

Changing Family Composition, Structure and Practices in Urban Area

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ABSTRACT

Bhopal the city of lakes is the capital of central state of India, Madhya Pradesh. Both Hindus and Muslim population lives here and with the celebration of festivals of both the communities make it special. There are various historical places in the city like Bhimbetka caves, van vihar national park and tajul masjid. The present study was conducted in Bhopal district of Madhya Pradesh. The aim and objective of the study was to assess and observe the changing family composition, structure and changing marriage patterns and other family related characteristics. The data collected was analyzed and it was found that about 71 percent families supported nuclear family system. Various factors were responsible for this transition. The new found freedom and less responsibility and new urban life forced people to opt for nuclear family structure. As stated by George Peter Murdock Nuclear Family is universal. During the study it was also found that changes in family system results changes in other social institutions like marriage and kinship. In urban area of Bhopal district the institution of marriage has underwent drastic changes with people choose their partners on their own choice and some people marry outside their respective social group.

Key words: Family, Urbanization, Migration, Communication, Nuclear Family

Introduction

A Family is a dynamic and complex institution in our society. We learn the essential themes of cultural life within the bosom of a family. The traditional form of family system is joint family system. It is a residential unit composed of more than two generations. Change is the law of nature and every institution in this world is changing from its state of origin to a dynamic one. As changes are witnessed in various institutions, family as a basic unit is also influenced by such changes. Globalization and modernization has affected family system very deeply in its structure, roles and functions. Liberalization of economy, privatization which leads to urbanization and people from rural areas moved to urban centres. People migrated to these areas in search of employment, improved living and a better future for their children. Improvement in transport and communication has helped in this migration and it is now easy for a couple or entire family to settle down at a new place with ease. Firstly people migrated from rural to urban centres and in this process generally husband will migrate while other family members will remain at home in rural set up. In some cases both husband and wife may migrate to urban centres and rest of the family at home, this type of migration is known as national migration. The urban educated families are migrating outside the country known as international migration generally in this type family the entire family migrates. The migrations of people have changed pattern of family, its functions, roles and structure. One of the negative aspects of migration is that when couples leave the home and migrates to another country or state, leaving their families behind them in dreadful situations. This has not only affected family relations but also degraded our social system with aged person leaving in poor environment. Although joint family is still dominant in our social system but changes are there in this system of family and people are living with their parents but the size of the family has decreased dramatically. The family size among Indians has declined rapidly and people are now happy with two children and in some cases among urban dwellers one child families can be seen. . The changes in the structure of family have created some problems of adjustment among children and aged persons.

Objectives

To assess the changing family composition

To assess the changes in respect to changing role, power and status in family.

Changing marriage patterns and other family practices.

Methodology

The present study was carried out in Bhopal city of Madhya Pradesh. Eighty families of middle class income were purposively selected. This study was based on the explorative and descriptive research design. Survey method was used with well structured interview schedule carrying questions regarding t

he family composition, structure and practices in given area. Data was analyzed in terms of frequency, mean and percentage. The main basis of research was the primary data collected by the researcher through interview schedule and participant observation. However for the collection required facts secondary data was also used by the researcher which include journals, magazines and newspapers etc.

Results and Discussion

Table: 1- Percentage distribution regarding changing family composition.

Type of families	Number	Percentage
Nuclear	57	71.25
Joint	23	28.75
Alternate	0	
Total	80	

The above table reveals that 71.25 families were nuclear whereas 28.75 were joint. Improved lifestyle, fewer responsibilities, freedom from orthodoxy and fewer children are the factors that compel people to go for nuclear family structure (Banerjee.S). Indicating towards the rise of nuclear family system in India, about 85% households have 3 to four members. Modernization, industrialization and technological advancements have collaboratively changed the family structure in urban areas.

Table: 2- Percentage distribution of role, power and status in families in city.

Role, power and status	Frequency	Percentage
According to age	63	78.75
According to gender	17	21.25
Total	80	

The above table shows that in 78.75 percent family unit role, power and status were given to according to age of the person. The above table also revealed that in about 21.25 percent respondents reveal that power, status and role was given according to gender. The study reveals that women had acquired the place of honor and respect in city life.

Table: 3- Percentage distribution regarding changing marriage practices in urban area.

Marriage practices	Number	Percentage
Marriage patterns Monogamy	80	100
Polygamy	0	0.00
Selection of partner Exogamy	19	23.75
Endogamy	71	88.75
Types of marriage Love marriage	23	28.75
Arranged marriage	25	31.25
Arranged love marriage	32	40.00

As in other institutions, changes were witnessed in marriage patterns in our country. Traditionally people prefer marriage to be arranged by parents and other senior members of family. In past it was common that both the spouses were not even known to each other before marriage date. But all changed as of now people prefer to self selective marriages with the consent of parents. In present study an effort was made to enquire about the changing marriage patterns in urban life. The table above shows that almost 100 percent respondents adopted monogamy (one man one woman) and the opposite of this polygamy has lost its

place in modern social set up. In modern industrial society people choose one partner as more than one partner is viewed as illegal and immoral. The above table also depicts that people in urban life still prefer marry within their own group. According to the data collected it was found that about 89 percent families prefer endogamy. Both Hindus and Muslim families follow this principle, however it is against the characteristics of urbanization and industrialization. In urban centers individuals class matters but in urban areas of Bhopal it was found that majority of people follow norms of marrying within one's own group. However the table also reveals that about 11 percent families were of the opinion of adopting exogamy (marrying outside ones group). There are various factors contributing towards exogamy like education, industrialization, modernization and lesser religious consciousness among youth.

Another changing aspect of marriage patterns among urban dwellers is that people now days prefer to choose their partners on their own. The above table shows that about 28.75 percent reveal that love marriage exclusively by partners is common in urban life. Here it is mentioned that modern telecommunication technologies have helped the boys and girls to come close and express their interest in opposite sex very easily. The table also shows that about 40 percent families were of the opinion that once young ones choose their partner they involve one of the family member and both families arrive at marrying their kin. This is considered best way of marriage in contemporary society as both family members and spouses got involved. However the above table shows that 31.25 percent families were of the opinion that arranged marriage is still practiced and preferred in urban areas of Bhopal city.

Table: 4- The Tendency in regard to decrease in the mutual relations among members of family.

Nature of Relations	Frequency	Percentage
More intimate	34	42.5
Close	22	27.5
Formal	18	22.5
Sour relations	06	7.5
Total	80	

Table 4 shows that among 80 families about 42.5 percent families had more intimate relations among the family members. It was revealed by the nuclear family members that with lesser number of family members there are less chances of conflict and both husband and wife understand each other. The above table reflects that about 27.5 percent family members were having close relationships with other family members, whereas about 22.5 percent respondents revealed that they were having formal relationship with other members. The above table shows that about 7.5 percent respondents were having sour relations with other members. This was more often found in joint families as revealed by the respondents. The conflicts and domestic violence is also found in urban areas as husband and wife sometimes fail to cope with the city environment and misunderstanding leads to disintegration and tension between the two.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that in urban areas of Bhopal district the family as an institution has undergone drastic changes. The family as an institution is performing its core function that is socialization of its new ones but at the same time has lost its traditional values. With industrialization, globalization and liberalization each and every individual has taken his speed to gain profits and reach the top level but the happiness, respect and satisfaction is not visible. Some changes are beneficial as in the case of women they found new freedoms in modern family systems which were denied to them by traditional family structure irrespective of religion. Marriage as an institution is another aspect which underwent major changes in modern times. The pomp and show is there but the sweetness and oneness is very rare found in modern marriage ceremonies.

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