

Chapter 7

Chapter 7

Proverbs in Khurkhul

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7.0 Introduction

A proverb is the knowledge that a group of people earns through many an experience in their life. Later such experiences are set down as a kind of rule for their society, incarnated in the form of language. Such knowledge is passed down from generation to generation. Thus, proverbs are brief statements showing in condensed form the gathered experience of life of the community, and it performs as conventional practical symbol for the abstract ideas (Galperin, 1977; Dundes, 1979). The meanings carried in most of the proverbs remain true since they are created based on life experience.

wa-ton-nə *way-ləgə* *kwak-nə* *pʰəm-tek-i*
bamboo-UPPER-by tall-COND crow-by sit-break-DECL

‘When the bamboo gets tall, the crow sits on it to break it.’ (Literal)

‘When one shows excessive pride another person severs it.’

In this proverb, the height of the bamboo is used to metaphorically mean the excessive pride one tries to show. And the crow is used to metaphorically mean the person who is more overweening than him. The crow not only sits on the top of the tall bamboo, it also breaks it. Thus, this proverb tells us that no one should think that he is the best or the topmost.

Mieder rightly says, “A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation” (Mieder, 1985: 119, 1993: 24, quoted by Mieder 2004, 3). Therefore, the wisdom carried in the proverb remains valuable and applicable to every generation; most of them have no time barriers.

This chapter studies the proverbs in Khurkhul. We have categorized them into the following categories.

7.1 Proverbs in Khurkhul

Proverbs are an essential part of the Khurkhul society. They have always been influencing the individual, the family, and the social life. The proverbs show how the Khurkhuls view the world, reflecting their culture, their beliefs and so on. By carrying the experiences of life of the past generations, proverbs have guided the younger generation in their life.

The proverb below means that before we judge anyone, first we should look at ourselves.

<i>nəŋgi</i>	<i>sumay</i>	<i>sit-tə-nə</i>	<i>migi</i>	<i>sumay</i>
your	courtyard	sweep-NEG-ADV	other's	courtyard
<i>sit-lu-nu</i>				
sweep-IMP-PROH				

‘Without sweeping your own front courtyard do not sweep other’s.’ (Literal)

‘Look at yourself before you criticise others.’

The term *sumang* (the front courtyard) is used metaphorically to mean ‘self’ in the proverb.

The act of ‘changing dwelling frequently’ is used as metaphor to mean that one

needs to be stable in one's life. When one changes his dwelling, something or other is always left behind. If the change is frequent, the number of things left behind is also increases. On the other hand, the one who stays in a single location since the birth till death, no belongings are lost. This proverb thus upholds the importance of 'stability in life'.

jum-hoŋ toi-rədi lairə talle

house-change frequent-if poor chase

'One chases poverty if the house is changed frequently.' (Literal)

'One lives a poor life when one has an unstable mind.'

Thus, the above proverbs give a valuable guideline to the younger generation of the Khurkhul society, i.e. they should have a strong, stable mind.

luptəriŋəi nək^hut t^haŋkət-lo

before sink 2P-hand lift-IMP

'Lift your hands up before your sink.' (Literal)

'Give up bad things before it is too late.'

This proverb tells us to give up bad things before it is too late. For instance, if one realises that taking drugs is wrong only at the moment when he takes his last breath, it is of no use. The act of 'sinking' is metaphorically used to mean a situation where nothing can help a person; 'lifting the hands up' metaphorically means getting help from others or self in giving up bad things or habits: while one sinks in water one cannot lift up one's hands to ask for help from others.

t^hacə-bə mi-nə mihatle

trust-NMLZ man-by kill man

'The man trusted killed the man.' (Literal)

'The one whom we trust betrayed us.'

This proverb means that the one whom we trust is the one who breaks our trust. Usually, we are cautious about strangers; however, do not trust anyone blindly, even if he or she is no stanger to you.

The following proverb says that one who is not firm and vacillates between two positions (the middle is neither this or that) finally suffers. As noted, the middle birth position is not viewed positively by the Khurkhuls (see Chapter 3):

məjaitʰəŋbə *kei-na* *cai*
 middle position tiger-by eat
 ‘Tiger eats the one who is in the middle.’ (Literal)
 ‘One who is not firm badly suffers in life.’

The following proverb shows how the Khurkhuls view the dead. After death, a person becomes a fearful spirit like the tiger; he no longer fears the tiger, which was fearful to him when he was alive; for him the tiger now is just like a curry. The proverb also says how death turns our life into its opposite.

mi *si-rə(gə)* *kəi* *olle* *kəi* *si-rə(gə)* *ensaŋ* *olle*
 man die-COND tiger turn Tiger die-COND curry turn
 ‘After death, man turns a tiger, tiger curry.’ (Literal)
 ‘Death changes life’.

The following proverb tells us that every aspect of our life is determined by time. Even the most powerful (compared to a tiger) cannot defeat time, which is infinite, immortal:

numit tʰa *kəi-nə* *cabə-ra*
 sun moon tige-by eat-INT
 ‘Can tigers eat the Sun and the moon?’ (Literal)
 ‘Time is infinite, indestructible.’

7.1.1 Proverbs related to the Kinship structure

The social structure of the Khurkhul society is well reflected in many proverbs of Khurkhul. This can be seen from the examples cited and discussed below.

Proverbs based on ‘blood relation’ and ‘social relation’

i m̄ari t̄atn̄ab̄a jad̄ab̄a m̄ari-ne
 blood relation break cannot relation-CONF

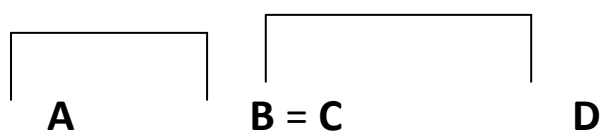
‘Blood relation cannot be broken.’ (Literal)

‘The relation formed by blood is unbreakable.’

The proverb means that there is no end to blood relation. Traditionally people, form kinship based on the “share of same blood line, i.e. common ancestors”. The shared blood line identifies the identity of the group. The sharing of same blood line is the basic similarities the group shares.

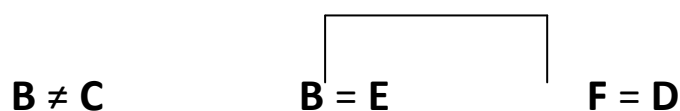
Thus, the Khurkhuls conceptualize it as an unbreakable relation, which is exemplified as the one below.

Fig 1: B marries C who is the brother of D (D is a female)



A and B will remain sisters as they are born as siblings. Any circumstances will not change this relation. However, the relation between B and D might change. In Figure 1, B and D are sisters-in-law as B marries C who is the brother of D.

Figure 2: B divorces C and marries E, and D marries F



However, in Fig 2 below, one observes that B divorces C and marries E. Here, D marries F who is the brother of E. So, B and D who used to be sisters-in-laws by

kinship relation become co-sisters. This shows that the blood relation between **A** and **B**, and **C** and **D** remain unchanged whereas the other relation keeps changing based on whom **B** and **D** married.

Thus, Khurkhul proverbs use ‘blood relation’ metaphorically to mean a firm relation. In simple terms, the relations between siblings; between parents and children; and *sagei* cannot be broken as they are based on blood relation. Whereas, those relations like brother-in-law, sister-in-law can be broken as they are not based on blood relation. Though the primary importance is given to the kinship form based on ‘blood relation’, they also acknowledge the kinship which is based on the ‘social relation’. The following is an example of it.

i: məri-dəgi nai məri-nə henbə mətaŋ ləi
 blood relation-from pus relation-by more situation be-DECL ‘There
 is situation where pus relation is more important than blood relation.’

[Literal]

‘There are situations where social relation is more important than blood relation.’

The proverb means that although blood relation is the basic relation of the society, social relation is also important. Because there are situations where one becomes more dependent on people who are related to him by social relation rather than blood relation.

In this proverb, ‘blood’ and ‘pus’ are used as metaphors to denote two types of kinship practiced in the social structure of the Khurkhul society. They are kinships based on ‘blood relation’ and ‘social relation’, respectively. The origin of this metaphor might be grounded in the phrase *i-nai tabə* as glossed below.

i-nai tabə
 blood-pus fall

‘The falling of blood and pus.’ (Literal)

‘Bloodshed.’

‘Blood relation’ is shared only within a group of people, whereas ‘social relation’ is shared with any one based on any common ground, e.g. sharing of the paddy field, the locality, and so on. In a similar manner, both ‘blood’ and ‘pus’ are part of our life, the only different is that blood can be divided into different groups based on a common blood line,

but in the case of pus, people do not need to have a common line, all can make the group.

In many communities, kinship is formed only through blood relation, and this kind of kinship structure limits within the family. However, human beings are social beings; they live by giving and taking. Thus, the above proverb tells us that sometimes the social relation is more important than the blood relation.

mijkaw-nə *məri* *tak-i*
addressing-by relation tell-DECL

‘The address term tells you the relation.’ (Literal)

‘An address term tells you what the addressee and addresser are to each other.’

An address term also suggests what to give and what to receive from the addressee. This proverb says that an address term is not just a term to address an addressee with, but it also means a relation and responsibility:

mijkaw *kʰəŋ-nə* *cət-lu*
addressing know-ADV go-IMP

‘Know the address terms.’ (Literal)

‘Behave in accordance with the address terms.’

Proverbs reflecting the marriage system of the Khurkhul society

nupa-di *təragi məpu nupi-di* *məŋ* *əni su-həi-de*
man-TOP ten’S owner woman-TOP graveyard two complete-PROH-NEG

‘As for men, he is the owner of ten, but for women, she is prohibited from having two graveyards.’ (Literal)

‘A man can marry ten wives but a woman should marry only one husband.’

This proverb reflects the marriage system of the Khurkhul society. Men can take more than one wife whereas women cannot have more than one husband. ‘Graveyard’ is used as metaphor to represent lineage. As noted, the Khurkhuls bury a part of the head of the deceased; each *sagei* has its own graveyard to bury it.

A man has a fixed *sagei*, whereas a woman has no permanent *sagei* (see Chapter 3). Thus, the number of graveyards is metaphorically used to mean the number of marriage.

Another word used in the proverb is *məpu* ‘owner’, which shows that in the Khurkhul society, husband is seen as the owner of his wife. Thus, the Khurkhuls say: *nupi louba* (owner of a wife), but not *nupa louba* (owner of a husband).

The proverb also informs that the Khurkhul society might allow polygamy, but not polyandry. This is mirrored also in the following proverb:

<i>tu-ronnəbə</i>	<i>lai</i>	<i>ca-ronnəbə</i>	<i>lu-i</i>
wife-pile up	easy	child-pile up	tough-DECL

‘It is easy to have a pile of wives but tough to have a pile of children’ (Literal)

‘Polygamy is easy but tough to deal with the results’.

The term *lonnaba* (piling up things) is used in the proverb as metaphor to denote the wives of polygamy and children born out of it. In a marriage, ‘the relation between husband and wife’, and ‘the relation between father and the children’ are the most important. In a polygamy marriage, the first relation is easier, but the second one is difficult. As one informant explained:

When two wives fight, the husband can deal with them separately, and if necessary, he can divorce them. However, in the case of the second relation, it becomes complicated, as the children are from different wives. This leads to conflict, for instance, at the time of property distribution. A has two wives and according to the social norm, it is the last son who gets the major portion of his father’s property, for he is supposed to look after the parents. In the case of the polygamy man, it becomes difficult as there is more than one last son from each wife.

The attitude towards the affinal woman can also be observed in in the following proverb:

<i>nupi-nə</i>	<i>tʰukaibə</i>	<i>jum</i>	<i>əruk</i>	<i>sakətpə</i>	<i>ŋəm-de</i>
woman-by	break	home	again	construct	can-NEG

‘The house broken by woman cannot be constructed again.’ (Literal)

‘The family broken by the affinal woman cannot be mended again.’

The attitude towards the affinal women of a family is, as is reflected in the proverb, both negative and positive. Firstly, such women are seen as home-breakers, a threat to the family; and secondly, they can, if they want, keep the family in harmony. They are so viewed as a threat to the family perhaps because they are outsiders. However, it is with their husbands that they have the most intimate and trustworthy relation. Therefore, the husbands pay heed more to their wives than the other family members. So, the family runs peacefully if the affinal women get along well with all in the family; it breaks if they do not. A house, if broken, can be reconstructed any time; it needs only concrete materials that are readily available in the market.

But a home, if broken, cannot be reconstructed so easily, for it is built with only love and respect - things that cannot be bought from anywhere.

Therefore, before bringing a woman as a daughter-in-law, a proper study of hers needs to be done. And this is done by studying rather her mother:

məw *tʰibə* *mətəmdə* *məma* *eŋ-ŋo*
 affinal woman search at the of time 3PP mother see-IMP

‘Look at the mother first when you look for an affinal woman.’ (Literal)

A daughter is the replica of her mother.’

In the Khurkhul society, both the mother and father share duties towards their children. Though both of them look after the children, the father is mostly expected to support the children financially, whereas, the mother is expected to teach her children social behaviour and household work. In the case of the daughter, it is the mother with whom she spends most of the time. Thus, the daughter is the replica of the mother.

Proverbs that relate to divorce

The Khurkhul society does not prohibit divorce. However, due to the complexity involved in the process of a divorce, the elders often warn the younger generation about its consequences.

ləwbə *lai* *kʰainəbə* *Lui*
 take easy separate tough

‘It is easy to take but difficult to separate.’ (Literal)

‘It is easy to marry but difficult to divorce.’

In the Khurkhul society, the marriage happens not only between two persons but also between the two families, localities, and *sageis*. Marriage is making new relation for love and friendship. It is positive, and so it is easy. In the case of divorce, it is difficult, because it means separation also between the two families, the localities, and the *sageis*. It creates hatred, conflict and so on. Moreover, separation means absence of the mother in the life of his children.

7.1.2. Proverbs related to Gender

Many Khurkhul proverbs throw light on how the Khurkhul society views men and women.

A. *Proverbs that relate to the patriarchy system of the society*

<i>əwa</i>	<i>nujai</i>	<i>Piba</i>	<i>pʰəm</i>	<i>nət-te</i>
sorrow	happy	male-child	position	no-NEG

‘Sorrow or happiness is not in the position of the male child.’ (Literal)

‘Sorrow or happiness is not permanent.’

This proverb tells us that neither sorrow nor happiness is permanent. If they come, they go, too.

In the Khurkhul society, only the male child has a permanent identity via his father’s *sagei*. He is given this identity the moment he is born, and it remains unchanged till his death. However, the female child, unlike her male counterpart, has no permanent *sagei*: before marriage she is dependent on her father, and then on her husband.

Thus, this proverb, which uses *piba* ‘male’ metaphorically to mean permanence, indirectly shows that the Khurkhul society is rather a patriarchal society. So, it is considered necessary to have male child in the family:

<i>nupa</i>	<i>lāitārādi</i>	<i>sagāi</i>	<i>mutle</i>	<i>nupi</i>	<i>lāitārādi</i>
man	if not there	lineage	extict	woman	if not there

p^huyka māi mutle

hearth fire extict

‘If there is no man, lineage goes extinct; if there is no woman, the fire of the hearth gets off.’ (Literal)

‘Without the man a lineage cannot continue.’

<i>alu</i>	<i>mā^hel</i>	<i>nupigi</i>	<i>sagāi</i>
potato	variety	woman’s	lineage

‘The lineage of woman is like the potato.’ (Literal)

‘Woman has no permanent *sagei*.’

The Khurkhul woman has no permanent *sagei*. She is known by her father’s *sagei* until she is married to her husband. Once she is married, she is known by her husband’s *sagei*. Her identity depends throughout her life on the male, who is either her father or her husband.

The vegetable called potato is used here to metaphorically represent woman’s temporal identity. The potato is the vegetable that can be mixed and cooked with any sort of curry. It will absorb into the curry, and it becomes part of the curry. In a similar way, a woman can belong to any *sagei*. She has no independent *sagei* of hers. Like the potato, she has to merge herself into the *sagei* of her husband i.e. she should accept and follow the rules and norms of her husband’s *sagei*, and become part of the family.

Proverbs that relate to the authority of man over woman

The proverb below informs that the wife is under the complete supervision of her husband. She ought to take permission for anything she desires to do either small or big.

<i>māwa</i>	<i>taktānā</i>	<i>sānton</i>	<i>kākpā</i>
3PP-husband	without informing	hair end	cut

‘The cutting of the hair end without informing her husband.’ (Literal)

‘The doing of something without informing her husband.’

The authority a man has over his wife is metaphorically denoted in this proverb by a trivial act of ‘*cutting the hair end*’ permission for which has to be obtained from the husband. However, this is rather a hyperbole. The Khurkhul is not a typical male dominated society.

In the following proverb, the ‘act of eating upon her husband and sons’ earning’ metaphorically means her dependency on them economically. In the Khurkhul society a husband is expected to put his earnings in the hands of his wife to run the household. Thus, it says that a mother cannot use her son’s earning as her own because it is the daughter-in-law to whom the earning is given. The proverb indirectly informs of the presence of a male in the economy.

<i>iwa</i>	<i>mərən nok-nə</i>	<i>cai</i>	<i>ica</i>	<i>mərən</i>
1PP husband	wealth	laugh-ADV	eat	1PP child
	wealth			wealth <i>kəp-</i>
<i>nə</i>	<i>cai</i>			
cry-ADV	eat			

‘Husband’s wealth is used merrily; son’s with tears. (Literal)

‘Husband’s earning is used freely; son’s earning is to be asked for.’

Proverb that relate to the affinal and consequneal woman

As discussed in the chapters on Kinship and Gender, in the Khurkhul society, when one talks of gender, two types of females are viewed. One is *mou* (affinal woman); the other *ningol* (consequineal woman). The proverb below is a reflection of the roles of these women:

<i>ica</i>	<i>pʰəbə</i>	<i>puk</i>	<i>tʰən-de</i>
1PP child	good	stomach	full-NEG
<i>məw</i>	<i>pʰəbə</i>	<i>puk</i>	<i>tʰəlle</i>
affinal-woman	good	stomach	full

‘Stomach is full if daughter-in-law is good; not when son is good.’ (Literal)

‘It is the daughter-in-law who looks after her husband’s parents.’

‘Stomach’ is metaphorically used to express happiness in this proverb. The son can only provide them financial support, but the rest comes from the daughter-in-law. Thus,

what is brought might be by the son, but what is served is by the daughter-in-law.

Though affinal women are viewed as a potential threat to the harmony of the family, the society acknowledges their importance, too, as in the above proverb.

niŋol-nə *məpam-də* *pi*
consequineal woman-by the family of orientation-LOC tear

tə-rədi *piba* *nunai-ŋəm-de*
fall-if male happy-can-NEG

‘If the consequineal woman sheds tear in the parental family, the male child cannot be happy.’ (Literal)

‘The consequineal woman should be treated well.’

The proverb means that the consequineal woman is to be treated well in her *family of orientation*. According to the Khurkhul social norm, it is the male child who inherits both the property and the *sagei* of the father. On the other hand, after her marriage, she keeps a distance from *the family of orientation*, socially, economically, and physically. As was explained by one informant:

She is prohibited to stay overnight in her family of orientation if it is not an absolute necessity. She is considered impolite if she visits them frequently; instead she is expected to accept the family of her husband and the sagei, i.e. take of the responsibilities and accepting new members of the new family as her own family and sagei.

This kind of social norm where the daughter is not given the property, *sagei* and is expected to maintain least contact with her the family of *orientation* might meet a situation where her connection to the family is ignored especially by the affinal woman. So, in order to prevent from such situation, this proverb reminds that the *ningol* should be treated well as she is always a part of the family.

7.1.3 Proverbs related to Age

How the Khurkhuls view age is reflected in the Khurkhul proverbs. Aged people, as noted, are highly valued and respected in the Khurkhul society. The society can function without chaos only with the presence of the aged people:

əhən mətʰi-nə cəpʰu menbə

elder faeces-by pot mend

‘Mending the hole in a pot with faeces of old man.’ (Literal)

‘Solving problems with elders’ advice.’

The process involved in producing faeces is metaphorically used to mean the process of attaining knowledge. Human faeces are a result of the digestion of the food taken for survival. Thus, human knowledge results from the understanding of experiences of life. Experiences of life are food; understanding them are digestion. The result is knowledge. On the other hand, it is the aged people of the society that have experienced and understood life most. So, their stool, i.e. knowledge, is most valuable in solving problems of life. Below are some more beautiful Khurkhul proverbs on age:

cəhi camə tʰəbək camə

age hundred work hundred

‘Hundred years hundred works.’ (Literal)

‘Age increases responsibilities.’

ucao əmə tubədə unao majam tekpə

big tree one while fall small tree many break]

‘Many small trees break when a big tree falls.’ (Literal)

‘The young ones suffer when an elder dies.’

əŋəŋ-nə jum-panbə jum pa-i

child-by thouse-run house thin-DECL

‘The family run by child is thin.’ (Literal)

‘The family without an elder is inappropriate.’

<i>l̥aisabi</i>	<i>ceŋ-su</i>	<i>cəkem</i>	<i>cai</i>
maiden	raw rice-pound	rice-small	eat
<i>h̥anubi</i>	<i>ceŋ-su</i>	<i>məcəŋ</i>	<i>cai</i>
old woman	raw rice-pound	distinct size of rice	eat

‘Old women pound rice into the right size, young women pound them into small size.’ (Literal)

‘It is not strength but experience that can solve the problems of life.’

This proverb means that it is not physical strength that helps in solving problems of life; it is rather experience that helps. The rice pounded by young women with their physical strength is spoiled, for they turn them into a small size so that they cannot be used for

eating. On the other hand, they come in the correct size when ponded by old women. Thus, a man with the strength can only give physical output, but a man with knowledge can give the right way to use that strength.

Thus, the above proverbs tell us what elders mean to the Khurkhul society. They are for them the store house of knowledge and wisdom and hence must be duly attended to.

7.1.4 Proverbs related to Social economy

‘The big bird’, ‘the small bird’, ‘the nest’ in the proverb below, beautifully couched in metaphorical language, inform that both the rich and the poor live their lives according to the size of their income. The rich dream big, live lavishly. On the other hand, the poor man spends by carefully calculating his income and expenditure; he dreams small, and lives a life affordable with his small income.

<i>ucek</i>	<i>acəwbə</i>	<i>məhum</i>	<i>acəwbə</i>	<i>sai</i>
bird	big	nest	big	make

<i>ucek</i>	<i>əpikpə</i>	<i>məhum</i>	<i>əpikpə</i>	<i>sai</i>
bird	small	nest	small	make

‘Big birds make big nests and small birds make small nests.’ (Literal)

‘Both the rich and the poor live according to their capacity.’

In the same way, the proverb below beautifully describes the change in man’s attitude when his economic condition improves. *Cakem* (the small size of rice) and *cengyai* (normal size of rice) are used metaphorically to mean the economic status, poor and normal.

<i>cakem</i>	<i>ca-rəm-bə-dəgi</i>	<i>ceŋ-jai</i>	<i>ca-rək-pə-də</i>
rice-small	eat-EVI-NMLZ-ABL	rice-middle	eat-INCEPT-NMLZ-ESS

<i>mi</i>	<i>u-de</i>
man	see-NEG

‘When one starts eating normal sized rice, he sees no one.’ (Literal)

‘When a man has something from naught, he feels self-contained.’

There is nothing to be excessively proud about eating *chengyai* as most eat it. But, when a poor man has something from nothing he fails to see the simple truth – that so many around him are already having it.

Some further Khurkhul proverbs are presented below, which reflect their view about money and wealth.

pəisa wa ŋaŋi

money word speak

‘Money speaks.’ (Literal)

‘A man with money can do anything he wants.’

cəru-nə naməi səmbə

straw-by tail join

‘Using straw to join the tail of *khudei* (a man’s wear)’ (Literal)

‘Showing off when he has nothing.’

cakjampokpə

prolific-person

nokpə

laugh

cəŋi pəisa-paibə

enter money-hold

nokpə

laugh

cəŋ-de

enter-NEG

‘A man with lots of children can laugh, a rich man cannot laugh.’ (Literal)

‘Offspring is the real wealth.’

kʰoŋ cot-lə(gə) cin cotli

feet wet-if mouth wet

‘Mouth gets wet when leg is wet.’ (Literal)

‘Working is the way to earn living (i.e. your legs get wet when you work in the paddy field).’

The proverbs also seem to indicate that the Khurkhul society has both poor and rich people – the poor do not waste *cakem*; the rich eat *cengyai*.

7.1.5 Proverbs related to Parenting

The quality of the future generation depends on how the children are brought up and taught. Thus, the Khurkhuls take parenting very seriously. The following proverbs beautifully couched in rich metaphors reflect the society's view on this.

<i>sən</i>	<i>ŋao-rə(di)</i>	<i>sənbu</i>	<i>tʰi</i>
cow	mad-if	cow owner	search
<i>hui</i>	<i>ŋao-rə(di)</i>	<i>huibu</i>	<i>tʰi</i>
dog	mad-if	dog owner	search

‘If a cow runs mad, the owner of the cow is searched for;
If a dog runs mad, the owner of the dog is searched for.’ [Literal]
‘Parent is responsible for any wrong done by the child.’

<i>kao</i>	<i>tʰa(bə)-kum</i>	<i>tʰabə</i>
Kao	release-SIMI	release

‘Releasing like a Kao.’ [Literal]
‘It is not good to grow up without parent’s restriction.’

Kao in the above example means the wildness of a child without parents. It can be traced back to the epic the *Khamba Thoibi*. *Kao* is the name of the ox owned by the parents of *Khamba*, the protagonist of the epic, and his elder sister called *Khamnu*. After their untimely death, young *Khamba* and *Khamnu* were unable to look after the ox. So, *Kao* was released from their home.

<i>kənnə</i>	<i>paisil-le</i>	<i>sikʰidəra</i>	
tight	hold-INWARD-PERF	will die	
<i>komnə</i>	<i>tʰadok-le</i>	<i>paikʰidəra</i>	<i>wai</i>
loose	release-OUTWARD-PERF	will fly	worry

‘It is strange that the bird dies when held tightly; flies away when held loosely.’
[Literal]

‘For the young child, a correct balance of freedom and restriction from the parents is expected.’

The Future of the Khurkhul society lies in the hands of young Khurkhul ‘birds’. Parents, therefore, must bring them up with utmost care, with the right kind of balance between restriction and freedom.

