

**Addis Ababa University**  
**Institute of Language Studies**  
**Department of Foreign Languages and Literature**

**Portrayal of Children and Elders**  
**in Wolliso Oromo proverbs.**

**Hika Fekede**

**January 2010**

**Portrayal of Children and Elders  
in Wolliso Oromo proverbs.**

**By  
Hika Fekede**

**A Thesis Presented to the Department of Foreign  
Languages and Literature in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in  
Literature**

**January 2010**

**Addis Ababa University**  
**Institute of Language Studies**  
**Department of Foreign Languages and Literature**

**Portrayal of Children and Elders**  
**in Wolliso Oromo proverbs.**

**By**  
**Hika Fekede**

Approved by Board of Examiners:

---

Advisor

---

Signature

---

Examiner

---

Signature

# DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Hika Fekede

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: January 2010

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

---

Dr. Birhanu Mathew

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The entire work is the result of many individuals' efforts. Of all I would like to express my deepest heartfelt gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Birhanu Mathew, for his timely and scholarly contribution in reading and correcting this research paper. Without his critical remarks, the work could not have taken its current shape.

I also convey my heartfelt gratitude to Jimma University for its kindness in sponsoring my study at Addis Ababa University. The same thanks go to the School of Graduate Studies at Addis Ababa University for its financial grant that helped me in covering part of the expenses of the research.

My sincere gratitude also goes to South Western Shawa Zone Culture and Tourism Bureau (SWShTCB) and Wolliso Woreda Culture and Tourism Bureau (WWCTB) who helped me in organizing the way I could get my informants.

I would like to thank *Jeettii Odaa* for all her immeasurable support. I am also grateful for my sister *Guddoo Fekede* whose continuous encouragement served as a great impetus in pursuing my study.

Thanks are due as well to my Evangelist friends *Bicaaqaa Yiggezuu*, *Margaa Dabalii* and *Darajjee Indaaluu* who have given unreserved moral support during the work. *Sami Gama* is also among those who deserve my heartfelt thanks for his invaluable support. Last but not least my heartfelt gratitude will go to my family and relatives for their continuous encouragement and assistance during my study.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Pages</b>
Acknowledgements.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Maps.....	v
Operational Definition of Terms.....	viii
Abbreviations.....	ix
Transliteration.....	x
Abstract.....	xi

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.4 Significance of the Study .....	6
1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.5.1 Scope.....	6
1.5.2 Limitations.....	7
1.6 Socio - Cultural Backgrounds.....	8
1.6.1 The People.....	8
1.6.2 Religion .....	11
1.6.3 Economy.....	13

## CHAPTER TWO

<b>Methodology</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Library Work .....	14
2.2 Field Work .....	14
2.2.1 Method of Data Collection.....	16
2.2.1.1 Interview.....	16
2.2.1.2 Group Discussion .....	17
2.3 Data Presentation and Analysis .....	18

## CHAPTER THREE

<b>A Review of Related Literature</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 The Concept of Folklore.....	20
3.2 Functions of Folklore.....	22
3.3 The Concept and Functions of Proverbs.....	23
3.3.1 Didactic Functions.....	24
3.3.2 Aesthetic Functions.....	24
3.4 Performance of Proverbs.....	26
3.5 Proverbs as an Oral Art.....	27
3.6 Some Literary Devices Used in Proverbs.....	27
3.7 Age in the Gada System.....	31
3.8 The Period of Childhood from Developmental Psychology point of View.....	33
3.9 A Review of Related Research Studies.....	36
3.1 Theoretical Framework.....	38

## CHAPTER FOUR

<b>Portrayal of Children and Elders in Wolliso Oromo Proverbs</b>	<b>42</b>
4.1 Functions and Concepts of Proverbs among the Wolliso Oromo.....	42
4.2 Children as Reflected in the Wolliso Oromo Proverbs of South Western Shawa..	44
4.2.1 Proverbs Presenting Children as Inexperienced.....	44

4.2.2 Proverbs Presenting Children as Immature for Responsibility.....	48
4.2.3 Proverbs Forbidding Children Adult Close (Friendly) Relationships.....	51
4.2.4 Proverbs Presenting Children’s Punishment as a Remedy to Avoid Misconduct.....	55
4.2.5 The Problem of Having Many Children and Having None as Reflected in the Proverbs.....	57
4.2.6 Proverbs Showing the Strong Child- Parent Relationship.....	61
4.3 Portrayal of Elders in Mexxa Oromo Proverbs of Wolliso .....	64

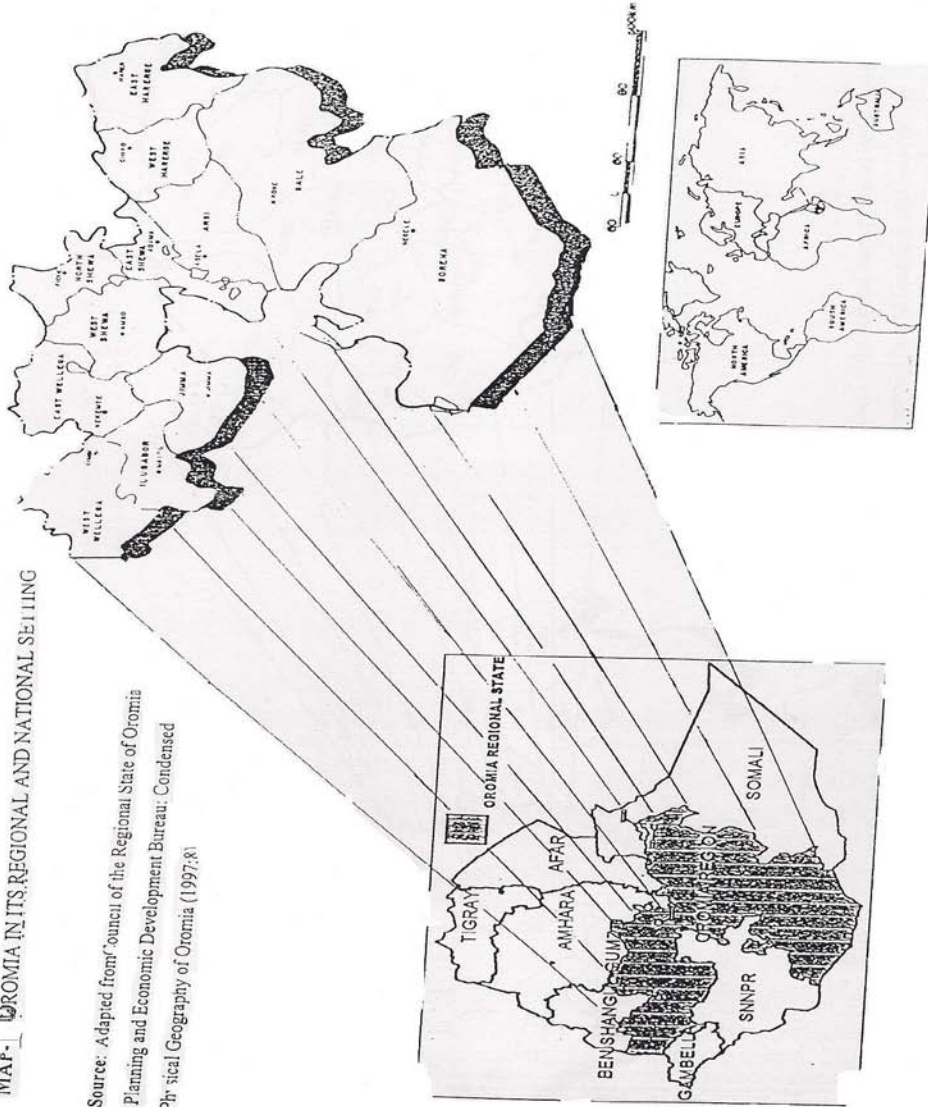
## **CHAPTER FIVE**

<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Declaration</b>	

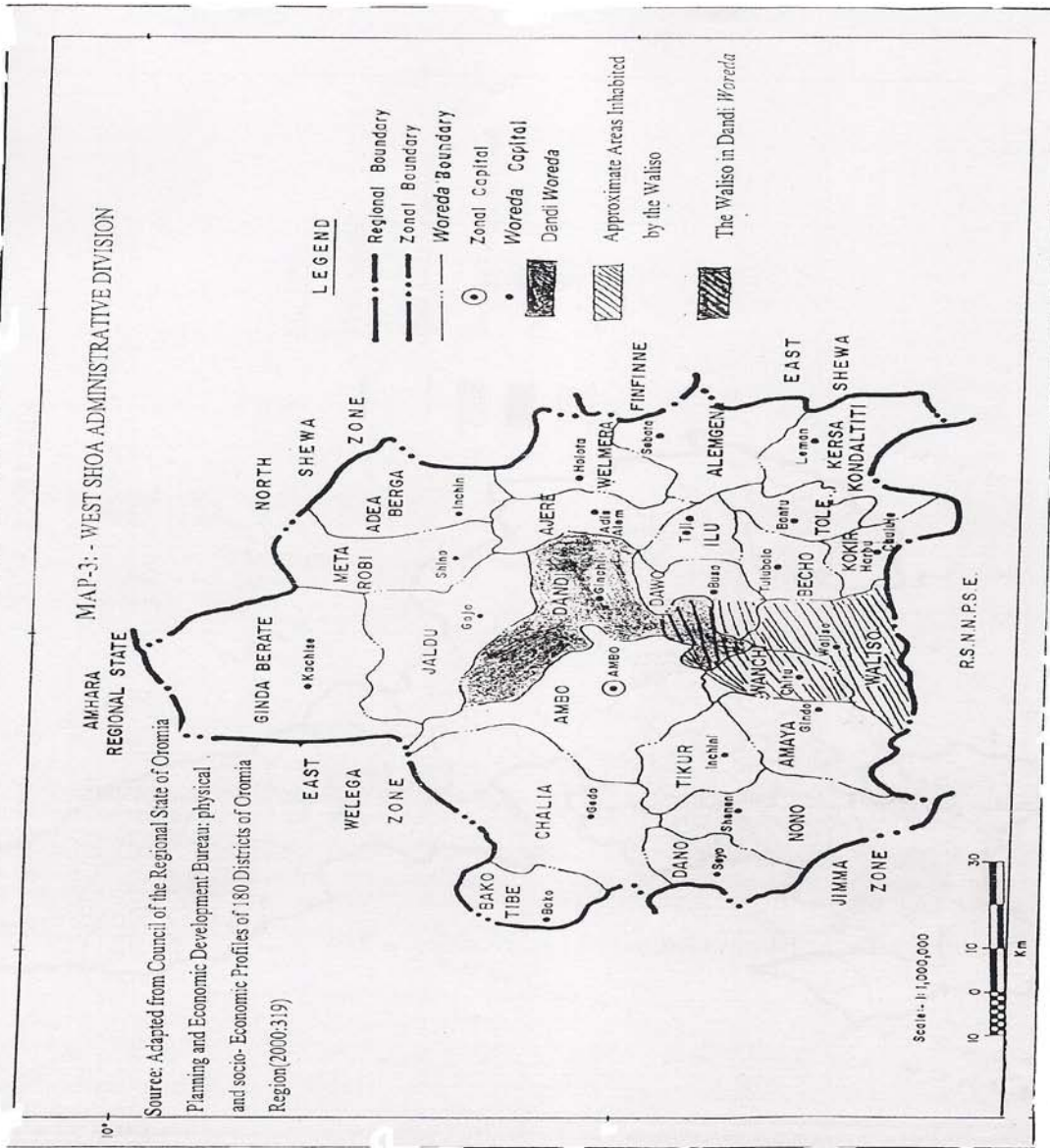
# List of Maps

MAP-1 OROMIA IN ITS REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SETTING

Source: Adapted from Council of the Regional State of Oromia  
 Planning and Economic Development Bureau: Condensed  
 Physical Geography of Oromia (1997:8)







## **List of Abbreviations**

*SWS<sub>h</sub>CTB*: South Western Shawa Culture and Tourism Bureau

*WWCTB*: Wolliso Woreda Culture and Tourism Bureau

*ORCTB*: Oromia Region Culture and Tourism Bureau

## **Some Operational Definitions of Terms**

*Proverb:* short and witty expression used in speech.

*Performance:* the use of proverbs in speech.

*Context:* Is the situation, point of discussion or event in which a proverb naturally occurs.

*Occasion:* Is a circumstance, occurrence or state of affairs that bring two or more people together and provides reason for discussions

*Transformation:* the process of alteration or incorporation of new items in folk poems resulting in the change of the original theme or context of performance

## The Transliteration Used

→ In Oromo writing system, short sounds are represented with single vowel and long sounds with double vowels.

Example: Short – Muka Long – Laafaa

→ Double consonants indicate germination.

Example: /dd/ showa germination in the word ‘adda’

→ The alphabets ‘**dh**’, ‘**c**’, ‘**q**’, ‘**ph**’, ‘**x**’, ‘**‘**’ represent the following sounds.

“**dh**” – alveolar implosive

“**c**” - palatal, voiceless and ejective

“**q**” - velar, ejective and voiceless

“**Ph**” – bilabial, voiceless ejective

“**X**” - alveolar, voiceless and ejective

“**‘**” – glottal, voiceless and stop

→ The rest of the sounds in the language are represented with the English alphabets

## **Abstract**

The research is primarily intended to investigate how children and elders are represented in Wolliso Oromo proverbs of the South Western Shawa. To carry out the research, contextual and functional approaches are employed. These approaches to the study of folklore help researchers to investigate the folkloric form in their natural setting. Thus, using them, the researcher tried to analyze the proverbs collected to see how children and elders are represented.

Interview and group discussion were used to collect the proverbs, to know the occasion of performances and purpose of the proverbs from informants. In the course of data collection, recording was used as a main data gathering mechanism. After the collection, transcribing and translating to the target language were made and finally the data were qualitatively analyzed. The analysis of the data was presented in chapter four. In this chapter, proverbs collected on children are presented in the first part under different themes while those of elders are presented in the second part of the chapter.

The researcher came up with the conclusion that children are part of the community who are viewed as valuable, immature and need care, love and affection while elders are viewed by the society as knowledgeable, experienced, wise, and responsible individuals in keeping and transmission of the society's cultural values.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this research paper is to investigate the place children and elders have in Wolliso Oromo proverbs. It has five chapters. In this introductory chapter, the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study and socio-cultural background of the study are presented. This introductory chapter is meant to present the focus and organization of the study.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Elders and children are part of any community who are at extreme sides of human life span. The two groups need care; the former due to old age and the latter because of physical and mental immaturity. Though their existence is highly based on others, they are so vital to the society. Children are hopes of the future while elders contribute from the experiences they accumulated throughout their lives to the generation coming following them. So, children are for the existence and continuation of generation while elders are for the wellbeing of the culture and tradition of the society. Children are our future leaders, our future teachers and doctors, and our future in general.

The Oromo are the largest ethnic group who have their own traditional religion known as ‘Waaqeffannaa’ and whose language ‘Afaan Oromoo’ is the second most widely spoken in the whole of Africa to the south of Sahara next only to Hausa (Melba, 1988 ). The Oromo, especially before their incorporation into the Ethiopian State formed in the late nineteenth century by Minilik had their own traditional democratic way of governance called “The Gada System”. Gada system is a complex institution that is handed over every eight years in assuming political, military, judicial, legislative and ritual responsibilities among the male members of the society on the basis of age group. Here, age is the focus for holding responsibilities of any sort. From this one can imagine the value the Oromo attribute to age.

In any society's oral tradition, oral literature is a highly wide-scoped concept. According to Bascom, W. (1968), verbal arts serve to keep cultural continuity from one generation to another generation. Of the various genres of oral literature proverbs are one. According to Finnegan, R. (1970), proverbs are very brief sayings with extremely compact messages shared by a large number of people and they 'tersely' communicate social truths. It is also agreed upon by many scholars that proverbs, in previous times, and even today, especially, in the nonliterate (traditional) society, play a great role in the people's culture of educating one another; appreciating, commenting on and criticizing behaviors, religions, customs, values, leaderships and in bringing up their young according to their norm. In other words, a proverb is a mirror in which its society observes its whole being. D'angelo, J.F. (<http://links.jstor.org>), indicated that, "almost every nation has its share of proverbs and sayings." He asserted that, "Because proverbs are so familiar, they often win uncritical acceptance from the audience..." Moreover, proverbs reveal the society's outlook on life and studying them is like studying the views, belief, knowledge, etc of the society on a certain idea.

The Oromo, like any other African society, have their own oral tradition, of which proverbs are popular ones that elders most often use as a spice of their speech in every context. For long this and other oral traditions of the Oromo people were hardly written or recorded. Those few written pieces are by foreigners and so difficult to get them. Again those few which are collected and found in written form are only in very limited sites and they belong to only a limited area of the people in the region.

Since proverbs are linked with every aspect of people's life, they are widely used for different purposes in different social contexts. The Oromo use proverbs to advise, warn, appraise, recommend etc. This does not imply that they are always meant to pacify things all the time but have also other aspects that need to consider. The unlimited importance of the proverbs of the Oromo is indisputable.

The Oromo have a special place for their elders and children. One can easily find proverbs related to children and elders. This in turn implies the special place they have in the life of the society. To state some proverbs: 1“*ijoollee wajjin hin taphatin mukaan siwaraantii*” which means “*Do not play with children because they will stab you with a piece of wood*”. Here, children are presented as immature. They cannot distinguish between what causes danger and what does not. In social context, the proverb is used to indicate the fact that one has to be careful while dealing with children. Moreover, it speaks that children are not mature enough to deal with affairs in life that require physical and mental maturity. To add proverb said in relation to elders 2“*Waajirti jedhee jaarsi utuu hin dubbatin du’e.*”, which means “*There is something*” said the old man and died without disclosing. In this proverb, elders are depicted as knowledgeable. The proverb is used in the context of speech when one wants to express his or her doubt of something.

During conflicts old men are part of the society who play a key role to resolve the conflicting problem. In various social affairs such as marriage, old men are sought for their life long experience of cultural practice. Their accumulated life experience is the reason why the Oromo consult the old during difficulty. The above proverb also shows the skillful nature of the old men. 3“*Lama nansuufan*” *jette jaartiin qullubbi hattee* which means *After stealing the onion the old lady said, “I will never be checked again.”* Here the old lady is presented as wise in protecting herself from being revealed. In the social context the proverb is used when one wants to show that he or she has learned from his or her earlier fault and now is aware enough to avoid similar mistake in life. In this proverb which is presented in the guise of speaking lady, we see that the she is refraining from committing the same error as before. In doing so it speaks of how elders are experienced. In both the proverbs above elders are presented as wise and knowledgeable.

On the contrary, as in oral traditions of many societies, there are proverbs that undermine elders and children. For instance: 4“*Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu*” which

means “*The daughter that the mother praises will not marry*” Here it is understood that when bringing up children, the parents, as to this proverb have better not appreciate whatsoever qualities the children have. According to the view of the community, in early stage of developments children are to be penalized to grow up according to the norm. This exactly shows the fact that in the society there is the misunderstanding that children only learn the norm with physically punishing them than praising them for their achievements and showing them the right way with good reasoning while they are mistaken.

It is therefore, with these ideas that the researcher is instigated to explore the places of children and elders in proverbs of Wolliso Oromo of the Mecca Oromo of South Western Shawa. The researcher believes that in studying how children and elders are represented in the proverbs of the society, it is possible to explore the views, understandings, knowledge, etc of the society concerning children and elders.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

As it is stated above in the background of the study that oral literature is a broad concept and proverbs are part of this concept with which people exchange their intention, feelings, comments, criticisms, appraisals, etc., using few words. Regarding this point, Buchanan, D. (1965: xv) wrote: “*The wisdom of nations lies in their proverbs, which are brief and pithy.*” This means that proverbs can show the identity of the people using them. Accordingly, proverbs reflect the strong and weak sides of any society. Thus, similar to proverbs of any other society, in Oromo proverbs, despite the variety of functions and acceptance they have in the society, those proverbs used in relation to elders and children depict them in different ways. There are proverbs of these variety that put children and elders as the most valuable section of the society and at the same time there are those which reveal the contrary.

Moreover, as the researcher has attempted to see the issue under study (how elders and children are depicted in Mecca Oromo proverbs), the area is not researched so far.. Thus, the study is intended to fill the gap with regard to the folk's experience, beliefs, knowledge, views, etc on children and elders as reflected in the proverbs.

Therefore, this study is conducted to answer the following questions:

1. How are elders and children depicted in the proverbs of Wolliso Oromo of the Mecca Oromo in south western Shawa?
2. How are these images of elders and children in the proverbs of the society related to the day-to-day life experiences of elders and children?
3. How do these people react to the way elders and children are presented in their proverbs?
4. How do these portrayals of elders and children in Wolliso Oromo proverbs reflect the socio-cultural attitude of the community?
5. In what ways do the proverbs present elders and children reflected today?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate proverbs said in relation to elders and children, particularly among Wolliso Oromo.

Under this general objective, the research specifically tried to:

- ➔ Examine how children and elders are presented in the proverbs collected.
- ➔ Evaluate the extent to which the community is aware of the impact the proverbs have on children and elders.
- ➔ Assess any socio-cultural attitudes of the community that is embedded (hidden) in their proverbs besides the function they have in relation to children and elders.
- ➔ Suggest possible solutions to the problem discovered.

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

Among the various significances the study is believed to have, the fact that it would come up with the society's views, beliefs, traditions etc about children and elders are some. It also contributes its part in recording and keeping the proverbs. Furthermore, the result of this study is expected to be shared by people of different groups. Firstly, since the use of proverbs starts at home, every family in the society can get awareness regarding the influence of the language they use towards their children. Secondly, parts of the society, who often use proverbs in their speeches, are expected to consider the effect of their proverbs and sayings on children and elders after they understood the reality from the result of this study. The other group to benefit from this study is thought to be, organizations working on the areas of elders and/or children. They are expected to use the results of the study in such a way that it provides them with important information on the views, beliefs, and knowledge of the society concerning children and elders. Finally, this research work may also serve as a base (source of information) for any researcher of a similar field of study.

## **1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

### **1.5.1 Scope**

Because of the limited time gap and resources for the study, the scope of this research is restricted to the identification of how children and elders are presented in the proverbs of the Wolliso Oromo. The extent of the evaluation made is also delimited. Accordingly, in this paper the examination of the society's views on children and elders, the effects of these proverbs on children and elders and the assessment of the nature of transmission of these proverbs were the only perspectives from which the proverbs are seen. Moreover, data are gathered only from the Wolliso Oromo living in Wolliso wereda.

### **1.5.2 Limitations**

The first and the major problem the researcher faced while conducting this study was the fact that proverbs have no separate social occasion (as it is stated by Finnegan, 1970 and Sumner, 1995). And this made the intention to collect the proverbs in their real contexts discouraging. However, the researcher has managed to minimize this problem by making a successful selection of highly skilled elders with the help of culture and tourism bureaus (Wereda and Zone), making enough rapport with the respondents and by preparing as many questions as possible those that help the participants remember proverbs that refer to elders and children and their contexts of use. In order to help the elders recall proverbs, the researcher managed to direct them by appropriate questions. In fact, after the elders were directed in such a way, the data collection became successful.

The other limitation the researcher faced was that, due to the fact that most of the respondents are far and dispersed, it was difficult to get them at the same place. With regard to getting the informants and participants in the group discussion, Zone and Woreda culture and tourism bureaus have helped the researcher. The bureaus have given him names of known elders and also assigned a person who has helped him throughout the entire activities of gathering the necessary data from the area. Anyway, all the proverbs and their functions and contexts that are collected from all respondents individually were more or less similar or alike regardless of the instrument through which they were gathered. Therefore, this limitation did not have an effect on the results of the study.

Despite the influence of all the above mentioned problems, a great effort was made by the researcher to complete the research successfully in the way it was premeditated.

## **1.6 Socio - Cultural Background.**

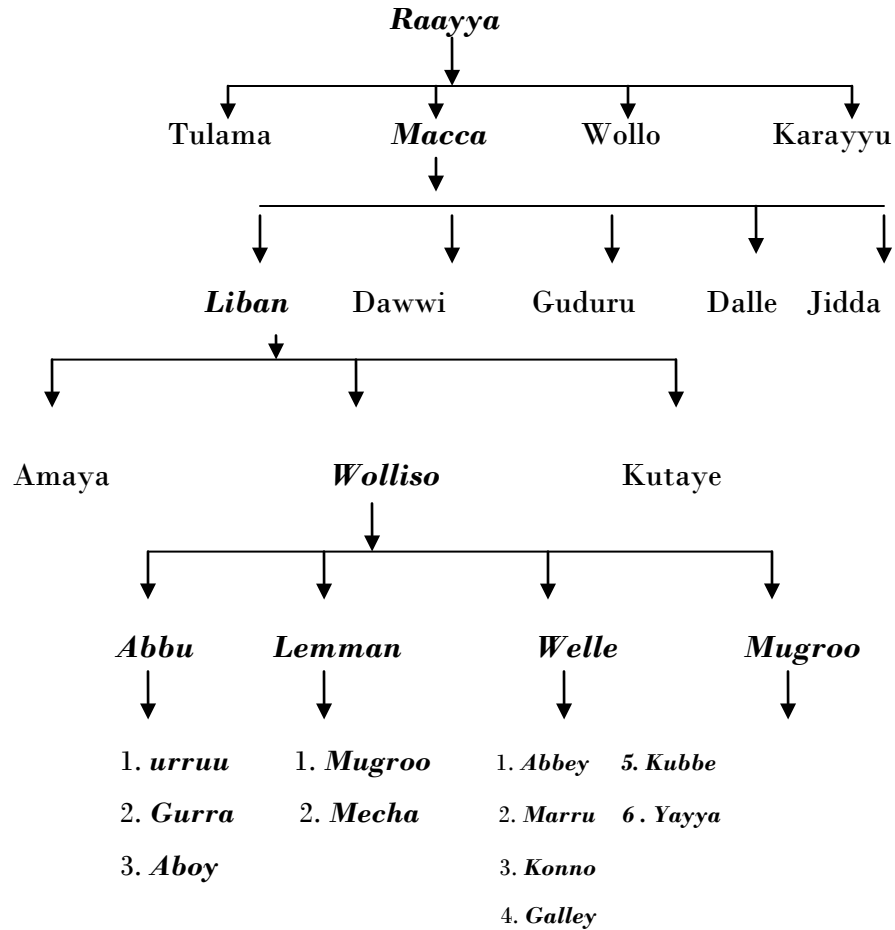
Folkloric forms of a society emerge from the socio-cultural setting of the society. Consequently, they are meant to reflect the realities of the society's life in various ways. So, for the better understanding of them, it is important to have the knowledge of socio-cultural backgrounds of the owners of the folklore. Socio-cultural background includes aspects such as history, culture, economy etc. As knowledge of the socio-cultural realities of the people helps to accelerate better understanding of their proverbs, it is important to present it in a comprehensive way as follows.

### **1.6.1 The People.**

The Oromo constitute a great portion of the Ethiopian population and are widely found in the horn of Africa. In Ethiopia alone the area which they occupy extends from the southern Tigray in the north to southern end of Ethiopia to the south and from Wollega in the west to Hararge in the east. Besides Ethiopia, the Oromo live in countries of eastern Africa of which a large number of Oromo live in Kenya. Despite the significant number they make in the region of East Africa little is known about their history especially before the 16<sup>th</sup> c. Those accounts written at the beginning by Abba Bahrey and later by European travelers and Ethiopians are distorted (OCTB, 2006).

It is unfortunate that both expatriates and Ethiopian writers have misrepresented the history of Oromo. Foreign writers have put the history of the people in such a distorted manner because of the wrong information they collected from the ruling class. But Ethiopians have distorted purposely. Mainly portraying Oromos as immigrants is depriving them of the right of ownership. It is the system the Abyssinians have established to hold the status quos of political power. Putting other nations as a latecomer and portraying them as alien is the method by which they avoid others to claim for potential power. Otherwise, the Oromo have come from nowhere. Their origin is Ethiopia and they are indigenous to the land.

Among the various branches of the Oromo; MeXXa is one. Presently, this branch of Oromo occupies the south western part of the country including western and south western Shawa, Jimma, Ilu Abba Bor and Wollega. The genealogy of Mecca Oromo as put on the book ‘*The History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century.*’ is indicated below. As it is seen from the diagram below, after seven generations Rayya appears and gives birth to four sons of whom MeXXa is the second.



Source: (OCTB: 2006)

Despite the difficulty to locate the exact origin of man, the Oromo like other people of the world have their own myth through which they resolve this basic question of human origin. As to the Oromo elders, the first Oromo man God has created was Horro. After the creation of Horro, God has made him two by miracle and the second one was made out of him and she was the first woman. After seven generations Rayya has given birth to four sons of whom MeXXa was the second. MeXXa in turn had five sons and the

elder was named Liben. Ameya, Wolliso and Kutaye are sons of Liben. The Oromo of Wolliso who are the descendants of Mexxa Oromo and the focus of this study live around Wolliso in the South Western Shawa Zone of the Oromia Regional State.

When the Oromos speak of their origin they say '*uumeen walaabuu baate.*' This means '*human creation has taken place in Walabu.*' This goes in line with the creation of Horro in the area called Walabu. It is also an indication that the original home of the Oromo is the place by the name Walabu.

Contrary to the above idea, different writers at different times have put different places as the original homeland of the Oromo. Some of these writers put the original homeland of Oromo as Asia while others locate it to African continent. There are still others who take the Oromos to Europe, France. Aleqa Taye making reference to Alaqa Atseme puts in his book 'The History of Ethiopian Peoples' the origin of the Oromo people as Asia. As to him they came to Madagascar and then to Bobassa (port of Kenya) from where they moved to Ethiopia.

In a different way from the above, Aleqa Atseme put France as the original homeland of the Oromo. To him the Oromo came from a tribe named Goal that used to live in France. Foreign writers like Father Baltazar Tellez, Huntingford, Trimmingham, and Antonie de Abbadie put the original homeland of the Oromo as Asia.

Among those who put Africa as the original homeland of the Oromo J.S. Trimmingham, Enrico Cerrulli, I.M. Lewis and Huntingford are found. These writers put northern Somalia as the original home of the Oromo. James Bruce, the Scottish traveler put Sennar (a place in Sudan) as the original home of the Oromo.

Furthermore, another group of writers including Eike Heberland, Herberts Lewis, Ulrich Braukumber and Mohammed Hassan refer Bale highland region as the original homeland of the Oromo. The idea of these writers is further strengthened with the

support it might gain from professor Ehret's assertion that from 3500 BC up to 1000BC the Cushitic people were inhabitants of the central highland of Ethiopia. The Oromo belong to Cushitic group and from this there is no doubt that the Oromos and other Cushitic peoples of Ethiopia were originally speaking and having the same language and culture which gradually have dismantled to various cultures and languages.

The researcher would like to conclude this part with the following quotation which implies that the Oromo lived long before the 16<sup>th</sup> century in western Oromia. It is taken from the book 'History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth century'

*Oral traditions collected from the Mecca Oromo elders tell us those there are two groups of Oromo settlers in western Oromia. One group consists of Pastoralist Oromo that came and settled in the region during the 16<sup>th</sup> century organizing itself under a military leadership of the Gada system. Another group consists of sedentary agriculturalist that lived in the region long before the advent of the pastoralist Oromo (OCTB, 2006: 87).*

The above quotation implies that the Oromos were in the areas long before the sixteen century. This is the reality which has been deliberately by some so called historians been distorted for long. Saying this much about the historical background of the people, the overview of the economy and religion is presented in the following two sub-sections.

### **1.6.2 Religion**

The Oromo indigenous religion, 'Waaqeffanna' was being practiced among the Oromos before the introduction of Christian and Muslim religions from the Middle East. In this traditional religion, the Oromos believe in one God by the name 'Waaqa Tokkicha' (One God), who according to them has created all things himself. Concerning this Bartles (1990: 14) puts, "The super being, whom they call 'waaqa' (sky/God) is the creator of things and sources of all lives starting with water and rocks going on through the vegetables

*and animal world to man Waaqaa has appointed to every being its own place in cosmic world.*” Waaqaa is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, the creator of the universe and all in it. He is also the one who keeps all things regulated according to certain order which nature has outlined at creation. Due to this nature of Waaqaa, the Oromo fear and respect him. They worship and give thanks to him in various practices of ‘Waaqeffanna’ (Worship).

‘*Ayyaanaa*’ and ‘*Qaalluu*’ are two very important concepts in the Oromo traditional religion. Different scholars put ‘*ayyaanaa*’ differently. Among them Morton put it as divine being with no exact and tangible nature while Bartles says everything has its own ‘*ayyaana*’. It is given from birth to guard and guide the possessor. Concerning this, the Oromo say “*Ayyaanni abbaakee siin haagargaaru.*” This is to mean ‘let the spirit (*ayyaanaa*) of your father helps you’. It is said when wishing good fortune for others or when others are in trouble. Here ‘*ayyaanaa*’ is understood as a being with divine power that can render help and is possessed by individuals. Accordingly, everyone has his/her own ‘*ayyaanaa*’.

In this traditional religion of the Oromo ‘*Qaalluu*’ is another important matter to consider. ‘*Qalluu*’ is a high priest who plays a leading role in the practices of ‘*Waaqeffanna*’ Asmerom (1973:200). There are/were ‘*Qaalluu*’ centers where people are gathered for various ceremonies in which some search solution to their problems, others name their children. Asmerom puts the role the ‘*Qaalluu*’ plays in the ‘*mudaa ceremony*’ in which the ‘*Qaalluu*’ serves as the father of anointment. Here the ‘*Qalluu*’, anoints representatives of the Gada for various positions.

Qaalluu (the person) is believed to be possessed with special spirit. He plays the role of intermediary between Waaqaa (God) and man. This is why people come to Qaalluu so that he brings them solution to their problems with the help of special contact with the spirit which possesses him and speaks through him. Buli Edjeta put the ‘*Qaalluu*’ institution as the flesh and bone of ‘*Waaqeffanna*’.

### **1.6.3 Economy**

The economy of the Oromo people is mostly dependent on the geographical location of their land. Accordingly, in the high lands, the base of their economy is mixed farming of grain crops and coffee together with cattle breeding, while they are pastoralists in the low lands. In the temperate areas, where both types of land are found, both pastoralists (herders) as well as agriculturalists in the same family congregate (Sumner, 1995). Therefore, Oromia is the land where both agriculture and animal husbandry are possible. As a matter of fact, Sumner referred to Oromia as the ‘best land of Ethiopia’ (Sumner, 1995: 29). The economy of the Wolliso Oromo is by far dominated by agriculture as the majority of the population is sedentary agriculturalists (NCR, 2009).

In the following chapter, the methodology of the study is briefly discussed. In the chapter, all the methods used from the beginning of the study to the end are presented.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Methodology**

The method employed in this study includes both library work and field research. In this section, the description of both methods is briefly presented as follows.

### **2.1 Library Work**

Prior to the field work, the library work is where the researcher has laid base of the entire research undertaking. The library research was carried out to assess what has been done in the field of oral arts in general and proverbs in particular. Here works done in the area of Oromo proverbs so far were also assessed. Moreover, various scholars views on the how of folkloric research were seen so as to see the most suitable approach for the study. It was also during this time that theoretical framework for the study was designed. Thus, the library work was where the necessary preparations on how to handle the actual field work were made. During this time relevant background information helpful in the course of data collection were assessed and made ready to be used as a guideline.

### **2.2 Field Works**

The data gathered during the field work is one of the major inputs for the entire research enterprise. The researcher has used two methods of data gathering. These methods which are discussed in the following sub-topics are interview and group discussion.

Before going to the target group, there are some preconditions to be fulfilled by the researcher. Accordingly, based on the researcher's request, letters from Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at the Institute of Language Studies (ILS) AAU, showing that he is conducting research were written. The letters were written for

Oromia Regional Culture and Tourism Bureau, SWSH Zone Culture and Tourism Bureau and Wolliso Woreda Culture and Tourism Bureau. These letters helped me in facilitating the ways I can easily get access to informants.

The first day I went to the Zone Bureau, I presented the letter and discussed with Mr. Elias Teferra Gose, head of the zone culture and tourism bureau, on how I can get informants. It was during this time that he promised to cooperate in facilitating the conditions for the ease of the progress of my work. He also told the researcher that the office will provide a person (field assistant) who will guide him to the homes of informants.

Moreover, the office gave me list of elders who are known for their knowledge of the culture, history, etc of the society. These elders have earlier taken part in providing information with regard to the society's historical and cultural values on various occasions for different purposes. So, in this phase of the field work the researcher managed to settle all the necessary prerequisite for the next phase in which the core of the entire work is to be done. This phase of the field work was entirely meant to create conducive environment for the data collection.

After having secured all the necessary condition with regard to the cooperation of the government body working in the area (June 4-6, 2009), the researcher went back to Addis for the preparation of the major fieldwork.

The data gathering work took the researcher about two weeks. And this was carried out from 15 – 28 June, 2009. The majority of the time was devoted to intensive interview of participants which was done from 15 – 23 of June. The rest of the days were used for the discussion. The group discussion was made on the 25 and 27 of June. The elders were put to two groups having each three members. In the first group *Tuujjoo Erge*, *Bulii Kumsaa* and *Asfaw Gonfa* were included and in the second *Dirribi Dinsa*, *Tafarraa Ida'oo* and *Bayyeeraa Teessoo* were categorized.

For the recording of data electronic materials such as tape recorder was used. Some of the data are also captured with the use of video camera besides the recording. To take pictures of the informants, digital camera was used. In the capturing of pictures and sometimes recording, the field assistant (Moges Wondafrash) assigned by zone culture and tourism bureau helped the researcher a lot. Moreover, *Moges* was my field assistant without whom the researcher could not have met the informants.

## **2.2.1 Method of Data Collection**

As pointed out above two major data collecting mechanisms have been implemented for this study. And these are interview and group discussion. For a folkloric study of this kind, interview and group discussion are effective ways of gathering the necessary data. In the following parts how the methods are employed for the collection of proverbs are presented.

### **2.2.1.1 Interview**

This instrument is used mainly to:

1. Collect proverbs,
2. Provide meaning for them,
3. Obtain context of use and also
4. Interview is used for relevant information such as socio-cultural realities and values.

The interview is carried out with six elders from the study area in such a way that the elders can represent the society with their accumulated experience and age. These elders who were selected with the help of South Western Shawa Culture and Tourism Bureau are known among the society for their knowledge of the society's cultural values and given special place with regard to information related to culture and social practices. Accordingly, these elders were interviewed and provided information on cultural realities and traditional values. Besides the provision of necessary data for the

study they were also asked to provide information on the genealogy of the Wolliso Oromo and this was meant to see it with what other literature say about.

Most of the interviewees are beyond and around 70 years of age. And all of them are native to the area. This in turn has enabled them to have profound knowledge of the area's social, cultural, historical, economic etc realities.

### **2.2.1.2 Group Discussion**

Usually a contextual study of folklore requires researchers to be with the target society for a considerable period of time. Proverbs are highly contextual. Among other folkloric forms proverbs are shorter in forms and are used in speech situations only. This feature of the form makes it different from other forms such as riddles, songs, and stories etc which are longer in structure and have designed occasion of performance. However, it is hardly possible to create such situation for the performances of proverbs. Due to this basic nature of proverbs, the researcher sought to use group discussion besides interview. The group discussion is used to further collect information on the when and why of the proverbs. Accordingly, as pointed above, the same elders participated in the interview came together for the discussion.

In the discussion, the researcher has manipulated in such a way as to elicit meanings and contexts of uses of the proverbs. As the meaning of proverbs is not seen apart the context and the proverbs themselves are originated from the social context, for the better understanding of them, paying attention to the examination of them in their contextual realities counts much (Okpehewo 1991). The discussion was also basically meant to elicit these features of the proverbs from the elders. Generally this discussion resulted in collecting crucial information on the when, why and how the proverbs are used? Besides, discussions were also made on the interpretation of the proverbs.

## **2.3 Data Presentation and Analysis.**

The data collected through the two methods discussed are here first transcribed from the tape recording to written form. This was done immediately after each interview and group discussion session. The transcription of the data is done in such a way that all data believed to contribute to the study were transcribed in addition to the proverbs. After the transcription was done, translations of the proverbs were followed. Translating the proverbs into the target language (English) had given the researcher one of the hardest time in the entire research undertaking. In addition to proverbs, the interpretation given by the elders on the why, when, how etc of the proverbs were also carefully transcribed and translated to be included in the interpretation.

It is said that there is no perfect translation. No translator can translate all the features in the source text to the target text. This is highly imminent in the translation made by the researcher. As said by Meider (1997: XIX-XX), proverbs are short expressions of human wisdom. These short pieces use value laden terms for the expression of the society's views, beliefs, understanding, philosophy etc. Hence, the difficulty of translating proverbs basically lies in the translation of these terms for which equivalent English terms could not be found. However, the researcher has employed communicative translation method to overcome the difficulty. This method helped the researcher to translate the data collected in such a way that readers of English will understand the translated text. Communicate translation method gives translator the right to make correction, to exclude ambiguous expression, to eliminate repetition etc. These all are meant to communicate the message in the source language to readers of the target language.

After the process of translation was over, proverbs to be included were identified and categorized according to their contextual themes and the analysis was made qualitatively by integrating the data gathered through the interview and group discussion. Proverbs that were almost similar in their themes and context were excluded during the analysis. The analysis was done in two parts. In the first part of

the analysis, proverbs with regard to children were presented while in the second part proverbs said in relation to elders were presented. Finally, based of the discussions and analyses made using the proverbs chosen, conclusions were made about children and elders in the proverbs of the Wolliso Oromo of the Mecca Oromo of South Western Shawa.

# CHAPTER THREE

## A Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to give the entire research work a theoretical framework by reviewing works done on folklore in general and proverb in particular. A thorough reading of the available works in relation to the research area is important to establish a good theoretical basis which in turn directs the line of argument in the main body of the research. For this purpose, both published and unpublished sources are used. Accordingly, in the following sections, the concept of folklore, functions of folklore, functions of proverbs, proverbs as an oral art, performance of proverbs, some literary devices in proverbs, age sets in the Gada system, the period of childhood, a review of related research and theoretical framework are presented.

### 3.1 The Concept of Folklore

It is mentioned by many scholars that it is very difficult to have a uniform and precise definition of folklore. Discussing the difficulty of defining the term, Thompson as cited in Melakneh, M. (2005:10) ascertained saying:

*Although the word folklore is more than a century old, no exact agreement has been reached as to its meaning. The common idea present in all folklore is that of traditions, something handed down from one person to another and preserved either by memory or practice rather than written record.*

As can be seen from the above quotation an attempt to give a comprehensive definition is made by Thompson. Let us now look at some definitions given to the term by other scholars and see whether they really have something in common with what is discussed above. Leach (1948:398), puts folklore as, “...*the generic term to designate the handicrafts, customs, beliefs, traditions, tales, magical practices, proverbs, songs, etc. In short, the*

*accumulated knowledge of a homogenous un sophisticated people.*” In this case, folklore does not only refer to oral value of a given society, but also it refers to different forms of cultural practices that include speech, auditory and visual senses, and sense of touching by itself. Boswell et al. (1962:1) put Espinosa’s definition of folklore as, “...*accumulated store of what people have experienced, learned and practiced across the ages as popular and traditional knowledge as distinguished from scientific knowledge.*” Here, folklore is defined as a collective container of people’s knowledge and practice through out their life and across longer periods. Similarly, folklore is said to refer to, “*People’s manners, customs, tales, jokes,...riddles, chants, charms, blessings, curses, deaths, insults, ... teases, greetings, ...folk dances, folk drama, folk art, folk beliefs, folk medicine, folk music, etc.* (Dundes, 1965: 6 and 12) Dorson (1972: 2-3), categorizes this into four broad divisions: **verbal arts** (oral literature) - riddles, proverbs, myths, folktales, fairy tales, etc; **material culture** - traditional materials (tools) used by the society; **performing folk arts** such as traditional drama and song and dance and, **social folk customs** which include the people’s traditional belief, dressing style and other ways of life. Others like: Courlander, 1975; Fekade, 1999; Michael, 1984 and Taylor, in Dundus, 1965 also support Dorson’s idea.

In general, it may be better to say that the definition of folklore by different scholars is rather a multidimensional attempt, but only to mean the same thing in different expressions. Therefore, as far as folklore is an instrument through which cultural, religious, economic, social, political, philosophical and any other cultural wealth of a given society manifests, it is better not to reduce its meaning to certain points, but to call it a mirror that reflects each and every aspect of society’s life as it existed(s). In short, it is everything of its people.

As indicated above folklore in general is the reflection of life. In folklore peace, war, adventure, courage, disaster, love, hatred, political and social value, weakness or strength, humor or sorrow, marriage or divorce ...etc can be reflected. Different

folkloric elements present the above issues in various forms. Discussing what folklore includes, Thompson as cited in Melakneh, M. (2005: 10) puts as follows:

*It involves the dances, songs, tales, legends and traditions, the belief and superstitions and the proverbial sayings of the people everywhere. It also includes studies of the customs, traditional, agricultural and domestic practices, types of buildings and utensils and traditional aspects of social organizations.*

Proverb which is the focus of this study is also an element of folklore as can be seen from above. As a result, the issues presented by the use of the proverbs are similar to the issues entertained by other folkloric forms listed above.

### **3.2 Functions of Folklore**

The various folkloric forms are used in different contexts for various functions. Though one could hardly say that the various definitions given to folklore take its root from the various forms of folklore, it seems that the forms have something to indicate about the names given above. The various names and definitions given to folklore are also reflected in the functions of folklore.

Many scholars of the field of folklore put its function in different approaches but the same direction. To see some of the functions, folklore serves as a tool for entertaining, educating, validating culture and maintaining conformity to accepted patterns of behavior (Chesaina C. 1997, Miruka O. 1004). Moreover, Bascom (1965) indicates some of the most important functions of proverbs as enlightening of the young, appraising good behavior, forming social conventionality among the community, used as an escaping device from the reality surrounding us, encouraging moral purity and strengthening cultural belongingness. Proverb as an element of folklore also shares these functions. The following sub-topic is devoted to the discussion of the concept and functions of proverbs.

### 3.3 The Concept and Functions of Proverbs

Despite their difference in time and place Proverbs which are short and witty expressions are similar (the same) all over the world. This is basically because of the fact that people are fundamentally and psychologically the same regardless of their continental and color differences (Bascom, 1992; Sumner, 1995; Finnegan, 1970). This can imply that proverbs like their similarity across different cultures also have similar functions.

The reason for the similarity of the proverbs according to Sumner, (1995: 53) is the fact that human experiences are almost similar. To use Sumner's words, "*Love, hunger and fear are the basic factors that rule mankind, primitive or cultured; are factors uninfluenced by environment or civilization.*" Similarly, many authorities indicated that in most traditional African societies proverbs may serve similar functions, even in nearly the same meanings that are different only for their actual context of performance than due to their content and attitude (Lindfors, 1977; Finnegan, 1970; Ben Amos, 1975a). However, as far as purposes of use can be different based on the variation in context within which they are performed, it is important to treat the function of Oromo proverbs in their own socio-cultural context. The *Masai* illustrated the importance of context in proverbs saying: "*Bark on one tree will not adhere to the bark on another tree.*" (Sumner, 1995: 54) This means, whatever the similarity might be, still, surely, there exist a difference between proverbs of two culturally different peoples.

Like most African people, the Oromo also have a great value for their proverbs in that they compare it with a salt in a stew in the same manner that the Igbo society compare with the palm-oil, and the *Chaga* who indicated this in their proverb, "Have four big possessions: land, cattle, water and proverbs." (Finnegan, 1970: 413). Regarding the value the Oromo have for their proverbs, Sumner wrote: "Since the beginning of my ministry among the [Oromo] populations, I have been struck by the importance given to proverbs by these people, who made a vast usage of them." (Op. cit.: 44) He added that, the proverbs then, stand as a storehouse of the accumulated experience,

knowledge and philosophy of the people.” (Op. cit.: 45) Evidently, therefore, the Oromo do not appreciate their proverbs for nothing.

Besides the four major functions of proverbs mentioned above which are also the functions of other folkloric forms Bascow (1995) and Finnegan (1992) put the functions of proverbs into two and these are the didactic and aesthetic functions. The following two sub topics are devoted to the explanation of these:

### **3.3.1 Didactic Functions**

Didactic functions of proverbs imply the educative (pedagogic) functions through which proverbs express, promote and recognize the beliefs and customs; care for and reinforce morality and tradition by giving them higher value Chesaina C. (1997), Miruka O. (1004), Bascom (1965). Taddese J. (2004: 46) has illustrated this in his thesis as: “Thus, its art both material and moral, inspirations and frustrations, customary practices, social norms, in short, the sum total of its realities of life can be observed and learned through proverbs. In doing so, proverbs play the role of bridging the past socio-cultural values to the present ones.”

Besides its function of cultural continuity in promoting beliefs and customs, the didactic function of proverbs serves people to teach morals, diligence and purity and, ridicule laziness, snobbishness, immorality, rebelliousness and other evil behaviors Finnegan, (1992) and Miruka, (1994). That's why, in the case of Oromo people, (especially elders), they often use proverbs and other genres to teach their children about their past, honesty, politeness, faithfulness, and to criticize inappropriate behavior in general. This shows that the educative function of proverbs is widely common among the Oromo too.

### **3.3.2 Aesthetic Functions**

Aesthetic as the name speaks has something to do with beauty. In the above context, the beauty is particularly that of communication or speech. To indicate the beauty

proverb adds to speech, the Oromo use the proverb 5“*Dubbiin mammaaksa hinqabneef ittoon soogidda hinqabne hinminyaa’u.*” which means “*A speech without proverb and food without salt do not give good taste.*” What is implied in the above proverb is the aesthetic value of proverbs in communication, both verbal and nonverbal.

The Yoruba proverb “a proverb is the horse that can carry one swiftly to the discovery of ideas” is an indication of the aesthetic functions of proverbs. These proverbs show the place proverbs have in communication both verbal and written. In his novels, the renowned Nigerian novelist Achebe has manipulated this quality of proverbs. White G. (1987) and Bascow W. (1965) argue that proverbs are used in speech to give beauty and force to the speech besides its economy in words usage. These scholars’ views show that proverbs use few words to express ideas which might need sentences to express. Moreover, the literary qualities of proverbs add to the beauty of the communication.

Finnegan (1970) and Sumner (1995) have pointed out that proverbs have no separate social condition (occasion) for their performance. But they can be used in speech and action any time, and therefore, are not meant for recreation or entertainment. Thus, the aesthetic function is attributed to the concept of palm-oil in the Igbo and the salt in a stew in the Oromo, where proverbs are used to give color and pragmatic force to formal discussions and an ordinary conversation. (Bascom, 1965) Besides, the aesthetic function of proverbs also takes place in written literature thereby adding cultural and local color and beauty in narrative discourses. Lindfors, (1973) mentioned Achebe as an example of authors who abundantly use proverbs in their novels. Generally, the use of proverbs in speech and written literature can help people/texts get attention from the listeners/readers. And this shows the power of proverbs in making discussions/readings attractive and in influencing people to listen/read. (Damme, 2000) The aesthetic function of Oromo proverbs according to Sumner, (1995) and Okpewho, (1992) is achieved through binarism/parallelism, terseness, metaphorical and poetic nature (rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, simile, metaphor) that is found in them. The same idea is ascertained by Sumner that, “...“binarism” or “parallelism” is the heart of Oromo rhythm: Phonic, synonymic, antithetic, synonymic-antithetic.” ...where an

utterance not to contain any type of binarism at all, explicit or implicit ...this saying should not be considered as an Oromo [*Makmmaksa*].” (1995: 51 and 52)

To conclude, proverbs are used among the Oromo to keep cultural continuity through their educative nature and to beautify speech; clarify meaning through analogy and to bring a case and settle it at the end in formal situations like settling disputes and judicial cases. This means, they serve the media through the society teach one another; control social norms, customs and values; criticize or comment on one another’s personality and a mechanism through which behavior and norm is enforced and practiced to fit the socially and culturally constructed norms. Sumner concluded that Oromo oral arts serve at least five extra-linguistic functions: cognitive, expressive, educative, disruptive and cultural functions. (1995) And Jaylan, H. adds a normative function mentioning the hymns sung in the praise of Sheik Hussein as a typical example (2005).

### **3. 4 Performance of Proverbs**

Basically, proverbs are used in speech situations. It is mentioned in the previous parts that proverbs are short and witty expressions used during conversation to add to the meaning and further strengthen the idea under discussion. In Oromo, the place proverbs have in speech is indicated by the proverb “*Mammaaksi ka’a dubbiifi cufa dubbiiti.*” which means “*Proverb is used to begin and end speech.*” Considering this proverb itself tells that the Oromo like to use proverbs in their speech frequently. It also implies the value given to the speech incorporating proverbs. Besides, it tells that proverbs are rhetorical tools used to supplement communication. So, the performance or use of proverbs is entirely limited to communication situations.

Okpewho (1992:229-30) puts the occasion in which proverbs are used into three major categories. The expression he used to put the situation is speech –act situation. This situation includes a formal or informal situation whereby two or more people are in

conversation or conversational exchange. In an informal conversation between two persons one can use proverb(s) to support his notion and give strength to his/her idea. In a formal speech proverbs can be used for the same purpose. A person delivering speech in a meeting or other forms of gathering can use proverbs.

### **3.5 Proverbs as an Oral Art**

Proverbs belong to the category of literature called by various names such as oral literature, orature, traditional literature, folk literature, and folklore. Different kinds of tales, riddles, songs, chants, poems and tongue-twisters etc fall in this category. One of the common features these oral arts reflect is the fact that they are all delivered by words of mouth. Bukenya and Nandwa put oral literature as “... those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibits to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression.” (Nandwa and Bukenya 1983:1 in Isidore Okpewho).

Proverbs share the above features of oral literature. Okpewho (1992: 226) defines proverb as a piece of folk wisdom expressed with terseness and charm. Proverbs are usually short with value laden words and expressions. This characteristic is put as terseness in the above definition. They are terse because appropriate selection of words is what one can easily observe from reading or hearing proverbs. This feature is also reflected in Oromo proverbs. For instance, there are proverbs with two words “*sobni hincoomtu.*” which means “*Falsehood doesn’t grow?*” “*Sissiqee goobana.*” This means “*It gradually becomes bigger.*” etc are proverbs indicating the feature of terseness. The manner words are put to convey a certain idea attracts readers or hearers of proverbs and this implies their literary or poetic beauty.

### **3.6 Some Literary Devices Used in Proverbs**

Proverbs are short expressions that are used in people’s daily conversation. Looking into these shortest traditional expressions, what one can understand is that proverbs

are the result of proper selection of words. The appropriate usage of words in proverbs in turn has given them the feature of literary writings. It is also evident from the collected proverbs that proverbs are concise in form and poetic in structure. Consequently, literary devices such as simile, metaphor, hyperbole, parallel constructions, balanced phrasing, etc are all reflected in proverbs. With regard to the figurative qualities of proverbs Finnegan R. (1970:90) put as follows.

*In many African cultures a feeling for language, for imagery, and for the expression of abstract ideas through compressed and allusive phraseology comes out particularly clearly in proverbs. The figurative quality of proverb is especially striking; one of their most noticeable characteristics is their allusive wording, usually in metaphorical form.*

Besides Finnegan R. puts that proverbs have in themselves aspects of linguistic and literary features. The various structures in which proverbs are presented or said are taken by this writer as serving to set apart this folkloric genre from everyday speech. Though they are short expressions, the messages loaded on them are conveyed with the use of several literary devices. They are crafty and artificial items of discourse that use all the devices usually reflected in poetry such as *meter, binary construction and balanced phrasing, phrasing, rhyme, assonance, and alliteration, conciseness, metaphor, occasional inverted word order and unusually construction* Dorson (1972).

Some of these devices or forms by which proverbs are presented to convey the message are presented as follows with examples from Oromo proverbs.

### **A) Simile**

This device is manifested in proverbs when the quality of one thing or the natural feature of that thing is ascribed to another different thing as having that quality or feature. This is done with the use of the words ‘like’ and ‘as’. To point out instances of this structural nature of Oromo proverbs, the proverb 7“*Ijoolleen amma muka kuttu dubbii kutti.*” This is equivalent to “*Children finish affairs as much wood as they cut.*”

Here finishing affairs and cutting wood are two different things but brought together to express the fact that children are not mature enough to deal with social matters. In the same or similar fashion we see many proverbs of Oromo being presented with this form. Concerning this figurative nature of proverbs Finnegan R. (1970:396) says “*More often the proverbs are figurative in one way or another. Direct similes occur fairly often --- Many other examples of these direct comparisons could be cited.*” To add one proverb said in relation to children, 8“ Kan dubbattee hinkunne akka abbaashee, kan hodhitee hinkunne akka haadhashee.” This means “Like her father she speaks endlessly and like her mother she knits endlessly.” This proverb is said to show children are the results of how they are brought up by their parents, i.e., if the parents are disciplined their children are also disciplined and if parents are not the same is for their children. In the proverb we see that comparison is made between parents and child.

## **B) Metaphor**

This is also another literary device frequently seen in proverbs. Finnegan R. (1992: 396) puts that this figurative speech in proverbs is made when comparison is evoked metaphorically. In Oromo proverbs we also see this feature prevailing in different forms. We see animals speak, complain, suggest or generally say something true and has connection with human nature and has nothing to do with those animals or speaking objects. These are all meant to refer to human life and action by means of non human activity. To cite one Oromo proverb of this structure, 9“*Muka jigetti qottootu baay’ata.*” This means “*To a fallen tree, axes are many.*” Here, the issue under consideration is not tree or axe but man’s action. Thus, this proverb is usually said to comment on the evil deeds or the injustices that people do to powerless persons. Thus, the fallen tree in the proverb is meant to represent a powerless or a person who can not defend himself while the axe represents people. In another proverb, we also observe animals speaking about man. The Oromo proverb 10“ “*Namaaf duuti inxinnaate*” jette wangoon.” This means “*The fox said, “Death does not suffice for man.”*” This proverb is also used when people do evil. It shows that the evil nature of man is beyond the final penalty (death) that is there for him. In these and other similar proverbs,

metaphorical expressions are all used to present human behavior and action. There are a number of Oromo proverbs told in the guise of speaking animals or humans. In a certain context of use, the words of these speaking animals and sometimes humans are meant to represent the real situation in that specific context of speech.

### **C) Hyperbole**

This is also one form of figurative speech reflected in the proverbs of Oromo like any other African proverbs mentioned by Finnegan in her work. Many examples of proverbs in this form can be cited in Oromo with the context of use. For instance, the proverb 11 “*Obsaan aannan goromsaa dhuga.*” Which means, “*A tolerant drinks the milk of calf*”. In this proverb the exaggeration is meant to emphasize the value of patience. The exaggeration is made in such a way that the patience of the person helped him to wait until the growing up calf gives him milk. The same mechanism is also manipulated in the proverb 12 “*Gowwaan bishaan bira taa’ee dheebota.*” which means “*The fool thirsts sitting by the side of river.*” In these proverbs, the exaggerations are meant to make emphasis on event(s) in the context of use. The proverb is used in the context of speech to inform that the solution to the problem encountered is just in the hands of the person in problem. It is meant to make him conscious and take action for the betterment of his situation.

### **D) Sound Effect - Alliteration**

Among literary works poem is the genre in which sound patterning is manipulated in various ways to yield poetic effect. Besides the beauty they add to the poem, these sound patterns are considered to be the typical feature to identify the genre from the other genres. Alliteration is one result of sound patterning and is seen in a line of verse. It is manifested in the sameness of the beginning sounds of consecutive words in a line of verse. This feature is also seen in proverbs. This feature is reflected in a proverb in such a way that the beginning sounds of words in a line of proverb are the same. The Oromo proverb, 13 “*Waatoo jala, waatu jira.*” can be considered as an example to explain this feature. Here in this proverb, sameness of the beginning sound is seen on

both sides of caesura (the breaking point at the middle of the proverb). In the beginning of both sides of caesura we see the same sound ‘w’ and sound ‘j’ at the beginning of the final words of the caesura.

### **E) Rhyming**

In many proverbs, there is a middle position where a pause occurs and it is called caesura (Abrahams 1972:120). Rhyming occurs when the two sides of the caesura exhibit identical vowel consonant composition which in turn produces a poetic melody. For instance the proverb,

*14‘Waa baachuun / waa nyaachuuf.’ Which means ‘To carry something is to have something,’ exhibits rhyming. On both sides of the caesura there are the same vowel consonant compositions. The composition is indicated below.*

[Cvv Cvvcvvc / Cvvcvvcvvc]

In this proverb, identical rhythmic flow of the two sides is clearly observable and gives the proverb metrical feature. As the two sides are metrical, they are phrased in a balanced manner. The word ‘baachuun’ on the left side of the caesura is a verb and means ‘to carry’; in the same way the word ‘nyaachuuf’ on the right side is a verb meaning ‘to eat’. Thus, this sameness sets the two sides parallel. Moreover, the balanced phrasing of the two shows that there is a clear relationship between them.

## **3.7 Childhood and Old Age in the Gada System**

The researcher has sought to reveal the importance of discussing how the Oromo Gada system sees children and elders. This helps to observe the relationship between how the proverbs depict them and how they are seen in the age sets of the Gada system.

Discussing how the Gada system has emerged Asmerom says “The Oromo people have not created the Gada system from scratch.” This complex but traditional and purely

democratic way of leading the society is a result of long years of experience. Asmerom Legesse in his book ‘Three Approaches to the study of African society’ has described how the Gada system has given rise to such a very complex structure beginning from a simple system of age sets. Pointing out how it began, he further goes on and says that today it is organized along radically different lines. The age set in Gada system today is only meant for temporal differentiation of the society. According to this age set, those who are nearly in the same age group collectively share same responsibilities.

Looking at the age sets of the Gada system helps the researcher to see how the Oromo people have been culturally considering and treating children and elders. As discussed above, members of the same age set share the same responsibility. In the following, the various age sets of the Gada system are presented with their names and age limits.

The Gada has put every male into different groups on the basis of their age. Members of the same group share same responsibilities.

- *Foollee* or *Gaammee xixiqqaa* (8-16 years)
- *Dabballee* (0-8 years)
- *Qondaala* or *Gaammee gurguddaa* (16-24 years)
- *Kuusaa* (24-32 years)
- *Raaba* (32-40 years)
- *Gadaa* (40-48 years)
- *Yuuba I* (48-56 years)
- *Yuuba II* (56-64 years)
- *Yuuba III* (64-72 years)
- *Gadaamoojjii* (72-80 years)
- *Jaarsa* (80 and above years) (Source: Workineh, 2001:3)

As one can see from the above grouping, the core of the categorization is basically age. From this we can easily recognize how the Oromos value age. From the above group, the Gada age set is the stage when members reach for political and ritual leadership.

After passing through five stages in which it is believed that they accumulated experience, they reach this critical period in which they shoulder the responsibilities of leading their communities.

Looking at both extremes of the grouping, where the focus of this study lies are children and elders. When we observe the duties of these groups, we understand that it is not as tough as the other group's responsibilities. Especially the later grades are put as the period of partial retirement and the extreme grade (Gadamoji) is said the terminal sacred grade. During this period, especially the last two grades namely 'Yuba' and 'Gadamoji', the elders maintain advisory authority. In addition they may also be asked to take part in the Gada assembly as assistants Legesse, A. (1985:92). Thus, elders according to the Oromo are believed to contribute from their long years of experience in the betterment of the community's life. Due to this, they are respected and their knowledge and wisdom are considered precious.

### **3.8 The Period of Childhood from Developmental Psychology point of View**

The discussion of childhood period from the point of view of developmental psychology is important here to help the researcher see the contextual usage of the proverbs from the angle of developmental psychology.

The period of childhood is seen as a world of miracle and wonders as if creation rose, bathed in light, out of darkness, utterly new, fresh and astonishing to the child (Papalia D.E etal 1999:309). These writers put this period as when the child feels new to whatever experience he or she encounters. They put that the period ends when things stop to astonish and the world turns to be familiar.

The term childhood is given a number of definitions from various points of view. Some of the definitions see childhood from the point of view of age while others relate it to the mental maturity of the children under discussion. Still others consider it from the

physical maturity perspective. The Ethiopian proclamation of child commission put the period of childhood as it begins from birth and extends to 14 years of age. Additionally, Fekede Terefe in his senior essay has attempted to present the different opinions regarding the beginning and end of childhood. As to his description, the educationalists suggest childhood to be up to 12, the psychologist up to 13, the physician up to 13.

With the detail provision of the physical, mental, social, and emotional developments at each level, developmental psychologist divide the period of childhood to four periods. As to William A. Kelly and Kelly M. (1938), this division is also based on the children's level of mental as well as physical development. According to them, the following are the major divisions:

- |                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1) The period of infancy | birth to 3 yrs |
| 2) Early childhood       | 3-5 yrs        |
| 3) Childhood proper      | 6-9 yrs        |
| 4) Later childhood       | 10-12 yrs      |
| 5) Adolescence           | 12- 21 yrs     |

The above division indicates that the period of childhood extends from the age of 3 to the age of 12. This period as explained at the beginning is the period when the child sees everything with full interest. Consequently, it is a very critical period in the late development of the child. What a well known psychologist Watson says "Give me a child and I can make whatever." goes in line with this. The child's experiences during this period determine its late personality make up.

When we see the child's behavior during the period of childhood from the angle of developmental psychology, we observe that the child behaviorally changes along the age from birth to when he finishes the period of adolescence. The change that the child undergoes both physically and psychologically is attributed to the experiential conditions to which the child is exposed. Psychologists such as Hurlock and Erikson

speak of the criticality of this period in such a way that how successful the child during this period determine how he will be in the later ages. To add, Freud put that personality maladjustment in the later ages take its root in the unfavorable period of childhood (Hurlock, B. E. 1980)

The period of childhood is characterized by immense emotion and behavior problem. This is so basically because the child is developing distinctive personalities and wants to be independent which in turn is difficult for the child to handle. Besides, according to Hurlock, “*Young children are often obstinate, stubborn, disobedient, negativistic, and antagonistic. They have frequent temper, tantrums, they are often bothered by bad dreams at night and irrational fears during the day, and they suffer from jealousies.*” These behaviors of the child give a very difficult period for parents in the course of the development.

In connection to this Hurlock goes on and discusses the effects of discipline on young children. On the basis of the extent of freedom given to children Hurlock has put children into three and these are:

- A) Children of permissive parents, who are selfish, aggressive and unsocial,
- B) Children of authoritarian parents, who are overly obedient in the presence of adults but aggressive in the peer relationship and,
- C) Children of democratic parents, who restrain from the behavior they know is wrong and are more considerate of the right of others (Hurlock, B. E. 1980).

The more parents punish their children the more the children are to be sullen, obstinate, and negativistic. And this brings to the children poor personal and social adjustments. This applies to children brought up under the first two categories of the above list. But, children brought up under the third category make the best personal and social adjustments (Hurlock, B. E. 1980: 134).

### **3.9 A Review of Related Studies**

The basic aim of presenting a review of related studies here is to give an overview of what has been done so far on similar areas. Besides, it is meant to show how the current study is different from those already done on similar issues.

In the area of proverbs a number of undergraduate and post graduate studies have been conducted so far. The focus of these studies are also various. On Oromo proverbs, the pioneering works are more of collection of proverbs than emphasizing on specific features of these proverbs and presenting them from that angle.. To point out some:

One study related to the present paper is done by *Mengesha Rikitu*, (1992) “Oromo Oral Treasure for a New Generation.”, and *George Cottage’s* (1990) “Salt for Stew.” both focused on the collection and translation into English of Oromo proverbs.

On the other hand, *Sumner C.*, (1995) has done a broad work with regard to Oromo proverbs. In his book entitled “The Wisdom of Oromo Proverbs”, he has attempted to present Oromo proverbs as paying attention to the value given to proverbs of the Oromo, and functions of the proverbs. He has categorized the proverbs on the basis of their themes and presents them accordingly.

The following six undergraduate BA theses have also focused on Oromo proverbs. Among these *Ararsa Negesso* (1995) has done his senior essay on the “Analysis of some selected Oromo proverbs, with a specific reference to Wolliso area”. In this work, only ten proverbs are presented with their analysis. Moreover, in this paper, the proverbs are not presented under various themes.

In another BA thesis by *Samuel Adola*, (2000), an attempt is made to collect and analyze proverbs from around Dembi Dollo. The title of the BA thesis is “Some Selected Oromo Proverbs around Dembi Dollo”. In this work, the researcher has collected some proverbs and analyzed from the point of view of their contextual meanings.

“The Contents of Oromo Proverbs in Jibat and Mecha Awraja” by *Abraham Alemu*, (1984), is also one of the undergraduate theses written on Oromo proverbs. In this paper the researcher presented Oromo proverbs as having the qualities of literary

genres. Consequently, there are rhyming and non-rhyming proverbs. There are also figurative features such as simile, metaphor, personification hyperbole etc in the proverbs of the Oromo.

In his BA thesis on ‘Some Selected Proverbs and Riddle of Wollega Oromo’, *Ayana Kabeta*, (1991) has discussed the function of Oromo proverbs, what riddles are, types of riddles, characteristics of riddles and their functions.

In another BA thesis by *Tesfaye Geda*, (1973) ‘Yeguji Teretina Misalewoch.’ Guji proverbs are briefly presented. In it he explored how proverbs are the outcome of life-long experience and day-to-day observation of the society.

‘Some Significance of Oromo Folksongs: with reference to Jimma.’ By *Muktar Hassan* (1994) presents folksong as an oral literature in line with the place oral literature has in the society. The folksongs are seen in this research from the angles of culture, politics, history, pedagogy, recreation and other themes.

To add some postgraduate studies on the same topic, works by *Eshete Gemedda*, (2007) and *Taddese Jalata*, (2004), are among those that can be mentioned here. Both the dissertation and the MA thesis respectively focused on Oromo proverbs. In both of the works an attempt is made to show that proverbs reflect the wisdom of its society where personality traits are also shaped in accordance with the cultural construction of values in the community.

To point out some of the M.A. thesis on the area of proverb of other language: Birhanu M. (1986) which focuses on the analysis of Kambata proverbs. The focuses of the study were content, occasions, functions, forms and styles of Kambata proverbs. In this study, it is indicated that the people are rich in proverb and their proverbs are used to express their daily experiences of life. Furthermore, the study clearly indicates proverbial uses in depicting people’s day to day experiences.

The second M.A. thesis is by Teferi (2000) which is conducted on Awang proverb. In this study, Awang proverbs are presented as instructive and rhetorical tools in speech.

Many of the above studies have studied proverbs generally. So far, as the researcher looked for he has encountered no study that has treated the issue of age in Oromo proverbs. Neither children nor elders which are the focus of my study were treated in one of the studies. Among the studies seen by the researcher, only one study was conducted in Wolliso where the researcher is doing this research. And the study which has treated Oromo proverbs in general has analyzed ten proverbs in the analysis part of the paper. Thus, this study basically differs from those already studied on similar issues in that it focuses on age with reference to children and elders.

### **3.10 Theoretical Framework**

Dorson (1972), lists twelve approaches to the study of folklore with their detailed explanation. These approaches are functional, contextual, cross-cultural, folk-cultural, ideological, historical-reconstruction, historical-geographical, structural, mass-cultural, oral-formulaic, psychological, and hemispheric.

Among the 12 approaches or theories put by Dorson, the researcher has employed the contextual approach in collaboration with functional approach. The reason why the researcher has selected both approach is basically to see the functions of the proverbs in their contexts of use.

The contextual approach to the study of folklore emerged in the United States by young folklorists who were given doctoral training at the University of Indiana and Pennsylvania in 1960s. The focus of these folklorists is on the idea that the folklore concept applies not to a text but to an event in time in which a tradition is performed or communicated. In their opinion, the text alone which is part of the whole event does not make or tell the whole. Therefore, the researcher or folklorist has to record the

entire performance or act. Where it is difficult to record the actual performance from its natural setting, the researcher organizes folkloric simulating session proposed by Goldstein as “The Induced Natural Context” In this method a context is instigated by the collector. Goldstein, K. (1964:87-89) put the three steps in the creation of the induced natural context as follows. These are:

- Deciding on the natural context to be recreated.
- Secondly the collector finds an accomplice. Here, the accomplices are taken from the group of people who normally are participants in the natural context.
- The third step is the period after the session begins. The researcher can either observe as a participant or simply join the group where he/she may take notes on the situation.

Going through all these steps is to get what is needed from nearly natural context. And this in turn implies how much the data gathered from the natural context has a lot to do with the validity of the result obtained from the study. The figures who played a role in the beginning of contextual approaches were *Alan Dundes*, *Dan Bes-Amos*, *Kenneth Goldstein*, *Roger Abraham* and *Robert Georges*. These scholars focus on the function of folkloric forms under study in their context of use. Thus, researchers conducting their research on any of the folkloric forms with this approach look for context not only as that specific form of the folkloric text which is only an aspect of the whole (Dorson, 1972).

Dorson, who has given explanations of the twelve approaches to the study of folklore, puts at the end of his explanations that they are mutually inclusive. Taking into account what Dorson has proposed, the researcher has also used contextual study in collaboration with the functional approach. He believed that the implementation of both approaches contributes to the betterment of the research works and its findings.

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, in the contextual approach to the study of folklore, the folkloric form is seen in the context of use. From this, it can be seen that the context of use is where or when the form is giving certain function. This in turn is an implication that contextual approach and functional approach are interrelated. Moreover, the performance of a folkloric form in a given context is meant to serve some function. Thus, it follows that a folkloric form needs a context of performance without which it is meaningless and in that context of performance it serves some function.

Dorson (1972) lists the various functions of folklore citing the viewpoints' of Bronislaw Malinowski in 'Myth in Primitive Psychology' (1926) as expanded by Bascom as "Proverbs help settle legal decisions, riddles sharpen wits, myths validate conduct, and satirical songs release pent-up hostilities." It goes on listing the functions of folklore and adds the following.

- ➔ Validation of belief, conduct, and ritual particularly by the myth narratives,
- ➔ Ego reassurance of tribal myths in dreams,
- ➔ In the practice of divination.

Folkloric form(s) in serving the above function is performed in a certain context. And that situation of performance is the context of use of that folkloric form. The study of any folkloric form including proverb is better conducted in the context of use. Besides, looking for the function it serves in the situation of performance making the study complete.

What distinguishes the functional approach from the contextual approach is the fact that contextual approach views folklore not as a text alone. A folkloric text for this approach is a single aspect of the whole. The environment of performance in which that folkloric form is used is focused in addition to the text when researchers approach folkloric form from the contextual point of view. The functional approach seeks for what purpose the folkloric form serves in that specific context. The former sees the situation or context of the form and the latter sees the use or function of the form.

This research paper deals with proverbs. Here are some questions that can be raised in the contextual study of proverb which is folkloric form as Miruka puts (1994:38) quoting Peter Seitel as follows:

1. What are the rules governing who can use proverbs?
2. Upon what occasions are they used?
3. Where can they be performed?
4. What are the contributing contextual factors which make the use of proverbs or particular proverb possible or not, appropriate or not?

Looking at the above , what one can say is that the *contextual* approach to the study of proverbs or any other folkloric form makes focus on ‘who?’, ‘when?’, ‘where?’, and ‘why?’ of the usage of proverbs. The last question ‘why?’ of the proverb forces one to look into the *function* of that proverb in the context. Here, the non exclusive nature of the approaches can be seen. Hence, the analysis in the next chapter is based on these approaches.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Portrayal of Children and Elders in Wolliso Oromo

#### Proverbs

In this chapter, the data collected from the research area will be presented and analyzed. In the first part proverbs expressed in relation to children are categorized into different topics and presented with their analysis according to the context of use. In the second part of the chapter those said in relation to elders are presented with their analysis from the point of view of their contextual usage.

#### 4.1 Functions and Concepts of Proverbs among the Wolliso Oromo

Concerning the function of proverbs, almost all of the informants interviewed in this study have said similar things. The Oromo of Wolliso use proverbs in speech both to strengthen their ideas and to pass their custom, culture, knowledge, etc to the next generation. These include both the functions we have seen in the proceeding chapter (aesthetic and didactic functions). These functions are also reflected in the proverbs. The proverbs: 15“*Haak jedhan waatufan, mammaakan waahiman.*” which means “*to spit one lean to the ground and to speak one uses proverb.*”, 16“*Mammaaksi bifa dubbiiti, kormi bifa jabbiiti.*” which means “*Proverbs resemble a speech; Calves resemble a bull.*”, “*Dubbiin mammaaksa hinqabneefi ittoon soogidda hinqabne hinmiyooftu.*” which means “*A speech without proverb and food without salt do not give good taste.*” are all expressed in relation to the place proverbs have in speech.

All the above proverbs are indications of the functions of proverbs in Oromo in general and Wolliso Oromo in particular. In various speech situations, proverbs are used to give strength to the issue and also ease understanding. Where there is conflict among or between people, elders deal with the matter to settle the conflict. In the process of handling the case, to get attention and give emphasis to their speech, elders frequently use proverbs. Similarly, proverbs are used at public meetings and legal proceedings to

bring cases, explain the cases through analogy and to facilitate decision making in very condensed phrases or sentences within a short period of time. At home, proverbs serve as a medium through which parents mould their children into responsible members of their community. In other words, the society uses proverbs to advise their children by discouraging their bad habits and by praising the good ones.

Speaking what proverb is, one of my informants say that proverbs are condensed speech. Proverbs are shorter forms of speech (*Mammaaksi dachaa dubbii*). In using proverbs, one can save the time that might be taken by longer speech to explain the same idea. Moreover, proverbs add to or strengthen the issue of the speech and help towards the better understanding.

In Oromo a speech that does not include proverb is equated to a food without salt. Proverbs keep the beauty of speech. We have seen in the previous part the poetic features of proverbs and with these features proverbs add beauty to speech. This is basically why the Oromo associate a speech without proverb with food without salt. It also shows how they use proverbs frequently in their speech and the value proverbially supported speech has. Here the expression ‘proverbially supported’ is used because proverbs play the role of substantiating the idea with the truth believed to be in them.

In another proverb expressing about proverb, it is put that proverbs begin and end speech. “*Mammaaksi ka’a dubbii cufa dubbii*.” which means “*proverb begins and ends speech*.” Here, proverbs help to begin speech and make a good conclusion to speech. When a speaker begins his or her speech with a proverb, it gets more attention from the audience. In other words, this same proverb can also mean, with proverbs, one can wind up affairs that otherwise may need longer speech. In general, proverbs pave way to begin speech and also serve as a tool to summarize.

Besides the multifunction of proverbs in speech, they also serve to express, promote and recognize the beliefs and customs; care for and reinforce morality and tradition by

giving them higher value (Bascom, 1965; Finnegan, 1992; Chesaina, 1997). As the truth expressed in proverb is taken for granted, the strength of proverb in promoting cultural values from generation to generation is unquestionable.

## **4.2 Children as Reflected in the Wolliso Oromo Proverbs of South Western Shawa**

Under this subtopic of the chapter, proverbs used in relation to children are presented with analysis from the point of view of their contexts of use. The proverbs are presented under various themes. Thus, proverbs having similar or nearly similar contextual use are put under one theme or title.

Proverbs, like any other folkloric forms, reflect the realities of life. In one of the definitions of proverb, Espinosa, as put by Boswell, G. (1962) folklore is accumulated store of what people have experienced, learned and practiced across ages. Thus, in studying proverbs, the people's experiences, views, knowledge, etc concerning children is explored. The topics and the proverbs presented under the topics do not necessarily imply that the proverbs are only used in the context they are treated in this particular study. They might also have other contextual functions apart from the perspective from which they are seen here.

### **4.2.1 Proverbs Presenting Children as Inexperienced**

In the Gada grades, the first two grades are where children are categorized. These two grades are '*Dabbalee*' for children ranging from birth to age 8 and '*Foollee*' or '*Gammee xixiqqaa*' for children aged 8 to 16. When we see the duty of these children, they are not burdened with heavy responsibilities. Shepherding and going for hunting are what the children in the first and second Gada grades are expected to perform.

In a more similar manner, The Revised Family Code Proclamation of Ethiopia (2000 E.C), puts the age limit of children as from birth to 18 years of age. In these ages the

children are under full control and dependence of their parents and are not allowed to conclude marriage (Article 7 of The Revised Family Code 2000). When we consider the age limit of the proclamation, there is 2 years difference with that of the first two grades of the Gada age sets (Grades). The Gada grades put children of age ranging from birth to 8 as ‘*Dabballe*’ and from age 8 to 16 as ‘*Foollee*’ or ‘*Gaammee Xixiqqaa*’. As an attempt is made to describe the responsibilities of these children, they are not expected to shoulder tough responsibilities like the other age groups. This is basically because of the physical and mental immaturity of the children to accomplish responsibilities that others can. The age limit set by the proclamation is also with the consideration of the maturity level of the children.

In the following section proverbs depicting children as immature are presented. The analyses of the proverbs are done from the point of view of the contexts of use. How they drive their meanings is then seen from the actual social situation.

***17 Ijoolleefi sareetu ollaa walitti naqa.***

***Children and dogs cause quarrels among neighbors.***

In Oromo, it is customary that people residing nearby each other have strong relationship. They help each other during work and when there is problem. Consequently, neighborhood is given special place. In line with the place the Oromo give neighborhood, there is a proverb which say “*Ollaafi dugdaan lafaa ka’u.*” which means “*The back and neighbor help one rises up.*” Considering the context of use of this proverb tells that neighbor stands by one side during trouble. As it is indicated, a person without neighbor is like the one without his back that supports the whole body move. By the same token, neighbor has such a valuable help to other neighbor in Oromo.

Despite the importance of neighbors put above, minor incidents caused by children and dogs cause quarrels between neighbors. The behavior of the children during the period of childhood as put by developmental psychologist is troublesome. And this emanates

from the mental immaturity of the children. What is emphasized in the proverb is the fact that though children's act brings hazard to the valuable social fabric, one should not give place for what children have done. In the proverb children are presented with dogs. This is meant to show that their act, whatsoever it might be has not to be counted to cause quarrel. As one does not accuse his/her calf or dog or cat for doing what it does, the same is true to child. In other words, children are not aware of their acts.

***18 Ijoolleen dhibee hinbeektu moofaa abbaa quba keessi.***

***Children do not understand the problem of parent's; they put fingers into their father's old clothes.***

In this proverb, we also see the immaturity in the understanding of children. They are even not mature enough to know the realities of their own family. They consider their father as having money and able to do whatever he needs to. Though their father is not in good state of wealth, for search of money they always send their hand into his pocket. This is an indication that during the period of childhood, children are totally governed by their own inner needs than the realities beyond them. This again shows the extent of maturity of the child to know and understand the problem of their own parents.

***19 Waan warri waarii dubbatan, ijoolleen waaree dubbatti***

***What the parent talked in the evening, children talk in the day.***

This proverb shows the fact that children could not keep what their parents consider secret and keep undisclosed. In Oromo, family affairs are discussed during the evening before bed time. This seems because all family members are available back home after their day time duties. During the discussion, it is normal that there are issues those have not to be disclosed and kept only among the members of the family. However, due to their immaturity, provided that children are there when the matter was dealt with, will talk it to the outsider. 'Waarii' in the proverb means 'Evening' and stands for the secret nature of the issue whereas 'Waaree' which means 'Noon' represents light and shows the fact that children disclosed the secret.

**20 Ijoolleefi abbaasheetu goota.**

***For children the brave is their father alone.***

The fact that children are so much limited as they have little experience is implied in the above proverb. Due to the limitation imposed from their inexperience, the way they measure everything is in terms of their knowledge. Basically, as one gets older and older, experience of life also increases and with the increase of experience the extent one explore and knows increases too. For children, their father is the strongest and the bravest person ever existed as to the proverb. This is an implication that they know little about the external world. To some extent, the fact that they value whatever they own more than other shows their egoistic nature. To strengthen what is said farther, children as a result of their immaturity are limited in what they know and this limitation is attributed to the exposure they have had.

**21 Ijoolleef tapha; billaachaaf nafa.**

***A butterfly suffers while children enjoy it.***

Children enjoy playing with a number of things. In Oromo, there are a number of plays for children which are folkloric elements. Besides the ones which are folkloric in form and performed during the night, during the day children play with a number of things. Among the object of their playing, chasing butterfly is one. In chasing butterfly, children create fun and enjoy. Here, children do not consider or think that butterfly is suffering or has any feeling. In a social setting, the proverb is used in a context when one gains at the expense of other's misery. Though it does not directly address issue related with children, it has used the innocent nature of the children to pass the message.

**22 Moluufi ijoolleen daarii hinbeektu.**

***Baldness and children have no boundaries (limitation).***

As one can see from the above proverb, two completely different matters are brought together and given the same character. Baldness can remove the hair on a person's head without any limitation. There is no limitation to the extent the amount baldness

can go in taking the hair. Equating baldness to children in the above proverb is meant to show the unlimited interest of children. Children, as a result of their immaturity want to explore whatsoever they encounter without any limitation. As the age of the children increases, this behavior decreases and finally takes the right shapes as they mature. Psychologists give children the name ‘*little scientists*’ because of this nature of the children Hurlock, E. B (1980).

***23 Ijoolleen quufne hinjettu; beerri gabbanne hinjettu; du’i raawwanne  
hinjettu.***

***Children never say we are satiated; old women never say we are getting strong,  
death never say we have finished.***

In this proverb children’s interest in having more of the thing which mesmerized them and making that thing their own on one hand is being equated with the complaints of old women for getting weaker and death’s insatiable nature on the other hand. The behavior of children which in this proverb is presented with their insatiability represents or used to imply their curiosity in what draws their senses. To give it more focus in the proverb, it appeared with an ever complaints of old woman for not becoming strong and death’s unquenchable action of seizing people to itself. The curiosity of the child is what the psychologist put as one of the common emotional features of the child. The proverb mainly indicates the unlimited interests of the child in knowing about anything new Hurlock, E. B (1980:123).

#### **4.2.2 Proverbs Presenting Children as Immature for Responsibility**

Children in the period of childhood need the care given by their parents or other care givers. Close nursing by mother or child care giver is needed without which the children’s health and proper development is hardly possible. In their entire childhood period, as a result of physical and mental immaturity, they may not be able to take responsibilities. The proverbs collected and presented under this part are those which are expressed in relation to children’s inability to properly carry out duty. Thus, most

of the proverbs below are used as an advice not to shoulder children with what they can not get done.

***24 Namni ijoollee ergate duukaa ergaa dhaqa.***

***A person who sent a child an errand goes after the child later.***

The proverb vividly put that children can not accomplish duty. As it is said in the proverb, a person sending a child an errand will do the mission of the errand himself. This is basically because of the failure of the child to succeed in doing what he or she is expected to. As the memory of the child is not so developed to remember for long periods of time, child sent to an errand may forget what he or she is told. Consequently, he or she may join another child for playing or stay where he or she is sent without accomplishing the mission. This proverb as told by one of my informant is used in a context when an issue is not handled in a way it has as a result of lack of experience.

***25 Kan ijoolleen bukeessite irbaataaf hinga'u.***

***That which a child kneads will not suffice for supper.***

The preparation of food (cooking) is entirely the responsibility of adults, particularly women. Though children may help their part in fetching water and collecting woods, they do not take part in the major part of the work as a result of their insufficient know how. It is indicated in the proverb above that the one kneaded by child will not be enough for dinner. Though the proverb is using kneading, it is used in the context of speech to indicate children's immaturity to handle social issues in life that needs a person to have good experience. So, kneading in the proverb above refers the knowledge and experience of the children. Thus, the proverb speaks that as children are immature to handle an affair; provided that one gives them they do not accomplish or can not hit the target.

***26 Ijoolleen amma muka kuttu dubbii kutti.***

***Children neither finish affairs nor cut trees.***

In the proverb children inability to cut tree is compared with their inability to deal with matters of social affair. Basically, the task of cutting tree needs skill and strength.

And one does not expect a child of 7 or 9 to have the skill and strength to cut tree. By the same token, children are unable to deal with matters of intricate social affairs. What the children lack to deal with such issues of life is mental maturity. The proverb is used in a context when one wants to criticize the inability of a person to deal with or accomplish something due to his lack of experience. So, both in the proverb above and in the context of use, there is implication of lack of experience. The lack of experience of the children is attributed to their age. But in the social context, the proverb is used to imply inexperience.

***27 Ijoolleen nyaataaf waaman ergaa seetee diddi.***

***Children invited to food do not show up thinking that they are called for an errand.***

This proverb is used in speech when the speaker wants to forward advice for suspicious person. Children's refusal to go to an errand is an indication that they are immature. During this period they usually play with their playmates and they love to play too much. As they make fun out of the game and various plays they perform in group, they do not want to be called by parents or their elders for an errand. In the proverb, we see that children called for food refuse thinking that the call is for an errand. This implies the child's lack of interest for an errand. What lies beyond the refusal is the fact that the child is underdeveloped to shoulder responsibilities.

***28 Ijoollee warraan jaalaa gurratu walcaala.***

***Children are social to their parents, but the understanding of the parents is greater.***

Children are so close to their parents. Children need love and affection of their parents. The close relationship at home is basically from the love and affection of the parents for their children. However, whatsoever relationship there might be between children and their parents, the level of understanding of the children is not as mature as their parents. This proverb implies the fact that children are not encouraged to take part in sophisticated social structure because of their immaturity.

**29 Ijoolleen niitii fuute gaafa quuftu galchiti.**

***Married child will send back his wife when sated.***

There is age limit when it is said a person has reached the level of marriage. In Oromo, it is customary said to mention the arrival of a person for this level with the expressions ‘*intalli or ilmi abaluu fuudha yookaan eeruma ga’eera yookaan geesseetti*’ which means ‘*The son of the person has reached for marriage.*’ For male and ‘*The daughter of the person has reached for marriage.*’ These expressions are implications that there is an age limit for one to marry. When we see the age limit for one to marry according to the family code of Ethiopia, it is 18 years of age. For a person under this age, it is illegal to marry. This age limit seems to have taken into account the developmental level of the person during this age. Consequently, the above proverb discourages a marriage that take place before the age level. It speaks of the child’s immaturity or incapability to handle all affairs in marriage. It also shows the lack of endurance on the part of immature persons, in this case children to deal with or to bear up the intricacy of social life.

#### **4.2.3 Proverbs Forbidding Children Adult Friendships**

In all the proverbs in this section, close friendship between children and adults is criticized. The analyses of the proverbs are done from the point of view of the contextual use of the proverbs.

**30 Ijoolleen gaafa mukuu wajjin taphatan gaafa biraa daaraan nama qabdi.**

***Child with whom one plays on the days of loneliness rubs with ash on the person the other day.***

The proverb forbids an overt rapport with children. Due to their mental immaturity, children could not identify the do’s and don’ts of the society. As children grow up learning and knowing the realities of life, they know the norm of the community and act accordingly. It is clear from the proverb that one has to be careful of the extent to which he or she has to make rapport with children. The mind of the child is so acute to adapt what one has shown them. Thus, the manner or approach of the one during the time he or she speak or play or have any thing with children has to be full of care. To

put final remark, the proverb tells that one has to observe his or her approach to children. Here, we also see that children are undeveloped and are not in a state to understand all the details of community's norm. Hence, as to the proverb above, though it is forbidden, children may call an adult from a crowd by name. And such act is believed to come from the boundless rapport between children and adult.

***31 Namni ijoollee wajjin nyaate lammaffaa nyaata.***

***The man who eats with children eats twice.***

In the preceding proverb, we have seen that it warns one to limit the extent of his or her overt ness in dealing with children. This proverb also has similar message under the guise of children's eating habit. It speaks that the manner of eating of children is not suitable for adults to eat with. When we observe the context of use of the proverb, it tells that children are not mature enough to equally participate on various social affairs. It implies that the understanding or maturity of children is not enough to discuss or deal with the adult on matters of life. What we deduce from the context of use of the proverb is that children are not mature enough to participate in any issues in life that are meant to be carried out by adults.

***32 Abbaa gabaabaa ijoolleen hiriyyaa seeti.***

***Children think (consider) short father their companion.***

Lack of knowledge and experience on the part of the children is what the above proverb speaks. The proverb puts children as having not even the understanding to differentiate between the elder and the younger. They consider any short person as young and belong to their age group. Nevertheless, the proverb is used in the context when a person is treated in such a way that he is not given the respect that a person in his status is given in the culture of the society. On the other hand it also implies that children are limited to what appears to their eyes. They do not have the ability and knowledge to see beyond what appears to their eyes and this is basically because of their under age. The proverb has the message that there should be limitation in terms of the relationship that should exist between adults and children.

### ***33 Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu***

#### ***The daughter that the mother praises will not marry.***

The proverb plainly speaks against praises by mothers to daughter whatsoever achievements or qualities the daughter might have. It is believed that to praise children mislead them. Furthermore, it tells that parents should limit their appreciation whatever good behavior and endeavor their children reflect. It is said that undue praises for children (girls) lead them to develop misbehavior. Thus, misbehaving girls are not wanted by the society and consequently will not get married is what the proverb is all about. To further extricate the proverb, in the cultural marriage of the Oromo, before setting to marry one has to search for the best girl. In doing so he asks for her background which includes her behavior. The above proverb discourages any praise to the daughter by mother; supposing that praising her leads the girl to develop misbehavior and this will remain with her for the remaining part of her life.

### ***34 Ilmoon angafni haadha hinsodaatu***

#### ***First born child does not fear his mother.***

In shaping the behavior of children according to the norm of the community, the first responsibility is to be the family which is the small social organization into where the child is born. Parents play basic role in shaping the child in certain way. The above proverb shows the relationship between mother and child. As to the norm, children are expected by the society to respect and fear their parents. However, the above proverb puts that the first born child does not fear his mother. In Oromo, first born child is given special place (my informant- Asfaw). Due to the high affection and care by mother for first born child, the child has no feeling of fear for his mother.

### ***35 Ijoollee wajjin hintaphatin mukaan siwaraantii.***

#### ***Do not play with children because they will stab you with a piece of wood.***

The proverb speaks that one has to limit himself in dealing with children. It forbids playing with them. Here in the proverb, playing is used to represent any subject in life that one deals together with children. As they are immature, they do not have the skill

and acquaintance to handle delicate social matters. Stabbing eye with piece of wood damages the eye. By the same extent, if one let children to handle delicate social affairs, the consequence will be worst as to the proverb. The tone of the above proverb implies the immaturity of the children to understand the intricate social affairs and their inability to handle them so it forbids children's participating on social affairs with adults.

***36 Ijoolleen qiixxaa wajjin nyaatan qixxee nama seeti.***

***Children consider the person with whom they sit for meal as equal.***

In the proverb, it is said that children consider the person who ate with them as their equal. In the same manner to the previous proverbs, this proverb shows that a grown up person has not to deal or play with children. It is believed that children have to respect adults. With the idea that intimate relationship goes against the gap that has to be between children and adults, the proverb forbids any friendly relationship. It put the friendly relation as having the tendency to develop in the mind of children the sense of equality with adults. Thus, to avoid this, children are not allowed to participate in social affairs with adults. What we observe from the proverb is that it deprives children the right to express their feelings even when the issue at hand has something worth telling.

***37 Qoosaa ijoolleefi mulluu foollee duran dhiise.***

***In the olden days I used to play with children and also eat boiled beans from pot.***

The spirit of the proverb is much similar with the previous one. In this proverb we also hear the voice of an adult speaking that he or she is no more child to deal or play with children. Here, children play or playing with children is presented as something useless for the grown up person. It is natural that with the increase of age behavioral as well as physical changes appear in the course of human development. What the child does, wants and all what the child reflects in the period of childhood is equally meaningful to the child as what an adult does in the period of adulthood. Moreover, the manners in

which children are treated during the period of childhood have impact on their later behavior. If adults distance children and avoid any intimate relation with them, they may develop the sense of mistrust.

#### **4.2.4 Proverbs Proposing Punishment as a Remedy to Correct Misconduct of Children**

In the proverbs presented under this category, the necessity of punishing children is encouraged as a best tool to correct children. The punishment is done with whipping the children or giving physical pain. In the following proverb what is emphasized more is the lack of punishment on the part of the child which in turn is believed to develop the response of crying on being scolded. The point is that, children have to adapt themselves to physical punishment that is meant to correct them.

***38 Mucaan hindha'amne yoodheekkaman boo'a.***

***The child who is never whipped cries when scolded.***

According to the above proverb, children should be corrected with whipping. The tone of the proverb is that a child brought up without the necessary physical penalty on misbehaving is difficult to correct later. The importance of physical punishment is what one can easily understand from the proverb. From the context of use of the proverb, we see that it is said while focusing the role of early childhood experience in shaping behavior. Thus, the proverb is an advice that children need to learn the norm early. However, it put physical punishment as a means to incorporate that norm in the growing children's mind.

***39 Toltee hintoltu intalli akkoon guddifte.***

***The girl brought up by grandmother does not go well.***

In Oromo, it is said '*intala akkoon guddifte*' which literary means '*the daughter brought up by grandmother*' and it is used to indicate the misbehaving of children brought up by grandmother. As to my informant (Obbo Asfaw), grandmothers are said not to punish their grandsons and granddaughters whom they brought up. And this in turn is

believed to spoil the behavior of the children. The implication of the proverb is that children should be physically punished to develop the type of personality behavior the parent in particular and the society in general wants them to have.

***40 Ilmi qananii abbaa ajjeesa.***

***The son whom parents pampered kills his father.***

The proverb focuses on the value of correcting the children. To do so it presents the consequence or crises of not correcting the child. Here in the proverb, one of the literary or poetic devices is used to emphasize the need to correct or punish children early in their childhood period. To represent the devastating consequences of the uncorrected children, hyperbole is used in such a way that the action of killing his father represents the misbehaving of the unpunished or uncorrected child. The proverb is used in the speech context when the speaker wants to focus on the necessity of early appropriate handling of the child before the behavior develops into the level of causing problem to the parent. Apart from this context, the proverb also functions to support speech which mainly meant to call attention to the effect or significance of early proper treatment of a range of matters of life.

***41 Ijoollee warri qanansiisan dhadhaa udduu nadibaa jetti.***

***Children whose family pampered ask for anointing their buttock with butter.***

As to the above proverb, proper disciplining of the children during the period of childhood will make the child to learn the dos and don'ts of the society and act properly. Here, the act of pampering is boldly discouraged and said to spoil the children. The proverb has also some very important message for parents who are pampering their own child. The request by the child in the proverb is to indicate the fact that though the child can do something by himself, he will not do it but asks for the parent or somebody else. And this implies that pampering the child makes them to lag behind the expected maturity level.

#### **4.2.5 The Problem of Having Many Children and Having None as Reflected in the Proverbs**

As put by various scholars of the field (folklore), proverb which is one of the folkloric forms partake the features of folkloric elements. Proverbs, which are highly contextual, are used to support the idea of a speech. They are used to express how one feels about some event. Proverbs are said or used in all speeches to serve the functions we have seen in the review of related literature (Didactic and Aesthetic functions). In the proverbs presented below, having many and not having any children are both presented as problem.

*42 Utuu nyaadhu jedhee maaf ijoolleekoo sagal godha?*

*If God wishes that I should live happily, why did he give me nine children?*

The proverb speaks that children are gifts of God. In the same way to the proverb, my informants told me that children are gifts of God. To strengthen the idea they told that the Oromo says “*ijoolleen kennaa waaqaati.*” When literally translated it means “Children are God’s gifts.” This goes in line with the idea and supports the proverb above. When we observe the contextual usage of the proverb, it is used when the speaker complains about the problem he or she encountered due to the unbalanced number of children and the resources to support the daily life of the family. The proverbs show the situation in the third world countries where the majority of the people live in absolute poverty.

Furthermore, the proverb indicates that the community has no awareness of family planning. Taking this into account, the researcher asked whether the proverb indicates the current situation existing among the society with regard to the number of children one has to have. They answered that people are now aware of family planning and there is no such presupposition (the fact that children are gifts of God) among the community.

***43 Ijoolleefi saree warra hinqabnetu ho'isa.***

***Children and dogs are warmly welcomed by those who do not have.***

The tone of this has something in common with the previous proverb. The previous proverb is a complaint for not having the potential to fulfill the basic needs because of the number of children. But the current proverb shows that the treatments and value those who have no children give to children is different from those who have many. The implication is that those who have many children do not have the same affection for children as the others. As to what the developmental psychologists say, the period of childhood is when the children establish the basis for their later personality behavior. The way the children perceive the world begins from the way the parents treat them. Provided that the parents of the children provide them with appropriate care and have affection for their children, there is no doubt that the children will develop the sense of trust while the opposite result in the development of mistrust in children.

Erickson and Hurlock clearly put the criticality of the period of childhood in shaping the child's later personality make up. Discussing the issue, Erickson mentions how individuals learn general attitude of trust or mistrust. He says the development of the attitudes basis basically on how parents treat their children. He maintains that if parents give what the children need (food, attention, and love), they develop the attitude of trust where as the attitude of mistrust is developed provided that parents do not provide these needs (Hurlock, B. E., 1980: 51). This very basic and crucial matter is not fulfilled by those who have many children according to the above two proverbs.

***44 Kan ilma hawwetu dubartiitti bilbila naqata.***

***One who wished a son decorates a girl with a bell.***

In Oromo, it is customary that boy child is decorated with bell. But the proverb speaks that one who wishes to have a boy decorates his girl child. A simple look at the proverb will identify two different points. The first is the fact that boy child decoration of the society has an implication that boys are given more attention than girls. This

unbalanced treatment of children on the basis of sex has great psychological impact on the girl child. The other point imminent of the proverb is that it is used to tell that one has to properly handle the resources in his or her hand to achieve what he or she is dreaming for. The focus or use of the proverb is to give advice to those who carelessly handle what they have in hand (resources). However, the proverb also implies (to some extent) the manner in which parents handle their boy child is different from the way in which they handle their girl child.

***45 Tokkittii akka dhala quruphee.***

***Alone as the offspring of a duiker (antelope).***

The proverb is said in a context when parents worry and give much attention to their child. It is said that antelope gives birth to only one. In the proverb antelope is used to show how precious the child is to the parents. It is known that all parents love and care for their child (ren). However, the proverb implies that parents who have one child give more care and have more affection than those who have more. Besides, it is also said to a son or daughter about whom parents worry to keep him or her comfortable. In both contexts of usage of the proverb, one can see that children are so precious to parents.

***46 Dhalaafi qoonqootu saree nama godha.***

***For offspring and food, people have no tolerance.***

How precious child to the parent is what the proverb speaks clearly. The proverb points out that parent do whatever necessary for the wellbeing of their children. It further emphasize the point by presenting how valuable the child is to his parents with how important food is for one to live and what one does to assure his or her living. Thus, the proverb clearly put how deep the love parents have for their child. The proverb also implies that in the context of scarce resources, parents face very serious difficulty to bring up their children even at the cost of their life.

***47 Ijoolleen deegaa keenyan keessaa yaati.***

***The children of the poor come from the roof.***

In the above proverb we see that children of the poor are said to come from the roof. Two points are clearly presented in the proverb. The first is the fact that there is lack of family planning and secondly as a result of the lack of family planning the many children of the poor are poorly handled. This is reflected in the proverb in the last phrase and it says ‘*come from the roof*’ which means that the poor easily give birth to children without any further planning of how to bring them up. Thus, the proverb is a remark showing that the poor give less attention and care to their siblings.

***48 Warri ijoollee sagalii beelli fixe. Warra ijoollee hinqabne quufni fixe.***

***Those having nine children vanquished of hunger and those with none are vanquished of satiation.***

In a situation where there is shortage of resources, the unlimited number of children has an impact on the family. However, not having children is also presented as an equal problem on the other hand. These two main points are what the proverb is all about. The proverb seems to have the same spirit as the previous proverb. It is a piece of advice telling that it is healthier to have a restricted number of children. It also speaks that not having any has a similar problem.

***49 Akka ilma godhattu utuu hinbeekin maqaa baafte.***

***She has given a boy name to her would be baby.***

In one of the previous proverbs, children are considered as gifts of God. Between a boy or a girl no distinction is made. Both are said to be gifts of God. Though the proverb seems to show that mother favors to give birth to baby boy, it is used in completely different context. The proverb is used in a context of speech when the speaker wants to give advice that unlimited curiosity for something uncertain is not important. It can be seen that the proverb’s main meaning is not the fact that mothers favor to have boy. But it used this tendency of mothers to incorporate the message.

#### **4.2.6 Proverbs Showing Child- Parent Relationship**

The proverbs under this section are all in one or the other way devoted to bring vividly to the hearer the strong link between parents and their children. This connection is so special that children call for their parents whatever comfort the accompanying person might provide them. Thus, in the proverbs below this intimate relationship is reflected.

***50 Ijoolleefi barcumni abbaa jalatti tolti.***

***Children and stool look good with the owner.***

Children, from the period of infancy to the period of childhood need close attention from parents. This is both meant to take care of them and to provide them the necessary affection and love which plays major role in the development of personality make up in their later ages. The difficulty of taking care of the child during these years is better to be done by their parents. This is basically because of the special affiliation between children and parents. As it is said in the proverb, the beauty of stool is seen with the person sitting on it. By the same token the essence of child is with his parents. Stool will be worthless if there is no one to sit on. And children are also helpless and endangered in the absence of parents.

***51 Ijoollee haati duuteefi haati bishaan dhaqxe walqixxee boossi.***

***The child whose mother is dead and whose mother has gone to fetch water weeps equally.***

Children always want to enjoy in the company of their parents. As this relationship is interrupted either temporarily or permanently like in the above proverb, children react to it with weeping. So, weeping is a response or protest of departing from their parents. This proverb besides the preceding ones emphasizes how much parents are important to children. Considering the context of use of the above proverb tells that, children are immature to have the understanding of intricate matters. The proverb is said when one is not in a state to differentiate between simple issues of life. However, it also speaks the longing children have for their parents.

**52 Ilmoon hantuutaa haadha jalatti gumbii uruu barti.**

***The offspring of mouse learn how to pierce from her mother.***

The proverb has the tone that children are the likening of their parents. It paints children and their parents the same colour. With its highly metaphoric means, it puts that children acquire their behavior from their mothers on whom the lion share of the responsibilities of bringing up the child lie. Another very similar Oromo proverb says, “*Intalli haati baatee hattu, lafa buunaan hattuu taati.*” This means “*The child, who is on the back while her mother is stealing, will steal when grown up.*” Both these proverbs imply that the intimate relationship between parents and children will go to the extent of influencing the children’s later personality.

**53 Ijoolleen ormaa nyaattee balbala ilaalti.**

***The children of the outsider want to go home after eating.***

Herein also is the fact that children prefer to be with their parents whatever comfort others may provide them. Others may provide them food or make them enjoy by playing with them. However, this does not suffice to represent the affection and love they gain from their parents. This is an indication that children are highly associated to their parents more than anybody. The intimate relationship between parents and children during this critical period create an opportunity for parents to play their part in the personality make of the children. Mentioning the nature of the relationship, Hurlock puts that it is closer, warmer and emotionally tingled. She adds that this relationship has without question paramount influence on the child Hurlock, E.B. (1980:138).

**54 Ilmoon itii cabanii guddisan cabaa nama baasti.**

***The sibling one has brought up paying sacrifices will help one out of difficulty***

The proverb speaks of the fact that children are hope of the future. Though short handed, every family does whatever necessary for the wellbeing of his siblings. The family thinks and hopes that children will become great person and bring good things

to the family. This shows the great commitment of the society to bring up their children at the cost of their own life.

***55 Intalli haati baattee hattu lafa buunaan nihatti.***

***A child whose mother steals carrying her will steal when grown up.***

The proverb implies that children are ready to learn whatever parents provide them. During the period of childhood, child's mind is alert to various experiences he encounters. Thus, the proverb teaches that one has to be very careful of children during this sensitive period not to infect their mind with bad behavior. This proverb goes in line with the idea of Albert Bandura (1977) who says 'give me a child and I can make whatever I like.' Thus, parents have to be very careful not to inculcate an awful behavior in children during this early period in which they develop basic behavior which determine their late personality make up.

***56 Ijoollee wajjin ooluun ijoollummaa nama yaachisa.***

***To be with children reminds childhood.***

How precious and loving the period of childhood is what one can understand from the proverb. Childhood period is the time in human life span without worries. Worrying about life and asking about oneself begins at puberty age when the question 'Who am I or identity question' appears. It is with this supposition that the proverb presents the period of childhood as the time that anyone wants to experience again. Moreover, the proverb tells that being with children makes one happy.

### **4.3 Portrayal of Elders in Mexxa Oromo Proverbs of Wolliso**

In Oromo, elders are given a special place and respect. They are believed to know the history, culture, wisdom etc of their community and are said wise and have the skill to help solve various social problems. It is with this belief that in a context of speech when seeking for solution, the Oromo says "Jaarsa bule haagaafannu." This means "Let us ask elder." The saying is an indication that among the Oromo people, there is the

supposition that elders have got the knowledge and wisdom to resolve various problems which puzzle others. The experiences they have accumulated over long years and the knowledge they have is reliable. That is basically why members of the community seek advice from elders for various undertakings in life. During conflict or disputes between or among members of the community, elders are preferred to settle. Due to the special place elders have in the community, it is forbidden to refuse the decision made by council of elders.

When the Oromo want to explain a certain piece of thought, it is customary to begin the explanation with what elders during the olden days said. Here, this point shows how valuable the words of elders are to the community. In the same fashion, Sumner has put the following concerning this issue.

*Very interesting to listen to are old ladies who give a didactic lecture when called upon to explain way of thought or behavior. To support their point of view, they often seek aid from the proverbs; they tell you that ‘maanguddoon duri akkana jetti – the elders of the olden days – said thus and thus, quoting one of the proverbs Sumner, C, (1995:45).*

Seen from the angle of the research, the above quotation from Sumner tells two things. The first thing is the fact that elders are considered as a store of knowledge and wisdom of the community. Consequently, they are called to explain certain thing which might be odd to others. Secondly, it tells that words of elders are very valuable. Whenever one wants to use proverb in a context of speech, an introductory remark is used and this remark says “*During the olden days elders said...*” and shows the high credit given to words of elders among the community.

In this second part of the analysis, an attempt is made to analyze proverbs used in relation to elders. Like the previous analysis of proverbs said in relation to children, here also the analysis is made from the point of view of the contextual usage. For instance, the following proverb is said in a speech context when the speaker wants to focus on the elders’ insight to deal with social matters.

***57 Jaarsaafi saree waan badetti waamu.***

***Elders and dogs are wanted during trouble.***

As can be seen from the proverb both elders and dogs are presented as important during trouble. However, as one can simply understand, the trouble elders are called to resolve is different from that dogs are called for. In Oromo dogs are called when there is fallen down food or leaked milk or cheese. So, the trouble they are called to resolve is the food which become out of human use. Dogs do the job of resolving this problem by eating the leaked food. In the same proverb, the trouble elders are called could be various social problems that need their skillful approach to resolve. Thus, the proverb speaks of the reliable knowledge and know-how of elders which plays key role in resolving various social problems that arise among the community.

***58 Jaarsi du'uuf deemu sinabaarin; bishaan dabaa deemu sinfudhatin.***

***Let an elder not curse you; let the passing flood not take you.***

The comparison made in the above proverb is used to show the danger of being cursed by elder. In Oromo it is believed that elders have the power to cause hazard to a person with cursing. On the other hand, the blessing of elders is also given value and believed to bring good fortune to the blessed. In the above proverb, emphasis is given to the devastating effect of the curse of elders comparing it with the devastating power of passing by flood. Here, passing by flood with its power once takes a person will kill immediately. In the proverb, the curse of elders is given equal power with the passing by flood that distracts or erodes whatever encountered on its way. The proverb is said when a person is found not respecting elders as per the custom of the society.

***59 Jaartiifi haadhoon saree hinrafan jedhan.***

***It is said that old women and mother dog do not sleep.***

In this proverb, old lady is presented as busy as a mother dog that takes cares of her siblings. It indicates that old ladies are busy of housework. As to my informants (Obbo Teferra Ida'o and Obbo Bayera Tesso), old ladies are responsible of managing the home with regard to all what is needed for the family. Thus, the proverb shows the fact that old ladies are even busy of planning how to carry out the responsibility of managing

the family. In the morning, while the others are having enjoying their sleep, ladies wake up early to make breakfast ready. In the evening as a result of work, ladies go to bed late. The proverb generally shows how much busy are old ladies with housework.

***60 Jaarsi dhukkuba qofa hinaadu; waan garaa jirutu aachisa.***

***What worries the old man is not illness alone; but also what is in his mind.***

Customarily an oozing sound is produced by a diseased person. It is an indication that the person has got problem with his or her health. It can also be a sign or call for help. As to the proverb above, an oozing of the old man is not only attributed to illness. An old man as to the proverb oozes to release an accumulated grieves. The proverb shows that old men are able to keep worries of life with the endurance they developed over long period. However, this proverb is used in a context of speech when a person reflects his real concern under the guise of some other occasion.

***61 Jaartii dha'uun haabartuufimoo haacabduuf?***

***Is to punish an old lady to correct or to break?***

Here the proverb forbids physical penalty of grown up person. Besides, the proverb tells that the young are better corrected with physical penalty but it is not outspoken. It speaks of the importance of physical penalty during childhood period in shaping the young in the way the society accept as right. As to the proverb, physically punishing the already grown up brings no results. The proverb in one way discourages physical penalty of the grown up. On the other hand it encourages physical penalty of children. It goes inline with the proverb “Ijoolleef uleen qoricha.” which means “Stick is remedy for children.” The remedy the proverb speaks is the corrective effect brought in the child by physical penalty. On the other hand physical penalty of the grown up person is presented as hurting than correcting. Thus, it strengthens the idea that children need to be physically penalized to develop the kind of behavior the society expects them to develop in their early ages.

**62 Jaartii ilkaan hinqabne akaayiiif maraacha.**

***A toothless lady badly wants fried corn (akaayii).***

In the proverb, the physical change during old age is used. However, when we see the contextual use of the proverb, it tells that one uses it when expressing the unfit between wish and what in reality can be achieved. ‘*Akaayii*’ is a kind of hard food made from fried cereals such as barely, wheat, corn, pea, bean etc and it needs strong teeth to eat. In the context of the proverb, it represents the wish of the person or the thing used in the context of the speech in doing something. On the other hand, ‘teeth’ is used to represent the capacity or ability of doing that thing. Thus, the proverb is said or spoken to mean other thing in the guise of the physical weaknesses of old lady. However, it tells that elders are physically weak.

**63 Beekaan guduruun; wallaalaan harriin.**

***Wise is born; foolish is with gray hair.***

The proverb speaks about both children and elders. It is used in the context of speech to appreciate the cleverness of children in accomplishing something or in raising good idea. The implication of the proverb in this regard is that children are not expected to do what the elders do due to their age. It shows the limitation of children to understand the various social realities as a result of their under age. On the other hand, the same proverb is used in the context of speech to point finger at the wrong deeds of the elders. So, as to what the proverb intends to mean, the knowledge of a person does not depend on his or her age. It is used in the context of speech to appraise the skill and knowledge of children and to criticize the weaknesses of elders.

**64 Lama nansuufan jette jaartiin qullubbii hattee.**

***An old leady who stole onion said “I will never be checked again”***

This proverb is used in the context of showing ones learning from the first error. The other proverbs having the same meaning is “*Tokko dhuufuun dhiirummaafi, lama dhuufun gadhummaaf.*” This is translated as “*To err once is brevity but twice is inanity.*” The implication of the proverb is that the people has given it or use it under the guise

of speaking old lady to show that elders are and their words are given high value and used in speech situation for various purposes. And this implies that old ladies are considered among the society as experienced.

***65 Jaarsa salphataan gandarra kaata.***

***A wonderer elder is not respected.***

In Oromo society in general and among Wolliso Oromo in particular, elders are given due respect. They are consulted for their reliable knowledge. They have said to have accumulated wisdom of the ages as well as social norms and values which in turn has attributed to the respect they won from their community. As they are believed to have rich life experience, they are called to settle disputes and play vital role in various social affairs such as marriage. Due to the key role they play in the society's entire life, elders are named '*jaarsa Oromoo*' which literary means '*Oromo elder*'. This name refers to the high social status of elders in the society.

Old age is the period in human life span, when one becomes powerless. As a result elders are naturally obliged to stay at home. Among the Oromo it is customary that elders tell or teach lore to children during their old age. However some elders do not stay at home and frequent wondering. Thus the above proverb refers to such elders. In the social context, the proverb is used to criticize such elders for their inappropriate act. It attempts to show that wondering from home to home is wrong.

***66 Jaartii rakkinni rifeensa irraa fixe ormi misirroo se'a.***

***An old lady whose hair has vanished from difficulty of life appears to others as bridegroom.***

According to the cultural marriage of Oromo, a girl who is to marry shaves part of her hair from the center. Consequently, the shaving of hair is an implication of preparation or getting ready for marriage. However, the situation of the old lady in the proverb is different. Here, the hair was not shaved but vanished as a result of the harsh life she lives. In the social context, the proverb is quoted or used to suggest that the real situation of life of the speaker

or the person using the proverb is contrary to what is physically observed. It is used to indicate the difficulty the speaker is facing but what others could not notice.

***67 Kan eegan jaarsa, kan du'u dargaggeessa.***

***The old is expected but the young died.***

The proverb can be considered as an example of proverbs metaphorically referring to social realities. Hence, in the above proverb, the people's knowledge and experience about old is used to represent the expectation or what people usually expect to happen in socially known situation while the young refers to what the people do not expect or have experienced but happened. The proverb consequently is used in speech context to criticize a certain state if it is not to the expectation. Such speech situation can be when a young person is happen to know about the culture of the society than his or her elder or when a young happen to possess skill and knowledge to perform than his or her elder. On the other hand, the proverb is also used to appreciate the knowledge and skill of the young.

***68 "Loon jechuun jibicha, nama jechuun qalbiidha." jette jaartiin.***

***The old lady said, "As calf is to cow, thought is to human."***

The above proverb is presented in the guise of speaking old lady. Though it has nothing to imply directly about the lady it refers to, the society's or the proverb owners' view on elders. One can tell what kind of cow a growing up calf can be. By the same token, the quality of a man is judged by the kind of thought or idea he or she has. The proverb is used to refer to the character or behavior of a person either to criticize or reward depending on the speech context.

***69 Jaarsi lubbuun gadi qalbiin oli.***

***Though old man is on the verge of death, his thought is valuable.***

Elders are part of the community who are in their last part of their life span. Here, in the above proverb, elder's physically weakness is presented in such a way that it does not limit them to contribute good things to his community. Elders play role in the community with constructive comments and suggestion they provide the young. In Oromo community, the

fact that elders are consulted for their valuable advice basically is because of the belief that elders' idea is supposed right. In the other social context, the proverb also indicates the old men's eager to do or think what their age has limited them to.

**70 “Osoo akka baay’inaatii titiisatu aannan buqqifata.” jette jaartiin.**

**”Had it been for number, flies could have opened the milk container,” said old lady.**

The above proverb said in the guise of speaking old lady, tells elder's insight. The proverb is used in social context to make an emphasis on the importance of power and courage to realize dream. The proverb is also used by speaker to encourage other to organize the resources in hand to make the best out of it. It speaks that number or quantity by itself does not make what one want unless planed and organized in such a way to hit the target.

**71 Booda dulluma jette jaartiin takka ragaddee.**

**Dancing for a while, “Later it will be old age.” said the old lady.**

As a result of physical weaknesses, the old can not participate in dancing. The cultural dance of Wolliso Oromo like the dance in other parts of Oromia needs physical flexibility, strength, and elasticity. To properly dance one has to be able to move his body in various direction and strong enough. Thus, it is familiar to see the young dancing during various popular ceremonies. However, in the above proverb, the old lady is dancing and also saying that she is young to dance and old age is yet to come. She is doing against the cultural limitations imposed on the old. In doing so she is opposing the views of the people about her age.

**72 Jaarsi dulloome sinabaarin, ijoolleen guddattu sinjibbin.**

**Let the old not curse you; let children not hate you.**

The proverb tells that the society gives a special attention to children and elders. The curse of elders is believed to cause danger on the person. This is because elders are said to posses the power to do so. By the same token, children are also given similar status. In the social setting, the proverb is used to advice any member of the community to take care of children and elders. Moreover, it shows how the society value elders and children.

In the various sub-divisions of this chapter, the proverbs collected are presented with analysis from the point of view of contextual and functional approaches. In the first part,

proverbs expressing children are presented and in the second part those collected on elders are seen. Thus, the next brief chapter will be devoted to the conclusions to be made.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Conclusions

In this concluding chapter of the paper, an attempt is made to give concluding remarks on the basis of the data collected and the results of the analysis made from the point of view of their functions in the context of uses of the proverbs.

Proverbs like any other folkloric forms are rich ground to study and know about any society. Especially, where there is no written literature, for the better understanding of the society's history, philosophy, views, culture, etc, oral literature provides paramount contribution. Taking this into account, the researcher implemented contextual and functional approaches to examine the proverbs collected and see how they portray children and elders. From the analysis made, the following results were obtained. Thus, the following concluding remarks are based on the analysis of the proverbs in the previous chapter.

In Mxxa Oromo proverbs of Wolliso, children are presented as physically and mentally immature and care members of the society. They were considered among the society as unable to carry out responsibilities. In the proverbs children are portrayed as individuals unable to carry out responsibilities. Their incapability is put as an advice or warning others not to shoulder children with errands that they can not shoulder.

Besides their immaturity, they are also portrayed as inexperienced. The proverbs that present children as inexperienced all speak that children have no life experiences. Due to lack of experience and knowledge, children are not expected to take part in complicated social affairs. Like their immaturity, their lack of experience refrain children from taking part in community dealings. In almost all of the proverbs presenting children as immature for responsibilities. The inability of the children to accomplish duty due to their physical and mental immaturity is given emphasis.

In some of the proverbs, physical punishment of children is presented as a remedy to inculcate good conduct and correct children from their misconduct. The proverbs put that children have to be physically penalized to appropriately brought up. Penalty is compared to drug and believed to cure children from their misbehavior in the same way drug cure a person from disease. Moreover, intimate relationship of elders with children is also discouraged. Though children are presented as precious part of the society in many of the proverbs, making them intimate friends is said to result in inappropriate manner of the children in other proverbs. As a result, some proverbs are used as an advice for adults to limit the extent of their rapport with children.

The proverbs also touch upon issues related with having many children and not having any. The necessity of limiting the number of children one has to have in accordance to the family's capacity to afford for the children is seen in the proverbs. On the other hand, how valuable are children is reflected in the proverbs presenting children as precious to people having no children. A special link mad by the strong affection of parents for their children and deep love of children for their parents is also among the issues raised by some of the proverbs collected. These proverbs speak that children wants to be with their parents. Whatever comfort others may provide them, children prefer to be with their parents. And this show the role parents play in the making of the personality make of their children during this critical period.

Among the Oromo of Wolliso, elders are given a special place. The community respects them and believes that elders are knowledgeable and wise. Due to this, during social problems such as conflicts and disputes, elders are called to settle using their knowledge and wisdom. They are also feared that their curse have the capacity to put one to hazard. In the same way, the community believes that, to be blessed by elders brings lucks to ones life. The dependable accumulated experience, the belief that they possess extraordinary power, and all others contributed toward the special place elders are given among the society.

The proverbs collected on elders indicate that elders have good insights about things. They imply the profound knowledge of elders on how to handle affairs in life. Elders are depicted in the proverbs as part of the community that have got unsurpassed lesson from life. Their cautious and insightful nature in their words and actions are more emphasized in the proverbs. Their vital role in the keeping and transformation of the cultural values of the society is pragmatic from the tones of the proverbs.

As has been observed during the collection of data, informants spoke that there is big differences in the use of proverbs between their generation and the current generation. Speaking on the reason contributing toward the gap, they added that these days children go to school and have no time to learn the proverbs from their parents and grandparents. As a result, nowadays the young hardly use proverbs in their speech. The elders put that during the days when they were young; they learned a number of folkloric forms in the form of question and answer, play, conversation, etc from parents. Here, change in the social life of the society and the coming of school are said among the reason contributing toward the change in the use of proverbs.

## **Appendix A**

### **Interview Questions**

Dear interviewee, this interviewee is meant to provide valuable information for the research I am conducting. Thus, the information you provide helps me to successfully conduct the research. So, I ask your goodwill to co-operate.

1. What is proverb?
2. Why do people use proverbs in their speech?
3. When do people use proverbs?
4. Who uses proverbs?
5. How do the people consider children?
6. What are the proverbs the people use in relation to children?
7. When and for what purpose do the people use them?
8. What effect do these proverbs have on children?
9. How does the society see elders?
10. What are the proverbs used in relation to elders among the society?
11. When and why do the people use these proverbs?
12. What effect do these proverbs have on elders?
13. What do you know about the Wolliso Oromo, their socio-cultural background (economy, culture, history etc)?

Thank you for your genuine cooperation

## **Afgaaffii ( Interview -Afaan Oromo version)**

Kabajamoo hirmaattota afgaaffii kanaa, kaayyoon afgaaffichaa qo'annoon geggeessaa jiruuf odeeffannoo walitti qabuuf. Kanaaf, odeeffannoo isin anaaf kennitan fiixaan ba'iinsa qo'annichaaf heduu gumaacha. Egan kana yaadaan qabuun odeeffannoo sirrii kennuun akka nagargartan gamanumaan kabajaan isin gaafadha.

1. Mammaaksi maal?
2. Namoonni mammaaksa maaliif dubbii keessatti fayyadamu?
3. Namoonni yeroo akkamii mammaaksa fayyadamu?
4. Mammaaksa qaama hawaasaa isa kamtu fayyadama?
5. Hawaasni daa'immaniif ilaalcha akkamii qaba?
6. Daa'immaniin walqabatee mammaaksonni mammaakaman maalfaati?
7. Hawaasni mammaaksota kanneen yoomiifi maaliif fayyadama?
8. Daa'imman irratti dhiibbaa akkamii qabu mammaaksonni kanneen?
9. Hawaasni maanguddootaf ilaalcha akkamii qaba?
10. Mammaaksonni maanguddootaan walqabatee mammaakaman kamfaati?
11. Mammaaksonni kanneen yoomiifi maaliif fayyadamu?
12. Mammaaksonni kunneen maanguddoota irratti dhiibbaa akkamii qabu?
13. Dugduuba aad-hawaasaa (dinagdee, aadaa, seenaa kkf) Oromoo Wolisoo ilaalchisee waan beektu yoojiraate ibsi.

Hirmaannaa keessaniif galatoomaa.

## **Guiding Points for the Group Discussion.**

Dear participants, I am researching on the topic “Children and elders in Wolliso Oromo proverbs”. For the study to be complete, your cooperation in giving reliable information during the discussion has a due value. Hence, you are kindly requested to give real information without hesitation.

1. What is proverb?
2. When do you use proverb?
3. Who use proverb?
4. How do you accept the message in proverbs?
5. How are children depicted in your proverbs? Please, point out proverbs you know to support your arguments.
6. Are the proverbs used in relation to children balance to commenting, criticizing and other negative implications or to rewarding, appraising and other positive implications?
7. What roles do children have in the community?
8. How are elders depicted in your proverbs? Please, point out proverbs you know to support your arguments.
9. Are the proverbs used in relation to elders balance to commenting, criticizing and other negative implications or to rewarding, appraising and other positive implications?
10. What roles do elders have among the community?

## **Xuqaalee Marii ( Points of Discussion – Afan Oromo version)**

Kabajamtoota hirmaattota marii kanaa, dursee nagaan isin gaafadha. Ani qo’annoo dhimma ”Daa’immaniifi maanguddoota mammaaksa Oromoo walisoo keessatti” jedhurrattan gaggeessaa jira. Hirmaannaan keessan milkaa’ina qo’annichaaf baay’ee murteessaadha. Kanaaf, xuqaalee ka’an hunda irratti qusannaa tokko malee akka hirmaattan isin gaafadha.

1. Mammaaksi maali?
2. Mammaaksa yeroo kam fayyadamtu?
3. Mammaaksa eenyutu fayyadama?
4. Ergaa mammaaksaa akkamiin ilaaltu?
5. Daa’imman mammaaksa keessatti akkamiin ka’amanii jiru? Yaadakeessan mammaaksa beektan xuquun ibsaa.
6. Mammaaksonni daa’imman waliin ka’an kan qeeqan, tuffataniifi kkf moo kan hamilee kennan, jajaniifi kkf nitti caalu?
7. Hawaasa keessatti daa’imman ga’ee maalii qabu?
8. Maanguddoonni mammaaksa keessatti akkamiin ka’amanii jiru? Yaadakeessan mammaaksa beektan xuquun ibsaa.
9. Mammaaksonni maanguddoota waliin ka’an kan qeeqan, tuffataniifi kkf moo kan hamilee kennan, jajaniifi kkf nitti caalu?
10. Hawaasa keessatti maanguddoonni ga’ee maalii qabu?

## Appendix B

### *D) Proverbs Collected on Children*

*Note: The number given to proverbs here and in the body of the paper may vary.*

#### *1) Proverbs used in chapter one and three*

- 1) Ijoollee wajjin hin taphatin mukaam siwaraantii  
Do not play with children because they will stab you with a piece of wood
- 2) Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu.  
The daughter that the mother praises will not marry
- 3) Dubbiin mammaaksa hinqabneef ittoon soogidda hinqabne hinminyaa'u.  
A speech without proverb and food without salt do not give good test
- 4) *If a man intends to go far, he makes provisions*
- 5) *Regardless of the size of the snake, one does not tread on it.*
- 6) Kan dubbattee hinkunne akka abbaashee, kan hodhitee hinkunne akka haadhashee  
Like her father she speaks endlessly and like her mother she knits endlessly.
- 7) Muka jigetti qottootu baay'ata.  
To a fallen tree, axes are many.
- 8) Namaaf duuti inxinnaate" jette wangoon.  
"Death does not suffice for man", said the fox.
- 9) Obsaan aannan goromsaa dhuga.  
A tolerant drinks the milk of calf.
- 10) Gowwaan bishaan bira taa'ee dheebota.  
The fool thirsts sitting by the side of river
- 11) Waa baachuun waa nyaachuuf.  
To carry something is to have something.
- 12) Haak jedhan waatufan, mammaakan waahiman.  
To lean to the ground is to spit, saying proverb is to speak.

13) Mammaaksi bifa dubbiiti, kormi bifa jabbiiti.

Proverbs resemble a speech, Calves resemble a bull.

14) Mammaaksi ka'a dubbiifi cufa dubbiiti

Proverb begins and ends speech.

## **2) Proverbs showing the inexperience of children**

15) Ijoolleen amma muka kuttu dubbii kutti.

Children neither finish affairs nor cut trees.

16) Ijoolleefi sareetu olla walitti naqa.

Children and dogs cause quarrels among neighbors.

17) Ollaafi dugdaan lafaa ka'u.

The back and neighbor help one rises up.

18) Ijoolleen dhibee hinbeektu moofaa abbaa quba keessi

Children do not understand the problem of parent's; they put fingers into their father's old clothes.

19) Waan warri waarii dubbatan, ijoolleen waaree dubbatti

What the parent talked in the evening, children talk in the day

20) Ijoolleefi abbaasheetu goota.

For children the brave is their father alone.

21) Ijoolleef tapha billaachaaf nafa.

A butterfly suffers while children enjoy it.

22) Moluufi ijoolleen daarii hinbeektu.

Baldness and children have no boundaries (limitation).

- 23) Ijoolleen quufne hinjettu; beerri gabbanne hinjettu; du'i raawwanne hinjettu.  
Children never say we are satiated; old women never say we are getting strong,  
death never say we have finished.

**3) Proverbs Presenting Children as Immature for Responsibility**

- 24) Namni ijoollee ergate duukaa ergaa dhaqa.  
A person who sent a child an errand goes after the child later.
- 25) Kan ijoolleen bukeessite irbaataaf hinga'u.  
That which a child kneads will not suffice for supper.
- 26) Ijoolleen amma muka kuttu dubbii kutti.  
Children neither finish affairs nor cut trees.
- 27) Ijoolleen nyaataaf waaman ergaa seetee diddi.  
Children invited to food do not show up thinking that they are called for an errand.
- 28) Ijoollee warraan jaalaa gurraatu walcaala.  
Children are social to their parents, but the understanding of the parents is greater.
- 29) Ijoolleen niitii fuute gaafa quuftu galchiti.  
Married child will send back his wife when sated.

**4) Proverbs Forbidding Children Adult Close (Friendly) Relationships**

- 30) Ijoolleen gaafa mukuu wajjin taphatan gaafa biraa daaraan nama qabdi.  
Child with whom one plays on the days of loneliness rubs with ash on the person  
the other day.

- 31) Namni ijoollee wajjin nyaate lammaffaa nyaata.  
The man who eats with children eats twice.
- 32) Abbaa gabaabaa ijoolleen hiriyyaa seeti.  
Children think (consider) short father their companion.
- 33) Intalli haati jajju hin eerumtu  
The daughter that the mother praises will not marry.
- 34) Ilmoon angafni haadha hinsodaatu  
First born child does not fear his mother.
- 35) Ijoollee wajjin hintaphatin mukaan siwaraantii.  
Do not play with children because they will stab you with a piece of wood.
- 36) Ijoolleen qiixxaa wajjin nyaatan qixxee nama seeti.  
Children consider the person with whom they sit for meal as equal.
- 38) Qoosaa ijoolleefi mulluu foollee duran dhiise.  
In the olden days I used to play with children and also eat boiled beans from pot.

#### **5) Proverbs Proposing Punishment as a Remedy to Correct Misbehavior of Children**

- 39) Mucaan hindha'amne yoodheekkaman boo'a.  
The child who is never whipped cries when scolded.
- 40) Toltee hintoltu intalli akkoon guddifte.  
The girl brought up by grandmother does not go well.
- 41) Ilmi qananii abbaa ajjeesa.  
The son whom parents pampered kills his father.

42) Ijoollee warri qanansiisan dhadhaa udduu nadibaa jetti.

Children whose family pampered ask for anointing their buttock with butter.

**6) Proverbs presenting Having Many Children and Having None as Problem**

43) Utuu nyaadhu jedhee maaf ijoolleekoo sagal godha?

If God wishes that I should live happily, why did he give me nine children?

44) Ijoolleefi saree warra hinqabnetu ho'isa.

Children and dogs are warmly welcomed by those who do not have.

45) Kan ilma hawwetu dubartiitti bilbila naqata.

One who wished a son decorates a girl with a bell.

46) Tokkittii akka dhala quruphee

Alone as the offspring of a duiker (antelope).

47) Dhalaafi qoonqootu saree nama godha.

For offspring and food man has no tolerance.

48) Ijoolleen deegge keenyan keessaa yaati.

The children of the poor come from the roof.

49) Warra ijoollee sagalii beelli fixe warra ijoollee hinqabne quufni fixe.

Those having nine children vanquished of hunger and those with none are vanquished of satiation.

50) Akka ilma godhattu utuu hinbeekin maqaa baafte.

She has given a boy name to her would be baby.

## **7) Proverbs Showing the Strong Child- Parent Relationship.**

51) Ijoolleefi barcumni abbaa jalatti tolti.

Children and stool look good with the owner.

52) Ijoollee haati duuteefi haati bishaan dhaqxe walqixxee boossi.

The child whose mother is dead and whose mother has gone to fetch water weeps equally.

53) Ilmoon hantuutaa haadha jalatti gumbii uruu barti.

The offspring of mouse learn how to pierce from her mother.

54) Ijoolleen ormaa nyaattee balbala ilaalti.

The children of the outsider look for the door after eating.

55) Ilmoon itii cabanii guddisan cabaa nama baasti.

The sibling one has brought up under difficulty will help one out of difficulty.

56) Intalli haati baattee hattu lafa buunaan nihatti.

A child whose mother steals carrying her will also steal when grown up.

57) Ijoollee wajjin ooluun ijoollummaa nama yaachisa.

To be with children reminds childhood.

## **II) Proverbs Collected on Elders**

58) Jaarsaafi saree waan badetti waamu.

Elders and dogs are wanted during trouble.

59) Jaarsi du'uuf deemu sinabaarin; bishaan dabaa deemu sinfudhatin.

Let an elder not curse you; let the passing flood not take you.

- 60) Jaartiifi haadhoon saree hinrafan jedhan.  
It is said that old women and mother dog do not sleep.
- 61) Jaarsi dhukkuba qofa hinaadu; waan garaa jirutu aadchisa.  
What worries the old is not illness alone; but also what is in his mind.
- 62) Jaartii dha'uun haabartuufimoo haacabduufi?  
Is to punish an old lady to correct or to break?
- 63) Jaartii ilkaan hinqabne akaayiiif maraacha.  
A toothless lady badly wants fried corn (akaayii)
- 64) Beekaan guduruun; wallaalaan harriin.  
Wise is born; foolish is with gray hair.
- 65) Lama nansuufan jette jaartiin qullubbii hattee.  
An old lady who stole onion said” I will not be smelled twice”
- 66) Jaarsa salphataan gandarra kaata.  
A wonderer elder is not respected.
- 67) Jaartii rakkinni rifeensa irraa fixe ormi misirroo se'a.  
An old lady whose hair has vanished from difficulty of life appears to others as bridegroom.
- 68) Kan eegan jaarsa, kan du'u dargaggeessa.  
The old is expected but the young died.
- 69) “Loon jechuun jibicha, nama jechuun qalbiidha.” jette jaartiin.

The old lady said, “As calf is to cow, thought is to human.”

70) Jaarsi lubbuun gadi qalbiin oli.

Though old man is on the verge of death, his thought is valuable.

71) “Osoo akka baay’inaatii titiisatu aannan buqqifata.” jette jaartiin.

“Had it been for number, flies could have opened the milk container,” said old lady.

72) Booda dulluma jette jaartiin takka ragaddee.

Dancing for a while, later it will be old age said the old lady.

73) Jaarsi dulloome sinabaarin, ijoolleen guddattu sinjibbin.

Let the old not curse you; let children not hate you.

74) Waajirti jedhee jaarsi utuu hin dubbatin du’e.

“There is something” said the old man and died without disclosing.

75) Lama nansuufan jette jaartiin qullubbii hattee.

An old lady who stole onion said “I will never be checked again”

## Appendix C

### *Some Pictures Captured During Data Collection*



Picture 1: **Obbo Tuujoo Irgee** on interview



Picture 2: **Obbo Asfawu Gonfaa** giving explanation to the interview questions



Picture 3: **Obbo Tafarraa Ida'oo** on interview



Picture 4: **Obbo Bayyeeraa Teessoo** on interview



Picture 5: **Obbo Dirribi Dinsa** on interview



Picture 6: **Obbo Bulii Kumsaa** after interview



**Picture 7: Obbo Eliyaas Teferraa, Head of SWSHCTB giving information on how to get informants.**