

Folk Music: An integral part of everyday life in Southern Karnataka

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Abstract: *India inherits a rich culture and heritage with vivid art forms such as music, dance, architecture, sculpture and painting. It is found from the history in India more than sixty-four forms of art have been identified and nurtured till date. Indian music has greater precedence in the world. Music in primitive days marked their beginning with natural language and sound. Music was considered a means for communicating the feelings and emotions. Thus, the natural way of expressing the music gave rise to folklore which imitated the daily activities through songs sung naturally in native language without support of any specific instruments. India being a county with diversified culture and language has more than 100 local languages for which many does not have scripts. Here an attempt is made to bring few such instances of folk songs describing various instances of daily life in the southern India (Karnataka). Kannada being the communicating language has various variants local to the region of living.*

Keywords: *Music, Folklore, Nature, Southern India.*

1. Introduction

The primitive form of music being very natural and represents the daily activities involved in the livelihood of the human beings. India being rich in culture, heritage and natural resources, people interact with the nature so much, that they consider nature as integral part of their lives (Hoemle et al. 1988). It is said,

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“Not only Indian Music, but also music of all countries evolved in the hoary past among the aboriginal primitive tribes in a very crude and simple form. It is believed that music originated from nature”. The folk music is so rich in describing the daily activities has transmitted orally from generations, as many languages has no scripts. But, the folk music are being now patronized by the Government PRELUDE of India and the State Governments, and 'their courses will certainly continue to flow uninterruptedly towards the near and distant future, so as to preserve the glorious tradition of fine arts of cultural and historical India (Prajnanananda 1973).

The powerful influence of music lies continuously that one inhibits the feeling of exhausted its meaning in oneself. One heard and loved music goes with want for hundred times. Music has also established a distinct and varied mood for various celebrations and observations (Prajnanananda 1989). We weary of forms more frequently because they impose upon us the full picture of them. Thus, we bestow ourselves and surrender to music. The secret seems to lie in the fact that music is invisible, and hence does not reveal its full significance. Music has the strong tendency to bind folk in some common action and experience.

2. About Indian Folk Music

The folk music originates in a specific culture, transmitted orally, composed by unknown and performed over a long period of time and passed on over generations. The melodic composition is so powerful it is intimately associated with the psychic nature, emotional pressure and pleasure of the moment. Every mood expressed itself through song, and the best of these spontaneous compositions have contributed enormously to the folk music. Here, melody tells a kind of running story; provides a natural release for pressure and intensities.

With the change in civilization, responsibility lied in the hearts of the people for the continuity of artistic life of music and art. The evolution of music began with the people who were illiterate and the art of music and the composition was with their innovative interests describing the instance. As the folk is a small society of people with common interests, follow common rituals in functions, possess common mind set. These people have distinctive characteristics maintaining a special order of life and beliefs, identified with rituals, worship, food habits, and way of living, traditional arts and crafts. Thus, the folk songs are scripted by group instantaneously. It is found that folk music is rich in expressing the activities, people, nature involved in the day to day instances [Prajnanananda 1989; Manly 2000]. Harmony through music has proved to build culture and civilization. In the

base of therapy, harmonic music contributes to the complete integration of the person associated with wisdom and understanding.




However, the folk music possesses basic characteristics, such as:

1. No set of rules or principles are followed, still maintain with a specific pattern.
2. Goes with rhymes, includes sound synonym to the actions in the scene of interest. For example, human made sound replicating a bird hum, river flow, cold breeze, animal roar, bells ring etc.
3. Many a times pattern of lyrics goes as questionnaires, puzzle to solve to explain a character of interest, followed by answering or yet another question which results in an answer.
4. Associate with the daily life characters, activities, nature, animal, bird and so on, to the extent of involving the god as a character of interest. Generally, interacting with the nature, explaining the ritual of a function, praising the almighty in happiness, thanking the god, questioning the god when in trouble, love between mother and child and so on
5. Reflex the culture and custom by the specific folk, mostly with very local and natural language, including the slangs.
6. Encourages spreading a positive energy in the group and upholding the self-confidence.
7. Audience being the part of spontaneous composition and the song continue based on their interest and skill narrating the instances.
8. Has the therapeutic value, more of emotional and social.



With the rapid and fast-moving life, balancing work pressure is not easy. Many people are affected by mental stress, anxiety, depression and hypertension diseases causing harmful effects in physical and mental disorders. Even today, in rural India, this folk music plays a vital role in relaxing the person mentally. It is proven that, music can play an effective role in helping the people to lead better, fruitful lives. It is not only listening but also singing a specific folk song appropriate to the situation rejuvenates the mind and soul. Recent developments in technology and entertainment fields have initiated to store and transmit them electronically.

Although plethora of folk songs exists in southern Karnataka. An attempt is made here to list a few varied instances of folk music from southern Karnataka, a southern state of India. The following table is organized with 3 columns, column 1 depicting the picture of the instance for the existence of song, the song content describing the situation and the content involved. Column 2 narrates one or two



paragraphs of the song in local language “Kannada” with the font in MS-Word “thunga”, whereas column 3 comes with its meaning and a brief description of its inference [Javaregowda 2019].

Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
<p>1. Marriage Rituals</p> <p>Blessings from Almighty</p>  	<p>ವಿಜಯವಿನಾಯಕನೆಗಜಮುಖನೆಕ ರುಣಾಸಾಗರನೆ</p> <p>ಹರಿಹರಬ್ರಹ್ಮರುಅನವರತ ಭಜಿಸುವಮೂಜಗದೊಡೆಯಗಣೇ ಶನೆ</p> <p>ನೀನೇಮೊದಲುನಿನ್ನಿಂದತಾನೆಆ ರಂಭಜಗದೊಳೆಲ್ಲ ಮೊದಲಪೂಜೆನಿಗಾದಮೇಲೆಇ ನ್ನುಳಿದಪೂಜೆಯೆಲ್ಲ ಹುಲ್ಲುಗರಿಕೆಯಹೂವಿನಂತೆಸ್ವೀಕ ರಿಸಿವರವಕೊಡುವೆ ನೇಮದಿಂದನೆನದವರಮನೆಗಶಿರ ವಾಗಿ ನೀನುಇರುವೆ</p>	<p>In India, marriage is a series of events which starts with praying the god and taking the blessings for the people involved along with would be couple.</p> <p>Here, God Ganesha is considered for the blessings and the song explains the process of prayer and the need of blessings, so appropriately to would be couple. The song also explains the processes involved in the prayer and the offerings made.</p> <p>This is done at the bride and grooms place separately.</p>
<p>Exchanging the garland</p> 	<p>ಮುನ್ನೂರಮೂವತ್ತುಕೋಟಿದೇವ ತೆಗಳುಚಿನ್ನದಗಿರಿ ಯಮೇಲೆ ಹೊನ್ನಹೊಸ್ತಿಲಪುರದಚೆನ್ನಿಗನ ಕಂಡಂತೆಕಣ್ಣುಪಾಪವಕಳೆವವೆಂಕ ಟರಮಣಗೆ ಕಾಶಿಪೀತಾಂಬರವುಕಯ್ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಳಲಿನಧ್ವನಿಗೈಯ್ಯುತಲೇಪಾದ್ರಿ ಗಿರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಸವಾಗಿರುವಂಥವಾಸುಕಿಶಯನ ಶ್ರೀವೆಂಕಟರಮ</p>	<p>Here the bride and groom are described as the angels being blessed by three millions of god with golden feathers. The processes of garlanding, beauty of the brides, shyness she exhibits, garland and so on are beautifully narrated very rhythmically.</p>

Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
Final ritual of marriage		
	<p>ಧಾರೆಯೆರೆದಜನಕಬಾಲಕಿಯರ , ಧಾರೆಯೆರೆದಜನಕಜಾನಕಿಯನು ಧಾರೆಯನೆರೆದನುಭಾಳತಪಸದಿಂ ದ, ದೀನೋದ್ದಾರಿಮುರಾರಿರಾಘವನಿಗೆ ಮುತ್ತುಮಾಣಿಕ್ಯಮಯದಮಂಟಪ ದಲ್ಲಿ, ಒಪ್ಪಿಶ್ರೀರಾಮನಿಂದಿರಲುಚಿತ್ತಜನ ಯ್ಯನ ಅನುಜಗತಕಂಧಪತ್ನಿಸಹಿತಲೊಂ ದು, ಪರಮವೈಭವದಿಂದ</p>	<p>The final ritual of Hindu marriages in India comes with the process of handing over of the bride in the hands of groom and their parents. This is very emotional moment of any Indian wedding. The song explains how it is important to hand perform this ritual, how responsible the groom and his family takes care of bride. The whole of process is compared with the rituals followed by lord Rama (God) in his marriage ceremony with Seetha (Goddess)</p>
2. Mothers Lullaby Songs	ತಾಯಿಯಹಾಡು	
	<p>ದೇವರಗುಡಿಯಾಗದೇವೆದ್ದು ಅಳತಾನದೇವದೇವನಂದತೂಗಿರೆ ದೇವದೇವನಂದತೂಗಿರೆನಂಬಲ ಣ್ಣ ರೇವಣಸಿದ್ದನಂದತೂಗಿರೆಜೋ ಜೋ ಚಿನ್ನದಗುಡಿಯಾಗಚೆನ್ನೆದ್ದು ಅಳತಾನಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿತ್ತೆರೆಲ್ಲರತೂಗಿರೆ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿತ್ತೆರೆಲ್ಲರತೂಗಿರೆ ನಂಬಲಣ್ಣಚೆನ್ನವೀರಭದ್ರನಂದ ತೂಗಿರೆಜೋಜೋ ದುರುಳಮೆಟ್ಟಿಲದಾಗಬೆರಳೆದ್ದು ಅಳತಾನಬೆರಳಚೀಪಿಚೀಪಿಅಳತಾ ನ ಬೆರಳಚೀಪಿಚೀಪಿಅಳುವಾಗ ನಂಬಲಣ್ಣಎರಳುಬೈತಲೆಯವರ ತೂಗಿರೆಜೋಜೋ</p>	<p>Lullabies are soft and soothing song. Here, mother is so generous in describing the cradle, its moving rhythm, blessing through almighty to shower the child. Mother tries to explain the smile of the baby, crying rhythm, thumb sucking all along the rhyming words.</p>

Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
<p>3. Song on Farmer and Farming</p>	<p>ರೈತನಹಾಡು</p>	
	<p>ಬೆಳಗಾಗಿನಾನೆದ್ದುಯಾರ್ಯಾರನೆನೆಯಾಲಿ, ಎಳ್ಳುಜೀರಿಗೆಯಾಬೆಳೆಯೋಳಾ ಎಳ್ಳುಜೀರಿಗೆಯಾಬೆಳೆವಂಥಭುಮಿ ತಾಯಿ, ಎದ್ದೊಂದುಘಳಿಗೆನೆನದೇನಾ ಕಲ್ಲುಕೊಟ್ಟವಾಣಿಎಲ್ಲಭಾಗ್ಯವುಬ ರಲಿ, ಪಲ್ಲಕ್ಕಿಮೇಲೆಮಗಬರಲಿ ಪಲ್ಲಕ್ಕಿಮೇಲೆಮಗಬರಲಿಕಮನೆಗೆ, ಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಮುಡಿಯೋಸೊಸೆಬರಲಿ</p>	<p>As mentioned, folk songs are integral part of the Indian society. Every professional have their unique set of songs. The farmer begins his conversation with the nature in the dawn. He describes himself about the grains he intends to grow and seek the blessing of the lord to get high yield.</p>
<p>4. Describing/praising the specific deity</p>	<p>ದೇವರಹಾಡು</p>	
	<p>ಚೆಲ್ಲಿದರುಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಯಾ, ಬಾಣಾಸೂರೇರಿಮ್ಯಾಲೆ ಅಂದಾದಚಂದಾದಮಾಯಾರ ಮಾದೇವ್ವೆ ಚೆಲ್ಲಿದರುಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಯಾ, ಮಾದಪ್ಪಬರುವಾಗಾ ಮಾಳೆಲ್ಲಘಮ್ಪಂದಿತೊ, ಸಂಪಿಗೆಹೂವಂಗೆ ಗುಂಪಾದೋನಿನ್ನಪರುಸೆ, ಗುಂಪಾದೋನಿನ್ನಪರುಸೆಕೌದಳ್ಳಿಬ ಯಲಾಗೆ ಚೆಲ್ಲಿದರುಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಯಾ</p>	<p>In India, the human pulse beat is called the “drum of shiva”. Deity “Shiva” plays an integral part of every one’s life and people converse as if they are with their own people. Here, the song praises the process of worshipping “Shiva” along with the fragrance of the flowers used. Hero “Shiva” is welcomed by showering jasmine flowers from cloud and a bed of flowers are spread around.</p>

Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
5. Rain songs	ಮಳೆಯಗೀತೆಗಳು	
	<p>ಮಾಯದಂಧಮಳೆಬಂತಣ್ಣ ಮಗದಾಗಕೆರೆಗೆ ಅಂಗೈಲಗಲಮೋಡನಾಡಿ ಭೂಮಿತೂಕದಗಾಳಿಬೀಸಿ ಗುಡಗಿಗುಡಾಡಿಚೆಲ್ಲಿದಳೊ ಗಂಗಮ್ಮತಾಯಿ</p>	<p>Rain is part of life and plays important role especially in the country side. Song explains how a handful of cloud brings heavy rain by the heavy wind with thunders around. Here, the beauty lies in the synonyms in kannada used to reflect could, wind, rain and thunder. The adjectives used intensify the characters of cloud, rain and thunder.</p>
6. Interaction with the Bangles Seller	ಭಾಗ್ಯದಬಳೆಗಾರ	
 	<p>ಬೆಳಗಾಗಿನಾನೆದ್ದುಯಾರ್ಯಾರನೆನೆಯಾಲಿ, ಎಳ್ಳುಜೀರಿಗೆಯಾಬೆಳೆಯೋಳಾ ಎಳ್ಳುಜೀರಿಗೆಯಾಬೆಳೆವಂಥಭುಮಿ ತಾಯಿ, ಎದ್ದೊಂದುಘಳಿಗೇನೆನೆದೇನಾ ಕಲ್ಲುಕೊಟ್ಟವಾಿಗೆಎಲ್ಲಭಾಗ್ಯವುಬ ರಲಿ, ಪಲ್ಲಕ್ಕಿಮೇಲೆಮಗಬರಲಿ ಪಲ್ಲಕ್ಕಿಮೇಲೆಮಗಬರಲಿಈಮನೆಗೆ, ಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆಮುಡಿಯೋಸೊಸೆಬರಲಿ</p>	<p>Beauty in this song goes with questionnaires. Bangles seller in the streets of a county side in common scene in rural India. Here, a girl who is married and moved to a neighboring village requests bangelierre to visit her mom's place for which he asks her how can I know and make out about your mom's place. The girl now explains the route in her own beautiful way, the trees he meets on the way, structure of the house, pets around, specially two little parrots. Then, he asks how can identify the people there for which the song continues describing the</p>

Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
		best means of identifying the people in her mom's house based on their characters and this continues.
7. Process in pottery	ಮುಂಜಾನೆದ್ದುಕುಂಬಾರಣ್ಣ	
	<p>ಮುಂಜಾನೆದ್ದುಕುಂಬಾರಣ್ಣಹಾಲು ಬಾನುಂಡನ.</p> <p>ಹಾರ್ ಹಾರಿಮಣ್ಣತುಳಿದಾನ ಹಾರಿಹಾರಿಯರಿಮಣ್ಣತುಳಿಯು ತ್ತಮಾಡ್ಯಾನ.</p> <p>ನಾರ್ಯಾರುಹೊರುವಂತಬರಾಣಿ ಹೊತ್ತಾರೆದ್ದುಕುಂಬಾರಣ್ಣತುಪ್ಪಾ ಬಾನುಂಡನ.</p> <p>ಘಟ್ಟೀಸಿಮಣ್ಣತುಳಿದಾನ ಘಟ್ಟೀಸಿಮಣ್ಣತುಳಿಯು ತ್ತಮಾಡ್ಯಾನ.</p> <p>ಮಿತ್ತೇರುಹೊರುವಂತಬರಾಣಿ</p>	<p>Folk song on artisans is abundant explain the process, tasks, results and the people involved there. For example, here a song on potter and the process in pottery, intensity with which the clay is processed manually. The song is with so much of positive factors which bring energy and morally boosting the potter to complete the task. Song also explains how best the end product, the clay pots, lamps, etc are made beautifully by the hard work. The words used here are so intensified that it reflects the hard work the potter does.</p>
8. Describing the Lake around the village	ನದಿಯಹಾಡುಗಳು	
	<p>ಮೂಡಲ್ಕುಣಿಗಲೈರೆನೋಡೋರಿ ಗೊಂದ್ಯೆಭೋಗ.</p> <p>ಮೂಡಿಬರ್ತಾನೆಚಂದಿರಾಮ ತಾನಂದನೋಮೂಡಿಬರ್ತಾನೆಚಂದಿರಾಮ.</p> <p>ಆತಂತ್ರಿಸಿನೋಡೋರ್ಗೆವಂಥಾಕುಣಿಗಲೈರೆ</p>	<p>Here the song explains the beauty of the lake on a full moon night. It says it is so pleasure to have a look of the lake with the moon as the crown which has risen, sitting on the stone bench</p>


Instance of Song	Folk Song in Kannada	Meaning and inference
	ಸಂತೆಹಾದಿಲಿಕಲ್ಲುಕಟ್ಟೆ, ತಾನಂದನೋಸಂತೆಹಾದಿಲಿಕಲ್ಲುಕಟ್ಟೆ	around while walking on the way to market. Here, the song involves the nature along with the beauty and the beholder.
9. Songs on Animals and Birds	ಪ್ರಾಣಿಪಕ್ಷಿಯಹಾಡುಗಳು	
	ನವ್ವಾಲೆಬಂತಪ್ಪನವ್ವಾಲೆ . ಸೋಗೆಯಬಣ್ಣದನವ್ವಾಲೆ ಬತ್ತವಮೆಯೊಡುನವ್ವಾಲೆ .	As peacock are seen rarely in the country side, the songs come with full of excitement describing the beautiful colors, dancing poses, grains it eats and so on. The words here are so soothing reflecting the activities of the bird.

Table 1. varied instances of folk music from southern Karnataka

3. Conclusion

Folk is a small society of people with common interests, follow common rituals in functions and possess common mind set. Folk music being the integral part of any society has played vital role in bringing up the culture and heritage of India, thus in civilization also. It binds the society emotionally. Folk music imitates every aspect of daily life and strengthens the individuals. The whole of community acts as the part of the composition and carries generation to generation. Here, an attempt is made to bring out few important aspects around folk music along with few illustrations. Even though, plethora of composition is there in Indian folk and especially in southern Karnataka, a glimpse is listed here with few variants

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