

THE STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN IN TRANSITION: THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

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'Family' in India is an ideal homogenous unit with strong coping mechanism. It is a basic cohesive and integral unit of the large social system. It's members are bound by interpersonal relationship in a wider network of role and social relationship. During the last few decades Indian families are undergoing vast changes. The waves of Globalization and technological advancements has been effected the roles, expectations, values and interpersonal relationship of the family members. There is a tremendous change in the outlook and attitudes of the family members. Because they are totally followed by the western ideology (European and American). So that the Indian families face wide variety of problems like marital, role strain and dissolution, parent-child relationship, family violence, rape cases and intergenerational conflict, feeling of guilt

and status confusion. Globalization and technological advancements also effect positively or negatively to the family life especially women status. Television, computer, internet, e-mailing, faxing, mobile phones, new home appliances has changed the quality of life of family members. In this paper, the researcher focused on the rapidly changing family scenario in the light of undercurrent process of globalization and technological advancement. This topic is more relevant to a variety of reason, because the modern technology and globalization directly related to family issues and problems. It bring new opportunities and challenges to individuals; families and the society at large. Structure and function of the Indian families has been change by these processes. Our constitution said that in Indian families, women have equal status and rights with men; and play an important role both as housewives and also in the development of the country. Because family is an essential unit of the society and the most important Primary Group which has survived the onward march of time and age over

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thousands of years. It is more durable institution and mankind has created, nurtured, shaped and reshaped over millennium many homogenous and heterogeneous communities bonded by rituals, rites, customs and practices.

In India; the predominant form of family has been largely patriarchal and somewhat feudal in character. But in recent times the patriarchal nature of Indian household has been subjected to tremendous pressure from outside and inside. The pressure is more in the urban areas in comparison to rural. There are many factors responsible for this transition and gradual abduction of patriarchal feudalism.

- The joint family system is gradually falling apart and more nuclear families and some extended families were found in the urban area. Technology has introduced different perceptions of time and power into the social environment, altering the composition of the nuclear family.
- For the economic necessity, spirit of adventures and higher aspiration of younger generation the family members migrated to different parts of the country and abroad for education and vocation, In this situation the older generation loses the support of their children.
- Technology related changes brought forth new pattern of power relations within the family the emancipation of women with

their newly gained independence and ensuring empowerment has encourage new changes and challenges in the family structure, functions and status also.

- In this respect we should not minimize the influence of great strides made in technology and expansion of employment and economic opportunities for a young aspiring educated Indian. Revolution in information and communication technology has, to some extent, rendered paternal advice unnecessary and irrelevant, as plentiful advice can be obtained from in served internet and information highway.

Education, particularly formal education, has very significant role to play in accordance to the social status of women. Education is a major avenue of upward social mobility. It is the key that opens the door of life which is essentially social in character. No one doubts; that there is a close relationship between education and mobility.

The decline of patriarchal family system, spread of education, economic freedom and movement toward total liberation of women, they emerged as new challenges for Indian families in transition which are wavering between traditional and western model. Fast changing social and family environment has thrown many challenges to the young and the old people alike Soap-opera Media blitz, Talk Show, Indian TV

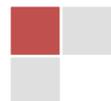
serials have not come out with a viable alternative or adequate solution to such challenges.

One of the biggest challenges of present is the growing instability in the family. The older joint families provided it member with emotional and material support of crisis. The family environment taught them to be patient, tolerance, compromising, cooperative and respectful to authorities, even though it might curtailed individual freedoms, initiative and spirit of enquiry to some extent. Now the disintegration of joint families and the mushrooming of nuclear family systems have brought a lot of new stresses and strains. The members of the family are no longer participating in the production, distribution and protective functions of the family as they were ding earlier, In fact, most of these function are now being done by professionals and outside agencies. Priorities in family life have also changed. The role of the family in determining individual status has been minimized. Though people still cherish family life, material success has become equally important, and it is the successful person who is more respected today and the older one. However, these need to be a balance between the old habits, behaviors, expectations and attitudes with that of the new ways of life. It is because everything is out of balance that family stress is rampant.

Husband-wife relationship is the basic and most important amongst the network of relationships. Healthy relations facilitate the spouse not only to perform their roles effectively but also help in the proper socialization of the children. Now a new approach for in equality between sex has given rise marital conflict and dissolution of marriage. Working women are either consciously and unconsciously expecting more authority, however, their husband do not want to lose the traditional male concept of domination over the family. These lead to conflict in marriage.

In the nuclear family environment of urban area, working parents who are professionally engage they do not have enough time. When they come back home after a day (or night) work, they are tired and fagged out. The working spouse may have different working hours. Lack of proper and adequate communication creates misunderstanding apprehension and conflict between the spouses, between the parents and children and parents and in laws. It is clear that at present a woman's role is far more complex and demanding and if require a lot of fact, understanding and astuteness to run the family effectively Otherwise there will be greater scope for discord disharmony and conflict.

Previously women role has largely confined to home. Her relationship was largely with



children and in-laws. She was supposed to work in the kitchen and do other household works. Now She has to relate to colleagues, bosses and to others in employment situation or outside it. The challenges lies in how harmonizing office work and Kitchen work, spending time with children, taking care of husband, sexual need and other requirements. Ultimately she has feel strain and stress. The women workers expressed that they had unsatisfactory relationship with their husband, children and in-laws. The main reason is to lack of time to interact freely with husband, lack of time to provide adequate love for their children because she has physically and exhausted due to heavy and never ending work; which is the resultant of their changing family status.

Family values and the status of women are also changing rapidly in modern society. Divorce, separation and broken homes are becoming common in contemporary India. Rapid declines in the moral values between the older and younger generation. That leads to greater stress and conflicts in families.

Similarly; sex problems and sexual adjustment are now more open to public discussion. In west sex has become more permissive and the family is not considered to be a stable and durable means for the satisfaction of sex and rearing of the off springs. The result is that many couples

'live together' without the formal marriage. Children born outside the wedlock are not stigmatized but their legal status and rights are not the same as those of legitimate children in every western country. Modern insistence on freedom of choice and freedom of action has made the male female relationship in marriage a complex and complicated affair.

In the era of globalization; transition in to the adult roles such as work, marriage and parenthood. The traditional hierarchies of authority has been weakening. Under the pressure of globalization the youth are forced to develop control over their own lives including work, marriage and parenthood. In cities young people are starting to choose their own partner. Matrimonial agencies are now able to devise individual profiles of their client to match them with the hope of harmonizing their union. Arranged marriages however, are still in trend but as a fact that divorce is also increasing. Urban Indian youth face significant competition and pressure to succeed even joint family system is weakening and there is less parental supervision and support (when both parents working) the youths are more restless and insecure. So there is an increase violent behaviour and aggression especially in urban youths.

Family in India has shed many of its old trappings as an institution. It is now less

authoritarian, less dogmatic and more permissive. It still sustain, supports and protects those who are under its umbrella. The quest of its members for more freedom of action and choice, while still remaining within the framework of family has created many social problems. It is very peculiar situation especially when two generations live under the same roof with different values, beliefs and attitudes. The family provides independence and privacy, it provided a kind of freedom in which respect and love can breathe fast and grow. Yet we cannot deny, that family is groping for a new identity. Now it is coping with its challenges and its inner contradictions. Family in India is a living vibrant institution. It is in the process of transformation (Transition) & reshaping. Its own image and in all; it is likely to survive external forces and western influences. It will continue to spread the fragrance of love, affection, unity, caring and sharing in a world of suspicion, divisiveness and turmoil. Even then 'The family' is a safe haven after all.

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