

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDY  
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE**

**ROLE OF PROVERBS AS A MEANS OF CONSTRUCTING  
AND PERPETUATING GENDER INEQUALITY IN WEST SHOA  
OROMO CULTURE: THE CASE OF TUKUR ENCHINE**

**By  
HAILU SHELEME CHEMEDA**

**JUNE 2010**

ROLE OF PROVERBS AS A MEANS OF CONSTRUCTING  
AND PERPETUATING GENDER INEQUALITY IN WEST SHOA  
OROMO CULTURE: THE CASE OF TUKUR ENCHINE

By

HAILU SHELEME CHEMEDA

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN  
LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE  
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN LITERATURE

JUNE 2010

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDY  
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

Role of Proverbs as a Means of Constructing  
And Perpetuating Gender Inequality in West Shoa Oromo Culture:  
The Case of Tukur Enchine

By  
Hailu Sheleme Chemedda

APPROVED BY EXAMINING BOARD

NAME

SIGNATURE

ADVISOR: PROFESSOR DR. A SUBBA RAO

\_\_\_\_\_

EXAMINER: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to my advisor Professor Dr.A Subba Rao for his constructive and unreserved comments, suggestions and encouragement from the beginning to the end of the research work. His valuable advice and logical comments helped me a great deal to reshape the paper in its present form.

I would like to extend my special thanks to Addis Ababa University, Institute of Language Study, and Department of Foreign Languages and Literature for giving me this chance to carry out my research as I intended to do it.

A debt of gratitude is due to my colleague Abiot Desta for his all round comment and assistance, and Hailu Fufa and Qulqullu Ijo for their help on data collection procedure and useful insights on collection and suggestion of proverbs from TEOC.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my beloved wife, daughter, and sister for their immeasurable help during the research procedure.

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the way proverbs construct and perpetuate inequality between men and women in social community and the basic structures that convey non neutrality in oral literature. To achieve this goal Proverbs as a means of constructing and perpetuating gender inequality was conducted in west shoa Oromo culture-the case of 'Tukur Enchine' is the research topic focusing on issues like gender treatment in oral literature, particularly proverbs in cultural structures that assist to construct gender biases, roles of proverbs in gender social construction, awareness of local elders and elites on the problem, challenges by women against sexist proverbs and responses that were by females were examined .The project was designed to obtain necessary information for the problem by using qualitative and quantitative research method simultaneously when and where required.The issues are analyzed with relevant examples from local proverbs which were collected through research tools: questionnaires, focus group discussion ,and in-depth interview with elders ,students and workers whom the problem directly or indirectly affects. The research problem came out with the finding that: proverbs exaggerate the weak side of women under the coverage of cultural ideology, and are used as cultural tools to convey the biased system for domination and oppression of women .In addition to this the problems are more of invisible in which they are highly related with human social life cycle and structures. Proverbs should be certified while using on any occasion by the elders because they are adoptable depending on their conservative range they display. Mind set and social set of new comers (generation) should be changed and proverbs can function as a means for such a revolutionary change which restores the honor and respect of women in our society.

## Table of contents

	pages
Acknowledgement.....	I
Abstract.....	II
Table of contents.....	III
List of Tables and Graphs.....	IV
Glossary of local terms.....	VII
Acronyms.....	VIII
Pronunciation of some ‘Afaan Oromo’	
Vowels and consonants.....	VIII
CHAPTER ONE	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Objective of the Study .....	5
1.4 Significance of the Study .....	5
1.5 Scope of the Study .....	6
1.6 Historical background of the Oromo .....	6
1.6.1 The People .....	6
1.6.2 The two major Oromo subgroups .....	7
1.6.3 Demography.....	9
1.6.4 The Language .....	9
1.6.5 Religion .....	10
1.7 Methodologies and Procedure .....	11
1.7.1 Introduction .....	11
1.7.2 Sampling studied .....	11
1.7.3 Sampling Techniques.....	12
1.7.4 Design of the study .....	13
1.7.5 Limitation of the study .....	13
1.7.6 Data Collecting Procedure .....	14
1.7.7 Focus group discussion.....	14
1.7.8 Interview .....	16
1.7.9 Questionnaire .....	16

## **CHAPTER TWO**

2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	17
2.1 Characteristics and function of Oral literature .....	17
2.1.1 Image of Women in Oral Literature .....	20
2.2 Proverbs .....	22
2.2.1 Characteristics of Proverbs .....	24
2.2.2 Function of Proverbs .....	26
2.2.3 The Oromo Proverbs .....	28
2.2.4 Time and Place of use of proverbs.....	30
2.2.5 Who Uses Proverbs .....	31
2.2.6 Image of Women in Proverbs .....	32
2.2.7 Women in Oromo Proverbs.....	34

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3 THEORTICAL FRAME WORK**

3.1 Gender .....	37
3.1.1 Gender inequality .....	40
3.1.2 Gender Stereotypes .....	41
3.1.3 Gender roles.....	41
3.1.4 Gender identity .....	42
3.2 Feminism .....	42
3.2.1 Radical feminism .....	43
3.2.2 Liberal feminism .....	43
3.2.3 Marxist feminism .....	43
3.2.4 Social feminism .....	44

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4 DATA ANALYSIS**

4.1 How proverbs treat the gender issues in Tukur Enchine Oromo Community.....	46
4.2 Cultural Structures that Help to construct gender Inequality via proverbs.....	53
4.3 Roles of proverbs in gender social construction .....	64

4.4 Awareness of people on inequality construction through proverbs .....	68
4.5 Responses of women on sexist proverbs .....	69

**CHAPTER FIVE**

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions .....	71
5.2 Recommendations.....	73

Bibliography

Appendix 1 Questionnaires

Appendix 2 women's percentage results of Questionnaires

Appendix 3 Men's percentage results of Questionnaires

Appendix 4 Interview Questionnaires

Appendix 5 Proverbs collected as source of data from Tukur Enchine

Appendix 6 List of Informants



## **List of Tables and Graphs**

Table 1: The two major Oromo subgroups .....	8
Table 2: Sex and gender sub-class .....	38
Table 3: A summary of feminist theories.....	45
Table 4: Responses for question No.4.2 from women and men.....	47
Table: 5 Responses for question No.2.3 from both sexes.....	52
Table 6: Responses for question No. 8.1 from both sexes.....	60
Table 7: Responses for question No. 5.1 from both sexes.....	68
Table 8: Responses for question No.12.3 from both sexes.....	69
Graph 1: Responses for question No. 7.1 from both sexes.....	49
Graph 2: Responses for question No. 11.4 from both sexes.....	54
Graph 3: Responses for question No. 10.1 from both sexes.....	59
Graph 4: Responses for question No. 3.4.1 from both sexes.....	67

## **Glossary of local terms**

'*Afaan Oromo*' is the Language of Oromo People.

'*Dinka*' is section of room where Women in Oromo Culture reserve dishes and articles used to eat in and from it.

'*Gadaa*' "one highly developed self-sufficient system that has influenced every aspects of Oromo life.

'*Gumaa*' is indemnity paid for killed person's parents or relative.

'*Intala*' *Afaan Oromo* word which means a girl.

'*Kebele*' is the smallest Political Administrative unit.

'*Mammaksaa*' is a term used to represent Proverb or saying in Oromia.

'*Qiraci*' is small broken part of clay used for cat to feed in it.

'*Shiro*' is the flour of bean and pea.

'*Waaqa*' is the name of 'God' in the traditional Oromo religion.

'*Woreda*' district which is larger Political Administrative unit than 'Kebele'.

'*Waaqeffata*' worships of the Oromo People's 'Waaqa'.

'*Zone*' is large Political Administrative.

## Acronyms

BBC British Broad Cast

EPRDF Ethiopian people Revolutionary Democratic Front

TEOC Tukur Enchine Oromo community

TVET Technical Vocation and Education Training.

## Pronunciation of some 'Afaan Oromo' vowels and consonants

a...as in about

aa...as in abar

e...as in ed

ee...as in eake

i...as in it

ii...as in ieeep

u...as in ut

uu...as in uoon

o...as in onkey

oo...as in og

g...as in gt

j...as in july

k...as in keeep

ch...as in church

sh...as in sheeep

q...as in qeeep

Notice:

1 Single vowel in 'Afaan Oromo' represents short vowel in English language

Eg. 'dide'

2 Double vowels in 'Afaan Oromo' represents long vowel in English Language.

Eg. 'daakuu'

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND of THE STUDY

In many countries, women are depicted as dependent and easily cheated human kind through oral literature. Even one of the socio-cultural instruments of patriarchy in modern times is oral literature, proverbs. There are practices of marriage arrangement in rural areas without the knowledge of girls, and also polygamies which are legitimized in the social institutions by elders and religious leaders. To control women's protest on both issues, they use oral literature like proverbs, to convince the women who try to defend their rights. The girls by themselves are afraid to be out of the control of the religious leaders. Most of the times particularly in rural society father and mother of a girl become submissive to the leaders. Nevertheless they try to show their dissent on some issues, especially marriage alliance, but the elders and the community leaders enumerate proverbs to psychologically weaken, and dominate them. They try to show that the ideology come from generation to generation through oral literature. Thus, the ideology which they provide, carries gender inequality messages (Husseini, 2005). For instance from West Shoa Oromo proverbs, '*Beekkumsi dubartii balbala gadi hin bayuu.*'<sup>1</sup> When it is translated into English it means, < The knowledge of women can not be out of door.> It is directly to delimit women in domestic chores.

According to Kate Millett (2005) there are evidences which attest the politically expedient character of patriarchal convictions about women. The evidences are from anthropology, religious and literary myths. For example one anthropological assumption cited in Millett as follow: "Women's biological differences set her apart.... She is essentially inferior," and because "human institutions grow from deep and [basic] anxieties and are shaped by irrational psychological mechanisms... socially organized attitudes toward women arise from basic tensions expressed by the male". This is the main problem which

the study tries to examine proverbs as the heart of the community's "way of life" within reflecting those tensions mentioned by Millet. To give another example from Ikea Oral Narrative by Bukenya (1994: 77), "... a long time ago, women were the rulers in Kikuyu land. They ruled with an iron hand..." And as a result, "men conspired to make all the women pregnant at the same time and in their position of weakness, men solidified their control and created a new world order." This is also another tension through oral narrative from the West shoa Oromo community.

The other example from George and Michael is (1995:85) "proverbs are an important source for popular attitudes, prejudices [and] stereotypes" and gender stereotyping has the overall effect of perpetuating inequality through.... Stereotypical messages in the way they construct language.... In sayings, songs, proverbs the media, religion, customs, culture, education and so on (<http://www.portal.unesco.org>). In addition to the above mentioned examples, Jordan, Rosan and Susan Kaleck (1985:27) deduced the image of women in oral literature stating "Oral literature, [particularly proverbs] presents a picture of the world as a precarious place for women a world where women are vulnerable, fearful and often mistreated". To give an example from Oromo proverbs: 'Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu.'<sup>2</sup> which means <Women may be tall but not intelligent>

Anybody can understand from this proverb the attitude of the community which admits the physical to size but not intelligent to women. Thus, "proverbs have a tremendous potential for telling truth about inequality in gender relation about healthy living" (<http://www.portal.unesco.org>).

"As both the primitive and the civilized worlds are male worlds, the ideas which shaped culture in regard to the female were [...] of male design," Cudd, Ann and Rbin O. Andreasen (2005:49). This is also the cause why women are unable to allow the symbols, in this case proverbs, by which they are described. Against this background, this study proposes to investigate how proverbs are a means of constructing and perpetuating gender inequality.

Finnegan Ruth, in her Oral Literature in Africa (1970:390) explains, "...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." Thus, proverbs have a share in revealing the inequality between genders that is created by social means

Gender is a social construction. Social relations are varying from place to place, culture to culture, and time to time. This also reveals that culture to be historically grounded. It means that the cultural construction of gender has time and place. For example the following extract is taken from African Gender Studies and it elaborates the facts as follows:

If gender is a social construction, then we must examine the various cultural /architectural sites where it was constructed, and we must acknowledge that variously located actors (aggregates, groups, interested parties) were part of the construction. We must further acknowledge that if gender is a social construction, then there was a specific time in different cultural /architectural sites when it was "constructed" and therefore a time before which it was not (Oyewum 2005:11).

In addition place and time for gender as a social construction, this passage also reveals a truth: one cannot assume the social organization of one culture as universal or the interpretations of the experiences of one culture as explaining another one (Ibid: 11). Thus time and place are important in cultural studies. This is the reason why the present study is intended to focus on West Shoa Oromos, Tukur Enchine. It is hoped that the results of this study will represent the selected society's real value system. The result will embody and express the political, social and moral philosophies of the people, and their outlook on life.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

A number of studies have been made, local or global, concerning the image of women in oral literature or culture. In Understanding Oral Literature (Bukonya et al. 1994:91), the images that emanate from the two societies (Kalenjin and the Massain in Africa) show that women occupy a very low social status and are viewed as bearing negative character traits. There is also the same concept in Sena's (2008) study on "The Image of Women in Arsi Oromo Proverbs."

Another scholar Berhanu's (2008) study on "The portrayal of women in Folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega" has revealed similar findings. However no study has been made on West Shoa Oromos, particularly in Tukur Enchine which approve this idea. The present study will be conducted in this area to *investigate* the problem of gender inequality. To this end, the researcher formulated the following research questions:

1. How does Oral Literature (specifically in terms of proverbs) treat the gender issues?
2. What are the cultural structures that help to construct gender inequality?
3. What is the role of proverbs in 'gender' social construction?
4. How do elders perceive gender inequality construction through proverbs?
5. What are the challenges perceived by women against the use of sexist proverbs?
6. What are the psychological responses of women to natural gender difference and non-neutral gender difference in the use of proverbs?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

### **General objective**

The general objective of the study is to investigate the routes through which proverbs construct and perpetuate gender inequality with particular reference to West Shoa Zone, Tukur Enchine. In doing so, the study will look into the male dominant practices implied in proverbs.

### **Specific objectives**

More specifically, the study has the following objectives:

- 1 To identify awareness of elders, women, teachers, students and stakeholders on gender difference and sex-difference as revealed in proverbs.
- 2 To analyze the structures that stress male dominance and non-neutral gender difference.
- 3 To analyses sexist proverbs.
- 4 To display the psychological suppression of sexist proverbs.
- 5 To examine the challenges faced by women towards the use of non-neutral proverbs.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

As stated earlier, oral literature embodies and expresses people's traditional values and, it has been the most powerful medium to influence the public mind. As has been mentioned by Ruth Finnegan (1970:390), "a feeling for language comes out particularly clearly in proverbs".Therefore, to build an egalitarian society, the best way is filtration of gender inequality proverbs. This is because our culture is not ordained by nature but socially constructed; societies have the means to adopt gender- based oppression. Therefore, this study can be considered as a solution to the problems of gender bias. Proverbs are practiced in social community by elders, school community: Parent Association, Kebele leaders of women affairs, and



teachers. Practically on their weekly or monthly meetings, they discuss issues related to girls in the school. Drawing insights from law they can reshape their image of gender which is negatively embodied. The present study highlights the need for reshaping the gender image and encourages such an effort

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

Even though it is common that gender inequality issues revealed in oral literature particularly proverbs in Africa, this study is delimited to one of the Oromia zones, namely West Shoa, specifically Tukur Enchine.

The study proposes to examine and investigate the source of the problem by collecting sample sexist proverbs from high school, preparatory and university students who hail from these Woreda. Some elders selected from the surrounding kebele would also be consulted in collecting proverbs. The Woreda, Cultural and Tourist Office, had also been contacted for data on proverbs.

## **1.6 Historical Background of the Oromo**

### **1.6.1 The People**

The Oromos are the largest ethnic group who has their own traditional religion known as '*Waaqeffanna*'. They are the indigenous people in the Horn of Africa. Oromo people have their own language called '*Afaan Oromo*' which means the language of Oromo. The Oromo people are not only found in Ethiopia but also in neighboring countries like Kenya and Somalia in different numbers. The following passage is quoted from 'The Non-Semitic language of Ethiopia' just to explain the appearance of Oromo people in the present boundaries of Oromo people.

The Oromo first appeared on the Ethiopian scene in the Bale area early in the sixteenth century and had reached their present limits, in particular in western Wellegga, by the end of the eighteenth century in the course of one of the major population movements recorded in African history. Since this time the Oromo have formed a

major constituent of the Ethiopian nation, and have played an important role in the accounts of Ethiopia by explorers, missionaries' diplomats and scholars. (Gragg 1976:166

### **1.6.2 Two major subgroups**

The following Table presents the details of the two Major subgroups of the Oromo people

**Table 1: The two major Oromo subgroups**

<b>The Borana</b>		<b>The Barentuma</b>	
<b>Clan families</b>	<b>Living place</b>	<b>Clan families</b>	<b>Living place</b>
The Macha Oromo	Between Didessa and Omo River, and south in to the Gibe region	The Wallo Oromo	Northernmost group and predominantly in the Oromia zone of Amhara Region, as far north as lake Ashenge, with whom the Raya Oromo and the yeju Oromo are often grouped.
The Tulama Oromo	Oromia region around Addis Ababa	The Ittu Oromo	
The Guji Oromo	Southern part sub-groups, Neighboring the Garri and Borana Oromo.	The Karayu Oromo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oromia region from the Awash River east to a line drawn south of Dire Dawa</li> <li>- Along the Awash Valley in east Shoa as well as west Hararghe</li> </ul>
The Borana Oromo	Borena Zone, includes Moyale and they also live parts of Kenya and Somalia	The Aniya Oromo	South of the Ittu and west of the Erer River
The Gabra Oromo	North Kenya along the Moyale border region	The Afran Qalloo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- West of the city Harar and the Eree River</li> <li>- Between Ittu and Ala Oromo</li> <li>- East of Erer River</li> <li>- East of Dire Dawa and North of Harar north eastern corner of the Oromo region.</li> <li>- Arsi and Bale Zone</li> <li>- Between the Awash River and Dire Dawa</li> </ul>
		1. Ala Oromo	
		2. Oborra Oromo	
		3. Babile Oromo	
		4. Daga Oromo	
		a. Nole Oromo	
		b. Jarso Oromo	
		The Arsi Oromo	
		The Qallu	

Adopted from S.Wadron, “The Political Economy of Harari-Oromo relations (1554-1975). P.7 (Forced migration website, accessed 3 July 2009)

According to Melba (1988) the Oromo people are found in all regions of the empire except in Eritrea and Gonder. They makes up a large portion of the population of Ilubbabor ,Arsi, Bale, Shoa Hararghe, Wallo, Wallaga ,Sidamo,and Kafa. Among them the current study focuses on those who inhabit in Shoa constituted from Tullama Oromo:Liban, Kutaye and some of walisso descendents(From Elders and Abba Gada ).

### **1.6.3 Demography**

The population size of Oromo is given differently by different scholars. According to the World Report of 1991 listed in Abadir (2003), of 50.6 million of the general population, Oromo people (Gragg, 1982) account for 23.3 millions. (Aguilf, 1998:26). But, according to the Central Statistics Authority report of 2007 submitted to the parliament, Oromo population size is 34.49% of the total population of Ethiopia (<http://www.georive.com /entry/Ethiopia .asox>).

### **1.6.4 The Language**

'Afaan Oromo' is the major language of the Horn of Africa, which is spoken predominantly in Ethiopia, but also in northern and eastern Kenya and a little in southern Somalia (Brown, 2006:103). Estimated numbers of speakers vary widely from about 17300,000 (based on current Ethnologic figures) to 'approximately' 30 million (Grief now Mews, 2009:9), and there are probably about 2 million more who use it as a second language (Ibid: 103). Gragg (1976:113) and Brown 2006:103 identified three dialects of Oromo Language. They are the Central Western Group, with at least 9 million speakers, comprising the Macha, Tullama, Wollo and Raya Varieties, all spoken within Ethiopia; Eastern group, known as Harar Oromo, spoken in eastern Ethiopia; and the Southern group, including Booranaa, Guji, Arsi, and Gabra, spoken in

southern Ethiopia and adjacent parts of Kenya. Distinct from this last group are Orma, spoken along the Tana River in Kenya and apparently in southern Somalia along the Juba River, and Waata, spoken along the Kenyan coast to the south of Orma. As Gragg (1976:173) pointed out the differences between these dialects are very narrow internal-dialectal. Dialectal Communication across dialect is apparently still possible without great difficulty. It is likely to take from a few weeks (for east-west) to more than a thirty day (for north-south) of contact to become completely perfect and fluent in conversation (ibid: 173).

### **1.6.5 Religion**

“God in Oromo language means: *Waaqa*” (Martial de Salviac, 2005:144) ‘Waaqa’ is the name of God in the traditional Oromo religion. Of course, due to lack of political unity and impact of Abyssinian rulers from regime to regime, the number of ‘*Waaqeffataa*’ accounts for a small number among the four religious groups of Oromo at the moment in Oromia. According to Ethiopian Census in the 2007, the largest religious group was Islam and the next to it is Orthodox Christianity. Protestant Christianity accounts for the second from the last group in number which was ‘*waaqeffata*’ according to Gadaa Melba (1992:23). “Before the introduction of Christianity and Islam, the Oromo people practiced their own religion [One *Waaqayool*]”. According to M.de Almeida (1628-46) cited in Gada Melba, “the Oromo are neither Christians nor heathens, for they have no idols to worship,” and also “The Oromo ‘*waaqa*’ is one and the same for all men.”

## **1.7 Methodology and Procedure**

### **1.7.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides on account of the blueprints carried out both in the field work and library work. These include participants' information, sample techniques and procedures, instruments which were applied in the field work, data collection procedure and research design.

### **1.7.2 Sampling Studied**

In order to carry out the proposed study, samples were taken from both sexes and those who are able to write and read and those who are not. Elders from the 'kebeles' have warmly participated in the focus group discussion and interview. Their average age is the same for both sexes, and only eleven of them, from 'Kebele' leaders are below forty five. All the 'Kebele' leaders from all 'Kebeles' who have participated in the focus group discussion and interview were able to write and read.

The other sample included stake holders from 'Woreda' Educational Bureau, 'Woreda' Tourism office, teachers and director, and large number of students from preparatory schools. All the experts from office employees are male, but one who was graduated in Culture and language is a female. They have given responses to the questionnaires and also addressing the famous elders' dwellers. In addition to this, they have guided the researcher how it would be conducted effectively with favorable local circumstances. Their average age was thirty two, and workers from Educational Bureau were above forty concerning teachers and students, the information collected from them was used as a stepping stone for clues to conduct the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. For example, the focus group discussions which were conducted in 'Homi-Hane' 'Kebele' and Enchine 01 Kebele were addressed to preparatory and high school, 'Afaan Oromo' teachers. The orator famous elder from 'Tokkee Abuyyee' was nominated by grade eleven students. Therefore, the roles they have played in addressing the

elders were effective and firm. Besides this, both teachers and students were involved in questionnaires. The total number of teachers is twelve and of them four were from high school 'Afan Oromo' teachers and the rest were from preparatory 'Afan Oromo' school. All of them were between twenty four and twenty nine years and a young lady, a fresh graduate, was twenty two. All the students are from preparatory level and of almost equal number of sex groups and were above twenty years of age. And all have been participated as teachers in questionnaires. The major purpose that students have taken part in it is to collect proverbs and cross check them with others respondents like elders and workers. Because of their interest and awareness of the research topic are three male teacher respondents were selected from TVET College which is located adjacent to Tukur Enchine high school

### **1.7.3 Sampling Techniques**

These techniques used are purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The primary consideration of the researcher in purposive sampling was to identify subjects who cannot and can provide the best information required to achieve the objective of the study. Therefore, having collected necessary information from Oromia culture and Tourism Bureau and Oromia Women and Children Affairs, the researcher directly contacted the Director: both from Woreda Culture and Tourism Bureau and Educational Bureau and Woreda Administrative Office; The Woreda Administrative office was consulted simply to smooth the way to move in the community and to inform them but not to get data from them. The other technique which was employed by the researcher was snowball sampling. To start from few groups, making net works with the rest of population, the researcher extended sampling to the students and local elders. In this step, 'Kebele' leaders and students from the local community were also considered as networks to address the elders. Elders from the community were found to be firm and reliable.

### **1.7.4 Design of the Study**

For the purposes of obtaining a general picture of the existing practices, problems and sources through which proverbs construct and perpetuate gender inequality the researcher adapted a purposeful combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. This is because qualitative methods were necessary to collect detailed qualitative information in the form of verbatim reports from the respondents through in-depth interview and focus group discussion, which has helped to carefully search the world as it presents itself. (Nickerson, 1993). In this research the respondents were the community elders from both sexes in the following 'Kebeles': Nanno Jidu, Tokke Abuye, Tokke Lamem, Enchine, Homi Hane, Arfinjo Abuye and Hindhee Hagayii.

Because the fact that, qualitative method cannot alone claim to generalize all similar situations quantitative methods also were used. For example, to generalize about who usually utter proverbs and to determine the basic things that assist men to dominate women necessitated quantitative research methods. Therefore, the researcher has followed both quantitative and qualitative simultaneously where each was necessary.

### **1.7.5 Limitation of the study**

There was time, materials, and financial problems during the process of investigation. For this reason, it was impossible to take ample time to repeatedly contact the elders in remote areas from the district. Because of election there were training and conferences in all areas and the community members were not free to give necessary information to the question from the researcher. Sometimes there was doubt about the information they had given; even they were not volunteer to take photos and to be recorded in tape recorder. The 'kebele' leader and militia were asking for identification card and permission from concerning body again and again as much it was boring.



### **1.7.6 Instruments of Data Collection**

To apply reliability and validity instrument, the researcher has used previous knowledge of those instruments which are currently applicable in the research. Including the respondents' profile, having those necessary knowledge and skills, the researcher has applied the following three instruments: In-depth interview, Focus Group Discussion and Questionnaires.

Gender inequality is hidden in proverbs and information world outlook including attitude, gender role and elder's stereotypes cannot be easily obtained. To address and touch those "no name problems" the researchers has prepared unstructured and easily flexible interview questions. Because, these instruments could easily be used for respondents who are unable to write and read.

To get the elders attitude on gender inequality problems and the way they adopt sexist proverbs, the best method that the researcher has applied, was group discussions in all 'Kebeles' and villages. However, questionnaire was applied to all literate groups: teachers, students, workers and the director. The major purpose was to collect proverbs and cross-checking the information which was collected from other respondents. In this procedure, deliberately more time was given for the students, because, some of them wanted to consult their parents and also famous elders among their neighbors.

### **1.7.7 Focus group discussion**

Information pertaining to this research topic was drawn from the elders who are experienced one generation before the moment generation experience. According to Bukenya, (1994) this is true for oral literature, particularly proverbs. For this reason, the researcher was looking for the names of elders known for oratorical skills from both sexes. Even though their numbers were not proportionate, with fewer women elders, the activities were conducted with them as group discussion within seven

kebele's and one village town called Enchine. From the beginning the location where it would be suitable for discussion was suggested by the elders themselves. Of course the researcher has had the full information where the elders like to sit and eat using local metaphor and proverbs. But the chance was given to them and they have selected the place and the discussion was started by praying as usual for the community. The necessary equipment like tape recorder, camera and camera man were present. In addition to this, there was something portable and edible like "Tejji" and "kollo". In between the researcher displayed code of conduct to the camera-man when the condition was okay to take photos. The topics which had relevance with the issues were generated by the researcher and even at the end they had involved in it and moved on the track. Sometime the women elders tried to withdraw from discussion. When the questions were on stereotyped trends like, when a female child was born they ululate three times and when a male child was born five times: Why is this so? Are there male orders that intervene? What do you think about proverbs which are frequently uttered by male elders? And so on. But the researcher initiated them to actively involve in the discussion. The attempt was made to simply stimulate them and to elicit answers to the issues. Nevertheless, in between there was hot talk from the male elders challenges the issues like, what if males equally prepare food with female, what if the females participate in mediations? At that time the researcher politely intervened down because the objective was not to take photos, but to note discourse and messages they are uttering. But purposely the researcher questioned proverbs for example, 'How do elders say it?' "What is the local adage/saying?" In general, the discussion was interesting in all places, but in one 'Kebele' it was not effective as much as in other areas. The maximum time which was taken in 'Tokke Abuyyee' was four o'clock till twelve and a half and the minimum was one-thirty in Arfinjo Abuyyee, which was an ineffective one.

### **1.7.8 Interview**

The major purpose of this instrument was to get information of the attitude of the elders on gender inequality problems through oral literature, particularly proverbs. For this reason, it was conducted with elders from both sexes two men and one woman. Though the male elders did not have much awareness of the problems, it was a big challenge to carry out the interview with the female elders'. With the help of the Kebele Development Agent, the researcher had tried to get little information. The women responded herself as female elders did in other places. The interview with male elders was successfully accomplished because of assistance from kebele leader and because it was a holiday. The day was Saturday and Sunday when there was no work or own urgent business. The maximum time which was taken to conduct the interview was forty-five minutes and the minimum was with female elders which were twenty minutes.

### **1.7.9 Questionnaire**

The major objective of this instrument was to cross-check and to collect gendered proverbs. Of course the questionnaires were administered by 'Afaan Oromo' teachers and school director: they were distributed to all females in preparatory schools and in all Afaan Oromo teachers, and workers from Educational Bureau and Culture and Tourism Bureau from Woreda. As stated already for the students deliberately the time was given because to consult their father and mother depending on their interests. In addition to this there were respondents who took the questionnaires from adjacent technical school, Tukur Enchine TVET. This is because of their sufficient awareness of the researcher topic and local cultural trends. From all respondents about 91% questionnaire papers were re-collected. The rest were left in the hands of the students. Because they were giving unnecessary reason proposing to re-submit and fill the questionnaires.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Characteristics and Function of Oral Literature**

According to Bukenya (1994:97), "before anything was committed to paper, all was oral". The bulk of African society's traditions and literature, even today are oral. Oral literature, as stated by Melakneh (2005:12), is the verbal heritage of mankind which is delivered from generation to generation by word of mouth. All the society's daily performances, traditional wisdom and universal human experiences could not be committed to writing. For this reason, not everything oral is oral literature. There are standard forms which categorize them under oral literature. For instance, proverbs, lyric songs, poetry and narratives are some of them (Bukenya, 1994; Melakneh, 2005:8)

Various scholars use different terms to identify the phrase "Oral literature": traditional literature, folk literature and folklore are some terms. The word folk could represent any group of people who share at least one linking factor: be it occupation, religion, or ethnicity. Every human society is at least one folk group and most of them belong to more than one (Dundes, 1973) people way of life could be reflected from literature delivered by word of mouth, oral literature. It is the very soul of that particular community and also displays their outlook on life (Bukenya, 1994)

As stated by A. Jordan, Rosan and Susan J. Kalcik (1985:27) oral literature is an important system of expressing attitudes, ideology, and world view, whether consciously or unconsciously. Oral literature by itself is a vehicle for learning the aspects of a culture. Oral literature tells us about social strictures or psychological repression that prevent women from using proverbs or sayings, which are at variance with the official ideals of the culture (Ibid: 27). Oral literature presents a picture of the world as a precarious place for women as a world is where women

are vulnerable fearful, and often mistreated or despised. Most pre-literate societies have had a tradition of oral literature including short folk tales, legends, myths, proverbs and riddles, as well as longer narrative works.

The participants in oral literature, may be as characters or users, are presented in such a way as to highlight strong qualities which members of society are called upon to strive for and to ridicule weakness (Bukenya, 1994). To mention from Oromo oral literature, a suitable example for this is, "*Uleefi dubartiin jilbaa gadittii.*"<sup>3</sup> which may be translated into English language as, <stick and wife should be under knee>The word "dubartii" in this Oromo proverb means "wife" but its literal meaning is 'women' and the word stick is represented by the Oromo word "Ulee". It is a kind of stick old aged people use to support while they walk from their seat to some distance from homestead. Therefore, it is possible to imagine which group is called upon to strive for and to ridicule.

Oral literature has some distinguished features and characteristics which help us to identify it from written literature. To start from the early peculiar feature, orality, which is the opposite of literacy, is one among them.

Another feature is, volatility, because of orally transmission by word of mouth it loses originality as the time passes. People preserve it by memory with the medium of spoken word. As by Okpwho (1992:5) "the terms oral literature and folklore are a little bit confusing". Like folklore, oral literature seems to be an evasive term to define.

There are some other characteristics of oral literature like universality, which means common to all people as universal human heritage (<http://www.yale.edu/>). Unlike written form of literature, works under oral literature are undated and here no authors. For this reason, many folklorists assert that various works of oral literature are products of the people at an indefinite time in the past. To substantiate this idea Sokolov (1971) stated the following points; Works of [oral literature] are

anonymous nameless, for the reason that the names of the authors in the vast majority of cases, have not been revealed, have not been discovered, because for the greater part they were not written down, but were preserved only in the memory of the people (Sokolou 1971:10)

Also as Finnegan observes attempts to understand oral literature were filtered through ideas derived from evolutionism, diffusion and functionalism (1970, 26-47; 315-34). Every text, like every other utterance, bears the marks of its orientation towards an addressee, revealing an expectation of being interpreted (p-27). Explicitly or implicitly oral literature is transmitted from person to person, from one culture boundary to another often orally, and there is no means to absolutely stop its transmission (Dundes, 1973; Melakneh, 2005). As stated by Finnegan (1970:2) Oral literature directly or indirectly depends on a performer. The quality and existence of oral literature, whatever it is wherever it is, relies on a performer who produces it in words on a specific occasion.

Oral literature like other forms of popular culture is not simply folksy, domestic entertainment but a domain in which individuals in a variety of social roles are free to comment on power relations in society. That is the reason why gender inequality constructions in socio-cultural activities are found in oral literature in general and also in proverbs in particular.

Oral literature can be a significant agent of change capable of directing, provoking, preventing and re-casting perception of social reality. Oral texts both reflect and affect contemporary social and political life in Africa and this is also true in the case of Oromia specifically.

Oral literature, wherever it is, addresses questions of power, gender and the dynamics of language use. It also displays the representation of social structures and the relationship between culture and the state. Thus, the pictures of current real life situation of that particular society could be manifested from their oral literature.

Okpewho (1992:9) has also said that each type of oral literature is the common property of the community and thus, works of oral literature are the product of communal authorship. In addition to this another characteristic of oral literature is its power to reflect a given society's past experiences. Oral literature can reflect the attitudes, beliefs, modes of thinking and other aspects of the lives of people in the past as well as in the present times (Finnegan 1970). As stated by Robert Georges (1995:231) in characterizing folklore as oral tradition, researchers imply that learning and perpetuating folklore are dependent on single individuals' stimulating and responding to each other face-to-face in one-to-one encounters or else in small group gatherings.

### **2.1.1 Image of Women in Oral Literature**

Scholars use different terms to describe women in their oral literature research. Women are portrayed in oral literature as different from men. They are more of negative than positive. Of course women as wife, as one's mother, and as one's daughter are depicted in different ways. The degree of negativity is different from culture to culture and time to time. As Sena (2008) summarized in her M.A study, the image of women in the proverbs and sayings of the Oromo: The case of west Arsi: "women are portrayed both negatively and positively." She has stated that as a mother is more positive image than a wife and a daughter. For instance, 'dependent', 'weak' . . . are the adjectives that describe women in oral literature. In addition to this, positive description of women as one's mother is as an excellent house maker and obedient servant of their family. Therefore, as Sena concluded that the positive image of women by itself is not free from bias. This is because it reveals their efficiency as workers in the house, without any equal rights as men. Hence, Sena (2008) says that women by themselves have accepted the inferior positions that are given to them in society. Women behave according to the social status given to them. Berhanu Bekele (2008) has also

examined the image of women in his study, the portrayal of women in folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of east Wollega, very few folktales and popular sayings portray women positively and relatively a larger number of tales and sayings depict women negatively.

He also substantiates the Sena's study stating that mothers are portrayed positively and generously. Thus, it has been indicated that in both studies one's mothers are lovable and positive in oral literature particularly in proverbs.

Bukenya (1994:36) has revealed in her study that women in general are given extremely negative role and explained that they are totally dependent on men as they are careless, vain and idle beings who can not be relied upon for seriousness in handling life's experiences. Bukenya observes:

The image of women as non-entities is clearly reflected by the way they are denied identities. In all the stories analyzed, each woman is referred to as the wife of such and such a man, but never as an individual who has an identity outside her role as some man's wife. Even the more positively portrayed and less passive women in the narratives analyzed (...) are not seen as deserving names or autonomous identities (Ibid: 91).

As these studies demonstrated, oral literature embodies women as exceedingly negative with low social status. On the basis of this concept traditional roles continue to exert strong cultural imperatives and may even be embodied with symbolic power in different cultural practices (Jordan, 1985). Cultural pressure in the process of enculturation can be called as symbolic power or it is the way in which an exhibition constructs and persuades meaning through demonstrating a path through meaning (Scupin, R., 2005:226-7).

Sometimes oral literature expresses ideas and feelings of different reason that would never emerge from a questionnaire or an interview, or



they may express them more powerfully. It shows the world as a precarious place for women, a world where women are vulnerable fearful, and often mistreated. Even it emphasizes that the women in the stories exist in a world where their sexuality makes them constantly vulnerable (Jordan, 1985).

As stated by Joni (1993) “women are subordinated to men in every society because the public sphere is valued more highly than the private in the Chinese’s culture.” This also clearly shows that how much oral literature negatively depicts women. She also added that men are in charge of family affairs, while, women are seen as helpers. Oral literature left women invisible in public spheres like economy, power and politics (Cornwall, 2008).

## **2.2. Proverbs**

As noted earlier, proverbs share some characteristics of oral literature. The other types of oral literature that have common properties with proverbs are myths, riddles, narratives and tales. They are transmitted from generation to generation through oral means. Proverbs are closely related to folk wisdom although they often have a literary origin unknown to the speaker. To exemplify this concept from English proverbs, “Better late than never” is an adaptation of “It is better to learn late than never” which has a parallel meaning in the Oromo proverb, ‘*Hafuu mannaa barfachuu wayyaa*.’<sup>4</sup> “Proverbs are one of the universal human treasures” and Author less. Proverbs have been defined in different ways by different scholars. Ruth Finnegan (1970) has defined proverbs as “a saying in more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it.” Attributes like ‘short’, ‘terse’ or ‘brief’ are also used in various scholars’ definition. Dorson (1992) defined proverbs, as short and witty traditional expression and, are more highly structured for education and judicial proceedings of everyday discourse. In serious talk

or in ordinary conversation, people particularly, elders like to start with a proverb. That speaks about the topic of the discussion. For example the Oromo proverbs: '*Dubbiin bulteef tiruun bulte lafee taatii*'<sup>5</sup> means, <when the current agenda and liver are given more time both of them gradually become bone>this means, if the present agenda gets additional time, it may become stiff like liver. It implies that giving time for issues at hand is not necessary.

Proverbs are usually short and highly condensed sayings, which are generally anonymous in their authorship and authoritative in their application. Brevity is one characteristic of proverbs and makes proverb memorable. Elders use proverbs readily retrieving from their previous memory. Because of its terseness, shortness, they can easily be recalled.

Some people equate proverbs with sayings. That may be loosely accepted but for the purpose of scholarship, it is better to be specific. This is because the word 'saying' is rather general and vague. It may be considered as a general terms for proverbs, aphorisms, maxims and euphemisms. Thus, proverbs may be called sayings, but all sayings may not always be proverbs (Bukenyua, 1994). However, Greimas in Sumner (1995) has tried to differentiate between proverbs and sayings by connotation and denotation respectively. According to Claude Sumner proverbs are connoted elements and sayings are denoted one. Finnegan (1970:394) has of clearly distinguished proverbs and sayings: "In general in the study of proverbs, it is important to consider what each community calls its own and what the names denote or connote"

Therefore, in the case of Oromo, there is a word that includes sayings, proverbs and maxims. That word is '*Mammaaksaa*'. Claud Sumner has said in case or Oromo language as: "In Oromo language there is but one word to cover sayings, proverbs and maxims: *Mammaaksa*"

## 2.2.1 Characteristics of Proverbs

The characteristic traits of this genre of proverbs may vary from one society to another, yet proverbs share a certain degree of similarity because of shared properties that confer a relatively homogeneity on them. There is similarity of content, which is understandable by given the proverb expresses general truths that are the fruit of day-to-day human experiences in society (Peek, Philip and Kwesi Yankah, 2004:374). According to this explanation these universal truths are of practical, ethical, social and, or philosophical nature.

In a wide sense each proverb is a full statement of an approach to a recurrent problem (Dorson, 1992). In addition to this as Abrahams (1972) and Dundas (1975) state cited in Norrick (1975), proverbs are the complete conversational turns syntactically independent of the surrounding text (Norrick, 1985).

The other major characteristics of proverbs are image and or metaphor. *Proverbs are indeed considered sayings that are necessarily circuitous*, as it must certainly not express directly what it has to say (Peek, Philip and Kwesi yankah, 2004): *‘Dubbiin lootoo qabdii lootoo abbaatu eggata,<sup>6</sup> it means that every proverbs are not uttered for nothing. There is a message thus, the audience should be careful for that message(s)(From Tukur Enchine Elders).*

Proverbs are brief sayings that usually point to a moral or express an accepted truth based on observation or experience. They are expressions of wisdom acquired through reflection and general knowledge. They are loosely related to the culture of a given society. Any layman can easily understand his own proverbs. To appreciate, understand and properly apply the proverbs, it is more advantageous to be part of the culture concerned or to study it carefully (Ibid). Proverbs must be vivid and easily remembered, since they are usually spoken rather than written and are among the shortest forms of traditional expressions that call attention to

themselves as formal artistic expressions (Dorsan, 1992) and thus, they depend on various devices for their effect, such as metaphor, rhyme and alliteration. To exemplify the English proverb: “Too many cooks spoil the broth” is a metaphor, “Rain before seven, fair before eleven” is rhyme and “Far from sight far from heart” is alliteration. Likewise in the Oromo language, there are parallel proverbs. For example: ‘Toleef hin nyaanne tolofameef nyaanne,’<sup>7</sup> which means, <we have eaten the food, not because it's okay but since it has already been prepared,> is structurally alliteration and ‘*shanis elman, shantamas elman, kan koo qiraacuma,*’<sup>8</sup> *Jette Adurreen*. which means, whether they( owners) are milking five or fifty mine is by 'Qiraci' .(Qiraci) means a small broken part of clay used for cat to feed in it .According to this Oromo proverb, when the number of milking cows are added ,the milk which is given to cut is the same everyday . The amount of milk which is given to cat is as much as earlier; it is metaphorical expression.

Proverbs usually present a point of view and a strategy that is self-sufficient, needing nothing more than an event of communication to bring it into function (Dorson, 1992). This idea is also substantiated by Seiler (1922:2) cited in Norrick (1985): “Proverbs must be self-contained sayings” which Seiler means that, “none of their essential grammatical units may be replaced.”

According to Dorson (1992:121) proverbs are descriptions made up of two or more elements and these elements often favor the two parts of a balanced structure. They are usually tied together either by a verb of equivalence or a verb of causation. The relationship between the elements could be rendered positively or negatively. Therefore, there are four known types of proverbs. Two of them are positive and negative equivalence and the other two are positive and negative causative. Ruth Finnegan (1970), states that proverbs have traits with clear and precise ways. She says, “Proverbs are a rich source of imagery and succinct expression on which more elaborate forms can draw”. For poets and

artists they may use proverbs as “a model of compressed or forceful language” and “a technique of verbal expression” (Ibid: 389-390).

To summarize this section it may be noted that there are different characteristics of proverbs depending on the culture and the acculturation of those who use them. Some common attributes in the definition of proverbs are: brief, terse, popular, pithy, short, withy and fixed. Thus, proverbs are repositories of social and cultural wisdom (Hussein 2005; Finnegan, 1970; Bukenya, 1994; Sumner 1995; Sena, 2008).

### **2.2.2 Function of Proverbs**

“It is particularly true of proverbs whose use and application depends so crucially on their context that no full understanding can be caught without some knowledge of the occasions and purposes of their actual use”( Finnegan 1970). To clearly understand the function of proverbs, one must know context and purpose of use of proverbs. This is because of flexibility of proverbs. “One can use a single proverb for different purposes in different condition.” The same proverb may be used as advice, instruction, or warning and may be cited in situations which may seem far removed from the original application or even in contradictory senses (Ibid: 420). But Bukenya (1994:47) has classified proverbs in to four functions according to their social purpose. These are aesthetic function, reflecting function, summative function and normative function: describing or establishing a set of rules or standards of behavior or normative social structure. “As witnesses and caretakers of the body of accumulated wisdom of the group, proverbs express the norm, the point of view, and the philosophy of the group, taking into account its tensions as well, since different proverbs can express contradictory theses ”(Peek, Philip and Kwesi Yankah, 2004:374).

Somebody can use proverbs for the purpose of facilitating the progress of speech, for instance, if the subject under discussion goes

astray, it is possible to use a proverb to put it on the right track it (Ibid: 47). According to Bukenya, this way of using proverb serves aesthetic functions.

The proverb captures various elements of a people's wisdom expressing a value in a brief and vivid manner. Codified wisdom of a society, accumulated over many years of happy and bitter experiences are presented to the generation through proverbs. Society's perceptions of life which are developed as a result of immense observation and reflection on the nature of life could be appreciated from oral literature, particularly from proverbs (Bukenya, 1994). Proverbs are like other texts, because they bear the marks of orientation towards an addressee, revealing an expectation of being interpreted (Miruka and Sunkuli, 1990). Thus, such a way of using proverbs among a community can be described as the reflecting function. In addition to proverbs act as a capsule of major aspects of social philosophy which means some proverbs help start off or conclude oral narratives. The speaker uses proverbs to elaborate the agenda at hand, and summarize when it is necessary to conclude. Even they are used quite formally and consciously as eligible to achieve the ends and to associate formally something to conclude.

In order to maintain summative function of proverbs, it is not necessary to look at oral presentation and conclusion, but it is possible to look at a fictional text. The various anthologies and textbook authors use proverbs at the end of their message to give credential values for the content (Bukenya 1994, Georges Robert, 1995; Finegan, 1970).

In the African context a proverb is worth a thousand words and thus, proverbs are vehicles of the society's precepts through warning, caution, satire, advice, counsel, or by any of those roles for which proverbs are acclaimed. Then, all this presumes that the society has certain value levels that it cherishes and wishes to continue for a long time. Therefore,

when proverbs facilitate the achievement of goals, they are serving the normative function.

According to Finnegan (1970:407) in any discussion of the uses and context of proverbs, there are two themes that the users may encounter. The first, “There is the sense of detachment and generalization inherent in proverbs”. As she explains said, the speaker stands back, as it were, from the circumstance of actual situation and draws his attention and that of others to its wider implications. The second is the oblique and allusive nature of expression through proverbs which makes it possible to use them in a variety of fruitful ways.

Proverbs are the treasure of a community. They reflect the world outlook of particular society and reveal and represent their philosophy. But one of the characteristics of proverbs is that they should be accepted by the community as a whole and the scope for individual initiative is clearly limited (Bukonya, 1994; Finnegan, 1970) .To summarize the overall use of proverbs Finnegan (1970:424) has to say the following:

Their [Proverbs] literary significance emerges not only in the beauty of words and form, their sense detachment and generalization, and form, their connections with other genres of artistic expression, but also in the aptness and perceptiveness with which they are used in an actual context.

### **2.2.3 The Oromo Proverbs**

“*Aaki jedhan waa tufan, mammaakan waa himan.*”<sup>9</sup> is one of the Oromo proverb which has almost a similar meaning with a Yoruba Meta proverb: “proverbs are the horses of discourse” (Irele, 2001:9). Oromos utter this proverb because Oromo proverbs have special values in every practical communication. Oromos begin speech by uttering proverbs and also use proverbs to aptly and perceptively deliver a message. For instance the proverb ‘*Mammaaksi Kooba dubbii*’.<sup>10</sup> means that speech

is spiced by proverbs. Thus, in Oromo society proverbs enter as a device into almost all kinds of speech activity and are regularly made to serve a formal function in the extended forms of oral literature in the society's daily practice. This is also summed up in Yoruba proverb strengthening as awareness of the intellectual values: "Proverbs are the horses of thought; when thoughts get lost, we send proverbs to find them." (Ibid: 32).

As sena Gonfa (2008), points out in most traditional African societies proverbs may serve a uniform function, even in nearly the same way though they are different only for their actual context of performance rather than due to their content and attitude. Therefore, Africans are accustomed to the connotative use of proverbs, and this practice is found in everyday speech of Oromo people especially, elders

Oromo elders give a special attention for proverbs. For example, the following Oromo proverb illustrates this fact clearly. "... *Mammaaksi soogidda (Mieessaa) dubbitii. Dubbii tokko fiduufis fixuufis ni gargaara,*"<sup>11</sup> (Worquu Dachaasaa et al. 1993:3). When it is translated into English it means that, proverbs are salt of speech, that speech without proverbs is tasteless (no flavor) and they are used for causation and summative functions of speech. This Oromo proverb is almost similar in meaning with Chenua Achebe's saying "Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten" (Achebe, 1958:5).

Warqu Dachaasa et al say, focusing on the use of proverbs, most of the time, almost in all cases elders use proverbs. Because, according to these authors' proverbs are invited to mediate in different institutional ceremonies like 'Gaea' ceremony, 'Gumaa' ceremony and the early marriage alliance ceremony. According to Dachaasa, (Wirtuu-8, 1999) women, because of tradition, do not use proverbs. Those community members, especially, women conceptualized that without male elders nobody could use proverbs.



All Africans including Oromo people and elders give great value for proverbs. That is the reason why they associate proverbs with salt and “Palm oil” as in Igbo society. According to Sumner (1995) proverbs are store house of wisdom for Oromo’s. And also he puts some characteristics of Oromo proverbs which are similar to Milner (1969 a: 200), and states that, “the most important characteristic of a traditional saying is the symmetrical structure of its form and content” In addition to this, Sumner states “Oromo proverbs always have a secondary chief or catchword.” That is, for the meaning there would be chief or catchwords in Oromo proverbs.

Dialectal and traditional sayings can convey character and sense of place (Robert George, 1995:6). This is true for the Oromo proverbs which carry the thumb print of socio cultural traditions of Oromo. “World view is usually implicit” (Ibid: 170). Thus, to examine once own community world view could be the mechanism to use proverbs, especially for a case study of gender inequality.

#### **2.2.4 Time and Place of Use of Proverbs**

“It is not even predictable that proverbs will certainly be used on any particular occasion’ (Bukonya, 1994). This implies that the use and duration for proverbs is fluid. They can be used when it is felt necessary to use them with a current agenda. Since proverbs can refer to particularly any situation it would be impossible to give any comprehensive account of the content (Finnegan1970), but Proverbs can be uttered in conversation.

Abrahams (1968b; 1969) as cited in Norrick (1985:12), “defines the proverb as a traditional conversational genre along with the curse, taunt boast etc” “For example an Oromo proverb, which is uttered frequently in conversation: “*Kan dhagayaa dide waaman hin howaatuu*”<sup>12</sup> means <if someone kept silent deliberately, he does not respond when you call out him> This proverb is similar to the English proverb, “Let sleeping dog

lie.” We can then sum up the various ways in which proverbs are used in African societies by saying that they really occur on all occasions when language is used for communication either as art or as a tool (Finnegan 1970: 418). In addition to this, it is possible to use proverbs in a text for the purposes of summation and reflection. For instance a proverb from the Ethiopian Herald, (March 4, of 2010,) “There is light at the end of the tunnel” expresses hope for the future. Another proverb From EPRDF authority is “Nonetheless, the dogs bark but the caravan movers on.” Here proverbs are used to criticize the oppositions groups and to explain their policy and its effect. Another proverb from BBC news channel is, “Where there is power, there is resistance.” Also attests to the functional role of proverbs in communication whether written or oral. Further, proverbs could be used and have been used to mold direction in all kinds of situations in conversation and text for the purpose of relevance, brevity, clarity and accuracy (Norrick, 1985:27).

### **2.2.5 Uses of Proverbs**

According to peek, Philip and Kwesi Yankah (2004) there are two different views on the use of proverbs. One is in Europe and other is in Africa. “In Europe someone who uses or speaks in proverbs is likely to be regarded as backward and intellectually limited for using hackneyed expressions instead of having a more personal and original discourse,” The other is in African societies. They state: “In Africa where an Oral tradition of discourse exists and where memory is the sole guarantee of conversation of this verbal culture, proverbs are held in esteem.” Thus, the two views are mutually contradictory. In the case of particular a subject who uses proverbs, Bukenya (1994) observes: “It is generally believed that it is elders who use proverbs, usually among themselves, but also when addressing non-elders. But if this generally true, it should not be taken as the gospel truth, or there must be variations” (1994: 38). Bukenya’s idea is also supported by Warqu Dachaasa et al. (1999) who

have edited Wirtuu-8. According to them, proverbs are free for any person to utter and to listen to but it is a false assumption that only male elders are entitled to use proverbs. The authors called it a false assumption, since, in almost, all community ceremonies, proverbs are used .But it may be noted here that according to Sena’s (2008) study the traditional assumption is that older people (men) are considered to be experts in the use of proverbs.

### **2.2.6 Image of Women in Proverbs**

As stated by many scholars proverbs are one oral literature and they express our traditional values (Bukonya, 1994). However, explicitly proverbs have portrayed women in different terms. To begin with Ghana proverb: “The woman is a banana tree; the man however is a cornstalk” and, “Woman is a flower in a garden; her husband, the fence around it”. The former proverb means, when man is compared with woman, woman is more precious and the latter proverb implies that woman is beautiful wife and husband are complementary to each other. In this section an attempt is made to illustrate how woman is indicated in Africa proverbs in general.

**A) Woman as a valuable:** Some proverbs imply that women are more valuable than men. They describe woman as life bearers, nurseries, cherishers, and they care for life since all human life passes through their wombs. “Wherever you go have a woman friend,” an Ireland proverb this means that woman has a more nurturing quality than man. She knows her environment better than man and easily feeds you with things necessary for life for at a given period of time.

The term “mother” is considered as an honorable form of address and one which is desired by every woman in Gikuyu society. When a women reaches the stage of motherhood she is highly respected, not only by her children but by all members of the community. Her name becomes

sacred and she is addressed by her neighbors and their children as “mother of so and so.”

**B) Woman as mother and wife:** There are proverbs that have depicted women as lovable, generous and tolerant (Berhanu 2008) some proverbs consider woman the most important member of the family. For instance, the Oromo proverb, ‘*Kan haati gabaa baateef kan haati jalaa duute walqixa booyu,*’<sup>13</sup> means when in English, <The child whose mother went to the market and whose mother was dead, cry equally> Of course the proverb is uttered to indicate the two events are more far apart from each other, and being unaware of this reality the child cries for its mother but not as such for its father. This is used when children cry because their mothers are away and out of sight and also when two people complain equally for unequal mishaps. The other proverb from English, “Who speaks ill of his wife dishonors him,” is a Scotland’s proverb. It means that the weakness of one’s own wife is the weakness of her husband.

**C) Unmarried woman:** “Good girls are always rewarded with marriage, bad girls with lack of a husband” (Bukanya 1994:81) this is to mean for a girl nothing is more important than marriage and “marriage is the ultimate goal” for woman. It is expected in African traditional view that “all women get married”. For example, Oromo proverb: “*Amman kooraa irra gayutti ofi hin amanu,*” *jette aftuun durbaa.*<sup>14</sup> means in English, < I did not believe that my marriage would materialize, until I sat on the horse’s back,” said by a late married girl. This shows how eager she was for marriage.

**D) Barren women:** If a woman has everything, except children, she would have no cause or joy to give thanks. That is the reason why it is said, “The woman whose sons have died is richer than a barren woman.” Even according to some traditional beliefs in Africa, parental blessings often run along the lines of “May you bear children like bees!” In Oromo society also such traditional blessings are given by parents to their married daughters.

**E) Disrespect for woman:** As there are proverbs which express livableness of woman as, mother and wife, there are also proverbs which depict woman negatively. Some proverbs are completely against woman. There are proverbs of prejudiced judgment towards woman as the following: “If you woo a lady at a party, she will go astray when she becomes your wife.” This means there would be great care to be introduced to a woman at any non-intentional occasion. Because she consider everything as she has already familiarized with the early stage. The other example is an English proverb: “Do not desire a woman with beautiful breasts, if you have no money.” This means to win a beautiful woman, there should be enough money (Bukonya, 1994; Sumner, 1995; Cudd, Ann and Robin O. Adreasen, 2005; Warquu Dachaasaa et al. 1999).

**E) Co-wives-** “A pole is strengthened by another pole” It is an African proverb which recommends a co-wives. In some African countries, polygamy is a widely prevalent practice “... among the Gikuyu arranged marriages and polygamy were the order of the day” (Bukonya, 1994:82). Even some proverbs imply that co-wives support each other.

For example: “The way to overcome cold is to warm each other.” From the foregoing discussion an illustration act may be stated that proverbs in general depict women both as positive and negative. The negative depiction of course was intended to control woman’s productive and reproductive roles (Bukonya, 1994:82).

### **2.2.7 Women in Oromo Proverbs**

Oromo proverbs are like any other African Proverbs and forward roles in depiction of women. Of course, as pointed out earlier in the preceding section, proverbs are expressions of wisdom acquired through reflection, experience observation and general knowledge. This is also true in the case of Oromo proverbs (Sumner, 1995:45). Proverbs are intimately related to the culture of a given society. Thus, proverbs could be a major

source to examine the image of women in Oromo society. For instance, from the numerous Oromo proverbs, “The lady, whose husband spoils her, slips from the tanned hide,” can be taken as an example. Usually tanned hide is used as sleeping material in the countryside. As Hussein has explained it, this proverb may be used to warn or inform a husband who tends to be liberal towards his wife (Hussein, 2005; Sumner, 1995:235). Another Oromo proverb is ‘*Dugda dubartii fii dugda harree irraa waa nyaatu.*’<sup>15</sup> in sena’s (2008) translated; it means that “everybody feeds from a woman’s and a donkey’s back.” This is true in the community that people get service from a donkey, but in this proverb woman is equated with a donkey. In other words, a woman is no better than a donkey.

Another Oromo proverb is ‘*Dubartiin haarii baate qaanii gala didi.*’<sup>16</sup> from west shoa, Tukur Enchini Oromo elders, means, <woman left her home because of anger and refused to come back because of public shame > as the elder has explained, women are more governed by their public image than their private status.

‘*Hadha dhabuu mannaa, haadha dhabduu wayyaa.*’<sup>17</sup> is another Oromo proverb which Sena (2008) translated, meaning “Having a destitute mother is better than not having a mother at all” .According to this proverb at whatever level of economy, nothing is better than mother. This is similar to the English proverb “A mother and water have no evil.” ‘*Kan nyaatu hunda warraa, fixuun haadha warraa*’<sup>18</sup> is also an Oromo proverb which implies : <Everybody in the family has eaten it, but not the wife.’ This means the wife is accused for every activity in the home. Thus, other African oral literature and proverbs the Oromo’s also depict women in both negative and positive terms. (Berhanu Bekele (2008) in his study the portrayal of women in Folktales and popular sayings of the Oromo of East Wollega. States that “...there are very few folktales and popular sayings that portray women positively vis-à-vis the number of tales and popular sayings which depict women negatively.”

Similarly, Sena Gonfa (2008) in her study, the image of women in the proverbs and sayings of the Oromo; The case of west Arsi Zone, concluded by saying that, women are portrayed both negatively and positively.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **3 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK**

### **3.1 Gender**

The term 'gender' can be used in different contexts for different purposes. As a word, it has more than one valid definition. Accordingly, the term represents different contextual meanings. Linguistically it is a word. In ordinary speech, it is used interchangeably with "sex" to denote the condition of being male or female. In social sciences, however, it refers specifically to socially constructed and institutionalized differences such as gender-roles (Chancer and Beverly xavierea Watkins, 2006; Cudd, Ann and Robin Andreasen 2005; Smith, 2007). Likewise, the meaning of the word is likely to vary depending on the context where it is used (Ibid: 17). In defining gender historically, it should be acknowledged at the outset that the term does not have a constant and invariant set of associations or meanings. Instead one can view gender as a group of ideas, some of which theorists have agreed upon for decades and others which have been evolving, that grew out of and unfolded through a broad social movement. Concerned with women's and [men] freedoms (Ibid: 17).

There is some consensus that the term 'gender' refers to the social rather than biological meaning given to being a man or a woman in a given society. But, there is less acceptance and acknowledgement that the social differences between men and women, context specific as they are, signify inequalities of power and privilege (N.A.:13). The term gender, therefore, is often used as a descriptive one to delineate the different roles and responsibilities of women and men, and the sources that each has access to.

The term gender, most of the time compared or replaced with the word 'sex'. However, their meanings are far apart from each other. According to Smith (2007:5) the term 'sex' is defined as the maleness or femaleness



of an individual rooted in biological anatomy. It is biologically programmed difference between male and female, and the term simply corresponds to the biological difference.

The term gender of an individual is not independent of his or her 'sex' it is essentially a social construction. According to Chancer and Beverly (2006:18) the term gender comes to be associated not merely with a set of categorized characteristics that have been deeply ingrained but with an entire universe that has been divided into separate but unequal spheres. These spheres are public and domestic realms (the province of women). They are extended beyond character traits to material realms with which masculinity and femininity have been associated. The following table shows this clearly.

Table 2: Sex and gender sub-class

<b>Sex</b>		<b>Gender</b>	
Male	Female	Masculine	Feminine

Adopted from: Lynn S. Chancer & Beverly Xaviera Watking

There are different views on gender as a social construction. For example Oyewumi (2005:11) points out that gender is constructed upon biological building blocks. Of course, the Western pre-occupation with biology continues to generate constructions of "new biology" even as some of the old biological assumptions are being dislodged. In fact, in the Western experience, social construction and biological determinism have been two sides of the same coin, since both ideas continue to reinforce each other (Oyewuni, 2005).

According to Oyewumi, when social categories like gender are constructed, new biology's of difference can be invented. When biological interpretations are found to be compelling, social categories do derive their legitimacy and power from biology. In short, the social and the biological feed on each other (Ibid: 10).

According to some feminist groups, in the Western world, women were legally supported and pre-occupied with getting access to the ballot box, family support and preservation. They were content with the private world of family and domesticity. They were wives, mothers, care takers, nurturers and homemakers (Nagarajan, 2006:206).

Briefly gender refers to the socially ascribed differences between men and women which are changeable and vary with class, caste, ethnicity, religion, age and with time. On the one hand, gender as a social construction is a historical phenomenon. The controversy on gender does suggest its mutability; as a result gender differences by themselves are not ordained by nature: they are mutable and therefore, changeable (Hussein, 2005: 60)

In another way, gender refers to a social attribute ascribing some characteristic and modes of behavior to the female and others to the male sex, derived from the interplay of cultural and religious, values and similar factors. It means that all the socially given set of qualities and expected roles, activities and responsibilities which are related to being a female or a male in a given community, as contrary to biologically programmed differences

<http://www.idibnc.idrc.ca/dspace/handle/2005>.

As indicated in the previous section, women have been victims of gender ideology; a systematically skewed set of cultural beliefs in all men. It is a means by which a society constructs and holds its gender relations and practices (Hussein, 2005). Gender ideology is explained in proverbs, legends, and suggests how each woman should behave in the community where she was born and brought up (Ibid). Hussein has also pointed out that gender ideology of a society is grounded largely in religious and social principles. In other words, culture, which is a coin with different faces of language and oral literature, has an influence on women gender issues. A number of expressions and proverbs are used in different languages to represent women in stereotyped and more

derogatory terms. For example, One proverb cited by Hussein from “Oromiffa” script, ‘Dubartiin beekaa deessi malee beektuu miti,’<sup>19</sup> means “Women bear an intelligent child but they are not intelligent themselves.” It is a twisted ideological expression in favor of male domination of women (Hussein 2005).

Another view on the social construction of gender is global implying that, communities interpret biological differences between men and women to create a set of social expectations that define the behaviors that are “appropriate” for men and women, and determine women’s and men’s different access to rights resources, and power in society [www.cgiar.org/80/ifpri/gender/gender.htm](http://www.cgiar.org/80/ifpri/gender/gender.htm). It is also used to refer to proposed social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities. In this context gender explicitly excludes reference to biological differences, to focus on cultural differences (Ibid).Therefore; according to Hussein a society strengthens its gender ideology as a form of social practice. Every society has a set of systems normative concepts to censure and control masculine and feminine behavior.

### **3.1.1 Gender inequality**

“The inequality between the sexes is not the result of biological necessity, but is produced by cultural construction of gender difference,” (Nagarajan, 2006). This is the main reason why feminists have accused different social institutions, patriarchal religion, sexism ideology (unjustifiable) and different forms of oppression systems. To uncover the indiscernibly of the system Friendan has said the following famous phrase. “The problem that has no name.” cited in Could and Robin (2005:60).According to some feminist groups, “gender is seen [...] not as a neutral difference but as a socially constructed inequality (Brown, Kethm, 2006:733). They support biologically programmed differences but act upon these, and there are non-neutral differences that are denying the freedom of humanity. The biological building blocks of inequality are

causes of oppression. There gender difference is the foundation for structural inequality between men and women. This is by which women suffer sympathetic social injustice or systematic and invisible oppression (Nagarajan, 2006; Oyewumi, 2005; Cuddy & Andreasen, 2005). Therefore, the agenda for gender mainstreaming seeks to produce transformatory processes and practices that will concern, engage and benefit women and men equally by systematically integrating explicit attention to issues of sex and gender in all aspects of an organizations work (Corwall, Andrea et al. (Eds.), 2007:124).

### **3.1.2 Gender Stereotypes**

They are group concepts. They refer to socially constructed beliefs about men and women. They are constructed in the axioms, songs, proverbs, culture, the media, customs, education, and literature of a society, and play important roles in determining the perception of the society towards women and the way women perceive themselves. On this basis, they are expected to live and act according to these stereotypical roles ([www.en.wickepeda.org/wiki/sterotypes](http://www.en.wickepeda.org/wiki/sterotypes)). In other words, they are described in terms of psychological features that people believe to be associated with the personal attributes of women and men. There are a number of parameters that help gender stereotypes to attain socially shared beliefs, definite qualities and characteristics traits of individuals based on their membership, attitudes, expectations and self-interests ([www.pagesinterm](http://www.pagesinterm)).

### **3.1.3 Gender roles**

These roles refer to anticipated duties and responsibilities, rights and privileges of both sexes that are shaped by society. They resulted from the differences in attitude towards sexes. Different roles are assigned to female and male influenced by learning in the process of socialization (ibid). That is gender roles refer to social functions that society deems suitable for a male individual and a female individual (Smith, 2007).

### **3.1.4 Gender identity**

As Smith has stated, gender identity describes the individual's experience of himself or herself as masculine or feminine. It is more a set of socialization processes in a certain social community. In other words when socialization is ascribed in a vivid way in which a person learn to fit in with the people around them as he or she grows up. A man is influenced by people around to think and behave as they act and do ([www.gires.org](http://www.gires.org)).

### **3.2 Feminism**

It is a term which has acquired a number of different meanings. It can be defined as a shared contemplation and advocacy of equality between men and women ([www.wlv.ac.uk/ale180femin-htm](http://www.wlv.ac.uk/ale180femin-htm)). From feminist agenda, their thought is characterized as occurring in waves. First wave feminism concerned itself largely with gaining equal political rights and economic opportunities for women (Cudd, Ann et al, 2005; Oyewumi 2005). The second wave of feminism can most easily be dated to 1949 with publication of Simone de Beauvoir's, "The Second Sex". It characterizes its efforts to move beyond the first wave and its focus on the political and legal sources of women's inequality. The second wave feminists stress that, although political and legal equality is important, it is not enough to end women's oppression. Their views are as follow:

... Sexist oppression is not simply rooted in legal and political arrangement; its causes are all pervasive and deeply embedded in every aspect of human social life including economic, political and social arrangements as well as unquestioned norms, habits every day interactions, and personal relationship (Cudd, Ann et al. and 2005:7).

Therefore the second wave feminism criticizes first wave for not work sufficient enough to stop the oppression. The followings are some feminist sub-type rather than wave categories.

### **3.2.1 Radical feminism**

This branch of feminism had a theoretical starting point which clearly differentiates it from other approaches: it claimed to go to the roots of women's oppression and it proclaimed itself as a theory of, by and for women and it saw the oppression of women as the most fundamental and universal form of domination and its aim was to understand and end this (Bryson, Valerie, 2003:162). In other words radical feminism chooses to concentrate exclusively on the oppression of women as women, and its analysis is on institutions like love, marriage, sex, masculinity and femininity. It would be opposed specifically to sexism, rather than capitalism (McCann Carole and Seung-kyung kim 2003:48). Radical feminism described and explained a totalizing ideology and social formation which dominated women in the interest of men. Such kind of formation was called patriarchy. It was a key term in radical feminism.

### **3.2.2 Liberal feminism**

It is a movement of feminism which aims to free women oppressive gender roles. Their demand for equal rights usually started from the claims that women are as good as men, that they are entitled to full human rights and that women should be free to explore their full potential in equal competition with men (Bryson, Valerie, 2003:139). Liberal feminists tend to support legalizing gay marriage, as well as polygamy and polyandry. They argued that marriage is no longer restricted to men with women and traditional view of marriage as a social institution designed to promote child bearing and child rearing, has been redefined (Nagarajan 2006; 212; McCann, Carole and Seung-kyung kim, 2003:334; Bryson, Valerie, 2003:139-162).

### **3.2.3 Marxist feminism-**

Feminist theory which focuses on dismantling of capitalism as a way to liberate women, states that the capitalism is the root of women's

oppression. They firmly believe that Marxism would abolish sex differences and treat all workers equally. Women would become economically independent of men and would participate on an equal footing with men in bringing about the proletarian revolution (McCann, Carole and Seung-Kyang Kim, 2003:207)

#### **3.2.4 Social feminism**

It focuses on both the public and private spheres of a women's life and believes that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. This feminist movement is a dualist movement because of holding radical feminist's theory of role of gender and the patriarchy, and the Marxist feminism's arguments obey the role of capitalism in the oppression of women (Nagarajan, 2006; Bryson, Valerie, 2003; Yigremew; 2005).

**In table 3 below, a summary of different feminist theory\approach is given**

**Table 3: A summary of feminist theories**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name/sub-type theory</b>	<b>Challenge/ Argument</b>	<b>Inequality</b>	<b>Alternative/support</b>
1	Liberal feminism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every individual should have control over his or her own body.</li> <li>- Government should stay out of the private affairs of its citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legislative act</li> <li>- Gender stereotyping (injustices fostered by gender rules)</li> <li>- Devaluation of women</li> <li>- division of labor</li> <li>- Limitation of reproductive choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legalizing gay marriage[and] polygamy and polyandry</li> <li>- Legalizing or decriminalizing prostitution</li> <li>-freedom from oppressive gender roles.</li> </ul>
2	Marxist feminism	Against capitalism and all types of exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capitalist mode of production</li> <li>- Class inequality patriarchal ideology</li> </ul>	-
3	Radical feminism	Gender roles of society a totalizing ideology and social formation, dominated women in the interest of men Society is an oppressive patriarchy	Institutions Patriarchal ideology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lesbianism</li> <li>- reproductive freedoms</li> <li>- changes of organizational sexual culture</li> <li>-Matriarchy</li> <li>-promote child bearing and child rearing has been redefined</li> </ul>
4	Social feminism	Against oppression women and other weaker sections of society	Common with Marxist and radical movement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Social change</li> <li>- social structural change</li> <li>- Individual fights</li> </ul>



# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4 DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1 How Proverbs Treat the Gender Issues in Tukur Enchine Oromo Community

For the purposes of the present study, from the general views of oral literature, attempt has been made to analyze gender issues in Tukur Enchine Oromo proverbs. Since Oral literature is the source of people's day-to-day experiences, it is possible to deduce philosophy, world outlook and attitudes of a particular community. Thus, the Tukur Enchine Oromo community gender issues reflected in their proverbs have been examined here on the basis of data collected from the study area.

Like any other Oromo Oral literature, Tukur Enchine Oromo proverbs portray gender issues in social, political and economic structures of the people. Likewise gender roles, gender identity and gender stereotypes are analyzed from proverbs which are collected from the respondents through questionnaires, focused group discussion and interview.

To start from the beginning, proverbs reveal women and men in different positions, one as possessor of this oral treasure, proverbs, and others as an oppressed group. For example, the respondents put the following living proverbs '*Beekumsi dubartii diinqaa olitti*,<sup>20</sup> to mean that <the knowledge of the women is beyond 'diinqaa'> 'Dinqaa' is the section of a room where woman put articles, dishes and other service materials for food. In Oromo society this section of room is not allowed for men, to add another example with the same meaning but opposite with material always placed in this section of room; the material is mortar. 'Dubartii fi mooyeen diinqaa olittii'<sup>21</sup> to mean <women and mortar are beyond the 'dinka'> means the issues toward 'dinka' do not concern the women. They are accomplished by men. To put this idea in clear language, all household activities are done by women and others are for those who considered themselves as "breadwinner" (men). For instance the followings are results from the

respondents for the question No. 4.2, 'In which one of the following cases do you think that women are seen equally with men?'

Table: 4 Responses for question No.4.2 from women and men

Items	Respondents	
	Men %	Women%
a. Position	25%	21.2%
b. In need	20.5%	21.2%
c. In house hold	34%	31.9%
D. In resource control	20.5%	25.5%
Total	100%	100%

According to Table 4, a high percentage of respondents have answered the choice of 'in house hold' which approve women are more busy in domestic chore than public realm. The other choices like 'in need', position and 'In resource control' have less percentage.

From the elders, there were also responses about social issues of women. For the Interview question No.12, this was asked by the researcher, 'what is the problem, if women are instructing men as they are instructed by men now?' The whole focus group discussion participants in all 'Kebeles' had said, "this is not our culture," but men can assist women household activities like childbearing and cloth washing, but this is not role of men. Even they said, men can help women by accomplishing these mentioned activities but they are not men's (husbands') duties to practice. The reason they had given was. "*Aadaa keenya mitii.*" to mean it is not [part of] our culture. And they consolidated it by uttering the proverb, '*Niitiin dhirsa mootu ganda bultii*'<sup>22</sup> it means, <wife who instructs her husband does not get in home at night>; 'instruct' in this context means, managing the house and controlling the whole family members including resources and other things. According to their explanation and discourses interpretation, women (wives) should be addressed by request day and night like children, unless the things become worse. Because they said, '*Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu.*'<sup>23</sup> to mean <women can be tall in size, but they could not be intelligent.> A number of respondents from both men and women have uttered this Oromo Proverb.

In Tukur Enchine Oromo Community (TEOC) the other issue which was related to gender inequality was political issue. It means that under the

coverage of cultural trends, there is a power structured relationship arranged by men to control women. In this particular situation proverbs play a great role to convey the structure. The structures are extended to all the bodies who are engaged directly or indirectly under “unquestioned norms” that are practiced in the society.

The answer for all questions which were asked by the researcher, about the equality of men and women, was “not [part of] our culture”. For example the proverbs from the respondents concerning women’s political issues in the community are as follows:

- A. ‘Dubartii jeechaan harka, saree jechaan sagaleedha.’<sup>24</sup> <A true woman is hand, a true dog is sound>
- B. ‘Dubbiin dubartii fi udaan indaanqoo burree hin dhabu’<sup>25</sup> <Women’s speech and hen’s faeces are not always spotless>
- C. ‘Kan dubartiin ergite du’a hin sodatu.’<sup>26</sup> <A man who is sent by woman does not fear to die.>
- D. ‘Re’een albaatee fi durbi mammaakte warraa baate.’<sup>27</sup>  
<The girl who has uttered a proverb and a sick goat are nothing to the owner>

In all the above Oromo proverbs the chief words are clearly reflecting women as things or animals, as Simone de Beauvoir (Bryson, 2003) called it: “the second sex” of human nature. In the first proverbs the qualities of woman are compared to the qualities of a dog. According to this proverb, the qualities of woman means, when she prepares best, neat, and delicious food by her hands. Unless and otherwise she may lose her nature of being a woman; she would be kept in of the woman’s nature. Of course there are no correspondent proverbs for men. The dogs which are compared to women are required for the purpose of sound (i.e. barking) to keep the security of its owner, unless the owner does not bother to feed it. Thus, the proverb reveals the politics of women quality assurance in relation with comparing her to dog.

The second proverb also compares women speech with hen’s faece which is always titled by nature with spots of color. It is not for the reason of defect, it is by nature. But the woman’s nature is considered as a defect. To

show that women on their speech create problems, as well as they are not perfect on any job or activity.

The third one considers woman as a catalyst. This means that according to this proverb, all women are aggressive in behavior. It means that when woman send a man for something to accomplish, whatever it is, he should do. Because according to TEOC to be belittled by women is shameful. To save from shame and bad rumor the male ought to accomplish or fulfill woman's instruction.

The last proverb also compares the girl who uttered the proverbs with the goat which was sickened because of some internal problem. Sickness is not normality, it may be an internal problem; the same is true for the girl who uttered the proverb. To utter a proverb is usual for a man, but if particularly a girl utters proverbs, she may be taken as rude. The reason is that she deviates from the norm of the community.

For example, the graph given below shows the percentage of respondents for the question No.7.1, 'What do you think that deviation from traditionally assigned sex roles in your community causes?'

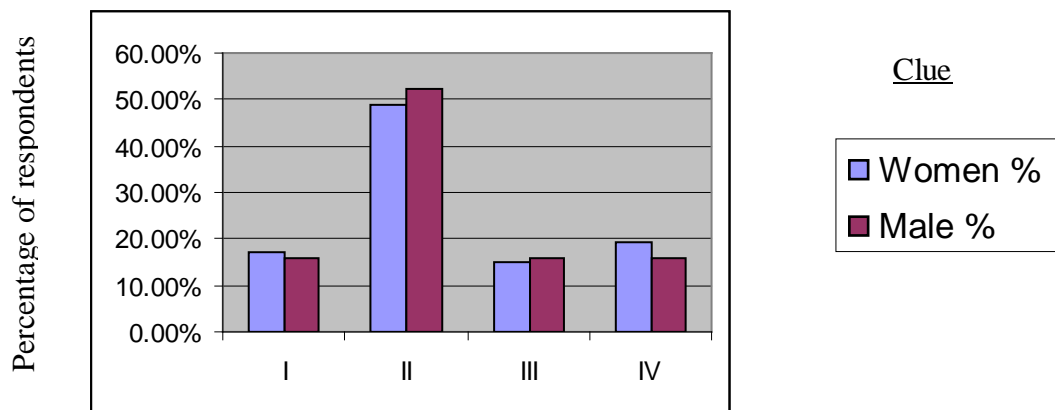


Figure 1: Responses for question No. 7.1 from both sexes.

**Items**

- I. Punishment
- II. Seen as evil
- III. Seen as reward
- IV. Seen as modernism

According to this graph deviation from traditionally assigned sex roles in TEOC causes punishments and seen as an evil at large and it is stricter for women. Therefore, the proverbs reveal women as to fulfill the criterion to be women in the community, besides their biological nature. Women are portrayed as they are always followed by defect and make that defect because of their mindlessness. In addition to this they are also revealed as catalysts who readily prepare themselves as sabotages. The use of Proverbs is considered as privilege of man in the community and when women utter proverbs they are taken as deviant. This is due to the political structure made to govern women as puppets. There are absolute truths accepted worldwide concerning these issues, but they are assumptions taken as rigorous true and fact.

The next are psychological issues conveyed through local proverbs. “Status, temperament, and role are value systems with endless psychological ramifications for each sex,” stated Cudd, Ann and Robin Anderasen (2005:53), to clearly illustrate the issues. To exemplify from local Oromo proverbs regarding marriage, superiority of men, ranks and division of labor and male superior economic position, the following proverbs may be considered

- A. ‘Kan ulfaan ammana nyaatte, deessu ana nyaatti’<sup>28</sup>. <when you have eaten as much while pregnancy, you may eat me after delivery>
- B. ‘Haadha ilaalii intala fuudhii’<sup>29</sup>  
<Having observed the mother: marry the daughter>
- C. ‘Dubartiin aarii baatet qaanii gala diddii’<sup>30</sup><Women leave their home for angry, and refuse to come back for shame>
- D. “Akkanatti nyaatanii dhirsa hin yaadan,” jette niitiin<sup>31</sup>. “Having eaten as such, no recollection of husband,” said the woman.
- E. ‘Dubartiin mana hin qabdu mana dhirsaa galtii’<sup>32</sup>  
<The woman has no home, but lives in her husband’s home>

These proverbs are treat issues that psychologically affect women among community members. To start from the first proverbs, it states that a woman’s feeding habit in pre- and post natal period is not the same. According to this proverb a woman in pregnancy eats less and the pre-natal

eating habit of women can be clue for the post natal period. It is simply a blind guess of the amount of food which she eats interims of not quality but quantity. “You may eat me after delivery,” to explain that the husband is the responsible for what the wife eats and, he is giving warning to her. Thus, the eating circumstance of the pregnancy is evaluated by her husband and the wife should take care of her eating habit. The proverb may reveal the wariness of the husband after his wife’s delivery.

The second proverb explains the selection of marriage alliance contract which is pre-determined by observing the mother of the bride. According to this proverb if one’s own mother did not attract someone who is looking for marriage, the daughter also cannot attract anyone else who is in need of a marriage contract. The proverb considers the daughter is the carbon copy of her mother. It is implied that the father, genes, environment and culture have no role to differentiate the character of a daughter from that of the mother.

The third proverb describes the role of women in public and private realms. It means that women give more value for public issues than private agenda. According to this proverb “Shame” is because of cultural norm that is not accepted in that particular society (TEOC) .When she leaves home for some problem, i.e. If someone’s wife leaves home she will not come back until she is begged by local community elders.

Otherwise, she may face mortification from the surrounding people as she has no relative to guarantee when she comes back without being requested to do so.

The other proverb, ‘akkanatti nyaatanii dhirsa hin yaadatani,’ to mean <Having eaten as such no recollection of husband> means that to remember husband the wife should eat small amounts of food while her husband is not around. In this case also the women are not themselves; they are men’s property or a wife is her husband’s property. It shows the superiority of men over women. The wife may face disdain when she is seen eating alone or eating much quantity of food until she is satisfied in the absence of her husband.

The last proverb makes the wife unqualified to have from property and home. According to this proverb the whole property, the husband and the wife utilize in common belongs to the husband. This is also an example of psychological dominance of cultural institutions. Therefore, dismissal of women from economy, comments on eating habit of women while pregnancy, the place the women give for themselves in the community and public and relative comparison of daughter and mother are psychological influences which are ready-made under “ unquestioned norms,” of culture. To estimate the intensity of psychological impacts of proverbs a question No. 2.3, “Do you think that proverbs are negatively affecting the person referred to” is answered by respondents as shows in Table: 5 Responses for question No.2.3 from both sexes

<b>Do you think that proverbs are negatively affecting the person referred to?</b>			
Items		Women %	Men%
A	Yes	51.52%	56.67%
B	No	48.48%	43.33%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

As this table shows 51.52%from women respondents and 56.67%from men respondents have answered that proverbs negatively affect the person referred to.

Issues like gender stereotypes, gender roles and gender identity are like the previous issues. This is because; the proverbs reveal the group concepts which are called as gender stereotypes. For instance the proverb mentioned under psychological issues “A”, “B” and “D” could be the best examples in this regard. They are group concept and psychological features that people believe to be associated with those proverbs. The others which are shaped by society are gender roles. For this the best example is “D”. The proverb itself is approved by the women and displays the adopted society’s beliefs.

## **4.2 Cultural Structures that Help to Construct Gender Inequality via Proverb.**

The number and the kind of structures that help to construct gender inequality are systematic and invisible: They are different in different communities and different in different cultures. They are deeply woven into social political and economic structures. All the institutions are not free from bias of gender inequality construction. They not only cause inequality, but also play a great role to make them invisible.

In the case of TEOC, the structures are closely related with cultural trends. They are passed from generation to generation through oral literature, particularly proverbs. Those structures are hidden under social, political and economic aspects of the society. For example, the cultural expectation of women in the community which was enquired through the question No.9.1, ‘Which one of the following do you think is the realm for women?’ all the respondents, women and men have given similar answer: “domestic realm”. The reasons they have given are:

- It is a trend that passes from generation to generation
- It is the norm of our community
- It is the cultural trends which were adapted once upon a time and come through generations.

In addition to questionnaires as a data collecting instrument, the focus group discussion with elders also consolidates this response, namely “domestic sphere”.

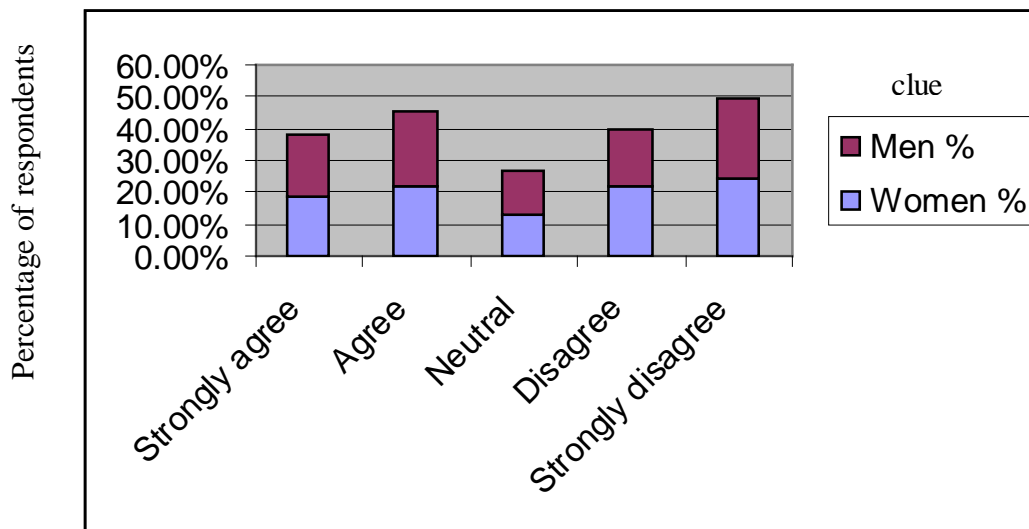
From the marriage institution contract child bearing and child rearing structures are invisible means of systematic oppression which are the cause for gender inequality practices. The following results show the respondents’ answer for the question No. 11.1, “In your area child bearing and child rearing responsibility is given to,” The answer from 100%males is “women” and the answer from 100%females is “women”. No respondent has given from the two sexes “both” or “men” as an answer. For the next question No.



11.2 which is, ‘what do you think the reason(s) is (are)? Is the following responses have been given.

Most respondents have given their answer as the causes are cultural trends and community expectation that one individual to do domestic and another public work. In addition to the above response the following graph also shows the attitude toward the sources of division of work in the community. Question No. 11.4 which is, ‘Do you agree that women’s or men’s role is determined by nature?’ The women have given 18.52% strongly agree, 22.22% agree, 12.96%neutral, 22.22disagree, and 24.07% strongly disagree. And also the men have given 19.61% strongly agreed, 23.53% agree, 13.78%neutral17.65% disagree, and 25.49% strongly disagree. This shows more percentage of respondents are agree on the idea which is women’s roles and men’s roles are not determined by nature. The following graph also shows this truth.

Graph 2: Responses for question No. 11.4 from both sexes



As the graph 2 implies women’s or men’s roles is not determined by nature and they are determined by ideology that came from generation to generation through cultural trends.

Concerning the cultural structures that help to construct gender inequality, there are many proverbs which are currently uttered in the community. For example:

- A. 'Namni daakuu nyaatuu fi kan dubartiin mootu afaan guute hin dubbatu.'<sup>33</sup>  
 <A man who is eating flour and a man who is guided by woman cannot speak in confidence>
- B. 'Gaafa harreen loon dura galtee fi dubartiin dhiira dura rafte gaarii hin ta'u'<sup>34</sup>  
 <When donkey is early to home and woman is early to bed things become worse>
- C. 'Hoolaa fi dubartiin dahoo jaalattii.'<sup>35</sup>  
 <Women and sheep like shade>
- D. 'Dubartii fi kopheen jijjiiran taltii'<sup>36</sup>  
 < It is better to change Shoes and woman >

The Oromo proverbs which are mentioned above convey cultural structures which were adopted in the community. For example the proverb, 'Namni daaku nyaatuu fi kan dabartiin mootu afaan guutee hin dubbatu' <A man who is eating flour and a man who is guided by woman cannot speak in confident> states that a man guided or managed by woman is considered an imbecile. There are cultural structures that take it as a shame to be led or guided by women and it is disdainful to give responsibility for women while men are present.

The other proverb 'Gaafa harreen loon dura galtee fi dubartiin dhiira dura rafte gaarii hin ta'u' "When donkey is early to home and woman is early to bed things become worse" indicates the cultural trend that both woman and donkey have a low status among their class categories. The donkeys are considered as cheap and simpletons among animals and, so that they are not early to home before other animals. Accordingly, a woman is a service provider for males and they showed not go early to bed. 'Hoolaa fi dubartiin dahoo jaalattii,' <woman and sheep like shade" is to explain that both of them are not physically strong to resist heat. Of course in the case of women, it means, she is dependent on man for some hard things which require forces and skills. According to this proverb women are lack these skills and ability which are expected from them.

On the basis of the last proverb, ‘Dubartii fi kopheen jijjiiran toltii’ “It is better to change shoes and woman” it is already known that human beings need variation by nature. That is the reason why the following is said, “Variety is the spice of life”. But, according to this Oromo proverb ‘change’ is for man, it is not mentioned for women. It is considered women as agents of spice of life to man. In other words: priority to change is given to man and hence woman is only to be changed as shoes.

Further reasons for cultural structures which reveal woman as wife, sister, mate and mother are as follows. According TEOC, cultural structures are similar to what Bukenya (1994) states, good wife is one who keeps whatever she has inside ,perseveres, does not answer back, express no opinion and is seen but not heard. That is a good wife. They legitimize their custom and create and perpetuate an ideology. To give examples from local Oromo proverbs which portray woman as described above are as follows:

- A. ‘Dubartiin abbaa warraa mootu olla horii hin seetu’<sup>37</sup>  
<Woman who defeats her husband gives nothing for neighbors>
- B. ‘Dubartiin keessummaa gara qabdu keessummaa fira hin qabdu’<sup>38</sup>  
<A voracious woman has no relative or guest>
- C. ‘Dubartii fi fardi waan kennaniif nyaattu’.<sup>39</sup>  
<Woman and horse eat what they are given>
- D. ‘Niitiin Dhirsaa ta’uu baannan hin bultu’<sup>40</sup>  
<Unless a woman favors her husband, she does not stay with him>

These proverbs illustrate structures that are hidden in culture to create gender inequality. To begin from the first proverb, ‘Dubartiin abbaa warraa mootu olla horii hin seetu, <Woman who defeat her husband gives nothing for the neighbors> exhorts displaying that one’s wife should keep silent whatever oppositions come from the neighbors. Of course it is culturally known that a wife is molded as her husband wants her to be. This is indicated in the proverb: ‘Abbaa warraa fi haadha warraa laga tokkoo waraabuu’<sup>41</sup><The wife and the husband are drawn from a river> to mean that both of them are carbon copy of each other.

The second proverb ‘Dubartiin keessummaa garaa qabdu keessummaa fira hin qabdu’ <A voracious woman has no relative-guest> It is culturally

known that woman eats a small amount of food compared with other family members, especially males. To consolidate this idea the other local proverb is 'Dubartiin sabbata nyaattii' <woman eats her sash> It is a metaphorical expression which means that a woman ties her belly not to eat a lot.

The third proverb compares the woman to a horse to mean that both should obey as their masters. 'Dubartii fi fardi waan kennaniif nyaatii. <Woman and horse eat what they are given> and the last proverb. 'Niitiin dhirsaa ta'uu baannaan hin bultuu' 'unless woman favors her husband, she does not stay with him' imply that woman should follow her husband's interests.

According to the foregoing discussion, wife as a community member is not implied in the cultural structures conveyed by proverbs. A number of structures are also addressee woman as a sister. Therefore, women as sisters also have the following cultural structures that are the bases for gender inequality construction. The following proverbs clearly show them as such.

- A. 'Gara laafetiin obboleettii obboleessaaf ulfooftii'<sup>42</sup>  
<A kind sister becomes pregnant for her brother>
- B. 'Obboleessa gowwaa aariitu ajjeesa'<sup>43</sup>  
<A foolish brother died of angry>

The Two are local proverbs which are uttered in the local daily works to show that girls as sister are not themselves. The first proverb explains that sister of any body does not make sexual intercourse with her brother because according to TEOC culture, it is forbidden to make it and marry sisters. But the proverb indicates that because of her kindness or generosity she may do it. It is over exaggeration to explain that girls are kindness and do something which is culturally not permitted to do. If she does it, she may deviate from cultural norms and become deserves mortification. The second proverb is different in message, but depicts a girl as sister.

It is said to mean that when a sister does something with non-relative man, her brother becomes angry, if he is foolish, but he puts it as usual, if he is smart. Because sister of anybody, whether her brother loves or not,

should get marriage with non-relative man. Therefore, both proverbs show cultural structures which are adopted in that particular community.

There are a number of proverbs that are currently uttered in the society concerning the cultural structure construction. They show girls in a different perspective as the following:

A. 'Kadhannaan diddee dhiifnaan booche.'<sup>44</sup>

<She was begged: refused, cried>

B "Anuu jiraa harmeen heerumaaf boochii," jette intalli<sup>45</sup>

< "I am here without marriage, my mother has cried for marriage," said the daughter>

C. 'Durbaa fi qullubbii abbaatu bakka gaarii dhaabbata'<sup>46</sup>

<The daughter and garlic are planted in the best place by the owner>

D. 'Intala haadhaan qixxee, shiroo arrabaan fixxe'<sup>47</sup>

<Daughter who is the same as her mother completed 'Shiro' by licking> (shiro) means the flour of bean and pea.

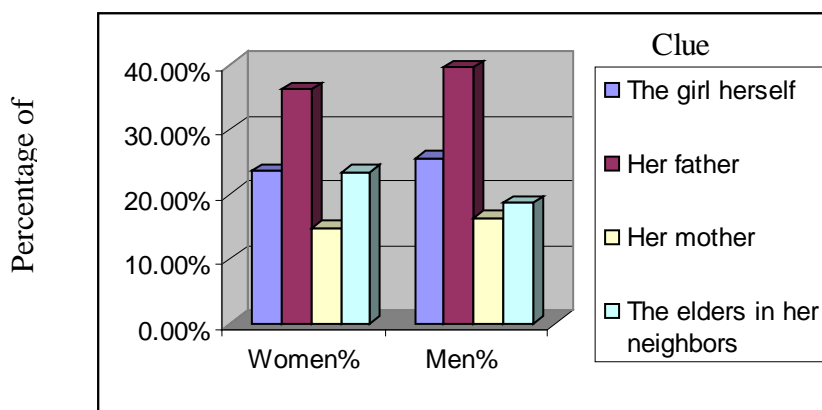
The first proverb, 'kadhannaan diddee dhiifnaan booche' <she was begged: refused, cried> explains that girls in that community tell their minds through tears rather than face-to-face verbal communication. According to this proverb, girl's arts of communications are their tears from their eyes, not words from their mouth.

The second proverb, 'Anuu jiraa harmeen heerumaaf boochii' <I am here without marriage, my mother cried for marriage>this is to show how a girl is in a hurry to marriage. According to this proverb the daughter and mother do not like each other on marriage procedures and it shows the females are very sensitive to the issue of marriage.

The third proverb 'Durbaa fi quullubbii abbaatu bakka gaarii dhaabbata' <The daughter and garlic are planted in the best place by the owner> 'Abbaa' in this proverb means both father and owner. In the case of a girl, father can be the owner since she is living with him but not when she is married, and husband becomes owner. Thus, the father plays a great role to marry his daughter to the best man who is rich, well-to-do in family back ground and of selected race and so on. The last proverb is also explaining

the same truth which consolidates cultural structural which is conveyed through local proverbs.

The fourth proverb, ‘Intala haadhaan qixxee, shiroo arrabaan fixxee.’ “Daughter who has the same (traits) as her mother completed ‘Shiro’ by licking. This is to mean that a daughter is usually the same in conduct as her mother. It states that behavior of the mother something for the daughter and she copied that ill behavior from her mother and applies it in unnecessary situation where cultural norms do not permit it to do and it is taken as mortification. It is the cultural construction which is legitimized by community. In the previous section there was the same implication of proverb that says, ‘Haadha ilaali intala fuudhii’. <Having observed the mother marries the daughter> to consolidate this cultural construction of girls traits. For example, the following graph is the result of question No.10.1, shows the percentage of marriage decision which is made in the TEOC. The question is ‘In your community the final decision of marriage is made by,’



Graph 3 Responses for question No. 10.1 from both sexes.

According to this graph 3, the final decision of marriage in TEOC is taken by the girl’s father and by the elders in her neighborhood .As respondents have answered; this has a negative implication on her future life and increase inequality as well as lack of self-confidence

For the next consecutive question No.10.2, ‘If your answer is ‘her father’, what you think of the consequence?’ the following responses are given by respondents.

- There may be no love between them (girl and boy)
- The girl's father blessing is good for her next life
- If there will be a dislike between them legally a boy's and girl's fathers may give solution to the problem in common
- Since father likes his daughter, he chooses good man (boy) for his daughter.
- The relationship between them becomes strong.

It implies that as a result the women feel inferiority and lack of self confidence in their public life, and which is the base for cultural inequality construction conveyed through proverbs and others.

Table 6 Responses for the question No. 8.1 from both sexes.

<b>Do you agree that a child's earliest exposure to what it means to be a girl or a boy comes from parents?</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Women %</b>	<b>Men%</b>
a. Strongly agree	43.18%	48.78%
b. agree	22.72%	14.63%
c. Neutral	11.36%	12.2%
d. Disagree	11.36%	12.2%
e. Strongly disagree	11.36%	12.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

According to this table results parents are the base and critical for child's gender construction and foundation for any of psychological development which has inter relation with cultural trends. There are girls image in the proverbs which are constructed as cultural structures show the true of girls through her tear, on the marriage procedure even daughter is jealousy of her mother and girl is very fast to be married, the fate of girl marriage alliance is determined by her father, and the traits of the girls are from her parents, particularly from her mother.

The other cultural structures for woman as mate are not especially supported by elders. According to TEOC culture, the best mate formation is with girls who are correspondents with age level. It should be the same for both sexes. That is good to save herself from back-biting and rumor from the surrounding people.

For example the following Tukur Enchine Oromo proverbs show the truth of girls mate formation structures with her similar age-level.

- A. 'Durba fi agadaa bira hin darban'<sup>48</sup>  
"A girl and cane do not pass by"
- B. 'Dubbaa fi dullacha abbaatu gaggeefata'<sup>49</sup>  
<Girl and aged-person are accompanied by the owner>
- C. 'Durbaa fi Sooressa nagaa hin gaafatan'<sup>50</sup>  
<The rich and girl are not saluted>
- D. 'Durbaa fi damma nama itti amanan qabuu.'<sup>51</sup>  
<Girl and honey are no trust to all>

To analyze the first proverb according to cultural context, it reveals that the truth of a girl which is hidden in it and faces the girls. There is such saying 'Durbaa fi agadaa bira hin darban' <A girl and cane do not pass by> means that when someone come to any girl, there would be pushing, tossing and insulting. Although such like activities are not permitted to do so, they are already known. Even the girls by themselves do not take them as something extremely rude activities but the big problem is when they are changed in to force which lead to do something else. Therefore, the girls have no easy way to establish opposite sexes' mate. They should be very fast and shrewd to give appropriate responses to all activities which are thrown toward them from males (boys).

The second proverb, 'Durbaa fi dullacha abbaatu gaggeeffata.' <Girl and aged person are accompanied by the owner> of course the word [dullacha] can be used for old cattle but in this proverb meaning, it implies aged-person who is unable to walk a long distance at night in dark. Because such persons cannot walk in such condition and such distance, they should be accompanied by close relative, may be son, or grandson. This is the case to support the aged person because of energy. But in the case of girls it is



different, and what makes it different is the issue in it. According to this proverb and cultural context, the girl should be accompanied by her close relative when she wants to go anyplace. Because under the proverb, 'Durbaa fi agadaa bira hin darbanii'. <A girl and cane do not pass by" is explained the reason clearly. It is because of to save them from danger or attack by boys (males).

The third proverb, 'Durbaa fi sooressa nagaa hin gaafatanii' < The rich and girl are not saluted > means when somebody want to salute a girl, it is assumed as something else beyond greeting. Similarly, the rich man is saluted for the purposes of getting money or other support from him because people consider as the rich man is okay to cover all things which required money. So, interims of implication both are beyond expectation of the subject which is clearly displayed.

The last proverb, 'Durbaa fi damma nama itti amanan qabuu' <Girl and honey are no trust to all> Honey is a very delicious food. For this reason, everybody wants to eat it, even to lick. In addition to its deliciousness, according to TEOC, it has more value than other kinds of food. This is culturally known in Tukur Enchine Oromo communities; even in the family when mother and father are out of sight, children steal it. That is not the problem of the children; family should put it in save place, unless it is exposed to the trouble. The same is true for girl. Nobody can take the responsibility of girl's care. If she may be disverged by a man, or she may be persuaded to go with some body, without the knowledge and permission of her parents, the problem may follow her and it is because of her parent's ill follow-up. Thus, in the coming marriage contract she may face a problem and her parents may face cultural mortification. If there is no virginity, there is no love. Gradually it becomes deteriorate and the result will be divorce with her husband. That is the main reason why her parents strictly follow her.

Generally due to cultural influences, it is believed that girls in TEOC are always over whelmed by strangers. To put those in a nutshell, in all the previous section, girls who are depicted in proverbs are as a social asset,'

everybody can converse, as no truest from social community, as easily cheated and need great care, and as every man ready-made to attack them.

The last cultural structures for woman as mother are not more of negative but more of positive. Mother is respected and considered as an honorable form of address. Mother is respected by her children and by all members of the community. The following Oromo proverbs reveal mother cultural structural formation.

- A. 'Haadha dhabuu mannaa, haadha dhabduu wayyaa,'<sup>52</sup>  
<Having destitute mother is better than not >
- B. 'Haadhaa fi lafatu nama danda'aa'<sup>53</sup>  
<Mother and ground have the challenges to hold somebody>
- C. 'Haadhaa fi raafuu hin quufanii'<sup>54</sup>  
<No man is satisfied looks of mother and eats of cabbage>
- D. 'Haadha duute mannaa, haadha maraatte wayyaa.'<sup>55</sup>  
<Mad mother is better than died mother>

To start from the first proverb, 'Haadha dhabuu mannaa, haadha dhabduu wayyaa' <Having destitute mother is better than not> means that mother is greater than everything. According to this proverb, psychologically somebody who have mother is not equal with someone who do not have mother. In this TEOC the word mother is sacred.

The second proverb, 'Haadhaa fi lafatu nama danda'aa'  
<Mother and land have the challenges to hold somebody> to mean both of them are enough resistance to hold any traits, ill-behaviors and so on of some body. Mother can correct her sons' ill-acts and ill doing because she is mother.

The third proverb 'Haadhaa fi raafuu hin quufanii, <No man is satisfied looks of mother and eats of cabbage> According to this proverb cabbage is a kind of green vegetable which is very soft and does not have much nutrition content, when it is highly cooked. Thus, when it is provided to eat, someone can eat a lot of it. Because it is simply get in to oral cavity to store in the stomach rather than satisfy a man. Even without senses of full appetite, it punches out some one's stomach. In this context, it is compared with mother, but not the values of nutrition content, but the amount

somebody would have and able to have it. Somebody can eat simply a lot amount of cabbage with meal and also mother gives continuous desire to have in front every time. Thus the proverb compares two of them on contrary to nutrition value and on the correspondence of amounts to have in.

## **4.3 Roles of Proverbs in Gender**

### **Social Construction**

Proverbs play great roles to construct gender inequality in human social life procedures. Peoples give attention to proverb and try to understand the messages which are conveyed through proverbs. For example the respondents have given the following answers for the questionNo.2.2, 'What do you think about the function of proverbs in your area?'

Responses of men:

1. To transfer the message obliquely.
2. To tersely and precisely convey the message to the audience.
3. To give values to the message which is going to decoded in the minds of the audience.
4. To summarize the current agendas
5. To indirectly give advice to someone who commit blames.
6. Elders use proverbs because service as cause and summary of agendas.
7. To mediate those who are quarreled each other.
8. To shorten long agenda or to summarize it.
9. On the meeting to begin the agendas
- 10 To provide a quality agenda that everybody should give attention to it.
- 11 To correct someone who leave the agenda and mixed with other irrelevant issues.

**Responses of women:**

1. To display hotness and liveliness of someone who is nearby.
2. To get awareness and knowledge of the community world outlook.
3. To consolidate the issues.

4. Proverbs hold a lot of cultural secret issues at the same time and help to convey them.
5. To facilitate ways to convey good agenda.

Of course a lot of concepts have been said under men, but what are added here are exceptions or something different from men. Proverbs play a great role in the daily practices. As respondents have explained the function of proverbs are shortness, terseness and wisdom.

To put it in a nut shell the respondents' implication concerning religion, politics, and marriage through proverbs, all have close relation with human social life which is the cause for inequality. The following proverbs are examples for roles of proverbs in gender social construction.

'Dubartii fi ibida hin amanan'<sup>56</sup>

<No trust of woman and fire>

'Dubartiin dheertuun dhuma midhaanii hin beektuu'<sup>57</sup>

<A tall woman does not know the end of grain in storage>

'Ta'uu mannaa durba dhalchuu wayyaa'<sup>58</sup>

"Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle".

To start from the beginning woman is compared with fire. Human being uses fire for different purposes: to cook, to warm, and to produce different materials. They use it as it is necessary. But the nature of fire is burning. It damages human body tissues and other, if somebody closes to it unsafely. Fire is very dangerous, unless it is kept properly. In the absence of safety the damages it causes are as much as its advantage when something is approached to it. According to this proverb, the woman is the same behavior as that of fire unless someone takes care of her behavior; she dispels any things which are useful and useless.

The elders' respondents had compared woman with fire, but they had given the reason as follows. Human beings use fire to melt butter which sweetens the food. Unless the fire, butter does not give as such values to people. When somebody use fire carelessly, it devastates all things and they said, the same is true for woman in ill-care circumstances.

The second proverb, 'Dubartiin dheertuun dhuma midhaanii hin beektuu.' <A tall woman does not know the end of the grain in storage>this

is to show that the tall woman reaches the grain in the storage easily and gets enough amount of grain for family daily consumption. As she frequently does it, the grain would be finished. Because, there is no problem on her accessibility in relation to her height to the grain. She only understands it when it is already empty. Therefore, the proverb has tried to show this reality in human social life.

The third proverb, “Ta’uu mannaa durba dhalchuu wayyaa.’ <Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle> to mean that becoming a daughter’s father is the last chance rather than being idle. This is to show that the range of daughters requirement in the community. The following respondents’ response clearly shows the facts for the question No. 9.4, 'parents want the new born to be 'boy(s) or girl(s)' '. All the respondents from both sexes have answered "boy(s)". The reasons they have given are as follows:

- I. Because the son leftovers in his father’s home and inherit the property but the daughter be married. Because the father could not be called by the daughter as x’s father or father of ‘x’. When x is the name of the son.
- II. The son becomes the representative of the clan but the daughter could not be to do so.
- III. In the case of the son there would be continuity of genealogy, but not the daughter

On this particular question, both sexes have given the same answer for the question No. 9.4.

In addition to the above issues the roles of proverbs in gender social construction, for the question No.3.3 ,‘proverbs are usually uttered ‘about women or men’, from women respondents 18.6% of them have answered ' about men',41.86% of them have answered 'about women' ,39.53% have also answered ,‘I do not know’ answer and also from men respondents 25.5% of them have answered 'men,27.5 % of them have answered 'women' and 50 % of them have responded 'I do not know answer . Therefore, it implies that proverbs reveal men and women but more display weak side of women of community members

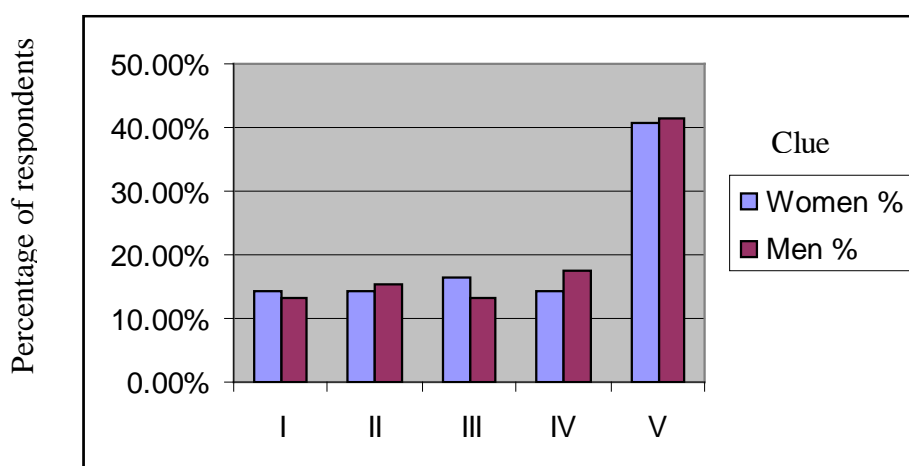
Moreover for the consecutive question No.3.4 which says, 'If your answer is 'about women' what issues figure in women's use of proverbs?'

Among the women respondents 47.51% have said negative (weakness) and 24.46 %have said positive (strength) and 28.36% have said 'I do not know' answer. From men respondents 43.94% have said negative (weakness) and 23.48% have said positive (strength) and 32.57% have said' 'I do not know' answer. They have given the following weakness issues. Their weaknesses are:

- I. On giving decision for something.
- II. On home management and political administration.
- III. Lack of confidence on education.
- IV. Obliviousness and easily cheated, and carelessness.

All answers are from women and the men respondents have only said the answer 'idea of undermining'. Therefore, these show that proverbs play great role in gender social construction. If your answer to the question No. 3.4, 'what issues figure in women's use of proverbs?' is negative / weakness/, the question No. 3.4.1, that follows it 'what issues are concerned with it? 'The following graph shows the percentage of respondents from both men and women.

Graph: 4 Responses for question No. 3.4.1 from both sexes.



- I. Unfaithful kinds and adulterous behavior
- II. Cruel and unsympathetic
- III. Selfish and greedy

IV. Stubborn and poor at decision making

V. All the above issues.

According to this graph result proverbs reveal more negative issues of women on which all respondents have responded similar answer. All, unfaithful kinds and adulterous behavior, cruel and unsympathetic, selfish and greedy, and stubborn and poor at decision making, more percentage of respondents' are said the answer 'all issues'.

#### **4.4 Awareness of People on Inequality**

##### **Construction through Proverbs**

In human social life there are elements of heterogeneity under coherent groups. For example, there are birth group, class group, political group, ethnic group, and race group. In this circumstance one group strives other group for domination. The means of domination at this century is more invisible than visible. Domination and oppressions are through human social life institution: cultural, politics and economy. Thus, the state of awareness's on inequality construction through life cycle of people is displayed from the respondents through the following question No. 5.1 below.

Table: 7 Responses for question No. 5.1 from both sexes

<b>Do you agree that without recognition within the family women's positions are subordinated to those of men?</b>		
<b>Items</b>	<b>Women%</b>	<b>Men%</b>
Strongly agree	34.69%	34.78%
Agree	22.45%	19.57%
Neutral	14.29%	15.22%
Disagree	14.29%	15.22%
Strongly disagree	14.29%	15.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Responses from interview and focus group discussion and questionnaires approve that women are unknowingly dominated and oppressed in the family life situation. The results from question No. 5.1 table 7 above also approves the responses from the former data collection tool results.

#### **4.5 Responses of Women on Sexist Proverbs**

To start by definition of sexism which has given by Cudd, Ann and Robin Andreson (205:71), “Systematic pervasive but often subtle, force that maintain the oppression of women and that is at work through institutional structures, in interpersonal interactions and the attitudes that are expressed in them, and in the cognitive linguistic and emotional processes of individual minds.” Apparently sexist proverbs are rooted in human social structure and display oppression of women through social, political and in economic aspects. Of course all proverbs which are analyzed under previous section are sexist proverbs and approve this reality. But under this section that should be analyzed in women responses from respondents.

The followings are women responses to the question No. 12.2 that follow.

Table: 8 Responses for question No.12.3 from both sexes

<b>Do you agree that male supremacy is desirable?</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Women%</b>	<b>Men%</b>
A. Strongly agree	36.1%	36.96%
B. Agree	16.33%	15.22%
C. Neutral	12.24%	13.4%
D. Disagree	14.28%	19.57%
C. Strongly disagree	26.53%	15.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The answer they have given for the next question No. 12.3, that says ‘can you give local proverbs that prove or substantiate) your answer?’ are as follows:

Under the coverage of culture, there are resemblances of community Elders with ‘God’; they said, “God and elders are the same; they should be



respected and deserved great values”. The proverbs they have given are as follows:

A. ‘Dubartii dhibbaa mannaa dhiira tokco wayyaa’<sup>59</sup>

<A man is greater than one hundred women>

B. ‘Dhiiraa jiruu dhiirummaa hin dhuunfatan.’<sup>60</sup>

<In man presence no possession of manhood>

Of course it is to show that man is vital in all direction concerning their social life. For example, according to the second proverb, ‘Dhiiraa jiruu dhiirummaa hin dhuunfatan’ <In man presence no possession of manhood> is to state that if man is at around woman cannot get confidence to say and do something. Because she thinks that man knows every things greater than woman, and according to local trends, priority would be given to man in concerning speech, knowledge and sometimes at the moment energy required works. The first proverb is simply to compare a number of women with a single man in all issues. Therefore, women’s responses on sexist proverbs are not as deep as feminist group have tried to solve the problem. Still the problem is in visible and covered under cultural trends, religions, economy and politics. Some of the respondents have given that culture is a trend that comes from former generation and it is impossible to clear from inequality construction and biased ideology.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

Oral literature portrays and expresses human social life and traditional values. Proverbs are one class of oral literature which reveals human social life and world outlook of particular community. They share the characteristics of orality. Anonymity, verbal heritage, malleability, historical phenomenon, and oral treasure are characteristics of oral literature and true of proverbs. Depending on characteristics of proverbs, it is possible to comment on the social roles, community roles, sex roles and individual roles in power relationship structures among human beings. Gender inequality is the denial of equality between men and women which is reflected through cultural trends by using proverbs and other agents. In other words: in the proverbs there are images of women, men, and community. The world outlook of life, philosophy and ideology in general can be revealed by proverbs of a particular community, but also deep inequality. Thus proverbs are used as a system of inequality delegation in between men and women.

Gender and sex are individual differences while the former one is social construction through socialization and cultural trends and the latter is biological programmed difference, which is the base for the first. Proverbs convey system of inequality relaying upon gender, not sex. Because sex is ordained by nature but gender which is the product of culture is not. Psychological development have share with gender traits and deeply internalized characterization of individual person.

- Proverbs are highly exaggerating the weak side of women and hide the positive side completely.
- The actual characteristics of women are considered as nothing and ideal behaviors are distributed in proverbs and in cultural trends.
- Proverbs are glorifying the men esteem at far distances from women and deny women entire human rights under the coverage of “unquestioned norms”.

- Women are considered as nothing in human social life, like institution, economic, politics and socially in the use of proverbs sphere as they are unknowingly consent to their human rights violation and also Marriage contract system in TEOC highly affect women in social life.
- Proverbs are used as cultural tools to conduct oppression and domination, and dominate one group of persons, women.
- Gender social construction under the coverage of cultural trend seems justice for one group person and unjust for another group person which is men and women respectively.
- Proverbs are portraying women as social asset who every male can use in as much as cultural trends permit to them.
- Proverbs are like common property for men but women are excluded from them.
- Cultural structures through which proverbs convey concept seems man made for them as self-esteem.
- Cultural norms are like readymade for men to dominate women through proverbs and other oral literature.
- Domestic realm is the area where women enjoy themselves rather than men and delimited for women by men as some implication of proverbs by using house hold structures.
- Most of the proverbs are comparing women with disliked animals like hyena, dog, donkey, monkey and other animals like sheep and, symbolize with evil besides of these; they are revealed as catalyst, material like mortar.
- Some proverbs are portraying women as they are weak in decision making and as they are exceeding public life than private life, and as tears are symbol for their mind.
- Some proverbs dispossess women from family properties and deserve them cheap resource, but not home, land and re-generated property and completely out cast them from her and her husband property.
- Proverbs detect negative suggestion on feeding habit of women and push them toward obscured place to eat.

- Proverbs resemble the human nature of women with fire which is danger when it is used unsafely.
- Proverbs reveal women as they are eager to marriage contract than men.
- According to this research results, in TEOC cultural trends, image of girls in oral literature at youth age life is more negative than adult life age. Because most of proverbs about mother and age beyond that are not ill reflection, it is more of positive .Proverbs under examples of women as mother could be evidences for this idea.

Thus, proverbs are making a system by joining people ideas together and make these ideas continue to exist for a long time. The system is a mere of explanation by the agents of social and psychic mechanisms.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The negative reflection of women through proverbs and other oral literature are common in every community and the same all time. Proverbs are changed from time to time depending on the occasion. Therefore, to assure egalitarian community and neutral gender differences, the base activity to be done, is change of mindset and social set of new generation. The change could be revolution, but not evolutionary change, because it is invisible and implicit. For example from Oromo proverbs:

A. 'Boru hin beekneen qoda-bukoon bira sagal'<sup>61</sup>

<She who does not expect for the future surrounded by nine different dishes>

B .Boru hin beekneen qoda bukoon bira lama.'<sup>62</sup>

<She who does not expect for the future surrounded by two different dishes>

Here it implies that the nine different dishes are adapted to two and currently the community is using the recent one, which is 'B'.

The other from English proverb like Oromo proverb:

A. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."(old)

B. "A bird in the hand is worth ten in the wood." (new)

From Georges, Robert (1995:11)

It also implies that 'two in the bush' is adopted into 'ten in the wood' Therefore, both of them are clue to adoption of oral literature and proverbs

Cultural assumptions and ideologies which are not proved or so called “unquestioned norm” are the base to convey inequality in the human social life.

Highly conservative oral literature, especially proverbs are the greater to be challenged by scientific rigorous, intellectuals and they are highly exposed to evaluate and re-evaluation. Of course less conservative proverbs require steady time than the others. To put it in a nutshell, ‘he who climbs too high is soon to fall.’ The state of perpetuation of proverbs is also clearly deduced from characteristics of oral literature which are verbal heritage of anonymity and of the historical phenomenon.

The age-respecting dominance system allowed older members of men to convey structural inequality through proverbs and thus, they should avail the benefit to build egalitarian society and banish, gender discrimination and ideology of oppression from cultural trends rather than accepting theory blindly eyes.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A Naples, Nancy. (2003). ***Feminist and Method***. London: Routledge.
- Abadir, Abraham. (2008). Dialectal Comparison among Harar and Macha Oromo: A Case Study through some selected issues in their Phonology, Morphology via Social Context. (Unpublished B.A Thesis) Addis Ababa University Department of Foreign Language and Literature.
- Abraham, M.H. (1981). ***A Glossary of Literary Terms*** .New York: Cornell University.
- Achebe, Ch. (1958). ***Things Fall Apart***. London: Heinemann.
- Afonja, S. (2005). ***Gender and Feminism in African development Discourse*** .Indiana University (unpublished)
- (2008). ***Gender, Society, and Development: Gender Training the Source Book***. Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute.
- Balkem A.A., (1980). ***Modern Ethiopia***. Rotterdam.
- Bascom, W. (1992). ***African Folktales*** .Indiana University press.
- Baswell, G. (1962). ***Fundamental of Folk Literature***. (n.p)
- Bender, M. (Ed.) (1970). ***The Non-semantic Language of Ethiopia***. New York: Michiganstate University.
- Berhanu, B. (2008). The Portrayal of Women in Folktales and Popular Sayings of the Oromo of East Wallega. (unpublished M.A Thesis) Addis Ababa University Department of Foreign Language and Literature.
- Brown, Keith. (Ed.) (2006). ***Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics***. London: Elsevier. vol.IV, P.733-9.
- Bryman, A. (1988). ***Quantity and quality in social Research***. London: Long boough.
- Bryson, Valerie. (2003). ***Feminist political Theory***. New York: Palgrave.
- Bukenya, et al. (Eds.) (1994). ***Understanding Oral literature***. Nairobi: Nairobi University press.
- Caffin, P and H.Cohen. (1996). ***Folklore in America***. (n.p)
- Chancer, Lynn and Beverly Xaviera Watkins. (2006). ***Gender, Race, and Class An over view***. Black Well Publishing.
- Collins, V.H. (1965). ***A Book of English Proverbs***. (n.p)

- Cornwall, Andréa et al. (Eds.) (2007). ***Feminism in Development***. New York: Z- Book.
- Cornwall, Andréa. (Ed) (2005). ***Gender in African***. Indiana University press.
- Cudd, Ann and Robin O. Andreason. (2005). ***A philosophical Anthology***. Blackwell Publishing.
- Dundes, Alan. (1973). ***Mother Wit***. London: university press of Mississippi
- Dorson, R. (Ed)(1972). ***Folklore and Folk life: An Introduction***. Chicago: The University of Chicago.
- Edmunds and Alan Dundes. (1995). ***Oedipus: Folklore Case book***: the University of Wisconsin press.
- Finnegan, Ruth. (1970). ***Oral Literature in African***. London: Oxford University press.
- Gerges, R. (1995). ***Folkloristic: An Introduction***. Indiana University press.
- Gragg, G. (1976). ***Oromo of Wellega***, in ***The Non-Semantic Language of Ethiopia***, Edited by M.Lionel Bender. African study center.
- Hall, Stuart. (2003). ***Representation: Cultural Representation and signifying practice***. London: the Sage publications.
- Hess-bibber, Short et al. (1999). ***Feminist Approach Theory and Methodology***. New York: Oxford University press.
- Hinsene Mekuria. (2009) . ***Galme Jechoota Afaan Oromo***. Addis Ababa. Hinsene Mekuria.
- House of people's Representatives. "The state of Oromia" House of people's Representatives. <http://www.ethiobar.net/English/basinfo/infoormy.htm>. (Accessed July 1 2009)
- [Http://www.en.wicpepeda.org/wiki/stereotypes](http://www.en.wicpepeda.org/wiki/stereotypes). (Accessed July 1 2007)
- [Http://www.ethiopolitics.com/news-1/2008/204719.htm](http://www.ethiopolitics.com/news-1/2008/204719.htm). (Accessed December 4 2008)
- <http://www.yale.ed/ynhti/curriculum/units>. (Accessed June 4 2007)
- <Http://www.questia.com>. (Accessed 1 September 2002)
- Irele, Abiola. (2001). ***The African Imagination***. London: Oxford university press.

- Jeylan W.Hussein. (2005).***African Study Monograph. The social Ethno-cultural Construction of Masculinity and Femininity in African Proverb .26(2):59-87.***
- Jordan, Rosan et al. (Eds.) (1985). ***Women's Folklore, Women's Culture.*** University of Penns Yivania press.
- Jully, Cathy. (1984).***Folklore in Oral Literature, Fair, Tales Fables and Folk Legend.*** (n.p)
- Kamar, R. (1999).***Research Methodology.*** London; Sage Publication.
- Lee, J. (2005). ***Psychology of Gender Identity.*** New York: Nava science publisher Inc.
- Lipa, Richard. (2005).***Gender Nature and Nurture.*** London: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Mass, Pamela (Ed.)(1989).***Feminist Geography in Practice.*** London: Blackwell.
- Martial de Salviac. (2005).***The Oromo.*** Finfinne.
- McCann, Carrole and Seung-kyung Kim. (2003).***Feminist Theory Reader.*** New York: Routledge.
- McLaughlin, Janice. (2003).***Feminist Political &Social Theory.*** New York: Palgrave.
- Melakneh M. (2005).***Map of African Literature.*** Branna Enterprise.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (2006). ***Fundamental of Literature.*** Branna Enterprise.
- Melba, G. (1999).***Oromia: An Introduction to the History of the Oromo People.*** Minnesota: Kirk House.
- Millett, Kate (2005).***Sexual Politics. New York:***
- Miruka, Okumba. (1992).***Encounter with Oral Literature.*** Nairobi; East African Educational Publishers.
- Mosero, Caraline. (1993). ***Gender planning and Development: Theory, Practice, and Training.*** London: Rutledge
- Nagarajan. (2006).***English Literary Criticism and Theory: An Introduction History.*** Orient Longman.
- Nickerson, Eilen. (1993). ***Dissertation Hand Book: A Guide to Successful Dissertation.*** New York: Boston University.



- Norricks, J. (1985). **How Proverbs Mean**. New York: Amsterdam.
- Okpewho, (1992). **African Oral Literature**. New York: Indiana University press.
- Oyewum, Oyetonk .(Ed.) (2005) .**African Gender Studies**. Macmillan.
- Peek, Philip and Kwesi Yankah. (Eds.)(2004).**African Folklore: An Encyclopedia**. New York.
- Rabson, Colin. (2002).**Real world research 2<sup>nd</sup>.ed**. Blackwell publishing.
- Romaine, Suzanne. (1994). **Language in society: An Introduction to Sociology**. (n.p)
- Rowbotham, Sheila. (1992).**Women in Movement**. London: Rutledge.
- S.Wadron, “The Political Economy of Harari-Oromo relations (1554-1975). P.7 (Forced migration website. (Accessed 3 July 2009).
- Scupin, Raymond and Christopher R.Decorse. (2004).**Anthropology: A Global Perspective**. New Delhi: Asokek Ghosh.
- Sena Gonfa. (2008) .The Image of Women in the Proverbs and Saying of the Oromo: the case of West Arsi Zone (unpublished M.A. Thesis) Addis Ababa University Department of Foreign Language and Literature.
- Shaw, Harry. (1972). **Dictionary of literary terms**. (n.p)
- Smith, Barbara. (2007). **The psychology of sex and Gender**. New York: Pearson.
- Sumner, Claud. (1995).**Oromo Wisdom Literature**. Vol.I. Addis Ababa: Guddina Tumsa Foundation.
- Valsiner, Jaan. (2000).**Culture and Human development**. London; Sage publications ltd.
- Warku Dachassa. (1999). **Wiirtuu-8**.Addis Ababa: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau.
- [www.cgiar.org/80/ifpri/gender/gender.htm](http://www.cgiar.org/80/ifpri/gender/gender.htm).
- Yigremew. (2005).Gender and development. (Unpublished Journal Article)

# Appendix 1

## Questionnaires (English Version)

### 1 Respondent's Family and Individual's Profile

1.1 Sex: male  female

1.2 Age group: 16 -24  24-32  32- 40

40-48  48-56  >56

1.3 Sisters: 0  1-2  3-4  4-5  >6

Brothers: 0  1-2  3-4  4-5  >6

Other family members: Men 0  1-2  3-4  4-5  5-6  >6

Women: 0  1-2  3-4  4-5  5-6  >6

**1.4 Family Level of Education:**

(Your family members should have stayed with you at least for one year)

	Basic education				primary education				High school education				university education			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Certificate	Dip.	Dig.	>dig
Father																
Mother																
Sisters	1															
	2															
	3															
	4															
	5															
	7															
Brothers	1															
	2															
	3															
	4															

		5																
		6																
		7																
			Basic education				primary education				High school education				university education			
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Certificate	Dip.	Dig.	>dig
Other family members	Men	1																
		2																
		3																
		4																
		5																
		6																
		7																
		Women	1															
			2															
			3															
			4															
			5															
			6															
			7															

**2. The following questions are on frequency and function of proverbs**

**2.1** How often proverbs are uttered in the daily life?  
 Always  Sometimes  Never at all

On special occasion only

**2.2** What do you think about the function of proverbs in your area? (Please briefly list them down)

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_

**2.3** Do you think that proverbs are negatively affecting the person referred?  
 Yes.  No.

**2.4** Do you agree that proverbs are transmitted from generation to generation?

Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree  
Strongly disagree

**3. The followings are questions about why we use proverbs and who uses them.**

**3.1** Who do you think that more frequently use proverbs? Female elders'   
male elders'  boys'  girls

3.1.1 What do you think are the reasons why they use proverbs more frequently than others?

(Please state the reason in the space provided).

---

---

3.2 If your answer to the above question (3.1) is male elders, which one do you think are the reasons from the following?

- Culturally it is already known
- It is a means to dominate women by using cultural trends
- It is a privilege that is offered to male elders to use proverbs
- The community gives them more chances to use it
- There are rules that say males are the only ones who should use proverbs

**3.3** Proverbs are usually uttered about, women  men  I do not know

**3.4** If your answer is women, what issues figure in women's use of proverbs?

Negative (weakness)  positive (strength)  I do not know

3.4.1 In the above question, if your answer is 'weakness' what do you think are those weaknesses? (Please state your answer in the space provided below)

---

---

**3.5** If your answer to the above question is negative or weakness what issues are concerned with it?

- Unfaithful kinds and adulterous behavior

Cruel and unsympathetic

Selfish and greedy

Stubborn and poor at decision making

All the above issues

**3.6** If your answer is “all,” please give as many proverbs as you can,

---

**3.7** If your answer is not all, please give as many proverbs as you can for your choices,

---

#### **4 Men and women in oral literature**

**4.1** Do you think that women and men are seen equally in Oral literature?

Yes.  No.

**4.2** In which one of the following cases do you think that women are seen equally with men?

Position  In resource control,  in need.

**4.3** What do you think of human rights of women in Oral Literature?

Violated

Not violated  I do not know

**4.4** If your answer is ‘violated’, Can you give example(s) (for your choice) by using local proverbs?

---

#### **5. Women’s rights in the family**

**5.1** Do you agree that without recognition within the family women’s positions are subordinated to those of men?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5.2** The heterogeneity of the household structures are biased in our cultures

Yes.  No.

**F7. The rights to use proverb**

Why do most of the time people in your community use proverbs? (Please state the reasons) \_\_\_\_\_

---

#### **6. Questions about gender**

6.1 Whose dominance is reflected in most of the time in the community daily practices?

Women  Men

6.2 If your answer is “Men” to the above question what do you think is (are) the reason (s)?

(Please briefly state the reason (s)) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6.3** What do you think are the basic things that assist men to dominate women?

(Please tick the following options you agree with)

Rules  Economy  Culture

Knowledge  Religion

6.4 In your community do you think that proverbs are showing dependency of women on men?

Yes  No

6.5 If your answer is “Yes” do you think that proverbs are helping the perpetuation of dependency?

Yes  No

### **7. Questions about deviation from the norm of the community**

**7.1** what do you think that deviation from traditionally assigned sex roles in our particular community causes?

Punishment  Seen as evil   
Astonishment (surprise)  Seen as reward  Seen  
as modernism

**7.2** The answer to question No 7.1 is more applicable to,

Women  Men  It is equally applicable to both

### **8. Gender issues in the family**

**8.1** Do you agree that a child’s earliest exposure to what it means to be a girl or a boy comes from parents?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

### **9. Questions about expected spheres of women in your community**

9.1 Which one of the following do you think is the realm for women?

The domestic realm

The public realm  I do not know

9.2 Where do you think that the role of women and the role of men come from in your community? (Please state your answer in the following space).

---

9.3 Do you think that household and domestic work indicates achieved status?

Yes.  No.

9.4 Parents want the new born to be a

Boy  Girl

9.5 What do you think is the reason for this preference? (Please state your answer in the following space)

---

### 10. Marriage status in your community

10.1 In your community the final decision of marriage is made by,

The girl herself  her father  her mother   
 The elders of their neighbors

10.2 If your answer to question no 10.1 is 'her father', what do you think of the consequences? (Please state your answer in the following space.)

---

### 11. The gender inequality case in your community.

11.1 In your area, child bearing, and child rearing responsibility is given to,

Men  Women  Both

11.2 What do you think that the reason(s) is (are)? (Please state your reason(s))

---

11.3 In your area who is the legal head of the house hold heading?

Men  Women  Both

11.4 Do you agree that women's or men's role is determined by nature?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11.5** Are women's role and men's role in a particular community the same everywhere?

Yes.

No

**12 Attitudes**

**12.1** "Legitimacy and power are derived from culture and religion," Do you agree to this idea?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12.2** Do you agree that male supremacy is desirable?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12.3** Can you give local proverbs that prove (substantiate) your answer? (Please list as many proverbs as you can.)

---

**12.4** Which of the followings do you think is more practiced in your culture, but on unwritten convention? (You can tick more than one.)

Political power  Property right

Reputation rested with men  Women should obey men

**12.5** In your local community caretakers, nurtures, and homemakers are

Men  Women  Both

**12.6** What do you think is of the reason(s)? (State your reasons)

---

**13.** Do you agree that culture is the cause for dominance of men over women?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Instruction no. 2**

Now you are going to enumerate proverbs you know and uttered in your community.

**I. wisdom**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

**II .carelessness**

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 4

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_



III .voiceless subordination

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

IV .submissiveness

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

VI. Disloyal, unreliable, and irresponsible behavior

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

VII. Easily cheated

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. Forgetful

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!**

## Appendix 2

### Women's Percentage results of Questionnaires

No.	Questionnaires	Alternatives					
		I	II	III	IV	V	%
<b>2.1</b>	How often proverbs are uttered in the daily life?	14.89	40.42	29.79	14.89		
<b>2.3</b>	Do you think that proverbs are negatively affecting the person referred?	51.51	48.48	-	-	-	100%
<b>3.1</b>	Who do you think that more frequently use proverbs?	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.2</b>	If your answer to the above question (3.1) is male elders, which one do you think are the reasons from the following?	<b>36.7</b> <b>3</b>	<b>16.3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>20.4</b> <b>1</b>	<b>12.2</b> <b>4</b>	
<b>3.3</b>	Proverbs are usually uttered about,	<b>18.6</b> <b>0</b>	<b>41.8</b> <b>1</b>	<b>39.5</b> <b>3</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.4</b>	If your answer is "women", what issues figure in women's use of proverbs?	<b>47.5</b> <b>1</b>	<b>24.4</b> <b>6</b>	<b>28.3</b> <b>6</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.5</b>	If your answer to the above question is negative or weakness what issues are concerned with it?	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>16.3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>40.8</b> <b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>4.1</b>	Do you think that women and men are seen equally in Oral literature?	<b>37.8</b> <b>4</b>	<b>62.1</b> <b>6</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>

<b>4.2</b>	In which one of the following cases do you think that women are seen equally with men?	<b>21.2 0</b>	<b>21.2 0</b>	<b>31.9 0</b>	<b>25.5 0</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>4.3</b>	What do you think of human rights of women in Oral Literature?	<b>55.8 1</b>	<b>25.5 8</b>	<b>18.6 0</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>5.1</b>	Do you agree that without recognition within the family women's positions are subordinated to those of men?	<b>34.6 9</b>	<b>22.4 5</b>	<b>14.2 9</b>	<b>14.2 9</b>	<b>14.2 9</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>5.2</b>	The heterogeneity of the household structures are biased in our cultures	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.1</b>	Whose dominance is reflected in most of the time in the community daily practices?	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.3</b>	What do you think are the basic things that assist men to dominate women?	<b>14.2 9</b>	<b>12.2 4</b>	<b>40.8 1</b>	<b>14.2 9</b>	<b>18.3 7</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>6.4</b>	In your community do you think that proverbs are showing dependency of women on men?	<b>62.1 6</b>	<b>37.8 3</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.5</b>	If your answer is "Yes" do you think that proverbs are helping the perpetuation of dependency?	<b>54.0 5</b>	<b>45.9 5</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>7.1</b>	What do you think that deviation from traditionally assigned sex roles in our	<b>17.0 2</b>	<b>48.9 3</b>	<b>14.8 9</b>	<b>19.1 4</b>	-	<b>100%</b>

	particular community causes?						
<b>7.2</b>	The answer to question No 7.1 is more applicable to,	<b>29.7</b> <b>3</b>	<b>70.2</b> <b>7</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>8.1</b>	Do you agree that a child's earliest exposure to what it means to be a girl or a boy comes from parents?	<b>43.1</b> <b>8</b>	<b>22.7</b> <b>2</b>	<b>11.3</b> <b>6</b>	<b>11.3</b> <b>6</b>	<b>11.3</b> <b>6</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.1</b>	Which one of the following do you think is the realm for women?	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.3</b>	Do you think that household and domestic work indicates achieved status?	<b>29.7</b> <b>3</b>	<b>70.2</b> <b>7</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.4</b>	Parents want the new born to be a	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>10.1</b>	In your community the final decision of marriage is made by,	<b>23.5</b> <b>3</b>	<b>36.1</b> <b>7</b>	<b>14.8</b> <b>9</b>	<b>23.4</b> <b>0</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.1</b>	In your area, child bearing, and child rearing responsibility is given to,	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.3</b>	In your area who is the legal head of the house hold heading?	<b>41.8</b> <b>6</b>	<b>39.5</b> <b>3</b>	<b>18.6</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.4</b>	Do you agree that women's or men's role is determined by nature	<b>18.5</b> <b>2</b>	<b>22.2</b> <b>7</b>	<b>12.9</b> <b>6</b>	<b>22.2</b> <b>2</b>	<b>24.0</b> <b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.5</b>	Are women's role and men's role in a particular community the same everywhere?	<b>29.7</b> <b>2</b>	<b>70.2</b> <b>7</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.1</b>	"Legitimacy and power are derived from culture and religion," Do you agree to this idea?	<b>48.9</b> <b>8</b>	<b>12.2</b> <b>4</b>	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>12.2</b> <b>4</b>	<b>12.2</b> <b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.2</b>	Do you agree that male supremacy is desirable?	<b>36.1</b>	<b>16.3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>12.2</b> <b>4</b>	<b>14.2</b> <b>9</b>	<b>26.5</b> <b>3</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.4</b>	Which of the followings do you	<b>17.0</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>36.1</b>	-	<b>100%</b>

	think is more practiced in your culture, but on unwritten convention?	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>12.5</b>	In your local community caretakers, nurtures, and homemakers are	<b>18.6</b> <b>0</b>	<b>60.4</b> <b>7</b>	<b>20.9</b> <b>3</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>13</b>	Do you agree that culture is the cause for dominance of men over women?	<b>39.5</b> <b>8</b>	<b>16.6</b> <b>7</b>	<b>14.5</b> <b>8</b>	<b>14.5</b> <b>8</b>	<b>14.5</b> <b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Appendix 3**  
**Men's Percentage results of Questionnaires**

No.	Questionnaires	Alternatives					
		I	II	III	IV	V	%
<b>2.1</b>	How often proverbs are uttered in the daily life?	<b>15.91</b>	<b>36.36</b>	<b>31.8 2</b>	<b>15.9 1</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>2.3</b>	Do you think that proverbs are negatively affecting the person referred?	<b>56.67</b>	<b>43.33</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>2.4</b>	Do you agree that proverbs are transmitted from generation to generation?	<b>36.96</b>	<b>21.74</b>	<b>15.2 2</b>	<b>13.0 4</b>	<b>13.0 4</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Who do you think that more frequently use proverbs? Female elders' male elders	<b>57.5</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>20</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.2</b>	If your answer to the above question (3.1) is male elders, which one do you think are the reasons from the following?	<b>40.43</b>	<b>19.15</b>	<b>12.7 7</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.3</b>	Proverbs are usually uttered about,	<b>22.5</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>50</b>	-	-	-
3.4	If your answer is " women", what issues figure in women's use of proverbs?	<b>43.94</b>	<b>23.48</b>	<b>32.5 7</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>3.5</b>	If your answer to the above question is negative or weakness what issues are concerned with it?	<b>13.04</b>	<b>15.21</b>	<b>13.0 4</b>	<b>17. 39</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>4.1</b>	Do you think that women and men are seen equally in Oral literature?	-	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	<b>100 %</b>

<b>4.2</b>	In which one of the following cases do you think that women are seen equally with men?	<b>25</b>	<b>20,45</b>	<b>34.09</b>	<b>20.04</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>4.3</b>	What do you think of human rights of women in Oral Literature?	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>5.1</b>	Do you agree that without recognition within the family women's positions are subordinated to those of men?	<b>34.78</b>	<b>19.57</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>5.2</b>	The heterogeneity of the household structures are biased in our cultures	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.1</b>	Whose dominance is reflected in most of the time in the community daily practices?	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.3</b>	What do you think are the basic things that assist men to dominate women?	<b>13.04</b>	<b>19.57</b>	<b>41.30</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>6.4</b>	In your community do you think that proverbs are showing dependency of women on men?	<b>100</b>	-				<b>100%</b>
<b>6.5</b>	If your answer is "Yes" do you think that proverbs are helping the perpetuation of dependency?	<b>67.65</b>	<b>32.35</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>7.1</b>	What do you think that deviation from traditionally assigned sex roles in our particular community causes?	<b>15.90</b>	<b>52.27</b>	<b>15.90</b>	<b>15.90</b>	-	<b>100%</b>

<b>7.2</b>	The answer to question No 7.1 is more applicable to,	<b>25</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>8.1</b>	Do you agree that a child's earliest exposure to what it means to be a girl or a boy comes from parents?	<b>48.73</b>	<b>14.63</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.1</b>	Which one of the following do you think is the realm for women?	<b>100</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.3</b>	Do you think that household and domestic work indicates achieved status?	<b>38.24</b>	<b>61.76</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>9.4</b>	Parents want the new born to be a	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>				<b>100%</b>
<b>10.1</b>	In your community the final decision of marriage is made by,	<b>25</b>	<b>40.91</b>	<b>15.91</b>	<b>18.18</b>	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.1</b>	In your area, child bearing, and child rearing responsibility is given to,	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>				<b>100%</b>
<b>11.3</b>	In your area who is the legal head of the house hold heading?	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.4</b>	Do you agree that women's or men's role is determined by nature	<b>19.61</b>	<b>23.53</b>	<b>13.73</b>	<b>17.65</b>	<b>25.49</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>11.5</b>	Are women's role and men's role in a particular community the same everywhere?	<b>29.41</b>	<b>70.59</b>	-	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.1</b>	"Legitimacy and power are derived from culture and religion," Do you agree to this idea?	<b>41.30</b>	<b>17.39</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>15.21</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.2</b>	Do you agree that male supremacy is desirable?	<b>36.19</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>19.57</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>12.4</b>	Which of the followings do you think is more practiced in your culture, but on unwritten convention?	<b>20.45</b>	<b>20.45</b>	<b>18.18</b>	<b>40.91</b>		<b>100%</b>
<b>12.5</b>	In your local community caretakers, nurtures, and homemakers are	<b>20</b>	<b>57.50</b>	<b>22.5</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>
<b>13</b>	Do you agree that culture is the cause for dominance of men over women?	<b>41,30</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>19.57</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>100%</b>



---

## **Appendix 4**

### Interview Questionnaires

- 1 .What sort of proverbs do you use to mediate husband and wife when they are quarreled each other (please give examples from local proverbs)?
2. Do you think that women are happy not to use proverbs in your community?
3. In your community, in the child bearing and child rearing process who do you think is more responsible?
4. Do you think that the uses of proverbs are passed from generation to generation?
5. Proverbs are oral literature, so what are the characteristics of oral literature?
6. Do you think that proverbs portray both sexes equally? (Please give examples from your local community proverbs)
7. 'Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu jedhama' It is said 'There is tall woman but no intelligent woman', why?
8. Do you think that proverbs are used as an instrument to speak obliquely and illusively? (Please give examples from local community)
9. Do you think that the messages of oral literature are absolute fact? (Example), (Boru hin beekneen qoda- bukoon bira sagal) <She who does not expect for the future surrounded by nine different dishes> it means extravagant women.
10. Can you give proverbs that are improved from previous using context?
11. Where do you think that the partition of men roles and women roles come from?
- 12 What is the problem, if woman instruct man as they are instructed by man now?

## Appendix 5

### Proverbs Collected as source of Data from Tukur Enchine

*Beekkumsi dubartii balbala gadi hin bayuu.*<sup>1</sup>

<The knowledge of women cannot be out of door.>

*'Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu.'*<sup>2</sup>

<Women may be tall but not intelligent>

*'Uleefi dubartiin jilbaa gadittii.'*<sup>3</sup>

<Stick and wife should be under knee>

*'Hafuu mannaa barfachuu wayyaa.'*<sup>4</sup>

"Better late than never"

*'Dubbiin bulteef tiruun bulte lafee taatii'*<sup>5</sup>

<When the current agenda and liver are given more time both of them gradually become bone>

*'Dubbiin lootoo qabdii looto abbaatu eggata,'*<sup>6</sup>

*'Toleef hin nyaanne tolofameef nyaanne,'*<sup>7</sup>

<We have eaten the food, not because it's okay but since it has already been prepared,>

*'shanis elman, shantamas elman, kan koo qiraacuma,'*<sup>8</sup> Jette Adurreen.

<Whether they (owners) are milking five or fifty mine is by 'Qiraci'>

*"Aaki jedhan waa tufan, mammaakan waa himan."*<sup>9</sup>

<Proverbs are the horses of discourse>

*'Mammaaksi Kooba dubbii.'*<sup>10</sup>

"Proverbs are the horses of thought; when thoughts get lost, we send proverbs to find them."

. *"... Mammaaks soogidda (Mi'eessaa) dubbii. Dubbi takko fiduufis fixuufis ni gargaara,"*<sup>11</sup>

<Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten>

*'Kan dhagayaa dide waaman hin howaatuu'*<sup>12</sup>

<If someone kept silent deliberately, he does not respond when you call out him>

*'Kan haati gabaa baateef kan haati jalaa duute walqixa booyu.'*<sup>13</sup>

<The child whose mother went to the market and whose mother was dead,  
cry equally>

*“Amman kooraa irra gayutti ofi hin amanu,” jette aftuun durbaa.*<sup>14</sup>

< I did not believe that my marriage would materialize, until I sat on the  
horse’s back,” said by a late married girl.

*‘Dugda dubartii fii dugda harree irraa waa nyaatu.’*<sup>15</sup>

*‘Dubartiin haarii baate qaanii gala didi.’*<sup>16</sup>

<Woman left her home because of anger and refused to come back because  
of public shame >

*‘Hadha Dhabuu mannaa, haadha dhabduu wayyaa.’*<sup>17</sup>

“Having a destitute mother is better than not having a mother at all”

*‘Kan nyaatu hunda warraa, fixuun haadha warraa’*<sup>18</sup>

<Everybody in the family has eaten it, but not the wife.>

*‘Dubartiin beekaa deessi malee beektuu miti,’*<sup>19</sup>

“Women bear an intelligent child but they are not intelligent themselves.”

*‘Beekumsi dubartii diinqaa olitti,’*<sup>20</sup>

<The knowledge of the women is beyond ‘diinqaa’>

*Dubartii fi mooyeen diinqaa olittii*<sup>21</sup>

<Women and mortar are beyond the ‘dinka’>

*‘Niitiin dhirsa mootu ganda bultii’*<sup>22</sup>

<Wife who instructs her husband does not get in home at night>

*‘Dubartiin dheertuu malee beektuu hin qabdu.’*<sup>23</sup>

<Women can be tall in size, but they could not be intelligent.>

*‘Dubartii jeechaan harka, saree jeechaan sagaleedha.’*<sup>24</sup> <A true woman is  
hand, a true dog is sound>

*‘Dubbiin dubartii fi udaan indaanqoo burree hin dhabu’*<sup>25</sup> <Women’s speech  
and hen’s faeces are not always spotless>

*‘Kan dubartiin ergite du’a hin sodatu.’*<sup>26</sup> <A man who is sent by woman does  
not fear to die.>

*‘Re’een albaatee fi durbi mammaakte warraa baate.’*<sup>27</sup>

<The girl who has uttered proverb and dehydrated goat are nothing to the  
owner>

'Kan ulfaan ammana nyaatte, deessu ana nyaatti'<sup>28</sup>. <When you have eaten as much while pregnancy, you may eat me after delivery>

'Haadha ilaalii intala fuudhii'<sup>29</sup>

<Having observed the mother: marry the daughter>

'Dubartiin aarii baatet qaanii gala diddii'<sup>30</sup>

<Women leave their home for angry, and refuse to come back for shame>

"Akkanatti nyaatanii dhirsa hin yaadan," jette niitiin<sup>31</sup>. "Having eaten as such, no recollection of husband," said the woman.

'Dubartiin mana hin qabdu mana dhirsaa galtii'<sup>32</sup>

<The woman has no home, but lives in her husband home>

'Namni daakuu nyaatuu fi kan dubartiin mootu afaan guute hin dubbatu.'<sup>33</sup>

<A man who is eating flour and a man who is guided by woman cannot speak in confidence>

'Gaafa harreen loon dura galtee fi dubartiin dhiira dura rafte gaarii hin ta'u'<sup>34</sup>

<When donkey is early to home and woman is early to bed things become worse>

'Hoolaa fi dubartiin dahoo jaalattii.'<sup>35</sup>

<Women and sheep like shade>

'Dubartii fi kopheen jijjiiran toltii'<sup>36</sup>

< It is better to change Shoes and woman >

'Dubartiin abbaa warraa mootu olla horii hin seetu'<sup>37</sup>

<Woman who defeats her husband gives nothing for neighbors>

'Dubartiin keessummaa gara qabdu keessumaaa firaa hin qabdu'<sup>38</sup>

<A voracious woman has no relative-guest>

Dubartii fi fardi waan kennaniif nyaattu.'<sup>39</sup>

<Woman and horse eat what they are given>

'Niitiin Dhirsaa ta'uu baannan hin bultu'<sup>40</sup>

<Unless woman favor her husband, she does not stay with him>

'Abbaa warraa fi haadha warraa laga tokkoo waraabuu' <sup>41</sup><The wife and the husband are drown from a river>

Gara laafetiin obboleettii obboleessaaf ulfooftii'<sup>42</sup>

<A kind sister becomes pregnant for her brother>

‘Obboleessa gowwaa aariitu ajjeesa’<sup>43</sup>  
 <A foolish brother is died of angry>

‘Kadhannaan diddee dhiifnaan booche.’<sup>44</sup>  
 <She was begged: refused, cried>

“Anuu jiraa harmeen heerumaaf boochii,” jette intalli<sup>45</sup>  
 < “I am here without marriage, my mother has cried for marriage,” said the daughter>

‘Durbaa fi qullubbii abbaatu bakka gaarii dhaabbata’<sup>46</sup>  
 <The daughter and garlic are planted in the best place by the owner>

‘Intala haadhaan qixxee, shiroo arrabaan fixxe’<sup>47</sup>  
 <Daughter who is the same as her mother completed ‘Shiro’ by licking>  
 (shiro) means the flour of bean and pean.

‘Durba fi agadaa bira hin darban’<sup>48</sup>  
 “A gril and cane donot pass by”

‘Durbaa fi dullacha abbaatu gaggeefata’<sup>49</sup>  
 <Girl and aged-person are accompanied by the owner>

‘Durbaa fi Sooressa nagaa hin gaafatan’<sup>50</sup>  
 <No solute for girl and rich man>

‘Durbaa fi damma nama itti amanan qabuu.’<sup>51</sup>  
 <Girl and honey are no trust to all>

‘Haadha dhabuu mannaa, haadha dhabduu wayyaa,’<sup>52</sup>  
 <Having destitute mother is better than not >

‘Haadhaa fi lafatu nama danda’aa’<sup>53</sup>  
 <Mother and ground have the challenges to hold somebody>

‘Haadhaa fi raafuu hin quufanii’<sup>54</sup>  
 <No man is satisfied looks of mother and eats of cabbage>

‘Haadha duute mannaa, haadha maraatte wayyaa.’<sup>55</sup>  
 <Mad mother is better than died mother>

‘Dubartii fi ibida hin amanan’<sup>56</sup>  
 <No trust of woman and fire>

‘Dubartiin dheertuun dhuma midhaanii hin beektuu’<sup>57</sup>  
 <A tall woman does not know the end of grain in storage>

‘Ta’uu mannaa durba dhalchuu wayyaa’<sup>58</sup>

“Fathering a daughter is better than sitting idle”.

‘Dubartii dhibbaa mannaa dhiira tokco wayyaa’<sup>59</sup>

<A man is greater than one hundred women>

‘Dhiiraa jiruu dhiirummaa hin dhuunfatan.’<sup>60</sup>

<In man presence no possession of manhood>

‘Boru hin beekneen qoda-bukoon bira sagal’<sup>61</sup>

<She who does not expect for the future surrounded by nine different dishes>

Boru hin beekneen qoda bukoon bira lama.’<sup>62</sup>

<She who does not expect for the future surrounded by two different dishes>

## Appendix 6

### List of Informants

<b>Name</b>	<b>age</b>	<b>place</b>
1. Bareche Beksisa Iran	78	Toke Abuye.
2. Irana Fayisse Dukan	88	“
3. Rikita Fila Dukan	80	Enchine 01
4. Fayera Gutama	56	Toke Abuye
5. Gutama Bayisse Ijo	52	“
6. Tujuba Oli	55	Toke Lamem
7. Taramu Mamo	70	“
8. Mosissa Dachasse	45	Hindhe
9. Turuneh Deresse	45	“
10. Makonen Jabessa	45	Arfinjo
11. Gutema Gurmessa	45	“
12. Fayissa Obsina	47	Toke Abuye
13. Daniel mitike	48	“
14. Acalu Badada	55	Enchine
15. Abdeta Refu Urgesa	68	Hindhe Hagayi
16. Duguma Nagara	65	Toke Abuye
17 Lata Diro oli	78	Homi Hane
18. Asafa Hata'u Seya	45	“
19 Diriba Daba Yikisa	66	Abayi dada
20. Liki Diro	80	Homi Hane
21. Diriba Chcmada	53	Nanno
22. Kumala Goro	62	“
23 Dalassa Chamada	44	“

## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my own work and all the sources of materials for the thesis have been duly acknowledged

Name: Hailu Sheleme Chemedda

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate studies, Institute of Language Studies,  
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Date of Submission: June, 2010