

Impact Factor: 6.017

ISSN: 2278-9529

GALAXY

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Special Issue on Tribal Culture, Literature and Languages

National Conference Organised by
Department of Marathi, Hindi and English

Government Vidarbha Institute of Science and
Humanities, Amravati (Autonomous)

13 Years of Open Access

Managing Editor: Dr. Madhuri Bite

Guest Editors:

Dr. Anupama Deshraj

Dr. Jayant Chaudhari

Dr. Sanjay Lohakare

www.galaxyimrj.com

About Us: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/about-us/>

Archive: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/contact-us/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/faq/>



Equality, Festivity and Language in the Lives of the *Korku* Community in Melghat's Region: An Analysis

Mr. Jagdish B. Mahale

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of English,
Shri Vasantnao Naik Mahavidyalaya, Dharni,
Dharni. Dist-Amravati (MS) India.

Abstract:

The Korku is an aboriginal community in Melghat. It is a sub-branch of munda and koleriya tribe. It is related to the Dravidian tribe of central India. The Satpuda Mountains and mahadev hills are the original habitant of the korku people. Korku is their dialect. This tribe is economically very backward. Their life is completely dependent on nature. Both men and women work on the farm. The korku tribe do not have attitude of accumulation of goods and money and during the farming, profit making is not the goal of their life because of this attitude, this tribe lives happy and long life. The present paper deals with equality. Equality seems between men and women in the society. Festivity is one of the vital aspects of their life. Korku language which is spoken by them is lucid. The tribe has cherished this language from many generations.

Keywords: *Korku, Tribe, Melghat, Equality, Festivity, Dialect.*

Introduction:-

Melghat is the geographical region between *Satpuda* mountain range and *Gavilgad*. As many Ghats meet there, the region became confluent. On the top of the mountain and in the valleys, there dwells a tribal since long ago. Prime tribal castes such as Korku, Bhillala (descendants of Bhillas) Gond, Nihala and Basod live there. There is a settlement of korku tribals in the forest on the top of the mountain in a valley on the Satapuda mountain range in Melghat. 'Korku' is a sub branch of the Munda or koleriya tribe. They are also related to the Dravidian tribe of Central India and the korva tribe. The area where the korku live is also known as "Kua" or rough reason. The Satpuda Mountains and Mahadev hills are the original habitat of the korku people. This tribal tribe is scatter in East Nimad, Baitul in Madhya



Pradesh and Melghat in Maharashtra. There are 315 villages in Melghat and 80 percent korku people live in it. The word “Korku” is related to the word “Curaco”. The meaning of the word is accepted as “core” meaning man and “ku” meaning community. “Korku” is their dialect. Mahavali, Room and Bondoya are the three subgroups of the Korku tribe.

The tribal way of life is different from others. The control system of their society is also different. Their customs, traditions and religious beliefs etc govern their social life. In a particular tribal society, there is a similarity in their food, drink, manners, thoughts, hairstyle, dress and outlook on life and thus the sense of unity of their society is so strong. Homogeneity seems in their lifestyle, the same dialect, same religion, same culture and same social rules show the homogeneity in the behavior of the tribal. They are also influence by their customs religion and tradition that they follow it very strictly. They have a consensus about the happiness in life. Therefore, there is no difference in their views and conduct. From all these characteristics it can be seen that the tribal society is different from their society. It lives in very remote and mountainous areas. Tribe gives special importance to blood relations. The participation of nature is the maximum in their life. They are found to leave life with a clean attitude. They follow their customs so strictly and cultivate centuries old traditions.

This tribe is economically very backward. Their main occupation is agriculture. Apart from this, making mats, baskets, farming, doing forest based businesses are their means of livelihood. The tribal economy is characterized only by meeting daily needs. Korku does not have an attitude of accumulation of goods, money and markets are subordinated, profit making is not the goal of their life. Their characteristic is the attitude of helping each other and accommodating everyone. Their life is completely dependent on nature. Their economy is based on nature and self- effort. Due to urbanization and modern technology, the great use of machinery is found in tribal life to a negligible extent. They use traditional methods of farming, fishing, hut construction, protection of domestic animals and their implements, weapons wards are traditional.

**Equality:-**

Both men and women have equal status in the korku tribe. Gender equality isn't just an abstract concept but a live reality ingrained in the very fabric of everyday existence. There are many glimpses into a society where gender roles are not defined by tradition but by a shared understanding of equality and mutual respect. In the agriculture field, women work alongside men, tilling the land, planting crops and harvesting produce. Their presence is not merely symbolic but essential, as they play a crucial role in ensuring the community's food security and economic sustainability. There is a significant influence in the decision making process both within their family and the broader community. Women's opinions are valued and their voices are heard in their homes.

In Melghat, girls have the right to marry with the boy they choose. Bride's father does not give dowry to the groom. This is a good tradition in this korku community. Many times it seems that girls eloped with the boy. Even girls have the boldness to live in a living relationship before marriage. After some days parents from both parties come together and get them married. Whenever a family has any work in the market, couples come to the market and women are always with their husbands. In the korku tribe, women are equal in diet choice and even drinking wine with their husband. In Dharni tehsil, market day is the special week day for the couple for having drinks together. Equality and enjoyment is one of the most important aspects of their life. And that's why they are so happy in their life. They fulfill each other's needs equally.

The korku tribe encourages widow marriage. A widow can marry the younger brother of her diseased husband if she wishes. No discrimination is known to be made on the ground of sex. They accept and welcome the birth of both a male and female child equally. No preference is attached to either of the sexes, as non tribal's do in India. In most of the tribes, both male and female members are economically self dependent. Both of them go for work. Both of them earn for their family. Therefore male members' dominance over women folk for their dependence is not found as both enjoy approximate economic equality here. Both Male and female consume country wine there is neither Taboo nor restriction that prohibits women from consuming liquor. Besides male and female dance together keeping hands on each other while singing in a chorus.



Festivity:-

Various festivals are celebrated in korku. The method of celebrating these festivals is also traditional and the rituals of each festival are associated with songs. Elders celebrate the festival 'Ranbhava' on amavasya. As a check for rain, they perform this ritual by putting water in a Pot, frocks and Neem branches in it, and children dance from house to house chanting 'Dedaramata pani de'. When the fields become muddy after good rain, 'chikhlabhave' is celebrated to thank God. The festival 'Jeroti' is celebrated on the full moon of Shravan. The form of this festival is similar to Raksha Bandhan. The sister comes to the brother and stays until the Pola. Swinging on a swing tied to a tree, the sisters sing songs praising brotherly love. These songs are called 'Dolar Geete'.

Korku's Dussehra- korku worships Meghnad and Kumbakaran during this festival. A buffalo or Bull is decorated by putting rope in his nose. The drummer takes out his procession through all the streets of the village. They stab his body. Let his blood spill on the streets. So they believe that the local gods and goddesses remain happy. Later at night they kill the Bull and eat his mass as Prasad. They play musical instruments, dance and drink alcohol. It is believed that this awakens Kumbakaran and makes him satisfied. Holi- the festival of Holi lasts for a month. Holi is lit by the hands of the headman in every village. The headman worships God. After drinking alcohol korku dances unconsciously to the beat of bells, drums and timki with sticks in hand. Songs with descriptions of beautiful women, fun, and humor are sung. On the second day Meghnad is worshipped. A pole is well smoothed and planted vertically. At its end 'Jerry' i.e. half a rupee, coconut and jaggery are tied. Women stand in a circle around the pillar. Sticks are in their hands. Dances and songs begin. The men climb the pole and try to get Jerry out. The women push away the men climbing the poles by hitting them with sticks eventually one succeeds. This game is a combination of worship, games, fun, skill dance and music.

Married life is a real life according to korku. Birth and death are natural events. 'Marriage' is a ritual of renewal to lead a Sanskar life. However, women know that this best event in life can be made beautiful with the loving and pleasant caress of hearts. Therefore, tribal women do the job of preparing the newlyweds for living life and seeing life by singing meaningful songs in every ritual of marriage. Therefore countless songs are sung in the tribal society



during the marriage ceremony which lasts for several days, from the planting of turmeric to the union of the bride and groom. It is because of the songs that are sung during each ritual that the ritual becomes more meaningful and the path of life becomes easier. The marriage of the korku community in Melghat is said to be a celebration of happiness, songs, music and dances are an outpouring of joy for the entire community. Marriage is like a series of women's songs. Even if there is no line. Korku's marriage in Melghat is not complete without songs, music and Gadali dance. In the korku tribe, it seems that festivals have a very important place in their lives. Celebrating various festivals throughout the year is the spirit of their life. From Bhavai which is celebrated in the month of May-June to Holi in the month of March, there are various festivals in their life. On the occasion of the festival, the excitement seems to have risen. They gather together on the occasion of these various festivals and they don't even know when the songs are on their lips and their feet are shaking in the excitement.

The korku tribes who celebrate festivals are seen preserving their ancient traditions. Nature is an integral part of their life. They have made their way of life by adjusting with nature. Even while living a very hard life, they have made their lives happy with dancing and singing. Their culture after studying it, it can be seen that in all the rituals from birth to death, from Ranbhave to Holi, marriage songs and folk songs are an integral part. In those folk songs, the importance of those rituals and festivals has also come automatically.

Language:

Language is a living process that transmits human culture. Many tribal of the world have preserved their oral traditions, ethics, customs, traditions, cultural and social values, art through dialect. Language is an invented system through which one can predict the social, cultural background of the person, his way of life. Therefore if the culture is to be preserved, the language must be preserved first. Language extinction is a matter of concern for society and culture but in the rush of modernization, many languages of the world are on the verge of extinction.

"Korku" is a language of the Munda group of the Austro- Asiatic language group. This group includes the Santali, Mundari, Ho, Savar and Gadaba language. The korku dialect is similar



to Korva in Madhya Pradesh and Santhali and Mundari in Chota Nagpur. The korku, who live in the mountainous regions of Melghat and satpuda, still preserve many of their dialects, singular, dual and plural systems of speech, gender system, uses of pronouns used for animate and inanimate, various usage of demonstrative pronouns and feminine suffixes for masculine relative words. Suffixes at the beginning, middle and end of the original verb, the tendency of the korku dialect towards long and short accepts. All these prove the uniqueness of the special korku dialect. The term phoneme was introduced around 1920 in linguistics. This approach gave discipline and rigor to descriptive linguistics. The function of phoneme is to keep two words semantically separate. This is called phonetic differentiation. There are two types of phonemes in korku dialect named broken phonemes and segmented phonemes. In korku dialect vowels and consonants are segmental phonemes. A total of 35 broken vowels are found in this dialect. Out of which 6 are vowels and 29 are consonants.

In korku dialect, suffixes are added to the relative noun and the relational suffixes are used. Like the word suffixes, this is also known as an autonomous feature of this dialect. To the feminine suffixes in the korku dialect north of the korku region contact with Hindi and Marathi language spoken to the south have adopted some cognate words while also adopting the suffix convention of those language. In the korku dialect, the tense of the action is understood from the verb that comes under the sentence. Simple present and simple future tenses have the same forms of verbs. Simple present and simple future forms in korku dialect take the suffix 'ba'. The simple present and simple future forms of verbs are gender word and gender absolute. Also, both intransitive and transitive forms of verbs are the same.

Inj seneba (I go/ I will go)

Diz seneba (he goes/ he will go)

Conclusion:-

The korku tribe has very distinct lifestyle. Many ups and downs come with nature in the life. They have learnt to live life happily accordingly. There is equality in their society. There is no partiality between male and female in day to day life. The language spoken by them is a lucid and has intimacy in it. They have not abandoned their customs, rituals and traditions. Elders are still respected and honored in the society. Nature is the god for this korku tribe.



They worship nature. They conserve nature at large. Songs, music, and dance are the instruments of happiness in their life.

References:

- 1) Barhate, Dr. Kashinath.- '*Korku Boli*' (Devyani Publication, Mumbai-ISBN-978-93-80201-18-4)
- 2) Pauhar, Dr.Ajitsingh.- '*Korku Lokgitohka Sahityik Adhyayan*' (Vishvabharati Publication, Nagpur- First edition-2009)
- 3) Wairagade, Dr.Ganesh.- '*Melghatmadhil sreeyancha lokgitatil Bhavvishva*' (Dnyanpath Publication, Amravati, ISBN-978-81-19435-36-4)