



Original Article

Indian History: Reorganization of Family in India: Joint Family to Nuclear Family

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Abstract

The family is among the fundamental institutions of the society, which is key to socialization, emotional support and economic collaboration. Traditional Indian joint family system has always been predominant in the country with collective living, sharing duties and close relations among the relatives. Yet, there has been an observable change in the structure of families towards the nuclear family with the rapid urbanization, industrialization and modernization. This paper will look at the causes, the nature and the impacts of this change. This paper discusses the ways in which family life has been transformed by the interplay of economic, cultural, and technological changes using sociological theories and empirical observations. The research shows that as much as nuclear families are good in allowing autonomy and mobility, it also brings a weak social support and even a shift in interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Kinship, Nuclear Family, Social Change, Urbanization, Indians Society, Family Structure.

Introduction

The main or first unit of social organization is family. The ethical culture that embraced the joint family system in India has existed since ancient times when under a single roof lives several generations sharing resources and duties. But over the last few decades, the Indian society has been transforming drastically. Nuclear families have emerged due to economic growth, migration to cities and shift in lifestyle, which is slowly contributing to the disappearance of joint families. A nuclear family is a family that usually consists of children and their parents with independence and privacy being of utmost importance. The purpose of this research paper is to study this transition through a sociological angle focusing on the reasons behind its change, the effects of it on the Indian society and its consequences in the long run.

Aims of the Research.

1. To gain insight into the traditional joint families in India.
2. To investigate reasons causing a change of nuclear families.
3. To examine how this change affected individuals and the society.
4. To estimate the pros and cons of the two systems of family.

Research Questions

1. What are the major traits of joint and nuclear family?
2. What are the causes of the deterioration of joint families?
3. What are the social impacts of the shift, in terms of social relationships and values?

Hypotheses

- H1: Urbanization and economic development are a major cause of the increase in nuclear family.
- H2: Nuclear families offer more autonomy and less social systems.

Literature Review

India has long been a subject of study of sociologists with regard to family structures. Irawati Karve (1961) explains this as a specialty of the Indian society basing on kinship and tradition, the joint family. M.S. Gore (1968) stressed that family structures change as a result of modernization. The role of globalization, the employment of women and technological progress in changing the nature of families is noted in the recent studies (after 2020).

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According to scholars, nuclear families grant freedom as an individual but it can loosen the traditional standards as well as the bond among generations.

Theoretical Framework

1. Structural Functionalism

This is a theory which regards the family as a vital institution which ensures social stability. The joint family has various roles which include economic support, socialization and protection.

2. Modernization Theory

Postulates that with the growth of the society, the traditional institutions such as joint families have transformed to more contemporary ones such as nuclear families.

3. Conflict Theory

Shines the light on the role of economic and power dynamics in shaping family structure, and in the changing role of women.

Methodology

1. Research Design

- Descriptive and analytical.

2. Data Collection

- Primary: Questioning 100 households (urban focus).
- Secondary: Books, journals, census reports.

3. Sampling Method

- Convenience sampling.

4. Tools of Analysis

- Percentage analysis
- Comparative analysis
- Qualitative interpretation

Joint Family System Traditional.

The joint family system is typified by:

- Living with several generations.
- Frequent assets and revenue.
- Shared responsibilities
- Close emotional and social relationship.

Advantages

- Economic security
- Support during crises
- Cultural continuity
- Childcare and eldercare

Disadvantages

- Lack of privacy
- Conflicts among members
- Limited individual freedom

Emerging Nuclear Family.

A nuclear family comprises of:

Wife, husband and children.

- Independent living
- Financial autonomy

Advantages

- Greater privacy
- Freedom in decision-making
- Job and school mobility.

Disadvantages

- Absence of the support system.
- Increased stress
- segregation of older people.

Reasons why change has occurred.

1. Urbanization

- Movement to urban areas to work results in smaller families.

2. **Industrialization**

- The employment demands mobility and decreasing joint-residing.

3. **Education**

- College education gives commitment to being an independent person.

4. **Women Empowerment**

- Female workers like nuclear arrangements as they are more flexible.

5. **Economic Factors**

- The cost of living is increasing rendering joint families less realistic.

6. **Technological Advancement**

- Online communication minimizes the need to be physically close to each other.

Impact on Society

1. **Social Impact**

- Weing of conventional values.
- Increased loneliness between extended family members.

2. **Economic Impact**

- Bigger financial burden on individuals.
- Increase in the number housing demands.

3. **Psychological Impact**

- Loneliness and stress
- Lack of emotional support

4. **Cultural Impact**

- Decrease in customary practices.
- Switch in position of seniors.

Data Analysis (Illustrative)

- Nuclear families are preferred by 70% of the respondents.
- PEX 65% of people feel that nuclear families are better in terms of privacy.
- One out of five consider joint families as offering more emotional support.

Findings

1. The nuclear families are on the rise as a result of economic and social preferences.
2. Joint families are becoming a thing of the past, but applicable in the country.
3. The two systems are unique in their own merits and issues.
4. There is a slow change in social values which are leaning towards individualism.

Discussion

The process of converting joint to nuclear families tells of conversion of the whole society. Nuclear families in as much as they fit into the current way of life present new problems like isolation and stress.

The research indicates that a moderate solution taking the advantages of the two systems could be perfect in the coming society.

Suggestions

1. Promote bonding within the family albeit separation.
2. Head up culture values and culture.
3. Support elderly persons.
4. Develop policies for work-life balance.

Conclusion

The modernization and economic growth of India can naturally result in the change of joint family to nuclear family. This independence and flexibility, although, come at the cost of traditional systems of support. It could be possible to find a hybrid model combining the merits of each of the structures that will be a sustainable solution to the generations to come.

Limitations

1. Limited sample size
2. Urban-centric study
3. Time constraints

Future research opportunities.

1. Comparison (rural vs urban).
2. Effect on the development of children.
3. Technology and life in family.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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