Portrayal of Women in Folksongs of Rajput Community;

An ethnographic Study of Village Wahndo, Gujranwala

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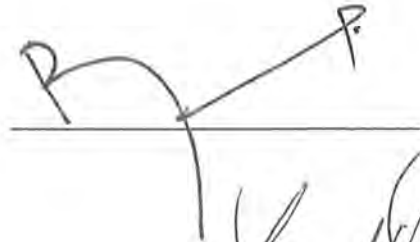
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ABSTRACT

This study looks into one of the important genres of folklore, the folksongs. The study investigates the images of women portrayed in folk (wedding and Birth) songs of the Rajput people in Wahndo district Gujranwala (Punjab, Pakistan). The study focuses on themes revealed through the folksongs along with the interpretation from the Rajput women in their cultural context. It brings to light the different themes within the songs as interpretated and described by the women singers.

The study relies on some of the theories like social learning theory, psychoanalytic theory and feminist theory to demonstrate that how women images are reinforced from one generation to another. Feminist theory ponders on the images depicted through the songs. Literature was reviewed, especially on gender and folk lore, family folklore studies and wedding and birth songs studies, in order to provide platform and direction for the research.

I conducted eight (8) interviews in total. Out of which six (6) were conducted from women (my folk group) who had folk knowledge of songs. Five of them were my relations whereas one was a professional singer (mirasaan) who only performs on Rajput marriages or child birth ceremonies. I also interviewed two key informants (both relatives) for cultural understanding and validity of the data obtained from the field.

The findings of the study suggest that folk wedding and birth songs perform many functions for the women who sing them. Through these songs women express their unspeakable sentiments, desires, fears and apprehensions. These songs provide them a medium of expression with all kind of emotions they want to exit.

However the most important function these songs perform is that women also protest, challenge and contest the patriarchal male social order. These songs also negate the impression created by

the western feminist that women of the third world countries are passives and not conscious enough to resist against the male domination. The difference is that women of this part of the world do question and protest the male social order but their protest is according to their own peculiar situation. In many songs that were collected during research for this study confirms that women address directly those relationships which are tabooed and cannot be address directly by woman. They satire and make fun of those relationships which otherwise they cannot. In both wedding and birth songs certain symbols are also indentified which have special meanings to the ritual in which they are sung.

To sum up the study it can be deduced that the folksongs provide many cultural aspects of the community understudy and it becomes more interpretive when its meanings are drawn in the cultural context in consultation of the people who use them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Context of the Study

Dundes (1966b) says that there are as many concepts of folklore as there are folklorists. Folklore is one of the significant aspects of people's socio-cultural life. It is an important part of people's customs, traditions, and institutions. In a pre-literate society, it serves as the storehouse of culture and history (Dorson, 1972: 35; Boswell, 1962:11). Therefore, studying folklore can strongly serve as a means of studying the people it belongs to.

Propp (1968) thinks that folklore is an ideological discipline; its methods and aims are determined in such a way that they reflect the outlook of that particular age. In Russian scholarship, folklore is called traditions popularizes, traditions population. In that case, it is not the subject of separate area of thoughts like in western thought.

According to Bascom (1972) for the anthropologists, folklore is one of the important parts that make up the culture of the people everywhere in the world. Ethnographic studies would remain incomplete in description if they do not include the folktales, legends, myths, riddles, proverbs and other forms of folklores employed by the native people. Being an educative device which authenticates religion, social, political and economic institutions, folklore also seems to transmit these materials from one generation to the other, and hence, cannot be avoided while researching and studying culture. Culture has been defined as a "man's social heritage" and as "the man-made part of environment". It consists, essentially, of any form of behaviour which is acquired through learning, and which is permitted in agreement with certain traditionally approved norms. Under this term, anthropologists include all the customs and traditions along with folktales or proverbs which are clearly a part of culture.

According to Dundes (1966b) folklore includes myths, legends, folktales, jokes, proverbs, riddles, chants, charms, blessings, curses, oaths, insults, retorts, taunts, teases, toasts, tongue-twisters etc. It also includes folk costume, folk dance, folk drama (and mime), folk art, folk belief (or superstition), folk medicine, folk instrumental music (e.g., fiddle tunes), folksongs (e.g., lullabies, ballads), folk speech (e.g., slang), folk metaphors (e.g., to paint the town red), and names (e.g., nicknames and place names)[1].

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[1] Online resource :Folklore Studies - What is Folklore - University of Missouri.

Folk songs are one of the verbal forms of folklore, and are sung by common people during work or social activities. One of the most important characteristics of these songs is that they are part of the oral culture. The melodies and the texts are learned by imitation and participation rather than from written sources such as books.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines Folk song as "a song of unknown authorship that has been passed on, preserved, and adapted (often in several versions) in an oral tradition before later being written down or recorded." Folk songs usually have an easily remembered melody and a simple poetic form such as the quatrain. The most prominent categories are the narrative ballad and the lyric love song; but the term also covers lullabies, carols, and various songs to accompany working (e.g. the sea shanty), dancing, and drinking.

In Pakistani context, the Rajput community in general has not been studied with reference to women songs. Therefore, this is a unique study in a way that women wedding songs and birth songs are studied to obtain knowledge about the culture of the respective community.

This thesis investigates the portrayal of women in folk wedding songs and birth songs of the Rajput community living in Wahndo district, Gujranwala. It further explores how folk wedding and birth songs shape the gender ideology in the daily life of the women there. Through the folklore, wedding songs and birth songs, the gender ideologies are transferred from one generation to the other. Both types of folksongs are performed during the events of marriage and birth of a child. Mostly, these songs are sung by women relatives or professional singers who perform songs in exchange of money or clothes. Folk wedding and birth songs depict the status and position of the women in the community. Listening to the songs and later on examining the texts makes an image of Rajput women that represents their expectations, feelings as well as their position in the community.

1.2. Objectives of the Study
I have two types of objectives which are discussed in detail

1.2.1. General Objectives
As stated earlier, folk wedding and birth songs seem to be an important part of Rajput folk culture. However, they have not been studied in such a way that they reflect the life realities of

the women in which they live in. The general objective of this study, therefore, is to collect and examine some songs and find out what how women are portrayed in those songs. In other words, the study aims at discovering the contextual functions of Rajput folk (wedding and birth) songs by examining them within the socio-cultural realties, and showing how they characterize the life of the women. The assumption is that by studying the folk songs within the context of their use, it would be possible to understand and state what they put in the picture about women life.

The study proposes to analyze folk wedding and birth songs in order to determine the extent to which the society expects women or girls to conduct themselves and get accepted by the society. The study also aims to provide a traditional Rajput frame of reference for the exploration of the genres mentioned above. The Rajput frame of reference will offer better understanding of the culture in which these genres will be interrogated.

This study specifically analyzes folk songs (wedding and birth) with a purpose to highlight the images attached to women. Women's reactions, if there are any, towards cultural norms or values are described too. It also looks at the overt and covert attitudes and ideologies which the folklore express and promotes through main institutions i.e. marriage and family in particular.

1.2.2. Specific Objectives
The following are the specific objectives, which this study intends to achieve:

1. To explore the underlying gender ideology in the wedding and birth songs
2. To understand women's own understanding and interpretation of their portrayal in folk songs
3. To analyze folk songs that ascribe gender stereotypical roles generation after generation

1.3. Significance of the Study
I am very much interested in this research for various reasons. The first and foremost is that being a woman, I have lot of interest in gender issues. I feel more comfortable and contented when I work on and for women. I have worked previously on a course assignment related to exogamy in Rajput community. I think it would be interesting for me to study this community again from a different perspective.

There have been many researches on the various genres of folklore throughout the world. However, as far as Pakistani folklores are concerned, there has been dearth of research on it in general. After a brief review of literature, it was noted that stress has been made on the documentation of folklore studies rather than empirical research studies. Mazhir-ul Islam (1977) wrote an instructional manual "Folklore *ki Pehli Kitab*" that describes in detail how material of folklore may be collected, recorded and later on documented.

Most of the Pakistani folklore that I came across narrates the romantic stories such as *Heer Ranjha, Sassi Punoo, Sohni Mahiwal, Mirza Sahibaan* and many more to list from various regions of Pakistan. These romantic tales describe the love-stories of the main characters and their ordeal and struggle to achieve each other. Although these love-stories do depict the social scenario of their particular ages, the moralities and social setup, they do not provide any critical analysis of the folktales. While searching in literature, it is important to mention here that there have been some folktales that are imported from other cultures such as Arab, Iranian, Afghani, Turkish and central Asian countries. These culturally imported folktales have also become a part of Pakistani folklore, and are adopted well in Pakistani folklore literature. *Shireen Farhaad* and *Laila Majnoon* are the instances of the famous imported love-stories.

Another group of folklore includes the documentation of folk poetry of great folk poets like Sultan Baho, Bulleh Shah, Baba Farid, Shah Hussein, and many more to add. The poetry of these folk poets has been collected and translated in many regional and international languages. Additionally, most of the research studies accomplished on folk poetry generally emphasize on philosophical and spiritual aspects of the folk poetry. These research studies generally employ the aspect of spirituality to describe the symbolic connection of human beings with Allah Almighty. The lyrics of the romantic folktales are interpreted by keeping the spiritual meanings in mind. Nayyer's research (1974) on "Philosophical interpretations of Punjabi folktale Heer Ranjha" is one of the many examples of this sort of literary work.

Beside the folk poetry, other grouping of folktales is categorized under the children literature. For example, books on folktales like "*Gift of WaliDad*" (1995) "Folktales of Pakistan" (1976), the "Adventures of Sinbad", and many more are referred to as children folktales.

The dearth becomes more intense as there are apparently very few research studies on women folklore in Pakistani context. While reading Pakistani folklore with reference to women, one gets to know that images and roles of women are limited and stereotypical, though they correspond to the socio cultural context. For example, in folk poetry, women are represented as submissive, sad and helpless individuals before their lovers who keep on waiting for them. Same is the case with other genres of the Pakistani folklore. Therefore, women are portrayed in traditional and stereotypical roles which are transferred from one generation to another. These roles and images of women define the expected and socially sanctioned roles of women in the society. There is the need to look at these roles and images in changing socio-cultural context with more analytic and critical ways.

Investigating with reference to gender and folklore, there have been few studies to name. Saeed's (2007) article links gender and folklore and describes women as keepers of the folklore. Fareed, (2010) in her unpublished thesis, collected and analyzed the "*Tappas in Punjabi village*". Her thesis has a feminist perspective and looks at the language of Tappas from feminist standpoint. Another research study on Punjabi women's life cycle songs "Voiceless Melodies" (1995) looks at women from a sociological perspective.

"Women and folklore" is a unique as well as under- researched topic to explore with reference to this community in Pakistani context. In India, there have been some significant studies on the folk songs of the Rajput women (Narayan; 1997d: Gold; 1997: Tiwary; 1978: Anjali; 2002, Reheja and Gold 1994). However, in Pakistan, research on folksongs with reference to Rajput women is very under-researched area of investigation. It is imperative that with the documentation of folklore, analytical and critical research studies must be conducted. The understudy research not only documents women wedding and birth songs for analysis, but also presents women's own voice. i.e., what is their own understanding of gender ideology in which these songs are sung and are referred to them? To what extent these songs represent their emotions? What is their point of view about these images which are portrayed in folksongs?

As mentioned earlier, my focus of study is on only one genre (folksongs) of Pakistan in which women are prominently featured and referred. The research on folklore of women from a socio-cultural and feminist perspective is a significant contribution to the knowledge of the folklore literature in Pakistan. I think my research is among few researches that would have various

strands to look into this genre as very limited research studies are available on Pakistani folklore from folklorist and anthropological perspective. I believe it to be imperative that folklores are not only documented but also empirically investigated from various standpoints.I am sure this research provides the readers some insight into the process by which folk songs of Rajput community are transferred from one generation to another. This study also offers some background of socio-cultural context which underpins the reasons of the continuity of this genre in this particular community.

Concluding the above mention discussion it can be said that folklore is the mirror of society and reflects its cultural pattern. Researching folklore with feminist interpretation along with anthropological insights would help me to understand the meaning of folklore in relation to women. It would be interesting to know how dominant group imposes its own ideas to the realities that exist in the society. Similarly, every society has its own socializing prototypes that effectively transfer various ideologies including gender ideology from one generation to another. Folklore is one of the templates of ideologies which are transferred within the generations by using various media.

1.4. Locale of the Study

The research study was conducted in Wahndo, a union council of *tehsil* Kamoke in district Gujranwala. It is at 45 minutes travel from Gujranwala city on G.T. road. Wahndo is a town with majority of people of Rajput caste. The other castes include *Jats, Arian* and *Kashmiris* settlers. Rajputs are the landlords and agriculture based community. *Jats, Arian* and *Kashmiris* settlers have their transport businesses and trade.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study does not take other forms of Rajput folklore into consideration. It deals with the contextual study of folk wedding and birth songs in which women are referred or presented. The songs are collected, recorded, translated and analyzed in the Rajput cultural context in Pakistan. The study is limited to the women Rajput living in Wahndo district, Gujranwala. It is understood that there are many Rajput communities living in many other parts of Pakistan along with their cultural heritage. The study, therefore, is limited to folksongs collected from the women found only in a particular area during the fieldwork.

It would have been better if I would have attended any marriage ceremony during my field work. However, it could not happen. So I recorded songs in routine days, not on the events of marriage or birth ceremonies. The period of research and participants were limited, therefore I do not feel and claim that the collection is exhaustive.

1.6. Theories / Theoretical Models

This research study encompasses the very two notions, gender and folklore. For the understanding and linkage of the concept of gender to folklore, I employ some interrelated theories that facilitate in comprehending the very basic link between gender and folklore. Therefore, this study takes eclectic approaches in which theoretical concepts are employed which definitely discuss 'gender' through many standpoints. It is unthinkable that while explaining and understanding concept of gender in any society, one can neglect social learning theory. This theory is the founding base for the understanding of gender dynamics in any society.

Besides, the feminist theory (with post modern feminist approach) and psychoanalytic theory is drawn on to uncover the covert and overt ideologies within the genre. The genre selected for this research is included in vast umbrella of folklore and as a form of verbal art. Additionally, I will try to combine these approaches with couple of folkloristic perspectives that explore oral narratives as representation of collective thinking (Dundes, 1966b) communicative process and artistic expression (Ben Amos, 1971) and a form of verbal art (Bascom, 1953).These models/ theories are briefly explained as under.

1.6.1. Social Learning Theory

In the case of gender, social learning theory takes gender identity and role as a set of behaviors that are learnt from the environment. The process of observational learning is the main way of learning gender behaviors. Children observe the people around them behaving in various ways, some of which relate to gender. They pay attention to some of these people (models), and predetermine their behaviors. At a later time, they may imitate the behavior they have observed. They may do this regardless of whether the behavior is 'gender appropriate' or not, but there are a number of processes that make it more likely that a child will reproduce the behavior that its society deems appropriate for its sex.

13

Bem (1981)' schema theory of sex typing provides valuable information to conceptualize gender in a social setting. She identifies three key "gender lenses" or hidden assumptions through which one can identify gender dynamics prevailing in any society. The first, she mentions, is gender polarization in which men and women are considered different from each other. Secondly, androcentrism in which men are considered superior to females and male experience is the normative standard. Thirdly, biological essentialism that believes in biological differences between the sexes. According to Bem (1981), these basic assumptions construct gender ideology within a society, and work overtly or covertly by making gender identities of woman and man.

Men and women, while growing up in the society, learn many types of behaviors. These learned behaviors and attitudes, after observations within the society, are transferred from one generation to the other through many expressions among which verbal expression is the one. Socialization, that includes education, media and use/abuse of language and many other interrelated aspects, does not force but reinforce the gender ideologies in the society. Gendered individuals perform their accepted and expected roles within the society. Certain norms, ideals and standards are expected to be followed by both genders.

These norms and ideals are perpetuated through various media of expressions. As folklore is very much part of the culture, so many genres of folklore become the media of expression to not only spread but also transfer these societal ethics from one generation to another. Some behaviors are expressed through subtle agitations and protests by expressing desires, emotions and wishes. As Bauman and Briggs (1990) suggest that oral narratives, whether song, poetry, story, proverb, or autobiographical narrative are always situated within communicative practices that may serve to reproduce a social order, to critique and undermine it, or something in between. Therefore, social learning theory supports much in understanding the gender ideology persisting in the community.

1.6.2. Feminist Theory
The feminist theory sees gender in terms of relationship between men and women. This relationship is often described within the feminist thought as of dominance and subordination. Moreover, it also takes societal structures, systems and their dynamics, as gendered which favors men more than women. Similarly, the crux of the feminist thought suggests that the relationship

14

between man and woman is that of gendered individuals in the sense of power and authority. In addition to this, the post modernist thought within feminist scholarship talks about women in terms of 'others' within the existing patriarchal society. This notion of otherness, however, provides the researchers enough space to criticize the prevailing norms, values and practices which the dominant culture (patriarchy) imposes on everyone especially women.

The research understudy interrogates folk wedding and birth songs in the line of feminist thought and ideology. Within the parameter of the feminist ideology, this study explores women images portrayed and looks at the position of women in relation to men in this theoretical conceptual framework. This framework explores the genre understudy as the site for challenging and contesting the patriarchal social structures, relationships and ideologies.

Gullested (1993) however, presents a slightly different but more balanced argument. She argues that it is assumed that women are subordinated in every patriarchal society. This should not be taken as a useful guideline in researching women's lives. She insists that this generalization narrows down the researcher's analytic abilities to uncover and reveal the complexities and contradictions existing within specific culture. It is imperative for the researchers to keep in mind that women must be researched in relation to different contexts. The thorough examination of values and traditions which govern the community understudy assist to understand the relationship between the two sexes existing there. This understanding of relationship helped me to recognize the gender construction within the genre expressed through folklore.

Simultaneously, I am also aware of the fact that western feminists generally describe third world women in a typical mindset. Gayatri (1987) and Lockett (1990) caution that western feminist scholars must avoid their own imposition and labeling of third world women as suppressed, subordinated, slow and docile members of the society. This portrayal of third world women has been highly criticized even within the feminist scholarship. Employing feminist theory, I investigate construction of gender at two analytic levels. Firstly, I focus on the gendered social roles and relationships between women and men and how they are brought in to genre (i.e. wedding and birth songs) understudy. On second level, I investigate the examining of cultural concepts of gender, i.e. what kind of cultural meanings and values are attached to women which are s accepted in the community.

15

1.6.3. Psychoanalytic Theory

The explorations of the subconscious mind of man in the field of psychoanalysis by the writings, experiments, and discoveries of Freud have deeply influenced the theoretical and methodological prospects of folklorists. Freud himself inclined heavily on myths, tales, particularly dreams in folklore for his psychoanalytical explorations of human mind. Dundes, in most of his work on American folklore, follows the Freudian interpretations. Besides, Freud, Jung's analytical psychology and the concept of "collective unconscious" and "personal unconscious" have also influenced the folklorists who analyze folklore materials psychoanalytically. There have been many controversial debates on the use of the psychoanalytical theory in deciphering meaning of the folklore materials; however, the use has not been discarded completely.

Taking conceptual support from this approach for the genre understudy, I support Dundes (1997d) who encourages folklorists and anthropologists to use psychoanalytic analysis in the study of folklore. He maintains that folklore offers a form of escape for the people who tell tales and sing songs. The anxiety provoking behaviors cannot be expressed otherwise in usual and direct conversations. Dundes (1980c) argues that the meaning of folklore is hidden and unconscious. Moreover, he maintains that the functions of folklore provide socially sanctioned outlet for the expressions that otherwise cannot be expressed in usual ways. This research unlocks the meaning of the genres in the context in which they are being used in the community. In the analysis of wedding songs, women's various concealed expressions are explored which otherwise are hard to express through other means of communication.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

This research study has its limitation in two ways. One is regarding qualitative research and the other is with respect to the selection of respondents. The major question mentioned by Goulding (2002) is that qualitative research is purely descriptive and therefore not rigorous, and that it is too subjective and impressionistic. However, Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) deal this critique and suggest that validity is stronger with the use of additional strategies used with observation, such as interviews, document analysis, or surveys, questionnaires, or other more quantitative methods. Participant observation can be used to help answer descriptive research questions, to build theory, or to generate or test hypotheses (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). Therefore, in this research, I

tried to improve the validity of research data by using interview and participant observation as tools of research.

As far as the selection of the respondents was concerned, I had no choice except selecting six women as the rest of the women of the community did not sing or knew these songs. Men were excluded as they did not sing wedding songs. Since women sing/ know the songs therefore, their interpretation and understanding of the songs in cultural context was documented.

1.8. Conclusion

Considering folklore as a concept and part of a culture that validates social and political institutions, the research topic of folk songs (wedding and child birth) of Rajput community of village Wahndo is explored with the objective of finding out the underlining gender ideology, women's own understanding and interpretation of their portrayal and analyzing the gender stereotypical roles ascribed to women. The literature review and primary research questions provided direction for the focus of the study. Significance, locale and scope of study are discussed along with detailed theoretical models to explain and justify the research topic in the Pakistani Rajput community context.

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter one presents the background and objectives of the study. Chapter two describes the study setting, methods of research and theoretical underpinnings upon which this study is presented. Chapter three annotates the findings of the relevant literature related to gender and folk lore with special emphasis on folk wedding and birth songs. Chapter four describes the area profile along with social context of wedding and birth songs in Rajput community living in Wahndo where the research is conducted. Chapter five and six discuss the results and analysis of the research. Chapter seven presents summary, conclusions along with findings and some recommendations for further research

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology of the study. The research study was conducted for nearly 3 months (June-August 2012). This is a qualitative research study and I used in-depth- interviews and participant observation as my basic tools for obtaining data. Besides, secondary sources such as archives (online) research journals and resources are used for analysis and understanding of the various perspectives of folklore and folk songs. Issues of field work are also discussed while working with the relatives, highlighting both affirmative and unhelpful. Limitation of the study also discusses the reason for the limitation.

2.2. Selecting Relevant Research Methods

Johnson and Altheide (1994) recommend that selection of the research methods is a "crucial element" in the research process. It is important to choose most appropriate tools for research as it affects the data collection as well as data analysis of research. As the research being carried out is a qualitative one, qualitative research method is used for data collection, employing the tools of in-depth-interviews and participant observation. My study not only documents the folk wedding and birth songs; it also has another important factor of analysis and interpretation of the folklore in their cultural context. Therefore, it has been selected in a way as to present both the anthropological and folkloric expression of information visibly, and get them understood as originally as possible. My analysis must reflect participant's experiences and voices in interpretations of songs. In order to obtain data, I conducted interviews of women, and used personal observations as research tools. However, I used small questionnaire for obtaining some background information and keeping record of the participants, which provided me basic information regarding their names, ages and marital statuses.

In the present study, data collection was done both from primary and secondary source of research, primary sources including in-depth-interviews and participant observation. Valuable insights were also gained from the analysis of the research studies conducted by eminent researcher in the field of folklore, family studies and particularly folk songs. Secondary sources mainly covered publications, text and electronic research journals and archives. Secondary sources essentially provide preparation for interviews and concept clarity about various

perspectives within folklore. Secondary data also supported me in cross- checking of official information, research methodology used in folk songs analysis etc.

Selecting qualitative methodology for the research study was a deliberate effort and the best choice to my understanding. In Nunkoosing (2005)' words and I agree with her "we choose the interview because we know that the best way to look into the lived experience of a person who has experienced an important ... issue to enable the person to narrate that experience. We are interested in persons' cognitive, emotional and behaviour as a unifying whole rather than as independent parts to be researched separately"(P: 699).

The other reason to select in-depth interviews is that the present study is not limited to the documentation of the folklore only; it is planned to explore the contextual meanings of the folklore wedding and birth songs when they are performed. Therefore, while looking for the meanings of certain images presented in folk songs (wedding and birth songs), it is imperative to explore folklore in contextual connotation, and I consider in- depth interviews provide the best options to explore and discuss detailed conversations. Otherwise, I would not have been able to get desired information for the research study.

While studying any genres of folklore, and especially in this research study on folksongs, it is crucial to look at the text of the songs as well as the context of the folksongs in which they have relevance to the people and their daily life activities. Researchers are stressed and suggested by eminent folklorists to investigate for cultural details and milieu while collecting and documenting folklores. Therefore, reaching for this objective, selection of interviews from the women who sing/know folksongs becomes significant for the research study.

This focus on meanings is central to what is known as the "interpretive" approach to social science (Geertz, 1973). Dundes too, puts stress on the need of understanding cultural context which makes folklore valuable and unique. He mentions that not only the folklore but the account of the respondent is very important too, as it carries a lot of information of the social cultural context in which that folklore exists.

Dundes' work can be reduced in these simple words as form, function and transformation. In this way, he suggests researchers who are researching on any genres of folklore, to identify what they are studying (form), the function (what folklore does for its folk group), and how the form transfers as it passes from one generation to the other or reappear in somewhat different contexts.

Dundes, in his two famous articles "Texture, Text, and Context" (Dundes 1966b) and "Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore" (Dundes 1964a) develops argument on this proposal. The argument of Dundes is well-known as "oral literally criticism" which, later on, Narayan (1995c) discusses when she analyzes her own research on folksongs of Kangra women in Rajasthan. She says that Dundes acknowledges importance of native texts within the cultural context, and attaches immense importance to context of the folklore. She quotes Dundes and says:

> The current interest in the collection of context ... has partially obscured the equally necessary and important task of collecting the meaning(s) of folklore. One must distinguish between use and meaning, the collection of context and preferably a number of different contexts for the same item of folklore. But it cannot be assumed that the collection of context per se automatically ensures the collection of meaning ... For this reason, folklorists must actively seek to elicit the meaning of folklore from the folk. [1966b:506-507, emphasis in original]

The connection of the songs in their cultural context in which they are performed and understood is one of the main explorations of this thesis. Connection has to be explored in detail; therefore, in-depth interview remains the best choice for investigation.

Additionally, Dundes (1964a) also emphasizes the recognition of the importance of texts and folk group of any particular genres of the folklore. He is of the opinion that symbols employed in folklore have an unconscious bonding between them. The folk (people) cannot always tell the meanings of the folklore by themselves. Instead, the investigator and the respondent together investigate the meaning of the folklore. This includes efforts of the researcher who first locates the symbols from the text in light of contexts in which they are employed.

20

2.3. In- Depth Interviews

According to Kvale (1996) the qualitative research interview attempts "to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of people experiences, to uncover their lived world" (1996). Further, qualitative research interviews enable a researcher to "see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee" (King, 2004). Furthermore, in case the research design involves an analysis of people's motivations and opinions, interviewing proves to be a particularly efficient means of collecting data (Keats, 2000).This is same for the present research study too.

The in-depth interview is a significant tool of qualitative research as qualitative researchers depend extensively on in-depth interviewing. Spradley (1979) described it as "a particular kind of speech" (p.18). The researcher uses ethnographic questions to gather cultural data. Keeping this in mind, it can be said that ethnographic interviewing is not simply doing an interview. Instead, it is an elaborate system of series of interviews which is structured with the purpose to extract insiders' cultural ethnographic views. However, I conducted elaborate interviews for finding out respondents' cultural knowledge related to the folk wedding and birth songs.

I also took guidance from Kvale's (1996) stages of conducting in-depth interviews including schematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting. These stages helped me in understanding of the whole schema of conduction of interviews.

2.3.1. Designing the Interviews

Before I went into the field, I visited couple of places where I can have enough number of respondents who have ample knowledge of folk wedding and birth songs. However, I changed my locale of study two times (the reason has been discussed in later part of this chapter) and came to know a few women who knew or could sing folk wedding or birth songs. Therefore, for a limited clientele, I designed interview guide that would investigate the individual's background, knowledge of folk wedding songs, and their interpretations and understanding of these songs. I constructed open-ended questions according to the two most important themes and collected information from the interviews. In the questionnaire, first part describes the profile of the women while other part offers a set of open-ended questions for the respondents for interpretations and contextual understanding of the songs as per their culture.

21

2.3.2. Conduct of the Interviews

In the field work (June -August 2012) I gathered two types of information. I conducted interviews and recorded folk wedding and birth songs. It must be made clear here that all women did not sing or allowed me to record songs in their voices. Some women sang the songs but did not want to record their songs. So I wrote the songs with the help of the women who narrated the songs. Some of the songs were recorded in women's own voices. However, I wrote all the songs and tried my best to record the non-verbal gestures and murmuring in the songs.

I conducted eight (8) interviews in total. Six (6) interviews were conducted from women (my folk group) who had folk knowledge of songs. Five of them were my relative women and one was a professional singer (miraasan) who only performs on Rajput marriages or child birth ceremonies. I also interviewed two key informants (both relatives) for cultural understanding and validity of the data obtained from the field.

All the interviews were conducted in Urdu language while some of the women answered me in their local language, Haryanvi (Mohajiri as local women call it) language. This language is a linguistic mixture of Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu languages. I cannot ignore the fact that contemporary movies songs are the most popular choice of the people on the marriage ceremonies. However, folk wedding songs are sung, occasionally, in limited number and by few women who are over fifty years of age. After a hard work of many days, I could manage to interview six women who knew or could sing these folk wedding and birth songs.

Interview time varied significantly and always took more time than I expected and anticipated. I used to contact my respondent one day before the interviews. Most of the time, it was between 9.00-9.30 in the morning; however, due to women's other engagements and presence of many other women, it could not be started in time. Singing, recording and writing of the songs usually took place in front of women. However, interviews were conducted individually and alone at their homes.

Sites of the interviews also have a significant influence on the conduction of interviews. Therefore, locations can be perceived as micro-geographies which can have an effect on the quality and content of the interviews. Interview locations provide an opportunity to understand the interviewer better and provide participants more control, resulting in better understanding,

and richer data (Elwoood and Martin, 2000). I conducted interviews in their houses and according to their own choice of time.

So I think in this way, they were more comfortable than me while conversing with me. It was worth to mention here that at every visit for interview, my respondents led me in from the outside through the courtyard and into her guest room (beithak). For me, this movement came to symbolize a couple of things such as my position as an outsider in the group. This movement also came to symbolize the extent to which I was allowed "inside" and interviewed the women of the family although I did not share a demographic similarity with them. After interview, I was allowed to sit anywhere in house. But before and during interviews, they used to be formal and apprehensive with me.

Each interview was unique, as each interviewee was an individual with multiple shades of personalities and roles which they carried throughout my research process. The individual uniqueness and distinctive expression of the respondents could not be represented in a study in which the themes are categorized in the analysis. However, I think I tried to capture their body gestures and other unspoken movements as they play important part in the understanding of many cultural traits. Johnson-Bailley (1999) highlights the significance of the culture-specific silent gestures and notes that silent understandings, culture bound phrases that do not need interpretation, non-verbalized hand and face gestures that are culture specific are comprehended when researcher-researched share cultural familiarity.

I spent a considerable amount of time with the respondents. As my sample size was small, therefore it was possible for me to meet them more than one time. I had to be considerate about their timings for interview. Sometimes, I met them first to explain the purpose of the research and got an idea if they would be interested and willing to help me in research work. In the second meeting, if they agreed then I conducted interviews. Family folklore is a living part of a family and cannot be separated from the everyday activities of the family. Therefore, sometimes due to some urgency of work, respondents postponed their commitment with me and I had to adjust my schedule with them. At times, only one interview could be completed in whole day with many breaks.

2.3.3. Power and Reflexivity within Interview

A continuous process of reflection on the research is also a significant part of the qualitative interviewing. Reflexivity refers to the process in which both the researcher and the researched are examined with the purpose of analyzing their relationship. Self-searching involves analyzing one's own conceptual clarity, notions and biases, if any. Additionally, it is also investigated how the researcher's own concepts affect research decisions, particularly the questionnaires phrasing and use of words. Reflecting on the research relationship involves examining the relationship of the researcher to the respondent, and how the changes in this relationship affect the responses to questions. In this way, a researcher like me is in continuous effort to analyze his/her position in relation to respondents and the data I gathered during and after field work.

Relationship between interviewee and interviewer plays a significant role in data collection. It also influences the data collected through interviews. Therefore, issue of power over the researched has been discussed widely in the qualitative research studies. Gottfried (1996) reports that relationships are very central in qualitative research and often involve in-depth interviews and responses to personal questions. However, the process of conducting enquiry based on relationships introduces issues of power where the researcher-researched relationship is built and makes social structures. Further, it is also claimed that most researchers have organization and institutional power (Henry, 2003). In qualitative research, it is generally acknowledged that the researcher has power over the researched within the research relationship (Fonts, 1998). At the beginning, the participant may feel obliged to take part in the interview because of the relationship they have with the interviewer. During the interview, the interviewer has some power over the direction of conversation. The participant may be forced though unconsciously to discuss issues he/she would rather wish to keep silent about. However, as Tang (2002) notes that the assumed dominant position of the researcher can be questioned in qualitative research. Grenz (2005) has another view and proposes that power is flowing and is possessed by neither the researcher nor the researched, and hence it is not possible to describe power in these terms. However, it moves free between the researchers and researched by taking different shapes and positions which researcher and respondents take during research process. Their various positions later on shape the data and outcomes of the study.

Comments on the policy of interviews are quite thin, although it is an issue that is largely supported by feminists who often refer to Oakley (1981)'s work as an originator. In following Oakley (1981) the feminist researcher would be on the woman's side in the interview; this position contrasts with the view that the interviewer's role is neutral and he/she is related to data-collection only. Oakley herself characterizes two positions, "reporter" and "evangelist", and she recommends the former, although on the woman's side. Seibold (2000) comments that even a feminine-oriented interview have issues of power during the conduct of the interview and during the reporting of it.

Presser (2005) notes that macro-level factors like social position, status and location bring the issue of power in research process. Still sharing certain identities is not enough to imagine and consider status. Individual traits are rooted in our identities that predictably create familiarity and distance between the informant and researcher. During the interview process, I was aware of the possibility that my ethnicity (being a non- Rajput), personal background and body language could affect my conversation with the respondents.

When I reflected upon my own role as a researcher and academic, I assumed that my respondents were influenced by my status as they were hesitant to talk about their experiences. They thought they did not have "actual knowledge" or "their knowledge was not academic enough" to be told or written. I had to convince them about the worth of their words and their experiences which I did not have as being an outsider to their community. Though quite difficult, I had to maintain the balance between their relationships with me. So it became even tougher for me to keep that balance all the time.

I tried to maintain a relationship and experienced varying levels of power and powerlessness during the different phases of the research. During interviews, many times I was unable to control the conversations as it kept on going towards family politics and other family gossips. I felt a bit helpless while trying to employ the participants for the research study. As there were fewer women who had knowledge about the songs, therefore, I had to include whosoever had information as participant for research study. I felt anxious many times about losing their interest during the field work.

2.4. Describing Folk Group

The basic criterion for the selection of the respondents was any woman who knew or could sing folk wedding and birth songs. Before applying this criterion, I knew from my various visits to family (in-laws) and other relatives that very few women knew or sang Haryanvi (Mohajiri name given to locals to their language) folk wedding/ birth songs. Because of this reason, I did not get restricted to any age limit for my participants or impose any compulsion over the respondents.

Undertaking research on one of the genres of the folklore defines respondents under a term known as 'folk group'. Dundes (1980c) article "Who are the Folk" provided me answers and fascinating information with background on the subject of folklore. It helped me greatly in defining and understanding the folk group for the present research study. Most folklorists agreed with Dundes' definition of the "folk group" as "any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor" (Dundes, 1964a:2). In his own words he defines folk group and says;

> The term 'folk' can refer to any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the linking factor is- it could be a common occupation, language, or religion- but what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some traditions which it calls its own. In theory a group must consist of at least two persons, but generally most groups consist of many individuals. A member of the group may not know all other members, but he will probably know the common core of traditions belonging to the group, traditions which help the group have a sense of group identity" (Dundes 1964a:2).

Encyclopedia of women and Folklore life define the term as;

> "Folk group" has been highly contentious among folklorists since the founding of the discipline in England in 1848. In North America today folk group is considered any group of people who share at least one common linking factor, such as an awareness of a shared tradition, whether defined by country, region, community, ethnicity, gender, family, school, occupation, religion, or any subgroup or interest thereof. Folk groups, then, may be as large as a nation or as small as a pair of siblings (Encyclopedia of Women and Folklore life, 2009: 219).

Therefore, a given folk group may share any number of folklore genres, for example, superstitions, recipe, folk dance, folk songs or ballad etc. Therefore, it would take a lengthy discussion to document the folklore of any one folk group. All folk groups have folklore, and such folklore provide a socially authorized outline for the artistic expression and communication of culture and world view. With this flexible definition of folk, a group could be as large as a nation or as small as a family. But there are many other forms of folk in addition to nation and family. Geographical-cultural division such as region, state, city or village may also constitute a folk group.

Following Dundes's parameter of folk group, I defined my folk group on the same basis. My folk group shares many traits as a group like socio-cultural back ground, language and many other traditions together. Being Rajputs, they share folk wedding and birth songs along with many other traditions.

2.5. Collection and Analysis of Folk Wedding/Birth Songs

I recorded folk wedding songs at the homes of the respondents and in presence of many family members. Most of the time, recording of the song became an event of festivity for all of the women who were in the house. At times, many neighborhood women joined when the singing was going on. Sometimes, it became hard to even listen to the songs but it was harder to ask someone to leave the room. Therefore, some songs were hard to listen to after recording while some were recorded many times due to their poor voice quality and distractions.

The folk songs were collected and analyzed in a four- stage procedure;

 Stage 1: Collection/ recording of songs from women performer / knower

Stage 2: Categorization of folk songs according to their themes

Stage 3: Writing, translation and transcription of folksong into Urdu and English languages for

             understanding of text and their context

Stage 4: Critical examination and analysis of the folksongs for its meanings in cultural context

Every stage is now explained in detail as under.

2.5.1. Collection and Recording of the Songs

I recorded 15 folk songs in total from six women respondents. Out of 15 folk songs, thirteen (13) songs were weddings songs and two (2) birth songs. There was no birth song for baby girl as told by my respondents.

The tool for recording of the songs was cell phone, and recording of the songs was done after taking permission from participants. Though the participants were familiar with the device, however, the anxiety of recording of a song was the same as it would have been in case of recording with the tape recorder. Recording through cell phone also served as the "silent participant" in the research process (Jackson, 1986:88-89). Recording of the songs made participants mindful and hesitant, and some of them felt shy in the beginning of the recording process.

Nevertheless, all of them agreed to narrate songs before me yet some of the participants did not agree to record their voices and they narrated the songs only for me so that I could write them. One participant sang the song in front of me, but did not let me record it. So I wrote that song as they narrated it to me.

Recording of songs was never done alone. I was always surrounded by many women. It used to be an eventful activity in which my women relatives enjoyed who did not participate in singing. Many times, couple of women used to correct texts or tune of the singing women. Some of them assisted the women in recalling the lyrics of the songs. The correction in lyrics and melody of the songs was done many times except for *Dadee* (grandmother) Sugroo (Sughra) who was a professional singer. Giggles and silence were common whenever I started recording the songs. It took time for the participants to be able to agree to record their songs. A couple of time instead of singing, discussions about the Rajput biradari and contemporary family politics started and whole of recording time wasted. At times, due to immediate household activities like arrival of an untimely guest etc, I had to discontinue recording of the songs and had to restart it after an interval. These short interruptions occasionally ended in departure of the participants and as a result, recording had to be taken over to the next day. I had to make sure that recordings had good quality and for that purpose, I listened to the recoding on the spot. Like most of the women I had taped songs from some of them were curious about what other women had recorded.

Participants also wanted to listen to their recorded voices so it also helped me to re-record a song if the voice quality was not good enough for transcription for the sake of analysis.

I also observed that young girls usually did not speak *Haryanvi (Mohajiri)* language at home though some women had the dialect of *Haryanvi* language even when they were speaking *Punjabi* language. However, they had less knowledge of these songs as well as of the words that were used in the songs. Instead, they were more familiar with movie songs. Most of them liked the Indian movies songs as various versions of these songs are available on CDs sung by Indian and Pakistani popular singers.

It is mentioned already that men were not my clientele for this research study. Therefore, after recording the songs and out of my curiosity I asked some men of the family about the knowledge of the words and contexts of the songs. It would be interesting to note here that men seemed largely unaware of the tales of hostility and rivalry conveyed in these songs. Even my husband (being Rajput) did not understand some of the contextual meanings and words of the folk songs. The other most important reason that was given by the younger women was that some of the cultural contexts are now out of the context in this present scenario, except for the couple of old traditions that still exist.

Time has changed gradually and there has been a tendency that people are going out of the towns and villages for economic reasons. Some of them took their families in the nearby cities like Gujranwala and Sialkot etc and now single family is not uncommon phenomena among this community. Women are not alienated from their native kins as they used to be in the past. Some of them often use cell phone to talk to their friends and parents. So isolation which existed almost fifty or sixty years ago is not there anymore. The situations which are depicted in the songs have changed. They believe that these songs represent old and traditional culture of their community and must be preserved as such. They were of the opinion that now anyone could get wedding or birth songs on CDs and other digital resources. Therefore, there appeared no need to remember songs by heart.

The songs I gathered were not recorded in marriage ceremonies. I could not attend any marriage ceremony at the time of the fieldwork. Therefore, I recorded songs in a make-shift setting, that is, not in marriage ceremonies in which they were actually sung. By narrating the events in the

marriage ceremony, especially when the songs are sung, women explained to me hypothetically how these songs were performed on the ceremonies. They told me that usually one or two women who actually knew the song sang while other women follow them. They sat near the bride and with the help of clapping with their hands and with one or two musical instruments like Thaal or dhulak, they started singing the song. Sometimes, these musical instruments were not available; in that case, they sang with hand claps only. The melody and the tune of the songs were rhythmic enough that without the support of any musical instrument, women could sing it comfortably. Most of the songs which I recorded were sung without any musical instrument support. Only the professional singer used beating of Thaal (a big metal plate) by herself while performing songs.

It is generally practiced that women who want to sing the songs, whisper and guide other women about the melody or tune of the song before starting to sing them. After getting agreed upon songs, the setting of tune and some of the verses are brought into order. Lines of the texts are repeated many times and so as the melody, for the sake of many women who wished to join the song in the middle. The rhythm, tune and repeated text enable other women to perform the songs without any difficulty and lack of coherence. This means that even a woman hearing the song for the first time is able to join in. The singing of these songs is open to all who want to sing.

2.5.2. Categorization of the Songs

After collection and documentation of the songs, they were sorted out in two major groups. One was wedding songs and the other birth songs. Wedding songs were then further categorized in two more categories. One category of the songs was identified according to the rituals in which they were sung for example, some songs were sung in Butna ceremony or Henna ceremony. These songs symbolized an activity performed on the event of Butna or Henna. The other category was based on the themes these songs represent. The themes found within the songs were further divided into sub-themes for analysis and discussion purposes. Folk songs also uncovered some of the symbols and symbolic activity which is also a part of the discussion and an important feature of the research study.

2.5.3. Translation and Transcription of Folksongs

After the organization and categorization of the songs according to the themes, process of translation and transcription started.

In the process of translation and then analysis of the songs in particular Rajput culture, I took help from two people. One was my sister-in -law and other was my sister. The translations were gleaned over many times and I tried to maintain the original message without losing fluent readability. I tried not to let the translation of the songs change the actual structure of the analysis; however, at times I felt that some original expression was lost during the process of translation. In some cases, I chose not to translate certain words since it would have tampered with the informant's original meaning what the informants said and more especially, what I say.

The writing of the song and interviews took lot of time from me. I had to listen to the songs many times before I was able to write them in Urdu and later into English. It took more than one month before I finished writing of the songs in Urdu language. Transcribing took more time than translation as it needs more attention, understanding and clarity of the cultural context. Especially in the use of interviews, transcribing and translating text have become increasingly salient issues in the discourse on qualitative research. None of them is a merely technical task; both require judgment and interpretation. In some way, when data was translated and/or transcribed, it is not raw data any more-it is a "processed data" (Wengraf, 2001: 7).

Krefting (1991) cautions qualitative researchers about the use of language throughout the interview process. Like personal appearance and body movements, language is also a social status marker. Because certain slang words or regional phrases can be misinterpreted or misheard, the credibility and interpretations of oral narratives may be examined through self-reflexivity and by informants.

Translation and transcription of the songs and text proved to be a lengthy process. In the case of translation of interviews, at some points in the interview, participants used some words and phrases to describe certain activity / event. These words cannot be appropriately translated into English such as butna etc. Moreover, translations of these words cannot capture the emotional and cultural context in which those words are used and what they mean within the specific culture. For example, I felt that some translations such as 'ijjat (izzat) as 'honour' or 'sharam' as 'shame' could not signify the cultural context of these words. Cultural suppositions are deeply-rooted in language and experience (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: cited in Tang, 2002). Whether in written or oral form, representations of language play crucial roles in continuing the operations of hegemony (Bakhtin, 1981). Therefore, it is important to take the interview data

back to the respondents for review as it proves helpful in addressing language barriers. During transcribing the songs, I also consulted my key informants for possible interpretations of a couple of words of *Haryanvi (Mohajiri)* language into Urdu and then in English.

I recorded songs and checked their voice quality. However, I encountered couple of issues while transcribing the songs in Urdu and English languages. I found difficulty in writing some of the words in Urdu and later on in English language as their pronunciation and expression was difficult to write in Urdu and English alphabets. For correct pronunciation of certain words, I used to call some of the participants and my key informants. At times, I listened some of the songs three to four times before writing them on paper due to misunderstanding of pronunciations and meanings of the words. After confirming the correct pronunciation and meanings of the songs, I wrote them down and analyzed them.

2.5.4. Critical Analysis of the Folksongs
After categorization and sorting out into themes and sub themes the songs were critically analyzed by the help of available literature and participations interpretations. The articles of Nayaran, Reheja and Gold specially helped me in interpretations of the songs in the required cultural context. All of these articles were on Rajput women songs but they are not in family folklore studies perspective. My research is on family folklore so research studies of Yocum, Sherman and Stahl provided me foundation and direction for analysis.

2.6. Participant Observation
My other tool for this research study is participant observation which is essential part of ethnographic research. As an anthropologist and working in the ethnographic fieldwork, I was involved in documenting people's beliefs and practices from the people's own perspectives (Riemer, 2008: 205). There have been many definitions of participant observation, which make it an essential part of ethnographic research. Many anthropologists defined participant observation in various ways labeling it as the best opportunity to be used in ethnographic studies.Marshall and Rossman (1995) reinforce the significance of participant observation by saying:

> Participant observation allows researchers to check definitions of terms that participants use in interviews, observe events that informants may be unable or unwilling to share

when doing so would be impolitic, impolite, or insensitive, and observe situations informants have described in interviews, thereby making them aware of distortions or inaccuracies in description provided by those informants (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

They define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study". During the fieldwork, while collecting data for research, participant observation involves "active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience" (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002).

Participant observation includes such actions as having an open, nonjudgmental attitude; having interest in learning more about others; being ready for feeling culture shock and for making mistakes, the majority of which can be overcome; being a careful observer and a good listener; and, being open to the unexpected in what is learned (Dewalt & Dewalt, 1998).

Observation methods are useful to researchers in a variety of ways .Supporting this view as one of the best tools for ethnographic research, Schmuck (1997) says that observational methods

.... provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check for how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997).

Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) believe that "the goal for design of research using participant observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitations of the method" (p.92). They further suggest that participant observation may be used as a way to increase the validity of the study, because observations help the researcher to have a better understanding of the context and phenomenon under study.

As it is already known, participant observation is an ongoing and continuous process; observing women closely in their daily lives provided me the opportunity to understand their day-to-day interaction with their family and friends. Whenever I was working with notes or mobile for recording the songs, they unconsciously became watchful and formal with me. However, living, talking and spending time provided me great opportunity to know about them closely and deeply.

Schwartz and Schwartz (1955) describe that participant observation also faces some challenges during the fieldwork. The presence of researcher affects the daily life of the respondent in subtle ways. They say that "mere presence of the observer means that movements are made and orientations are developed toward him/her who would not otherwise have occurred. The 'typicality' of these movements, their difference from or similarity to other activities undertaken by the observed before the observer role had been established, must be evaluated. The fact is that the role of observer has been established; he/she may alter the course of events, even when the observer is temporarily absent". I admit that the real life activities of women had been affected because of my presence there. So I think Schwartz and Schwartz (1955) are justified in their assumption.

Fine (2003) uses the term "peopled ethnography" and says that it is based on extensive observation in the field, a physical activity that sometimes takes years in its completion. In this description of the observation process, the observer becomes a part of the group being studied to the extent that the members themselves include the observer in the activity and turn to him/her for information about how the group is operating. Fine (2003) also indicates that it is at this point, when members begin to ask the observer questions about the group and when they begin to include the observer in the "gossip," that it is time to leave the field. The process he describes of becoming a part of the community, while observing their behaviors and activities, is called participant observation.

My stance as a researcher was different. I was already researching with and in relatives and was related to them through affine. Many times, I had to listen to their "gossip" and family politics about other relatives. However, I kept my self ethically bound that I should not spread any gossip or sharing of experiences with others. In this way, I was hugely bound to the ethics as I was researching my relatives, and family fights can be possible after my fieldwork.

I observed the daily routine of women who used to start working from early in the morning till late at night, and also their interactions within their families (in laws). I realized shortly that it is not only me who was observing them, but I was also being watched by them. They were judging and evaluating me and building opinion about me. They wanted me to tell my opinion about them. Like how I found them? What I found good about them? What they should not do? How

34

much they can change? Many times I explained to them that I was there for academic purpose, not for making any judgment about them, their traditions and culture.

Women remained busy in their daily chores. However, main responsibility of the household chores was on daughters-in-law, while mothers-in-law supervised and controlled them. Looking from the distance, I found out that there had been a constant tussle on household chores. Generally speaking, as I also assessed from some informal talks with daughters-in-law, their mothers-in-law were not satisfied with the way their daughters-in-law performed their household chores and raising of children. Same was the case with some daughters-in-law. They also had certain complaints against their mothers-in-law who dictated them all the time. Both of them complained against each other in their absence. The mother-daughter-in-law conflict was very visible during their daily household routine. These small conflicts sometimes resulted in fights in domestic life and land disputes. Generally, it is thought that Rajputs as an ethnic group usually do not marry outside their clan; therefore, these conflicts become a deep-rooted part of the families, and get transferred from one generation to another. The mother-daughter-in-law conflicts usually remain within the boundaries of the house, and men take them as normal routine of their lives. However, when land disputes are dragged into discussions, men take interest and then it becomes a matter of concern for them.

I stayed with many families during my field work. Though all of them were my relatives and I knew them before, yet in the fieldwork and while interacting with the participants, I kept myself prepared for any unexpected situation or unscheduled event. Most of the time, I was welcomed by my respondents; however, in one situation, I felt awkward as I felt that the respondent and her family was not ready for interview. They were not fully informed that I would visit them. They were misinformed about my visit to their house, and consequently refused to give interview. The woman wanted to give interview, but her male family members were not willing. So, after small negotiations, they finally refused to give interview. That was a totally unexpected situation for me, and I was perplexed and had to take much time to recover from the situation. This is the situation about which O' Brain (2006) warns the researcher that everyday social realities are fluid, unpredictable, and fragile because they are largely shaped by situated and often unforeseen circumstances produced by the people who come into contact with each other (O'Brien, 2006).

And sometimes in research, good intentions do not always result in smooth social interaction but sometimes produces awkward outcomes (O'Neil, 2002).

2.7. Locating myself as a Researcher (My Positionality)

Positionality of the researcher has been discussed in many ways. In simple words, positionality basically deals with the point of view of the researcher in relation to his/her own relationship with the society in which he/she conducts research. In qualitative research, the feelings of power and powerlessness were often located within the positionality of the researcher. As defined, 'Positionality' is indicative of the particular social, structural and organizational positions that individuals occupy. Such positions define the identity, power structures and social fields of the individual which mediate their interactions.

The various identities that I and the respondents adopted in the research process were based on negotiations of power while conducting interviews and our day-to-day interactions. Additionally, some of the identities were broadly based on gender, social status and shared cultural norms.

Field methodology mostly talks about the subject of anthropology, and in anthropology theoretical standpoints have been discussed from various perspectives. Positionality of the researcher has been discussed under various stances in the discipline of anthropology such as inside-outside, native and non-native, and emic and etic. Here I will briefly discuss these three significant stances with reference to my positionality within this research study.

In plain words, an insider researcher is one who conducts research on the cultural, racial or ethnic group of which he/she belongs to. The outsider or stranger is one who enters a society and attempts to know about the way of life of its people. In anthropology, insider-outsider debate is practically challenging and theoretically questionable. From both vantage points, there have been arguments about the problems encountered by the insider and outsider researchers. However, the core of the debate raises the methodological issues which are related to the balance of access to knowledge and ability to remain objective in the analysis. Moreover, the insider/outsider issues can influence the analysis of the research. The insider-status is constantly negotiated. There are many aspects like race or ethnicity that can be a common factor, but gender and power remains persistently at work and they keep on shaping the power discourse in the researcher-researched

relationship. The insider-outsider stance that has been investigated in many studies (Soni-Sinha, 2008; Chawla, 2006; Few et al, 2003; Mani, 2006).

The insider status works two-way. On one hand, it is quite beneficial to the researcher as far as the production of anthropological knowledge is concerned. Endo-ethnographers, as they are called sometimes, have a good understanding of a macro-society, and they deeply understand its daily routines, symbols and value systems, feelings of empathy etc. (Van Ginkel, 1998:256). In this respect, there are many suggested advantages arising from the insider status like cultural closeness, easier establishment of trust, and also that people do not try to impress an insider in order to present a more positive impression of them (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1984).

In case of outsider anthropologists, the ethnographic observations are those that are shared with them by the informants; in that case, the anthropologist's presence becomes less noticeable (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1984:585). However, the same cultural closeness can bring about the ethnographer's disadvantage. Often, insiders tend to take certain things for granted, for example an insider's familiarity with a given social norm makes it even harder to discuss it with respondents due to the taken-for-granted reality. In such situations, it becomes quite hard to take on the position of being culturally blind and look at one's culture with certain simplicity. Van Ginkel(1998) argues that whereas an anthropologist doing fieldwork away from home faces a challenge of how to 'get in' to the field, an insider anthropologist is confronted with quite an opposite issue, that is, how to 'get out in order to enable them to have an ethnographic gaze in familiar social environments'.

The other position is that of the native and non-native anthropologist in the research studies. This kind of ethnographic approach started to grow in ethnographic writing in the1980s and 1990s. Narayan (1993b) essay 'How Native is a Native Anthropologist?' opens the debate on the dichotomous relationship between a native anthropologist and insider. It is commonly believed that native anthropologists are insiders regardless of their complicated backgrounds. Narayan challenges this belief in her work. She maintains, following other scholars, such as Messerschmidt (1981) that the extent to which a native anthropologist can be considered as an insider is questionable. She then claims that 'factors such as education, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, or sheer duration of contacts may at different times outweigh the cultural identity associated with insider outsider statuses. Hence, it should always be kept in mind that

37

'we all belong to different communities simultaneously' and as the anthropologist we develop a complex and multiple subjectivity with our many mixed identifications (1993b).

In a way anthropologists who study even their own societies may be subjected to 'subculture shock' although they are unlikely to experience 'culture shock' (Van Ginkel, 1998: 10). The analysis of Narayan (1993b) regarding the native and non-native anthropologist and its positionality in representing native point of view is a bit problematic; however, it can be assumed from the debate that researcher, after completing their research work, must pay attention to their research subjects and themselves rather than thinking about their titles as 'insiders' or 'outsiders' assigned to them by the respondents. She suggests that anthropologists must focus on the neutrality of the data rather than grading themselves as native or non-native anthropologists. I quote Narayan here as she says:

> It is more profitable to focus on shifting identities in relationship with the people and issues an anthropologist seeks to represent. (p. 671)

It was not easy for me to determine my status and positionality within the community in which I was conducting field work. My decision to research in my in-laws enabled me to think and locate my positionality as a researcher.

Working in the field with multiple identities and shifting roles is a difficult task to handle. Every researcher has to face a continuous process of change. Within the discussion in anthropology, many debates have been conducted about various stances which a researcher can take during the research process without settling on any conclusion. Various outlooks guide a researcher, but sometimes they happen to complicate the position of researcher forcing him/her to shape/modify her/his role in research process. Debating on the same issues and taking an essentialist stand, Narayan (1993b) concludes that debate of "native" versus "non-native" perspective in her prominent article. She argued that there should be no fixity of native and non-native anthropologist, and supports multiple identities of the researcher while present in the field.

That means I can be categorized both as a native and non-native anthropologist who is researching in her relatives. Therefore, it is not easy for me to justify myself as a native or non-native researcher as far as the stance of positionality in research is concerned.

The third stance which may determine the positionality of the researcher is emic and etic. 'Emic' and 'etic' perspectives have been significant part of the social sciences researches. The emic or inside perspective is mostly followed in psychological studies of folk beliefs and in cultural anthropology, and focuses mainly on understanding the culture from the "native point of view" (Malinowski, 1922). Moreover, emic perspectives are culture-specific.

The etic or outside perspective follows the tradition of behaviorist psychology (Skinner, 1938). The anthropological approaches having etic perspectives link cultural practices to external factors such as economic or ecological conditions that may not be important to cultural insiders (Harris, 1979). Additionally, emic perspectives are considered to be universal.

Reading about these stances that determine positionality of researcher in the research process, I was perplexed and surrounded by many questions like which stance should I take? And can I take more than one stance at a time? Or should I take the advantages of different stances by shifting stances simultaneously? However, I support Narayan's argument that stresses upon the collection of data along with taking care of ethics rather than being labeled as native or non-native researcher.

Following Narayan's (1993b) emphasis that labeling as a native or non-native anthropologist is problematic and not significant as the main objective of a researcher may be on data collection, taking any particular stance in the research study was difficult. Fixing myself on one stance was even more difficult. So a great difficulty appears in deciding what stances any anthropologist can definitely take. I am of the opinion that all of these stances support and oppose at different levels in data collection.

I focused my attention on the same goal. Whatever facilitated me, I went for it. Besides, I kept on altering my multiple identities (researcher etc) and roles (daughter-in-law, mother,) during research process. At one end, I spotted myself as an insider to the community who had an affine tie with them. On the other end, I was an outsider who did not have knowledge of the traditional wedding folk songs and many other traditions of the Rajput community. Therefore, I conducted field work by changing the multiple identities as researcher.

Therefore putting myself in a flexible role helped me in a positive way. Firstly, gender of the researcher matters in this study. Tang (2002) also suggests that sharing a common experience of

39

gender can help to build better understanding and facilitates closeness between the researcher and the researched. As a female researcher and being a relative to them, I had easy access to women of the community and I was not perceived as stranger to them. After brief introduction of my in-laws family along with me, I was welcomed easily. However, personally I think that gender advantage in field research was supportive in order to understand women's life situations and experience; therefore more studies should be conducted by women and for women (Ettorre, 1989). William at el (1993) in their research, emphasize the importance of interviewers' gender in in-depth interviews. However, their main emphasis was on the comparative study of male and female interviewers which were taking interviews from the male nurses. Interviews with the same interviewees showed difference in results. Therefore, as Barker (1987) says, "sex of the interviewer effects". The proponents of the qualitative research methods argue that they give voice to women whose life experiences that have been silenced or ignored by more standardized survey research method techniques (Smith, 1987).

Mostly my relationship with the respondents remained friendly. However, power within the interviews was visible and could be identified. Many researchers have discussed the relationship between the researcher and respondent while working in the field which is shaped by certain personal traits of the researchers' personality such as gender, race, and age (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Ladson-billings, 2003). My age, education, working woman, mother of sons and of course as researcher also affected shifting my positionality and stance in obtaining data from the respondents.

Having the advantage and stance of being a woman, I got the opportunity to observe women in their houses and family lives. However, I was unable to identify very significant differences of daily life activities between Rajput women and non-Rajput women. There has been one difference which was obvious and distinguishes them from other ethnic groups present in that particular area. One major difference that I observed was women who are older than fifty years practice purdah by covering their faces from their males and in-law relatives especially father-in law. Although the trend has been changing but still it is very much practiced in the community. Women from other ethnic groups do not practice this kind of purdah.

I found myself perplexed among various positions and stances while conducting fieldwork. Theoretically, I was aware of some of the dilemmas I may face during fieldwork. However,

while entering into the field, the scenario changed and kept on changing every day. I thought that I will be researching in a community that I knew before and was related with. However, many times I felt that just as shared experiences and solidarity based solely on gender cannot be assumed (Mohanty, 1988) "simply by being of the country/ culture/ group/ family, one is not automatically guaranteed infinite and non terminable knowledge of the culture" (Panourgia 1994: 46).

Even after becoming a part of the family and following customs, I remained outsider in many respects. I always had a subtle feeling of out of the place with my respondents. I felt that I was alien in the sense because of language, proverbs, family politics, accent, mannerism, body gestures etc. I could not enjoy and understand some jokes, contexts of proverbs used during conversations. Sometimes, they also made me to realize through their talks and some proverbs that I am an outsider who did not know their culture and traditions.

My multiple role identities, such as educated women, researcher, non-Rajput, daughter-in-law, mother etc. have fluidity, and constantly I have to negotiate and deal with these roles. I did not and could not fix myself in one role; rather, I constantly operated in various roles and stances simultaneously and made many compromises that helped me in gathering data.

The fieldworker, as has been noted by scholars in the field, comes to any field situation with a set of social and personal identities. In my case, these consist of anthropologist and folklorist, female, and non-Rajput among others. In personal relationships with family, my role as daughter-in-law is complicated as to how I should behave when interacting with them. During this project, however, my roles as fieldworker and family member were both baffled by my decision to record wedding and birth songs. My role as a fieldworker was confused by contact with my family because I was used to greater control over the recording and writing of songs. Also, my expectation to be "objective" and "academic" might seriously be held back by my family involvement. The situation was sometimes disturbing to both me and my family, as I was placing greater priority on recording and interviewing of songs than on their familial discussions. My initial suggestion to research on wedding and birth songs of Rajputs was appealing to my sister-in-law and other women relatives. I was happy that they agreed to help me, and they were at once bewildered and enthusiastic by the decision.

41

Sherman (1986) explains field work process conducted for the family folklore as

In the process of conducting fieldwork, we examine and reexamine our own behavior while we simultaneously scrutinize the behavior of our subjects. We can view people, events, and behaviors immediately after they have been documented. It force us to recognize the fact that familial roles and identities are multifaceted and that conducting fieldwork among members of our own families may be equally or more difficult than studying people who are strangers to us. Such projects highlight subject/researcher roles, responsibilities, and interactions, raising ethical, theoretical, and methodological questions central to the discipline of folklore. Fieldworkers often delude themselves into thinking that they are the only ones who shape a project. It is obvious that this is not the case. In human interaction, there is an almost endless and rapid shifting back and forth, with fieldworkers and those we study redefining their duties and compromising to meet each other's demands as well as what they perceive to be the demands of the situation being investigated (Sherman, 1986: 68).

2.8. Privileges researching in Relatives

Field work is a hard job to do and there is no doubt about it. However, if respondents are known and locale is familiar it brings some comfort to research as I enjoyed many benefits of it. Researching native community is not a new phenomenon in anthropology and for folklorists. My research also had many privileges while conducting field work in the relatives. Fieldwork within one's own family begins with the advantage of an intimate knowledge of the group. For this reason, Lindahl and et at (1979) recognizes the advantage by saying that this kind of knowledge allows the researcher in interpreting the folklore item correctly (p: 61).

Gaining access to informants is easy as compared to strangers because family and relatives are "invariably flattered at this show of attention from the relatives" (Dorson, 1964). As told earlier, I was greeted well while visiting for interviews and songs collection. Some of the relatives were those whom I had never met for many years. Hence, the research study provided me opportunity for a family get-together. Brunvand (1971) recognizes this advantage by saying that researchers go into their family not the "field". In my case, it was true. Rapport building takes lots of the time in the field to establish good relations with the respondents. For me, "rapport", that authors of guidebooks tell their readers to "build" with informants, was already intact with relatives and

42

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42

friends. There is generally a feeling of mutual trust, liking, and cooperation. The researcher has knowledge of his/ her co-participants' behaviors and can share experiences to aid in the process of fieldwork (Scheiberg, 1990). I faced many questions in the beginning phase of the research even when it was not chalked out on the paper yet. I was confused about the data and interviews of family women. I constantly asked myself whether women will answer my questions or not? Do the words and experiences of women have some worth and credibility? This was a very prominent question that was asked not only from women but also from men of my family. My respondents did not expect it, and were surprised to know that their words were valuable to be documented! In the same way, they felt flattered and honored that I found them "interesting enough" to provide information for a dissertation.

My kids also accompanied me while conducting my field work. Their accommodation, food and comfort were my basic concern. However, they remained reasonably comfortable and accompanied me throughout my field work time. Selecting family research helped me in this way. I was with my kids, and kids were familiar with some of the relatives where I stayed and visited for interviews and songs. I think that it was tough for them to cope with my mobility and spending time in the field, nevertheless they managed it well.

2.9. Issues in Family Folklore Research

It is said that family research is between pulling hair and heaven and it is so true. The issues one encounters are varied in nature as compared to research done other than the relatives. It is comfortable to be with the people whom you know, but at times it becomes hard to maintain the balance between relationship and professional work. I faced the same dilemma. I was aware of the fact that sometimes too much information confuses the researcher and at times, significant data may be taken for granted and wasted or ignored by the researcher so I took care of both the issues during my fieldwork.

After taking decision on researching my own family folklore, I searched for the research studies that were done on family folklores. I found two very helpful articles. One was of Margret Yacom's (1982) family folklore and Oral History interviews: Strategies for Introducing a Project to one's own relatives and other was Scheiberg, (1990) A Folklorist in the family: On the process of fieldwork among intimates. These two articles helped me in clarifying ideas and concepts as well as issues that one may encounter during field work in family folklore research.

Some issues I found were cultural specific, and I tried to deal with them accordingly. Such issues like who, how and whom I will contact for interviews? Whose house I will go first? How I will contact? How I will talk to male members of the family before talking to females? How and to whom I will observe purdah? Some of the issues I managed to resolve; however, I could not prevent women from family politics and gossips during interviews and songs recordings.

2.9.1. Introducing Research Study

In the beginning, I was a bit nervous about the introduction of the study. On my part, I began to realize how strange it would be to meet the relatives and introduce my research study. All of my key informants and participants had no experience of any interview or research process before. Therefore, I was already experiencing some of the anxieties in introducing my research plans to my family.

I was aware of the fact that a good introduction is important for the whole research study. Therefore, I started from my M. Phil studies, and tried to make them understand the importance of this research for me. Why I need and why I am doing it? Finally what is my research all about and how important it is? The most important part of the introduction, according to my respondents, was conducting their interviews. So I explained to them the interview process and recording of the songs. At the beginning, almost all of them were scared of interviews. However, after explaining it in simple words, some of them agreed. Besides, I briefed them about the methodology, i.e. interview process, and explained to them that an interview was like a conversation with one or more relatives and friends. During my discussion with the women, I tried to emphasize the personal value of their family lore which they still carried with them. I acknowledged their efforts for preserving the songs by remembering them by heart.

Introduction of the research took much time as I had expected. During and after the introduction of research study, respondents asked many questions from me. They asked about my education, job and my experiences of joining their biradari. They were curious as well as apprehensive about the interviews, recordings of the songs and selection of the topic (folk wedding and birth songs), which they thought were never significant for study.

Before I entered into the field work, I discussed my research objectives with my sister-in-law who was my one of the key informants. This discussion helped me a lot as most of the

respondents were fairly familiar what I wanted to know from them. So before my meeting with the respondents, my research project with diverse details and interpretations was known to the respondents. Some of them were thinking that I was recording songs and interviews for TV channels. Some were of the opinion that I would make a C.D. of their songs. It was surprising for them to understand that I was collecting and recording their songs and interviews for academic purpose which is part of my research study.

2.9.2. Role Negotiation

Scheiberg (1990) discusses role negotiation in family folklore research studies. According to her role negotiation is usually not so difficult when someone is working with individuals one does not know. Roles such as those of researcher-informant and interviewer-interviewee are established gradually. However, I found role negotiation to be somewhat difficult because of my earlier association and relationship with family members. They knew me as their daughter-in-law, and the new role as a researcher was hard for them to accept and imagine. They were astonished, inquisitive and nervous all at the same time.

On my part, accepting my relatives as respondents and gathering information from them was also a varied experience. I also took some time to accept them in this role as an interviewee. Thus, role negotiation was going on both sides and taking time to settle.

To my understanding, respondents were confused about my new role as a researcher with specific objectives to fulfill. Many times while I was conducting interviews or recording a song, there was a sudden change of topic to "get back to" what they perceived I was interested in. They seemed to have an image in their minds of what I required from them as an appropriate material for study. However, most of the time they wished to provide me proper and adequate data for my research study. After giving information, few of them always asked from me whether it was that information I really needed from them.

Although I knew most of my respondents, yet talking to them formally as researcher was a different experience. When I started conducting interviews, respondents were not accustomed to the situation they were facing. I used to take many breaks in the interviews sessions in order to make them comfortable. That was one of the reasons that interviews longed for many hours. The word "interview" made them scared as one of the respondents told me. They thought that

45

interviews were conducted from celebrities and famous people like film actors for TV channels. According to them, they were not actors or famous people to give interview to me. If their interviews broadcast on TV channels, their family would be annoyed with them. So after knowing their apprehensions, I clarified the objectives of taking interviews from them and replaced the word with "baat cheet" instead of interview. The change of word worked better than the word 'interview'.

2.9.3. Trapped in Feminist Lens

I have been working in the department of women and gender in a local university for the last fifteen years. I found myself trained to see women as a suppressed and subordinate gender in a patriarchal society like the one I studied. I struggled with feminist ideology in my mind, and made a conscious effort to come out of the feminist lens which sees women as a victim of patriarchal culture.

I did not want to be judgmental about their status in their particular culture. I tried to focus myself on how women see themselves and represented in their community. My endeavor was to explore and search their voices and interpretations of the cultural practices in their own words. I looked for their understanding of their culture. I wished to try to interpret their emotions and relevance of cultural practices according to their own situations.

For me, it was a difficult task and I had to handle it with conditioning of my previous thinking and training in feminism. I did not want to have any pre-conceived ideas of patriarchy about women. I wanted to listen to their voices about their situations. So during interviews, I avoided any judgmental comments.

In the later part of the analysis, I analyzed these songs in the light of post-modern feminist stance that believed that women must be understood in their particular cultural context. My concern was on the identification of the stereotypical images of women on the folk wedding songs. Additionally, what picture these folk wedding and birth songs made about a woman who lived in the area understudy.

2.9.4. Family Politics

While researching in family, one cannot escape from family politics which is part and parcel of the family life. Family politics affected me at the very beginning of the research. I had to change

my locale two times because of land and family dispute respectively, and had to choose the third location.

There were various incidences where I got confused in family politics. During interviews, many times I had to divert conversations on the topic relevant to my study. At one occasion, I had to interview women of two estranged families. Their interviews were different but both women performed the same song for recording. After documenting 15 songs, data saturation occurred but due to family politics, I was obligated to re-record some of the songs from couple of women.

2.9.5. Too many Formalities

Conducting interviews became much more hectic and time consuming than I expected. Family talks and formalities like tea, lunch, and dinner-breaks before and after interviews took more time than the interview itself. This practice made me frustrated, and sometimes I felt that research questions I asked were lost somewhere as conversations were dominated by family politics and discussions.

2.9.6. Men Response

I limited my research to only women interviews and songs recordings. Therefore, it became hard for some of the men of the family to understand and accept that women had some knowledge which they did not have!

My husband appreciated my work with and on women, but even he was surprised to know that folk wedding and birth songs could be a research topic at all. It was a matter of surprise for other men of the family, too, that folk wedding songs were so important to be researched upon. They advised me to look for some productive research topics like women education and health etc. They also shared their concern over the significance and importance of the topic after completion of the research study.

2.7. Limitation of the Study

This research acknowledges existence of several limitations. It is important to notice that the findings and observations presented and found in this research do not necessarily apply or fit to similar cases in other parts of the world.

Generally, while reviewing literature about qualitative research studies, I got to know that there are some criticism on the limitation and selection of respondents. The major challenge

mentioned, as Goulding (2002) states, is that qualitative research is purely descriptive and therefore not rigorous, and too subjective and impressionistic. This critique questions the validity of the qualitative research studies.

Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) suggest that validity is stronger with the use of additional strategies employed with observation, such as interviewing, document analysis, surveys, questionnaires, or other more qualitative methods. Participants' observation can be used to help answer descriptive research questions, to build theory, or to generate or test hypotheses. Therefore, in this research by using participant observation and interviews as tools of research, I tried to improve the validity of research data.

The other limitation which is criticized in qualitative research is in the selection f the respondent. I had no other choice except selecting six women as rest of the women of the community did not sing or know these songs. Men were excluded as they generally do not sing wedding and birth songs. Since women knew the songs, therefore their interpretation and understanding of the songs in cultural context was important to document in the present study.

Issues of translation (from one language into another) and transcribing (connotation and meaning of the text) has been widely discussed and criticized. Both of them have issues of representation that are described as much more complex. However, I found transcribing is much more complex than translating as it involves more subtle issues of connotation and meaning.

Thus the focus on generating accurate and meaningful data through translation processes is the primary objective of this research study. Issues of transcribing and translating are subtle and complex. However, they can be handled if dealt with cautions and vigorous hard work. I tried my best to translate and transcribe songs with the help of my key informants and respondents. I corrected words, their pronunciation and meanings while contacting them through phones and visiting them after the field work. This helped me in clear understanding of many words and contexts of the songs in translation and transcription of the folk songs.

2.8. Conclusion

Using qualitative method and employing in-depth interviews and participant-observation as research tools, the current study was completed in three months. Archives (online) and research journals were used as secondary sources. The pros and cons of the methodology used are

discussed in detail at all levels of planning, conducting of research as well as analyzing and interpreting of data obtained.

Previous researches and their critical reviews were explored in order to get ethnographic researches on folklore genre, i.e. folksongs, so that the Rajput community may be investigated in Pakistani context.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the key concepts underlying the study, the main view being to establish gaps in the knowledge that necessitate the undertaking of the research. This chapter also presents an overview of previous work on related topics that provide the necessary background for the purpose of this research. Before discussing research on folk wedding songs, topics of gender and folklore, field work issues in gender and folklore, family research studies, local research studies on gender, folklore and folk songs of women, are taken up to establish a possible link and prevalent perspective. This is followed by literature review on birth songs.

3.2. Gender and Folklore

> Folklorists have long paid lip-service to the importance of women's expressive behavior, though usually that behavior was recognized and accorded legitimacy only when it occurred in predetermined genres that fit the prevailing image of women. Beginning folklore students learn that the brothers Grimm collected primarily from women servants and relatives in the early 1800s.[2]

Folklore research pertaining to women is not a new concern, as a survey of the journal from its 1888 commencement also indicates. During the 1880s and 1890s, women's expressive behaviour was believed to be evident in charms, old-fashioned customs and beliefs, home remedies, and some retelling of folk-tales. In this latter instance, when a collector had a choice between a story as told by a man or as told by a woman, the man's version was chosen.[3]

Gender and folklore is a diverse and interdisciplinary archetype of research. Research of gender and folklore is not possible if the relationship between the paradigms is not fully understood. The connection of folklore and feminism is incomplete unless someone believes that "the unquestioned, unexamined and unchallenged acceptance of belief that the world as it looked to men was the only world and that the way of dealing with it evolved by men was the only way" (Bernard, 1971:37). In fact, the interpretation of gender classification of masculinity and

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[2] 1MurrayB. Peppard, paths through the forest: a biography of the brothers grimm (New York, 1971)

[3] w. w. beauchamp, "on ondaga tales," journal of American f olklore, i (1888), 44-48.

femininity seems to be concerned more with the socialization of an individual rather than biological division of nature. Simon-de- Beauvoir (1989) argued that one is not born woman but becomes woman.

Traditional folklore study represents women in traditional and stereotypical roles, and employs generic-based hierarchy as gender. However, after the 2nd wave of feminism (1970s), feminist folklorists challenged and disputed over the generic system ascribed to women in folklore literature. They argued that the generic system pertaining to women's roles and images in the scholarship is not neutral but politically manipulated and biased. They further emphasized that the characters and roles ascribed to women in generic system of classification are represented in such a way so as to strengthen and re-invent the traditional images of women living in their respective societies. These images included images, roles and stereotypical characteristics assigned to women in various communities. Feminist folklorists began to look into women's expressive behaviors. They insisted that there was more to study about women's issues besides researching upon quilting, herbal medicines and food ways (Green, 1977).

Feminist folklorists used the consciousness raising movement as a base, and argued that "traditionally, knowledge, truth, and reality have been constructed as if men's experiences were normative, as if being human meant being male"(Kousaleos 1999:20).

Folklorists commented that the scholars of folklore had a need to reconsider and revise commonly held perceptions about women and their relationship to the generic ascriptions. They suggested that these perceptions must be examined in two ways: firstly, the critical analysis of women images in folklore scholarship, and secondly, employment of gender-based perspective within cultural context of folklore. Folklorists were concerned about the fact that dominant notions prevailing in the fields of folktales, fairy tales and storytelling are such that they reproduce and re-emphasize women's traditional roles and characteristics in the societies. They used word "extreme polarization" for the way women are represented in these genres (Greenwood Encyclopedia, 2008). However, feminist theories and approaches have contributed and acknowledged the valuable and useful development of folklore as a discipline (Mills, 1993; Stoeltji, 1988).Moreover, feminist approaches in the field of folklore have been concerned with gender as a fundamental category for analysis of cultural experiences and creative artistic expression (Kousaleos,1999).

Gilman (2005) notes that the study of folklore from a feminist perspective has been done keeping in mind two main points: Firstly, the feminist perspective of folklore includes the criticism of the existing traditional folklore on women; secondly, study of the women portrayal in the folklore literature. In simple words, much of the scholarship to date interrogates gender and folklore on women, their communities and negotiation of power within the patriarchal societies.

Kodish (1987) talks about the absence of women narratives in folklore scholarship. She says that

> "Folklore theory (no less than literary theory, writing, or ethnography) is constrained by powerful and patriarchal subtexts. The implications of scholarly suppression of gender consciousness, however, are far-reaching, affecting not only versions of field experiences and the collection and production of texts, but all aspects of folklore theory and history" (Kodish 1987: 6).

She further points out the importance of folk expression in folklore scholarship, and says that male folklorists write their description of narratives in conventional way. They describe man as an active hero while a woman as silent and passive individual with no voice and resistance. However, when women describe their own narratives, the case is otherwise. Kodish (1987) further emphasizes the role of family and kins in the life of folk people, which is often ignored by the folklorists while writing about their narratives. She agrees with Spivak (1985: 128) that the importance of family and house-work in these women's accounts should not to be overlooked as these are frame of references for the women folk groups. She concludes that gender is never absent and encounters are never one-sided.

Stoeltje (1987) traces how the masculinity affected various structures and disciplines prevailing in the society. She claims that bias exists in the study of folklore against women like other sister disciplines of anthropology and literature. She asserts the challenging role of feminist theory and its impact on the folklore by saying that women and men's way of acquiring and expressing knowledge is different. She raises the question for constructing new epistemologies and emphasizes the need of the re-evaluation of whole system of truth. In her research, she explains how masculinity, in the form of institutional structures, was included into folklore by relating it to the concepts of imperialism and nationalism. In support of her argument, she refers to Fox (1987) who says that gender bias was explicit, a clearly expressed element of belief in the work

of the first scholarly folklorist, Johann Gottfried von Herder, the founding father of Romantic Nationalism in Germany and architect of folklore scholarship. According to Fox (1987) Herder created a comprehensive model that included folklore, patriarchy, and nation. In saying all this, she hopes that women narratives will be described in a way as suits their own voices, and they will also be considered as active agents of the society. She is of the opinion that patriarchal expression does not give space to women voices that are the preservers of most of the folklore.

According to Radner, (1987) the scholarship of folklore in relation to women falls under three broad areas: firstly, images and portrayal of women that have been used to condition attitudes of women and societies; secondly, women's own use of folklore through oral and performance genres, i.e. how women's social roles influence female creation of expression; and thirdly, female folk performances and artists, i.e. how women have been recognized or not recognized as artists.

Raheja and Gold (1994) focus on women's oral traditions and women's use of language in rural Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan (Northern India). They examine stories, ritual songs, personal narratives, and ordinary conversations from the villages understudy. The study reflects on the ways in which speech genres may be mixed up in women's self-perceptions and self-fashioning. Further, the study tells about the ways in which oral traditions and narratives may be understood. The oral traditions and narrative, according to them, constitute a moral discourse in which gender and kinship identities are constructed, represented, negotiated, and contested in everyday life. They refer Scott's (1985) "everyday forms of resistance" to systems of ideological or material dominance. They explore the "hidden transcripts" (Scott, 1990) that are lying unexplored in women's speech and songs, but sometimes transform into overt and public words and actions through which women communicate their resistance to dominance.

Nenola (1999) expresses gender and folk lore in connection to oral tradition with Finnish experience. She is of the view that oral traditions reflect the gender roles of the time in which they are created with its symbolic system. According to her,

> "Oral traditions have existed everywhere, also in Finland, alongside institutionalized and literate culture, and in a dialectic interaction with it. Both men and women have been its

producers and performers. The goal of a folkloristic feminism is thus to try to clarify what part women have played in oral tradition, as well as what sorts of traditions they have used and how. On the other hand, oral tradition also reflects the gender concepts of its time, so that it can be examined as part of the symbolic system which justifies and reproduces the prevailing roles and relations between the genders"(Nenola, 1999: 23) .

Contrarily to that, she argues that most of the folkloric values are male values. She quotes Lombardi-Satriani and claims that

"In reality this occurs only rarely; in fact we find that the most frequently expressed values in folklore are the male values, or truly, in this specific regard, the values of the dominators".

She concludes that the majority of women's folklore reflects male values, or the so-called "general" view of the world as defined and evaluated by men. However, she points out that there must be research on folklore in order to deeply know and reflect more directly on the relations of dominance and subordination in which women live. She finds examples of women's eternally subordinated and inferior status from the folklore which rationalizes this status, as well as from that which contests it.

Saltzman (1987) in research narrates her concerns related to her field experiences. She is concerned about the contradictions found in the folkloric and feminist perspectives while doing the fieldwork and in analyzing the data. These contradictions exist on the basis that folklore theory and research give privilege to male informants and masculine forms of expressive culture, even when women and their lore are examined. Further, she talks about some of the approaches which are used by feminist folklorists in order to deal with this dilemma. One approach, she mentions, is to confront it directly by exploring the relationships between women's choices of expression and their sense of belonging to a larger culture. This approach was opted for by some feminist scholars who framed their analyses with the assumption that women have universally been oppressed by men, as culture has oppressed nature (Ortner 1974; Rogers 1978; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974). She further says that women feminists should not force to incorporate their field data into already existing conventional models; rather they should use alternative models as opted by many feminist folklorists (Farrar 1986; MacCormack and Strathern 1980; Stoeltje 1986;

Young 1983). She stresses the need for alternative models as according to her, in western societies, scholars have overlooked or undervalued feminist folklorists and have taken culture for granted. She suggests that folklorists must objectively analyze the material collected and should always remain honest in writing the theories which are constructed and reacting with people (Saltzman, 1987:3).

Radner and Lanser (1987) note that women's creation and performance is often covertly-expressed ideas and attitudes proscribed by the dominant culture. Drawing on interdisciplinary feminist scholarship, they propose the theory of coding strategies for women in folklore and literature. They identify six primary strategies of coding as appreciation, juxtaposition, distraction, indirection, incompetence and trivialization. Further, they explain that by coding they mean;

> .."the adoption of a system of signals-words, forms, signifiers of some kind-that protect the creator from the dangerous consequences of directly stating particular messages. Coding occurs in the context of complex audiences, in situations where some of the audience may be competent to decode the message, but others-including those who might be dangerous-are not. Thus a coded text is by definition complex, and its messages may be ambiguous. The coding need not be a conscious act" (p: 414)

Therefore, all of the six strategies they mentioned are in the favor of women in folklore and literature scholarship, the purpose being to communicate women voices. As they claim that;

> "we are adding our voices to a consensus among feminists and suggest that in the creations and performances of women and other oppressed groups one can often find covert expressions of ideas, beliefs, experiences, feelings and attitudes that the dominant culture and perhaps even the oppressed group itself would find disturbing or threatening if expressed in more overt forms" (Radner and Lancer, 1987:4).

Jordan and De Caro (1986) discuss the status of folklore studies, and inform that interest in women, as well as in their lives, are prominent in many disciplines in social sciences. They maintain that folkloric literature on women falls into three broad areas of concern. The images of women that are projected in verbal folklore and negative images that have been used to condition

55

attitudes; women's oral genres and performance and female use of folklore, which may be different from male use; and female folk performers and artists. The first of these areas relates to the broad issue of how women have been portrayed by "the media". The second relates to questions of women's aesthetics: how women's social roles influence female creativity, and how women's art projects a female vision of the world. The third involves how women have been recognized or not recognized as artists. Thus, although there has been little folkloristic work directly concerning feminist theoretical issues, all three of these areas are connected with general context of women singing. They say that

> "...the social contexts for singing and related attitudes point clearly toward a deep division between men's realm and women's realm (which is the "inner world" of home and family)" (Jordan & De Caro, 1986: 6).

Concluding their research on gender and folklore, they declare that

> The discovery of women's traditions and women's lives continues to have a powerful impact on folklore studies generally, as folklorists realize the many things they have missed in their past studies of folk cultural forms. And insofar as women's folklore has revealed a fresh vantage point from which to look at the world, studies of women's folklore have contributed to a greater understanding not just of the world of women, but of the world of men, too, and of interrelationships between the two worlds.(p :518).

In her article, Saeed (2007) discusses about gender and folklore with particular references to South Asian countries, and says that women are the keepers of traditions, and folklore survives because of women. Based on her observation, she describes the different roles women perform in the survival and revival of the folklore. She mentions that folklore is also a source of emancipation for the women. Upon analysis of women in folklore in South Asian cultures, there appeared several elements of folklore that are supportive to women in terms of finding their strength. She mentions one example of water-wells which has become gathering and sharing places for women. They share stories, and there have been many folk songs which women sing while fetching water from there. She informs about some festivals, Urs (religious ceremonies on shrines) and other religious rituals on which women sing various songs. Additionally, criticizing

and concluding the dual nature of the folklore, she describes that sometimes these folk traditions and its genres become impediments for women by discriminating against them. Some of the proverbs and folktales are there that are gender-biased and encourage patriarchal culture.

Babcock (1987) in her research study mentions several commonalities between folklore and feminist theory. She points out that there is a need for feminist folklorists to not only address to women's folklore and womenfolk but also a need to examine and redefine disciplinary paradigms and discursive practices of folklore scholarship. She also stresses the need to rewrite the history of the discipline to include women and to review the contributions of women folklorists.

3.3. Family Folklore Studies

There are many types of family folklore including the categories of material, verbal, and customary lore that folklorists in the United States have used to study their field since the 1970s. Material culture has been overlooked by some folklorists who are interested in customs and spoken traditions, whereas other folklorists have noted the significance of artifacts in understanding a group's way of life.

The verbal art of family life also has an early and lasting impact on families. Naming, traditions, songs, sayings, and inside jokes identify individual family members and explain how the family came to be. Oral traditions connect the family to ancestors or to other significant groups such as religious or ethnic communities. Names, stories, sayings, and songs can be a resource to maintain coherence and to recognize or construct continuities in family history. Folklorist Wilson (1991) explains that these stories and sayings are comparable to a family novel that requires knowing the contexts of family events and the various character traits of family members to be fully understood and appreciated.

Family studies in the context of folklore are defined as family folklore in the encyclopedia of folklore. Family folklore covers the traditional expressions that people make, say, and do in the family life and in consideration of family members, events, and history. These traditional expressive behaviors help and enable the members to identify themselves as a family, and also provide knowledge about appropriate actions and ways to find meaning in the world. Folklorists are increasingly interested in the production or display of items that are of vital significance to

the family, including heirlooms, quilts, crafts, photographs, home videos, and other memory objects. Traditional verbal expressions important to families include names, songs, stories, sayings, proverbs, riddles, and inside jokes. Some families attuned to the power of music use songs to accompany household duties, as well as to mark transitions and celebrations. The combination of words and music makes particularly strong memories that often are eagerly shared over generations. Customary expressions play an essential part in family life and often incorporate verbal and material traditions also. Life-cycle events mark changes and transformations in the family involving birth, puberty, marriage, migrations, reunions, and death. Holidays and festivals unite the family with wider communities.

Folklorists find many elements of family life under the umbrella of traditional expressive behavior. Two German brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, in the 19th century were interested in their German language, and their traditions encouraged people for collecting lore through their publication of household tales and legends. Taking inspiration from the Grimm brothers, scholars around the world became motivated to find and publish traditional materials. With the contribution of Grimm Brothers and other husband-wife (Iona & peter Archibald Opie, Tyler Gibbons & Robin MacArthur etc) and father–son (John Avery Lomax & Alan Lomax) founder pairs, family became an important aspect of folklore studies.

However, family lore was not an early interest of scholars. Often folklorists collected tales, ballads, or games that belonged to a particular national group or they tried to trace international similarities and differences. Till early twentieth century, folklorist focused on the larger groups which obscured the traits and talents of individuals and specific families. When folklorists collected material from family members, they focused on songs, stories, or artifacts rather than on the function of lore in family life.

Some researchers have been very successful in carrying out studies based on data gathered from their family members. For example, Sandra Stahl's work on personal experience narratives (1977) withdraws heavily on her mother's storytelling for her database. Sharon R. Sherman has produced a vidcotape documenting her family's annual Passover Seder in which she analyzes the inter-familial dynamics of celebration and ritual. Another researcher, Margaret Yocum, based her dissertation on fieldwork conducted within her own family.

Folklorist Boatright (a Texan folklorist) has been identified by Yocom (1997) as one of the first to focus specifically on family folklore in his 1958 study of family chronicles. Yocom (1997) further mentions that L. Karen Baldwin called families the social base for folklore. By the 1970s, more folklorists studied and considered family as the primary and essential group for the perpetuation and performance of folklore.

There have been certain guides who develop to help researcher who wanted to work in the family folklore, like 'A Guide for Collectors of Folklore in Utah[4]' "The Family Saga as a Form of Folklore[5], Buying the Wind: Regional Folklore in the United States are some of the examples.

3.4. Folklorist within the Family

Field work within one's own community has been studied by many anthropologists. However, conducting fieldwork in other communities other than one's own is still regarded as a custom among anthropologists. However, for the last fifty years or so, role of ethnographers has gone through substantial changes within anthropology. The native anthropologists and feminist anthropology have gained notice and acceptance within anthropology and other social sciences.

Social researchers developed their interest in family studies in early 1970s. Over the last few decades, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and folklorists have begun to focus attention on community studies. However, the purpose and the endeavor of the data collection varied from discipline to discipline. There have been many research studies in anthropology and with a large contribution from feminist anthropologists who conducted their fieldwork in their own countries or communities of origin and in their native languages (Myerhoff 1978; Ginsburg 1989; Kondo 1990; Abu-Lughod 1993; Narayan 1993; Visweswaran 1994; Lewin 1995; Agar 1996; D'Alisera 1999; de la Cadena 2000).

Sherman (1986) talks about her research on the family's Seder for documenting the Seder activities, that was focused on the problems fieldworkers face when they are intimately involved in the folkloric processes themselves. Passover, considered by many Jews to be the opening activity in the Jewish calendar, is a religious event involving a number of different phases from preparing the ritual meal to chanting religious prayers. She uses videotape as a best possible tool

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[4] Jan Harold Brunvand(1971)
[5] Mody C. Boatright's John T. Flanagan (Urbana, 1958)

for capturing the activity, for documenting responses to the Seders, and for examining the dynamics of intra-familial behavior.

Her purpose of research deals with description and analysis of the difficulties that arise when a fieldworker decides to conduct fieldwork among his/her own family. She highlighted the role of fieldworker who often conflicts with the role of family member; the roles adopted by the fieldworker when documenting family represent a compromise between the interests of the fieldworker and those of the family. By conducting the research, she describes the struggles, adaptation and the consequences of changing established roles that are frequently taken for granted. She concludes that a researcher, (fieldworker) when coming into the family research, is accompanied with a set of social and personal identities. He/she is concerned how these help or hinder in family research studies.

Stahl (1977) presents a particularly developed methodology for studying personal narratives and legitimate folklore genre while offering a thoughtful examination of current interpretive practices. Her analysis of several personal narratives includes an extensive investigation of her own position as reader interpreter and the theoretical implications of that position. She contextualizes several personal narratives in detail by investigating them in relation to literary theories of reader- response and folkloristic performance theories Stahl maintains that "the values or attitudes reflected in the stories are culturally shared and thus traditional" (13). She goes on to validate the position of the scholar as researcher and reader interpreter.

In the discipline of Anthropology, family held a central position in anthropological analyses from the beginning of the discipline. Especially in the last decades of the twentieth century, anthropological definitions of the family were more concentrated about biology and its relationship to kinship. Anthropologists were more concerned about the universal definition of the "family" beyond time and space. However, kinship studies after 1980s took a new turn and family took a more central role in social analysis because of its very close linkages to emerging theme of gender. Ethnographies, with the inclusion of gender, provided lengthy details in the institution of family[6].

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[6]. Family in Anthropology since (1980) - Putting Theory Into Practice: Family Studies Of The 1980s

60

Case studies of the families have been one of the major tools in the studies of anthropology. Additionally, in anthropological perspective, family is studied in terms of personality of individuals in relation to their culture. Lewis (1950) states the anthropological approach to family studies,

> "in terms of intensive case studies of families as functioning wholes, utilizing all the conceptual categories and methods generally employed in the studies of the total culture. Family case studies of this type are particularly useful for problems in the field of culture and personality" (P: 468).

Like anthropology, sociology takes family studies in its wider perspective. Sociology examines human interaction and the behavior of the people that is shaped by various social structures (groups, communities, and organizations), social categories (age, sex, class, race, etc.) and social institutions (politics, religion, education, etc.). The sociology of family examines social institutions like marriage, divorce, child rearing, and domestic abuse. Sociologists study various aspects of the family that are defined in different cultures, and their effect on individuals and institutions.

Historians have used family studies profoundly. Coontz (2000) analyses the family studies in relation to anthropology and sociology and their contribution in the discipline of history. According to him;

> Historical research allows researchers to deepen their analysis of family diversity and family change by challenging widespread assumptions about what is and what is not truly new in family life. Such research complicates generalizations about the impact of family change and raises several methodological cautions about what can be compared and controlled for in analyzing family variations and outcomes.

Although family historian Gillis (1996) asserts that families are a world of their own making, increasingly important and fragile in contemporary society, family folklore reminds that families connect with wider communities such as ethnic, religious, or occupational groups. Family

traditions are performed as practical responses to daily demands of family life as well as hopeful bridges between generations of time and space.[7]

Differentiating the approach of family studies to other disciplines, it may be obviously stated that folklorists emphasize the description, function and aesthetics of traditional behaviors, whereas family studies scholars tend to investigate the analytic, evaluative, and therapeutic elements. Family studies scholars, especially psychologists, use clinical work to study families (such as those dealing with alcoholism or other social issues), while folklorists often study families that focus on artistic elements of family traditions. The folkloric approach assesses the effectiveness of traditions in creating healthy family life. Furthermore, the family studies approach enriches the artful and symbolic aspects of traditional behaviors.

3.5. Folksongs of Women

Hassan (1995) in a research study, documents and analyzes the folksongs of Punjabi rural women, and includes various types of folksongs which women sing on various ceremonies ranging from lullabies to wedding songs. Mostly women sing these songs by themselves or through professional singers who specially sing on these ceremonies. These songs reflect and also construct the Punjabi woman identity. The research study analyzes the songs from socio-cultural perspective of Punjab province of Pakistan excluding other ethnic areas of Pakistan.

Fareed (2010) in her unpublished thesis collected and analyzed the *"Tappas in Punjabi village"*. Her thesis has a feminist perspective and looks at the language of tappas from feminist standpoint. She analyzes her data and concludes that women investigated areas are subordinated by patriarchal system which is reflected in the lyrics of the tappas. She infers that through singing of tappas, women communicate their emotions and wishes which are otherwise not acceptable to be expressed. Though the study investigates through feminist perspective which is one particular mindset, however, the analysis makes it is a valuable contribution in Pakistani context of gender and folklore.

Jassal (2012) in an ethnographic study of folksongs sung by lower-caste women in north India at weddings and other occasions, tries to use the songs to explore how ideas of caste, gender,

sexuality, labor, and power are strengthened, questioned, and through music. She stresses the significance of the folksongs, and argues that women sing what they often cannot talk about. Women's lives, their feelings, their relationships and their social and familial bonds are persuasively presented in songs and in the themes of the songs. She suggests that for the ethnographic study, these songs offer an entry into the everyday cultures of marginalized groups of women who are the main focus of analytical investigation.

Seoga- Zake (2000) in her book based on Kenyan (Africa) study of folk wedding songs and dance on weddings narrates that these are mainly for women. They sing to the bride and for groom. Songs and dances are arranged and organized some weeks before the wedding ceremonies. Wedding songs normally need no instruments but clapping and may be whistle, too, which has a place in Kenyan folk music. Wedding songs include quite a number of songs just to scorn and ridicule the people and even the families of bride and groom. The families of the girl will sing to scorn everything including the food. They have been givers and, in turn, the other group favors the groom's family and sings to jeer at those who accompany the bride. They sing mocking, abusive, provocative sardonic songs mentioning all they can to criticize the bride.

Chatzilia (2004) in her unpublished thesis on position and status of women in Greek folk songs examines that folk songs are representative of the social environment. Some songs praise women and some condemn them. But through the fantasy, myth and metaphors, they ease off the tensions and conflicts which are present in the traditional Greek society and maintain a balance. Her study includes a wide variety of folk songs and a selected number of songs concerning women in different phases of their lives. These songs belong to the kleftic (traditional Greek food) songs and the songs of the cycle of life. They are widespread all over Greece with slight differences. She concludes that in Greek society, many songs on various events of life are sung by women. These songs give voice to a woman to express their emotions and sentiments.

Olson (2001) studies the lamentation and ritual wailing songs which were a large part of the lives of Russian peasant women. For centuries, laments and songs pervaded every significant life event they witnessed or participated in. Songs were sung at work, at rest, alone and with friends. Other songs were restricted to rituals such as wedding ceremonies, funerals or *khorovody* (games and dances). Recurring themes in the songs included fate, unhappy love, farewells, matchmaking

and marriage. The richest of the songs pertain to love and family life (Reeder, *Volga*11). Traditionally, the songs were performed by women and during the last few centuries chanted laments have been exclusively genre of women's poetry (Sokolov: 226). The oral tradition of ritual laments followed women from the time they were young girls through rites of matchmaking, marriage, motherhood, and death.

Trawick (1988) on her work in Tamil Nadu (India), talks about the untouchable women songs which they sing on many occasions. These women compose songs individually and through expressive poetry refer openly to the hardships and deprivations they have had to bear in their own lives. She claims that such individual women's songs have never been documented for any other part of South Asia. However, women respond individually to the collectively performed songs and narratives. According to her Women sing several kinds of songs that express personal sentiments and are sung spontaneously, in relatively protected environments, for select audiences. These include laments, work songs, and songs of secret love, put-down songs, songs of social commentary, and songs that mix these various themes. These songs give voice to women's complex feelings concerning the nature of human relations though not directly but through stylistic variations in the lyrics of their songs. These women, while singing these songs, overlook hierarchical and exclusionary social relations and contrast with relations of love between equals, in which the boundaries between lovers dissolve.

Trawick (1988) besides happy songs, women sing laments that are wept-songs and low-caste women are hired to sing laments in funeral processions. They sing the laments along with the family women of the deceased. The content of the laments often has nothing to do with the person being buried, rather these laments state the singer's own sorrows, in particular the sorrows connected with her marriage and with her low-caste status. According to Trawick (1988) a central theme of all laments is the victimization of the women by more powerful others.

Raheja (1994) in her research stresses the fact that women's songs from Uttar Pradesh consistently review the male-oriented supports which are respected in local ideologies of patri-lineal kinship. The other important factor she mentions about the songs sung by women is position of the women which is not uniform, but constantly shifts. She also describes

contradiction in the roles of daughter, sister, wife, mother and mother-in-law. Women who sing these sing belong to group of women who have married into the village as wives, others who have returned from their marital homes to visit their natal kin, young unmarried girls, newly married brides, and older mothers-in-law alike, but all of them sing together various songs that speak different and often contradictory desires of a sister or a wife. Raheja (1994) further explains that although a sister hopes that her brother will not forget her as she goes away to her husband house, a wife wishes for intimacy with her husband, and criticizes him along with his sister and mother if he gives too much importance to them. In this way, women claim two different and contradictory positions that exist between brother–sister and husband-wife. The two unequal relationships support the patrilineal ideology which stresses on the need of subordination of the marital bond.

Skinner and et al (1994) in their research on the songs of women on religious festival Tij, explain high caste women's performance of rituals that reaffirm patrilineal principles. However, the songs that women and sometimes men compose each year for this annual festival carry an alternative view of women's position in the family and society. Tij is celebrated on the third day after the new moon in the Nepali month of August-September. It is often referred to in the published literature and by Nepalis themselves as "the women's festival" because on this day, all ritual activities are carried out by women and girls. The women adorn themselves in their finest jewelry and clothing, and gather together to sing and dance in front of a temple or in an open area. They also maintain a strict fast for the entire day, beginning a series of austere rites ending in puji (worship) and ritual bathing. Because of this focus on the public rituals, Tij reaffirm patrilineal principles, and the women happily perform the rituals for the benefit of their present, past, or future husbands and for setting free from the sin of menstruation. According to her, Tij is, thus, presented as a ritual that reinforces the gender relations of Hindu religious ideology and helps produce women who willingly and compliantly accept the constraints of this patriarchal system. It is interpreted as a traditional festival in which women demonstrate their faithfulness toward patriarchal ideas through the performance of certain rites.

Dlamini (1995) in an unpublished thesis on songs by Swazi women is of the opinion that Swazi culture is patriarchal and women have no position in the society. Since women are not happy

65

with the status quo, they express their feelings through the singing of songs. These songs provide women a channel to express their feelings and at the same time tell their perception of the society. In this way, these songs give voice to women's unsatisfactory sentiments concerning the society in which they live.

3.6. Wedding Songs

Encyclopedia of Indian literature (2006) explains that the major stream of folksongs is that of marriage songs which are sung by women. These songs made in detail and step by step ceremonies of the marriage. The marriage songs are bride's choice of the groom. Her yearning for him, the courtship of bride by the groom, the bride and groom being offended with and pacifying each other, the role of other family members in their lives, the sad farewells of the bride's relations at the time of her leaving with the groom, advices given to the bride while going to her father-in-law house, riddle and other games played by the couple on arrival at the groom's house etc. Thus, songs make some sharp observations on the family life; its harsh realities are also pointed out and they try to indicate the couple in a new and complex life situation. The realities and modest attitude in depicting the hopes and expectations of the young boy and girl make the picture true to folk life.

Primdahi (1993) defines that the wedding songs that are sung at each ceremony are general songs named as mangala, meaning auspicious. It may be proper to call these songs as songs of women because these songs are primarily sung by women folk, women either of the house or neighborhood or invited relations.

Narayan (1986a)) explains that friendship and folklore locate marriage/wedding as termination of the past, and preparation for the future in collective experience. In *Kangra*, friendship between unmarried girls creates emotional support through the transition marked by marriage. Her research explores marriage as a transition for women in *Kangra*, friendship and folklore when available helps women through the passage between roles or life stages. Both friendship and folklore can ease transitions by orienting the self in terms of similar and sympathetic with others.

She discusses that although women's songs are collectively performed, their meanings are never fixed and uniform but rather complex, diverse, and often vague. Each song presents a set of

images or thematic elements which provides collective symbolic forms and individual' interpretations. She analyzes that women draw upon and interpret these meanings in the songs selectively in relation to their own unique experiences, memories, and aesthetic pleasures. Narayan, in her study, focuses on individual experiences that cause songs to remain differently in the hearts and minds with different emotional experiences for them.

Narayan (1986a) studies friendship as a recurrent theme in women's wedding songs of Kangra (India). Her research addresses the intersection of friendship, a folklore genre, and a life cycle transition for women in Kangra centered on images of friends in suhag wedding songs. Her focus is on the friendship which is culturally acknowledged and associated with unmarried girl-friends both in song and lived experience; however, women of all ages sing suhag. Drawing upon wedding as a transition period of a girl on her way to become a woman she discusses two perspectives by anthropologists and sociologists. One is by Van Gennep (1960 [1908]) who terms the movement between roles as rites of passage (Benedict 1938; Foner and Kertzer 1978; Gluckman 1962; Turner 1965). The other perspective is derived from developmental psychology that terms it as passages between stages in the life cycle, each stage marked by particular psychic tasks and concerns (Bridges, 1980; Erikson 1968, 1980; Gould, 1978; Levinson et al. 1978; Mines, 1981).

In another study, Narayan (1997d) in another study in *Kangra* (India) discusses a favorite song genre among older women singers, *pakharu*, which describes the details of married life. The separation of husband and wife is a recurrent theme in these songs. In her research, she focuses on representations of absent husbands, complementing the texts of songs with commentaries from singers in whose memories the songs comprise off. She argues that male absence in *Kangra* songs is not just an ethnographic fact, but also a multi-vocal symbol on which women strategically express range of emotions and situations in their lives.

Ndzelon (1997) in an unpublished dissertation entitled "The content and form of *Nso* Nuptial songs, examines the content and form of nuptial songs bringing out their functions and important contexts. Her study reveals themes such as farewell, advice, stinginess, as well as linguistics features that sanctify marriage, the central event in a person's life. These songs provide some

67

idea of the world view of Macedonian patriarchal family. These songs give clear picture of social relations and offer artistic representation of many elements of the wedding ritual, which meant to ensure a happy and harmonious life for the newly-weds. In her research, she traces that for every moment of a peasant wedding there is a corresponding folk song. This shows how the power of the word and of ritual is interconnected. Starting from the engagement of the bride, her leaving home with the uncertainty of a new life in an unfamiliar family, arrival of the wedding party to take her away, the celebration, the marriage ceremony, and other customs distinctive of a peasant wedding were preserved in songs of great artistic value.

Archer (1985) in his study, talks about the Hindu *Kayasth* marriage songs in Bihar places within the full ritual context of the marriage. It is a detail account the contexts in which women sing songs of marriage and research is about and by women. These are songs mostly sung and composed by women, and the rituals with which they are associated are primarily those of women, not males and priests. In his research, he starts with a discussion of the symbols used in *Kayasth* marriages and then a synopsis of the marriage ritual itself. Embedded in this description are examples of the songs sung by women at almost every significant point in the marriage process, from the time of first searching for a groom to the rituals at the groom's house when the bride is brought there after the marriage ceremonies at her home. This description of the *Kayasth* marriage emphasizes the role that women play in life-cycle rituals, in contrast to the dominant view of rituals performed by male priests. Not only are women active participants in these ceremonies, but their concerns are also articulated in their songs.

Yagi (2008) studies an Indian village on wedding songs and their interconnection with wedding songs. In her study, she identifies four characteristics of women's rituals. First, women sing songs specific to each ritual and without these songs, the ritual is considered incomplete. Second, women's songs play the role of warding off evil spirits as bride and bridegroom are considered physically attractive during the marriage ceremony and therefore susceptible to the influence of evil spirits. Third, women's songs are much related to the notion of auspiciousness. Women's songs are called *man gal gīt* (auspicious songs). These women's songs and erotic dances of fertility and reproduction connote auspiciousness. In her study, she further reveals that the locals believe that auspiciousness contributes to the prosperity and fertility of their family and lineage,

whereas evil spirits are inauspicious and bring misfortune or disaster to them. Lastly, auspiciousness is related to women's ritual roles and life-cycles. The singing of *gālī* (abuse songs) and symbolic erotic dances are performed primarily by married women who are called *sagunihiya* (auspicious woman). They take a leading part in the rites performed by women. Unmarried girls and fertile women, including those in menstruation and pregnancy, are considered auspicious. Auspicious women have positive *śakti*; they are capable of bringing fertility and prosperity to the family and lineage. Unmarried girl's *śakti* often brings danger to society because their sexuality is considered to be strong. A woman must be married off to reduce the potential danger. Married women's *śakti* is properly controlled by their husbands and channeled to bear children. This control means that married women who are auspicious are able to assist the newly married couple in achieving prosperity and fertility. Thus, women play important roles in the marriage ceremony through their songs and performances.

Jacobson (1975) discusses the women songs including wedding songs of a village in Central India in *Nimkhera* (UP). According to her the songs are sung to celebrate significant events in the life cycle: births, engagements, weddings and funerals. Life cycle songs are sung exclusively by women and girls. Of particular interest is the fact that many of these songs are expressive of tension and social distance between a woman and members of her husband's family, between the kin groups linked by the marriage of a couple, and between males and females in general. She further elaborates that all women's songs are orally transmitted, and girls attend song feasts in order to learn songs from the older women, and the older women learn from each other. She also mentions women of a high caste family are said to know more songs than anyone else, but every woman knows scores of songs. Telling more about the songs, Jacobson (1975) explains that many of the songs which she heard in Nimkhera seem to be very old, since they include some phrases and vocabulary no one can readily explain, least of all young people. Other songs, particularly hymns, are easily understood by all. Some songs include terms not normally used in the speech of this area suggesting that they may have originated in other geographical regions where these terms are commonly heard.

Maswari and et al (1993) in their research on Arab wedding songs as oral traditions compare and trace out the link of oral poetry and wedding songs. They examine how oral tradition has

69

contributed in the transmission of wedding songs from one generation to another. In Arab culture, from the examination of proverbs and the bridal songs, they examined the duality and true underlying nature of male-female relationships in Arab society which becomes visible. On the surface, women appear to be passive objects with a total lack of identity: under that superficial appearance, however, women are honored and appreciated by men, and praised by family relations. They control their lives in light of tradition. As for the bridal songs, in weaving together joy and sorrow they constitute an inseparable part of both wedding customs and associated festive events.

Nhlekisana (2007) in her study on Botswana folklore, talks about songs that accompany almost all social activities. Every occasion in which people come together has particular songs including work, wedding and funerals. She argues that Setswana wedding songs have a dual nature, that is, they express peace and harmony, but they also indicate conflict within families. Most of the songs talk about what should be done in order to have a peaceful marriage and a good relationship with one's in-laws. They also talk about possibilities of conflict that may arise in a marriage if one does not conform to the prescribed expectations. Most of the wedding songs are directed to the bride thus giving the impression that the success or failure of the marriage is dependent on her. Much as these songs are sung for entertainment, they also play a significant role in socializing the bride and groom into their new status as husband and wife. Some of the functions of Setswana wedding songs are to teach the couple about marriage and married life in general, to express what is socially and culturally expected of them as husband and wife, to talk about the couple's new rights and obligations, and to communicate messages about the cultural expectations for a peaceful and successful marriage.

Wade (1972) in her research, talks about the songs of traditional wedding ceremonies in North India. She explains that in these villages, there is unquestionably a body of songs, the texts of which indicate that they are specifically intended for the various rituals in the wedding cycle. Further, she concerns the music of wedding ceremonies that she recorded and filmed in four communities in Delhi. Its major focus are primarily the songs for two ceremonies in the Hindu cycle of wedding rituals ,the lagan and the ban, and also includes songs for the other rituals that took place on the day of the marriage itself in the villages of a groom and of his bride. The music

70

for such ceremonies is always provided by women, members of the families of the bride and groom and other appropriate female members of the community. She concludes that wedding songs must be analyzed in their cultural context, and the songs she recorded depicted the utility of the cultural norms and tradition in a way that bride and groom understand the relationship which they are going to have in coming days.

Narayan's (1986a) study of *Kangra* village (India) on Rajput women analyzes folk songs sung by women in their socio-cultural context. She infers that these songs are not only sung for entertainment purposes, but reveal a socio-cultural context of patriarchal community in which these women live. These women express themselves by singing these songs on marriage ceremonies. These songs describe the separation of a daughter from her maternal home, and her departure to her in-laws where she will live after marriage. The songs depict her pain of separation from her parents, siblings and expectations from her husband. The lyrics of the songs provide opportunity for the women to express their emotions, anxieties, feelings and expectations which otherwise they cannot express.

Tiwary (1978) in his Indian village study, talks about the gloomy folk wedding songs which the girl has to start couple of days earlier to her marriage. These songs reflect the cultural patterns of that particular village where marriage is accustomed specifically with the painful separation from family and friends that a woman undergoes when she marries and moves to the household and village of her husband.

Gold (1997) in her research study in Rajhistani village, describes songs which are sung by women to express the expectations and desires of women and men in a husband and wife relationship. She says that women's songs sometimes allow husbands to respond and object to women's expressed desires; women's stories tend to show husbands as "yes-men" carrying out female commands. Besides, women's traditional images related to obedience and compliance from wife are also expressed through these songs.

Anjali (2002) in her book describes the wedding songs of Garhwali women of India which clearly describe mental and social condition of the women. The songs that are sung on the weddings not only present the descriptive account of the socio-culture events of the society but also the mental and psychological state of mind of women. She concludes that the wedding songs

71

particularly express girls' anxiety and curiosity about the rituals connected with various ceremonies. These songs also reflect the praises of beautiful clothes and jewelry as well as the pain of separation from her parents.

Rosenhouse (2001) in her comparative study of wedding songs of the Middle Eastern countries compares women wedding songs of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities. She reviews the differences and similarities among several types of wedding songs of these communities. She refers to song topics, their structures, singing circumstances and certain linguistic and musical elements. The major finding as she describes is that many of the songs are common to all the four communities mentioned above. The available material and the lack of communal distinction among songs in people's consciousness suggest that basic song structures and styles are similar nearly identical within the studied communities. The differences found were largely with communal-religious factors rather than strictly structural or linguistic ones, i.e. to sociolinguistic issues. Variations of similar songs types among the communities are obvious in vocabulary, metaphoric expressions, stanza structures and melodies. The repetition and variation could be common to many communities and not only to women's songs,

Blake (1979) examines the Chinese daughter and mother relationship in detail that deals with the break of Chinese daughter under the care of mother, and the tragedy of daughter's departure into marriage. According to Blake (1979) in patriarchal society the parent–daughter relationship is based on changing of emotions, and daughter has no institutionalized role in it, and she is never allowed to enter in father's genealogy and even after marriage, only her surname is recorded in her husband's genealogy. Her research is based on the marriage laments which girls sing before their departure to their husband's house. Traditionally bride sings, chants or sighs (as quoted by Blake) these laments for several days and nights before her departure. Most of them address her significant relatives, majority to women and the most passionate is to her mother. They express tender emotions, regrets and strongly argue about mother's maternal instincts. She further adds that

> "When the daughter is sold into marriage, it is towards her caring mother she turns for reprieve. But even if mother is all loving, she is not all-powerful. The hand of the maternal love is constrained by the patriarchal social structure to be the hand in betrayal. The daughter's laments pay homage to her mother's nurturance and sacrifice. They also

blame mother in attempts to arouse mothers heart is like a stone which cools in rapid waters" (p: 96).

Blake (1979) has suggested that the Chinese laments are very revealing of a daughter's place in a patriarchal system wherein she is merely exchanged for a consideration. Indeed, one cannot help suspecting that wedding laments reflect an important social phenomenon: though they may be produced from natural anxiety over leaving an old life for a new. A woman's laments at the time of this supposedly joyous occasion suggest something rather negative about women's views of marriage in these societies.

Jordan and de Caro (1986) talk about another song genre and compare it in Greece and Ireland. This genre is commonly the property of women--the ritual laments sung in a number of cultures. In Ireland and Greece, such laments are associated with death,[8] as they may be in India, though there "tuneful weeping" is much more associated with marriage, or, more specifically, with the painful separation from family and friends that a woman undergoes when she marries and moves to the household and village of her husband. Wedding laments are also sung in Finland, and were sung traditionally in China. In the Ingrian region of Finland, laments sung by the bride or her mother are a major part of wedding ceremonies. In China, the bride traditionally sang laments for several days and nights before the marriage, especially expressive of nostalgic toward her mother whom she had to leave.

3.7. Birth Songs

I could not get sizeable literature on the birth songs while reviewing literature. Similarly I was unable to get any birth song for baby girl. I confirmed from the respondents that there is no song which is sung on the birth of a baby girl. Hassan (1995) conducted their research in Punjab (Pakistan) also have the same declare when discussing findings of their research and say;

> this findings was also substantiated by the fact that there are no ceremonies or rituals to express joy on the birth of a baby girl., whereas on the birth of a baby boy , the family actively celebrates . The door of the house is decorated in special way to announce the birth of a boy. The sweets are distributed. Songs are

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[8] Margaret Alexiou, The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); Anna Caraveli-Chaves, "Bridge between Worlds: The Greek Women's Lament as Communicative Event," Journal of American Folklore 93 (1980): 129-57.

sung. People dance and there is special celebration in which the entire family and the tribe participate but on the birth of a baby –girl no such t=rituals take place which would give the feeling of welcoming the girl child (p:17).

I also could not find researches on baby girl songs in Pakistani and Indian context as there is no songs sung on the birth of baby girls.

Nevertheless, there are some researches conducted on the songs that are sung on birth of the baby boy. In Indian context, it is only baby boy who has some songs on his birth. No birth songs have been documented on the birth of baby girl. In north Indian context there are some songs which are sung on the birth of son which are known as Sohar songs. However, couple of researches explains that songs along with the rituals are performed on birth of child and in those researches gender is not specified. The genre of birth song has been defined in couple of ways. Some of them are as under:

Tiwari (1978) in his article, discusses their nomenclature in the following way

> The generic name for childbirth songs is sohar (variants: sobhar, sohal, and sohilo). This inclusive term comprises sddh, sariyd, mangal git, badhdi, carud, pipar, ajawdin, and a few other song forms. The words sohar, sariyd, and mangal actually appear in many songs. Many of the names of these song forms designate the ceremonies they describe and, are sung at appropriate times during the pregnancy/birth cycle. All of these songs are sung by women.

Tewari (1988) discuses the cultural aspect of son-birth and says that the birth of a son is an important social occasion in the life-cycle ceremonies practiced in India, a joyful event celebrated with songs, rituals, feasting, and gift-giving. His study focuses on pregnancy and birth rituals, and the context, content, and performance of sohar songs. Sohar songs contain compact information on folk beliefs, social customs, and family rituals. As such, they are an important body of women's oral literature. Generally, the authorship is anonymous and their age unknown; these songs have been handed down from generation to generation, and are remembered and sung only for the appropriate occasions. They are an essential component of the cultural heritage

74

in Indian society and fulfill the functions of values transmission, social delineation, and thanksgiving.

Vatuk's (1965) analysis is based on the tape-recorded folksongs that he collected in British Guiana. They were collected in various parts of the country from people of many different walks of life, and represent a good sample of the folksongs currently sung by Indians in British Guiana. He elaborates that from early times beginning in the Vedic Period, the birth of a child, particularly of a son, has been considered necessary or the social and spiritual fulfillment of an Indian man or woman. The home where son has just been born is described in the folksongs as containing a scene of extreme joy. The child's paternal grandmother, usually a stern figure, is wild with happiness and distributes jewelry, gold, silver, cows, and uncounted cash with abandon. The father's sister dances as she fetches the water, and the mid wife joyfully fights for her reward.

Galla (1969) in her research study, talks about birth customs and births songs in (Dembidollo) Ethiopia. Though the traditional culture of this region is being increasingly affected by the impact of Amhara culture and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and by the advancing education, money economy, and urban influences in Dembidollo, birth customs still remain largely unaffected. This is because the birth customs are almost exclusively the concern of women, and that women in general retain a closer attachment to the traditional patterns of life. Elaborating the rituals related to birth songs, she says that after taking birth meal, the women begin their birth songs, of which only two or three are sung on the first day. Galla (1969) however, uses the same word, sirbu, for singing and dancing, which in fact normally go together. The songs have passed from generation to generation, and place names may refer to places which they have left behind them, generations ago. Some words are added to the songs just to make them rhythmic as few of the words from the songs have disappeared with time. Therefore, some words, names, and even lines for the sake of rhyme or vocal harmony are inserted in the songs.

Ayuk (2000)'s unpublished dissertation on the content and form of birth songs among the Ejaghams of Cameroon portrays the oral traditions that are embedded in Ejagham people birth songs. She further reveals in her work that Ejagham birth songs are both educational and

75

entertaining in nature. These songs also reveal the socio-cultural life of the people who sing these songs.

3.8. Conclusion

The review of literature for research and allied topics brought out the underlying feminist and anthropological approaches adopted in most of the research studies. Majority of the researchers are found emphasizing the role of researcher herself, her own theoretical frame work and particular human experience in the local context. References of research carried out by Indians or in India are cited for obvious cultural and anthropological similarities especially of Rajput communities on either side of border. A dearth of documented research on women wedding/folk songs in Pakistani context seems apparent, as for birth song, the scenario is without any substantial research altogether.

4. AREA PROFILE

4.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with area profile of the town *Wahndo* where the study took place. It includes brief introduction of the area and the history of the Rajputs in Indo-Pakistani subcontinent. Culture differs from one society to another, and it is a key determiner of behaviour in any society. In Rajput community, some of these elements of culture are expressed through still existing folk songs sung on different occasions. These socio-cultural factors are revealed through ethnographic study of Rajput culture conducted for the purpose of this dissertation as well as a few studies of Rajput culture done by other scholars. The survey and description of Rajput culture in the following sections reveals some general aspects of Rajput culture. An understanding of these aspects of Rajput culture is necessary because they serve as an important contextual framework within which one can understand Rajput folklore, particularly Rajput folksongs.The last part of the chapter deals with the marriage and birth ceremonies in Rajput community living in the area in Pakistan. The folk wedding and birth songs imitate the Rajput culture and by explanation of the ceremonies the songs may be better understood.

4.2. Locale of the Study

The locale of the study is town Wahndo, Tehsil Kamoke, District Gujranwala (Punjab). It is at 45 minutes drive from Gujranwala city. Gujranwala is located in the North East of the Punjab, and it is the seventh largest city of Pakistan. Gujranwala is known for being the birth place of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (November13, 1780), the last ruler of Punjab. It is from the descendants of Ranjit Singh that the British later were to obtain, under fraudulent circumstances, the famous Kohinoor Diamond which now is part of the Crown Jewels. Gujranwala city appears to be 500 years old. The origin of the name Gujranwala is shrouded in mists of time. The first name of the settlement, according to the compilers of the first edition of the district Gazette, was Khanpur Shansi after an individual of the jutt cast called Khan Shansi who founded 11 villages in the nearby area. For some reason, Gujar occupied the land from Jatt. They reached such dominance that it seems likely that the district once contained the capital of the Punjab, at an epoch when Lahore had not begun to exist.

The area of study is connected to the main city through a mettled road which leads to Gujranwala city on GT road. Kamoke is situated at 31.97° North latitude, 74.22° East longitude and 226

meters elevation above the sea level. Kamoke is a big town in Pakistan, having about 199531 inhabitants. According to new local government ordinance, Gujranwala is a City District consisting of the following towns: Khiali Shahpure Town, Aroop Town, Nandipure Town, Qila Didar Singh Town, Wazirabad Town, Kamonki Town, and Nowshehra Virkan Town. Kamoke is a Tehsil of Gujranwala District located on the Grand Trunk Road. It is headquartered at Kāmoke, which is approximately 40 km from Gujranwala--the district capital. It is famous for its market of Basmati rice. It is administratively subdivided into twenty four Union Councils. Kamoke is a bustling town located on the GT road. Most inhabitants are Rajputs and Jats, and depend on agriculture. It is famous for its *burfy* (a local sweet) and rice.Kamoke has 16 union councils and Wahndo is one of them[9]. It is populated with approximately 22000 people with a male ratio almost equal to female population.

4.3. Amenities and infrastructural of the area

4.3.1. Ethnic Groups

There are three major ethnic groups residing in the village. Arians is the biggest ethnic group in terms of population. Rajput population comes after Arians. However, Rajputs have more land holdings than Arians. The third ethnic group is of Jaats, who have small land holdings than other two groups and most of them work in nearby city or on others' fields. Beside these major ethnic groups, there are Christians, barbers, and cobblers etc. Kashmiri migrants are also residing in the area, and are mostly employed on daily wages during the harvesting season for various crops grown in the area. Many Christians and other low class people work on daily basis in crop cutting seasons.

4.3.2. Educational Level

Education is a source of acquiring skills, developing knowledge and improving productivity. Wahndo has its two primary schools up to the 5th standard and two high schools, one for boys and the other for girls. Girls from the nearby villages come to study here. There is also one degree college for boys, which also caters male students from many nearby villages. There is no degree college for girls in the town. Girls have to go to Gujranwala city for intermediate studies.

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[9] Towns & Unions in the City District of Gujranwala -Government of Pakistan

In fact, after the completion of primary education, a considerable number of students abandon their studies for couple of reasons like poor economic conditions and unemployment. Most of the students are living the college after having their intermediate education. Many young people know computer and majority of them uses computers for entertainment and amusement purposes.

Situating near the city of Gujranwala has benefitted the town. Instead of working with traditional practices, people are taking the help of machines and other modern practices for their agriculture production which brings better production for them. However, illiterate people and some of minority class of the area are still conservative and poor. They have a great faith on their fate. Some of the people whom I met told me that they have been born as laborers, and they must remain laborers all their life.

Literacy is essential to empower individual, families and communities to protect, preserve and promote their well-being. The literacy rate is one of the important factors determining the socio-economic development of a town. The total percentage of literacy in *Wahndo* is 43% out of which 54% are male and 26% are female.

Employment is an important aspect to decide the socio-economic conditions or the purchasing capacity of people. Most of the people have some land in the town. Their lands are bit far from the main town area. Employment activities appear to be divided on caste generally. People of *Jat* community are traders and businessmen. They work in nearby villages and city. They are running the transport business. Most of the buses and vans belong to *jats* there. Rajput community is landlords and engages in agriculture farming. People belonging to *Arian* caste are mostly shop-keepers and have vegetable and fruit shops there.

4.3.2 .Agriculture

Wahndo is predominantly an agricultural town. The town is chiefly irrigated by tube well and a couple of canals. The total rainfall is quite light and is not sufficient for the agricultural land. Most of the people own tube wells for their agricultural land. The people who cannot afford tube well buy water from the people who have tube wells.

The road leading to the town from Gujranwala has agricultural fields on both sides. However, when the town starts, the fields disappear. There are many shops of fertilizers and other

agricultural gadgets. The area has mainly two cropping seasons, viz, the first crop (June to September) and the second crop (October to February). The main source of livelihood for the people here is agriculture. More than 75% of the people in the village depend on agriculture directly or indirectly. Hence, land plays an important role in their livelihood as most of the marriages are planed according to the money gained after selling the crops. Wahndo has suitable land for rice production. The network of the irrigation system marks full use of the water resources; the natural deficiency has been overcome to a greater extent. Rice is the main crop of the area followed by wheat. Other major crops of the area are pulses, fruits, sesame, vegetables millets and variety of fodder for the animals.

4.3.3. Housing Type

The different types of houses are an indication of the economic status of any person. Mostly *pakka* houses are in majority. Many people from the area went to foreign countries for earning; therefore, living conditions are good enough for people there. However, sanitation is poor and majority of the streets are narrow and in bad shape. Comparatively, houses are in relatively good shape. People who belong to Rajput, *Arian* and *Jat* community have *pakka* houses with all important items (as people described it) available. People belonging to minority class such as Christians and other manual workers have *semi-pakka* houses. Only very few people who migrate from other areas for work during crops cutting season have kacha houses. They migrate to other areas as crop cutting season ends. These people work on daily basis.

Wahndo has many facilities: there is one hospital, women health service unit, veterinary hospital, and post office, many mosques for different prominent sects of Muslims, and a rice market. Besides, the area has electricity, general water supply and Sui gas facility provided in the houses too.

4.3. 4. Means of Communication

The area people have many communication facilities. There are facilities for delivering of regular postal and newspaper. Telephone facility is also available there. Now majority of the people use mobile phones and therefore many mobile companies have their local franchises there.

Wahndo is connected to Gujranwala city with mettled road. Gujranwala is on main GT road. Therefore, people living in town are usually well-connected to the Gujranwala city with many

80

means of transportation. Most of the people have their own transportation. Otherwise, public transports and private vans and buses operate on the road connecting people of the town to main cities and nearby villages. Most of the people have their own bikes and some own cars, too. For general transportation, buses, vans and rickshaws are available. Buses running on long and short routes are also available all time in day. At night, few buses are available for specific routes. Tractor trolleys are used for agricultural goods transportations and other agricultural equipments.

Town is also connected to railway network through Gujranwala railway station. Trains that are on their way to Lahore till Karachi and Peshawar have stop-overs at Gujranwala railway station. One passenger train also runs between Lahore and Gujranwala and stops at Kamoke railways station; mostly daily workers travel on it. This train runs daily and benefits people who travel daily for their work outside the town. Most of the households have their own television sets, cable networks and satellite dishes.

4.3.5. Religion
Majority of the people are Muslims. However, there are some Christian families, too, who live at a little distance from the Muslim families. Before the partition of India and Pakistan, some Sikh families used to live there, but now no Sikh family lives there anymore.

4.3.6. Language
In this town all the people, irrespective of their caste, speak *Punjabi* while communicating with each other. The town is close to big city of Gujranwala where almost all the people speak Punjabi with various accents like Lahori and Sialkoti. However, old Rajput people who migrated from Ambala (India) speak *Haryanvi* language. Majority of the people understand Urdu and *Punjabi* languages too. Some of the students, who are studying in schools, understand English and Urdu. Young people also understand English. There is a great tendency of young people to go to foreign countries like Greece, Malaysia and South Korea for employment. Therefore, they learn and improve their English for going abroad.

The language of the Rajput people living in the area is Haryanvi. Mostly people who are above 50 years of age speak fluent *Haryanvi*; however, young people prefer Punjabi language though they understand *Haryanvi*. Nonetheless, when they talk to their elders like maternal or paternal grandparents, they try to speak in Haryanvi language. Some young girls, when speaking Punjabi language, use accent of *Haryanvi* language while communicating with their elders. By and large,

81

majority of the young people of Rajput community understands *Haryanvi* language whether they can speak it or not.

Historically speaking, *Haryanvi* language is an Indo-Aryan language. It is native to the regions of Haryana and Delhi of India and few regions of Pakistan. It is written using the *Devnagiri*. It is also considered to be the northernmost dialect of Hindi and has lexical similarity with *Bagri* language. It is most widely spoken in the North Indian state of Haryana. The term *Haryanvi* is also used for people from Haryana. *Haryanvi* belongs to the Western Hindi family of languages. It is usually understood to be a dialect of Hindi and not a separate language although it has more lexical similarity and legibility with Bagri dialect of Rajasthani. One of the songs also points out the name of the town Banger (UP, India).

Arreee ...chhoree Banger ke tharee aqal kethe khogae se

However, women of the area whom I interviewed called it Mohajiri, too. But they trace their migration from Ambala where their forefathers used to speak Haryanvi language as their mother tongue. They also confirmed that it is one of the dialects of Rajasthani language. However, they also authenticated that living near cities like Gujranwala and Lahore, their language has been influenced by Punjabi too.

4.4. The Rajput People: Historical Perspective

Rajput identifies numerous *ksatriya* or warrior castes in northern and western India. The term "Rajput" comes from *rajaputra,* which means "son of kings." Rajputs are famed for their fighting abilities and once ruled numerous Indian princely states.

Most people believe that Rajputs come from tribes in central Asia such as the Parthians, Kushans, Shakas, and Huns. These groups entered India as conquerors and became kings or rulers. They often married high-caste Hindu women or converted to Hinduism. By the ninth century, Rajputs controlled an empire that extended from Sindh to the lower Ganges Valley and from the Himalayan foothills to the Narmada River. The Rajput population and the former Rajputs are found in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

In 1192, Prithviraj Chauhan led the Rajputs against the Muslim Mughal ruler Muhammad Ghuri (1206) who defeated them at the second battle of Tarain, near Delhi. This firmly established Muslim power and ended Rajput dominance. The only Rajput kingdoms that could challenge Mughal rule were those in the great Thar Desert.

The history of the Muslim Rajputs coincides with the Muslim conquest of South Asia. The Rajputs started converting to Islam due to various reasons beginning with the conquest of Indus Valley from Multan to Debal by Muhammad bin Qasim, the Arab general of Umayyad Caliphate from Taif (now in Saudi Arabia) in 711 AD. At the time of arrival of Islam, the north and western regions of South Asia were ruled by Rajput clans. The Rajputs and Muslim armies fought many battles for the control of South Asia. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni conquered the regal power of Rajput Maharaja Jayapala Shahi of the North Western South Asian (modern day Pakistan) region by 1026, through successive battles. Towards the end of the 12th century, the Turkic Shahbudin Muhammad of Ghor conquered Delhi after defeating last defense of the Rajputs in the second battle of Tarain 1192, by Maharaja Prithvi Raj Chauhan. Later, his successor in India Qutb-ud-din Aibak established the Delhi Sultanate in 1206.

In 1527, the Muslim Janjua Rajput clan aided the Mughal conquest of South Asia by taking part in the Imperial Mughal armies as Generals. Hindu Rajputs also took part in these conquests as allies and even took part in marriages with the Mughals such as Raja Man Singh of the Kachhwaha clan, who aided Emperor Akbar in 1568 against the Sesodias.

In the eighteenth century, many Rajput states came under control of Marathas and, by the early nineteenth century, the British. Many Rajput kings retained a status as rulers of princely states under the British. This ended when India gained its independence in 1947.

4.4.1. Conversion to Islam

Many Rajput clans were converted to Islam during the early 12th century and were given the title of Shaikh (elder of the tribe) by the Arab or Mirza by the Mughal rulers. Rajputs converted to Islam due to many reasons including physical or for political reasons. The Delhi Sultanate and later Mughal dynasty encouraged the martial Malik Rajput clans to convert to Islam. Conversions to Islam continued into the 19th century period of the British Raj.

It is said that Ambala District (from where my respondents belong to) was founded by Amba Rajput during the 14th century AD. Another version is that the name is derived from *Amba Wala* meaning *the mango-village*, from mango groves which existed in its immediate neighborhood. Still another version is that the District has taken its name after the goddess "Bhawani Amba" whose temple still exists in Ambala city.Rajputs traditionally formed landowning classes. In the past, Rajput rulers of princely states such as Kashmir, Jaipur, and Jodhpur were known for their splendid courts. Rajput Maharajas (kings) often lived luxuriously in ornate palaces. After India's independence, however, the princes lost their titles and privileges.

4.4.2. Family Life

A distinctive feature of Rajput society is its clans. More than 103 clans have been identified in all. Among the more important ones are the Chauhans, whose former capital was Ajmer; the Gehlots of Mewar; the Rathors of Marwar; and the Kachhwaha of Jaipur. Rajputs marry outside their clan. They also try to marry their daughters into clans of higher rank than their own, while accepting daughters-in-law from clans of lower rank. The Rajput clans in Rajasthan have the highest standing, so families with sons in Rajasthan often are sought by those with daughters. Rajput marriages are arranged. Marriages are occasions for great ceremony and feasting.

Another significant feature of Rajput community is the tradition of sati which women used to practice. In 1303, when the fort of Chitor in Rajasthan was about to fall to Muslims, the Rajput Rani and all the women in the fort burned themselves to death to avoid being taken prisoners. Women who practiced this act of *sati* were revered as saints and stone sati memorials exist in Rajasthan. Despite abundant folklore surrounding this tradition, it was never widely practiced. In Muslim Rajputs living in Pakistan, tradition of *sati* is never practiced. However, while telling me this tradition, many Rajput women told me that they feel pride in it.

4.4.3. Beliefs and customs of Muslim Rajputs

4.4.3.1. Change of Name
A custom during these conversions was to adopt a new name to reflect their change of faith. Many Rajput kings changed their names, but also retained their ancestral/lineal titles such as tribal Clan names. This sense of identity has never been lost and they retain their tribal identity.

4.4.3.2. Marriages
Hindu Rajput code dictates that Rajputs can only marry amongst other Rajputs. Similarly, Muslim Rajputs still follow the custom of only marrying into other Rajput clans only.

4.4.3.3. Genealogical Family Trees
A strong tradition that exists amongst Rajputs of all faiths is the recording of family names and continuance of the family tree. Muslim Rajputs of prominence hold and continue to record their genealogical trees since their Hindu past even after their conversion to Islam, to the present day. Few of the Rajput families I met during research showed me their genealogy family trees that trace their ancestors from Hindus relatives.

4.4.3.4. Social Organization

People who identify themselves as Rajputs are found across northwestern India, the Ganges plains, Madhya Pradesh, and Himalayan valleys. Following Indian independence, the twenty-three Rajput states that formed, what was called Rajputana, were consolidated into the modern state of Rajasthan. The great majority is Hindu, but more than one million are Muslim. In the past, Rajputs formed the fighting, landowning, and ruling castes. They claim to be the descendants of the Kshatriyas of ancient tradition, and from this association they derive their identity as a distinct group, superior to other groups in their traditional territory.

Rajputs are hereditary soldiers and landowners, but the demand for soldiers is now limited and few Rajputs have any occupation except as landowners. While some Rajputs farm their land themselves, many own enough land so that they can hire others to perform manual labour.

The chief feature of Rajput social organization is their division into hierarchically ranked clans and lineages. One hundred and three Rajput clans are well known. Additionally, rankings based on regional location, the degree of centralized political control within regions or Rajput states, and hypergamy are all important elements of the traditional Rajput social order. Rajput men and women are still much involved in elaborate ceremonies, especially weddings, for these are the rituals of Rajput identity.

4.4.3.5. Rajput Folk Custom
Many folktales describe Rajput stories as having Hindu origin. The Hindu custom of burning a wife with the dead body of her husband is mentioned in many stories. In one story, a *ksatriya*

(warrior) clan leader decided to kill all Brahman (priest and scholar) men after learning a Brahman had killed his father. This meant Brahman females had to marry ksatriya men and gave rise to various Rajput dynasties. In another story, gods created some ksatriya clans on Mount Abu in Rajasthan to help fight Buddhists and foreigners. These Rajputs were known as the *agnikula* ("fire-race") and were the ancestors of clans such as the Chauhan, Solanki, and Ponwar Rajputs. Other Rajput clans trace their ancestry to the Sun or Moon.

[10]Hindu Rajput code dictates that Rajputs can only marry amongst other Rajputs. However, mostly Muslim Rajputs still follow the custom of marrying only into other Muslim Rajput clans. Being recent converts to Islam from a culturally Rajput background, there was very little difference between Rajasthani and Uttar Pradeshi Hindu and Muslim Rajputs (outside of religious practices).[11] Hence up until recently, marriages between Muslim and Hindu Rajputs also took place.[12]

4.5. Rajput Community Living in Wahndo

As stated earlier, Rajputs living in Wahndo trace their origin from India (Ambala). While migrating to Pakistan, they carried many of their clan traits with them, too. Many times I heard from the people during research that "a Rajput is always a Rajput whether he is Muslim or Hindu". The Rajputs with a sub-caste *Tunee* (*dhoni* as known in India) migrated from Ambala (Haryana state) in India in 1947. Some of their relatives migrated after 1947 too. Rajput as a community is endogamous; though they are living among many other castes but they do not marry outside their clan. In indo-Pakistan subcontinent context, castes play a very crucial role in defining social roles and expectations within a social system. Dumont (1970) explains that most of the Indian social behavior is based on these hierarchic principles. That shows that the ranking of the castes will not only include beliefs of pollution and purity, traditional occupations, and ritual ranking of the clans within the castes but involves marriage and kinship institutions too. This hierarchical status can be understood while observing the domination of males over female, especially in case of kinship and marriage where one can observe status of bride-receivers to

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[10] Sangari, Kumkum (2004). "Multiple Temporalities, Unsettled Boundaries, Trickster Women".

[11] ^ *Jhelum District Gazetteer* Lahore, repr.2004, p129

[12] Sangari, Kumkum (2004). "Multiple Temporalities, Unsettled Boundaries, Trickster Women". In Blackburn, Stuart H.; Dalmia, Vasudha. *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century.* Orient Blackswan. pp. 225–226

bride-donors, and seniors to juniors in generation (Dumont, 1970). This social behavior, along with other social and symbolic activities, reflects upon women's songs. Protocol of Kinship and marriage play major role in Rajput social order within their clan.

4.6. General Characteristics of Kinship and Marriage within Rajputs

The marriage and general kinship pattern is observable not only in the daily lives of the women, but many relationships along with their expectations are important part of the folk songs. The role expectations and responsibilities are reflected in the both wedding and birth songs. Therefore, an insight about kinship may provide opportunity for the understanding of the themes in the folksongs.

The basic social unit in the area is the extended family that consists of a group of agnates, their wives, children, and often other relatives, usually unmarried. Descent and inheritance are patrilineal. Sometimes couple of extended families also lives. In this way, the land generally remains undivided until the death of the father. Afterwards, separated families reside in ad-joining or nearby houses.

Like most of the families in Pakistan, authority patterns remain to male agnates. Usually in extended family father-in-law is authoritative if he is alive, otherwise eldest brother of the husband has authority over younger brothers who must abide by the orders of their elder brother. Hypothetically, it is expected but not necessarily always followed.

Marriage in Rajputs, as mentioned above, is endogamous within the caste and exogamous to the clan. In general practice, it is enviable that a girl's husband is of higher clan and of a family which is slightly wealthier than her own. This is not a compulsion but it is highly desired.

A heavy dowry, according to the economic status of the families, is paid to the husband's family. One of my respondents told me that a very heavy dowry is given on daughter's marriage. There is very little amount of money spent on the girl from her in-laws' side. While talking about her personal experience, she said that "she did not get anything from her in-laws. Her parents provided her very large dowry. Therefore, burden of expenditure mostly rests on girl's parents".

In the case of match making for the girl, preference is given to a man who is generally four to five years older than his wife. However, under some circumstances, girls can be older than their husbands, and it is not an uncommon phenomenon among Rajputs. The reasons may be economic; it may also be possible that as they do not marry their girls outside their clans, they prefer to give their daughter to younger man with huge dowry and many other benefits. For them, it is shameful to marry their daughters outside of their clan. The Bombay Gazetteer explains that "Rajputs are never careful about the age of the husband who is sometimes two or three years older or younger than the girl". The important factor is not the difference in age as much as the clan's superiority or the higher family status of bridegroom which is a natural concomitant of the hypergamous attitude (Harlan, 1992, p 158).

Residence after marriage is patri-local. In personal communication with the respondents, I was told that distance of ten or more miles usually separates the two families. This proves to be effective as it prevents casual contacts between their members.

Rajputs in general and particularly in the community understudy, marriage with paternal cousin (father's brother sons) is prohibited and they are considered as real brothers. The logic behind this assumption stated by the respondents is that they have the same blood as they have, so how can they marry them when they share the same blood? They are their brothers. Therefore, exogamy prevails in the clans resulting in the marriage of an unknown female of a subordinate family into a higher household of strangers. Besides, this hypergamous practice makes marriage alliances asymmetrical too (Uberoi 1994) i.e. the bride-givers are inferior to bride-receivers.

Relationship of daughter-in-law with her affines is expected to be polite and respectful. She is expected to be polite and silent in the company of her husband's father, father's brothers and father's brothers' sons and other female elders. Ideally speaking, it is anticipated that she must speak only when asked to. At the time of her marriage and after arriving in affine home, it is customary that she should speak to her husband only in private. Usually she is not allowed to go out of the house alone. She must comply with the older women of the household, follow their commands and perform personal services for them. Soon after her arrival as daughter-in-law of the family, she is expected to perform a large share of the household tasks. Only with her husband's younger brother, she has an informal relationship.

In older times, a daughter-in-law was expected to cover her face from her father-in-law and all other male relatives. Still it is practiced; however, it is changing with time.

It is observed, and personally communicated through many talks to me, regarding the estranged relationship between woman and her female relatives. Karve, (1965) in the same way, mentions one type of enmity between a woman and her husband's sisters. Her husband's sisters are critical of the behavior of the affinal newcomer (Karve 1965: 137) and may impose their work on her.

Another enmity also exists between a girl and her husband's mother. Her mother-in-law, being mother of a son, has nearly unlimited authority to receive services from the new bride. (The over-bearing mother-in-law is a theme in many women's songs). However, when she bears sons and grows mature, she also assumes some status and after several years, finally authority in the household, too. In some cases, she even wins some affection and respect from her mother-in-law and affines.

Complaints, grievances and conflicts arise as a result of a girl's changing family status and the nature of the relationship between affinally related families. The apprehensions and other anxiety related sentiments that are reflected in the songs arise due to various reasons. The general reason that can be understood in this context is her altered role in her natal and affinal home. In simple words, a young girl's status in her conjugal family contrasts with her status in her natal family.

In her natal home, as compared to her conjugal home, she has freedom of movement within the families. In her natal home, if there are brothers' wives in the family, she is responsible of fewer chores. After marriage, while having a lower status and most of the work load, she is expected to transfer her devotion to her husband's family. Additionally, she has to accept the companionship and authority of the women in the new house.

Exogamy within clan takes women away from their natal homes. Respondents talked about it in sad tone though they appreciated this practice. According to them, the distance separating the two households and the bride's young age facilitate her socialization in her new family. As I was told, barely few visits in her natal home during the first years of marriage serve to ease the adjustment.

Divorce is not frequent among the community and there has been no case of divorce reported in the community understudy.

Marriage creates an important relationship between two families though the relationship is asymmetrical. Members of the bride's family play the role of givers and are subordinate in status, while the groom's family is the receiver, and it superordinates and dominates in the relationship.

Usually, the wedding ceremony takes place in the village of the bride, where all expenses incurred during the ceremonial day are met by the girl's parents. Here, the social standing of the bride's side of the family is risky as the *Izzat* (respect and honor) of the groom's side of the family very much depends on how well they were treated on this auspicious day. Although hospitality given and received by both sides says something about their present social positions, it also demarcates the closeness of their future interaction, and ultimately, the happiness of the bride (Gill, 1998).

For example, when a man visits his wife's natal home (which is very uncommon among them), it is expected that he will be compulsorily greeted with many gifts and extreme hospitality. He is considered to be the whole area's son-in-law (*Sare pind ka jawae*) so he must be greeted very well. However, on the contrary, the woman's relatives avoid visiting her husband's place or relatives if possible, but if it is necessary then they go there with gifts for her husband or in-laws. They also do not accept hospitality of any sort from their daughter's family.

Wedding ceremonies are symbolic in nature as they represent many rites that help to transform woman and man from one status to another. In wedding ceremonies, members of a couple are transformed from being unmarried to being married, passing through rites and rituals by which their role changes from one status to another. In this way, they become aware of their new obligations and rights and obtain approval for their new identity as husband and wife.

4.7. Marriage in Social Context and Wedding Rites

Usually, three ceremonially marked events comprise Rajputs during wedding ceremony that includes rites of passage such as birth, marriage, and death. The most physically active, complex, dramatic, and symbolic are marriage and birth rites that demonstrate the integration of social and religious features affected through the rules of culture. These rites also reflect the entrenched

ideology of the woman's place in the scheme of things (Mason, 1975). Specifically, South Asian weddings are notoriously elaborated and grandiose (Eglar 1960).

Marriage is an institution that is common to all human societies. It is a legally and socially sanctioned union between a man and a woman. However, like many other communities, in Rajput community this union is not for the bride and groom only but it is also for their families. When two people marry, they become kin and their families will also be tied by kinship. Marriage is also the basis for the formation of a family. The family is the smallest political unit which is often, but not always, faced with conflict and disagreements.

The wedding is the significant social event for the family and involves many rites. Weddings in Rajputs are not a single ritual, but rather a string of rituals. However, in Rajput community, wedding rituals generally start within a week, and after passing through various rites, ends with the taking away of the bride to the home of the groom. In this whole series of events, women's songs are integral parts of each of the rites.

Wedding rites have significant meanings in social and cultural practices of the people especially women. They are entertaining as well as symbolic in cultural context.

Wedding rites used to take many days in the past as told by one of the interviewee:

> "In old times wedding rites used to take one month. Women used to sing songs and dance in the evening while stitching and embroidering bride's clothes. They also used to prepare eatables items for wedding. Many eatable items were prepared for guests" (interview 2012).

Marriage ceremonies in North India used to take many days, and every rite was performed in a day (Yagi 2008). Now wedding rites are confined to two or three days and the number of the days of rites varies from culture to culture and has changed gradually. All the rituals leading to wedding ceremony are planned events which have certain rules to follow. They are also accompanied by symbols that transmit recognized meanings through rites and songs. These rites present the socio-cultural experience along with the diverse relationships within a social hierarchy in the context in which they take place. These rites are also acknowledged by the people who participate in them and believe in the ideologies these rites present.

91

Every ritual has two main aspects which it performs. Firstly, it becomes the means for maintaining social order, social cohesion and strengthening of main values of the society. Secondly, it legitimizes statuses and roles on the basis of those values (Yagi 2008). All the rituals performed during the wedding context have the same function to perform. They not only strengthen the social order but also prepare individuals in their new roles and statuses accordingly.

4.7.1. Dua-e- Khair

After match making, preliminary rites usually comprise of the proposal acceptance before wedding ceremony starts. In the past, this process used to involve barber's wife who took active part in match making between the two families. In Rajputs, it was not unusual that the elder of the boy used to arrange marriage for their sons even without visiting girl's family. However, now women also visit different (Rajput) families for match making for their boys. When there has been an agreement between the two families, a small ritual is performed by exchanging sweets. On this occasion, wedding date is fixed and a prayer is offered for the happiness of the couple. The ceremony is called *Dua-e-khair*. This ceremony ascertains certain expectations that define roles for boy and girl who may go to start new life as husband and wife.

On this event, girl's family arranges for lunch and tea eatables. Certain symbolic action from the boy's family is taken to prepare the girl to be ready for her future roles in her conjugal home. For example, the boy's family and especially the father-in-law (if he is not there then any maternal uncle) gives money (according to economic his status) to the girl as a token of agreement and honour for the bride. The money given by her father-in-law symbolizes her status as an important part of some other family i.e. a man's wife. This also signifies the dominant position of the two men (father-in-law and her husband) in her life. In addition, role of maternal uncle also indicates the role as a fatherly figure to her who is never afraid of spending money on her. On many occasions during wedding rites, he initiates a couple of the ceremonies while giving money as a good omen to his niece.

The change in the status of the girl symbolizes the many changes she is about to undergo- of home, social environment, age, and responsibility. She is also taught in a subtle way that she must accept the authority of the males in her in-laws and natal home who are responsible for her economic and social responsibilities. She may be obliged to them. Usually, the boy and the girl

are not present on the occasion and all this ceremony is performed in their absence from the scene. But they know what is going on in the meeting. It is expected that the girl should not come before her prospective in-laws as a sign of respect and sharam. No songs are performed on this occasion though it is a festive activity.

The wedding rites start usually two to three days before actual wedding day as one of my respondents told me. The details of the events are given below

4.7.2. Butna/ Haldi

In past, this event used to take many days before actual wedding day's commencement. However, due to people's engagements in various economic and other activities, the Butna ceremony has shrunk to only one day. The ceremony starts 2 days before wedding day. The ceremony called *Butna / Haldi* (turmeric) is performed in the bride's and groom's homes separately on a fixed date by elders of the family.

Butna ceremony involves applying of the paste made from turmeric powder and mustard oil all over the girl's body by her female friends and relatives. This is done to make the girl look more beautiful on wedding day. *Ubtan* (mixture of turmeric and sesame oil with other fragrances) is supposed to bring glow on the bride's body especially her face which is supposed to look clean, attractive and shinning. After this ritual, bride and groom are constrained from meeting each other until the wedding ceremony.

In old times, the girl used to sit on *choki* (a wooden small bench without arms) but now she sits on the decorated chair in the centre of the room with her women relatives and friends and she remains confined in her room or the place allotted to her in her natal home. She is expected not to meet everybody who comes to visit her natal home. Only a couple of her female friends or relatives are allowed to see her. These friends also take care of her and her food till wedding day. She has to be silent and shy. It is expected from her that she may not see her male relatives (brothers, father, male cousins etc.) and try to avoid them as much as possible. This expectation from her is due to the respect and *sharam* for her males relatives. In a way, she becomes invisible in her own home. In this "liminal condition" the bride is not allowed to bathe and work in the house. Van Gennep (1960) calls this condition the first phase in a rite of passage, the phase of separation. This "comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or

group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or a set of cultural conditions" (Turner 1969: 94).

She hides her face with her dupatta. It was advised to her that she should not show her face to all people around so that she may look more beautiful on the wedding day. Women relatives and her friend place *Ubtan* on her hand and face with their fingers. When the ceremony starts, elder women of the family and neighbor married friends apply oil on her hair and put sweets in her mouth. There is no compulsion on bride to wear a certain type of dress but it is advised that she should not wear new dress at this occasion. She should not look happy (even if she feels happy) or joyful on this time. This ritual demands the bride to stay at home in her old clothes for a couple of days before her wedding.

In groom house, *Butna* ceremony is also held and women relatives and neighbors are invited. However, this ceremony is brief and less festive as compared to that at the bride's house. The groom sits on the decorated chair and women relatives (sisters, maternal and paternal aunties) apply small amount of ubtan on his palm which is more symbolic than for cleaning his skin. They also apply oil on his hair. His mother and other close women relatives give him sweets. His sisters and cousins also demand some money after giving him sweets for eating.

Groom and his mother also receive money as a token of love and tradition from his relatives. This money is also given as an exchange which is paid by groom's mother on various other wedding ceremonies in the relatives. His sisters and other female cousins sing songs (mostly *sehra* songs) for him during the ceremony.

Dinner or tea is served after the ceremony ends. Gurr in large quantity and batashee are served to the relatives and also sent to neighbors and relatives as a good will gesture from the groom's family. Sweets are also distributed among family members. After the women ceremony ends, the male relatives of the groom, especially his friends, may hold a small function in which they crack jokes to tease him and dance. However, this is not very usual function as it depends upon family to family.

Unlike the bride, the groom is not expected to be invisible in his own home. Generally, he helps in wedding arrangements and spends time in other routine activities. He is expected to behave

normally as he used to do in his routine days. However, he is not allowed to go far from house and is asked to spend time at home and with his male relatives.

The songs on this occasion from the girl's side are mostly preparatory songs. As *butna* ceremony occurs two days before wedding day, therefore songs prepare the bride for her new role as wife. These songs in subtle ways inform her about the intimate relationship which is part of married life. In these songs, certain symbolic words are used to convey these messages. Some examples are quoted here for references:

Mere heryalian ... jhoree ki lut kholo

Apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo

Soo ae jore waliyan ... jhoree ki lut kholo

apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo

The phrase 'loosen your hair' conveys the beginning of the intimate relationship in subtle ways.

For the groom, mostly prayers and blessings are offered and the event is called the consecrated event.

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Tere mame lootayan undhan sona

Teree mamee lotayen here kee kali – mote kee laree

Lo... Mubarik ho sehre kee gharee

2) Aae.... he ehde-i- jawani mian gharee sehre ki...

Aae..... he ehde-i- jawani mean gharee sehre ki...

Dostoo tum ko mubarik ho gharee sehre ki

Mehfil main ja kar un ke aba jee se keh dena ...

Donoo hathoo mein utha laween laree sehre ki

4.7.3. Henna Ceremony

In pre-wedding ceremonies, in different parts of the Hindu and Muslim world, turmeric and *henna* are especially used to drive away evil spirits (Hutchings, 2002). Henna is a perfumed shrub that, originating in India, now has spread from there to the countries of Asia and North Africa. *Henna* rituals are held for the bride and groom separately next to the butna ceremony in the same wedding days.

In the *Henna* ceremony, the palms of the bride's hands and wrists (sometimes feet) are covered with a material extracted from the henna plant. *Henna* leaves are dried and grounded into powder and sometimes many other things like pomegranate shells and nut shell are added to obtain darker color. The powder is then mixed in water and the desired consistency is obtained. Then *henna* paste is used for the decoration of the bride's hands and feet. Henna's red color is also considered beautiful.

Now the trend is changed and girls use another kind of *henna* which is more watery in nature and has different chemical composition than the old *henna* recipe. By using this *henna* mixture, delicate designs are made on the palm of the bride. However, for the traditional *henna* ceremony still the old fashioned *henna* paste is applied on the palms of the bride.

Henna paste is prepared in big plates, and often the plate is decorated with flowers, gota (golden or silver lace) and candle lights. The lighting of candles on the *henna* ceremony also symbolizes women's wishes for light in the bride's life. The *henna* ritual starts with elderly and married women who put some *henna* on the bride's palm. When the ceremony starts, the bride is seated on a decorated chair and older women gather around her and start putting *henna* mixture on her palm over a betel leave that is placed before *henna* paste is applied on the bride's palm. Then married women come one by one and apply *henna* on the palm of the bride. These married women symbolize the significance of marriage as well as talk about the higher status of married women as compared to unmarried girls.

96

After putting *henna* on her palm, sweets are given to the bride to eat as a good omen for her married life. The women come turn by turn for putting *henna* paste on the bride's palm and their sequence of coming reflects the social hierarchy, which the rituals has preserved. Songs are sung on these occasions that reflect the conjugal relationships which a bride is going to face in her future home. Some of the songs advise the bride to take control of the male relatives there as males are assertive and then she can rule her conjugal home. The songs sung on this occasion are humorous and sometimes flirtatious, too. For example:

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

Aahe.... Sone ki thaliyoon meain bhojin parosa

Jeth gee khalo mere kahe se...

And

Phoolon ji seaj moti jhaler ke taakiye

Jeth gi soo joa mere kahe se

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

Another song says,

Mere jeth ka larka bara papi

Waan to mara seen kaha chachee

Maen tikka le aya mere chachee

Zara la ka dekhade mere chachee

Mere jeth ka larka bara papi

The song tells her that she has to be very cunning with family politics; only then she can survive there. She has to make her spec there by hook or crook. A major theme in the songs is that of the

girl-maiden's pain at separating from her family and her known world, and her passage to a strange place.

Talking about the nature of the wedding songs, Upadhyaya (1957) explains that songs of the henna ritual are centered on the bride, praising her beauty, the details of her dress, her attributes, and those of her family. Then he compares the songs with their singing time and says that the principle theme of the midday songs was that of "the bride as maiden," while the evening songs emphasized "the bride as wife and mother." Thus, the order of the songs and their content indicated the change that was about to occur in the bride's life and status.

After the ceremony concludes, the henna paste is taken away from the bride's palm. A friend of the bride usually makes *henna* pattern on the palm, wrist and on her feet. One of my respondents told me that henna served not only for purposes of beauty and health, but also employed for the protection of the bride (and groom) from evil eye. It was believed that the red patches on the skin, as well as the original green color of the *henna* leaves and powder, protects the couple from dangers of evil eye. The *henna* changes its color (identity) from green (powder) to red (wet henna), and in this way prevents the evil eye from recognizing the bride. The red color of henna, after washing with water, on the skin of the bride symbolizes the color of happy wedded life.

During her henna ceremony days, the girl is not supposed to wear any jewelry and makeup; instead some flower garlands are used for this purpose. She wears a simple *shalwar qameez* and dupatta which covers her forehead, head and face. Her dupatta comes down over her neck and shoulders, since for reasons of modesty a woman's hair should not be seen. Her role during the ceremony is supposed to be passive and obedient. She is accompanied by elder women for guidance on the new life ahead and protection from evil eye.

It is told by a respondent that the time period before marriage is one of adjustment to the couple's future situation. Both bride and groom are in a liminal state; they are no longer completely separate, since they have committed themselves to the marriage, but they still are not married. This is perceived as a dangerous period in which they are vulnerable to physical and mental injuries. Commonly, people think that if they are left alone, some evil spirit can harm them. Therefore, the future bride is not left alone and usually one of her friends or sisters accompanies

her especially at night. The bride also wears very ordinary clothes so that any evil eye cannot spot her and hence harm her.

The bride's *henna* ceremony is usually more magnificent than that of the groom. For the bride, this is a more significant rite of passage and a more intensive emotional experience. This is the process by which she turns from a girl into a wife and then prepares herself for leaving her parent's home for the sake of her husband. Disassociating her from the rest of her natal home, her kins and environment is part of the gradual process in which she is prepared to get ready for new home, kins and environment (Upadhyaya, 1957).

Therefore, *butna* and *henna* ceremonies are part of the process and are highly symbolic in nature. That is one of the reasons that many ritual actions in this ceremony are focused on the bride's home and include her closest relatives. The *henna* function is more elaborated and time consuming activity. The sequence of rituals and the songs performed in the ceremony prepare the bride for her new life and explain the community's social expectations and messages.

Similarly, covering the bride is also an expression of invisibility, one of the liminal characteristics endorsed by Turner to the persons undergoing rites of passage. Though the bride is physically visible, she is "invisible" in terms of her social status. She loses her former status; she is exposed to her symbolic expressions of appearance and behaviour. Thus, during the wedding rituals, gradually the former status of being unmarried is erased (dies). The invisibility is expressed symbolically in that the bride does not appear in public and wears ordinary clothes. In the liminal stage, as defined by Turner, (1964) she does not have the previous status and not yet in the new one. She is the person who is undergoing the rite in a confused state and must learn the appropriate rules and behaviors intensively from authoritative people.

One of the women I interviewed told me that the bride is dressed up in green clothes. If she does not have all green dress, she may wear at least a green *dupatta* at the time of rituals. Her green dress or *dupatta* is provided by her mother's side.

Henna ceremony for groom is not as elaborated as it is for the bride. The henna ceremony for the groom is held in his house with his relatives. The groom is brought to a room or veranda where his aunts and female cousins are gathered to perform the ceremony. Groom wears ordinary clothes and symbolically wears a red dupatta. The red color of the *dupatta* signifies a wish for

happy married life. He sits on a decorated chair and a beetle leave is placed on his hand. His aunts and married sisters/cousins put *henna* on his palm. They give him sweets to eat as an omen of happy married life. Besides, money is also given to the groom from the relatives. The ceremony starts in the evening and continues late at night. Relatives and friends are served with tea and dinner.

Songs are sung on this occasion. Usually some professional singer performs the different songs. The most common for this occasion is the sehra song which is especially sung for the groom. The professional singer (mirasaan) is also given sweets, clothes and money as a token of happiness and wealth for her songs.

4.7.4. Wedding day /Barat

Butna and *henna* ceremonies lead to the wedding day. In bride's home, the bride's maternal uncle (mammon) plays an important role by initiating the ceremony of the wedding day. Before taking bath and getting ready for bridal dress, the bride's maternal uncle gives her a handsome amount of money. This ritual is called *Patrae Utarna*. If the bride does not have a real maternal uncle, then any other of her mother's male cousin will give money to her.

After taking money, the girl takes bath and then gets ready for the wedding day. A ritual similar to that of Rajputs was found in ancient Greek where girls used to take bath before getting ready for the wedding day ceremonies. This ritual symbolized the purification.

When the bride is dressed up, she is brought on the stage or centre of the room and sits on chair or sofa. Her face is covered with her *dupatta* which she will take off in her in-laws home after her husband will see her face. Women gather around her to see her with face covered with *dupatta*. Her friends and cousins sing many songs for her. It is usually women- only event and men are not allowed to join them.

Most of the songs sung on this occasion convey subtle romantic messages of various natures. For example:

DerwaJe pe bol sunaya ... buno mere ..main tere karan aya

Engrejee baja laaya ... ... buno mere ..main tere karan aya

Bare dhoom garaj se aya .... buno mere ..main tere karan aya

Here in this songs, the groom says that he is about to enter into his bride's home and he is there only for her. He has brought English band in barat procession for her (to show her his happiness on marriage); he is celebrating his marriage as he is here only for her.

In another song, the bride tells her groom that she wants to be with him all the time. She is a bit annoyed with him as he left her on wedding day for petty job. She says,

Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla pare ghar baar

Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

The wedding dress and all the jewelry is given to the bride by her parents. One of the respondents told me that bride does not wear anything from her in-laws as she is still the daughter of her parents. This signifies her last day in her natal home, her relationship and ownership of her parents.

Traditionally, Rajput bridal dress is *shalwar qameez* of red color. However, with other colour combinations, more colours are added in order to make it beautiful. Beautiful designs of silver and golden threads are made on the *shalwar qameez* and *dupatta* on the bridal dress. The bride is given very heavy dowry that sometimes seems to be beyond the economic status of her parents. Dowry is considered a symbol of reputation and prestige. Some studies have shown that dowry is a primary means of calculating *ijjat* (prestige) where one can define and represent their position as 'big' or small'. According to Chowdhry (1997) dowry brought by the bride was to be displayed and anyone who did not display the dowry was automatically assumed to have been married into a poor home or into a home of low caste. Vatuk (1975) observes that gifts in the form of dowry did not stop with marriage, but kept flowing for every ceremony after the marriage like childbirth, birthdays and so on. In addition, gifts on a large scale were sent to daughter-in-laws' place during various religious and social festivals.

Usually, dowry consists of clothes for bride, groom and her in-laws, jewelry, furniture, utensils, electronic gadgets and other daily items that a girl may use in her new home for next coming

It is the occasion of joy and happiness for the mother and father of the groom. Sometimes, people get emotional if the father or mother of the groom is not alive. This is the most important event in groom's wedding ceremony. Most of the songs for the groom are for this particular occasion.

After sehra bandi, the groom's father invites people for lunch or dinner and they take food while getting ready for *Barat*.[14] Traditionally in Rajputs, women are never allowed to go along with their men in Barat procession. It is very old tradition of Rajputs which is still practiced. One of the respondents told me the interesting explanation for this.

She says that

> "Wedding procession is like going for war for Rajputs. They are going to conquer somebody most precious thing like in war they used to do. In old times, Rajputs never take their women along with them while going for a war but they neither leave them alive too. They used to kill their women when they prepared themselves for the war. They used to feel dishonored if their women were captured or married to other than Rajput. So in the same way for Barat they avoid women to take along. Only men accompany groom for the Barat procession if bride home is on walking distance then Barat procession goes on foot. If it is far from groom house then Barat is taken in cars, and buses. However groom travels by car or some times on decorated horse in Barat procession".

4.7.5. Arrival of Barat

Barat is received with happiness and anxiety. Bride's relatives use to get anxious that everything go according to their plans and they try to please the groom's relatives with food and respect. Brides' parents arrange for nikah khawaan and other formalities for *Nikah*. *Nikah* is the real marriage contract between bride and groom and after signing to the agreement, they become husband and wife. Sweets especially *chowaras* (dried dates) are distributed among all relatives and people greet each other with good wishes and also bride and groom and their future life ahead. After *Nikah*, food is served to the guests.

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[14] groom procession to bride house

Bride and groom usually see each other after *Nikah*. The groom is asked to come to sit with his wife. Not all men are allowed to enter into the women place where bride is present. Only a couple of groom's friends accompany him when he comes to sit with his wife. Mother-in-law of the groom usually gives him wrist watch and gold ring as a gift. Many relatives of the bride give money and gifts to the groom on this occasion.

4.7.6. Vidai (Departure of bride from natal home)

After the gifts are taken, the groom's father asks from bride's father for the departure of *barat*, to which the bride's father agrees. The next event *Vidai* (departure of bride from her father home for husband house) takes place. Relatives of the bride get emotional on this occasion. All her relatives hug her and give her their blessings. Most emotional scenes are seen when she meets her father and brothers. *Mirasaan* sings emotional songs on this occasion making people more emotional. However, I could not collect vidai songs at that time. After some time, the barat procession along with the bride leaves the bride's house. Only one of the bride's brothers accompanies her to her new home in order to stay there for one or two days. Women are not allowed to accompany the bride to her in-laws house. Before leaving his sister in her in-laws' home, the brother of the bride receives couple of gifts too. The wellknown gift on this occasion is wrist watch which is considered as a token of remembrance of his stay in his sister's new home.

When *barat* reaches near the groom's home, his friends dance on the drumbeats and popular songs. Sometimes, display of fireworks is also done. In this way, people get to know that barat is back with bride. A room is decorated for bride and groom. Women relatives receive bride and take her to her room. There are certain rituals which are performed when bride reaches at her affine house.

In old time and some of the Rajput families still practice this ritual, when the bride used to arrive in her affine home, she was asked to sit on a mat in her room and not on the sofa or chair. This ritual was performed to realize the bride that she had less status as compared to her in-laws and she should not think herself higher in status to her in-laws. She was expected to remain humble and self-effacing to others. One of my respondents told me that she was also made to sit on the mat though it was very cold at her wedding day. Mat was very cold and she had to sit there for many hours.

The other ritual is of D*oodh Pilai* (milk drinking). A glass of milk is offered to the bride and the groom to drink together. Groom drinks milk first and then bride takes it. The sequence of drinking milk is important and groom takes it first so that the bride will remain under his control and authority. Bride is not allowed to drink milk first.

While entering into the bride's room, groom's sisters and cousins stop him at the door of the room. This ritual is called *Baar Rukvae*. They demand some amount of money which, after some time and negotiations, is finally paid to them. The sisters and cousins then let the groom go into the bride's room.

In another ritual *Godaa Bithai* when bride sits in her room, her youngest *devaar* (husband's brother) sits with her on groom's seat. If he is an adult, then he sits on the chair near to bride and if he is a child then he sits in bride's lap. *Devaar* remains with the bride until the groom offers him some money to vacate the chair or the bride's lap.

4.7.7. After the Wedding day

The bride is allowed to visit her natal home after two or three weeks of the wedding day. Her brother again visits her in-laws, asks their permission and then takes his sister for one or two days to her natal home. After staying for one or two days with her parents, her husband visits his in-laws for the first time and takes her back to her conjugal home. At his first visit to his in-laws, the son-in-law is offered many gifts that may include gold ring, money, motor cycle or car.

Bride also receives many gifts for her in-laws that may include clothes for the groom, his father, mother, sisters and their husbands, brothers and their wives, their children, and the groom's uncles and aunties.

4.8. Birth in Social Context and Birth Rites

Birth is a joyful occasion for any family. However, birth of a boy is an ecstatic event in the Rajput family. There is extreme psychological pressure on a wife to produce a son. The birth of a son is considered to be responsible for the generation continuation. A woman's status in her conjugal home remains low until she gives birth to a son. Failure to do so traditionally resulted in a man's taking a co-wife, but this is infrequent today. The birth of a daughter is not joyously celebrated. Daughters always leave their natal homes; their dowry is a burden to their families.

They are treated with affection but this is tempered with the idea that the daughter is an impermanent member of the family.

According to Gill (1998) the news of the birth of a baby boy spreads like wild fire. Some households decorate the main entrance of their dwellings to formally announce the birth of a son and to ward off evil spirits. If it is a first birth, the family immediately engages in celebrations. Depending on the prosperity (size of freehold land) of the household, its senior women mark the occasion by distributing Gurr (molasses) and sweetmeats to families in the entire village and gifts to the lower caste workers who come to congratulate the family. The *hijras* (third gender) come to the village and perform a celebratory "song and dance," for which they receive gifts in the form of cash and/or any other kind. No such need to celebrate is felt if the new born infant is a female. Quite often, if a birth is not talked about, it is understood that it is a baby girl, especially if it is a second or a third one. Perhaps the festival of *lohiri*, in North India, is a land mark in the cultural construction of gender when the family celebrates only the birth of a baby boy (p; 203).

The songs that describe either a pregnant woman or the rites and rituals connected with the birth of a child are called *sohar* or *sariya* (Srivastava, 1991). In north Indian context, Tewari (1988, 260) mentions that there is hardly any sohar that describes the birth of a baby girl. Same is the case with Rajput families here. No folk song is sung on the birth of a baby girl.

Rajput is a patriarchal society where women are dependent on men for getting support and protection throughout the life. As a daughter, a woman is dependent and protected by her father and brothers, as a wife by her husband and as a mother by her sons. Folk songs are sung everywhere on the occasion of boys' birth but on girls' birth nowhere in the society. The situation specific son-birth folk songs are known as *jaccha* songs. The lyingin woman is often referred to as *jacca* (from the Urdu word *zacca* meaning "lying-in woman") (Srivastava, 1991). With the birth of a son, the mother's status is also elevated and she becomes queen mother. The *jaccha* songs depict joy, happiness and blessing as a son is born in the family. In the ceremony, all the relatives are invited and they give money to the mirasaan who sings the songs. *Mirasaan* also invites every relative of the child to give her money on this happy occasion. For example:

Le le Jajjcha rani palna mool...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya…

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya…

Aahe… mamee jhoote de gee palna mool

On the birth of the son, the maternal grandparents, aunts and uncles give many gifts to their daughter, her son and her in-laws. The paternal aunt *(phoopo)* expects a special gift from her sister-in-law. Besides, the mirasaan also wants to have a lot of money and other gifts from the mother, grandparents and uncles of the newly born baby.

4.9. Conclusion
This chapter looks at the area profile of Wahndo where the research study has been conducted. As the research is conducted on the Rajput community living there, the general characteristics of the Rajput people along with their historical background, origin, conversion to Islam, traditions and other silent features are also discussed. This discussion leads to the social context of marriage and birth in Rajput people living in Wahndo.

5. THEMES OF FOLKSONGS

5.1. Introduction

Folk music and songs play an important role in the social construction of identity and the promotion of particular places and areas (Hudson, 2006; Kong, 1995; Revill, 2000a; Smith, 2000). Music from specific rural localities has the potential to represent the lives, grievances and celebrations of those living in the respective areas. Finally, listening (Morton, 2005) performing (Revill, 2005c) or dancing to (Revill, 2004b) music is a physical performance that has the potential to engage people with places in emotional ways (Yarwood & Charlton, 2009).

Folksongs are unlimited in form and subject-matter, ranging from very simple to relatively complex. Folksongs, unlike any other kind are passed on mostly in oral tradition and fulfill the responsibility of developing traditional variations. Songs are important components in the wedding and birth ceremony. Whether they are played on composite discs (CDs) or are performed by women singers, they make the wedding ceremony significant. There is no doubt that composite discs (CDs) and other musical instruments have somewhat replaced the women singing live in the weddings; however, still it is traditionally followed. In many weddings, women or girls sing on different events of wedding. These songs are sung not only for the purpose of entertainment but also act as a social activity. Nearly every wedding occasion, in which people come together, has particular songs for the events.

In this chapter, the themes of wedding songs and birth songs are analyzed and interpreted in the Rajput cultural context as explained by women of the community. Generally, these songs reflect the feelings, emotions, hostility and other expectations related to the couple that is going to be married, and the child who is born in the family respectively. The discussion is held in two parts. First part describes themes of wedding and birth folk songs in a social context of the Rajput community. This part deals with the songs on the relevant event along with its explanation and commentary. The other part of this chapter discusses the symbols that are used in folk songs and various events in the wedding and birth ceremony.

5.2. Wedding Songs

By wedding songs, I mean songs that are sung and performed at wedding celebrations and talk about the issues of married life coming ahead of a newly married couple. It is important to inform here that all wedding songs related to groom or bride-groom are sung exclusively by women. Jacobson (1975) researching in central India, suggests that women's songs express social distance between a woman and her husband's kin, between kin groups linked through affine and between men and women generally (1975:46). According to Jassal (2012) songs, being the representatives of people's oral traditions, illuminate the social construction of gender through which overarching caste and gender ideologies are transmitted and reproduced.

Because the kinds of relations that exist between men and women are not merely determined by the biological givens but also are products of social and cultural processes (Ortner and WhiteHead 1981). Songs make it possible to let us understand the organization of maleness and femaleness in relation to a particular society. As the same songs suggest how dominant ideologies are not merely complied with, accommodated, and reinforced but also resisted and interrogated, they also enable us to address the question of agency. Songs are integral to people's lives therefore they describe about caste, kinship and marriage, work cultures, gender, power, sexuality, family life, patriarchy, and the forms of agency in the cultural context from where they belong to.

Much as these songs are sung for entertainment, they also play a significant role in socializing the bride and groom into their new status as husband and wife. Besides, these songs also inform the bride about the circumstances she may encounter in her married life. Most of the songs that were collected address women, or women address them to rest of the family. Therefore, these songs make the impression that the success or failure of marriage depends on the behaviors and attitudes of the woman towards her in-laws family.

From an artistic point of view, the lyric songs are the most interesting. They reflect the bride's life in its entirety: her touching farewells to loved ones as she departs for the wedding ceremony or her husband's home, intuitions about the future, relationships between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and the innermost thoughts and emotions of the would-be bride. The rich

collection of pre-nuptial lyric love songs is also often ascribed to the category of wedding songs, since the lyrics often have to do with upcoming weddings. During the actual wedding, the lyric songs were sung by the women and girls in chorus, often in the name of the bride.

The songs are sung both by the groom's family and that of the bride's. Generally, the wedding songs sung by the girl's family express and evoke sentiments of grief, sadness, and pain; whereas wedding songs sung by the boy's family provoke a festive climate and happy feelings of celebration, and possess humorous, even suggestive lyrics.

Upadhyaya (1957) explains wedding folk songs in Indian context, and says that wedding is a joyful and unconditional happy setting which promotes women's well being. In village society, it is assumed that women mainly bring two things from their parents house (*Mayaka*): *Suits* (New dresses) and new folk songs (*lokgeet*). As a girl is married out of her village, she carries regional songs with her and mingles them in new culture (*sasural*). In this way, *lokgeet* - contents spread across the community without any conscious effort. However, wording and rhythm of folk songs got slightly changed in style according to sub-cultures.

Yaggi (1999) in his research on Indian wedding songs identifies four characteristics of women's rituals. First, women sing songs specific to each ritual. Without these songs, the ritual is considered to be incomplete. Second, women's songs are not a frivolous addition but an essential constituent of rituals, equivalent to the *mantra* (incantation) of priests. They must wear the same clothes throughout the *byāh (wedding)* rituals to ward off evil spirits. Third, women's songs are much related to the notion of auspiciousness. Women's songs are called *mangal gīt* (auspicious songs). These women's songs and erotic dances of fertility and reproduction connote auspiciousness. According to my study, village people believe that auspiciousness contributes to the prosperity and fertility of their family and lineage, whereas evil spirits are inauspicious and bring misfortune or disaster to them (Yaggi 1999: 274). Wedding and birth songs are multivoral in nature. The songs collected convey several meanings in one line and describe many themes and variety of relationships in one song. Therefore one song in analysis has been discussed in many references i.e. themes as well as character of the relationships.

5.3. Themes in Folksongs

The wedding and birth songs are thematically categorized which, in turn, are further divided into sub categories as per theme. First part of the discussion explains wedding songs themes, and later part of the discussion is related to birth songs themes.

5.3.1. Blessings and Praise moments for the Bridegroom

I collected two sehra songs, and both songs do not talk about anything which one can relate to bride. They only admire groom .In the Rajput community, like any other Pakistani patriarchal community, birth of a male child brings all the happiness in the family. A boy becomes darling of all his maternal and paternal relatives. Right from the day he was born in the family, her mother and sister start dreaming about his marriage. The attachment of his mother and sisters to his marriage, and especially his sehra ceremony, is very much awaited moment in their lives. The marriage of a son brings happiness as well pride for the family. On the contrary, marriage of a girl does not become a so happy occasion for the family. Most of the time since her birth, the parents remain under heavy social pressure for searching a suitable match for their girl. After finding a suitable match, economic burden in shape of large dowry makes girls marriage a hard task. Though parents of girls feel relieved after sending her off to her husband's home, till then they remain conscious that everything must be done adequately. Therefore, the songs sung on a girl's wedding day are sad ones unlike groom songs which are happy and full of cheerfulness.

The lyrics of these sehra songs have good wishes and prayers for the groom who is going to enter into new life. He is praised and through songs conveyed as the sweetheart of the whole family. His youth is admired, and he is supposed to be incomparable in the family even the moment of his sehra is admired as the best moment for all the family members who are witnessing this joyful moment.

In these songs the groom and his parents along with other near paternal and maternal relatives are congratulated on this wedding day. The Sehra songs basically congratulate him, his mother, sisters, father, brothers and other close relatives by suggesting that the moment of the ultimate joy has arrived, and the young man is getting married. As birth of a boy is the moment of joy for the parents, similarly wedding of their boy is the ultimate joy they can enjoy. The singer

111

congratulates every near and dear relative of the groom, and asks them to give lots of gold and other expensive belongings of them to poor people on this joyful occasion. Through songs, groom's maternal, paternal uncles and aunties are invited to share their happiness as well blessings for the groom;

mubarik ho sehre ki gharee ...

mubarik ho sehre ki gharee

Aaj tera aba lotawe undan sona

Amman lotaween here ki kale mote ki laree

Congratulations! On this blessed moment of sehra

Congratulations! On this blessed moment of sehra

Today..Your father is so happy that he will bestow countless money

Your mother is so happy that she will bestow countless money (on this occasion)

In the second song, which is also a *sehra* song, it is said that the groom is very young and in his youth he is going to be a groom. It is a great blessing that someone becomes groom in his full youth. His *sehra* is so divine that one should not ruin it. Whosoever brings it for the groom should be careful that fresh flowers should not wither. So, all the family members are advised to carry *sehra* with care as it is very precious as well the moment of sehra bandi function. The song keeps on inviting various relatives of the groom and gives them the same advice for *sehra*. At sehra bandi function, when the name of the relative is called in the songs, he or she is supposed to give some amount of money to the *mirasaan* as a reward for her song, the much desired song.

Aae he ehde-i-jawani mian gharee sehre ki...

Donoo hathoo mein utha laween laree sehre ki

Mehfil main ja kar un ke aba jee se keh dena

Aae he ehde-i-jawani mean gharee sehre ki...

Dostoo tum ko mubarik ho gharee sehre ki

112

The blessed moment of wedding has arrived in the youth of the boy

Congratulations! Friends of the groom that he is going to wear sehra

Go… and tell the father of the groom to please be careful while bringing sehra for him as the sehra is very delicate and blessed one.

Signifying the importance of *sehra* and *sehra bandi* function, Dadee Sughroo says:

> "In old times, mirasaan was called especially to sing sehra for the groom. The song and its lyrics have special meaning for all the people. It was, and still is, very important function in the wedding events. Not every woman can sing sehra so she used to be invited for sehra songs. Relatives of the groom used to give her lots of money, clothes and sweets after the *sehra bandi* function. Nowadays, people prefer audio CDs for sehra songs. Occasionally, I or my sisters are called for any sehra bandi function for sehra song. People don't have time and heart to give money, clothes and sweets to us. Everything is expensive".

The songs are sung by female women relatives or *mirasaan* at the departure of the *barat*. Every relative is invited to congratulate the groom, and the *mirasaan* takes lots of money from every relative while singing the song. The groom is the darling of the whole family so everybody must show and share their love by distributing expensive things to poor people on this occasion. These songs also reflect the love of relatives for the man who is going to be married soon.

5.3.2. Inter -Personal Familial Relationships

Family life has a very central part in the Pakistani society and among most of the ethnic groups living in Pakistan. The familiar network, politics and family ties are very much part of all the folksongs. The folk wedding as well birth songs reflect the nature and traits of the family relationship. Almost all of the songs that are collected talk about family relationships with reference to bride, groom and baby boy.

In the wedding songs, the adolescent girls are never docile, submissive, or passive and portrayed as bold, daring, and fearless. In real life, however, girls have hardly any say in their marriages. The head of the family looks for a match for the girl, and she accepts the boy as her husband without any objection.

They songs may express their feelings which they otherwise cannot say aloud. In both bride and groom songs, parents and in-laws of both parties are referred affectionately as well as sarcastically according to the events and rituals in which they are sung. As stated earlier, the Rajput community under study had joint family system, and I could not find any nuclear family there. I assume that even if I found out a nuclear family there, the folk wedding songs would have been the same in which joint family system was reflected.

As I studied the songs, I found out two types of interpersonal relationships. One is consanguineous relationship and other one is affinal relationship. Consanguineous relations referred in the songs consists of father-daughter, mother-son, brother-sister, uncle-nephew, aunts-nieces, Uncle-niece. Affinal relations talk about comprise of husband and wife, mother in law and daughter–in-law, *jeth* (husband's elder brother) and *jethani* (husband's elder brother's wife) *devaar* (husband's younger brother), *nanand* (sister-in-law or husband's sister). In a couple of songs, relations with mother-in-law, jeth and devaar are discussed repeatedly making them most important and controlling in the future life of the bride.

Now I will discuss these relationships separately along with the songs reference and commentary.

5.3.2.1. Consanguineous Relationships
* Father--Daughter (Baap--Beti)

The relationship between a daughter and her father is somewhat different from other relationships. Their relationship starts as estranged at birth, but gets emotionally strong till the departure at the wedding day. Father, who becomes unhappy and does not celebrate the birth of a daughter in his family, loves his daughter very much and his daughter respects him. However, daughter takes liberty of his love and becomes sweet heart of his father. Off course, her liberty is limited in the real life as compared to the folk songs.

In the songs, the sentiments of love and care between father and daughter are very much noticeable. After listening to the songs, it appears that daughter is more close to her father than her mother. Her father, though an authoritative figure in the house, spoils her with his love and care but the element of respect remains between them. Her father calls her *laado* (beloved

114

daughter). She takes liberty of the leniency of her father's love for her, and demands too many expensive things from him for her wedding. For example

Meree ronaq jhonaq ladoo khele guryaan

My young beloved daughter who is wearing lot of jewelry is playing with a doll

Baba easaa baar dhondio jis kee kothee khotla ho...

O..father... look for a match for me Who has very large house

Tankhawa panj suo ho

Who has salary 500 rupees!!

Ghree time wali ho

Has a wrist watch which tells time!!!

This song tells many social realities related to the girl's status in Rajput community. First of all, the song tells that the girl who is going to be married is very young as she is playing with the dolls. Therefore, marrying young daughters has been one of the traditions of the Rajput community. The song also reveals that boy is older than the girl stereotyping the aging of the couple that girl should be younger than the boy.

The girl is darling of her father as she makes demands from her father regarding her future husband. She wants a rich husband who has a big house and handsome earnings; she longs for a happy and economically sound life. This song also reveals that women economically depend on men for monetary items. In other songs it may be noticed that women ask for many monetary items from the men of the family which they think are only providers.

Though in Rajput culture, girls are not supposed to wear jewelry before marriage, yet the girl wears a lot of jewelry before marriage conveying the idea that she is so lovable for her father that he does not forbid her to wear jewelry. So, if she wears so much jewelry before her marriage then one would expect that she may get much more jewelry from her parents on her marriage. The subtle message to her in-laws is also conveyed that the girl is the darling of her father, and so they must treat her well and give her lots of jewelry, too. Jewelry symbolizes the wealth and

115

status of the family and shows that she belongs to a rich family. It also signifies that the status of the girl is represented through the amount of jewelry (wealth) she wears. In this way, her own identity is somewhat hidden behind her family wealth and status.

The songs also inform the stereotypical role of a girl in Rajput culture that getting married and having a financially good husband is the destination for a girl. She needs a decent living provided by her husband. Before marriage, she is dependent on her father and brothers who support her financially and socially. After leaving her natal home, she may be dependent on her husband. Taking refuge of the folksong, the girl says all these demands to her father which in real life she, because of *sharam (shame)*, respect and social norms, cannot speak to her father directly. It is not considered to be decent for a girl to talk to her father about her marriage prospect and related issues. If she has some opinion, she may convey it to her mother and her mother will pass on her feelings, if permitted, to her father or brothers. So, in this way, wedding songs try to communicate a girl's sentiments to her father.

Similarly, Upadhyaya (1957) talks about Bhojpuri wedding songs in which a young daughter asks her father to search out a bride-groom for her as she has attained puberty. She further requests him that her husband should be beautiful so that the people of the village may not laugh at her. The father replies, "O my dear daughter! I have searched for your husband in all directions but could not find a suitable one." The daughter again says, "O my father! On the bank of river Sarju in Ayodhya, my would-be husband is playing. He is the most beautiful among men."

However, in Rajput songs, the girl is more concerned about the economic security rather than the boy's physical beauty. The songs further turn out to be different from Bhojpori in a sense that Bhojpori song in a dialogue between father and daughter. On the other hand, a Rajput song does not become a dialogue; it expresses only the girl's sentiments. Bhojpori song has Hindu religious background in which girl wants her husband from Ayodhya which is a sacred place for Hindus in India.

- **Brother-Sister (Bhai–Bahen)**

In the joint family system, the brother-sister relationship is ranked second only to the mother-son relationship. A Haryanvi girl almost worships her brother. She is proud of him and shows an

116

extravagant hospitality when he visits her on festive occasions. Traditionally, a sister is sent from her in-laws to her parents' home with her brother only

Upadhyaya (1957) explains that the Bhojpuri folk-songs give the highest status and respect to the bond of affection between brother and sister. Sometimes, the emotional attachment between both is compared to the attachment between mother and son. 'As a cow runs to meet her calf, in like manner a sister runs to her brother'. Cormack (2000) writes that the relationship between brother and sister is such that 'Brothers and sisters do not need to explain things to each other, because they understand each other.' 'The sister does everything for a brother a wife would do, except have physical contact.' Brothers like their sisters more than their brothers because their sisters are in no way challenges to their authority and power.

In Rajput family structure, brother-sister relationship has the same significance. Before marriage, the girl is the responsibility of the father and brothers. She is expected to respect her brothers, especially the elder ones. With younger brother, she takes liberty to have informal relationship that includes care and concern. On *butna* ritual, while untying bride's hair for applying perfumed oil on it, friends of the bride address her as 'Beloved of the brother, let us put oil in your hair':

....Joore ki lut khoolo...

Ahe.. behno, bayoun piyareyan...

Joore ki lut kholoo

Untie your hair dear one ....

Sister's and brother's beloved........

Loosen your hair ...

The brother–sister relationship changes when a girl gets married. Though she becomes the sole responsibility of her husband, however on various occasions, her brothers and natal relatives are expected to help and support her emotionally as well as financially. On occasions like marriage, death or birth of her child, her younger brothers are supposed to take her from her in-laws' house

117

to her natal house. The importance of brothers (younger or elders) becomes more important when they have nieces and nephews. On the birth as well as on the marriage ceremonies, role of maternal uncle *(mamu)* becomes very important. He supports his sister's children emotionally and economically. The relationship between brothers and sisters changes when sisters demand property from them. This demand adds to the tension in brother and sister relation.

However, brother –sister relationship changes when land distribution takes place. Chowdhry (1997) confirms that in Hindu Law, there is a provision to give women a fair deal in the sharing of ancestral property, but there are hardly such women's cases which claim for it in Haryana. During his fieldwork in Haryana 1985-90 and more recently in 1992-95 only in a few cases, where there is lack of harmony and unhealthy interpersonal relationship within the families, daughters claim their ancestral property. Otherwise, brother protects and supports the whole life of his sister, and visits her with gifts during festival seasons and also ushers her to her natal home *(Mayka)*. It is also believed that parents feel insecure and helpless for their daughter, whether she is happy with her in-laws or not. However, brother's strong position does matter; it again promotes son's preference.

- **Maternal Uncle (Mamu)**

Another emotional aspect of brother-sister relationship is that in all children's marriages, first ceremony starts with the welcoming of her brothers as she herself, as a ritual she goes to invite her brothers. Although the traditional relationship between the child and the mother's brother and his wife (mama and mami) is one of informal affection, it has special significance. Respect and emotional love for the sister's son (bhanja) is greatly emphasized in the Rajput way of life.

On the birth of his sister's child, he and his wife are asked to spend lots of money on deserving people as a good will gesture on this happy occasion. For example,

Le le palna mool...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Aahe... mamee jhoole de gee palna mool

Buy a crib ….

This crib is brought by your *mame* (maternal uncle)

Your *mamee* (maternal aunt) will rock your crib slowly

The songs narrates that mamu will buy rocker for the child and *mamee (mamu'* wife) will rock him slowly with love. The responsibility that m*amu* and his wife begin on the birth of the child remains significant throughout the life of the child. As stated earlier, on marriage of niece *(bhanji),* he performs a ceremony *putra utarna* before she becomes a bride. Same is with nephew on his marriage. On his *sehra bandi* day, his mamu performs the *sehra bandi* ritual. He ties *sehra* to his nephew, and give lots of money to *mirasaan* and other servants of the house. In both *sehra* songs, he is advised to tie up *sehra* to the groom. In this way, he becomes a significant relative of his sister's family with a lot of expectations attached to his relation from the groom as well the bride. These expectations are emotional and economical.

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Tere mame lootayan undhan sona

Teree mamee lotayen heere kee kali – motee kee laree

Lo… Mubarik ho sehre kee gharee

Congratulations on this blessed moment

Congratulations on this blessed moment

Your uncle may give countless money

Your maternal aunt (*mamee)* will give diamond flower and pearls

Congratulations…. on this blessed moment!!!

The second song explains that mamu and mamee are supposed to give away a lot of money and other expensive things like pearls and diamonds on this happy occasion. The song, in a way, conveys maternal uncle and aunt to spend lots of money on this very happy occasion.

In third *sehra* song the same good wishes are offered for groom as he is darling of his mother, sisters and many other relatives who are present on this joyful occasion. The song also explains the pomp and show which is displayed on the wedding.

Amman ke tum ladle re heryala banra

Baba charhaega teree barat re heryala banra

Behna ke tum laadle re heryala banra

Jeeja   charhaega teree barat re heryala banra

Your are darling of your mother my dear happy prince

Your father will take a stunning barat   for you

You are darling of your sister my dear happy prince

Your brother in law r will take a spectacular barat   for you

Same lines are repeated with different realtives and whole song is sung on the wedding day.

In Bhojpuri culture, the relationship of brother and sister is seen as a semi-deity. There is a proverb, "Even if I give birth to a calf, treat it gently and call him a *bhayane* (nephew)" (Upadhyaya, 1957).

- **Paternal Uncle (Chacha)**

The relationship between a parental uncle, nephews and nieces entails affection and care on the part of the uncle, and respect and obedience on the part of his brother's children. They all live together in the same household most of the time. Therefore, their affiliation starts from childhood. Traditionally, an uncle is like the father. Depiction of the parental uncle in folk-songs is always that of a *chacha* (father's younger brother) who is usually close to the children's father's age.

120

The relationship is also prominent in songs and has the same expectations from him and his wife on the marriage function. In both *sehra* songs, *chacha* and *chachee* (his wife) are seen with the same expectations as *mamu* and *mamee* are. Both of the relatives are expected to give away lots of money on the joyful occasion of marriage. For example,

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Tera chaacha lootayan undhan sona

Teree chachee lotayen heere kee kali – mote kee laree

Lo... Mubarik ho sehre kee gharee

Congratulations on this blessed moment

Congratulations on this blessed moment

Your uncle may give countless money

Your paternal aunt (chachee) will give diamond flower and pearls

Congratulations.... on this blessed moment!!!

Congratulations to paternal uncle and aunts are not only verbal in nature, there are many expectations attached to it. Both of them take part in every activity and are expected to spend money on certain events during the rituals. *Chacha* is also treated like *mamu;* however, the expectation attached to *chacha* is not like that of *mamu*. He does not have the same obligations as mamu has, who takes important part in marriage ceremony for his sister's children. This relationship may also change on property issues and sometimes, tension may create between paternal uncles and nephews. However, nieces' love for their paternal uncles do not go through tension as girls are not considered any threat to the male property and power.

- **Father's Brother's Wife and Sister (Chachee, Tayie , Phoopha and Boowa)**

No explicit statement about the role of an aunt (father's brother's wife) is made in the folksongs, and there is only infrequent mention of the word aunt in the songs. However, in the joint family,

121

aunts do play a somewhat important part in the life of their nephews and nieces. They are supposed to be treated as a mother by her husband's brother's and sister's children.

In the songs, on the birth of children of husband's brother or sister, aunts are expected to give away loads of money. Similarly, on marriages aunts have the same obligatory function for giving away money to *mirasaan* and other servants. They are also asked to rock the crib when their husbands buy them for their nieces and nephews. The songs also reveal that men (*mamu, chacha, Taya* and *phoopha*) have certain obligations as they may buy crib or other things for the child. Their female counterparts do not have money and they will only swing the cradle.

Le le palna mool...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Aahe... mamee jhoole de gee palna mool

This crib is brought by your *mamu* (maternal uncle)

Your mamee (maternal aunt) will rock your crib slowly

Buy a crib .... *(Mamu)*

 The song keeps on recalling every paternal relative with his spouse in the same line.

5.3.2.2. Affinal Relationships
Since a girl remains in her affinal home after marriage, her inter-personal relations are the subject matter of a great body of songs.

Husband-Wife (Mian –Biwi)

The most important relationship exists between wife and husband. In the joint family system, the wife is subservient to her husband and his relatives. Her role with her in-laws remains docile and she is expected to be like this.

In Rajput community, the husband-wife relationship is not an informal one. They are not supposed to show their love for each other publicly. A newly married couple is not supposed to talk directly when in-laws are around. The new bride knows this situation before time. One reason may be that she has noticed it in her home, too, with his brother and sister-in-law. So she

house is reinforced through these songs, and bride departs from her natal home to affinal home with a biased perception.

The other fear which a bride has is the departure of her husband to some other place because of economic reason, and this fear is also expressed though another song. Estranged from her husband who is away or going to be away for occupational reasons for long time, the Rajput woman sings and expresses her anguish and intense longing for her husband:

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia san dhee see amaan humare sang larnee noo

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee see bobo humare sang larnee noo

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly mother who fights with me

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly sister who fights with me

Therefore, she has a fear of living alone with her in-laws. Though in Rajput community understudy almost all the families have joint family system, it is a contradiction that the girl who does not want to live in joint family also comes from a joint family system. The same girl does not have any objection when she brings a wife for her brother but for herself she thinks otherwise.

In another song the bride asks from her husband;

Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla para ghar baar

Doob kiyon naa mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

Gore wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

124

Gore wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open for you

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open for you

You should be ashamed of your behavior as I am so young (and you left me alone at night!)

My dear I went to gold smith for renovating your tikka

My dear I went to gold smith for renovating your tikka

She keeps on asking same questions from her husband and he gives her the same replies with different jewelry items he renovated for her at night. In one stanza, she curses and gets angry with him by saying that she is so young and he does not care for him. So fear of being abandoned by their husbands always remains in the back of mind of these women. As their husbands go somewhere, they feel helpless, vulnerable and at the mercy of their in-laws who are not at good terms with them.

In this way, these songs reveal dual task for women. It is important to mention here that though in most of the songs women are represented in typical and customary role in the family structure, nevertheless, the same songs provide the platform for protest and challenge the established norms of the family in which these women live.

Similarly, Gluckman (1963) rationalizes these verbal tones (songs) of everyday behavior found in many "rituals of rebellion". Songs are considered to have a socially cathartic significance and functioning to ensure that "conflicts" were enacted only in well-defined ritual contexts that allow social unity and the dominant ideology otherwise to prevail in everyday life. Similarly, the expression of women through the songs is one of the reactions to the power structure; songs are the platform that helps women to voice themselves.

- **Mother-in-Law (Saas)**

According to Grima (1986) who worked with Paxto *(pushto)* women in Afghanistan, 'Gham' (sadness)' is a key cultural word-term in the everyday performance of a Paxto *(pushto)* woman when she is taken way from the security of her mother's home into an environment of hostile

relationships with mother-in-law and sister-in-law, living day after day in the same house with no release from them. Just as marriage marks the introduction of *Gham* into her, so does it marks the opening of the story of her life. So the opening line always starts with 'My life is miserable after marriage'.

The relationship of mother in law and daughter in law is problematic in most of the folk literature of wedding songs. In this section I referred a few examples other than subcontinental context.

One of the respondents tells me:

> "Living with mother-in-law is like living in hell. She does not like me. Though she is my relative (maternal aunt) but now I have only one relation with her that is of mother-in-law. Whatever I do, I cannot please her. She always criticizes me and my chores and I am not happy with her" (informal talk 2012).

Usually, the identical sentiments are expressed in the songs I collected from the Rajput community. The two songs which I narrated in the previous paras are much expressive of the emotion. In the previous para, these songs are discussed in relation to bride's husband but here I explain them in relation to mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship.

Mean niyaree hoon gee banre

Mean niyaree hoon gee banre

Jhajja delaan jabara liyoon banree

Tere maan laree gee banree

Qanchi se jeeb kater duyoo gee banree

I want to live alone my prince

I want to live alone my prince

I want to live on upper story house

Your mother will fight with me ...my prince

I will cut her tongue with scissors ... my prince

126

As evident from the lyrics of the song, the bride is sure that her mother-in-law will fight with her along with other affinal relatives so she asks her husband to have a separate house for her. She is anticipating the fight with them, but she also warns her husband that she will not remain silent and will cut their tongue (acute aggression) if they fight. She will also react in an aggressive way. This song also narrates that she is vocal and aggressive too. But in real life, fights do exist with daughter-in-law and mother-in-law but daughter-in-law cannot use such language for her mother-in-law in her presence; in her absence, she may. Because it is already mentioned that through folksongs, one can have catharsis of emotions which otherwise cannot.

The other songs have almost the same negative feelings for mother-in-law from her going-to-be daughter-in-law:

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia san dhee see amaan humare sang larnee noo

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia san dhee see bobo humare sang larnee noo

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly mother who fights with me

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly sister who fights with me

Here, the wife complains to her husband who went to some other place leaving her with his parents, sister and sister-in-law. His wife is not happy with her husband, too, who left her on the mercy of in-laws who fight with her. Through the song, she is directly expressing her negative emotions to her husband but in real life, she cannot use such kind of language; no man can listen to his wife if she uses such offensive language with his mother or sisters.

127

The conventional nature of the conflict between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law place the responsibility of successful marriage on women. The conventional portrayal of mother-in-law in literature and folk proverbs depicts her image as one of the major causes of unhappy life of her daughter-in-law. Therefore, through songs and folk proverbs, her image is exaggerated making the bride already biased about her role and character in her future family life.

Olsen (2001) describes the situation of a Polish bride who is going to her in laws after getting married. The folk wedding songs she sings has the lyrics that emphasize that life with the in-laws could be miserable. In the song, the future bride anticipated that her in-laws would criticize her, question her chastity, imply that she was burdensome to the family, and label her as a mischief-maker. All these insults indicate that she would be forever indebted to her husband's family. They would think that she was beneath them and more trouble than she was worth. A girl's fear at moving in with her in-laws was more than ritualistic; it was real. Her in-laws could be overbearing and could demand strenuous work. If her husband's family lived far from her own family, the new bride was essentially isolated from her former home and friends. Songs show that the bride often asked an older married woman, perhaps an aunt, for counsel on how to live with her in-laws.

The conflict between mother in law and daughter in law is also found in the folk oral literature of the Yiddish songs. Yiddish songs dealing with the sadness of the daughter-in-law can be assigned to four thematic groups. In songs belonging to the first group, the daughter-in-law complains that no matter what she does, she cannot satisfy her mother-in-law. The second group includes songs in which daughter-in-law is criticized by her in-laws, while she is praised by her parents and her husband. In songs belonging to the third group, a mother teaches her daughter how a daughter-in-law should behave in her mother-in-law's home, but these lessons do not protect the daughter from her evil mother-in-law. The fourth group contains dialogue songs consisting of a mother's questions and the answers of her married daughter (Rothstein, 2001).

No matter which language you say it in, mother in law are universally disliked .A Hebrew proverb says that even if she (mother in law) is made of sugar, she's not good.In Yiddish folk wedding literature the relationship of mother in law with daughter in law is the more or less same as it is depicted in Rajput songs. In Yiddish literature, a Mothers-in-law No matter which language you say it in, they are universally disliked. Most of the enmity is directed towards the

128

mother of the groom. In Yiddish folk literature, it is clear, especially in the folksongs, that the mother of the groom is the problematic person. There is no escaping the influence of the mother-in-law in traditional family life. Many folksongs in Yiddish and Ladino describe the resentment that the daughter-in-law feels. In songs, mother-in-law is given sarcastic names like *Mi suegra, la negra* (My mother-in-law, the shrew), or the song about the bad mother who was impossible to please: *Oy vey, mame, vos zol ikh tun? Ikh hob a beyze shviger, hot zi mit mir tsu tun* [Oh dear mother, what shall I do? I have an evil mother-in-law who's dissatisfied with me.]

Drawing example from Indian folk literature, in the Bhojpuri family organization, Upadhyaya (1957) discusses that conflict exists between mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law. Many songs express the agony of the daughter-in-law. The mother-in-law has been referred to as a cruel, wicked, and heartless woman. Surprisingly enough, a woman who is kind and generous to her own children may cruelly mistreat another's child, her own daughter-in-law. A mother desires her son's marriage, but resents a rival to her power and authority. Speaking of a bride, the mother-in-law says, 'can anyone become the master of my house because she has got a bit of vermilion from my son?'

Further, conflicts may occur between daughter-in-law and other members of her husband's family. This type of conflict is succinctly explained by Max Gluckman (1965) who says:

> The success and happiness of a marriage does not depend so much upon the couple but also upon his parents and other relatives that they may live with. While she generally manages to get on fairly well with them, it happens now and then that they become jealous of her and begin to dislike her; especially if they feel that her husband is devoting all his attention to her and is not supporting them as liberally as before. They may accuse her of being lazy, disobedient, snobbish, etc. She, on the other hand, may complain of the burdens and workload they thrust upon her, of calling her names, disrespecting her etc. If a man is too devoted to his wife, they say she has bewitched him out of his senses" (Gluckman 1965).

So the stereotypical image of mother in law is reinforced through folk wedding songs not only limited to Rajput people but in Bhojpori and Yiddish literature also.

- Sister in Law (Nanand)

It is surprising that a woman who waits for many years for her brother's marriage so impatiently becomes cruel to her sister-in-law after a couple of days and tries to ridicule her off and on. Rivalry between wife and her husband's sister is found to be so great that the bride tends to regard her as her co-wife. (Hivale, 1946) As the songs picture, even though a *nanand* (husband's sister) has no specific authority in her own hands, she may try to control her brother's wife with her domineering mother and remains in constant tussle against her brother's wife. This situation is not much different in Rajput community. The unmarried *nanand* may not be as controlling sometimes as compared to a married or divorced/widow sister-in-law. In this situation, sisters feel that their brothers are obliged to support them and their children. They may even accuse the daughter-in-law of ill-treating and discriminating against their children (Gluckman, 1965). Therefore, majority of songs depict a relationship between them based on mutual conflict and jealousy.

In Rajput song for example:

Nanandia mange heroon jaree

Ae... jevaroon mein mera tika bharee...

Wo bhi nanandia ko de doo

Nandee ke veera jago..........

Nanandia tika leti nahein

Nanandia mange heroon jaree

My tikka is the heaviest among all my jewelry

But ... she doesn't want to take it

Wake up .....Brother of my sister in law, she is only insisting on diamond jewelry of mine

Sister in law is asking for diamond jewelry

In Rajput culture, as told by one of the respondents that on the birth of nephew, his paternal aunt demands the most expensive item from her sister-in-law and brother. In the context of the song, the new mother's parents also give her many expensive items on the birth of their first grandson. They also give jewelry and so many items for the child's use, too, besides gifts for their daughter and her husband. They are also supposed to give clothes, jewelry to their daughter's in-laws. In this song, sister-in-law is insisting and persisting on the jewelry that is given to her sister-in-law by her parents, and which she is not willing to give her. She asks her husband that she is repeatedly offering her sister-in-law many other heavy items of her jewelry like earrings, bangles etc., but nothing is attracting her and she is still insisting on her favorite jewelry item. This song also reflects the relationship between a girl and her sister-in-law which is based on conflict and tension.

One of the respondents narrates:

> "It is matter of control and authority for both parties. Groom' sister though longed for the wedding day of her brother feel in secure against bride. They think that bride will take away their son or brother. So it is better to control new girl of the house in her position that she is subordinate here. She has to obey rules of the house. If they let her to exercise her power, she will take away their brother and will live separately" (informal talk 2012).

In another song, this tension and bitterness of relationship is also depicted in this way:

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee si bobo humare sa ng larnee noo

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly sister who fights with me

Consequently, she also reacts in her most aggressive way by calling her bad names. If her sister-in-law fights with her, she also reacts and fights with her.

Husband's Elder Brother (Jeth)

In real life situation, the relationship of a bride to her husband's elder brother *(jeth)* is of respect and is highly tabooed. The bride is supposed to respect and avoid talking informally to him. However, if she has to ask something from him, she is supposed to ask the jeth's wife or through her husband. In the Rajput culture, women are supposed to practice *purdah* from their jeths. It is also practiced in the community I studied. However, in folk wedding songs, this relationship has been reflected otherwise.

Dil mil gaayaa jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

Aahe.... Sone ki thaliyoon meain bhojin parosa

Jeth gee khalo mere kahe se...

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se ...

I am in love with my jeth

That's why his wife is about to fight with me

I gave (my jeth) food in gold plates

Please eat it as I am saying and insisting to you

This song definitely crosses the boundaries of relationship and goes to that level which is, at any case, prohibited in the Rajput culture. The song is repeated with same words but for different items.

In another stanza, the subtle sexual connotation is also reflected as bride says:

Phoolon ji seaj moti jhaler ke taakiye

Jeth gi soo joa mere kahe se

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

132

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

(I prepared) a flowerbed with pearls on it (for you)

Please sleep as I am saying and insisting to you

I am in love with my jeth

That's why his wife is about to fight with me

The song continues as:

Aahe... saastaa sa pani sabon ki tikkia

Jeth gi naha   lo mere kahe se

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

Luke water and perfumed soap is here

Please take a bath as I am saying and insisting to you

I am in love with my jeth

That's why his wife is about to fight with me

The previous two stanzas of song reflect the subtle sexual messages. When I asked from *Dadee Sugroo* about the explanation of the songs, she looked at me for a while and then replied, "You didn't get it what she was saying?" When I did not show any expression (as I wanted to listen to her explanation), she said it was just for fun with no meanings at all. On my insistence, she told me that the song has some sexual undertones which are not understood by many women and take it just for fun. As relationship of any sort is strictly prohibited between bride and her *jeth*, therefore the mockery is made for fun, just to embarrass both relatives. The song also reflects the possible tussle that might exist between *jeth*'s wife and the new bride. *Jeth*'s wife can be angry or jealous with her as she is expressing her romantic feelings for her husband. This shows that

133

life in in-laws house is not easy. She has to make her space there, and the stereotypical hostile situation of in-laws is depicted through the song.

The bride is being convinced, here, that the affinal houses are a difficult place to live in, and she has to make her own place by playing politics there. Some male of the house must support her that will make her life easier there as her husband will be away.

In another song, the bride goes one step further and says:

Mere jeth ka larka baara papi

Waa to mara seen kaha chachee

Maen tikka le aya mere chachee

Zara la ka dekhade mere chachee

Mere jeth ka larka baara papi

My *jeth*'s son is very naughty

He hints me naughtily and says

I brought a tikka for you my chachee

Just wear it for a while

My *jeth*'s son is very naughty

In this song, the new bride also flirts with her *jeth's* son who brought a jewelry item for her. The song conveys that not only bride but her *jeth*'s son also flirts with her. He wants her chachee to look beautiful and wear jewelry all the time. The bride might be sad as her husband is not around as she is sad and doesn't wear jewelry. So, in the absence of her husband, her *jeth*'s son is flirting with her and keeping her happy. In the song, every jewelry item like bracelet, bangles, earrings, etc. are mentioned and asked to the bride to wear as it is brought by her *jeth*'s son. In another explanation of the song, it can be revealed that only monetary items can make a girl happy. It is assumed that women like jewelry so by wearing jewelry they become happy. Additionally, if somebody brings jewelry for her, she is happy with him.

The most important truth regarding these songs is that people who sing them do not know or pretend they don't know the hidden messages that are reflected through these songs. Most of them say that they do not look for the meanings in these songs as these songs are for fun and entertainment only. Perhaps they know but they do not want to share it with me. During the research in the field, I felt that my respondents were apprehensive to tell me only the "good" traditions and songs of their culture. They did not want to share any bad image about themselves. They were conscious that the relationship between jeth and sister-in-law was respectful, modest and expected to be like this. Therefore, after the narration of the songs, they became little confused when I asked few questions about the context in which they were explained. Some of the respondents did not know the context too.

- **Husband's Younger Brother (Devaar)**

In the strange and hostile husband's home, devaar in Rajput culture, as told by the respondents, is a brotherly figure and supports her sister-in-law in domestic fights. Sometimes, he becomes the sister-in-law's closest ally, and he gives her sympathy and friendship. In folk wedding songs, the relationship is friendly and open. Bride likes him as he resembles in many ways to his brother (bride's husband) so she takes latitude of friendliness with him and sings. :

Jeisa kurta sayaan pere, weisa pere deverya

Sayaan ke bharoose munne ja jagaya deverya

Kheryann likhwan puryaa likhwaan dhoosa le le deverya

Teree meri na bannegee elehda ho ja deverya

Jeisa kurta sayaan pere, weisa pere deverya

Sayaan ke bharoose munne ja jagaya deverya

The shirt my beloved husband wears dever wears the same

Mistakenly I woke up devaar instead of my husband

I have seen every manner of you but you are not like my husband

We would not be able to be friends with each other so forget about this idea

The shirt my beloved husband wears devaar wears the same

Mistakenly I woke up devaar instead of my husband

In the song, the bride is comparing her devaar with her husband whom she loves. While comparing her husband, she outclasses devaar in every dressing sense. In song, she compares his turban and dhoti with *devaar*, and says that he cannot be like his brother who is very dear to her and very well dressed person. Conversely, she flirts with and ridicules him in a joking way. By saying that she mistakenly woke him up, hints her liking for him that he resembles so much with his brother (her husband).

Like other songs, this songs also challenges the patriarchal order of the family in which women remain docile and submissive, both physically and emotionally. It is impossible for a woman to express her romantic and sexual feelings even for her husband. Conversely, through songs, she articulates her sentiments and use humor and funny ways. She also communicates her sexual desires in subtle ways which she otherwise cannot. While talking about the Croatian ballads Dollop (2000) quotes Augustin (1984:169) and says that songs are largely narrated by women and rarely by men. That is why songs reveal the "female sub-culture", suppressed in the "devised order" of the patriarchal family. However, female narrators primarily uncover the reality of the hushed-up familial conflicts, the "realised order" of the family. The very *act of narration* of the ballads always repeats the question on the validity of the common norms of the family which are taken as normal norms of the family by challenging the "devised" and "realised order" (Dellop, 2000:32).

5.3.3. Abuse and Satire in Songs

Humorous-satirical wedding songs often include fun for the party for groom or bride, the groom and his groomsmen, brothers, friends and relatives. These songs are also related to various wedding rituals; melodically, they are similar to other songs in the wedding songs and are lyrical in nature.

What is the meaning of singing these abuse songs to the bridegroom and his relatives in the presence of many villagers and the bride's relatives? There may be some explanation for it.

136

These kinds of songs are called gali songs in sub India- Pakistan continental context. They have a deeper social meaning. These *gālīs* relate to social relationships. In daily life, the status of wife-givers is lower than that of wife-takers. In idealized Rajput customs, a father must marry off his daughter as early as possible. The hypergamy system dictates that the groom's family be given a high dowry by the bride's family (Madan 1975; Vatuk 1975). So, through the women's *gālī*, the hierarchy between the bride's and bridegroom's families is temporarily reversed (Kolenda 1990; Selwyn, 1979). As Jacobson (1982: 100-101) points out, such singing offers welcome relief from the formality that characterizes an often tense relationship. *Gālī* song texts are classified into two types. One type insults the bridegroom and his relatives while the other has a sexual meaning.

One of the respondents expresses her thoughts on gali songs as:

> "These songs are for fun. Nothing is serious about them. They are not sung to ridicule anybody......(then giving some thought and said)... I think wedding ceremony creates lot of tension as parents of bride are stressed up about the arrangements and other wedding related issues. So through these songs perhaps tension is relieved" (informal talk 2012).

One of such songs is:

Mere jeth ka larka bara papi

Waa to mara seen kaha chachee

Maen tikka le aya mere chachee

Zara la ka dekhade mere chachee

Mere jeth ka larka baraa paapi

My jeth's son is very naughty (loose character)

He hints me naughtily and says

I brought a tika for you my chachee

Just wear it for a while

My *jeth*'s son is very naughty

As the translation of the song deciphers, the girl is calling her husband's brother's son as having a loose character because he tries to flirt with her. In another song, she calls her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law overweight and ugly women. So both of these songs, in a subtle way, convey the sexual and ridiculing messages, but in a comic way, so that people may entertain themselves and enjoy the moments, and subtle sexual similes may be communicated in a comic way which is not possible otherwise.

In another songs the humorous side of joint family system is reflected the female srealitves are depicted as unpredictable as they can take their girl back and may not let her go to her in laws house. So bride and groom in this song are asking for early departure.

Tum kis sung beyawaan aae re bana
Hum dad eke sung aae re banne

With whom you are here for getting married my prince
I am here with my grandfather my princess
Teree Dadee ka etabaar manna thora re banna
Tum jaldee karo re bane

I donot trust your grandmother my princess (that she will let me go with you)
So hurry up my dear princes (for departure)
The same song goes on with different paternal and maternal realtives of bride and groom. However, the famle realtives are potrayed as distrustful as they might noit let bride go with groom.

5.3.4. Existence /Support/ Protest for Extended Familysystem

The family structure pictured in the Rajput songs is patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal. It is a joint family system wherein there are two or three generations of males related to a male ego, and his grandfather and his brothers, father and his brothers, brothers and cousins, sons and nephews and wives of all these male relatives plus the ego's own unmarried sisters and daughters live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common. The

community I studied had the same pattern. There has been a little change in the joint family structure as some families are separated in way that they shifted to the next door home from their parent home. However, the same trend is still followed in the community.

According to the traditional norms of the Rajput people, the head of the family is the eldest male who is expected to be an authoritarian figure. His will should always dominate the domestic scene, and he demands respect and obedience from the members of his family. His responsibility is to adequately provide for the support and maintenance of his dependents. He is the chief policy maker of the family; but, as the folk-songs describe, he may be advised by his wife and other older members of the house on family politics issues and maraiges. The head of the family and his wife not only manage the house, but it is through them that the members of the community participate socially with the others of the house.

Supporting institution of arranged marriage and involving paternal and maternal relatives in the wedding ceremony shows how much these relationships are important and necessary for a couple who is going to be married. In almost every song, all the paternal and maternal relatives are invited to participate in the wedding rituals and spend bundle of money to show their love for the soon-to-be-married couple. Through showering money and having love for the couple make both parties not only under obligation but huge social pressure. The new couple also gets the subtle messages through songs that many people are pleased with their marriage and keep them under pressure as they have to live together for the rest of their lives.

In a patrilocal society, such as that of Rajputs, a girl is sent to her husband's home after marriage. The daughter-in-law, coming from a different family and often from a different area, finds herself in totally new surroundings in her husband's home. The bride is to be assured that she has to live in a joint family system and she has to make her own place in the affine home. Through the songs, the importance, presence and power of the joint family system are reinforced.

These songs also demonstrate the various aspects of joint family system. They reveal the support and the very existence in the social life of the Rajput community. On wedding ceremony, and similarly on birth occasion, (which I will analyze in later part of the chapter) relatives show their support by participating in every ritual. From the beginning of the wedding process, that is, from proposal searching till departure of the bride, they stand with the relatives of bride and groom.

139

They express their happiness and through gifts and money expenditure they show their support. In this way, the songs reinforce the importance of the joint family system. Additionally, the songs impose the status of the women in the patriarchal joint family system wherein the terms of roles identities are gendered and women status is secondary. She will be helpless and vulnerable to her in-laws and husband and other male relatives. For example,

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee si bobo humare sang larnee noo

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly sister who fights with me

Nevertheless, these songs also give women an opportunity to protest against the joint family system. Through songs she can talk about her fears, insecurities and oppressive sentiments. Her expression of the feeling of anger, helplessness and desire to live with her husband is prominent in the para above. She thinks that she is left alone with her in-laws where she is unaided and helpless.

5.3.5. Plight of the Bride

Under the authority of a father-in-law, the male head of household, it becomes hard for the wife to persuade her husband to stay with her. Generally the husband due to economic or other daily life necessities works far from the home. Even living in the same house is unlikely that wife can influence her husband and make choices for themselves. Usually wife in songs try to hold her husband back by seducing him. Similarly, a folk song in UP India named *Kajri* is sung by women whose husbands had left their wives at home and went for jobs and business at distant places. The loneliness and sadness of these women are expressed through the songs of Kajri. In monsoon, the lonely women cried their heartfelt sorrows which subsequently took the form of *Kajri*.

In Rajput songs, this remains in the mind of a newly-wed wife, too. She thinks that one day her husband will also leave him for his work and will go to some distant place. She will have to stay with her in-laws. Talking about Indian social context, Kakar (1989) says that the unfulfilled longing for intimacy within the joint family setting pervades women's lives in India. Generally

fated for disappointment, the fantasy of constituting a "couple" not in opposition to the rest of the extended family pervades the life of the wife linking the various stages of a woman's adulthood, from a new bride to a grandmother. But with the passage of time, she realizes the reality and this intense wish to create a two-person world with her husband goes away from her consciousness (1989).

For example in Rajput song

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee si amman humare sang larnee noo

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly mother who fights with me

The explanation I asked from the respondents was a surprise for them. Some of them struggled to explain the context of the song. Some told me that they never took songs and their context as a thought-provoking process. They did not think about the context of the songs. One respondent explained the context but did not mention the subtle sexual connotations about the song.

However, searching the literature on folk songs, I got the explanation of the songs. As Roy (1975) and Trawick (1990) decipher that juicy ripe fruit and the craving to enjoy it mixed with a longing for an absent husband and the complaint that she cannot enjoy eating alone permeate this song with erotic overtones as food is associated with love through many domains of Indian culture (as Pakistani culture emphasis added).

In another song:

Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla para ghar baar

Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

Gore wahan gae the thara kante gharya saree raat

Gore wahan gae the thara kante gharya saree raat

141

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open

You should be ashamed of your behavior as I am so young (and you left me alone at night!)

My dear I went to goldsmith for renovating your earrings

My dear I went to goldsmith for renovating your earrings

She communicates to her husband that whole night she waited for him in her room, but he did not come for her. In a seductive way, she says that is so young and attractive but he did not stay with her and left her alone. She reminds him of their physical intimacy through communicating in a subtle and hidden way. Therefore, songs proved to be a way of communication with their husbands for their love and intimacy as a married couple a talk which might not be possible in any other way.

In the same context, Narayan, (1989) in her study on Indian Rajput women, explores a song Pakharu; though it is not a wedding song, but discusses about husband and wife relationship after marriage. She says that man (husband) is far away and she (wife) is alone with other members of the family. In the songs, woman talks about all the miseries she is facing with her in-laws and nothing is pleasing her as he is away. She constantly says that the trees are bearing fruit but he is not here with her to taste the ripe fruit together. In this way, the woman is conveying her sexual desperation and love for union with her husband. In simple words, though the women we know through wedding songs in many ways agree to the dominant ideologies of gender and kinship, they also sing of their resistance to these ideologies into their everyday lives. This type of resisted is misunderstood by many western feminists which are mentioned by Mohanty (1988).

5.4. Birth (*Jajjcha*) Songs

During my field work, I intended to collect many birth songs in Rajput community. However, I managed to collect only two birth songs and both were for baby boys. When I insisted for any song for baby girl, they all replied in this way:

> "Who sings on girl birth? No way. It is not a matter of pride for any family. Girls leave their parents one day. Then rest of their life her parents remain obliged to

142

her in-laws. Her in-laws humiliate her parents at various occasions so there is no need to sing on birth of baby girl" (informal talk 2012).

Folk songs are sung everywhere on the occasion of boys' birth but on girls' birth nowhere in the society. The birth of a daughter is not joyously celebrated. Daughters always leave their natal homes; their dowry is a burden to their families. They are treated with affection but this is tempered with the idea that the daughter is an impermanent member of the family. The celebration of the arrival of the new member in the family, especially a male child, is also a manifest preference for son in the family.

There is hardly any *sohar* that describes the birth of a female child (Tewari, 1988). Having no other option left for me, I am bound to discuss only the two baby boy birth songs in relation to the themes they represent.

5.4.1. Elevation in the Woman Status as Mother and Daughter in Law

There is extreme psychological pressure on a wife to produce a son as his birth perpetuates the agnatic line. A woman's status in her conjugal home remains low until she gives birth to a son. Failure to do so, traditionally, results in a man's taking a co-wife, but this is infrequent today.

In this situation, a woman is expected to fulfill her social role and gratify her status through her reproductive capacity. If she produces a son to maintain and extend the patriarchal power structure, she claims a higher status. She is held in high esteem and given respect by her in-laws. On the other hand, if she fails to give birth to a son, she fails to achieve her ultimate role of assuring the continuity of family lineage. She faces discord from her in-laws, who believe they are let down by her inability to give them an heir. But when she gives birth to a baby boy, she becomes queen of the house (queen mother and queen daughter in law) as expressed in the song:

Le le Jajjcha rani paalna mole

Le le bahoo rani palna mool...

Yo.. paalna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Yo.. paalna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Aahe... mamee jhoote de gee palna mool

143

Buy a crib …. Queen mother

Buy a crib …. Queen of the house (daughter in law)

This crib is brought by your mame (maternal uncle)

Your *mamee* (maternal aunt) will rock your crib slowly

The whole song addresses her as queen mother and queen of the house (daughter in law) who gives birth to a boy. In the case of baby girl, firstly there would not be any song for baby girl to sing on her birth, secondly she would not call a mother 'queen' and there would not be any function of this kind.

Therefore, the status of mother is raised as she gives birth to a male heir and she is now an important person who has an identity as queen mother. She is the same girl who used to be invisible in the house, but now has an identity after giving birth to a boy. The birth of the boy elevates his mother's status. Ross (1962) notes three distinct reasons for the close mother-son relationship: first, the birth of a son proves a woman's position in her husband's family more than any other single factor; second, she is not his main disciplinarian; third, he does not leave his maternal household after marriage.

In the second song I collected, sister-in-law who is not at good terms with mother of the child, now gives a lot of importance to her after she has given birth to her nephew. Now she asks the proud mother of the son to give her most precious and dearest jewelry item to her on this happy occasion.

Nanandia mange heroon jaree

Ae… sub zevaroon mein mera tika bharee…

Wo bhi nanandia ko de doo

Nanandee ke vera jago… … …..

Nanandia tikka leti nahein

My tikka is the heaviest among all my jewelry

But ..., she doesn't want to take it

Wake up .....brother of my sister-in-law

She is only insisting on diamond jewelry of mine

The mother of son is pleading to her husband to ask his sister to take anything else from her jewelry but not that jewelry item which is given by her parents as it is very dear to her. She wants support from her husband as she knows that her sister-in-law can take her special ornaments. She expects that her husband will take her side and will ask her sister to take other ornament as a gift from sister-in-law.

5.4.2. Explicit Gender Discrimination

There are no birth songs for a baby girl! So this explains all kind of gender discrimination in the community under study. Gill (1998) says it best, "A man took pride in having more sons than daughters because people took pity on those who were not blessed with a son" (1998:206). Sons also carry on the family name and take care of their parents in old age, as well as being allowed to work in the fields (Gill, 1998). Daughters cannot do this, and are instead taken away to provide labor for their husband's families (Gill, 1998). On a more religious note, there are certain ceremonies that a son can perform upon the death of his father, which girls are not allowed to do, (Miller, 1987) like in Hindus culture , only sons can torch lit his father's pyre when he dies.

Miller (1987) describes further and says that like most of the societies in the world, Rajput society is a male-dominated society. Therefore, women are dependent on men for getting support and protection throughout the life. As a daughter, she is dependent and protected by her father and brothers; as a wife by her husband; and as a mother by her sons. After birth, on every step a girl faces gender discrimination. The extreme disappointment of a mother who greatly desires a son, but bears a daughter instead, could affect her ability to breastfeed successfully; "bonding" certainly would not be automatically assured between the mother and the child, and the mother's disappointed in-laws would be far less supportive than if the newborn were a son (1987).

Gill (1998) analysis birth of a baby girl' mother receives less support from one's family if the newborn is female, and face the difficulty of providing her dowry when she marries, prestigious families may have difficulty finding suitable marriage partners for their kinswomen. Pride then becomes a large factor in encouraging female infanticide. And if she is left to live, she has to face gender discrimination for the rest of her life.

5.4.5. Celebration for the Whole Family

Gill (1998) with reference to Indian Punjab, states that reports that the news of the birth of a baby boy use to spread like wild fire. If it were a first birth, the family immediately engages in celebrations. Depending on the prosperity (size of freehold land) of the household, its senior women mark the occasion by distributing *Gurr* (molasses) and sweetmeats to families in the entire village (area), and gifts to the lower caste workers who come to congratulate the family. The event is accentuated when the mirasaan or hijras (third gender) come to the house and perform a celebratory "song and dance," for which they receive gifts in the form of cash and/or other kind. No such need to celebrate is felt if the new born infant is a female. Quite often, if a birth is not talked about, it is understood that it is a baby girl, especially if it is a second or a third one. Similarly, the festival of *lohiri* in North India is a landmark in the cultural construction of gender where the family celebrates only the birth of a baby boy (p: 203). The song narrates:

Jajjcha rani .... Le le palna mool ...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Mother Queen.... Buy a crib....

This crib is brought by your mame (maternal uncle)

Aahe... mamee jhoote de gee palna mool ...   Your mamee (maternal aunt) will rock your crib

slowly

All the relatives of baby boy are invited on the happy occasion. *Mirasaan* takes the maternal and paternal relatives names and expects money and gifts from them. Therefore whole family gets together on this occasion to celebrate birth of baby boy.

5.4.6. Pride of the Family and Clan

Gill (1998) states that in the Punjab, a baby boy's birth results in large amounts of celebration, especially if it is a first birth in the family. However, he claims that, "if a birth was not talked about, it was understood that it was a baby girl" (Gill, 1998:203). Miller (1987) reinforces this as, "the extreme disappointment of a mother who greatly desires a son, but bears a daughter instead, could affect her ability to breastfeed and 'bonding' would not be automatically assured between the mother and the girl child. If the motherl has a daughter than her in-laws become disappointed and less supportive to her" (1987:95).

The song presents a happy picture of the event in which everybody is involved and happy. Mother becomes queen mother and everybody is ready to spend lots of money on the occasion. The other happy occasion comes when the wedding ceremony of the boy takes place by involving every paternal and maternal relative with same passion. There is little doubt that the birth of a son is preferred to that of a daughter, the reason for this attitude in the folksongs seems in part to be the belief that it is only a son who can bring happiness and pride to the family.

5.5. Symbols used in Wedding and Birth songs

Anthropologist Turner (1967) described symbols as "multivocal," suggesting that they have multiple meanings for people within a society. He also said that symbols have the characteristic of "condensation," having the ability to unify many things and actions into a single formation. In the same way, there are many symbols mentioned in the folk (wedding & birth) songs that may have variety of meanings within the social context of the community under study.

The songs I collected from the field have many symbols as well. This part of the chapter discusses those symbols and symbolic activities in wedding and birth ceremonies. I asked the respondents for the cultural interpretation of the symbols and symbolic use of some material during the wedding and birth ceremony. Four of the respondents could interpret the symbols used in folk songs in their cultural context. Rest of them did not have any idea.

They simply replied to me that "we have heard this from generations and remembered the songs by heart without knowing their cultural context". Therefore, for the interpretation of the symbols and symbolic activity, I had to search the literature, especially in south Asian context. After relating them to Rajput culture in Indian context, I asked my respondents for feedback on my

interpretations. After obtaining feedback from respondents, I analyzed the symbols and symbolic activities presented in folksongs.

5.5.1. Jewelry

Jewelry is the most frequent symbol that has been used in majority of the songs. It has multivocal meaning in folksongs as stated by Turner (1967). For example.

Meree ronaq jhonaq ladoo khele guryaan

Baba easaa baar dhondio jis kee kothee khotla ho...

Tankhawa panj soo ho

Ghree time wali ho

My young beloved daughter who is wearing lot of jewelry is playing with a doll

O father… look for a match for me

Who has very large house

Who has salary 500 rupees!!

Has a wrist watch which tells time!!

Another song:

Nanandia mange heroon jaree

Ae... sub zevaroon mein mera tika bharee...

Wo bhi nanandia ko de doo

Nanandee ke vera jago..........

Nanandia tikka leti nahein

Nanandia mange heroon jaree.....

148

Sister-in-law is asking for diamond jewelry

My tikka is the heaviest among all my jewelry

But … she doesn't want to take it

Wake up …..brother of my sister-in-law……

She is only insisting on diamond jewelry of mine

One more example:

Raja kahaan gae the mare khullaya para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khullaya para ghar baar

Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

My king where you went last night my house remained open

My king where you went last night my house remained open

You should be ashamed of your behavior as I am so young (and you left me alone at night!)

My dear I went to goldsmith for renovating your *tikka*

My dear I went to goldsmith for renovating your *tikka*

These entire examples mentioned above tell us about jewelry that women wanted from their male family members. Therefore, jewelry has a versatile utility in the social life of the individuals and social structures. Jewelry is employed in a variety of ways beyond the beautification of the wearer. The magnificently decorated bride represents the family's power and wealth, and not necessarily herself. The women ostensibly at the center of this tradition, thus truly serves primarily as a substitute for familial (male) honor and status (Rubin 2008).

The jewelry given in dowry to the bride from her parents has functioned as a symbol of family honor, functioning in strictly prescribed ways to improve and enhance the hierarchies and potential among relatives. Jewelry acts as a representation of wealth or honor specifically, as it is linked to gender. For instance, usages of jewelry indicate the wealth of owner by displaying to enhance their social status.

The wearing of jewelry is not considered a simple personal choice, but rather a matter of respect for tradition and family, especially towards, and regulated by, a woman's in-laws. Although there is regional variation, Indian women's lives are almost universally divided into categories with accompanying compulsory ornamentation (or lack thereof) that are appropriate for a sexually immature young girl, an unmarried girl past puberty, a bride, a wife, and finally a widow. Jewelry is generally not invoked to signal changes in the marital status of Indian men (Greenberg and at el, 2008).

Jewelry is so thoroughly and deeply intertwined with marriage that it is almost never considered as a neutral category, something a woman might wear for her own pleasure. It is always understood in the context of presentation for a man. Shukla and colleagues (2004) describe the connections between body art and marriage in their seminal work on dress and adornment in modern India. "Marriage is integral to the study of body art in India; it sets the standard for a woman's appearance in all the stages of her life" (p: 65).

Greenberg et al (2008) report that generally adolescent girls are not allowed wearing jewelry until they marry; they are forbidden to wear jewelry or ornament themselves at all without provoking accusations of promiscuity. Brides on their wedding day are heavily ornamented, generally with items from their own family. It is the day that they make the switch from being forbidden jewelry to it being compulsory, to please her future husband and respect her in-laws. "[The] wedding day... marks the beginning of a woman's life as a decorated being. Ornament is the right and responsibility of wife while her husband is alive. Once [single women] have married, acts of self-adornment are linked inextricably with the husband. For many women it

becomes impossible to separate the desire to be ornamented with the desire to please one's spouse".

According to Shukla et al (2004) jewelry is conceived purely in terms of presentation for the gaze. Married women in India have a variety of markers to symbolize their status, and there is a variation among different regions in the degree to which different elements are required or are optional. Several of the items of jewelry serve practical purpose. Anklets and bracelets covered in bells help enforce taboos against wives coming in contact with their brothers or fathers-in-law. The mother-in-law, matriarch regulates the new wife's jewelry as a message to the world about the state of the marriage and, by extension, the family's status.

> Mothers-in-law enforce the wearing of jewelry by their daughters-in-law to avoid
> bad luck upon the family, especially their son, as well as to avoid gossip...Women
> feel the social pressure to wear less and less jewelry as they get older. Their old
> interest in fashion is partially filled vicariously by having beautiful young women
> around the house, dressed up appealingly. Since daughters must remain plain until
> they are married, at which point they immediately go live with their in-laws, this
> desire is logically relocated to the body of the daughter in law who becomes the
> recipient of the family heirlooms, ensuring the wealth stays in the family
> (Greenberg, at el 2008:312-313).

Jewelry has many functions that are why girls are so demanding and concern about their jelwery and especially wedding jewelry. Parents of girls are always concerned about the security of daughters in their marital homes and they try their best to keep the in-laws in good honor mainly by satisfying their material expectations either in cash or any other kind. Vatuk (1975) maintains that though the daughter is the primary recipient of her parental wealth in the form of dowry, gifts serve to protect and ensure the daughter's future security. By keeping the in-laws happy, the girls' parents think that it would safeguard their daughters' position in their marital homes, and that their daughters might not be subject to any ill-treatment.

Some gifts a woman receives from her natal kin have critical economic significance in her married life. Jacobson (1975) has traced the economic importance for women in cultural India, of

the jewelry gifted to them, showing that the women have most control, the most undisputed rights to jewelry given to them by their natal relatives. Vatuk and Vatuk (1976) documented the significance of solidarity of an informal system of private savings for women's lives, a system in which gifts of cash and jewelry to daughter and sisters are often enormously consequential. Any woman can expect to be humiliated and ill-treated, even buried alive, if the dowry expectation of husband's family is not met. Certainly, when women speak of clothes, cash and jewelry they expect to receive from their natal kin, the economic well-being is much on their mind (Raheja, 1994).

This is the reason that a girl asks as many jewelry items from her natal relatives as possible as she also knows that this is the right time for demands. Further, she knows that her natal relatives will fulfill her demands at their best. She understands that this is the right time when her parents have to maintain the element of respect and prestige in front of the people. The more jewelry they give to their daughter, the more prestige and status they will get in front of other people and within their families. Girls are not allowed to wear gold jewelry before their marriage. So they also wait for the day when they would be in the position to make a demand for it.

Feminists generally criticize jewelry in terms of ownership of sexuality for the women. They are of the opinion that the traditional use of jewelry and ornament as a means of physical incapacitation illustrates the degree to which these usages are an outgrowth of patriarchal and oppressive sexual power dynamics. "Women's supposed obsession with their own bodies served as evidence for their inferiority to men... In other words, by turning women's [socially enforced] occupation with their jewelry into female obsession, it became possible to highlight male superiority, despite the fact that men had a vital interest in their wives' demonstration of wealth and power" (Christine, 2005).

According to feminist thought jewelry as a means of control over the body and sexuality is most directly affected through usages that physically restrict sexual activity. Married women in Sumatra wear a heavy and complicated ornament over their chest and back. Indian culture reserves several types of ornaments for married women alone, including the thali or marriage pendant. And throughout history, rings have figured prominently and variously in wedding and

engagement rituals. Awofeso (2002) an African feminist who has written extensively on the history of wedding rings, writes:

> Prior to the 20th century, wedding rings were used in a variety of contexts: as adornments, to signify the capture of a bride, to denote a promise of fidelity, to signify classification of women as men's property, as signposts for discouraging potential mating partners of a married woman, and as cultural icons((2002).

Jewelry does not always be problematic from a feminist perspective. Feminist also advocate that utilization of jewelry as a means and symbol of independence, physical and psychological, has been recognized in feminist thought. Most directly, jewelry has frequently functioned as the primary or sole source of wealth under direct control of women. In times of turmoil, jewelry has repeatedly proven to be an invaluable resource as portable wealth, allowing women to lead independent lives or provide for their families.

5.5.2. Skin Color

Anthropology has rarely theorized human beauty as a distinct domain of social and psychological experience. More theoretical approaches within the social sciences can be found in feminist critiques. The scholarship analyzes the relationship between beauty and patriarchal domination (Bartky, 1990; Bordo, 1989, 1993; Faludi, 1992; Spitzak, 1990; Morgan, 1991; Wolf 1991; Jeffreys, 2005 and Rankin, 2005). Despite differences in theoretical orientation, these critiques converge on the point that beauty practices act as a means for the social control of the female body within patriarchy. As Wolf (1991: 3) puts it: the beauty myth is "the last best belief system that keeps male dominance intact." Feminist critiques have shown how commercial and medical beauty practices do not just offer women 'choice' and cure psychic suffering, but also mentions the norms of gender and race on the body.

In China, "milk-white" skin is a symbol of beauty and some Chinese women used to swallow powdered pearls in the hopes of becoming whiter (China Daily, 2006). Although there are cultural variations, the desire for light skin is universal (Isa and Kramer, 2003; Russell, Wilson and Hall, 1992). In India, the words for fair and beautiful are synonymous (Franklin 1968; Hall 1995).

153

Same is true for Pakistani context. In the folk wedding song, the one that is mentioned below, a man is cursed whose wife has black skin color.

Aree …aree jhoree Banger ki
Teree aqal kethe khoree the
Karam phoote un mardaan ke
Jin kee joroo kali se
Dheree kotheri mein kho geese dhoodum dhoonda ho rahee se
O.. girl from Banger city (India), are you crazy?
Men who have black wives are cursed
She (wife) was lost in the dark room
Everybody was looking for her

In the folk wedding song, the one that is mentioned below, a man is cautioned whose wife has white skin colour.

Aree …aree jhoree Banger ki
Teree aqal kethe khoree the
Karam phoote un mardaan ke
Jin kee joroo goree se
Roee koe maan khoo gee se
Lukaan miti ho rahee se

O.. girl from Banger city (India), are you crazy?
Men who have white (skin) wives must be watchful
She (wife) was lost in the cotton store room
Everybody was playing hide and seek with her

The basic difference between the two stanzas is the context in which they are referred. The white color woman was attractive to all men and all men present in the ceremony wanted her company. She was so while that they couldn't recognize and find her while she was hiding in cotton store

room. Here a subtle caution message is also conveyed that because she has a white color so her husband should remain watchful as many men are after her. White color, here, is the desirable color for a woman who may attract many men. The woman depicted in songs is getting attention from many men because of her white complexion which is considered to be an extra quality for women besides beauty. Therefore, white color is a privilege for a woman to have. So everybody wants to play hide and seek with her as she is liked by everybody and everybody may be after her.

In another song the beauty and color is referred to bull color and size, for example:

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee si amman humare sang larnee noo

 You planted an orange tree for my pleasure ...

But you left your overweight and ugly mother who fights with me

In this song, black skin color and overweight traits referred to bull and then attached with mother-in-law in order to ridicule her. "Whiteness" or having white skin is considered an important element in constructing female beauty in Asian cultures. Contemporary meanings of whiteness are influenced by Western and Colonialism ideologies as well as traditional Asian values and beliefs. Not only does skin lightness affect perceptions of a woman's beauty, it also affects her marital prospects, job prospects, social status, and earning potential (Wagatsuma, 1967; Ashikari, 2003b; Goon and Craven, 2003; Leslie 2004).

5.5.3. Veil (covering head and body)
Among Rajputs both type of veiling is found. One type of veiling is when bride especially cover her face and body in wedding rites. On wedding day, bride veils her face referred as '*Ghungat nikalna*' that means to draw the edge of the scarf over one's face so as to veil it completely. The other one is women in their in-laws' house veil from their father in law or other males elders of the family both types of veiling has the same purpose. Both symbolize the social distance of from rest of the people. Veiling provides women a private social place where only selected men can come in. The other purpose of veiling is supposed to be the invisibility of women from the rest of the family members specially men of the family. In laws house women in day time, while

working in homes, cover their head with a wide scarf or shawl (*dupatta*) drawn about the head and shoulders.

Sharma (1978) confirms that a married Rajput woman practices *ghungat* before her husband's father, elder brother and uncles, and indeed before most of the older men of the village where she is married. *Ghungat* is a means of rendering a woman socially invisible. It is not usually difficult to guess who is behind the veil in most cases, but the veil covers the woman's most personal and communicative features.

Jacobson (1975) in her study in Madhya Pradesh describes the *ghungat* as a 'distance' technique, and her account relies heavily on the contributions made by Radcliffe-Brown and Murphy to the study of 'social distance' and avoidance patterns (Murphy, 1964). Considered in this way, *ghungat* helps reduce tension within the joint family. According to her, first it may help minimize tension by reducing the opportunities for sexual competition among the men of the same household (Jacobson, 1975). Presumably, brothers are less likely to lust after each other's wives if the latter's charms are concealed from them. Secondly, where women veil themselves from their husbands in the presence of the mother-in-law, this prevents the man from taking undue interest in his wife in the presence of his mother. He is less liable to suffer from a conflict of loyalties when his wife and his mother quarrel if he is constrained not to interact with both of them on the same occasion (Jacobson, 1975). Finally, and perhaps most obviously, it reduces the likelihood of open conflict between a woman and her male affines and may even give her a 'sense of privacy' in a strange place (Jacobson, 1975).

During the wedding ritual, as told by one of the respondents bride face and body is covered and during her first visit to her in laws ' house , she will seldom unveil her face to anyone. In a ritual which takes place shortly after her arrival in her husband's home, the women of the household and the neighborhood come and uncover her face one by one, making her small gifts and hopefully commenting on her good looks. But it is the other women who lift her veil. She will never show her face to her husband's father nor to his elder brother (her jeth), nor to any other of his senior male kin. Her husband's younger brother (her devaar) and others of her husband's junior kin may see her face. Now the trend has been changing. I observed that still old women followed this tradition very strictly, but not all women follow this tradition any more. Instead of

156

ghungat nikalna, they usually avoid to face their fathers-in-law, *jeth* and other elders of the family. If they talk, they talk from a distance while keeping their face away from male members of the family (Jaconson, 1970).

When a girl is invisible and covers her face then   people keep a formal relationship of distance with her. In her in- laws house she is supposed to be nobody and may remain invisible most of the time. She is asked to talk less, restrict her movement in house and many other restrictions making her presence less visible to others. It is suggested by elder women of the family that when she is asked to reply, she may answer. Otherwise she must be silent all the time.

A bride arrives in her husband's home as a nameless bundle wrapped in veils and shawls. In fact, the social individuality of is generally unknown as nobody can see her face (Sharma, 1978). Similarly about the invisibility of the bride by taking veils and shawls Levi-Strauss remarks they are unlike the other 'goods' which are circulated between social groups this bundle can speak. However, they can be told to be silent, and this is one important aspect of ghungat. It teaches the married woman the appropriateness of a passive and deferential behaviour in a system of domestic and political relationships among men. In these songs, it becomes clear that their wraps are polyvocal media of self-presentation for women (Abu Lughod, 1990). Certainly, the wrap symbolizes female modesty, neutralizing women's sexuality. It, thus, serves a double function protecting men from over-exposure to women's power, and protecting women from unwanted male attentions (Papanek and Minault, 1982).

In wedding rituals, the bride is always asked to cover her face from the males of the family and strangers. I asked one of the respondents of mine and she replied:

> "I think it is matter of *sharam*. The girl is going to married and becoming wife of somebody so she should cover her face from her father, brother and his other family members. She should look invisible in her house and nobody should see her" (informal talk 2012).

On the ritual of *butna*, when the perfumed oil is applied on bride's hair, groom asks from bride to take off veil from her face and talk to him as;

Darvajee pe bool sunaya .... Bano mere ..main tere kaarun aaya

Ghunghat kholoo ...moo se bolo

Bano mere main tere karun aya

I am on the door step of your house my princess... I am here for you

Take away your veil from your face ... talk to me dear

I am here just for you my dear princess

Therefore the symbolism of veil or *ghungat* gives woman a private social place and keeps them at distance to other people in general and male members of the family except her husband. Veil also makes her invisible while performing various rituals during wedding ceremony. In the ceremonies of *Butna* and *henna*, the bride to be is asked to cover her face and body even from her natal male family members. The faceless and invisible woman is supposed to be in the transition of the roles from a un- married woman to becoming a wife of a man. Therefore during the transitional phase she remains invisible by covering her face and body as she is neither married nor unmarried as she has agreed to marry.

5.5.4. Doors and House is Open
The home is a key site in the social organization of space. It is where space becomes place and where family relations get gendered and clan identities are negotiated. (Vasvari, 1999:7) Across a number of languages, "to open the door," "to leave the door open," or "to knock on every door", all have sexual connotations. The division of male public sphere and female private sphere and the female symbolism of enclosed spaces lead to the pervasive sexual symbolism of suitors knocking on doors, corresponding to their seeking entry into the female body. In tradition, men's roles remain constant in folksongs their only aim being to gain entry, whether through romantic words and deceit.

The symbolism of closed door or enclosed spaces is also found in few of the Rajput songs. In one of the wedding songs for example the groom is asking bride to open her house door for him;

Darvazee pe bool sunaya .... Bano mere ..main tere karun Aya

Ghunghat kholoo ... dervaaja kholo

Bano mere main tere kaarun aya

I am on the door step of your house my princess... I am here for you

Take away your veil from your face ... open the door

I am here just for you my dear princess

In this song both ghungat nikalna and request for opening of the door symbolized as ingoing into women private social places and in subtle way physical space too.

As Douglas (1966) suggests the boundaries of the body cannot be separated from other social and cultural boundaries. In traditional society, there is a distinction between public and private spheres which also extends to separate sexual spheres, with women rarely seen in public places. Their private, closed space is the only safe place to guard their reputation. The supervision of women and her body from where pollution can occur, concentrates on three specific areas: the mouth, chastity, and the threshold of the house. The three areas become frequently collapsed into each other, so that the signs of the decent woman are the enclosed body, the closed mouth, and the locked house. A woman's body becomes the symbol of family integrity and purity, which is violated by illicit sexual penetration. It is the woman who is held responsible for loss of her family's reputation through failure to maintain the boundaries of house and body (Stallybrass, 1991).

In another song, the bride is warning her husband:

Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla para ghar baar

Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

My king where you went last night my house remained open

159

My king where you went last night my house remained open

You should be ashamed of your behavior as I am so young (and you left me alone at night!)

My dear I went to gold smith for renovating your *tikka*

My dear I went to gold smith for renovating your *tikka*

So, here, the bride is seducing her husband by conveying him subtle sexual message. Here, by saying "my house remained open", she is expressing her intimate emotions for her husband. Vasvari (1999) discusses the symbolism of thresholds and opened doors. She tries to show that the "open your door" motif symbolizes to enter into forbidden female bodies. In European folk poetry she further says that women are often depicted as potentially law-breakers. On the occasion of the wedding festivities folk poetry represent a caution to young women about the sexual and social dangers that are always present in their interaction with men.

5.5.5. Buna (Prince) and Bunno (Princess)
The Rajputs believe that they are from royal genealogy. Therefore, they use special words to address bride and groom, *Buno* (princess) and *Buna* (prince). In other songs, the word 'Raja' and 'Rani' is also used to address groom and mother of a son.

For example:

Darvajee pe bool sunaya .... Bunno mere ..main tere karun Aya

Ghunghat kholoo ... dervaza kholo

Bunno mere main tere karun aya

I am on the door step of your house my princess… I am here for you

Take away your veil from your face … open the door

I am here just for you my dear princess

For Rani:

Jajjcha rani ... ...Le le palna mool...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Aahe... mamee jhoote de gee palna mool

For Raja, see this song:

Raja kahaan gae the mare kulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere kulla para ghar baar

In another song, the going-to-be-bride, in relation to her father, is addressed as l*ado* which means 'my dearest daughter' and 'beloved daughter' and expression of love from a father to her daughter.

5.5.6. Hair

Hair symbolism has been extensively researched by anthropologists with reference to initiation, marriage, mourning rituals and magic (Frazer 1935; Malinowski, 1922; Firth, 1936). Leach (1958) introduced a comparative perspective that discusses the synthesis between anthropological and psychological insights. Long hair is both the glory and symbol of womanhood and highly desired for women. However, leaving hair untied in front of males is forbidden for women. Simultaneously, Delaney (1994) with reference to Turkish society explains that women are thought to have a loose and unchecked sexuality that must now be tamed and brought under further control. This is symbolized by braiding the hair for the wedding. Similarly In the butna ritual of Rajputs women sing as they prepare bride for her future married life by saying:

Joore ki lut khoolo...

Joore ki lut khoolo...

Ahe.. behno,bayoun piyareyan...

Joore ki lut kholoo

Untie your hair dear one ....

161

Sister's and brother's beloved........Loosen your hair ...

Therefore, hair symbolism has sexual connotation in folksongs. For example, Obeyesekere (1981) discusses the meanings of hair of Hindu ascetics and Buddhist monks-those who either let their hair go so that it becomes matted, supposedly indicating their letting go of sexuality, or who cut or shave their hair to indicate cutting off of sexual life for religious ends. Consequently, a woman's honor consists in keeping them under wraps so as to keep them for the use of only one man.

5.5.7. Tree

Since ancient times, tree has a deep symbolic meaning for man. All cultural traditions, in their own specific images, have associated trees with the concept of life. The tree, as symbol of life, has been associated with fertility as far as physical life is concerned. Therefore reference of tree in the songs present life and fruit bearing tree symbolizes fertility.

For example:

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

CJhore gia san dhee see amaan humare sang larnee noo

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia san dhee see bobo humare sang larnee noo

Translation:

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly mother who fights with me

You planted an orange tree for my pleasure

But you left your overweight and ugly sister who fights with me

Wife is complaining to her husband that he started a good life with her and maybe she is carrying her child, but now he is gone and she is alone where her in-laws fight with her. Fruits and tree both symbolize fertility, reproduction and continuity of life. Besides, tree is also considered a

symbol of supernatural powers, growing as it does towards the sky. It is the pillar of the universe that sustains life.

5.5.8. Colors

In wedding and birth songs, there are some colours which are imply certain meaning in the rituals they are used and in the songs they are mentioned. They are discussed below. According to deVries (1976) all major colours have many symbolic meanings. These colours have both positive and negative feelings and emotions in that particular cultural context. Colours symbolize a rite of passage that can distinguish between fun and serious, young and old, male and female in the cultural context in which they are interpretive and context is the whole thing.

Color combinations are considered culturally bound with certain ideologies and traditions (Geboy, 1996). For example wearing red, yellow or green colors on specific wedding rituals is considered appropriate in Pakistani and Indian weddings. Color has effects on psychological level, with emotional, sensory and cognitive suggestions. However, these psychological aspects of color are not universal, nor are they applicable to any one entire population, since they are constructed with individuals as well as collective participation (Lilia and at el 2006). Hutching (1997) talks about the use of colors in language and states that color symbolism in language imply that a color means anything we decide it to mean. Color and appearance are essential to the well-being of most living organisms. While analyzing folk songs, I found out some of the colors which are referred in songs and used in wedding rituals. Some of them are discussed below:

5.5.8.1. Green Color

One of the women tells me the importance of green color in wedding ceremony rituals:

> "Green is the color of suhag (husband). On henna ceremony the bride wears green clothes and green bangles. A green petal leave is also kept in bride and groom hand before they apply henna on their palms. Henna paste is applied on bride and groom palms which are of green color. So green is the good omen for new married life ahead. It signifies the happy life of the new couple and they will bear many children together" (Informal talk).

In folk wedding song, it is narrated as such;

163

Mere heryalian ... jhoree ki lut kholo

Apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo

My fortunate girl... loosen your hair

Beloved of your mothers .... Loosen your hair

The green color is also called '*harah*' in Urdu and Hindi language. So, here, women attach good omen to the bride by calling her '*Heryalian*' means a fortunate girl who is going to be married and have a fertile life ahead. The other explanation of songs can make a link with "while loosen your hair (allowing a man into your life), you will enter into a phase of life which has a reproductive function". Therefore, loosening of hair and green *(harah)* colours have been interlinked together.

In one song the groom is also called as *haryala* which have to same meanings as for bride.

Additionally, green color is connected with life, springtime and growth or with decay. Indeed, green and growth have common origins. In general, natural greens can be used for the cure of specific complaints or to deflect the glances of the evil eye. There are instances in which a green color is used as a substitute for greenery.

Wallis-Budge (1930) says that a color is either good or bad. Green, he says, is good, symbolizing hope and confidence. All common symbolic meanings for green are derived from the growth that occurs in springtime and the growth of decay.

5.5.8.2. Red Color

Red is the color of blood, therefore the color of life, and also the color of bridal purity. However, the red may also be the symbol of ripeness as in crops to be harvested. Anthropologically, the colours *black*, *white*, and *red* are nominal descriptions.

Historically speaking, the use of reds dates back to 4000 years ago. However, in Indian subcontinent context, it may have its origin as a defloration color (Westermarck, 1921). The act of deflowering, as American Heritage Dictionary (2000) defines, is rupture of the hymen, typically in sexual discourse. Therefore, red is the color of the bride who is entering into an intimate relationship. Here it is used in connotation along with the line untie your hair which is also hints towards the hidden sexual intimacy meaning. In the context of folk songs, red is the color of bride dress.

As stated in one song:

Soo ae jore waliyan ... jhoree ki lut kholo

apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo

The girl who is dressed up in red ... loosen your hair

Beloved of your mothers .... Loosen your hair

5.5.8.3. Yellow Color

Yellow color is symbolic in Hindu and Muslim marriage and funeral ceremonies. According to a seventh century Chinese traveler in India, red and yellow textile colours were regarded as auspicious colours which "repel demons" (Joshi, 1985).

On wedding ceremony, especially on butna ritual, (butna ritual is also called Haldi ritual in some areas in Punjab), the use of yellow dress, yellow flowers and butna (a yellow paste made from turmeric and other perfumed oils and is applied on the bride face and body for shine and fair complexion) all symbolize that bride-to-be must be concealed from the evil eye. She is asked to remain invisible from the eyes of the strangers and only few of her friends are allowed to be with her.

5.6. Conclusion

Folk songs of wedding in Rajput community of Wahndo present an array of themes ranging from blessing for the mother of bride Groom, interpersonal familial relationships, affinal relations, abuse, satire, support and protest to the existence and plight of bride. Each theme is explained with appropriate examples from the data obtained and previous research references wherever, an underlying theme similarity was found.

Birth songs were restricted only to baby boys as community could not find any reason to celebrate a female child birth. The themes were salutary with some gender discrimination found in favor of baby boy. Various symbols found in these songs are explained in their cultural and anthropological context.

6. CHARECTERISTICS OF THE FOLKSONGS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. First part tries to explain why women are more interested in singing folksongs. In the light of my research, and research experiences of Jassal (2012) in Punjab and Narayan (1997d) in Rajasthan, I tried to explore women singing of folk songs in Rajput community in Wahndo (Gujranwala). In the second part of the chapter, the stylistic characteristics of folksongs are discussed, the songs including both wedding and birth songs collected during fieldwork for the research.

It is known that folksongs indicate a variety of meanings and undertones both for natives as well as for the researcher. These meanings and undertones can be examined through the analysis of the songs that rest upon firstly, the manner in which a song is composed, and secondly on the way the singer performs the song. These two styles make folk songs unique and distinctive among other types of songs.

6.2. My Conceptualization of Folksongs

In simple words, a folk song originates among the people of a country or area; passed by oral tradition from one singer or generation to the next; often existing in several versions; and marked generally by simple, modal melody and narrative verse. For the purposes of this study, I define Rajput folk wedding and birth songs with regard to the Rajput women who sing the songs within their family gatherings (weddings and birth), and the professional singers who sing songs specifically on Rajput family functions only. Generally, wedding songs are sung in the ceremonies with the help of hand-claps or dhulak. However, the professional singer (mirasaan) uses dhulak or thaal as a musical instrument besides the aid of claps from the audience and her group of singers.

6.3. Why Women Sing (Folksongs)?

I quote from Narayan (1997d) research work on Rajasthan on Rajput woman by putting a question to her: why women sing (folk) songs? Her reply is as under:

[15]"Women are always singing," observed a middle-aged village woman in Kangra, North West India, in 1991. Whenever you go to a ritual gathering, women are singing," she said." Some songs you know, and some you just sing along with. Some songs attract you; they go and sit inside your heart. That's how you learn songs." The relationship between songs (*git*) and hearts/minds (*dil*) is a theme echoed by other female singers".

It may be a normal sight to observe, while talking in Indian cultural context, that whenever women gather for celebration or to share work, they sing. Whether there are village women working in rice fields, relatives gathering for a marriage, activists riding on a bus for a demonstration, the practice of singing has the powerful effect of binding the singers together. Joined "in one voice", singers create a sense of shared identification, even as the mingling of melodies, rhythms and words ease the passing of time. However, in Pakistani cultural context, the picture is different. Here, singing is mostly limited to weddings and birth ceremonies, as explicated by the Rajput community under study.

In this particular community, singing is mostly done by mirasaan, as family women are discouraged to sing or dance on family functions yet women manage to sing and sometimes dance too. On wedding, signing is a collective activity and women like to sing in groups. The folksongs are sung according to the rituals performed. The lyrics and tones are set according to the activity involved in the rituals. The songs are familiar to almost every woman as they know it by heart. Those who do not know the songs by heart, learn them through the rhymes and repetition of words and lines of the songs. These songs present women's collective expression while they sing songs on the ceremonies. Women sentiments are reflected in the songs and their emotions are best approached through the language of the songs. In this sense, the songs are "inescapably and fundamentally social" (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990).For example, Narayan (1997d) expresses that in the song Pakharu, women internalize their passive long-suffering as a wife because their men do not appreciate their efforts in serving them. These songs depict women feelings, wills, and desires; when severely crossed with their husbands, they may go so far as to curse their husband and his household.

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[15] Text taken from Kirin Narayan research article" Singing from Separation: Women's Voices in and about Kangra Folksongs *Oral Tradition*, 12/1 (1997): 23-53

Similar emotions are reflected in one song I collected from field, for example, a wife curses her husband and reveals her frustration as:

Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar

Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla para ghar baar

Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open for you

My king where you went last night my whole house remained open for you

You should rather die, I am so young (and you left me alone at night!)

Folksongs of any area present complete picture of the culture from where it belongs. Through songs, one can understand many ideologies constructed or reconstructed in the community. Explaining the rationale for singing folk song, Jassal (2012) claims that in cultures that do not openly discuss inner emotional states, songs are the shared tradition through which emotions are expressed, thus providing a medium for the expression of what might be taboo in everyday conversation.

That is true for the songs women sing, as the sentiments are shared without identification of the individuals. Through collective singing, their expression and experiences are shared. The lyrics of the songs that express their thoughts make them invisible individuals, but jointly identifiable group as 'women'. There might be many women in the community under study, who want to have the same sentiments for their in-laws, but they cannot say them; through songs they may have their emotional outlet collectively. Songs have allowed women (and men) through the ages to articulate, acknowledge and share impressions. Therefore, their validity for large group, especially those of women that cover precisely the kind of anonymity they want, facilitates them in the fleshing-out and articulation of shared experiences. Songs constitute the collective voice of women (Jassal, 2012).

Songs interpret many social realities generally. However, folk songs make it possible for us to understand the organization of maleness and femaleness in relation to a particular society, as the same songs suggest how dominant ideologies are not merely complied with, accommodated, and reinforced but also resisted and interrogated. Since songs are integral to people's lives, they possess various settings and functions: they shed light on caste, kinship and marriage, work cultures, gender, power, sexuality, family life, and patriarchy (Jassal, 2012).

Taking the example from the Rajput songs, we get to know that many stereotype images are not only constructed but also reinforced through folk songs. For example, the stereotypical image of a woman in every role: she is presented through songs as a mother-in-law who is ill-tempered; wife who is a jealous and grouchy person always wanting to snatch her husband away from her parents and sisters, etc. Similarly, the celebration of birth of a son also shows a daughter's status in the community. All of these social identities are created through songs, and after getting administered in the community, pass through generations by reinforcing a gender stereotyped image of women. Women are made to imagine and ascertain themselves in the created roles for them by the society. Jassal (2012) identifies some purposes of the songs that women sung on the ceremonies. They are not just mere songs for entertainment and amusement rather they have special aims to accomplish.

6.3.1. Songs as Forms of Communication

While looking for the answer to the question that why women sing songs leads us to more supplementary questions. What these songs tell us? In broad sense, what these songs tell us about caste, gender, and class that one cannot learn in other ways? What do the songs convey that might otherwise be hidden from simple observation?

Linking folk songs with poetry, Jassal quotes Friendrich (1996) who argues that through poetry and songs, "one is often given the gist of the culture in a way that would be difficult or impossible to infer. These insights and intuitions are of singular value because they characteristically deal with and involve the emotions, the cultural experience as felt in addition to as understood that is, in psychological terms, the phenomena of intention, identification and motivation that are often neglected in cultural analysis, including much of the recent research that combines an ideology of emotionality with practices that feature analytical instruments and

objectivized data'' (Friedrich 1996 cited in Jassal,2012). Similarly, like good poems, folksongs exist in the memories and voices of living individuals (Rao and Shulman, 1998 cited in Jasssal, 2012).

These strong intertextual connections and relationships between the songs of a region make them effective as forms of social communication. The social reality that folksongs are sung again and again and transferred through generations also indicates the high degree of acceptability of the ideas, moods, and messages they contain (Jassal, 2012).

6.3.2. Gender as Socially Constructed

"Gender", however, is a matter of culture; it refers to the social classification into "masculine" and "feminine" '(Oakley, 1972:18). This social classification prevails in folksongs as well. Songs can be regarded as a reserve pool of folk resources and wisdom that people may draw upon to reflect on, and understand and struggle with their own realities, and investigate how women's work songs become vehicles for the construction and reproduction of gender identity (Jassal, 2012). For example, the role of a daughter, as constructed in this song, depicts her economic dependence on her father and then on her husband.

Meree ronaq jhonaq ladoo khele guryaan

Baba easaa baar dhondio jis kee kothee khotla ho...

Tankhawa panj soo ho

Gharee time wali ho

My young beloved daughter who is wearing lot of jewelry is playing with a doll

O father! Look for such a match for me

Who has very large house

Who has salary 500 rupees!!

Has a wrist watch which tells time!!!

Therefore, singing passes on psychological strength to individual woman and to women as a group, and the underlying messages these songs transmit offer us a range of clues about how the feminine gender is constructed.

6.3.3. Songs as Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1977) defines cultural capital in order to understand how genres are learned and deployed in a strategic way. Bourdieu (1977) argues that any given social order is based on several types of capital, including both economic and cultural capital. Cultural capital refers to socially recognized and accepted cultural knowledge. Dirk (2001) supports by saying that the ongoing system of inequality is reproduced in contemporary society in its interaction with class and gender, and this system can be straightened out by adopting oral narratives (folk songs) as our lens. Anthropology has examined how women are embedded in relations of production, but certain of their aspects remain unexplored like cultural dimensions of women's work, the history of women's entry into the work force, the hidden nature of women's labor, women's access to and control over productive resources, and the dimension of women's consciousness.

Mary Douglas's understanding of the continuous process of "contestation, coordination and collaboration" (Rao and Walton 2004: 21) describe that multiple cultural codes are embedded in the songs. These codes, through the interpretations of the songs, help to discover the cultural dimensions of interactions of different ideologies constructed within the society.

6.3.4. Agency in Women's Songs

Mahmood (2005) broadens the notion of agency beyond that of Butler who defines it as the capacity to challenge norms. She cautions that values such as humility, shyness, or modesty should not be equated with passivity and inaction simply because they do not "buttress the autonomy of the individual" (p: 206-22). She argues that limiting the notion of agency and the actions taken by individuals in subcontinent context with intersection of gender, class, caste, and race should not be considered in compatibility with the western feminist movement terms of resistance.

Abu-Lughod (1990) has also cautioned against the tendency both to romanticize resistance and to treat agency as a synonym for resistance, as women always play active parts in accepting, accommodating, ignoring, resisting, or protesting and sometimes all at the same time.

In defining agency as the socio-cultural capacity to act, Ahearn (2011) suggests that instead of taking in the songs passively, we should look that the meanings that might emerge are constrained, that is how these meanings are socially arbitrated.

6.4. General Traits of the Folksongs

Generally, the language of the songs differs somewhat from the language of ordinary discourse, including textual repetition (of which there is a great deal in these songs - a song of four lines may last as many minutes), repetitious meter and melody etc., all of which make these songs more penetrating than speech (Lomax 1968). Lapses in competing sound also allow bits of the song or whole songs to be heard unchecked. Although most people (other than the singers) probably do not comprehend each word of the texts of the songs, they know the topics and melody and have general ideas about how they are developed in the songs. It can be compared with Scat singing[16] i.e. vocal improvisation without words with added humor.

The woman who sings the songs is bearer and oral transmitter of wedding songs. They sing or recite songs which they heard. Afterwards, they learnt and memorized when the songs were sung by others in ceremonies. All of the women from whom I recorded songs were illiterate, so they learnt the songs by heart and sang them on different wedding ceremonies within their families. The pattern of singing is that a lead singer sings the song and rest of the women accompany each other in chorus. Songs on the various events of the wedding ceremonies are usually sung in chorus.

There are many stylish features of the folk songs. Here, only those features are discussed which are found in the songs collected from the field. I analyzed the characteristics of folk songs by taking help from some archives and research articles on ethno-musicology. The information I obtained from the research was applied to my collection of folk songs. There have been many characteristics which were not found in wedding and birth songs and therefore, I did not include them in my analysis. I included only those which are unique to documented folk songs. The characteristic I applied to the folksongs have some technical terms, too, so I tried to explain them with the help of some of the guides of ethno-musicology[17].

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[16] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scat_singing
[17] Bonenfant, Yvon. Body Contact: Deep Expression, Social Touch, and Relationship through Voice and Sound

6.4.1. Figures of Sound

The figures of sound refer to the various sounds of vowels, consonants and clusters of consonants (speech sound other than vowel[18]) which appear in the songs. The language of the songs constitutes figures of sound including conventional devices such as onomatopoeia, alliteration, repetition, rhyme, consonance, assonance and tone. However, here I will discuss few of them which are applied to the collected songs. The figures of sound help to enhance and reveal the rhythm, the tonality and the musicality of folk (wedding and birth songs) songs of Rajput community sung on various events of the wedding and birth ceremonies.

6.4.2. Breath-Space

Breath-space is the moment when a singer pauses in the course of performing. The pause could be short or relatively long. This oral device reflects the difference between songs composed through writing and songs which are orally composed and orally transmitted. The folksong texts used for this study also have the breath-spaces between the lines which the singers use for their comfort in singing. Often the breath-space is filled or punctuated either by melodies and repetitive rhythms created by playing musical instruments or choruses sung by members of the singing group or by the audience /participants.

Le le jajjcha rani palna mool...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Yo.. palna tere mame ne gherwaya...

Aahe... mamee jhoote de gee palna mool

The other one

Nanandia mange heroon jaree

Ae... sub zevaroon mein mera tika bharee...

Wo bhi nanandia ko de doo

Nanandee ke vera jago...........

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[18] Encarta dictionary English (N. America)

173

Nanandia mange heroon jaree......

he vocables *Ae. Aahe* and *Yo* do not have a clear or direct lexical meaning, but they are used in the songs many times. Sometimes, the singers repeat them couple of times in one line.

As Dadee Sugroo reveals that

> "...the pauses inn the songs have been very helpful for her. She said that she uses pauses while singing to catch her breath, relax her vocal cavity and to compose the next part of the song. Taking breath-space is helpful in a way that I take time and use the moment of the breath-space to figure out the next thing to say when I resume the singing. The gives singer breath-space and audience an opportunity to participate inchorus singing" (interview 2012).

6.4.3. Vocables

A vocable is a verbal communicative device which does not convey direct lexical meaning. Its meaning can only be implied. Generally, vocables frequently occur in folksongs, especially in funeral song, satirical song, religious song, protests song, love song, and praise song.

Dadee Sugroo often includes vocables in her songs. When I asked her why she does it, she said that she uses vocables whenever she lacks words or phrases during her spontaneous singing of the songs. Uttering the vocables gives time to think of what word, phrase, sentence or statement to say next. It is also obvious that the vocables used by *Dadee* and other singers enhance the continuity of their songs. Sometimes, the vocables occur at the beginning of the songs. For instance, *Aahe... Yoo...* etc.

The responses of choruses contain repetitive vocables such as the expressions *Aahe...* and *yooe*. The vocable in a particular song may be repeated many times either by the lead singer or by those singing in the choruses. Another function of the vocables in folksongs is to enhance and maintain the rhythm and the melody of the songs.

6.4.4. Tonality

Since the texts of the songs are performed in human voice, they benefit greatly from the flexibility of the voice, which is not easily represented on the printed page. The singer whose

voice is not strong enough gains little popularity. Song-makers often use tone in a special and an exaggerated manner for lyrical effects, for emphasis and to stir up emotions in the singer and in the listeners. Even when the singers do not make certain gestures or dramatizations, they can still create dramatic effects by applying vocal variety and high pitches. These tonal features can be noticed easily when one listens to the songs.

While I was recording songs, I observed that some of the words were highlighted by the singer due to their importance in the song. Singer also uses some body and hand gestures to make the audience take notice of the words of the songs they stress upon through their voice tone. They change their tone according to the importance of the words in the song. For example, in the songs which have some sexual connotation, the singer twitches her eye to get more attention for the word and song from the audience. Sometimes, the singer changes her voice tone to highlight the word or lines of the song.

For example in the case of this song

Ae… sub zevaroon mein mera tika bharee…

Wo bhi nanandia ko de doo

Nanandee ke veera jago…………

Nanandia tikka leti nahein

Nanandia mange heroon jaree……

The singer, with hand gestures, highlighted the line *nanandia tikka leti nahein* by repeating it many times loudly through her tone.

6.4.5. Repetition
Repetition is a technique which is often employed in most of the folksongs including Rajput folksongs too. The repetition is either of words, phrases, sentences or choruses. It is necessary to understand first the aesthetic value of repetition in a song text. Besides the aesthetic impact, repetition does have a stylistic and rhythmic value in the song text. One is in giving certain amount of emphasis to a point that needs to be stressed.

Dadee Sugroo points out;

175

"Repetition is also used sometimes to mark a feeling of excitement, anxiety and fear. Repetition is also used by singers when they are short of new words, phrases, sentences and new ideas as they spontaneously compose and sing songs"(informal talk) .

Repetitions of words and phrases can be found in almost all the Rajput folksongs used for this study. For instance, the words '*banna*' and '*banno*' have been used in many songs. Besides, many lines of the songs are repeated many times in one song. In the an other song for example, in the beginning of every song, the first lines are repeated many times because of many reasons, sometimes to remember other lines or melody, or for attracting and getting attention of the audience. In some songs, some lines are repeated several times.

Some of the examples are:

Nanandia maange heroon jaree (4 times)

Le le Jajjcha rani palna mool (4 times)

Joore ki lut khool (after every line of the song).

In most of the other songs, the repetition of the lines is more than twice. The singer in order to get attention from the audience reapeats the song lines many times. This repetition also sets the mood of singing among the audience.

6.4.6. Rhyme
Rhyme is a much important part of the folksongs, and this characteristic helps people to remember them easily. Almost all the folksongs have rhyming words which help the singer to remember them and make them popular among the audience. Some of the examples include:

Mubarik he sehre kee gharee

Tere mame lootayan undhan sona

Teree mamee lotayen here kee kali – mote kee laree

Lo... Mubarik ho sehre kee gharee

The words *gharee* (moment) and *laree* (bead of flowers or pearls) are rhyming-words in this song.

6.4.7. Anaphora

Anaphora is a verbal communicative device which involves deliberate repetition of a word or a phrase at the beginning of successive lines in a song. An example can be seen in the following song:

Aae.... he ehde-i- jawani mian gharee sehre ki...

Aree.....he ehde-i- jawani mean gharee sehre ki...

Dostoo tum ko mubarik ho gharee sehre ki

Mehfil main ja kar un ke aba jee se keh dena ...

Donoo hathoo mein utha laween laree sehre ki

In the first and second lines of the song, the words Aae (expression of happiness) and Aree (address to some girl to be attentive and listen to something) have been repeated. The anaphora reinforces the tone of attention, happiness, fear or melancholy expressed in the song. Also, it harmonizes the formal structure of the song.

6.4.8. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a bold overstatement or extravagant exaggeration of facts used either for serious or comic effect. The use of hyperbole sometimes prompts a negative response as in the skepticism expressed towards a tale or a fictional story. On the other hand, some people find songs containing exaggerated ideas and incidence to be more interesting and more entertaining.

Dil mil gaaya jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

Aahe.... Sone ki thaliyoon meain bhojin parosa

Jeth gee khalo mere kahe se...

And

Phoolon ki seaj moti jhaler ke taakiye

Jeth gi soo joa mere kahe se

Dil mil gaaya jeth bare se...

6.4.9. Imagery

An image is "a mental picture" created either by a writer or a singer by means of the words which are used. It represents an idea, a thought or an emotion by an object, action, or situation without mentioning that idea, thought or emotion. The images used in folksongs are not abstract but concrete and familiar to folksingers and their audiences. This is mainly because the images are mostly taken from local, natural and human environments which are familiar to these singers, makers and their audiences. The images make the persons, ideas and emotions described in the songs more concrete and more colorful.

In Rajput folk songs, images are taken most exclusively from daily life like saboon (soap), sonee ki thali (golden plate), paan (petal leaf for chewing) jewelry; majority of the thing are of daily use and women can relate with them in their daily life. However, these things are creative and imaginative for folksongs. For example,

Aahe.... Sone ki thaliyoon mein bhojin parosa

Phoolon ki seaj moti jhaler ke taakiye

One of the respondents told me:

> We are from royal pedigree. Our forefathers were kings and they used to eat in expensive utensils. These lines refer to those days. Those days are gone but still the references are there and we use them without changing them. Still we enjoy our past (interview, 2012).

Now nobody use golden plates now but for the sake of making it creative and significant, gold is used in imagination adding worth to the inexpensive plate.

Certain images used in the songs depict aspects of human nature, experiences, desires and aspirations. For instance, most of the love songs contain images that reflect human feelings and desires for some sort of love relationship. The songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs

178

contain images that depict and describe behaviors and attitudes which Rajput people consider to be human follies, vices and taboos. These include flirting with tabooed relations, pride, arrogance, greed and corruption. Some images are used to express aspects of social and cultural values.

6.4.10. Direct Questions and Answers
Direct questions and their answers also occur in folksongs. The following song is in dialogue form between husband and wife:

Woman   *Raja kahaan gae the mare khulla para ghar baar*

              Raat Raja kahaan gae the mere khulla para ghar baar

              Doob kiyon na mar gae the mare yareen umer nadaan

Man   *Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat*

              Goree wahan gae the thara tikka gharya saree raat

6.4.11. Euphemism
Euphemism is "the substitution of mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one". This verbal communicative device is employed in Rajput songs, especially in songs of abuse, satirical songs and political songs. Some Rajput folksongs are modest, and for security reasons euphemisms are used instead of harsh and vulgar or indecent expressions.

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

Aahe.... Sone ki thaliyoon meain bhojin parosa

Jeth gee khalo mere kahe se ...

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

and

Phoolon ki seaj moti jhaler ke taakiye

Jeth gi soo joa mere kahe se

Dil mil gaya jeth bare se...

Jethani rani bhathie hoehe lare se

An example of euphemism can be found in this song. The expression is a modest substitute for saying "sleeping with *jeth*" or involving in affair with *jeth*'s son.

6.4.12. Humor

Humorous expressions are generously employed in Rajput folksongs, especially in songs of abuse and in satirical songs where individuals or group of people are satirized through songs for saying or doing things which are considered socially and culturally unacceptable in Rajput society.

Mere jeth ka larka bara paapi

Waan to mara seen kaha chachee

Maen tikka le aya mere chachee

Zara la ka dekhade mere chachee

Mere jeth ka larka bara paapi

6.4.13. Direct Address

There are some songs that use the direct address to the person concerned. The direct address in songs helps the singing of the songs in a more theatrical or dramatic way. Also, it makes the songs more relevant and personal to the individuals who are directly addressed. The address in direct songs is usually happens in songs as women are not supposed to talk directly to their father, husband or brother for many demands they ask for in the songs.

For example, in this song daughter is directly addressing her father about her match for a husband in this way:

Meree ronaq jhonaq ladoo khele guryaan

Baba easaa bar dhondio jis kee kothee khotla ho...

Tankhawa panj soo ho

Gharee time wali ho

A daughter is directly asking her father about her future husband that he should have certain traits which she wishes for herself.

With husband she directly speaks like;

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

La gia santare ka perr humara jia legnee noo

Chore gia sandhee si bobo humare sa ng larnee noo

6.4.14. Symbolism

Many symbols are used in the songs, and this symbolism is often defined, interpreted and appreciated within its cultural context. Among the Rajput people, certain plants and colours are recognized and associated with certain meanings. The symbols used in Rajput folksongs are powerful because they are better understood by insiders within their own culture.

For example, red and green color is considered good omen for married women. Green color represents fertility, and red is the color of *suhag*[19]. Examples of such songs are as under:

Mere heryalian ... jhoree ki lut kholo
Apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo
Soo ae jore waliyan ... jhoree ki lut kholo
Apni amman piyarian jhore ki lut kholo

Whereas *'heryalian'* is green and 'soo ae' means red color and both symbolize married women. However in one songs (explained earlier) that the word haryala is also referred to groom which have the same meaning as for bride.

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[19] Suhag. Literally "good fortune" (from Sanskrit *saubhagya*), but used exclusively to denote the good fortune of a married woman whose husband is alive.

6.5. Conclusion

The analysis of Rajput folksongs in this chapter shows some of the qualities and artistic characteristics of Rajput folksongs. Regarding the style of composition, the songs are composed orally by making use of oral formulae which are frequently and widely used in Rajput oral tradition.

The transcribed texts of Rajput folksongs inevitably exclude many of the technical elements which exist in the orally performed versions. These include the visual aspects of the oral performance such as the performer, the audience clapping, gesturing and mimicking. In fact, it is almost impossible to get the full aesthetics of Rajput folksongs if they are transcribed. It is doubtful if even a skillful person could reproduce in translation the sounds and sights, the liveliness, the humor and the effectiveness of the oral versions.

I had problems in finding the English equivalents for some lexical expression used in songs terms. This suggests that Rajput folksongs are better understood and better appreciated by listening, viewing and participating in their performance rather than in reading the transcribed texts. The transcribed texts of the songs are limited attempts to document the songs. But despite such limitations, I have tried to observe the artistic qualities of Rajput folksongs.

7. SUMMARY CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Summary

Folksong is one of the genres of the folklore. This study comes under the broad umbrella of folklore with anthropological perspectives and methodology. The study particularly focuses on wedding and birth songs sung by women on the respective ceremonies.

The overriding purpose of this study was to investigate the images of Rajput women in their folk wedding and birth songs. To accomplish that goal it is necessary to know about the folk songs and their connection the ideology and social construct of gender within the lives of people understudy. Therefore during literature review I studied exclusive literature on gender and folklore, family folklore studies specially in sub continental perspective. It was important for me to build a foundation before I leave to the field for research. I was sure that once these fundamental steps were achieved, this research could go forward. This chapter reports the summary, conclusions and recommendations that resulted from this study.

The study, a qualitative one, was conducted in my in-laws families making it unique and very much part of family folklore research and only women from my in-laws' family participated. I conducted eight interviews in total from women (seven family members and one professional singer) and recorded 15 songs from them. Most of the respondents did not allow me to record the song in their voices so I wrote those songs instead of recording them. There was no age limit for the respondents as any women who knew about the songs participated in the research. Moreover, I also held informal talks with many of the women I met during field work. Some extracts from these conversations are used in the discussion chapter for clarity and understanding of the songs. The folk songs were collected and analyzed in a four- stage procedure;

a) Collection/ recording of songs from women performer / knower

b) Categorization of songs according to their themes i.e. birth songs and marriage songs

c) Writing and translation of folksong into Urdu and English languages for understanding of text and their context

d) Critical examination and analysis of the folksongs for its meanings in cultural context

Wedding and birth within the Rajput community with special emphasis on kinship and marriage also provided pedestal for the analysis of the results. Analysis of the folk songs i.e. wedding and birth songs was completed in the light of the theoretical models such as social learning theory, feminist theory and psychoanalytic theory which provide base for the conceptual framework. Themes of folksongs were categorized according to the rituals in which they are performed and the content they represent. The themes within the folksongs were further divided into subthemes for analyses. Additionally certain symbols and symbolic activities were also analyzed that were revealed in the folksongs. Characteristics of the folk songs were explored with examples from the documented songs.

Participant observation was another tool for research which helped me in observing women in their daily lives while dealing with different relationships. This observation helped me in understanding the Rajput culture in a natural setting.

The study was limited only to women as men were excluded from the research. Therefore it might miss men's point of view regarding images of women in Rajput community understudy. Moreover, majority of the men did not know wedding songs or birth songs.

7.2. Conclusion

From the analysis of Rajput folk (wedding and birth) songs some salient points are drawn some of them are as under:

First and foremost, the folksong in general and Rajputs in particular, is an oral expression of women which provides a strong base for their understanding and interpretation of culture. Secondly, the folksong is a forum for the expression of diverse ideas and opinions of women. It serves to entertain abuse or amuse and express the sentiments of women courageously and fearlessly.

Thirdly, through the folksongs, encoded messages, the meanings women have for these messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted can be studied. Similarly, through the folksong the culture of a people can be better understood.

Lastly, transmission of the folksong is largely by the people in all societies. It is because it reaches too many people in a relatively short time. Also, the folksongs easily remain in the minds of people since some key words are easily memorized. Besides it is one of the most liberal means of expression, it transfers from one generation to another especially in the societies where

184

freedom of speech and expression is not allowed. In short, the knowledge of many cultural beliefs, morals, customs and the world view of the people and specially women can be learned through the folksong sung on different occasions.

Folk (wedding and birth) songs are very significant aspect of Rajput women lives. These songs provide women a platform through which women express their feeling and other sentiments which otherwise they cannot. They convey their fears, desires and other unspeakable emotions by using humor and satire in cheerful ways.

By the analysis of the folksongs it can be concluded that songs address the significant aspects of women lives. Firstly they provide women a platform for all kinds of expressions. These songs also revealed the stereotyped images of the women of the Rajput community being transferred from one generation to other. In certain songs the stereotypical representation of women in different roles is depicted for example a docile daughter who marries wherever her elders especially father agrees; a sister who loves her brother and desperately prays for his marriage; an economically dependent wife who asks for monetary items from her husband; a mischievous mother in law who is never liked by her daughter in law and vice versa , etc. Therefore it can be added that these songs produce and reproduce the traditional and conventional images of women in the Rajput community understudy quite well. These songs are the medium through which the stereotypical images of women are transferred from one generation to other generation.

he other significant aspect of the folk song is that it provides an opportunity for women to protest and the challenge the patriarchal male social order by conveying subtle hidden messages of intimacy to her husband, messages of resentment to her in-laws and joint family system which is prevailing in the community. This kind of protest is unfamiliar to the western feminist ideas that are used to see women of the third world as passive and unlikely to resist patriarchal order. Chandra Mohanty' criticizes the western feminist's perspective who picture third world women as "homogeneous 'powerless' group often located as implicit victims of particular socioeconomic systems" (Mohanty 1991:57) In her article, Gold (1997) in her research on Rajasthani women' oral performances   claims   that   superficial analysis of women oral narratives do not reflect the true picture of women' expressions. It looks that women oral narratives transfer gender stereotypes images from one generation to other which is one of the functions of the folk songs. However, the critical analysis of the folk traditions reveals that

these narratives such as of modesty and embarrassment are not practiced the way western feminists describe and prescribe them for third world women within the culture.

While talking to the women I also felt that they are not as submissive as they are told by males of the family. I was puzzled when I decided to work on the topic as most of the men discouraged me by informing that their women did not know much about the academic knowledge I wished to obtain for the research. They told me that women hardly talk on such issues. But my experience was otherwise. Women wanted to talk and share experiences with me as they were happy that their words and opinions are valued. They were hesitant but did not feel shame while talking about songs having subtle intimate massages. They were quiet frank and forthcoming while sharing their stories with me. I am, therefore in agreement with Gold and Mohanty that women are not voiceless and submissive as depicted in many outsider views of South Asian women from orientalist to feminists. Drawing on the analysis that why women resist and challenge in the folklore songs , the best possible answer is explained by Gold(1997) and I quote " the vigor of female demands in folklore would be that they constitute safe releases of resistant energy that neither expresses nor affects actual domestic circumstances"(Gold,1997). Therefore the both purposes of the songs are served within the cultural context in which these women live.

7.3. Findings (Portrait of Rajput Woman through Folksongs)

After analyzing the folk songs, I try to make a hypothetical portrait of Rajput woman based on the characteristics uncovered through the folksongs.

She is expressive in all kind of emotions and mostly affirmative emotions are for her natal relatives and negative towards in laws. (See songs no5, 8, 10, 11, and 14).

She is vocal and blunt in expression of love and intimacy as she is not afraid of sending messages to her husband and other in-laws male relatives. She is also vocal to her father while asking for a rich man proposal for herself. (See songs no 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14).

She likes to involve in family politics and knows how to play this game. She knows how, whom and which person is to be controlled to make a space in the conjugal house. She anticipates fights and family conflict well before time. (See songs no14, 10 and 8).

She doesn't like to live in joint family system and thinks that the system provides basis for fights and misunderstandings between husband and wife and other family members. (See songs no.14,5, 13and 14).

She is the lonely woman who waits for her husband. She wants to stop her husband by seducing him and forbids him that if he leaves her with in- laws, fights will take place. (See songs no5 and 14).

She demands monetary items like clothes, jewelry from husband so that she may get attention from her husband and other relatives. (See songs no. 10, 4 and 9).

Apprehensive as well as hostile towards their relationship with in- laws as she always expect fights from them. She also complains to her husband about the hostile behaviour her in-laws have towards her. (See songs no14, 5, and 9).

She has accepted stereotypical role as daughter, mother, sister and wife and oscillates between these roles. She remains under pressure from the people for becoming good daughter, devoted sister, loving wife and mischievous daughter and mother in law (See songs no 4, 5, 7, 8,9,11 and 14).

She is recognized in songs not as an individual woman but in relation to men such as daughter of a father, sister of a brother, wife of a person and mother of a son. (See songs no4, 5, 7, 8, 9).

On becoming mother of son her status is raised and she becomes queen mother and queen of the house. She is respected and feels proud about herself. Everybody even in her in laws family becomes happy with her and respects her. (See songs no7).

As a woman she is economically dependent on man. She is the one who always asks for monetary items from men of her family irrespective of natal and conjugal relatives. Women ask for monetary things and sexual intimacy; song unites the woman's proffered enticements of sweets and intimacy with her demands for ornaments and attention: Women's genres tend to portray domestic exchanges; male genres involve public oratory (Ramanujan, 1986). (See songs no15, 9,7,6,4 and 2).

These songs depict women as receivers and men as giver or providers of the family. The husband's greater power to travel and to shop is of course implied in the preceding examples as well, and stresses not only his greater mobility but also his control over economic resources. (See songs no. 7).

7.4. Recommendations and Suggestions

The following recommendations are offered for related research in the field of gender and folklore.

I may recommend here that the Rajput people especially women should put more efforts in revamping their folksong which is almost disappearing. Otherwise with the vanishing of songs some important aspects of their culture will also become extinct after some time.

The older generation may teach and transfer folklore heritage in general and folksongs in particular to the younger generation which they inherited from their forefathers. The oral traditions must   maintain their continuity for their survival and endurance.

It is equally recommend to folklorists, literary artists and researchers to preserve folksongs and other oral traditions of the Rajput culture in Pakistan. Therefore not only documentation but critical analysis of the folklore lore is highly needed for further research studies.

There is a great need for literary analytical studies on the women. There are many other genres of the folklore that exist in this community such as proverbs, epics, riddles and myths etc that may be explored for further research.

I must emphasize here that there is a desperate need to preserve the *Haryanvi* language along with its oral traditions. The documentation as well as the transcription of folksongs is important as most oral tradition is changing rapidly in the face of cultural evolution.

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Jame:

Age:

Marital status:

Songs type: Butna / Henna/ wedding / childbirth

1. From how many years you are singing?

2. What kind of songs you sing?

3. What is the difference between a professional singer and ordinary women signing?

4. What would be different?

5. What techniques you use while singing folk wedding or birth song? Name some of them

6. What are main feature of the folk songs which you keep in mind while singing songs?

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name:

Age:

Marital status:

Songs type: Butna / Henna/ wedding / childbirth

What this song is about?

What this song tells about women?

What type of woman it depicts?

What is the most common theme of this song?

Why the song depicts a certain kind of relationship or theme?

Does this songs is related to the ritual on which it is sung?

How the song is related to the ritual on which it is sung?

Are there any songs which are sung on baby girl birth? If no, what is the reason?

In your opinion why women sing songs?

Do you like to sing the songs(s) and why?

Would you tell me why people on weddings tolerate gali or sarcastic songs?

Do you think that a woman depicted in this song is related to real life women?

Why you still remember this song?

Why girl are less likely to remember these folk wedding and birth songs?

Song #1

سہرا

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

دوستوں تم کو مبارک ہو گھڑی سہرے کی

محفل میں جا کے ان کے ابا جی سے کہہ دینا

دونوں ہاتھوں میں اٹھالا ویں لٹری سہری کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

محفل میں جا کے ان کے تایا جی سے کہہ دینا

دونوں ہاتھوں میں اٹھالا ویں لٹری سہری کی

محفل میں جا کے ان کے چاچا جی سے کہہ دینا

دونوں ہاتھوں میں اٹھالا ویں لٹری سہری کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

محفل میں جا کے ان بھائیوں سے کہہ دینا

دونوں ہاتھوں میں اٹھالا ویں لٹری سہری کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

کاٹی گیندا باغ تمہارے میں کھلا

منہ تو چھوٹا ہے مگر بات بڑی سہرے کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

چلتا پُرزہ ہے مگر دیکھے حکمت اسکی

آئے کیا بھلے وقت میں تقدیر سہرے کی

آئی ہے عید جوانی میں گھڑی سہرے کی

song # 2

آئے مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی

مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی لو موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی موتی کی لڑی

آج تیرا آبا لوٹا ویں آن دھن سونا

اماں لوٹا ویں تیرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی موتی کی لڑی

آج تیرا تایا لوٹا ویں آن دھن سونا

تائی لوٹا ویں سہرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی موتی کی لڑی

مبارک ہو سدا آباد رہو

تیری چاچے لوٹا ویں ان دھن سونا

چاچی لٹا ویں سہرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی موتی کی لڑی

تیرے بھائی لٹا ویں ان دھن سونا

بینا لوٹا ویں ہیرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

تیرا نانا لٹا ویں ان دھن سونا

نانی لوٹا ویں تیرے کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی سہرے کی لڑی

تیرے ماں نے لٹوائیں ان دھن سونا

تیری ماں نے لٹوائیں سہرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی سہرے کی لڑی

تیرا بچھا لٹوائیں ان دھن سونا

بڑا لٹوائیں سہرے کی کی موتی کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی سہرے کی لڑی

لو مبارک ہو سہرے کی گھڑی سہرے کی لڑی

song # 4

نہندیا مانگے ہیروں جڑی رے

آے۔۔۔زیوروں میں میرا ٹِکا بھاری

آے۔۔۔زیوروں میں میرا ٹِکا بھاری

وہ بھی نہندیا کو دے دو

وہ بھی نہندیا کو دے دو

نہند کے ویرا۔۔۔جاگو۔۔۔نہندیا ٹِکا لیتی نہیں

نہندیا مانگے ہیروں جڑی۔۔۔نہندیا لیتی نہیں

سب جیوروں میں میرا لوکٹ بھاری

سب جیوروں میں میرا لوکٹ بھاری

وہ بھی نہندیا کو دے دو

وہ بھی نہندیا کو دے دو

نہندی کی ویرا۔۔۔جاگو۔۔۔نہندیا لوکٹ لیتی نہیں رے

نہندیا مانگے ہیروں جڑی۔۔۔نہندیا لیتی نہیں

سب جیوروں میں میری پونچھی بھاری۔۔۔وہ بھی نہندیا کو دے دو

جاگو میرا راجا۔۔۔نہندیا وہ بھی لیتی ہیں

نہندیا مانگے ہیروں جڑی۔۔۔نہندیا پونچھی لیتی ہیں

song # 5

میں نیاڑی ہوگی بنٹرے

چھجا دلاں چبارہ لیوں بنٹرے

تیری ماں لڑاگی بنٹرے

قینچی سے جیب کترے دیوگی بنٹرے

میں نیاڑی ہوگی بنٹرے

میں نیاڑی ہوگی بنٹرے

تیری بہن لڑاگی بنٹرے

تیری بہن لڑاگی بنٹرے

قینچی سے جیب کترے دیوگی بنٹرے

میں نیاڑی ہوگی بنٹرے

میں نیاڑی ہوگی بنٹرے

تیری بھابی لڑاگی بنٹرے

قینچی سے جیب کترے دیوگی بنٹرے

song # 6

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

وا تو مارا سیں کہا چاچی

ذرا لاکا دکھارے میرے چاچی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

وا تو مارا سیں کہا چاچی

میں کانے لیا یا میری چاچی

ذرا پا کا دکھا میری چاچی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

وا تو مارا سیں کہا چاچی

میں ہار لیا یا میری چاچی

ذرا پا کا دکھا میری چاچی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

میرے جیٹھ کا لڑی بڑا پاپی

دانتو مارا سیں کہا چاچی

میں کنگن لیا یا میری چاچی

ذرا پا کا دکھا میری چاچی

لے لے بہو رانی پالنا مول

لے لے بچہ رانی پالنا مول

اے لو پالنا تیرا ابا نے گھڑایا

اے لو پالنا تیرا ابا نے گھڑایا

آ ئے اماں جھوٹے دی گی پالنا مول

آ ئے اماں جھوٹے دی گی پالنا مول

لے لے بہو رانی پالنا مول

لے لے بچہ رانی پالنا مول

یّو پالنا تیرے ٹایا نے گھڑایا

یّو پالنا تیرے ٹایا نے گھڑایا

آ ئے مائی جھوٹے دیگی پالنا مول

آ ئے مائی جھوٹے دیگی پالنا مول

لے لے بھائیوں پیاری پالنا مول

لے لے بہو رانی پالنا مول

لے لے بچہ رانی پالنا مول

آ ئے یّو پالنا تیرے چاچے نے گھڑایا

آ ئے یّو پالنا تیرے چاچے نے گھڑایا

آئے چاچی جھوٹے دی گی پالنا مول

آئے چاچی جھوٹے دی گی پالنا مول

لے لے کنڈیا پیاری پالنا مول

لے لے بہو رانی پالنا مول

لے لے بچہ رانی پالنا مول

song # 8

جیٹھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

جیٹھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

آئے سونے کی تھلیوں میں بھوجن پُروسا

آئے سونے کی تھلیوں میں بھوجن پُروسا

جیٹھ جی کھالو میرے کہے سے

جیٹھ جی کھالو میرے کہے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

آئے سونے کا کڈوا گنگا جل پانی

آئے سونے کا کڈوا گنگا جل پانی

جیٹھ جی پی لو میرے کہے سے

جیٹھ جی پی لو میرے کہے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

جیٹھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

آئے۔۔۔۔پان پچاسی کا بیڑا منگایا

آئے۔۔۔۔پان پچاسی کا بیڑا منگایا

جیٹھ جی چالو میرے کہے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

جھٹیھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

آئے۔۔۔۔پھولوں کی بیچ موتی جھمار کے تکیے

آئے۔۔۔۔پھولوں کی بیچ موتی جھمار کے تکیے

جیٹھ جی سو جو میرے کہے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

جھٹیھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

جھٹیھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

آئے۔۔۔۔ستا سا پانی صابن کی تکیہ

آئے۔۔۔۔ستا سا پانی صابن کی تکیہ

جیٹھ جی نہالو میرے کہے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

دل مل گیا جیٹھ بڑے سے

جھٹیھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

جھٹیھانی رانی بیٹھے ہوے ہے لڑے سے

میری رونق جھونق لڈ دو کھلے گڑیاں

میری رونق جھونق لڈ دو کھلے گڑیاں

بابا ایسا کر ڈھونڈیو جسکی کوٹھی کھٹلا ہو

بابا ایسا کر ڈھونڈیو جسکی کوٹھی کھٹلا ہو

تنخواہ ۵۰۰۰ ہو

تنخواہ ۵۰۰۰ ہو

میری رونق جھونق لڈ دو کھلے گڑیاں

بابا ایسا کر ڈھونڈیو جسکی کوٹھی کھٹلا ہو

تنخواہ ۵۰۰۰ ہو ۔۔۔۔۔ گھڑی ٹائم والی ہو

گوری وہاں گئے تھے تھارے کانٹے گھڑائے ساری رات

ڈوب کیوں نہ مر گئے تھے میری باڑ بن عمر نادان

رات۔۔۔ راجا کہاں گئے تھے مارا اُکھلیا پڑیا گھر بار

song # 11

اررے ارے چھوری بانگڑ کی

تھاری عقل کیتے کھوری سے

کرم پھُٹے اُن مرداں کے

جن کی جورو موٹی سے

درواجے ماں پھنس گی سے

دھکم دھکا ہوری سے

اررے ارے چھوری بانگڑ کی

تھاری عقل کیتے کھوری سے

کرم پھُٹے اُن مرداں کے

جن کی جورو تتلی سے

تیج ہوا ماں اُڑ گی سے

پکڑم پکڑا ہوری سے

کرم پھُٹے اُن مرداں کے

جنکی جورو کانی سے

دھری کوٹھری میں کھو گی سے

ڈھونڈم ڈھنڈا ہوری سے

اررے ارے چھوری بانگڑ کی

تھاری عقل کیتے کھوری سے

کرم پُھٹے اُن مرداں کے

جن کی جوڑو گوری سے

روئی کے کھوئے ماں گُھس گی سے

لُکن چُھپی ہو رہی سے

ارے ارے چھوری بانگڑ کی

تھاری عقل کیتے کھوری سے

song # 12

آئے ۔۔۔ میری ہر بالیاں ۔۔۔۔ جوڑے دی کٹ کھولو

او ۔۔۔۔ اپنی اماں پیاریاں ۔۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو

آئے دلی جسیر والیاں ۔۔۔ آئے ۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو

ہائے ۔۔۔ سُوئے جوڑے والیاں ۔۔۔ آئیئے ۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو
آئے ۔۔۔۔ ٹمکے چُھمر پیاریاں ۔۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو

اے تائے چاچو پیاریاں ۔۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو
اے خانے مامے پیاریاں ۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو
اے سارے کنڈبا پیاریاں ۔۔۔ جوڑے کی کٹ کھولو

جیہا گرتا سیاں پیرا، وسیا پیرا دبوریا

سیاں کے بھروسے منے جا جا گیا دبوریا

کھڑیاں لکھاواں پڑیا لکھاوا۔۔ ٹھوسا لے لے دبوریا

تیرے میری نہ بنا گی گی علیحدہ ہو جا دبوریا

جیسا صافحہ سیاں باندھا ویسا باندھا دبوریا

سیاں کے بھروسے منے جا جا گیا دبوریا

کھڑیاں لکھاواں پڑیا لکھاوا۔۔ ٹھوسا لے لے دبوریا

تیرے میری نہ بنا گی گی علیحدہ ہو جا دبوریا

جیسی دھوتی سیاں باندھا ویسی باندھا دیوریا

سیاں کے بھروسے منے جا جا گیا دیوریا

کھڑیاں لکھاواں پڑیا لکھاوا۔۔ ٹھوسا لے لے دبوریا

تیرے میری نہ بنا گی گی علیحدہ ہو جا دبوریا

لا گیا سنگترے کا پیڑ ماراجیا لگنے تو

چھوڑ گیا سندھڑی سی اماں ہمارے سنگ لڑنے نُو

لا گیا سنگترے کا پیڑ ماراجیا لگنے تو

چھوڑ گیا سندھڑی سی بولو ہمارے سنگ لڑنے نُو

لا گیا سنگترے کا پیڑ ماراجیا لگنے تو

چھوڑ گیا سندھڑی سی بھابھی ہمارے سنگ لڑنے نُو

اماں کے تم لاڈلے لے رے ہریالہ نٹرا

بابا چڑھاے گا برات تیری ہریالہ نٹرا

بہنا کے تم لاڈلے رے ہریالہ نٹرا

جیجا چڑھاے گا برات تیری ہریالہ نٹرا

بجتے اویں ڈھول تیرا رے ہریالہ نٹرا

چمکتا اویں ہر ہر یار تیرا رے ہریالہ نٹرا

چاچی کے تم لاڈلے لے رے ہریالہ نٹرا

چاچا چڑھاے گا برات تیری رے ہریالہ نٹرا

بجتے اویں ڈھول تیرا رے ہریالہ نٹرا

چمکتا اویں ہر ہر یار تیرا رے ہریالہ نٹرا

تم کس سنگ بیاون آئے رے بنا

ہم دارے کے بینگ بیاون آئے رے

تیری دادی کا اعتبار منا تھوڑا رے بنا

تم جلدی کرو رے ننا

تم کس سنگ بیاون آئے رے بنا

ہم ابا کے سنگ بیاون آئے ری بنی

تم جلدی کرو رے ننا

تیری ماں کا اعتبار منا تھوڑا رے بنا

تم جلدی کرو رے ننا

song # 17

اونچی سڑھی بلنگ دروازہ

بنا رے تیرے سڑھی پہ بھالھو چڑھ گی

سرمہ لایوں ترت کا تا جا

بنا رے تیرے سڑھی پہ سالی چڑھ گی

بٹری لایوں ترت کی تاز جی

بنا رے تیرے سڑھی پہ چڑھ گی

چوکی لایوں ترت کی تا جی

بنا رے میرا دیکھن کا راجہ

بٹنا لایوں ترت کا تاجہ

نو سہ میرا دیکھن کا راجہ

نو سہ میرا دیکھن کا راجہ