

# Development Message through Folk Media: A Contextual Content Study of Odia Proverbs

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**Abstract**— Folk experience is that knowledge which is expressed on proverbs. This type of knowledge is welcome by the society. Recent day, the folk are limited to their traditional knowledge. They only given more emphasis on traditional knowledge acquired from their ancestors. When the illness, the people prefer to sick the help of traditional physician the vaidya. They prefer to use the local medicinal herbs or plants known to them. So far as agriculture is concern the common folk depend on some traditional techniques. Looking the situation of environment, condition and colour of clouds on the sky they expect rain and other natural incidents which they have been experiencing from long past following their ancestor generation after generation. At that time of purchasing cattle the common people apply their tradition knowledge to select good one, so that they have not to repent later. To save the body and health free from disease, to avoid from ill eyes and to save from witch craft in the case of children these people take certain traditional preventive.

There are different types of odia proverbs like :- Animals related proverbs, Agriculture related proverbs, Vegetable and fruit related proverbs, The Jagannath culture related proverbs, Educational and Money related proverbs, Health related proverbs, Reference to epics and mythological scriptures, Legends, Anecdotes, Day to day life etc.

**Keywords**— Ancient practice, Folk media, Indian society, Modern science, Odia proverbs

## INTRODUCTION

In India, two-thirds of population still remains in the villages. Regarding the social and economic structure of Indian Society, Wilbur, Schramm once said "Activity at the village level is the only means, I would say, of effective village change and where as communication has to travel down, it has got to travel up and much more important it has got to travel round of the village level people have to work together and discuss together. Only when communication can build itself into the social structure, it is going to show any real hope of extensive results. Only when media channels can mix with inter personal channels, and with

the organization in the village are you going to have the kind of development that you will like. In other words, the idea of big media, of talk-down communication, is something which is not going work".

Proverbs saying, mirror the past to benefit the present. They are true informative and useful and wise and spontaneous saying of the then people. Proverbs are potential stocks in human discourse and best represents the mythology, history, culture, tradition and creative. They bear social value and thoughts. Proverbs addressed recurrent social situations in a strategic way. They have apothegm, adage, poetic devices in a definite social structure and semiotic point of view. Proverbs involve listeners with enigmatic character which leads listeners to assess the situation.

Odia folklorist Prof. Krushna Chandra Pradhan said on Proverb, "They are categorized as saying based on dutifulness (Farmer's song, Cart driver's song, Vagabond's song, Cowherd boy's song, sailor's song and suaridaka); rules and regulation (prabachan, prahelika, khanaa bachan); religious and cultural fairs and festivals, life of women and astrological sayings)."

In Odisha there are 80% people depend on agriculture. Domestication of animal is an ancient practice of man when he settle in rivers banks, he started organized agriculture. Due to this long involvement and utility of livestock like cow, bullock, buffalo, horse, sheep and goats etc. there exists a rich heritage of character study selection methods and management of these

quadruped animal in different parts of the world. This wisdom is transferred verbally from generation to generation in the form of popular folk songs or proverbs. Agriculture is the main source of income of the Odia community. Agricultural activity in Odisha normally coincides with the period of active monsoon from June to September every year. The farmers has been cultivating his main kharif crop during this period from ancient time. Seeds is one of the most important input that play a key role in agricultural productivity. There are some proverbs related on agricultural activity.

Proverbs are exposed in the following areas :-

- I. Animals related proverbs
- II. Agriculture related proverbs
  - a) Fertilizer relater proverbs
  - b) Weather and climate related proverbs
- III. Vegetable and fruit related proverbs
- IV. The Jagannath culture related proverbs
- V. Educational and Money related proverbs
- VI. Health related proverbs :
- VII. Reference to epics and mythological scriptures
- VIII. Legends
- IX. Anecdotes
- X. Day to day life

### I. Animals related proverbs

Pandāku kiniba kharāre bohi  
 balada kiniba yocina mai  
 mācha kiniba gālisi dekhi  
 Gāi kiniba singa parakhi  
 Ghodā kiniba bālire kasi  
 Paribā kiniba pindāre basi  
 Sunā kiniba niāre podi  
 Bāchurī kinba yodiki yodi

(Pandāku – a male buffalo, kiniba – purchase, kharāre – in Sunlight, bohi – engaging, balada – bullock, yocina – engage, mai – harrow, mācha – fish, gālisi – gills, dekhi – examine, gāi – cow, singa – horn, parakhi – observing, Ghodā – horse, bālire – sand, kasi – testing, Paribā – vegetables, pindāre – doorstep, basi – sitting, Sunā – gold, niāre – fire, podi – burning, Bāchurī – calf, yodi – pair)

choose and purchase He-buffalo after observing its performance in scorching heat; bullock by engaging in harrowing; fish by observing the gills; cow from its polished and small horn; horse by engaging in sandy bed; vegetables at door step; purity of gold by burning in fire and male calf in pair.

Thāpuā balada rakhyāpāe  
 thāpuā manisa nāśayāe

(Thāpuā – idle, balada – bullock, rakhyāpāe – saved, manisa – man, nāśayāe – suffers)

A lazy bullock is saved i.e. due to its laziness not engaged over time. But a inactive man usually suffers due to same character.

Balada parakha bāli  
 bandhu parakha dukkha padile  
 Saudā parakha kāli

(Balada – bullock, parakha – Examine, bāli – sand or sandy bed, bandhu – comrade or relation, dukkha – sorrow and suffering, padile – when falls, saudā – grocery, kāli – on credit)

A good bullock can be tested by engaging it in sandy soil, friend or relatives during hard times and a grocer while purchasing on credit.

Gāi kariba kālipunci  
 balada kariba dhepā  
 Pokharī pākhare bila karithiba  
 Cāsa karithiba ekā

(Gāi – cow, kariba – possess, kālipunci – black and short height, balada – bullock, dhepā – tall, Pokharī – pond, pākhare – near to, bila – plot for cultivation, Cāsa karithiba – cultivate, ekā – alone)

One should obtain cow with black colour and short height, tall bullock, cultivate plots near the pond or source of water and farming should be done alone.

### II. Agriculture related proverbs

chaso baso baishaka maso  
 phagune chaso suna kasa  
 chaita chaso kutumbo poso  
 baishakhe chaso hakimo poso  
 jesto chaso muliya paso

(Phagune- In the month of Phalguna, Chaso-Plough; Sunā-Gold; Kasa-Test for purchase; Chaita-In the month Chaitra; Kutumba-Family;

Poso-Maintain; Baishâkhe-In the month Baisakha i.e. April and May, Hâkima- Authority, Jesto - Jyesthe i.e. May and June; muliya - cultivator labour, poso - maintain Ploughing and preparing the farmland for paddy cultivation in different months gives different yield as observed from long experiences. Ploughing in 'Phalguna' (Feb.-Mar.) is most beneficial and gives higher yield as the soil gets sufficient time for proper conditioning. In 'Chaitra' (March-April) with moderate yield, in Baisakha (Apr.-May) the minimum and in 'Jesto' (May - June), the least amount of paddy output due to lack of appropriate time

Kârtike nathâe aphulâ  
Mârgasire nathâe apâcilâ

(Kârtike-In lunar month Kartika i.e. Oct. & Nov.; Nathâe-Shall not remian; Aphulâ-Without flowering, Mârgasire-In Margasira i.e. Nov. & Dec.; apâcilâ- Without ripening) All variety of rice, flowers in 'Kartika' (Oct.- Nov.) and start ripening in 'Margasira' (Nov.-Dec.) irrespective of its day of sowing or transplantation

Dhano na rangia rai  
mote na charo chasa bhai  
hate lombo katibo sisa  
jhumru thibe sai padisa

Good seed product more crop. One of the seed's name is rangia rai. Advice to farmer to cultivate it.

#### a) Another proverbs related to fertilizer

Khato barase  
panko puruse

Khato - cowdung, Panko - protoplasm soil, barase - one year, puruse - one generation. Cowdung is a bio fertilizer suitable for paddy crop. Its lasting is only one year but protoplasm is more suitable than cowdung. Its lasting is one generation.

#### b) Weather and climate related proverbs

1. Farmer make forecast the identity of rain by observing the direction of wind i.e. East to West - less rain, West to East - more rain.
2. Ants running from down to up with their eggs indicate heavy rain
3. Clouds of dark brown colour cause heavy rain for a fortnight
4. On the basis of vast experience farmers are generally imagine that if thick dark clouds are seen at the last shuklapakhsh indicates heavy rain
5. Purbe Ardul Pachhime Ravi  
Thik Janithibu Sedine Dhui.

It means that when the rainbow it seen on the East and the Sun-setting in the West on than day heavy rain is a must. Accordingly the peasants keep themselves alert and plan for cultivation.

On the contrary another proverb says, if the whole sky is not covered with clouds on the forth moonlight day in the month of Sravan and air blows from the South it is apprehended that there will not be balanced rain during the season and people are advised to go out in search of work to meet the day to day life. The proverb is like this:

Sravana Masara Adya Chauthi,  
Chariadu Jadi Megha Naghoti,  
Dakshina Digaru Bahai Baa,  
Bhuga Tupa Dhari Bidesha Jaa.

#### III. Vegetable and fruit related proverbs

1. In another such proverb it has been told regarding yielding good crop of brinjal. Brinjal is a vegetable which can be used in many items. It should be ploughed twelve times and digging for eight times. The proverb in this regard is quoted below.

Ath Kuda, Bara Bihida  
Baigan Phale Muda Muda,  
Pudei Khae Bamhan Budha.

2. Regarding cultivation of sugarcane and paddy it is mentioned in a proverb that sugarcane grows in case of lucky farmer and paddy grows for unlucky one. Indirectly it has been advised that a farmer should try to grow sugarcane to maximum height but not the paddy. Paddy crops get fall down if grow more in height which leads to loss, where as sugar cane grow more height provides more juice out of which more gur is collected. Thus the farmer gains the traditional knowledge. The proverb is like this:

Karmiar Kusher Badhe  
Akarmiar Dhan Bdhe.

3. In particular year if the tamarind tree bears more fruits, that year may be drought year.

4. In particular year if the mango bears more fruits, in that year may be non-drought year and crop situation will be better.

#### IV. The Jagannath culture related proverbs

Kolikatare rati nai  
Puri khetrare jati nai

( All caste are allowed to Jagannath temple,  
Kolkata is busy for 24 hours)

Jahaku rakhibe joga balia  
kikoribo taro boli bolua

(If Jogannatha God save, can't kill by anyone.)

Doro kahaku bhayo kahaku  
Thakuru achanti choubahaku  
(Jagannath God is always help us)

Arupa jakora sarupa mitha,  
manuso mitha gora  
debata jakare kalia mitha,  
sabuthu mitha kora

(white color people, kalia jaganatha and  
dry prasad is one one greatest in their own  
sphere )

Apana hato jagannatha  
(own hand made every thing is good or  
bad that loves by own self)

**Tirla (wife) budhi re mahaprabhu khandia**  
(at the time when lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra made by wood, inside of the temple not listen to thok thok sound, so the queen gurdicha worried and inform this matter to kind Indradukno, the close temple door was opened b the queen's order in the time the lord had incomplete

Rohini kundore budo pokaiba  
(rohini is a small pond in Puri. It believes  
that one who bath in that pond, get  
salvation)

Tini dhupo pancho abokas  
(to maintain luxury life)

#### V. Educational and Money related proverbs :

Patho dekhai bata -  
knowledge shows the way  
Pada bhuire gobo daru -  
in the land of illiterate, less literate person is also  
considered as wise person  
Pathere doro bandha heba -  
end of the student life  
Horo guno fedo misa, aau sobu patho phasara  
fasa -

if a person has the knowledge of addition  
subtraction multiplication and division then his  
mathematics knowledge will be easy.

C- akhara bibarjito- uneducated person

Jaha nahi bharate, taha nahi bharate -  
India's culture-civilization and heritage is  
described in Mohabharata grantha

Pothigoto vidya, poro hasta dhano -  
both bookies knowledge and thift money does  
not help in any work.

Pothi baigana na bari baigana -  
which did not help in real life like the brinjals  
draw in the books  
Pustak hie kala kalaro parama bandhu -

a good book is the best friend.

Chasa hudile barashe, patha hudile puruse -  
ill cultivation is lasting only one year but bat  
education is continuing one generation

Artha hi ekadharare gyano, vidya o shakti -  
Money is wisdom, knowledge and power all  
combined.

Artha hi anartharo mulo -  
Money is the root of all evils

Adharmo bito bodhe bohuto gola bele jai mulo  
sahito -  
Easy come easy go

Artha hi mano diya, mano niya -  
Money not only developed persons respect but  
also create problems.

## VI. Health related proverbs :

Khaibo pita, gaibo gita -

Both bitter vegetable and read Gita are keeps  
healthy body and mind.

Regarding health and hygiene and folk therapy many important and worthy proverbs prevail among the common folk. These people mainly depend on the medicinal herbs on which they trust and cure diseases. Besides on sorcery, branding, some rituals they believe more. They prefer the ojha or village priest and vaidya but not the doctor. From such proverbs the folk acquire knowledge which they apply whenever necessary. Regarding treatment of diseases they follow the directions mentioned in such proverbs. Many times they get good result. Let us examine a few proverbs in this connection.

Dine Duna Rati Una,  
Sakhalpuake Khankhana.

It means one should take full-belly food at launch but nearly half at dinner. As a result the

bowl on the next morning is cleaned and makes a man smart for the whole day. A proverb says, if someone uses turban on the head throughout the day and massages oil under the feet in the night a vaidya or physician will never be called for him. Rather he may make jokes with the vaidya. The proverb is –

Mude Pagdi Pae Tel  
Baid Sange Karbu Gel.

Another proverb speaks on taking food. In this regard four persons are chosen according to their eating. The minimum a person takes the maximum he maintains sound health.

Ek Bel Khae Jugi,  
Dui Bel khae Bhogi,  
Tin Bel Khae Bania Bahman,  
Chaer Bel Khae Rogi.

It means that a Jogi or saint takes food once a day, taking twice a day one can enjoy the life. The Baniya or the traditional medicine expert and a Bramhin take thrice a day as they are able to digest but who takes four times a day invites diseases.

It has been mentioned in a proverb regarding health. What should one do to keep himself well and not to do which creates harm.

Khai Challe Badhe Bayu,  
Khai suile Badhe Ayu,  
Khai Basle Badhe Peta,  
Khai Khale jamar Bhet.

One should not walk after eating as it creates gas in the bowl. It is better to sleep after meals as it extends the longevity. After taking food nobody should sit to avoid fat and bally to enlarge. On the other hand if somebody eats and eats he or she has to meet the Yama, the God of Death. The more a child is massaged with oil the more he or she retains good health as the paddy ripens properly under water.

In Odia different writers gives different opinion on this categorized. Normally they can be divided as i) Reference to epics and mythological scriptures ii) Legends iii) Anecdotes iv) Day to day life



## VII. Reference to epics and mythological scriptures

Jhimiti khelaru mahabharata  
(from the game of dice to the battle of  
Mohabharata) refers to the creation of big  
problems in common social life from petty  
matters.

Karna male paanch,  
Arjuna male paanch

(If Karna dies then it is five, if Arjuna dies then it is five too or It does not matter if Karna or Arjuna dies.): In the Mahabharat, Kunti, the mother of the Paandavs, the five sons like Yudhishthir, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakul and Sahadev. In addition, she had a spiritual son named Karna who is at par with Arjuna. If any one of them dies in the battle, then, there will be still five sons left. It is just like loss and gain which has no meaning in the context

Bhima bala Kuntiku janaa  
(the actual strength of Bhima is known to Kunti) is a colloquial saying that refers to the The Mahabharat. Bhima, one of the five brothers of the Pandavas is known as the strongest. But, his real strength is known to his wife Kunti. It means that everybody has certain weakness which is known to some of their close relatives, in most cases, it is known to their wives because they only know the extent of masculinity the husbands possess.

Gangaa boile thibi,  
Gaangi boile jibi

(If you say Ganga then I will stay, if you say Gaangi then I will go). It is originated from the story of King Shaantanu who married Gangaa with a condition that he cannot obstruct her from her works. By the way, she went on destroying her babies till the seventh one. When the eighth one came, Shaantanu was bound to reproach her and getting reacted, she left him forever. This is reflected in the context of defiant women living with weak men

Martya mandale deha bahi,

Debataa hoile marai.

It means even the gods and goddesses take human form in the earth, they die as per the law that human is mortal.

## VIII. Legends

Nikiti taula saana badaku,  
bhaari hua jia ruhe talaku  
(weight and measure is for small and big amounts, and obviously the big amount remains lower) i.e. in the system of weights and measures, it is the law of nature that the behavior remains lower and the light higher. (Historical background)

Andha deshaku gali darpana biki,  
Kandha hastare deligodhana teki.

It means that selling mirror in a country of the blind and donating cow to the tribal are equally meaningless. They do not know the proper use of such things. He writes,

Raaja sinaa pooja paae aapanna deshare,  
kabi pooja pauthae deshavideshare

(A king is honoured in his country but a poet is adored everywhere). Like this, some other traditional poets like Baladev Rath, Fakir Mohan and Madhusudan Rao have also written which are adapted in such a manner. One famous Odia poet Radhanath Ray in his anthology Chilikkaa writes

Sundare truptira abasaadanaahin,  
jete dekhuthile nua dishuthai  
(A thing of beauty is a joy for ever).

## IX. Anecdotes

Tini tundare chheli kukura  
means even a goat is considered a dog when many people approve it. These two reflects the role of animals in cultural performances, metaphorical image making and taken as symbols befitting human nature in different contexts.

Bilei kapaalaku sika chhindiba

(the hanging rope container having a milk pot breaks before a cat) means getting an opportunity unexpectedly.

Raandipua Ananta

(Ananta, the son of a widow) means a very careless and unsystematic loafer, free from all social norms and very bold and shameless in his activities.

Kataka chinta Baimundiku

(the problem of Katak, the city is a great concern for Baimundi): It is popularly used to refer to the benevolent and volunteer service rendered by common people to the society who does not expect any return. There was a poor and illiterate man in the city of Katak. The place is surrounded by rivers and every season the place was greatly affected by heavy flood. The King was not much concerned for this calamity. But selflessly, Baimundi went on collecting a group of volunteers to construct a dam to prevent water from rushing into the city. This inspired the king to accomplish the work and people remember him for this.

## X. Day to day life

Apadokale jehu dekha bandhu janaku sehi lekha -  
Friend in need is a friend indeed

Bhukila kukuro kamude nahi -  
A barking dog seldom bites

Manisha swabhabo mole tute,  
ghusuri swabhabo pankare lote -  
A leopard cannot change its spots.

Choto bastu ku korle hela,  
nische budibo toro bhela -  
A little lid will sink a great sheep.

Choto saparo biso basi -  
A little pot soon hot.

Najanu tuhe chali, deu bataku gali -  
A bad man quarrels with his tools.

Biswasta bandhu hi mohoswadha -  
A faithful friend is medicine of life.

Choro otee sahi jana, jamana sada chano chano -  
A guil's mind is always suspicious.

## CONCLUSION

Proverbs still live in the word of mouth of the common people though oral communication.

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