

REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN IN KOCH VERBAL ART: A STUDY THROUGH THE RAJBONGSHI PROVERBS

Kaushik Das*

The present paper will examine the proverbs used by the Koch community in their own communicative context in order to understand the way through which they have perceived the position of women in their day to day life. Proverbs are one of the important sub-genres of verbal art that are used as an oral communication system among different communities for a long time. In almost all societies, elders and parents used proverbs as a personal tool to spread the knowledge and guide the actions of the younger. The reflection of the cultural details of a particular community is very much visible in their practice of proverbs. In the context of the representation of the gender roles in the society, proverbs play a crucial role in distinguishing the space and role as it acts as a guideline and aid in constructing the normative gender roles.

Therefore, this paper attempts to locate the role of proverbs as the traditional communication system among the Koch community in constructing the gender role. The identification of certain proverbs has been related to particular gender specific relations. This paper will look into these certain paradigms while trying to locate how women are portrayed and symbolized in the society. For that, the data has been collected and substantiated from the Rajbongshi language in form of a semi-structured interview and observation method as well as secondary sources like vernacular books, journals and newspaper article to realize the objective.

Key Words: Proverb, Community, Knowledge, Morality, Gender.

* **Ph.D. Research Scholar, Centre for Folk Culture Studies, University of Hyderabad**

Introduction:

The continuity of the past throughout the present to the future is very much distinguishable through the verbal art. The oral expression reflects the cultural heritage of a group in the present time, where one could easily find a connection of its value system with the past. These are glorified through different expressive systems such as beliefs, customs, rituals, creative forms etc and is visible either directly or symbolically or as a performance. So, the study of Folklore offers an opportunity to grasp the meaning of past heritage in the present context. Proverbs are one such form of verbal art that are frequently employed and used as a form to educate the young, to establish the institutionalized behavior pattern or to make the statement strong or add colour to an ordinary conversation. When it is used in a suitable situation, proverbs may turn into a good and perfect approach to communication. It is one of the concise forms of the oral art of human communication and turns the human observations and experiences into the wisdom of the individual and the society. So the cultural norms, values, and beliefs of the society are very much mirrored through the proverbs. The proverb, as a reflection of the wisdom of the society, highlights the existing gender parity in relations to women socio-economic status within the social belief system. Thus, the study of proverbs in a particular culture through the gender perspective provides us the understanding of how the culture perceives gender. As folklore studies help us in understanding and questioning the cultural beliefs, values, and norms; feminism can open up our understanding of how these gender roles are naturalized in the society through our folklore.

Therefore, the present article attempts to analyze one of these expressive forms within folklore called proverbs that exists and is practiced in Rajbanshi language among the Koch community of Assam. Through the means of data collected from the field and substantiating it with the literary texts, the article critically examines the position of women in Koch community as reflected in the proverbs of Rajbanshi language. However, while examining the position of women through proverbs, the aim is to look only into the proverbs that are particularly used for women, and not for both the gender. The study thereby analyzing the proverbs will locate the position of women in the Koch society which is very much traditional and patriarchal.

This paper is a field-based ethnographic study done in Borpara, Boripara, Xaonagao villages of Bongaigaon district, Dumardah village in Dhubri district and also in Khoksigaon of Kokrajhar district of Assam. It sheds light on the position of women in proverbs and seeks to explore how these proverbs play important role in the society and reinforce women's subjugation. For this purpose, I have interacted with male members of the community from varied socio-economic backgrounds such as farmers, traditional priests, students, small vendors, teachers etc. To read on this subject from a gender perspective, I interviewed both women and men from different socio-economic strata.

A brief note on the Koches:

The name 'Koch' is one of the major Mongoloid communities that emerge significantly in the history of Assam as well as in North Bengal. Although the community is scattered throughout the state, they are most predominant in the western region of the state. Also, the population is found in Garo Hills of Meghalaya and North Bengal and in some parts of Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. Regarding the racial affinities and origin of the Koches, there is always an uncertainty among the historians and missionaries. But the contemporary anthropologist and historians have mostly agreed to accept the Mongoloid blood among the Koch community. They have pointed out that the Koches are akin to the Bodos. Historically, they are described as a section of Bodo group who have converted to Hinduism and left their original religion. Talking about the Bodo groups in Assam, scholar Birinchi Kumar Barua agrees that Koch community belong to a group of Bodo race and says, "The Bodo group of tribes includes the Koc, the Kachari, the Lalung, the Dimacha, the Garo, the Rabha, the Tipura, the Chutiya and the Maran" and "... build strong kingdoms and with various fortunes and under various tribal names – the Chutia, the Kachari, the Koc, etc..." (Barua, 2001: 6-7). Scholar S. K. Chatterji described Koch as "Hinduised or Semi Hinduised Bodo people who have abandoned their original Tibeto-Burman speech and have adopted the Northern dialect of Bengali (which has a close affinity with Assamese)" (Chatterji, 1974: 112). Even Gait has already accepted this fact and commented, "in Assam proper, it has become the name of a Hindu caste, into which are received the converts to Hinduism from the ranks of the Kachari, Lalung, Mikir and other tribes". (Gait, 2008: 47) Gait further stated that the population number of the Koches are increasing rapidly because of the process of conversion is still continuing. (ibid)

In terms of the language, in Assam, the Koch people primarily speak the Goalparia dialect of the Assamese language which is according to the community members is *Rajbanshi* or *Kamatapuri* language. There is a clear division of two forms of the dialect with local variations. These two broad dialectical patterns are the *Eastern Rajbanshi* – spoken in the eastern part of the Golapara region of both banks of the Brahmaputra River and the *Western Rajbanshi* – spoken on the western and south-western part. Grierson regarded the *Rajbanshi* language of the Western region as a variety and dialect of the Bengali language, where the rest is as an Assamese dialect. (Grierson, 1903: 163).

The Koch society is mainly an agricultural society that most of its verbal arts and other forms of folklore are surrounded by the process of agriculture. Apart from that, the community also depends on forest-based livelihoods, weaving, cattle farming, poultry farming, fishery etc.

A Brief Note on the Position of Women in the Koch Society:

The Koch community follows patriarchal and patrilineal structure. The dominance of patriarchal structure of the community affects the Koch women's participation and decision making authority in the social affairs; ownership, control over and access to land. The role of women in the decision-making process is also very less and their participation at the 'n^{alish}' or 'village council' are also negligible. The norms related to inheritance rights in every aspect including land and other forms of property do not allow women to have the ownership. However, it would be wrong to say that women are completely denied the land property. Instances of giving land to daughters do exist, but it is either in the case of the girl being the single child or as a gift at the time of her marriage or after marriage. If the son-in-law owns little land as compared to the considerable land the girl's family has, a share is given to their daughter. Moreover, the property such as gold ornaments, household equipment like weaving tools, brass metal etc. which are under the control of the mother earlier is transferred to the daughters of the family.

A daughter among the Koches is always seen as an outsider who goes to a different house after her marriage. Therefore, the term '*Porhori mal*' which means 'property of others' is always associated with them which in a way become a basis for social discrimination. Nevertheless, although the birth of a daughter is not so much favored as compared to sons in the community, in

terms of labour they are considered as assets to the family. The preference for son is because he is the one who carries forward the lineage of the family and also the inheritor of familial property. The existence of the tradition of *pon* or *ga-dhon* (bride price) at the time of marriage, where if any Koch man wants to marry, he has to pay the half or complete amount of the cost necessary for the marriage for both side. This relieves the girl's parent from social pressure of marriage and places the bride in a good position. However, at present, it is seen that the practices of the 'bride price' is less and the dowry system in the form of material has taken over the traditional existence of "Pon". Although, asking for dowry is not considered as a tradition in Assam, but in reality, dowry-related issues are not completely negligible. As the Parliamentary Affairs Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary informed the assembly that 1606 women died in dowry-related cases in twelve years¹²³, we cannot neglect the existence of domestic violence on woman due to dowry. This kind of changes in society also infected the members of the Koch community also. Further, regarding the degraded position of the widow and separated woman, Dwijendra Nath Bhakat has commented that the impact of Hinduisation process that occurred among the community is one of the factors for the degradation of the position of woman in the society. (Bhakat, 2008: 78).

In the case of a separated woman or a widow, the women can go for remarriage and that is accepted by the society. But, in terms of property, it is the village authority that decides whether she will receive something on her separation from the husband. It must be noted that the community follows customary norms in terms of divorce as well and women have the authority to go for a divorce. The woman will not receive any property if it is her fault for the divorce. If the husband is responsible and they have a child, he needs to give a share of the property to her, specifically land. But how much it would be given depends on him.

Representation of Women through Proverbs:

¹ <https://www.ndtv.com/guwahati-news/over-1-700-women-killed-in-assam-due-to-rape-dowry-witch-hunting-from-2006-to-2018-1832597>.

² <https://english.manoramaonline.com/news/nation/2018/04/03/rape-dowry-witch-hunt-kill-1773-women-in-assam-in-12-years.html>.

³ <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2018/04/03/1700-women-died-Assam-due-to-rape-dowry-witch-hunting.html>.

The reflection of the cultural details of a particular community is very much visible through the practice of proverbs. Proverbs constitute an important and popular genre of oral expression. Koch society being rich in its oral literature and proverbs being a part of it are seen widely and commonly used by the people. A number of vernacular works on Koch community and verbal art in itself explain about its popularity.

Society plays a crucial role in constructing or establishing the gender role depending upon its idea of masculinity and femininity. In a patriarchal society, the male ideology has always positioned women after or under men and the socialization of people is such that it gets institutionalized. They teach each and every member of the society how to behave in the society by various modes and means carried by the various social institutions. The society prescribes different sets of social norms for man and woman to be 'normal' member of the society and creates binaries as man and woman. The requirements of a society reproduce the contents and theme of these proverbs. The proverb is one of the most important verbal forms that act as an expression to communicate and to spread moralities and traditions. As Mineka Schipper has rightly said, "Oral literature plays an important role in confirming 'traditional' ideas. In particular, proverbs provide us with a rich collection of reflections on the female body and an equally rich mosaic of the social consequences people's sexual differences have brought about. In this book, the starting point is that proverbs about women throw a fascinating light upon the worldwide existing gender division of roles in life." (Schipper, 2006: 18). Therefore, proverbs can be an important source to understand the gender construction of the society.

Therefore, the present paper has consisted of an analysis of some Rajbongshi proverbs in order to look at the representation of woman in the society. This paper intends to critically read how these proverbs which are a part of the common parlance act as guidelines thereby aiding the socially 'accepted' notion of a woman. Due to the limited scope of the paper, a few popular Rajbongshi proverbs are selected which are then looked at under two broad thematic heads. They are:

- i. Construction of Hierarchy
- ii. Representation of the Female Body.

Construction of Hierarchy:

In any society, the strength of the patriarchal ideology depends upon its consequences in the development of prevailing traditional beliefs. Being a patriarchal society, it is the Koch man who takes the major decisions at home as well as in public. He is considered as the main owner of the property and looks as the permanent member of the house while women are positioned after the male. While the term “*porhori-mal*” (property of others) is always associated with women, certain proverbs further help in reinforcing this notion. The proverb *Betay rakhe nao / Betiye dekhay gao* (boys bring prestige and keep the name of the family, where girls will go to another village after marriage) can be read in this line. Additionally, the engagement of the concept of ‘*napay*’ (*don’t*) is very much constructed through the verbal art among the people that it becomes a taboo for them. For example, the Koch women are not allowed to visit the paddy field after the plantation of paddy till the time of harvesting. According to the origin story of paddy, which describes the destruction of paddy field from the fire coming out from the mouth of *Buri* (Goddess Parvati) and that destruction was happened when *Buri* went to see the crops before harvesting without informing her husband *Bura* (Lord Shiva). So, according to the story *Buri* was cursed by *Bura* by saying that women folk will not be able to see any kind of cultivation and whenever they will go to see the crops the crops will either die or destroy. This restriction comes from that belief that visiting of a woman to the paddy field will not bring enough harvest which is known as ‘*mukh laga*’ (*evil eye*). So, proverbs and folktales are used as an instrument to control women’s mobility and rights in the family property, while labour was extracted when it was needed. In the case of sowing rice or transplanting paddy seedlings women are allowed and equally participated in the paddy field. Women in the household do not have the choice of not going, they have to go to paddy field during cultivation time, it is considered as their job, a female-centric job. Whereas the same women can create evil eye after the crops were started to bloom. This was, in a way, can be seen as to restrict the women so that they could not make claim the equal share over the crop after harvesting was done and the economic power, decision-making capacity remain with the man and keep them out of decision making and restrict them within the household. No economic power means no authority in the family and full dominance by man.

Moreover, the contribution of women in the economy of the family is not counted directly. The male members are considered as the main earner in the house. As the Koch is an agricultural

community, so land possess a significant role in terms of power and identity and therefore the patriarchy society tries to keep away women from this power by denying their economic contribution at the time of harvesting. Their labour is extracted at the time of cultivation, but at the same time creating various types of taboo to it they are denying their future demand for the equal shares. The taboo ‘*napay*’ (don’t) associated with the women’s ploughing also affects a woman from accessing or cultivating the land. The patriarchal society makes a clear-cut biological hierarchy by attributing the idea of weakness to the women.

In the patriarchal society, a female is always associated with love, marriage, and childbearing. Women's work is inside the house and men are meant to work outside. Women should stay inside the boundary of the house and serve the domestic works. She is the homemaker and this is sanctioned by the patriarchal society. So for a woman it is the best to stay inside of the house and engaged in her everyday household works and then only she is recognized as an idle woman, while a man can go outside of the home for works and society will not ask any question to him. It is his duty. The evidence of patriarchal society is very much clear through the proverbs like *Giri jai porot / Tiri thake ghorot* (the man/husband is for the outer world, but the woman/wife stays at home).

But perhaps the most common and popular association and attitude towards the whole woman community is that “*tiri jati khesera jati*” having the literal meaning as ‘woman race is the awful/wretched race’ actually reflects the male perception about the woman and their hierarchy in the society. While I was talking with one of the informants about black magic and witchcraft among the Koch community, the male informant whose age is about 64 and a *Deusi* (traditional priest) by profession says that women are the ‘*khesera jati*’ so they can do or engaged with this kind of dirty works. So his general view on woman represents the nature of woman as awful who should not be believed at all and according to him, his personal experience supports the proverbs also. He further stated that therefore he has never let the female to make the decision in the family and never believe the female race. So, when we talk about trust in a gender-based patriarchy society, women are represented as those whom we should not believe at all and it is better to avoid telling secrets to girls. Proverb *Tiri tiri nokobi tiri nohoy bhal / Tirir kathat morse*

Ravan ghorer pal (don't listen to the women and tell anything to the women because they are not good, even the whole family of Ravan was destroyed listening to a woman.)

Another proverb which is very much popular among the Koches talks about direct domination of males over female in every stratum. Although sometime this proverb is used in another context by female folks generally it is delivered to show the incompetent nature of woman that they can never be equal to a man in the hierarchy of the society. The proverb *Lao jotoy danger hok / Teo pater tol* (How much bigger the guard is in its size, it will be always under its leaves.) reflects the hegemonic idea of the male who doesn't want to let women in the higher position than male. They can't be equal to male. The metaphorical words like 'guard' and 'leaves' of bottle guard are used for 'male' and 'female' respectively for its physical/biological nature. It is a creeper plant which is generally trained in a bower made of bamboos, where the leaves of the guard stay always over the bower and fruits come lower the bower. So, the enactment of certain social construction within the members is supported by the human participation with that material and its symbols. In this regard, Nicole Boivin argued, "...in many cases, ideas and cultural understandings do not precede, but rather are helped to become, by the material world and human engagement with it. Like the relationship between material signifiers and signifieds, the relationship between things like material environments, technologies, and social constructs is also often far from arbitrary." (Boivin, 2008: 47). Quoting Fredrick Barth's findings on ritual symbols among the Baktaman of highland Papua New Guinea, Boivin further said "...Baktaman Symbols or idioms did not derive their meaning from their contrast with other symbols within a system, but rather from certain physical features and qualities that made them appropriate representatives of an idea or abstract thought." (Ibid: 48). Thus, the cultural representation of the guard and the leaf with the female and male reflects the natural competence of the Koch society. Physically, a guard is an oval shape which is used as a metaphor to represent the womb of that has the fertility to produce the offspring. Seed, which is inside the guard, represent the offspring to produce their next generation. In this particular proverb, the leaf is symbolically used to represent male because in Koch society they have a perception that sky which is in higher in position is male and lower state represented by the earth is female. It is also a cultural set up that man protects female. So, leaves protect the fruit from various external forces like hailstorms, heavy raindrops etc. So, naturally, the guard and the leaf metaphor used for female and male

reflects the incompatible nature of female with the male which ultimately establishes the male dominance in the society.

Most commonly the user of this kind of attitude towards the female is the male members of the society, but women are also seen to use this term and proverbs for themselves. So, society used this kind of attitude towards the women and proverbs helps in socializing and to legitimize them among the members. In the present modern society while the woman is equally participated in various fields with the man, getting the education; the attitude of using these proverbs to degrade the position of woman is still available in the society. At present days when society is changing, women still believe the idea of women to be incompetence. Oral tradition has that acceptance by the people as true and people accept these stereotypical norms without any question. While interviewing in the field, when I asked few females about the use of these kinds of proverbs they simply said that these kinds of words are coming from a long years before which is the true sentence. In support of them, they started to tell various stories also. They even told that they can't change and ignore their physical weakness and social construction and ultimately they have to depend on their male members. So, their approval of these internalized constructions of social norms led the construction of various woman related stereotypes and various hegemonic power structure.

But perhaps, the most common phenomenon of establishing the male hierarchy in the society is to show off the male strength by using violence. In most of the patriarchal society, violence against the female is the most popular event in order to control women and their rights. Most Rajbongshi proverbs also showcase the same issue. Proverbs like *Daot shan kutharot xil / Maheke pokkhe tirik kil* (if you sharpen your wives like the *dao* and axe, beat her every month) metaphorically argued the establishment of male dominance and authority in the society by introducing the submissive behavior of a woman. Moreover, the popularity of this kind of proverb in present day proves how the proverbs of past advocate violence on women even in contemporary society. Another proverb *Bhat, kapur, sashon / Ei tini tirir apon* (rice, cloth, and control are the three main things that a woman needs) basically goes with the same theme. These proverbs reflect the dependence behavior of the female where in order to carry the legacy of superiority and hierarchy a man should beat his wife from time to time and a woman should be

controlled by the man. Further, if the man is unable to control his wife, the society will not accept that situation which will be humiliating and shameful to his manliness. So, proverbs are not only reflecting the behavior of the masculine nature but also trying to build a forceful masculinity in the society with that proverb. Rajbongshi proverbs force the Koch man to be hyper-masculine in order to retain his position and manliness. It is not just the Koch woman but also man who falls within the traps of proverbs.

Representation of the female body:

The idea of 'beauty' may be a state of mind, but since ages, most of the society has placed importance on beauty to mark as a criterion for the woman. The idea and criterion of beauty for one society may not be the same with another society. In society, there are some stereotypical expectations on the female body and every society has their own norms regarding the idea of beauty. Society constructs the notions of female body and by interacting one member to another from generations to generation developed some concepts in their mind and behaved according to it. This kind of construction gradually naturalized into certain roles and through time it gets recognized by the society. If a woman does not fulfill those criteria of the society, she will not be considered as a 'perfect' woman. They will consider her evil or as the carrier of bad luck. Various verbal forms are the common thing to represent these kinds of concepts.

In the Koch society, the idea of the beauty of a female body is also transferred through proverbs. The female body constitutes various assumptions and acts as a representation of what is good or bad or desirable looking from hair to toe. For example, *Jar ghorot apamua tiri / Tar ghorot nahe siri* (the house who has women with the masculine look, that house doesn't have any prosperity.) An ideal woman should be sweet, mild, humble, soft speaker etc. and these are the stereotypical feminine feature a woman must have. If a woman has masculine nature she is not desired at all and very much alienated from the society. Prosperity to a family only comes when women are feminine. Deviating from the socially created normative structure, she is considered defected. She becomes the symbols of bad luck. Conflicting with the socially sanctioned norms, women are cursed doubly because she is deviating from the 'normal' social structure. She is female but like a male. So she is neither a 'normal' male nor a 'normal' female.

As a woman with a masculine feature is very much unpleasant in the society, the male with a feminine feature is also not welcomed by the society. The proverb *kukurer saimua, purusher gaimua* (the dog who has ash colour in the face is not trustworthy like the man who has a face like *gaimua*.) shows the feminine nature on a male is also not accepted in the society. The metaphoric term 'gaimua' is actually used for those male members who don't have beard or mustaches on their face and those who have a clear skin like a female. So beard becomes a significant feature for the males, where in terms of female this beard can transfer her into a bad omen. On the other hand, proverb *Jorabhuru, komor xoru, hostitulya jar goti / Baper beta buker pata – xei he jogya poti* (The man who has eyebrows that are pointed, walk calmly and strongly like an elephant and he who has courage is best man to marry) reflects the character of males. The character of an ideal woman who is meek, humble, soft, weak etc. is contrasted with the characters of the male which are strong, courage, rough etc. So the proverbs that are meant for idealizing a male member of the society are actually the character to differentiating them from women, which clearly reflects the ideology of a patriarchy society. Moreover, while the term 'motamua' turned a woman into a flawed piece of creation, a bad symbol for family, the term 'gaimua' does not create the same image for males. Among the Koch people, the term 'gaimua' is popularly used to tease the male if that guy talks a lot or can't keep any secrets with him which are the stereotypical nature associated with the female. While a woman who is like a male is dangerous and unnatural in the society, males, on the other hand, being like a female is not dangerous at all. Rather it is shameful and embarrassing for that male to be like a woman. So, the bodily features construct the acceptable forms of manhood or womanhood in the society and proverbs reinforces these constructions.

A male gaze objectifies the beauty of women according to their choice. The ideology that is prevalent in the society helps these things in naturalizing these ideologies and the subconsciousness of the members is ready to accept these very easily. Objectification is very much common in a male dominant society. It is believed that the beauty of a woman is useless if she does not have lover or husband. So, how a woman needs a man to exist in a society and there is no place for a single independent woman is reiterated through the concept of beauty and rooted in proverbs. For example *Akashot Chandra nahole taray ki kore / Jeinarir swami nai tar rupe ki kaj kore* (without stars the beauty of sky is useless and like that without her husband the beauty

of her is useless). So in a patriarchal society, the female beauty is also dependent upon the eyes of the male.

For the male point of view, females are the sex objects, a commodity where male having the full authority over her body. While the male is allowed and accept their sexual position in the society, for the female sexual relationship is considered as a shameful act. In the society, the importance is not given to women's needs, desire or body. A good reflection of this behaviour can be seen in the *Hudum Deo* ritual. Koch women have a very old religious tradition to go naked in the midnight at the paddy field and worship *Hudum Deo* for the rain to come when there is not enough rain for cultivation. Because cultivation is mainly related with the male members of the family and when the cultivation is about to destroy because of the less rain, according to the beliefs, females have to come naked in order to save their household and her husband. Now the very interesting thing here is that *Hudum deo* is a male deity and females have to go naked in front of this male deity for the sake of the house and the male members. So this again is not for women sexuality herself but again to please a man, which again reinforces the idea that woman body is meant to satisfy and please man, not on her own will but on the will of a man. So it cannot be said to satisfy her sexual needs woman go naked. It's in a way forced on her in the name of tradition to go naked in front of a male god in order to please him.

Male sexual aggression merely treats the woman as their own right and it is up to them whenever they want to use them. Proverb like *Bahar paro jiyai rakha mas / Jelai khushi xelai khais* (the pigeon and fish of home, you can eat them anytime you want) definitely have a deeper meaning than the surface meaning. The metaphorical implications of a domestic pigeon and fish that are kept alive in a bowl in the home make the nature of the woman as meek, dependant and most importantly the obedient to males. They do have some boundary in which they can't ignore the circumstances that are coming to them. The metaphor of the domesticated pigeon and fish symbolize the womenfolk and the owner of that pigeon and the fish are the menfolk. So it is up to the mood the menfolk. The stereotype of double meaning in this proverb obviously is the male gaze that sees a woman as only as a product for sexual stimulation.

Conclusion

Every culture has distinctly attributed various gender roles to the members of the society and through the socialization process, these roles are taught. The work and attitude have been divided on the basis of its gender. Traditionally, women are engaged with the works inside of a house where males are assigned to outside works. Moreover, the continuation of various values and norms whether it is cultural, social, family or religious are dependent upon the family members of the society. If the women or mother is rich with these moral values their children or future generation will enrich with that values and it is the duty to that women. All these restricted the range of female activity in a society. The projection of men as a strong, rough or career-oriented nature contrasted with the soft, caring, emotional nature of women. The main duty of women in child-rearing and household activities. Moreover, male members have the idea of patriarchy bias and they have every right over their females but simultaneously female has also accepted these norms and various stereotypical norms of the society.

Thus, the present study of Rajbongshi proverbs not only shed light on the position of woman the Koch culture and society but also reflects the role and position of the male in that society. The establishment of these social norms and values through the oral tradition are so strong in the society that they legitimize such stereotypes without any questions. Even the legitimization of these gender stereotypes and ideologies transfer the male into the dominant section of the society while the female remains as the secondary.

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