CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES

(A case study of Quetta district)

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Abstract:

Change is inevitable fact of human life. It has been and will be happened in future, however, with varying pace and intensity. The area of influence of change also varies from economic to social and institutional. Family as a basic social institution is faced with changing structure and functioning, which definitely would impact the life patterns of individuals, groups and community at large. There are multifaceted factors both external and internal that can cause structural changes in family set up, which are prevailing reality of life in Quetta and are unavoidable phenomena. Getting change from extended and joint into nuclear is not only option available for masses, but relatively a sagacious choice to avoid economic burden. Coping with the pace of change is a prudence action that is needed to be taken by the masses, while securing positive aspects of their norms and practicing value systems in order to get benefit of this ever happening change of family structure. This research paper is a condensed form of research study undertaken at tertiary level of education at Balochistan University by the author, which included, review of relevant literature as secondary source of mustering data, collection of primary data and its scientific analysis and interpretation on SPSS soft ware for building opinion.

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INTRODUCTION

Families, in Quetta, like many other urban areas of the country have undergone rapid and radical changes: from the joint family system to the present individualistic society, in which the concept of family embraces a vast variety of relationships and forms of household. The concepts of family and household reflected the social and economic processes of change. At the same time, the concept of family closely linked as it was to culture, laid down the lines for social differentiation, and, by defining what was private and what was common, it also reinforced strategies for the transfer of property and became incorporated into different forms of household.

Where do we look for the ideal model of family and parenting? Twentieth century's secular literature is burdened with normative data describing what does and what does not work for children's stability and for enduring marriages. The popular literature is rife with how-to books and scores of opinions by doctors and therapists. Yet, the family as a "cornerstone" unit seems to be degrading at the present time in history. Divorce is up sharply, child abuse is ubiquitous, children are in pain, and our collective loyalty to child culture is nil. John Bradshaw says "families are dysfunctional and parents are engaged in the soul murder of their children. He says that parents are unconsciously passing on a deeply shaming, abusive, and poisonous pedagogy in a multigenerational process that goes on and on"[5]. Expert's opinions highlight the main issue of degradation of family. No doubt, in most of the western world the very basic concept of family is at high risk of degradation. People like to live with being held responsible to accomplish affairs of running family. This has a negative effect over children in particular and on society in general. However in most parts of eastern world, family as a basic social institution is still strong enough to exist and impose certain rules over its members. But this is also fact that since social change is occurring very rapidly, family as social structure is also under heavy pressure of getting changed.

This changing pattern of structural change does raise certain basic questions pertaining to upbringing of children, changing role

5

of parents and other aspect of our social life. There are challenging questions which are to be answered by social scientists and social experts. There is a great need of exploring the scenario of current pace of change through scientific investigation. This research paper is primarily aimed at to identify the major factors, which contribute and accelerate the pace of change into structure of family. This research is also aimed at to come up with some useful conclusion and suggest pragmatic recommendation with regard to cope with ongoing process of structural change while securing our values and social norms.

This research study is basically the outcome of an effort being made by the scholar to study changing pattern of family structure in Quetta district. To make the study bonafide a good sum of 200 families were targeted as sample during data collection phase. Besides, intellectuals and people having view points were also contacted in order to muster information and relevant opinion regarding topic of the research study

FAMILY: THE BASIC INSTITUTION

Human societies are made of a complex whole of various units and institutions. Among major ones, family is believed to be the oldest and most important social institution. It has importance because of its role in human life and its multifaceted matters. "Family is the basic social unit. Family represents people living together by ties of marriage, blood or adaptation, thus representing a single household"[6]. We learn almost everything from our family, which ranges from learning language to behaving in certain manner. This is family that teaches us what and how of our daily social life, like what and how to cook, what and how to eat, what and how to wear and similar other daily routine work. Thus as institution, family form and shape our personality.

Reinforcing the idea that family is a basic social institution, any modification in its structure and functioning would definitely, have impact over our live, our society and over their fellow institutions. Alteration into basic structure of family in most of the industrialized countries of north have already proved certain basic social, psychological and economic changes in their social set up. We also know that in most of countries of eastern part of the world,

6

family is still surviving with all its valuable contributions in one's life. However, family as a social institution is no more protected. It is faced with certain challenges that tantalize both its structure and functioning, which would definitely have impact on overall society.

Sociologically speaking, family structure apart from getting change from large into small has also been changing in its functioning. Globally, there are certain kinds of family structures based upon its basic components or ingredients. This type of classification is purely modern concept of family structure, which is based on various kinds of relationship between husband, wife and children."[7]. Structure and functioning of various types of families are somewhat change among them, while having many responsibilities in common.

TYPES OF FAMILY STRUCTURE

Apart from general classification of families into nuclear, joint and extended as commonly prevalent in our society, they are also presented into different types. Patrifocal, for instance is a type, where the family consists of a father and his child; matrifocal, where the family consists of a mother and her child. Consanguineal family is one which consists of the mother, the child and other people, mainly belonging to the family of the mother. The conjugal family consists of one or more mothers and their children, with other people and one or more spouses. Relationship between children and parent varies among all the family types.   The parent-child relationship also varies due to difference of various culture and sub cultural patterns. Children who share one parent but not another are called half brother or half sister. Children who do not share parents, but whose parents are married, are called Step-brothers or step-sisters. Similarly, if a person is married to the parent of a child, but is not the parent of the child themselves; they are called stepfather or stepmother.

CHANGE – AN INEVITABLE FACT

One of the major facts of all times is occurrence of change in and around human being. Nothing is permanent, except the change itself. Change means alteration or modification of current socio-economic institutions or structures. This also means in

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7

broader perspective the transformation of culture and social institutions over time that is reflected in the life patterns of individuals. There are different types of changes bifurcated by social experts on the basis of their nature and area of influence. "Social change, for instance, involve changes in values and norms, status and roles, social stratification and social institutions. Other discussions have focused on dynamic forces that recast human consciousness, human skills, and the development of formal organizations, the growth of cities, social conflicts and the emergence of social movements"[8]. The occurrence of change is still a salient feature of contemporary life as changes have been taking place in all societies around the globe. However, it's tempo, intensity and nature varies among societies across continents depending on their socio-economic condition and geo-political importance at one given point of time.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

The broad concept of social change embraces many other aspects of changes such as political, economic and attitudinal etc. However, social experts define structural change as "structural change is a change in the parameters of a structure generating a time series. There exist tests for whether the parameters changed"[9]. Another definition of structural change is " Deep reaching change that alters the way authority, capital, information, and responsibility flows in an organization"[10]. Both definition focus on changes that take place into basic structure of social institutions such as family, economy, trade, mode of living etc.

CAUSES OF STRUCTURAL CHANGE

There are many causes for family structural changes, which can widely be divided into two major categories of external and internal factors of change. External factors are further bifurcated into the following.

Urbanization. Urbanization itself creates adequate pressure on individuals to opt for nuclear family set up. Since most of the families inhabiting Quetta city is basically residents' of rural

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8

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10

areas where extended family set up is more prominent. It seems that urban life is more democratic as compare to rural value system, where getting shift from joint into nuclear is more relaxing and socially sanctioned.

Increasing rate of education. The ever increasing ratio of education among masses has already contributed towards getting shift from rural values and norms to the urban one. This shift of value system also promotes the process of family structural change. People see it easy to avoid social pressure of living jointly into extended family set up. Better rate of education among family members does influence basic structure of family matters pertaining to childrearing, personality development, and socialization of youngsters and communication style of family members.

Mass media. Mass media is another powerful factor which has been influencing people mindset and their practicing value system. Urbanized practicing value system relatively move around personal interest as compare to group and communal interests. Mass media feeds people with burden of information both needed and un-needed. The burden of information promotes individualism among masses, which is another contributing factor towards opting for structural change. The concept of "small is beautiful "is a lively example of opting nuclear family set up.

Employment. Serving as salaried employee both for public and private sector limits one's financial resources and income. Lack of financial resources keeps one force to avoid large family structure. This as a bitter fact is not a choice, but a compulsion to go for nuclear family set up. Employment of both parents also contributes into family structural change even among nuclear ones. Decisions taken at family level is relatively more participatory than among families where male family members are whole bread earners.

Besides the above external factors of structural change of family, there are internal factors, which are listed below.

Socialization. Socialization of family member is the prime responsibility of parents, however the current fast pace of change has also impacted this basic role of parent. Now peer groups, cultural and social organizations have more prominent role in socialization of all family members particularly the

young generation. In the past people used to get socialized during personal interaction of daily conversations and occasional events. Now we have other options to be familiarized with world's happenings through educational institutions, people's associations, formal and informal social and political gatherings.

Social Mobility. Social Mobility refers to "the movement of individuals between different levels of the social hierarchy, usually defined occupationally" [11] The paradigm shift of humankind from agrarian society into industrial and more sophisticatedly into service providing one have also changed social and physical mobility of masses. During agriculture era, we had limited mobility with regard to fulfilling our basic needs, now we are forced to become more mobile in accomplishing our socio-economic needs. We are forced to move around both locally and regionally to earn livelihood, establish linkages and get benefit of it for protecting our interests.

Parent's leadership style No doubt, social mobility and changed patterns of socializations have impacted parental leadership style. Now parents of urbanized communities are more democratic and social as compare to past autocratic style of family leadership. However, it does matter to discuss it as a major component of internal factor of family structural change. Considering family as a small state is ruled by parents, particularly by father in all male dominated societies of contemporary world.

Personality pattern As we know that no two human being are exactly the same in all parts of the world. Yes it is possible that many individuals may be sharing various characteristics of life, but there are differences among everybody in all matters of life. Liking and disliking are different, preferences are not similar, choices and arrangement or orders are not similar. These differences show that personality patterns does have prominent role in our life. This is another factor of internal cause of family structural change. One who is individualistic by personality

pattern would never cope with living a life in extended and joint family set up.

Perception of social image Like individuals, families too have social image in all human societies. However in developing agrarian societies of eastern world, it matters more. We consider it an aspect of our social respect to live into extended and joint family set up. Getting apart to live our live into nuclear set up and performing according to its requirement is not sanctioned socially. This perception of getting changed or liking to opt for change is considered a serious threat towards our traditional mode of living. Major changes in the physical environment are quite rare but very compelling when they happen.

OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS CHANGE

1. **Population Changes** A population change is itself a social change, but also becomes a factor in further social and cultural changes. When a thinly settled and frontier fills up with people, the hospitality pattern fades away, secondary-group relations multiply, institutional structures grow more elaborate, and many other changes follow. A stable population may be able to resist most change, but a rapidly growing population must migrate, improve its productivity, or starve. This is major contributing factor towards occurrence of structural change.

2. **Geographical Environment** Variability in geographical environment causes variability is culture and behavior of the people. For example, the people of hot regions are rigid and culturally backward, while the cool region has the advancement in technology etc. so environment has many effects on the people and their culture, which in turn can contribute towards change.

3. **Social Needs** Social needs of different people are different. This difference affects and develops difference in culture as well as in social structure.

4. **Value system** Valves are the ethos of the culture or central point or philosophy of culture, which decide variance in

cultures. Due to the difference of values people have different sentiments and attitudes towards each other.

Following two tables illustrate tendency of getting change in family structure among 78 percent respondents of the study.

Tendency of respondents' mind set to change the family system

Mind set/Changing	Quetta City	Satellite Town	No of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	37	41	78	39%
To some extent	34	30	64	32%
Never	29	29	58	29%
Grand Total			200	100%

The table / data presents that 39 % of the respondents have mind set to change the existing family system, 32 % agreed to some extent and 29 % discouraged change in the family system.

Reason of respondents mind set to change the family system

Reasons	Quetta City	Satellite Town	No of Respondent	Percentage
Education/socialization of children	19	22	41	52.56%
Shortage of living capacity	12	8	20	25.64%
Maladjustment	6	11	17	21.80%
Grand Total			78	100%

The reason shown by the respondents for the tendency to the change of family system is 52.56 % education/ socialization of children, 25.64 the shortage of living capacity and 21.80 % is maladjustment of the individual in the existing family system.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the findings of the study, it would be prudently concluded that the pace of change in family structure is as rapid as it has more economic reasoning than cultural. Various factors accelerate this pace and paving the way for its social sanctioning in

the society. Since change is inevitable, which cannot be stopped by our desires, it is better to cope with wisely and get benefit of it, otherwise, it might bring about issues and problems, which may further complicate its occurrence.

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESSIONS

Broadly speaking, we cannot live altogether alien from the rest of world, where change is happening every single minute, therefore, its occurrence in our society is a salient feature of our everyday life. Getting ready to cope with pace of change is a broader suggestion to all, particularly social scientists and expert to further undertake research and educate masses about their findings. However, the following recommendations are suggested to be acted upon while securing positive aspects of our present value systems and norms.

1. In fact, social change is occurring very rapidly, family as social structure is also under heavy pressure of getting changed. This changing pattern of structural change does raise certain basic questions pertaining to upbringing of children, changing role of parents and other aspect of our social life. There are challenging questions to be answered by social scientists and social experts.

2. There is a great need of exploring the scenario of current pace of changes in family through scientific investigation. The findings must be available and easy access for guidance of researchers.

3. Family is a basic social institution, any modification in its structure and functioning would definitely, have impact on our life, society and its fellow institutions. A good example is European society where changes in family structure have resulted both positive and negative impacts. Therefore the change in our societies must be tackled with care to avoid negative impacts.

4. This is family that familiarizes us with our specific culture, which consists of both material and immaterial aspects of it. Such as how to behave with elder member of family and community, what to do and what not. It is feared that the change in family structure may unable our new generation to learn tactics of dealing pertaining to our social life. Therefore care must be taken to keep alive these tactics of social learning.

5. Family structure apart from getting change from large into small has also been changing in its functioning. Than the relationship

must be consider differently in socio-economic development on various kinds of relationship between husband, wife and children.

6. It is commonly observed that many of the members of joint family lack sense of responsibility because of their dependence on others make them redundant. In joint family they share all the task of trade, food gathering and preparation and child rearing. Sharing of responsibilities also includes upbringing of children, taking care of them and helping them become economically independent. This is observed that nuclear family puts burden on each member of family.

7. The nuclear family is recommended in current scenario of economic recession in all segments of society. This type of family is mostly prevailing in urban set up. In urban society life is more competitive and challenging; therefore people should opt for nuclear, which gives them adequate ease in terms of meeting economic and social needs of a family. Among nuclear family set up economic burdens get shortened.

8. The nuclear family is also recommended because it plays vital role in well being of children. Parents are not responsible only to earn livelihood and fulfill the requirements of upbringing of children, they are also supposed to establish new relationship with new people and organizations for socialization of their children and meeting their social and psychological needs and that is only possible in nuclear family.

9. The joint family is second option after nuclear family in comparison to extended family for the well being of children.

10. The nuclear family is also recommended because the parents are able to pay much attention in tending children and also fulfill the responsibility to see that the child is not open to any risk and gets proper protection.

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Note by the proof reading;

The one and the only weakness of the article is that it is irrelevant to our journal.