi nakk te kaddi hath		
11.			
12.	Buddiiyaan jiyondiyaan nitt powaray paandiyan		
	Buddiyaan winj karendiyaan ghar buddhe tera		
	Zarr, joru, zameen teenain apradh da mol		
15.	Mian biwi da aidda pyar, patt di jhulli te jandd da angaar		
16.	Agg lain ayi te ghar wali bun bethi		
	Data kaal parkhiye, dund phagan maah, ghar wali tan parkhiye je thela pallay na		
18.	Is duniyan te aan ke tinnon na duhraye, kuriye, wootiye, te mundy diye maye		
19.	Zaal te baal donwen robaroo changy, oudher theewan tan dushman bunde		
20.	Zaal, maal, baal, te much da waal, jithaan hilao oh thaiyen hil si		
21.	Zanani da rona te majjhien da mutter, ik braber		
22.	Zanaani mard di jutti nal hund jaandi ae		

23.	Dhi de ghar peyo, sohre ghar jawayi, bhen de		
24	ghar bhae sutta kutta		
	Dhi jamdi hi mar jaye jidha dukh v na aye		
<i>2</i> 5.	Dhieye saary jugg naal larien per ik apny khasam naal na larrien		
26	Dhi nalon jawayi mehnga		
			Dhi means daughter
	Dhi mul jawayi	9 %	Din means daugnter
	Puttar na jammeya tan dhi tan watt te payi ae	<i>J</i> 70	
29.	Jihda saen chahwe ohi suhagan		
30.	Khasam na puchy watri te phat suhagan naar		
31.	Marway khasma mar, khasam maray tan wassay ghar, jindiyaan khasam na mili dhoyi,	5 %	Suhagan means married woman
	khasam mareya te suhagan hoi		,, o,,,,,
32.	Maan puttran nal na rajji te		
	chullh angaareyaan nal na rajji		
33.	Aapda raaj te jagg muthaaj	3 %	Maan means mother
	Puttran da raaj te main aap muthaaj		
34.	Randiyan nu ander khawan chohy, bahir khawan kaan		
25			
35.	Randi tan randaip katt laindi ae je charrhay kattan dain		
36.	Randi te behndi ae mashtanday nae behn		
	dende		
37.	Randi te waqt katdi ae per unglaan waly		
	nahin kattan dende	8 %	Randi means widow
38.	Tittar khumbi badli, randi surma paa, ae wasawe meghla, ous khasam da chaa		
20	<u> </u>		
37.	Randi roway, kunwari roway, nal lag satt khasmi roway		
	Kiiasiiii toway		

Table 4 shows the frequency of occurrence in percentages of those Punjabi proverbs which cast women in the domestic and family roles of wives, daughters, sisters and mothers. It is pertinent to note that 37% of the Punjabi proverbs are about married women which illustrate that the predominant role and positioning of women in Punjabi families is that of a wife. The frequency of such proverbs in the data supports our claim that daughters are to be married off at an early age and their main role after marriage is that of procreation and running the household of the husband and in-laws where they are expected to live and die obediently despite experiencing abuse, insults and violence. In Punjabi culture, sons are always preferred over daughters because their parents think of daughters as a burden or loan to be paid off to the in-laws. But, investing in a son makes them earn afterwards. So, 9% of Punjabi proverbs are about daughters where they are considered as a burden on the family. Similarly, 8% of Punjabi proverbs are about widows, which shows that they cannot spend their lives according to their will after their husband's death. 5% Punjabi proverbs are about

"suhagan" or "married woman". Contrary to this, no such word like "suhagan", has been used for males in Punjabi proverbs. These stereotypical proverbs show the dominance and power of husband in a patriarchal marriage and household. A woman's marital status depends on the pleasure of her husband. If she will make him happy, only then is she respected in society.

In addition to this, 3% of Punjabi proverbs are about mothers where it is observed that the men of Punjabi society show their superiority. Sons also try to impose their decisions on their mothers who have to accept their choices in order to maintain peace in the house. This explains how all females of Punjabi society are considered worthless regardless of their relationship (as mother, sister, wife or daughter) and all males are superior to females in the Punjabi culture (see table 6).

## Aging and Punjabi Women

Punjabi women are also marginalised on the basis of their age as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Ageism: Punjabi women targeted on age and individuality

Sr.	Statement	Percentage	Roles of Punjabi Women
no.			
1.	Budhi ghori laal lagaam		
2.	Budhi hoi rangaan te, pochal maray		
	tangaan te		
3.	Budhi ghori, banati hanni		
4.	Budhi rann khadeeja naan		
5.	Budhi kanjari, tail da ujarra		
6.	Budhi majj da dudh shaker da gholna, budhe mard di rann galy da dholna	11 %	Budhi means old woman
7.	Budhi rann purana gadda, murr gharr khaaway malik da hadda		
8.	Mard ghar nu kahiyaan naal nae dha sakde te aurat soi naal dha dendi ae	3%	
9.	Aurat mard de cholley di joon ae		Aurat means woman

Punjabi language and culture discard older or aging women. Only youthful looks are valued; once women are beyond their child-bearing age, they are considered old and unattractive. The word "budhi" also connotes sexually undesirable or beyond her sell-by date. In this sense, Punjabi proverbs relegate older women to invisibility, in spite of the wisdom and experience that come with age. In table 5, 11% Punjabi proverbs are about "budhi" meaning "old woman". These proverbs target their distinctiveness and their age.

A few Punjabi proverbs clearly show the gender stereotyping related to females where it is expected that women should not focus on their looks and attire in their older age. Punjabi society does not accept older women who give attention to their looks and use multiple accessories and makeup. These females are mocked in the culture of Punjab (see table 5) whereas if an old man tries to act young through his dressing and style, nobody questions his sexual desires because a male can never grow old: *mard te ghora kadi budhe nai hunde:* A man and a horse never grow old. These stereotypical proverbs regarding older women also imply that even an older woman's life is strongly controlled and regulated in Punjabi culture by socio-cultural constraints.

## Role of Punjabi Men in the Corpus

Table 6: Role of Punjabi men in different categories reflecting percentages of occurrences in corpus

Sr.	Statement	Percentage	Roles of Man
no.			
1.	Khasam de mann bhani te kamli v siyaani		
2.	Oho raaniyan jehriyaan khasmaan		
	bhaaniyan		Khasam means husband
3.	Jowaan wala sir saray te maaran wala	5 %	
	khasam maray		
4.	Ghar howay wassan nu te mard howay		
	hassan nu	3 %	Mard means man
5.	Mard mitti da v maan nae		

In Punjab, males are considered superior to females in every relationship i.e., being a son, husband, brother or father. They are independent and referred to as guardians of females. No matter how intelligent a female, yet she is discouraged and demoralised in contrast to males. 5% Punjabi proverbs show that the husband has all the rights to rule over his wife in terms of psychological or domestic violence whereas wives are supposed to be happy in their husbands' happiness. Moreover, 3% Punjabi proverbs show the supremacy of men. Men are preferred over women regardless of whether they are daughters, wives, sisters or mothers because of the hegemonic patriarchy in Punjabi culture. We rarely come across a proverb (e.g. number 3, table 6) which shows a balanced approach towards men as this proverb tends to regulate the behaviour of wife-beaters and abusive husbands. However, the frequency of occurrence of such proverbs in the corpus was found to be less than 0.01%.

The findings of this research show that the women of Punjabi society are considered weak, inferior and much more dependent on men in terms of social and economic matters. Moreover, Punjabi proverbs depict patriarchy where the birth of males is celebrated whereas a girl's birth is considered as a bad omen. A lot of expectations

are developed from the women of Punjab where these females are presumed to be submissive and subservient specifically to their husbands and generally to their inlaws, brothers and sons. It is also observed that a man's honour is dependent on his women so many men are humiliated in our society by abusing their respective female kin specifically mother or sister. Expletives such as mother-fucker or sister-fucker (madar-chod, behen-chod) in Punjabi are targeted at insulting a man by targeting his female kin. Moreover, our research highlights how certain proverbs degrade the women of Punjab by objectifying them and portraying them as immoral objects of physical gratification.

We have argued that women are typecast on the basis of gender especially in personality traits, physical appearance, cognitive ability and sexuality. Many Punjabi proverbs use polite irony to describe women as rude and vulgar. They are not given due respect on account of their individual traits and attire and are thus objectified. Some proverbs depict violence against the women of Punjab which takes different forms i.e. domestic, psychological, physical, cultural or emotional. The research also shows that irrespective of relationship, women are targeted explicitly or implicitly in these proverbs (see Table 2 and 3).

Focussing on the gender and cultural ideologies which are embedded in Punjabi proverbs, our research has also highlighted stereotypical approaches that target women through sexism and ageism (see Table 5). Most Punjabi proverbs reflect the linguistic and socio-cultural phenomena which show a system or society in which men hold the power or in other words, they are dominant over women. This research has also reveals that women in Punjabi families have an asymmetrical and lower status in family relationships (i.e. husband-wife, father-mother, brother-sister, son-daughter) where their male counterpart is the standard irrespective of women's social status and standing in the wider community. Althouigh many women in contemporary Punjab work outside their homes, women in professional and public roles are almost non-existent in our corpus of Punjabi proverbs. They are mainly relegated to the domestic domain where they remain submissive and dependent on their male kin particularly husbands.

The study has shown that sexism against women is one of the causes of unequal social relations which continue to exist in Punjabi society. We have explored those stigmas of Punjabi culture which are evident in Punjabi proverbs, in the hope of fostering a new approach towards the concept of gender equity among the young Punjabi speakers. Attention and activism is required to address issues in order to eradicate such biased and misogynist gendered representations in Punjabi language. A practical attempt was witnessed during the *aurat* marches of 2018-19, when some gender equity activists and younger generation representatives, similar to the Western feminists' language reform movement in the 1980s for symmetrical

representation -- tried to rewrite such cultural norms and old proverbs with new twists, changing such proverbs to fit new realities. A language reform movement is recommended in contemporary Punjabi language and culture to change such dated representations of women in Punjabi proverbs.

#### REFERENCES

- Adesida, A. A. (2007). Proverbs and Masculinity: A Stylistic Analysis of Select Gendered ProverbS. *The Nigerian Academic Forum: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 13(3).
- Ahmad, M. (2004). *Punjabi Zarb-ul-Imsaal aur Kahawatain* (1st ed.). Lahore: Abdul Salam Printer and Publisher.
  Blood, P. R. (1996). *Pakistan: a country study*: DIANE Publishing.
- Cook, R., & Cusack, S. (2011). *Gender Stereotyping: Transnational Legal Perspectives*: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*: SAGE Publications.
- Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013). *Language and Gender*: Cambridge University Press.
- Hussain, N. (1994). Women as objects and women as subjects within fundamentalist discourse. *Locating the self: Perspectives on women and multiple identities. Lahore: ASR*, 108-134.
- Jain, B. D. (1976). *Punjabi Zuban tay Odha Literature* (2nd ed.). Lahore: Majlis Shah Hussain.
- Kerschen, L. (1998). American Proverbs about Women: A Reference Guide: Greenwood Press.
- Kiesling, S. F. (2001). "Now I Gotta Watch What I Say": Shifting Constructions of Masculinity in Discourse. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 11(2), 250-273.
- Krug, E. G., & Organization, W. H. (2002). World Report on Violence and Health: World Health Organization.
- Malik, S. (2004). Saadde Aakhan (2nd ed.). Lahore: Aziz Book Depot.

- Mieder, W. (2004). Proverbs: A Handbook: Greenwood Press.
- Mieder, W. (2015). 2 Origin of Proverbs *Introduction to Paremiology* (pp. 28-48): Sciendo Migration.
- Paul Gee, J. (1999). An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: theory and method.
- Safdar, S., & Kosakowska-Berezecka, N. (2015). *Psychology of Gender Through the Lens of Culture: Theories and Applications*: Springer International Publishing.
- Shaw, V. F. (1998). *Coping with Sexual Harassment and Gender Bias*: Rosen Publishing Group.
- Van Harssel, J., Jackson, R. H., & Hudman, L. E. (2014). *National Geographic Learning's Visual Geography of Travel and Tourism*: Nelson Education.
- Winick, S. D. (2003). Intertextuality and Innovation in a Definition of the Proverb Genre. *Cognition, comprehension and communication: A decade of North American proverb Studies* (1990–2000), 571-601.
- Zubair, S. (2007). Silent birds: metaphorical constructions of literacy and gender identity in women's talk. *Discourse Studies*, 9(6), 766-783.