

Linguocultural Study Of Proverbs About Women In Korean And Uzbek Folk Traditions

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Abstract: This article analyzes the linguocultural features of the female image in Korean and Uzbek folk proverbs. It compares the values, gender stereotypes, views on family life, and attitudes toward women found in the proverbs of both nations. During the study, the semantic, pragmatic, and cultural layers of paremiological units related to women are interpreted, and their similarities and differences are identified. The findings show that although both Korean and Uzbek proverbs recognize women as an essential pillar of society, there are noticeable distinctions in the intensity of patriarchal attitudes and their cultural foundations.

Keywords: linguoculture, gender linguistics, Korean proverbs, Uzbek proverbs, female image, paremiology, cultural stereotypes.

Introduction: Folk proverbs are wise expressions passed down from generation to generation, embodying the experiences, worldview, and cultural memory of a people. When examining the proverbs of any nation, we can observe not only their life philosophy but also reflections of the society's structure, attitudes toward men and women, and views on family and upbringing. Therefore, proverbs serve as one of the richest sources for linguocultural research.

In Eastern cultures, the image of a woman holds significant importance, and this theme is vividly reflected in Korean and Uzbek proverbs. In both cultures, where the family is regarded as a core value, a woman is portrayed as the manager of the household, the educator of children, and the source of compassion and harmony. However, the historical development of the two peoples, their religious traditions, and the influence of Confucianism and Islam have shaped different layers in the portrayal of women in their proverbs.

This article aims to study the image of women in Korean and Uzbek folk proverbs from a linguocultural perspective, analyzing their semantic, cultural, and social foundations. The relevance of the study lies in the fact that, in the era of globalization, the comparative analysis of paremiological units—one of the key markers of national identity—holds significant

importance.

The Korean Perspective on Women

Korean attitudes toward women are primarily shaped by three major cultural factors: Confucianism, the traditional family structure, and Eastern philosophy. Confucianism emphasizes qualities such as obedience, integrity, patience, loyalty, and diligence in women.

Korean proverbs often associate a woman's social role with the household:

- “아내가 좋아야 가정이 산다” — “If the wife is good, the family thrives.”
- “현명한 아내는 남편을 일으킨다” — “A wise wife elevates her husband.”
- “딸은 집안의 꽃이다” — “A daughter is the flower of the household.”

These proverbs show that a woman is viewed as the foundation of family stability. Her wisdom, thoughtfulness, and hard work are considered the guarantee of the family's well-being.

However, some proverbs reflect the influence of a patriarchal system and depict the restrictions placed on women's roles:

- “여자의 말가 많으면 집안이 망한다” — “If a woman talks too much, the household falls apart.”
- “여자는 나서면 안 된다” — “A woman should not come forward.”

Although such proverbs are losing relevance in modern Korean society, they still remain part of cultural memory.

The Uzbek Perspective on Women

The Uzbek worldview regarding women has been shaped by Islamic teachings and ancient Turkic traditions. In Uzbek oral literature, the woman—as a mother, wife, and daughter—is highly respected.

Proverbs about mothers:

- “Onaning duosi — farzandga yor.” — “A mother’s prayer is a blessing for the child.”
- “Ona — muqaddas zot.” — “The mother is a sacred being.”
- “Ona bir umr — vatan bir umr.” — “A mother is eternal, just as the homeland is eternal.”

These proverbs reflect the sacred status attributed to mothers in Uzbek culture.

Proverbs about wives:

- “Yaxshi xotin — yurtga davlat.” — “A good wife is a blessing for the nation.”
- “Xotin yaxshi — oila yaxshi.” — “If the wife is good, the family is good.”
- “Ayol — uy jamoli.” — “A woman is the beauty of the home.”

Proverbs about daughters:

- “Qiz bola — gul bola.” — “A girl is like a flower.”
- “Qiz uyda — chiroq uyda.” — “A girl at home is a light in the home.”
- “Qiz farzand — uy jamoli.” — “A daughter is the adornment of the house.”

These proverbs connect girls with beauty, purity, and refinement.

Patriarchal attitudes are also present:

- “Ayolning aqli — erida.” — “A woman’s wisdom lies in her husband.”
- “Ayolning so’zi uzun.” — “A woman speaks too much.”
- “Ayolni yengil olma, o’zni og’ir qilma.” — “Do not treat a woman lightly, nor consider yourself too important.”

These reflect historical social norms and remain in the folklore, despite being at odds with modern values.

Similarities

1. **Women as the foundation of the family.** In both cultures, women are seen as the main source of stability, prosperity, and harmony in the family.

2. The elevated status of mothers

Korean proverb: “어머니는 하늘이다” — “The mother is the sky.” Uzbek proverb: “Ona — muqaddas zot.” Both signify the sacredness of motherhood.

3. **The association of daughters with beauty and grace** Korean: “A daughter is the flower of the home.” Uzbek: “A daughter is the light of the home.”

4. Presence of patriarchal stereotypes

Both cultures contain proverbs discouraging excessive female agency or outspoken behavior.

Differences

1. **Confucian vs. Islamic-moral values** Korean proverbs emphasize obedience, discipline, and patience; Uzbek proverbs highlight compassion, prayer, and upbringing.

2. **Interpretation of a woman’s social role.** Korean proverbs often link a woman’s role to household management and frugality. Uzbek proverbs focus more on motherhood, nurturing, and emotional warmth.

○ **Differences in linguistic imagery.** Korean proverbs frequently use metaphors like “flower,” “house,” “mountain,” and “sky.” Uzbek proverbs employ concepts like “prayer,” “light,” “beauty,” and “blessing.”

3. **Degree of patriarchal rigidity.** Korean patriarchal norms are reflected more strictly, giving women fewer public roles. Uzbek proverbs, while also patriarchal, acknowledge women’s wisdom and household leadership more often.

Three Levels of Analysis

1. **Semantic Level** Main semantic fields describing women: compassion, upbringing, blessing (Uzbek), obedience, patience, prudence (Korean), beauty and refinement (both).

2. **Pragmatic Level:** Proverbs serve educational purposes: teaching boys to respect women, encouraging modesty and diligence in girls, promoting family harmony.

3. Cultural Level

The female image reflects: religious beliefs, traditional customs, social structure, gender roles.

CONCLUSION

Although Korean and Uzbek proverbs contain many similarities in their depictions of women, cultural

differences remain evident. Korean proverbs largely portray women as obedient, patient household caretakers, reflecting Confucian ideals. Uzbek proverbs emphasize the woman primarily as a mother, nurturer, and source of affection, grounded in Islamic–moral values. Despite the presence of patriarchal stereotypes in both traditions, Uzbek proverbs more frequently highlight women's wisdom and managerial abilities, while Korean proverbs tend to restrict women's roles to the domestic sphere.

This linguocultural analysis provides valuable insights into the shared and distinct values of the Korean and Uzbek peoples and serves as a significant contribution to gender linguistics and comparative paremiology.

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