A comparative study of changing Family Composition, Structure and Practices in urban area of Kanpur City (U.P.)

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Abstract- The present study was conducted in Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The aim of research study was to assess the changing Family Composition, Structure and Practices in urban area of Kanpur City. Purposively 80 families of middle socio-economic strata were selected for the study. A survey was conducted using a self- structured questionnaire with close ended questions, to collect the data regarding changing Family Composition, Structure (Changing role, power and status, Changes relationships and Practices (Changing marriage patterns and other family practices). Data was analyzed in terms of mean, frequency and percentage.

Findings reveals that 81.25% families were nuclear , Role, power and status was given according to age of person in family (86.25). There were families having normal (37.50%), good (31.25%), very good (8.75% %), poor (22.50%) dyadic relationship with their extended families, Families having good (25.00%), average (46.25%), very good (5.00%), poor (23.75%) dyadic relationship with their kinship reference group, Families with monogamy (100.00%) , endogamy (73.25%), exogamy (26.25%) marriage practices, families were in favor of arranged (41.25%) , arranged love (28.75 %) and love (30.00%) marriages, families in favor of marriage after 25 years (51.25%) , marriage between 21-25 years (40.00%), marriage between 18-21 years (8.75%), families following marriage rituals of marriage (100.00%), families in favor of financial exchange during marriage (96.25%) and families against of financial exchange during marriage (3.75%), Families having their own residence and linage system (100.00%), families following democratic (61.25%), authoritative (33.75%), permissive (5.00%) disciplinary system, families giving preference to their family member for Guardianship and custody of their children ((86.25%) and families, taking help of neighbor, community center for Guardianship and custody of their children (13.75%), families, taking the responsibilities of rearing and bearing of their own children ((100.00%), families able to fulfill (91.25%) and families unable fulfill their familial needs sometimes(8.75%), families very careful about health and hygiene of their family members(90.00%), were less caring about health and hygiene of their family members (10.00%), families planned regular saving for present and future of their family members (85.00%), families irregular in saving for present and future of their family members (15.00%). families were supporting their working/ non working members of their family (100.00%)

I. INTRODUCTION

The family is a complex and dynamic institution in India. For many decades, several studies were carried out to understand this complexity. In India, people learn the essential themes of cultural life within the bosom of a family. In most of the country, the basic units of society are the patrilineal family unit and wider kinship groupings. The most widely desired residential unit is the joint family, ideally consisting of three or four patrilineally related generations, all living under one roof, working, eating, worshiping, and cooperating together in mutually beneficial social and economic activities.

Family patterns are conceptualized in terms of family composition. A household is one of the dimensions of the family pattern. It is a residential and domestic unit composed of one or more persons living under the same roof and eating food cooked in a single kitchen (Shah, 1973). The family has been and continues to be one of the most important elements in the fabric of Indian society. The bond that ties the individual to his family, the range of the influence and authority that the family exercises make the family in India not merely an institutional structure of our society, but accord give it a deep value. The family has indeed contributed to the stability to Indian society and culture. Today, the Indian family is subjected to the effects of changes that have been taking place in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres of the our society. In the economic sphere, the patterns of production, distribution and consumption have changed greatly. The process of industrialization and the consequent urbanization and commercialization have had drastic impacts on the family. Migration to urban areas, growth of slums, change from caste oriented and hereditary occupations to new patterns of employment offered by a technological revolution, the cut-throat competition for economic survival and many other economic changes have left their impact on the family. Briefly speaking, these changes in the socio-economic-political-cultural milieu of our society have led to changes in the structures, functions, roles, relationships and values of the family.

Family is the foundation stone of society. It teaches us to be social. It teaches us to digest the fact that there is a common interest, which may be more important than individual interest. Thus, it may require to be given up in favour of family interest. It modifies individual behaviour and cultivates tolerance, patience,

respect for others, love and affection, dedication, care and sacrifice. It checks selfishness and restrains rigidity. In fact, a family is the first institution that cultivates social values and social behaviour among individuals. Social values are basically family values written at large. Had the family been absent, concepts like nationalism could never originate. Traditional Asian societies have survived for thousands of years mainly because there has been a consistent emphasis on enforcing family values. Collapse of the family system simultaneously leads to social breakdown. With the advent of urbanization and modernization, younger generations are turning away from the joint family form. One of the most striking features of contemporary societies is the presence of a range of family variations, from the most traditional, extended families with strict, gender based sex roles to the modem dual career families based on liberal, equal sex roles and to adults cohabiting without marriage. The term "alternative family patterns" suggests family patterns that result from personal circumstances outside one's control (death of a partner, infertility) or from socio-economic conditions (male migration, work participation of women). In the Indian context, most family variations are a result of personal or socioeconomic circumstances. Experimental or chosen lifestyles like living without marrying, and being childless voluntarily are restricted to an extremely small group of people. The following are the most commonly observed family variations in India. Single parent families, Female headed households, Dual earner career families, Childless families, Adoptive families. Thus this study was planned assess changing family composition, structure and practices in urban area of Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh.

II.   OBJECTIVES

- To assess the changing family composition in urban area.
- To assess the changing family structure in urban area with respect to following:
  - ➢ Changing role, power and status in family
  - ➢ Changes in familial relationships
- To assess the changing family practices in urban area of Kanpur city with respect to following:
  - ➢ Changing marriage patterns and
  - ➢ Changing other family practices

III.   METHOD

The study was carried out in Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh (India). Purposively eighty, families of middle income group, were selected for the study. A survey, was conducted using a self- structured questionnaire with close ended questions to collect the data regarding changing family composition, structure and practices in urban area. Data was analyzed in terms of mean, frequency and percentage.

IV.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table: 1- Percentage distribution regarding changing family composition in urban area.

Type of families	Total (N=80)	
	No.	%
Nuclear	65	81.25
Joint	15	18.75
Alternate	0	00.00

Table.1 revels that 81.25% families were nuclear where as only 18.75% were joint. There were no families of alternate family type out of selected families. Banerjee S. (2010) explains In Indian cities, families aspire to an improved lifestyle, which they recognize is possible with fewer children. Reflecting the rise of the nuclear family in urban India, these households are small in size—88% have 3-4 members and there are no senior citizens in these households. Just 11% have more than two children— again a pointer to how well entrenched the small family norm has become in the urban landscape. According to Kashayap (2004), Industrialization, together with technological development, has brought several new challenges to the family. It has brought significant changes in the structure of urban families that have moved from large extended family systems to more nuclear structures.

Table: 2- Percentage distribution of role, power and status in families in urban area –

Role, power and status in families	Total (N=80)	
	No.	%
According to age	69	86.25
According to gender	11	13.75

As shown in **Table.2**, in most of the families (86.25%), Role, power and status was given according to age of person in family where as only 13.75% gender was the basis for distribution of role, power and status in family.

Table: 3- Percentage distribution regarding familial relationships in urban area –

Total (N=80)								
Familial Relationships	V. good		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Relationship with extended Family members	7	8.75	25	31.25	30	37.50	18	22.50
Relationship with Kinship	4	5.00	20	25.00	37	46.25	19	23.75

As shown in **Table.3**, 37.50% families were having normal dyadic relationship and 31.25% families had good dyadic relationship with their extended families. Only 8.75% families

were having enmeshed dyadic relationship with their extended families where as 22.50% families were not connected/poorly connected to their extended families. 46.25% families were having normal dyadic relationship and 25.00% families had good dyadic relationship with their kinship reference group. Only 5.00% families were having enmeshed dyadic relationship their kinship reference group whereas 23.75% families were not connected/poorly connected to their kinship reference group. areas. Kashyap (2004) explains in his study, with urbanization and migration, kinship bonds have been weakening in urban areas. However, there is also evidence that the kinship system is changing, adapting itself to the newer demands. In urban areas, this extended kinship system has proven to be a viable organization even today, as it has facilitated the adaptation of its individual members to city life by providing shelter and other material assistance. Along with the change in the structure of the family from the traditional joint or extended family systems to the evolving nuclear form, changes have also been observed in role relationships and authority among family members. Norms of interpersonal relationships are gradually becoming more egalitarian and reciprocal Kashayp (2004).

Table: 4 - Percentage distribution regarding changing Marriage practices in urban area –

Marriage practices		Total (N=80)	
		No.	%
Marriage patterns	Monogamy	80	100.00
	Polygamy	0	00.00
Selection of Marriage partner	Exogamy	21	26.25
	Endogamy	59	73.25
Types of Marriage	Love marriage	24	30.00
	Arranged marriage	33	41.25
	Arranged-Love marriage	23	28.75
Age of marriage	Below 18 years	0	00.00
	18-21 years	7	8.75
	21-25 years	32	40.00
	Above 25 years	41	51.25
Marriage Rituals	Present	80	100.00
	Absent	0	00.00
Financial Exchange during Marriage	Present	77	96.25
	Absent	3	3.75

The concept of Indian wedding has seen drastic changes, over the last few years. In the yesteryears, the ceremony was a brief affair, confined to an economical budget, even though the guest list was long. On the contrary, in the present time, the occasion is generally celebrated in an elaborated way, with number of rituals that are conducted before, during and after it.

The **table 4** shows that 100.00% of the families had adopted monogamy marriage pattern (on man to one woman) because polygamy (plurality of women/men to one men/women) illegal in present scenario. Most of the families (73.25%) were giving endogamy marriages (marriage within a specified group) (26.25%), where as exogamy marriages (marriage out of a specified group) are also increasing in present scenario. According to article (site given below) Until some time back,

marrying a person belonging to some other caste or religions was strictly not permitted by the families. With the modernization of the Indian society and social awareness of the people, inter-caste and inter-religion marriages have become a common sight. This is primarily due to the acceptance of the concept of love marriage. Nonetheless, people with an orthodox or conservative outlook of life are still firm about marrying within the same caste, community and religion. Contrary to this thought, people in the present time do believe in solemnizing weddings of two different individuals belonging to different family background and culture.

41.25% families were in favor of arranged marriages where as 28.75 % were in favor of arranged love marriages. Only 30.00% favored for love marriages. According one research article (site given below)the custom of arranged marriages has been a part of Indian culture since the fourth century. The practice was begun primarily to maintain and pass on the family traditions from one generation to the other. It is still prevalent in both rural and urban parts of India, former being more inclined towards the system. In fact, arranged marriages are in majority, because not all people have accepted the concept of love marriage. However, with the changing time, people in India have accepted the concept of love marriage, which is otherwise considered against the Indian culture. People in the rural India are now more liberal, when it comes to love marriages. Therefore, both arranged and love marriage find equal importance in the wedding scenario of India.

51.25% families were in favor of marriage after 25 years where as 40.00% were in favor of marriage between 21-25 years. Only 8.75% favored for marriage between 18-21 years. No one favored for marriage before age of 18.

All 100.00% were following marriage rituals of marriage. In 96.25% families financial exchange during marriage was common only remaining 3.75% were against of financial exchange. *Kashyap (2004) says* Marriage in India is still a socio-religious institution that takes place between two families rather than two individuals. It is still arranged by parents and members and the kinship group with class and caste positions and religion as important considerations. However the youth in India now want to have a say in the choice of marriage partners, though they do not mind their parents arranging their marriage as long as they have a say in it. In the present times, though patterns of partner selection vary in terms of extent of choice given to the young man or woman, family approval is essential for the marriage to actually take place. Among the urban educated youth, the traditional concept of marriage as a sacrament, a social obligation, and for the perpetuation of the lineage, is slowly being sidelined by the concept of marriage, for love, companionship and individual happiness.

Table: 5- Percentage **distribution regarding changing Other Family Practices in urban area-**

Other Family Practices		Total (N=80)	
		No.	%
System of Lineage	Present	80	100.00
	Absent	0	00.00
Residence facility	Present	80	100.00
	Absent	0	00.00
Disciplinary system	Democratic	49	61.25
	Authoritarian	27	33.75
	Permissive	4	5.00
Guardianship and custody of children	By Self	69	86.25
	By others	11	13.75
Responsibilities of child bearing and rearing	Present	80	100.00
	Absent	0	00.00
Maintenance of familial needs	Able to fulfill	73	91.25
	Unable fulfill sometimes	7	8.75
Managing death in family	Present	80	100.00
	Absent	0	00.00
Management of family health and hygiene	Care for health and nutrition	72	90.00
	less care for health and nutrition	8	10.00
Earning and savings for future of family	Regular	68	85.00
	Irregular	12	15.00
Supporting family members	Supporting Working/ Non-working members	80	100.00

All families (100.00%) were having their own residence and linage system. In 96.25% families' financial exchange during marriage was common only remaining 3.75% were against of financial exchange. Most of the families 61.25% wre following democratic disciplinary system where as 33.75% were following authoritative disciplinary system. only 5.00% family were permissive to their children.

Most of the families (86.25%) were giving preference to their family member for Guardianship and custody of their children where as 13.75% were taking facilities of neighbor, community center. In spite of some social changes, such notions as sharing a child with uncles, aunts and grandparents continue in many households. Only recently has the Western press noted new ideas about sharing child-rearing roles among the family community. Closeness has not meant lack of guidance or discipline for Indian children. Indian families advocate early learning, believing that children can and should start young. Indian families believe in strict discipline--obedience, even passivity, in children is enforced, according to Babyzone. Today's Indian families continue much as they did in the past, with the notable move from extended to nuclear families in some regions. This can lead to lack of support or lack of stress, depending on the family's views. While not having a parent or aunt close by to help with responsibilities can mean more work,

it can also mean less unwanted advice and more personal space. While Dr. Spock's "Child and Baby Care" was published in the mid-20th century, his ideas of parenting have only come to the attention of Indian families more recently. Some of Dr. Spock's ideas, such as feeding on demand and not leaving children alone for long periods, already formed part of Indian parenting styles.

All families (100.00%) were taking the responsibilities of rearing and bearing of their own children. 91.25% families were able to fulfill their familial needs whereas 8.75% were unable fulfill their familial needs sometimes.

90.00% families were very careful about health and hygiene of their family members. Only 10.00% were less caring about the same.

85.00% families were planned regular saving for present and future of their family members where as 15.00% were irregular in saving for the same. All families were supporting their working/ non working members of their family.

V. CONCLUSION

In light of present study and other research review it can be concluded that majority of families of middle socio-economic status are has brought about radical changes in family composition, family structure (role, power and status and familial relationships) and family practices (marriage patterns and other family practices). Urbanization of families is continuously causing for change in structure, composition and practices of family but still family ritual, care for younger and older in family, supporting working/non-working member and some other family practices are untouched even modernization has been added to families. Evil like financial exchange during marriage is also present in most of the families. There is need create awareness among families regarding importance of joint families, family structure and practices.

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