

# The Role of Proverbs in Extension Dissemination and Technology Transfer: A Case of Ethiopia

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## Abstract

This paper examines the use of proverbs in extension and communications in Ethiopia. The purpose of this article is to show the influence proverbs in extension and technology transfer. In Ethiopia the use in the farming community of proverb to encourage or discourage the society, to influence the weak so that to be strong, to encourage the strong farmers and appreciate the industrious. This research aims to was to assess the role and implications of proverbs with regards of the agricultural extensions and communications in Ethiopia. The paper concludes indigenous Ethiopian proverbs are rich in conveying messages, rich in knowledge and. Hence, the use of proverbs in the farming society need to be further exploited.

**Keywords:** Proverb, Tradition, Extension, A metaphorical

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia has 83 different languages with up to 200 different dialects spoken. According to Webster dictionary proverb is a short, well-known pithy saying, stating a general truth or piece of advice. Proverb is a very short and precise reflections of human knowledge wisdom of life. It generalizes the high extent of certain social experiences and finds its linguistics realizations in a quite popular metaphorical language (Conard,1975). It usually is very well known because of its popular use in colloquial language. Ethiopia is a nation of diverse society and mainly the people of stay in agriculture and diversity culture, religious and traditions. Proverb is a simple concrete traditional saying that express truth based on common sense or experience. Some proverbs exist in more than one language because people borrow them from languages and cultures similar to theirs ()

Proverbs is belonging to a very old literacy tradition of mankind. They disclose in a surprising precise manner a people's philosophy of life its ideas and concepts about the world, its self-consciousness. They reflect common human knowledge and experiences, perceptions, attributes etc.

Proverb is the wit of one and wisdom of money (). It's a short generally known sentence of the folk which amethapholical fixed and memorized from the which handed from generation to generation. ()

## 2. Objectives

### 2.1. General Objectives

- ❖ To promote the collection and research activities of oral literature in the farming community
- ❖ To identify how to preserve, document and disseminates the proverbs, and
- ❖ Identify the indigenous communication media that are often utilized by the rural dwellers in the state

### 2.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives intended

- **To identify the role of proverbs in extension**
- **To examine the relative application of those proverbs and**
- **To know the level of usage in the time of the day.**

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive methods. The researcher was collected the proverbs from the society grass roots labels viz., By asking from the elders, by referring the Amharic proverb books, and with personal commications with farmers and language teachers/lecturers. Beside this, the researchers tried to collected the proverbs which only have motivational, inspirational and optimistic to the societal change.

## 4. A SHORT HISTORY OF PROVERB IN ETHIOPIAN HISTORY

In most instances time and places of origin of a proverb is not, its author or creator is not remains unknown and due to the long age of proverbs and growing social contracts between people of a certain process of

'internalizations' of proverbs can be recognized.

### 5. PROVERBS AND AGRICULTURAL EXTENSIONS AND COMINICATIONS

The role of proverbs in the farming community has a reflects all spheres in life. It is mostly related to educated the people with inspirational and motivational ways. That means the farmers uses as a tool of identifying the weak, the innovator, adopter, non-adpoter or **lagers** in their areas.

So, the roles are

- **Better understanding of farmers and experts, researchers and developmental agents.**
- **It has a power to mind set up prepare them for various circumstances**
- **Create commitment, motivation and,**
- **It facilitates exchange of experience, ideas, from farmer to farmer and farmers to researchers.**

### 6. FEATURES AND LIMITATIONS OF PROVERBS

According to Richter, unpublished proverbs are unique features. These are:

- ❖ A proverb reflects a short story:
- ❖ A proverb is more moralistic- didictes contents:
- ❖ Proverb praising the dignity of labour:
- ❖ Proverbs reflecting subordinations:
- ❖ Proverbs which express inequality and oppressions:
- ❖ Proverbs which protests and uprising:
- ❖ Proverbs with religious contents:
- ❖ Proverbs about love:
- ❖ Proverbs about men and women:
- ❖ Proverbs about marriage and family relations:
- ❖ Proverbs relatives and
- ❖ Proverbs about nationalities:

### 7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is well known that Ethiopia is a country with a very old literary traditions dating back to seventh century, if not before. This tradition is mainly based on the writing in Ge'ez, the classical language of Ethiopia which remained the medium of written communications until its substitutions by Amharic in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Aksumites developed Ge'ez, a unique script derived from the Sabeian alphabet, and it is still used by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church today. Amharigna (Amharic) a and Tigrigna are the modern languages which are derived from Ge'ez. Amharic is the official national language of Ethiopia. In the Ethiopian context, some of the proverbs that related to the technology transfer and dissemination the is encouragements and motivation in the farmers are listed below in the table 1. Which is emphasis in the specific role of the proverbs in farming society.

**Table 1:** Common proverbs and their meanings in terms of technology transfer

Nº	Proverbs	Amharic equivalent	Meanings with examples
1.	Regret, like a tail, comes at the end	ልክ እንደ ጅራት መጨረሻው ይቆጠራል	❖ For the farmers that did't accept the technology and missed the fortune
2.	Cactus is bitter only to him who tastes of it	ባርኮቱ ጣዕም ላለው ወይም ለመረበሽ ብቻ ነው	❖ Before you judge something, you need to know first.
3.	A bird hanging between two branches will get bitten on both wings	በሁለት ቅርንጫፎች መካከል የተንጠለጠለው ወፍ በሁለቱም ክንፎች ላይ ይደርቃል	❖ You can't use two things opposite things simultaneously. i.e. you have to choose the one better to be profitable.
4.	Don't blame God for creating the tiger —instead, thank him for not giving it wings	አምላክ ዘንዶቹን ስለፈጠረ አመሰግንሃለሁ - ክንፉን ስለሰጠህ አመሰግናለሁ	❖ In life there may be worst scenario than somebody experienced, so don't give up
5.	A good name is better than good perfume	መልካም ስም ከመልካም ሽቶ ይበልጣል	❖ If you built your work in a best way, you will have a chance to sustain it for a long
6.	She who does not yet know how to walk cannot climb a ladder	መራመድ የማያውቅ ሴት መሰላል መውጣት አይችልም	❖ A man needs to try his best to do better things.

7.	The hyena has already gone by; the dog barks	ጅብ ከሌደ ውሻ ጭሀ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Use the right opportunity, if you have a chance of getting it.</li> <li>❖ If well protected behind the house enclosure, dogs make an uproar at the nocturnal passage of hyenas and alert the masters; but if free and face to face with them, they stay secure. In the latter proverb the dog barks too late; the danger is already passed.</li> </ul>
8.	The coward sweats in water	ፈረ በውሃ ውስጥ ያልብዋለል	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ If somebody's have negative attitude towards something, it will be difficult to change.</li> </ul>
9.	Little by little, an egg will walk. Or slowly, slowly, even an egg will walk	ቀስ በቀስ እንቁላል በእግሩ ይሄዳል	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The above proverb gives a good lesson for the hopeless person. Sometimes when a person fails in his first try, he/she wants to give up on that work and stay quit. At this time the society says be patient is good.</li> </ul>
10	Better to work hard than to be bothered	ከማማረር ሰርቶ ማደር	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The other proverb which shows the need of working hard is “Better to work hard than to be bothered”. This proverb clearly shows the life of the people who arguing with the extension workers in adopting new technologies they face on their way of working.</li> </ul>
11.	The stand one is melt; the runner one is escape.	የቆመ ቀለጠ የሮጠ አመለጠ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ In Ethiopian society most of the time people waiting things on the place where they are. This is because they may afraid to start new technology that thing or they may wait those things until to come towards them. At that time, they lost so many things.</li> </ul>
12.	Learning makes intelligent	መማር ያደርጋል ሊቅ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The society believes that the only get of wisdom is school, so they want everybody to go for learning. At that time the learners become intelligent and they can be the persons who lead and manage the country in every aspect.</li> <li>➤ By thinking their final outcome, the society motivates the youngsters to go to school for getting knowledge and to being intelligent.</li> </ul>
13.	Better to work hard than to be bothered	ምክረው እምቢ ካለ ምክረው ይምክረው	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The other proverb which shows the need of working hard is “Better to work hard than to be bothered”. This proverb clearly shows the life of the people who arguing with the government policies and some problems they face on their way of working.</li> <li>➤ Amhara society believes that losing time by complain the system doesn't bring anything. Rather they believe that engaging in work helps and show some direction for changing once life and the whole society living standard.</li> </ul>

14.	You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink it		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ You can try to help someone by giving good advice, but you can't force them to accept it or follow it</li> <li>❖ “She tried to help her brother find a job by improving his resume, but he didn't do anything with it. I guess you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink it.”</li> </ul>
15.		ሥራ ለሰሪው እሾህ ላጣሪው	❖
16.		አለባብሰው ቢያርሱ በአረም ይመለሱ	❖
17.		ማን ይናገር የነበረ ማን ያርዳ የቀበረ	❖
18.		አውቆ የተኛን ቢቀሰቅሱት አይሰማም	❖
19.		በባዳ ቢያኮርፉ በጨለማ ቢያፈጡ፡ ምን ሊያመጡ	❖

## 8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Proverbs in Ethiopia, which is common in aged, people that gives value to culture, and rural dwellers in peasants areas. It is becoming gradually phasing out, through time to time due to the exposures of exogenous media. In order to preserve this cultural heritage which has been handed down from generation to generation orally, great efforts are being made to collect, to write down, to translate and to publish these pieces Ethiopian proverbs previous time. But through time, these valuable proverbs didn't get an attention. This is due to luck of a strong institutions that capable of in resources and man power for the collections, use and research of this indigenous knowledge.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

To use these valuable proverbs

- The agricultural research institutions and agricultural higher educations need to be set up for further study and use of this proverb,
- The generations must be focus on this indigenous knowledge than the foreign cultural move.
- To preserve this cultural heritage which has been handed from generation to generations orally.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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