

CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURE OF MODERN INDIA

Dr. Syed Tanvir Badruddin

Associate Professor in Sociology,
 Milliya Arts, Science & Mang. Sci. College, Beed.43112

Abstract:

In India, the land of culture and unity, culture and unity are well manifested in the structure of society, indeed in the smaller unit of a society i.e. family. A family is a set of human beings related to each other in a non-professional manner, giving rise to a real interconnection within the family. Love, care, and affection are the most prominent human values, which are responsible for maintaining these bonds of relationships within a family. The traditional family structure of Indian society was undergoing a rapid transformation. The older structure of the joint family is being replaced by simpler nuclear structures. In the past few years, the effect of globalization has further increased the change in social and family structures in the world and India is also one of them. And there are many factors for the disintegration of the joint family like economic, educational, legal, urbanization which contributes in separating the children from the elders. From this background, the present study highlights the various factors which contribute to the disintegration of Indian family structure. This paper critically examine the impact of various contributing factors on Indian family structure.

Keywords:

Family Structure, Changes, Impact, Globalization.

Introduction:

The family has been a foundational institution of society in most parts of the world, particularly in India. The term family is derived from the Latin word 'familia' denoting a household establishment and refers to a "group of individuals living together during important phases of their lifetime and bound to each other by biological and/or social and psychological relationship". The family is the basic unit of society. Families exist in all sizes

and formations and are essential to the health and survival of the individual members and to society as a whole. As the primary group for the individual, the family serves as a buffer between the needs of the individual and the demands and expectations of society. The family as a social institution has been undergoing change. Both in its structure and functions changes have taken place. In India, as in many traditional societies, the family has been not only the center of social and economic life, but also the primary source of support for the family members. The dynamics of family structure in India have undergone significant transformations over the years, reflecting the difficult relationship between tradition, modernity, socio-economic factors, and cultural changes. Such transformation is representative of the larger structural transformations occurring within Indian society, influenced by urbanization, globalization, educational achievement, changing gender roles, and improvements in technology.

Changes in family structure:-

Following changes that have occurred in family structure in India

- 1. Change in fertility:-** India, is a decrease in family size. Fertility declined due to the combined effect of significant socio-economic development achieved during the last two decades and the effective implementation of family planning programmes. Hence, it has become unreasonable for many people to have large families as the cost of children is increasing. A main, emerging feature of modern family is the changing attitude towards the value of children. In traditional societies, where human labour was a source of asset to the family, more children were preferred to fewer. But as the economic contribution from the children in a family decreased, because of

a move away from agriculture, the need for large numbers of children decreased. Progresses in health care and child survival also contributed. The importance was on the quality of life rather than the quantity of children, a new concept added to family values.

2. **Change in family system:** - Virtual disappearance of traditional joint family system and increasing nuclearization of families. Though still patriarchal nature, a rise in proportion of female headed households can be seen.
3. **Change in age at marriage:** In India significant declines in fertility are being experienced, reductions in the amount of people never married have often coincided with or preceded declines in marital fertility. A importance of the increase in the proportion of never married young adults is the gradual upward trend of the average age at marriage. A higher average age at first birth is an indicator of lower fertility. Delay of marriage among females resulted delay of childbearing with reduction in family size. Also Increase in separation and divorce rates. A shift towards love marriages, decline in arrange marriages and mate selection by individuals themselves. Increase in average age of marriage with decrease in instances of child marriage
4. **Change in mortality:** Mortality declines, particularly infant mortality, everywhere preceded the decline of fertility. Improved survival rates of children mean that when women reached the age of 30 they increasingly had achieved the completed family size they desired. Earlier, much larger numbers of births were required to achieve the desired completed family size.. In the last three decades infant mortality has declined significantly in India and this trend undoubtedly influenced the fertility decline. Mortality decline, followed by fertility decline, altered the age structure of the population and also the structure within individual families.
5. **Change in family size:** In India, the reduction of the family size could be

attributed partly to economic difficulties, low levels of income, the high cost of living, the costs of education of children and the desire to maintain a better standard of living, which is best achieved within the more affordable smaller size family. So, the nuclear family with its Parents and children became the model of society and soon ruled out the traditional, extended family usually creating three generations.

6. **Change in decision making and conflicts:** - There is a shrinking of kinship ties and decisions are taken by continuous consultations between children and parents on familial matters. Greater tension and conflicts between wife and husband, parents and sons and between brothers.
7. **Change in fertility and childcare:-** Total fertility rate declined to around 2 during 2019-21. Postponement of first pregnancy and family planning. Childcare responsibilities are increasingly coming under the domain of professional caretaking. Family's role as an agent of socialization for children has diminished.
8. **Change in gender roles:-** Increasing acceptance of girl child in the family. Increasing participation of women in education with increase in their role in economic activities outside household and decision making within house

Factors responsible for changes in family structure:-

Industrialization: - There are immeasurable published accounts representing that changes have taken place in the structure of the family due to exposures to the forces of industrialization. Nuclearizations of the family is considered as the outcome of its impact. Such an interpretation presupposes existence of non-nuclear family structure in such societies. Industrial establishments have their own requirements of human groups for their efficient functioning. As a result, people are migrating to industrial areas, and various kinds of family units have been formed adding extra-ordinary variety to the overall situation. It is, nevertheless, important to note down in this context that despite definite visible trends in the changing structure of the family due to

industrialization, it is not yet possible to establish any one-to-one relationship

Urbanization:- In most of the discussions on impact of urbanization on the family structure, one specific observation is fairly common: that, due to the influence of urbanization, the joint family structure is under severe stress, and in many cases it has developed a inclination toward nuclearization. When there is no disagreement on the authenticity of such a tendency, the traditional ideal joint family was perhaps not the exclusive type before such influence came into existence.

Modernizations:- Both industrialization and urbanization are considered as the major contributing factors toward modernization. In fact, modernization as a social-psychological attribute can be in operation independent of industrialization and urbanization. With the passage of time, through exposures to the forces of modernization, family structure suffered multiple changes almost leading to an endless change. There are examples too, where family structure has become simpler due to its impact. There are also contrary instances indicating consequent complexity in family structure. Culture has been shown to determine the family structure by delineating boundaries, rules for interaction, communication patterns, acceptable practices, discipline and hierarchy in the family.

Globalization:- Globalization has resulted in movement of younger populations across the countries, especially from developing countries to developed countries. It also resulted in increased exchanges in goods, services, cultures and values. Infiltration of consumerist culture has weakened the emotional bondage and many young members feel a sense of identity crisis in the family. Transfer of dependency burden of family from younger to older generations due to migration of prime working age members. Traditional decision-making responsibility of the male head of the family, in a patriarchal society started collapsing with foreign employment and improved economic status of women.

Technology:- Technology has transformed the way families communicate. It enables instant connection regardless of geographical

distances, contributing to connect with extended families. Disruption to traditional face-to-face interactions affects the complexity and quality of personal conversations, which can increase conflicts within families. Technological apparatus is replacing the role of family as means of socializing and value engraining in children.

Impact of changing family structure on women and children :-

The transition from traditional joint families to nuclear or non-traditional family structures has often resulted in greater autonomy and agency for women. However, women's autonomy is differentiated by economic status, caste, region, religion etc. For instance, women in richer joint households have more autonomy in intra-household decision-making but less freedom of movement outside the home. With more women joining the workforce, nuclear families often rely on dual-income households, requiring women to juggle professional commitments with traditionally established household duties and caregiving responsibilities. This can lead to stress, fatigue, health issues and burnout feelings. In changing nature of authority in families, women have better access to resources for pursuing higher education and skill development, leading to improved employment prospects and financial independence.

Women in nuclear families or non-traditional family arrangements often challenge traditional gender norms through their economic participation and role in decision making within the household. Household responsibilities are also being increasingly shared with their partners. The decline of the joint family system has impacted women's support systems and social networks. Increasing number of non-traditional family arrangements, especially single-mother households, presents additional challenges in this regard. In nuclear families, women have to bear the primary responsibility of caregiving to both children and elderly. With ageing of Indian society and changing nature of families, this will continue to pose a significant challenge.

In nuclear families, children often develop a strong sense of individual identity and autonomy, while in joint families, they develop a deeper connection to their extended family heritage and traditions. In small households, children lack emotional and social support that comes from extended family relationships, impacting their well-being and social development. Increasing separation and divorce rates result in single-parent household which impacts the welfare of the child. Children often lose connection with their cultural heritage in modern family systems. so that children and families can connect with their heritage.

Conclusion:-

From the traditional joint family system to the increasing prevalence of nuclear and non-traditional family arrangements, the landscape of Indian families has undergone significant transformations over the years. These changes have been driven by industrialization, urbanization, globalization, evolving governance framework among other factors. As families adapt to these changes, they face both opportunities and challenges. some change in the late twentieth century due to variety of reasons, including the need for some members to move from village to city, or from one city to another for employment opportunities. As the Indian family and their mind set up is not well prepared to fast growing and ever changing present competitive and challenging world, this change in societal norms and lifestyle are becoming a threatening to Indian family structures with increase in several socio-psychological problems. Consequently, radical transformation of Indian society in to nuclear family is inevitable. Therefore it becomes imperative for the government and decision makers to pay attention towards the impact of this societal change in family structures and its probable consequences.

References:-

- + Thomas, William; Florian Znaniecki (1996). *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: A Classic Work in Immigration History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- + Van den Berghe, Pierre (1979). *Human family systems: an evolutionary view*. Elsevier North Holland, Inc.
- + Desai, M. (2003). *Tradition and change in the Indian family*. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*.
- + Desai, S., & Patel, P. (2014). *Joint family vs. nuclear family: An analysis of changing family structure and roles*. *Sociology Study*.
- + Deshpande, A., & Motiram, S. (2008). *Urbanization, gender roles, and family dynamics: A study in Maharashtra*. *Economic and Political Weekly*.
- + Srivastava, R., & Singh, S. (2013). *Regional variations in family structures: A comparative study*. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*.
- + Barcley, G.W., 1958. *Techniques of Population Analysis*, John Wiley and Sons, New York.
- + Bhande, A. and Kanitkar, T. 1992. *Principles of Population Studies*. Himalayan Publishing House, Bombay
- + Bongarts, J. and Potter, G.R. 1983. *Fertility, Biology and Behaviour: An Analysis of the Proximate Determinants*. Academic Press, New York.
- + Davis, J. and Potter, G.R. 1983. *Fertility, Biology and Behaviour: An Analysis of the Proximate Determinants*. Academic Press, New York.
- + Davis, K. and Balake, J.1956. "Social Structure and Fertility: An Analytical Framework". *Economic Development and Social Change*. Vol.3 No.2.