

**Research Article**

## Language of Alienation: A Site of Cultural Violence

Neena Pandey<sup>1\*</sup> and Vijay Kumar Pandey<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, <sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, University of Delhi, New Delhi

\*Corresponding author email: neena.aditi@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

Culture teaches us the basics of living. We can say that it is the institution of culture which hosts the primary school in our life which opens up the learning processes. Language is one major element of culture. Language is a collective of numerous words, tones and styles. Every word, tone and style communicates its meaning. It provides meaning to the contexts and meanings also construct the contexts as well. Any term or word of language has a history of context and realities. These histories could be singular or plural. What is important to know that as language of acceptance and participation exists, similarly language of pain, hatred and alienation exists too. What happens when the language of exclusion and othering becomes the part of culture? This means one behaves in a manner that a person feels that this is the only way to behave against and with each other. There are numerous illustrations in society which are spreading its wings knowingly or unknowingly which has been culturally learnt behavior strengthened by the power of language creating venom against each other on various grounds like caste, class, gender region, race and communities. It's time to review those venomous languages which is not only responsible in creating distances rather it is also responsible in creating disturbances. Johan Galtung tried hard to create the process of peace studies by identifying various nuances associated to Violence in society. The present article tries to capture the Galtung perspective towards language of negation of needs and hatred. This has been dealt by him as a part of cultural violence. Further the present write up tries to grab the gaps in the language and its usages which try to abuse and violate the rights of certain agencies like homeless and women. The two agencies have been taken into consideration because the reflections have been used through the research work conducted with them as a part of academic work.

**Keywords:** Alienation, Cultural violence, Homeless, Language of exclusion, Negation of needs

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is understood as ways of life. These ways of life are shaped since the conception of the child in the womb. The very aspect that where and how the child's conception has been formed has the larger and major impact on him or her. The expectations through the birth of the new one are carried away throughout his or her life. It is important to mention that there are numerous myths and stereotypes associated with the birth of the child. These myths and stereotypes too are part of cultural accommodation. So it becomes pertinent to deal with the concepts of culture so that it provides an understanding of different ways of life and its impact on the agencies like individual, family, community and society at large. Culture is defined as follows:

Spencer-Oatey 2012 cited Tyler (1870) as *culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*'

Further, by Adler 1997 quotes Kroeber & Kluckhohn, *culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action.*'

Language as culture is the collective memory bank of people's experience in history (Thiongo, 1986: 15). Language is a common world of meaning which had been transformed into symbols. The process of interpretation through language makes people understand each other and build a common understanding of the world but it can also lead to alienation. The increasing alienation of people from other people and from one's self leads people to grow apart from each other which then leads to violence.

Lock and Strong (2010) wrote that language is the fundamental mode of operation of our being-in-the-world and the all-embracing form of the constitution of the world. Heidegger related to words as tools and to language as something we 'dwell' in. somewhat similarly, Gadamer regarded language as the medium through which we understand experience, and are able to communicate our understandings of experience to others. But, Gadamer's concern was that, even though language is how we understand reality, it is also necessarily partial and that forgetting this creates problems (pp. 68).

Jones, Bradbury and Boutillier (2011) cited view of Levi-Strauss is thus interested in the form, not in content, of language and culture. Culture, like language, is a

system of signs and symbols whose organization reflects the manner of human thought. Rogger Trigg's view of levi-Strauss is that:

He interprets myths and symbols in this way, saying that 'the world of symbolism is infinitely varied in content but always limited in its laws'...he analyses kinship systems in a similar way, viewing them as languages....He is concerned... to uncover the systems, whether of kinship or language.... Which are built by the mind, as he puts it, 'at the level of unconscious thought'.

There is, then, nothing in social life that is the innovative creation of the conscious or imaginative mind; human beings are not the authors of their life stories, for these are written for them in language and in culture.

A system of language exists independently of its learners and users, and they are obliged to use the meanings referred to by its constituent symbols both to think for themselves and to change thoughts with others. Trigg put this argument as follows:

The nature of language and culture, viewed as systems, cannot be discovered at the level of the subject... this kind of structuralism offers a threat to any idea that man(sic) is the centre of the universe. The very categories of human thought are given to us...we can no longer be understood as subject thinking about an independently existing world and devising language to describe it. We are not the source of language or of culture. Being human involves living in a world which has already been determined (pp. 126-127).

It is important to note that the usages of languages at times negate a person, community grossly and assimilation becomes an uphill task. Johan Galtung tries to understand these negations as cultural violence. According to Galtung (1990) by cultural violence we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence-exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence. He clarified that if the opposite of violence is peace, the subject matter of peace research/peace studies, then the opposite of cultural violence would be cultural peace, meaning aspects of culture that serve to justify and legitimise direct peace and structural peace. Cultural violence makes *direct violence* and *structural violence*<sup>1</sup> look, even feel right-or at least not wrong. Galtung further opined as how the structural violence and direct violence are being legitimised in the society. He noted, "one way cultural violence works is by changing the moral colour of an act from red/wrong to green/right or at least to yellow/acceptable: an example

---

<sup>1</sup>Direct or personal is violence with a subject or actor or perpetrator of violence, the structural violence is violence without a subject, lacks any visible actor. The structural violence is systemic and shows up as unequal power and consequently unequal life chances.

being ‘murder on behalf of the country as right, on behalf of oneself wrong’. Another way is by making reality opaque. So that we do not see the violent act or fact, or at least not as violent.”

The violence types negatively affect the basic human needs and needs satisfaction of individual. Galtung gave another typology of violence (Table 1) in relation to four classes of basic needs. These needs are survival needs (negation: death, mortality); well being needs (negation: misery, morbidity); identity needs (negation: alienation); and freedom needs (negation: repression).

**Table 1: Typology of Violence**

<b>Violence Types</b>	<b>Survival Needs</b>	<b>Well being Needs</b>	<b>Identity Needs</b>	<b>Freedom Needs</b>
Direct Violence	Killing	Maiming, Siege, Sanctions, Misery	Desocialization, Resocialization, Secondary Citizen	Repression, Detention, Expulsion
Structural Violence	Exploitation A	Exploitation B	Penetration, Segmentation	Marginalisation, Fragmentation

*Source:* Galtung (1990)

In order to understand the relation between the structural of violence and need categories, Galtung asserts that a violent structure leaves marks not only on the human body but also on the mind and spirit. The terms such as exploitation A and B<sup>2</sup>, penetration<sup>3</sup>, segmentation<sup>4</sup>, marginalisation<sup>5</sup> and fragmentation<sup>6</sup> are the ways of exploitation or as reinforcing components in the structure. The last four aspects of violence i.e. penetration, segmentation, marginalisation and fragmentation are used to prevent conscious building, thwart awareness generation and mobilization of underdogs.

There is a triangular relationship among all the three types of violence. The physical, structural and cultural violence are all three corners of a violence triangle which signifies the propensity to induce violence across all the dimensions and in numerous ways. Similarly there is a time relation among these three violence types. Direct

<sup>2</sup>Exploitation represents the main parts of archetypical violence structure. This means nothing more than a situation in which some people, namely the top dogs draw substantially more profit from the interaction taking place within structure, the underdogs. In reality, the underdog might be disadvantaged to such an extent that they die (starve or waste away as a result of illness and disease); the exploitation B means leaving the underdogs in a permanent involuntary state of poverty, which usually encompasses malnutrition and illness.

<sup>3</sup>By Penetration the elements of top dog ideology reach the consciousness of the underdog.

<sup>4</sup>Segmentation is very much linked to penetration, only allows the underdog a limited view of reality.

<sup>5</sup>Marginalization keeps the underdogs increasingly to the edge of the society, condemning them insignificant.

<sup>6</sup>Fragmentation divides the underdogs and keeps them away from each other.

violence is an event: structural violence is a process with ups and downs; cultural violence is an invariant, 'permanence', remaining essentially the same for long periods, given the slow transformation of basic culture (Galtung, 1990).

The present article incorporates two agencies i.e. homeless persons and women. These two agencies were studied as part of research work undertaken during academic assignment. A part of research which engaged with the linguistic usages for both the agencies were studied is explained further in this research paper.

### **Homeless persons affected through cultural violence**

The study is part of research work where the homeless people are defined as follows:

Homeless is an idea, identity or individual or collection of all probably; a category live/sleep in isolation, in a group or with families in the open and public spaces such as parks, railway platforms, bus stands, under bridges, pavements, drainage pipes, temple courtyards, on river banks, on the roof of shops and buildings in the markets places, on the roof of buses in the bus stand, in the taxies in the taxi stand, on his rickshaws, pull-cart and the other means of transportation and government lands. Further, they are personally all right but socially neglected, deprived, discriminated because of their vulnerability. Homeless is a category which is as humane as other human beings. The negation of their survival needs, well being needs, identity needs and depicting them unhealthy and criminal is nothing but violence against them and also against society.

Galtung (1990) called 'alienation' enforced through the processes of *desocialization, resocialization and internalisation* of culture. There is a double aspect: to be dissocialized away from own culture and to be resocialised into another culture including the adoption of the words, vocabulary and the language of the dominant. The language is also the medium whereby cultural violence is located and nourished in the symbolic sphere (pp. 293). Moreover, the process of othering hardly leaves any space for homeless persons to make their choice of life. They are forced to accept things as they are and their agency either does not matter or does not get the acceptance it should have. The imposition of a subjugating and oppressive language can be understood in the way homeless persons are called and it becomes so pervasive that even the homeless people internalise the same. *kooda, gandagi, kangle, chor, uchakke, waise log, nasheri, smakiya, bhikhmange, Bangladeshi, charsi, jebkatre, pagal or pagle, mentle* (waste, dirt, penniless, thief, ruffian, those people, addict, binger, beggar, citizen of Bangladesh, a stonner, pick pockets, mad, or mentally challenged) are such terms which have taken shape in the cultural repertoire. Galtung (1990) observed 'a causal flow from cultural via structural to direct violence can be identified. The culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, eggs

on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them (particularly not exploitation) at all' (pp. 295). This process has been explained by Edgar *et al.* (1999), (2005), Kothari (2005), Pleace (1998) as process of exclusion. Daly (cited in Tipple and Speak, 2004) reveals that the language used to describe homeless people in the literature is broadly construed and reflects the dominant social constructions. It includes media images, sound bites and defamatory rhetoric, as well as policies and programmes that convey mainstream society's message of power, influence and authority. The messages that raise a number of dilemmas can become tools of manipulation. Homeless individuals may be and are silenced by such power relationships, control mechanisms and by messages contained in popular media. The negative and exclusionary language used to describe and discuss homeless people help to construct homeless people as other and institutionalise their stigmatisation keeping them dissociated and disconnected from the mainstream society. Homeless people can be confined to the periphery of public consciousness because the public perception of them is that they violate the social norms and offend the public sensibilities (pp. 2).

Such othering and intimidation is also promoted and celebrated by the society at large. The society consents to this violence with the popular rhetoric and prevalent myths that homeless are criminals. *Bolo bhaiya hum kya kissi ko darayenge? hum toh khud hi dar kar jeete hain.* (tell us brother, do we possess so much of power to scare others? we ourselves live in persistent fear). This is reflective of what Galtung (1990) called changing the moral colour from red (wrong) to green (right) or at least yellow (acceptable). Thus the homeless are labelled as criminals and the same has now become integral part of the common-sense and acceptable vocabulary in referring to the homeless. Singh (2016) empathises with the pain and fear associated with the homeless persons as he writes these relocations exercises only serve to build and strengthen the perception about who were being an urban nuisance, who like to live off dole and indulge in criminal activities. Nothing could be farther from the truth (pp. 16). Bringing Galtung (1990) is imperative here, because he cautions that, 'threats of violence are also violence' (pp. 292). In addition to this, one has to understand how and why people's choices go on to commit a crime like beggary. As some of the respondents confessed that they were forced to beg because in the context of their lives, wherein they have to face inhuman subjugation and perpetual marginalisation, what else one could do.

In sync with Galtung, the study too found the on-going process of vulnerability of the homeless; that the homeless consider themselves in perpetual repression and being churned in the cycle of violence is nothing but the make of the violent structure which is deep rooted and established in the system. The interesting yet ironical expression used by Galtung is 'top dogs' and underdogs' wherein the top

dogs always get the major share of all kinds of interactions within the structure and the underdogs are left with constant stage of vulnerability to an extent that deprivation and violence are permanent features of their being and existence. Being homeless is denial to access of freedom.

The narratives used for the homeless persons infer the negation of all their basic needs whether it be survival, well-being, identity or freedom needs. They are made to experience extreme hunger and misery; vulnerable to police beatings and diseases. Their mobility is restricted through the process of othering and penalizing; they are made to consider themselves worthless; they are left to live with low self-image; and they are made to themselves as lesser humans. Some of the examples of cultural violence and linguistic connotations are as follows:

- People perceive Homeless as lazy and *Kamchor*. Who cannot do hard work and hence they choose easy money through begging. They are *Kangla* and beggars and hence arrested under Bombay Prevention of Beggary Act.
- They are criminals and indulged in theft, robbery (*Chor, Ucchaka, Uthaigir*) and other criminal activities arrested in different IPC provisions.
- Homeless are drug addicts (*Nasedi, Charsi, Chilamchi* etc.).
- They are very unhygienic, dirty and make public places dirty. It is their unhygienic conditions due to which they fall ill.
- Homeless are uncouth, insane and lunatics.
- They are diseased persons and hence they are kept away from society.
- They make city repulsive and unpleasant hence they are kept away from public eye.
- They are *Bangladeshi* and hence they are not entitled to live in this city.

The study captures the narratives of homeless people wherein the broad picture emphasizes that homeless are the deviant, criminal and anti-social people and they are themselves responsible for their own situation. The cultural construction justifies their plight as the whole situation is due to individual capacities and it is their destiny. They are begging and living on the street because homeless are not capable of doing any other work.

### **Women as an agency affected through cultural violence**

If one tries to understand violence as word which is inseparable with the word women (Pandey, 2015), it will not be an exaggeration as researches prove that women educated or illiterate (Gandhi, 2001; Verma, 2002; Ghadially and Kumar, 1988), of any class rich or poor (Khanna, 1978; Allen and Baber, 1994), any caste, region or race has numerous stories to narrate which is full of abuses and

violence. The position of women, the negation and marginalization was observed in folk tradition as well. The language Bhojpuri is no exception to that. The language Bhojpuri is spoken in the Eastern part of Uttar Pradesh and Western part of Bihar. Ghazipur is in the eastern part of U.P. and it is a Bordering district of U.P. and Bihar. This was the region which was selected as research locale. The popular Bhojpuri songs were selected for the research work and hence altogether 50 songs associated to birth (15 songs), youth (10 songs), marriage (15 songs) and women in difficult situations (10 songs) were purposively selected and analyzed qualitatively as per the availability of songs in each category.

The social location of women is accorded lower berth not only in Indian subcontinent but in all the major/minor as well as ancient and modern civilization. The notion of women as 'Polluter' - 'a baser 'creation', finds its earliest explanation in the 'Adam - Eve' mythology which saw its later incorporation in all 'divinely ordained' texts with varying degrees. In the perspective of Galtung it can be said that women were positioned as underdogs culturally. The earliest manifestation of the said ire is seen at the time of the birth of the 'girl child'; and the strength of patriarchal ideology is found in the fact that the mother herself becomes the 'willing carrier' of these prejudices. This can be understood and analyzed as 'alienation internalized'. It is manifested best at the time of birth of a girl child. The woman enters the world of crisis the day she is born. She becomes the problem child for her parents from the day one. And if at all her marriage creates a problem (because of dowry) she is scolded and blamed by family members in particular and society (folk) at large. If a woman is widow or barren she is treated differently. It is considered that 'bad evils' accompany such women who can only destroy and destruct things so they should be debarred from some institutions. The images of women in such songs are fate less, sad, misfortune, meaningless and death like. Such marginalisations push the women (underdogs) to the fringes of society condemning them insignificant.

People curse the birth of girl child. It finds its resonance in women echoing the same sentiment, preferably with greater fervour. They find it most unfortunate to have baby girl in their house. A mother in the bhojpuri folk songs is cursing the birth of a girl child. She says that she'll be deprived of all the facilities and comfort because she has given birth to a girl child. The songs says:

*"The day you were born daughter, my legs started paining  
I have lost appetite and I don't like non-veg. food (meat & fish)  
It was a dark thunder night of Bhadon,  
The day you were born,  
No one at house lit the lamp  
My husband is harsh to me".*

In fact the song is directed towards the 'inner-self' of the mother herself and provides her ventilation in a suffocating patriarchal society and culture. An inner self which was so fragmented that it keeps the woman away from the women so that they fail to keep themselves united. She tells the baby that since her birth, she has lost appetite for non-vegetarian food. Nobody lit a lamp when she was born. It is worth-to mention here that in rural India 'non-vegetarian food' is still an occasion for celebration. By denying herself the food, she in reality denies the opportunity to participate in the celebration. So the coming of woman is not welcomed by a woman. Actually it indicates that the family awaits the birth of a 'male carrier' of the family tree, that is why no one lit any lamp.

Songs have reflected that even the members of family are afraid when a woman is pregnant that if a girl is taken birth then it will be most unfortunate.

*Jaisan Dahe me Ke purain, Dahe biche Kanpele re,*

*E Lalna oisan hiya kanpele hamro harijee, Dare janam nu re* (like the leaf of lotus shivers in the pond, my husband shivers in fear when he thinks of a baby girl being given birth to).

It is a fearful description that a father cannot accept a birth of his daughter. The mother says that she would be getting protection and best comfort if she gives birth to 'baby boy'. Unfortunately, if girl is given birth to, she would be lacking the basic comfort of life and would be provided hay to cover her body and to sleep. Neither her husband will provide her good food nor does he provide sandal wood. As a result she would not sleep peacefully. The father expresses himself that if he had known that he is being burdened by daughter then he would have committed suicide by taking poison (*janti ki Aaho e beti, Dhiya Kokhi Janmihe, Piyati aaho e beti Jahar Mahurwa*). This reflects the anger and frustration of a father while cursing the birth of his daughter. This cursing further reinforce the already existing remorse in the woman concerned as she wishes *sataru ke dhiya jani hoi* (even the enemy should not have a daughter). This reiterates the cultural alienation by emphasizing that women are unwanted. The negation of the total being separates the women as a gender equal category in society.

The frustration is visible at the time of marriage when in-laws of the daughter demand dowry and parents ventilate with sarcasm, 'all the earning of the family is given in dowry'. The songs quote *nav lakh mange re dahej ho* (there is a demand of nine lakh as dowry). Women were looked as market products. Moving further from the significant others women themselves follow the cultural othering and fragmentation processes as the songs depicts that women humiliates her sister in-law by demeaning the status of her race by saying that 'don't be proud of having a son in your womb, may be you give birth to a girl who is squinted (*Kani re Bitiya*).

A woman cherishes the fact that her position excelled in the eyes of her father-in-law and her sister-in-law. The quarrel with her co-sister-in-law runs in her favour with son on the lap to show. Having son on her lap (she is at the top) would work as weapon through which she can win and have edge over other woman. Further, she feels that she got something very precious which grants her the authority to humiliate other woman. e *Jhagra ta Bhawela gotin Sange*,

*Godia Balak lele ho* (this quarrel becomes enjoyable with son on my lap).

A woman is considered to be complete in her so called incomplete world once she is in a marital relationship and the husband is glorified in the process of construction of women. The phrase used in the song is *banaib auratiya* which means making of a woman or constructing womanhood. This can be critically looked into through the lens of Galtung explanation of exploitation by top dogs supremacy over the underdogs.

A girl narrates her pains to her brother that she is being exploited in her in-law's place but she warns her brother not to share with his wife because her *bhabhi* will humiliate her time and again which will be hard to digest. *ihē dukh bhāiṃ bhāujī se jānī kahīhā, aīle - gāīle bhāujī ughātihēn re* ( O, brother don't share my pains of life with my sister in law as I will be made vulnerable through her remarks and sarcasm). In certain relationships frustration and humiliation is more frequent i.e. *Nanad & Bhabhi*. A girl humiliates her *Bhabhi* by cursing *Bhauji ke apjas hoi* (the daughter in law of the house should get defamation), because her *Bhabhi* (the daughter-in-law of the house) is not so emotional and she is not getting affected by the pains of the daughter of the house. This is an example of institutionalised stigmatisation.

A woman cries on her fate by saying that she performed every kind of *Puja* and she went to every religious place but still she remained 'barren', *etna tirathi hum kaili.... banjhin hum rah gaili re* (so much of worship I did and still I remained barren or childless). The songs have reflected that women's life is of no use if she remains barren. Her individuality does not matter, she does not have any identity of her own. The cultural notion that women's primary and most significant role in her life is to produce children is nothing but site of cultural violence where she is not allowed to sense her life as complete being. The negation of her other needs and significance has been accustomed structurally in such a way that women with different and independent thinking are attested as deviants.

The folk songs reflects that a widow in society lives a hard and tough life because in this patriarch domain she remains 'only and too 'weak' to lead her own life. She is humiliated from every nook and corner. A woman has lost her husband and she fallen prey to the lusty hands of her husband's brother who wanted to abuse her. A woman cannot tolerate the humiliation and she commits suicide setting

herself in pyre. The direct violence on women poses threat on her honour and she had to prove her chastity to the extent of deciding suicide for herself even though she nowhere triggered to be the cause of such brutal event. The cultural acceptance of proving oneself innocent and pure is a sole burden of women.

If a girl is living and having a relationship with a boy, which is considered amorous, she goes through most traumatic situation. The village people, neighbourhood passes sarcastic remarks which becomes intolerable (yet she tolerates) for the girl in due course of time. Unfortunately, if the boy leaves her and do not marry her then she leads all the more a traumatic life. So pain and fear of the girl, whether the boy will marry her or not, only worries the girl. So she finds her rehabilitation in 'social marriage' with the boy. The girl says *gup-chup hamra milan nahin bhawe la, aa, jaite Bharath aasra purawe, Tahiya kiran hoi jaite uddhar ho* (I am not liking the secret meetings, the day this relationship culminates into marriage I will be relieved). Marriage is cultural attestation of the relationship through which acceptance and non-acceptance is attributed to. In fact, the attributes of life i.e. respect, love, care and support are conditional for women. Galtung's explanation of *desocialisation* and *resocialisation* are found very prominently here as Women in *Bhojpuri* folk society is expected to desocialize completely from her family post marriage. Interestingly, they are expected to resocialize very fast and adhere and follows the norms and orders of new families and relations. The girls are socialized in a way that specifies that they are someone else's property, i.e. '*paraya dhan*'. In one of the songs, the daughter asks her father why is he sending her to the other place; to which the father replies that 'girls always leave their parents.' As a woman she is expected to uphold the honour of the family, entire village and her folk society. This is done through adhering to the new norms and following them completely without questioning them.

Men folks go to the cities to earn the livelihood leaving behind their wives at home (in the village). The girl who comes for the first time, undertakes all the responsibility of house negating her aspirations completely. But if at all she suffers, finds no one around her to ventilate her thoughts and emotions in return, this further aggravate to her pain.

In the following song girl cries and shares her pain and suffering with her brother.

*'Bigha napal bhuiyan lipan  
Bhaiya anwa tharal bartan majile  
Man bhari bhaiya kutan pisan re  
Bhaiya man bhari seejhele resoian  
Pahili tikariya hamari bhojaniya re  
Bhaiya ohu mein kukur bilariya re*

(I have to do all the house hold work including sweeping of the floor and scrubbing. I have to wash a large number of utensils. I have to cook a huge quantity of food and as I start to eat my food is shared among dogs and cats as well). She works day and night in the house but the food which she gets to eat is shared by 'dogs and cats'. She is mal-treated, mal-nourished and is in miserable state. Voicing her concerns are considered as ill manner and value of a skillful wives (*kushal grihanies*) is to be patient, tolerant and silent. This is how the structural violence against women is supported by cultural violence which is internalised by women too that they have to accept the fate decided for them. If a girl is facing problems in her conjugal life, it's her fate,

(*Jo Kachu likhal babu hamare, karam men Kachu meti na jai*). One of a song reflects the sentiment of a father who says that he had already done the marriage of his daughter and unfortunately it is not successful, 'he says had it been a letter, he would have read it twice, but how can he arrange her second marriage. It was only her bad fate. In Bhojpuri society the women of rural areas have to suffer the burden solely. A fate of a girl is compared *kakar* which is cultivated in dry and sandy place and so its taste is unpredictable whether it tastes bitter or sweet. (*'Usar hi khete beti kakar boalo na jano teet ki meeth*). The language itself communicates the fate of women as alienated category in the society.

Women are superstitious even in dreams. If they see 'mango' it denotes they will have son and if they see '*imli*' (tamarind) it denotes girl. It may sound, amusing to the world but these are the ways of the folk society which are perceived differently. Even in some of the relationships women are prejudiced and behave accordingly. Relation between daughter and daughter-in-law is depicted as, *am ke swad imli nahi purweli*'. Here '*aam*' is daughter and *imli* is daughter-in-law. This shows the differential attitude of the society. So, in terms of Galtung, the woman is seen as secondary citizen.

There were couples of songs in which women expressed their anger by personifying Calcutta (Kolkata of today) as '*Saut*', a term used for the other wife or beloved of the husband. The woman have her own set of complaints deriving out of the frustration from continued separation - on one hand it sounds very personal but on the other level it reflects collective concern of lives of many woman. Folk songs in general are noted for a very lively depiction of the varieties of strata of the lives of folks burdened with the push and pull of day to day activities. Bhojpuri songs, in particular, are known for their beautiful and at times panoramic presentation of the lives and times of ordinary beings. A woman has received a message regarding the much-awaited arrival of her husband. And so the women start thinking about her life, physical appearance and beauty, obsession with ornaments etc. The choice of words while explaining the characteristic of a

woman is also very catchy. A male describes a woman who according to him roams around without any business and who is conscious of her looks. The boy says that she should not boast of her physical being otherwise all will be destroyed and her life will be wasted.

*'Punia utar jaii, jhutha utrail baru, hoi jai ijatia bekar gorai'* (all your status and position will be ruined and snatched if you engage in showing off). Like most of the songs of folk tradition much of the meaning escapes a cursory glance. It is only when we try to decipher those ideas which have become material force over the past several centuries we see effective mechanism of folk songs as cementing the power relation in society.

Woman's image is central to the understanding of unequal gender relations; it is the site of violence, exclusion, and abuse; it also has its celebratory aspects which are revealed in imagery through artistic or aesthetic modes, or in the consciousness of women; it is the site also for agency which allows for the possibilities of negotiation, intervention, contestation and transformation.

Simone de Beauvoir's (1953) classic statement that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' is indicative of the view that a woman's biological, psychological and social location are not as significant as the influence of 'civilization' which produces woman. The social constructionist position on the woman's image emphasizes the view that a woman experiences her body, sexuality and feminine identity as a social being located in a particular cultural setting with its dominant values and norms. This view takes the physicality of the body, as matter or stuff, as given and moves on to consider the constitution of identity in gendered terms in its social context. There are certain presuppositions of this position, viz. that power is all-pervasive and all-encompassing so that people are influenced to think, act and interact in ways which are conducive to maintaining the existing unequal relations in society.

Such popular notions need to be challenged through the scientific temperament and understanding of those planned strategies of making some sections weak and vulnerable as homeless and women. The cultural attestations are required to be identified and need to be brought to the main stream of discourse to help minimise the gap of accessibility and approachability so that the present distant targets seem to be achievable in near future.

## REFERENCES

- Allen KR and Baber KM, 1994. Issues of Gender: A feminist perspective. In: Mckenry PC and Price SJ (Ed), Family and Change: Coping with stressful events, California: Sage Publications, pp. 21-39.

## Language of Alienation: A Site of Cultural Violence

- Aydin S, Çiçek AC, Artunay MÇ and Certel AB, 2016. An Essay on the Phenomenon of Violence and Alienation Originate in the Context of the Symbolism and Signification Process. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, Vol. 6, No. 5, pp. 402
- Beauvoir, 1953. *The Second Sex*, London : Jonnathan Cape.
- Edgar B, Doherty J and Mina-Coul, 1999. *Services for homeless people: Innovation and change in European Union*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Galtung J, 1969. Violence, Peace and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 167-191.
- Galtung J, 1990. Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 291-305.
- Gandhi A, 2001. Wife abuse: A concern for social work training and practice in Indian context. *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 62, No. 3, pp. 367-378.
- Gay WC, 1998. Exposing and overcoming linguistic alienation and linguistic violence. *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, Vol. 24, No. 2-3, pp. 137-156.
- Ghadially R and Kumar P, 1988. Bride-Burning: The psycho-social dynamics of dowry deaths. In Rehana Ghadially (Ed.), *Women in Indian society: A reader*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 167-177.
- Jones P, Bradbury L and Boutillier SL, 2011. *Feminist and Gender Theories*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Khanna G and Varghese MA, 1978. *Indian women today*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishers.
- Lock A and Strong T, 2010. *Social Constructionism: Sources and Stirrings in Theory and Practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pandey N, 2013. *Women in Folk Culture*, Delhi: Jyoti Foundation.
- Pandey N, 2015. *Bhojpuri Lokgeeton Me Aurat Ki Chavi*, In: Pandey N and Gupta P (Eds.) *Stree: Astitva Asmita aum Adhikar*, New Delhi: Swaraj Prakashan.
- Pleace N, 1998. Single Homelessness as Social exclusion: The unique and the extreme. *Social Policy and Administration*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 46-59.
- Shahid M, 2015. Manual Scavenging: Issues of Caste, Culture and Violence. *Social Change*, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 242-255.
- Singh IP, 2016. *City Makers: Tribulations and Triumphs A Saga of Heroic Struggle of the Homeless Residents in India*. Delhi: Mukul Prakshan
- Spencer-Oatey H, 2012. What is culture? A compilation of quotations. Global PAD Core Concepts. Available at GlobalPAD Open House retrieved from (<http://go.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>).
- Thiongo N, 1986. *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in Ajhcanliterature*. London: James Currey.
- Verma M, 2002. Gender violence: A case study of conjugal violence in the U.T. of Chandigarh. In: Yadav S and Mishra AD (Ed.), *Patterns of gender violence*. New Delhi: Radha Publications, pp. 159.