

A STUDY OF THE CHANGING FACE OF FAMILY LIFE IN INDIAN



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ABSTRACT

Families are always evolving, and experts in today's society argue that today's families are not the same as they once were and that members of today's families "often tinged with sorrow for a healthier past" (Allan, G., Crow, G. & Hawker, S., 2011 p. 1). Alterations were also made to India's traditional family structure. The changes taking place and the interventions being carried out are becoming more and further apart. The primary goal of replies from the social work field should be to close this gap. There are many different models, each of which is extremely helpful in responding to the requirements of evolving families. Indian families still believe in the importance of keeping closeness and emotional connectivity between kith and kin despite the dramatic changes that have occurred in the traditional structure of the family. In light of this, initiatives are being taken by organizations and experts to enhance the link that exists among family members. In spite of the fact that India has the world's lowest divorce rate, occurring in only one out of every hundred marriages, the most recent data and research show that divorce and separation are becoming more common in India. The primary focus of the professional social workers is to foster healthy and productive relationships among the many members of the evolving families they serve. S. P. Rajeev, 2014). However, the fast shifts that are taking place in the responsibilities and activities of the family are something that professional interventions must never ignore

KEYWORDS: Indian families, traditional family structure, separation.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a surge in the frequency of concerns over divorce, separation, and single parenting in India. In this particular situation, the professional social work treatments that are both essential and practical are required. In a country as diverse as India, formulating a solid family policy is certain to be a challenging endeavour; yet, the time has come to give it some serious thought. In general, this kind of strategy need to leave adequate room for the participation of trained professionals with families that are struggling. A robust family policy would hasten the efforts of professionals to assist families that are in need of assistance, leading to the initiation of extensive research into family interventions and the effective implementation of programmes. Social workers in industrialised nations create initiatives to empower families because they recognise the importance of the family unit as the bedrock upon which a thriving community is built.

CHANGES IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK RESPONSE MODELS

Marriage and family are seen as two of the most fundamental pillars of social order in India. Family is the primary social unit that is regarded to be the most vital in any community. Marriage and family life serve as a "bulwark" against the precariousness of social life (Jamwal, S. N., 2009). This fundamentally important social unit goes through a lot of shifts, and those shifts are seen in all of the institutions and aspects that are linked with it, such as marriage, parenting, family duties, and family relationships. For instance, the institution of marriage is crumbling in the majority of western societies, and the influence of parents on their children's choice of partners is waning in many other nations, including India, China, Turkey, and Japan. Similarly, the control that parents have over their children's sexuality is also declining (Abela, A. & Walker, J., 2014). Even in the midst of tremendous socio-cultural and political shifts, the Indian family unit is still considered the most important component of the social fabric. The Indian family unit plays an important role in maintaining the country's culture and society's equilibrium.

CHANGING NATURE OF INDIAN FAMILY SYSTEM

1. **The changing household-** The share of households consisting of just the married couple has grown as the nuclear family model has become more popular. The share of moms raising their children alone has also grown, which is directly related to the rising divorce rates across the country. It is also typical to have extended families consisting of one or more parents and/or relatives. There are 5.4% more homes headed by a single mother than there are headed by a single father.
2. **Decision Making-** In a traditional household, the woman did not participate in the process of making important family decisions. However, in today's modern family, the woman acknowledges that she shares an equal power position with the husband in areas

such as creating the family budget, exercising authority over the children, shopping for products, and providing presents. Even while the husband continues to play the more instrumental position and the wife continues to play the more expressive part, they nevertheless frequently talk things over and consult each other in order to arrive at a conclusion. This also does not imply that a family headed by the husband is transitioning into a family headed by the woman or an equalitarian family.

3. **Equal work participation-** The number of families that have been brought out of poverty and into the middle class is increasing. In these households, both the husband and the wife play an active role in the workforce. The impact of women becoming more economically, legally, and educationally empowered is no longer limited to the domestic sphere, such as in the administration of households.

FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGES IN THE FAMILY

Industrialization, urbanization, and migration of population from villages to cities, general spread of education, especially among women, changes in occupational structures, conferring of political and property rights, modification in the legal status of women and their taking up various occupations, and the general weakening of caste as a social force are some of the main factors behind the transformations that are taking place in the Indian family. These factors are some of the main factors behind the transformations that are taking place in the Indian family. Sinha (1972) made the observation that as a result of modernization and the social changes that are taking place in the country, the structure and role of the family have changed, and the interrelationships that take place inside the family have been significantly affected.

FAMILY AND SOCIALIZATION

The institution of the family serves as the primary basis for all of the diverse life activities that are performed by both the individual and the community in all civilizations around the globe. The individual's moral character is developed in the context of the family, which also serves as the individual's primary source of the mobility that is ascribed to them. Domestic patterns establish a line of rules, which are then ornamented as the life objectives of a family and are followed generation after generation after generation after generation.

CHANGES IN FAMILY STRUCTURE

According to the findings of a number of researchers (including Goode 1987, Nimkoff 1960, Gore 1977, and Ross 1961), these shifts are a direct result of industrialisation. The rise of more effective farming practises coincided with the beginning of the industrial revolution. The machines were put into use in order to boost overall production. The first institution that underwent fundamental change as a result of financial considerations was the payment of salaries to workers employed by industrial enterprises. According to the findings of W. J. Goode's research, the family suffers the most from the effects of industrialization. Goode (1987) proposed in his chapter titled "How does industrialisation influence the family" that

there are three primary processes that emerge as a result of industrialization that erode the old structure of family control. These processes are as follows: First, the percentage of people who derive their income from employment or positions that pay them a wage for performing a specific duty continues to rise. They are not dependent on someday acquiring a portion of the property or the rights to use land, both of which are often held by the more experienced members of the family. Second, the needs of efficiency in the industry and the economy require that jobs and promotions be given out primarily for competence and by people who basically have little stake in the familial position of the worker.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Swisher (2000), single-parent households are detrimental, since they bring about issues in the lives of both mothers and children. Emotional, social, economical, and physical insecurity are challenges that face mothers who are raising children alone or by themselves (Kotwal & Prabhakar, 2009). When they are surrounded by such a hostile atmosphere, it can be difficult for women to find a way to deal with the problems that arise. On the other hand, it has been found that children raised in households with only one parent are more likely to experience feelings of isolation, withdrawal, fear, anger, social and emotional difficulties, distress, conflict, anxiety, and less cohesion than children raised in households with two parents.

Agarwala (2018), one of the most important aspects of the joint family is that "members of the joint family are subject to the authority of the elder in matters of family and religion, joint investment of capital, joint enjoyment of profits, and of incurring birth, marriage, and death expenses from the joint funds." According to Agarwala, it is not absolutely necessary for members of a joint family to reside in the same location and prepare their meals in a communal kitchen. He stated that the way of life that is shared by all members of the joint family, or the lifestyle that is shared by the majority of the members, is what makes up the core of the joint family.

Mukherjee (2017) has proposed that the classification of family structures could be based primarily on inter-family variations in the characteristics of kinship relations. According to this theory, the terms for kinship should be interpreted as "egocentric" rather than as "sociocentric," and it is possible that this could be the most important factor in determining the classification of family structures. The author has broken up the categorization methodology he's developed into many different "orders of classification." There are eleven different kinds in the first order.

The term "joint family" was coined by Kapadia (2019) "They should all live in the same house, share meals and worship services, and hold all of their possessions under communal ownership. A shared house, combined efforts in the kitchen, and mealtimes spent together at the table were all outward manifestations of the internal cohesion of the family."

Nimkoff (2018) has investigated the hypothesis that the joint family model acts as a barrier to the process of industrialisation. In his article titled "Is the joint family an obstacle to industrialisation?," he outlines and discusses the many different ways in which people believe that having a family that lives together acts as a barrier to the development of industrialization in India. In terms of its function and the consequences it has for the advancement of industry, the nuclear family in the West is compared to the joint family system that is common in India. Evidence is also supplied from other Asian nations, many of which have a culture that values extended families. In addition, the author discovered that extended families appear to be less suited for industrial societies, particularly in the beginning stages or transitional stages of the transformation from an agrarian society to an industrial society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The participants were 200 young children ranging in age from 9 to 12 years old (Table-2.1). The second half of the respondents were from the urban parts of the Allahabad district, while the first half of the respondents came from the rural areas. Half of the respondents were from nuclear families, while the other half came from joint families, regardless of whether the survey was conducted in a rural or urban setting. One half of the respondents were male and the other half were female; they came from a variety of backgrounds, including urban, rural, joint, and nuclear households. (Table-3.1).

Age Description

Age	Percentage
9	11.0
10	39.0
11	17.0
12	33.0

To ensure that our sample was as similar as possible, we chose our respondents based on whether or not they were currently enrolled in school. Both going to school and not going to school are relatively broad categories that can encompass a wide variety of subgroups with varying characteristics. In a survey that is small and concentrated like this one, it is necessary to employ homogenous groups in order to eliminate extraneous variables and highlight the primary influence of different family structures on the development of the individual's sense of self and values. The participants ranged in age from second graders to eighth graders. Specifics of the percentage broken down each class are shown in Table-3.2.

Class Description

Class	N=200	Percentage
2	1	0.5
3	9	4.5
4	45	22.5
5	51	25.5
6	54	27.0
7	27	13.5
8	13	6.5

Table 3.3 provides a comprehensive analysis of the respondents' castes, along with a percentage breakdown of each. Participants who fell under the Schedule Caste group, Other Backward participants, and General participants (Table-3.3).

Caste Description

Caste	Percentage
SC	16.5
OBC	38.5
Other	1.5
General	44.0

Due to the fact that the respondents were too young to understand their family's financial situation, the process of gathering information on family income proved to be quite difficult. Because of this, information on assets was gathered. On the basis of the checklist, the existence of home goods in the family was recorded in order to determine the socioeconomic standing of the respondents. These household goods included a bicycle, gas, television, scooter, refrigerator, automobile, and air conditioner. There are scores associated with each category, and each of these characteristics was given a weight (score) in order to arrive at a total SES score for the subject (Table-3.4). The range of possible points on the scale is from 5 to 41. On the basis of the scores that people attained on the scale, three different

socioeconomic groups were determined: higher, middle, and lower. Table-3.4 presents the percentage of respondents who own assets, which can be used to infer respondents' socioeconomic position.

Assets Description

Assets	Weightage value
AC	7
Car/Tractor	6
Fridge	5
Television	4
Scooter	3
Gas	2
Cycle	1

Assets Description

Assets	Percentage
AC	4.5
Car/Tractor	19.5
Fridge	45.0
Television	89.5
Scooter	64.5
Gas	80.0
Cycle	95.0

Male and female classification was coded male as ‘1’ and female as ‘2’ respectively.

FAMILY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The family history information scale, which consists of five questions, was utilised so that the socioeconomic position of the kid could be determined. The respondent's relationship with each member of the family was investigated in order to compile this information. The ages, genders, levels of education, and professions of each member of the family were also recorded. Education of family members (coded on 1 to 9 levels) included illiterate, literate upto class one, primary 2 to 5 class, middle for 6 to 8 class, high school 9 to 10 class, inter for 11 to 12 class and technical education like diploma and etc., for graduation inter +3 like B.A., B.Sc., B.Com were included in the survey. In the category of postgraduate degrees, degrees such as master of arts, master of science, master of commerce, medical doctor, and legal adviser were listed. The final category, post-graduate degrees and higher degrees such as Ph.D., M.D., and M.S., were recorded as the final category. (Table-3.6).

Educational qualification

Educational Qualification	Categories
Illiterate	1
Literate	2
Primary	3

Middle	4
High school/technical	5
Inter	6
Graduation	7
Post graduation/professional	8
Above P.G.	9

The occupations of family members were classified into nine categories (numbered 1 through 9), one of which was "no work," which was used to classify family members who did not have paid employment (such as students, housewives, and the jobless). The next category, labour, included both skilled and unskilled workers for recording purposes. The third category was for class four employees, the second was for cultivators, and the fifth category was for petty business, which comprises shopkeepers and low-level business category. Following that was the class-III employee category, which was followed by the class-II employee category and the category for professionals such as doctors, engineers, and lawyers. The eighth category was the high level business category. The most recent one was in the highly specialised professional category and class one. The levels ranged from one to nine for each of these categories. (Table-3.7).

Occupational Status

Occupation	Categories
No work	1
Labor	2
Class-IV	3
Cultivator	4
Petty business	5
Class-III	6
Class-II, professionals	7
Business	8

Class-I, Highly Specialized professionals	9
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The socioeconomic status (SES) scale is comprised of questions pertaining to the respondent's mother's education, mother's occupation, respondent's father's education, father's occupation, and household goods (assets).

Dimensions, Number of items, Range of Scores, Cronbach Alpha of the Scales

Variables	Dimensions	No. of items	Range of score	Cronbach Alpha
1. Self-construal	Independent Self-construal	12	12-48	.53
	Interdependent Self-construal	10	10-40	.52
2. Values	Individualistic Values	6	6-24	.71
	Collectivistic Values	8	8-32	.64
3. Social Behavior	Individualistic social behavior	7	7-28	.66
	Collective social behavior	8	8-32	.67
4. Self-esteem		13	13-52	.75

SELF-CONSTRUAL SCALE

A scale of 24 items was devised in order to assess the degree to which a child's developing self-concept may be tapped. This scale was adapted from the Singelis (1994) test of the Self-Construal Scale; however, the children were not old enough to comprehend the abstract notions that were associated with the test items, which were designed for adults. For the purpose of resolving issues of this nature, children were presented with scenarios in the form of short stories, which were simpler to comprehend and to which they could more readily respond.

SOCIAL VALUE SCALE

A measure with 16 different elements was designed so that researchers could better understand how children's values evolve throughout time. Individualistic values and collectivist values are the two components that make up the Social Value Scale. On the other hand, communal values include things like conformity, universalism, tradition, and compassion, whereas individualistic values include things like power, self-direction,

accomplishment, and stimulation. The fundamental structure of the items was taken from Schwartz's (1990) Value Survey and adapted. On the other hand, based on the results of the pilot research, several adjustments were made so that they better fit the current requirements in the Indian context.

DATA ANALYSIS

The first part of this section looks at the correlations that exist between the variables. The findings of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) are shown in the second section. These results reveal the main effects as well as the interaction effects for the family structure, place of residence (urban/rural), and gender variables. The results of the regression analysis are presented in the final section. These results demonstrate the degree to which certain predictor variables, such as socioeconomic status, caste, and age, significantly predict a number of criterion variables, such as self, values, social behaviour, and self-esteem)

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

Correlation of Psychological Variables with Demographic Variables

Psychological Variables	Demographic Variables		
	Age	Education	SES
Independent Self-Construal	.03	.25**	.27**
Interdependent Self-construal	.05	.11	.09
Individualistic Value	.20**	.35**	.41**
Collective Value	.07	.29**	.36**
Individualistic Social Behavior	-.05	.22**	.34**
Collective Social Behavior	.04	.12	.22**
Self-esteem	.05	.28**	.44**

To provide a more accurate depiction of socioeconomic status, information on the education and profession of the respondent's parents as well as their asset values were gathered. The educational level of the parents is a significant factor in influencing the socioeconomic standing of their offspring. According to Table 4.2, there is a positive correlation between the education level of the respondent's mother and the respondent's autonomous self-construal, individualistic and collective social ideals, individualistic social conduct, and self-esteem.

This shows that respondents whose mothers had a higher level of education acquired a more autonomous self-construal, learned individualistic and communal values, exercised more individualistic social conduct, and had a high level of self-esteem. According to the findings in Table-4.2, the respondent's mother's employment did not have any significant link with the psychological factors.

Correlation of Psychological Variables with Demographic Variables (Details of SES)

Psychological Variables	Demographic Variables				
	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Asset Values
Independent Self-Construal	.29**	.04	.32**	.29**	.14*
Interdependent Self-construal	.03	-.12	.02	.08	.06
Individualistic Value	.45**	.08	.42**	.39**	.23**
Collective Value	.33**	.08	.31**	.40**	.20**
Individualistic Social Behavior	.30**	.09	.35**	.32**	.17*
Collective Social Behavior	.14	.05	.21**	.24**	.12
Self-esteem	.45**	.01	.39**	.33**	.33**

**p<.01, *p<.05

JOINT AND NUCLEAR FAMILY BACKGROUND

The findings shown in Table-4.4 show that the mean differences between independent and interdependent self-construals for family structure (nuclear and joint) are not statistically significant. This would imply that joint and nuclear families do not play a role in the formation of autonomous and interdependent self-construals. There is also not a significant difference in the growth of individualistic and collective values, individualistic and collective social conduct, and self-esteem, as shown in Table-4.4.

Means and ANOVAS for the Main Effect of Family Structure

	Family Structure		ANOVA (F)
	Joint Family	Nuclear Family	

	(Mean)	(Mean)	
Independent Self-Construal	23.51	24.03	.77
Interdependent Self-construal	29.06	28.65	.61
Individualistic Value	16.63	16.67	.01
Collective Value	23.70	23.47	.38
Individualistic Social Behavior	20.19	20.01	.16
Collective Social Behavior	24.67	24.65	.00
Self-esteem	38.63	39.14	.57

URBAN AND RURAL BACKGROUND

The means of the two locations of the sample on a variety of psychological factors are shown in Table-4.5, along with the F-Ratio, for your perusal. On measures of autonomous self-construals, individualistic values, collective values, individualistic social behaviour, collective social behaviour, and self-esteem, respondents in urban and rural settings considerably diverge from one another. This suggests that the respondents from urban areas had developed more independent self-construal as well as individualistic and collectivistic values, individualistic social behaviour, collective social behaviour, and self-esteem as compared to the rural counterparts, but in the context of interdependent self-construal no difference was found between the two groups.

Means and ANOVA'S for the Main Effect of Residence

Psychological Variables	Residence		ANOVA (F)
	Rural (Mean)	Urban (Mean)	
Independent Self-Construal	22.40	25.14	21.23***
Interdependent Self-construal	28.69	29.02	.39
Individualistic Value	15.22	18.00	51.91***
Collective Value	22.60	24.57	27.64***
Individualistic Social Behavior	18.89	21.32	32.87***

Collective Social Behavior	24.22	25.10	5.15*
Self-esteem	36.78	40.99	39.12***

***p<.001, *p<.05

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Indian family system is going through a period of profound upheaval. The problems that are often exclusive to highly industrialised civilizations are widespread across India's urban and rural areas alike. However, vulnerable groups of individuals are pushed to the fringes of society because they lack access to professional care to help them deal with the challenges they face, and as a result, they suffer in silence. There are a lot of variables that contribute to the worsening of suffering, including domestic violence, separation, divorce, single-parent households, a growing number of elderly people, and parental disputes. These causes need to be handled scientifically and professionally. The development of healthy connections within the families is the initial emphasis of the intervention. After then, it is necessary to go through the stages of dealing with separation, divorce, emotional changes, and attending to the requirements of the children and older members of the family. This may necessitate a strategy that is capable of meeting the present difficulties without sacrificing the essential principles of India's family-centered social structure.

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