

## **Socio-Cultural Change in the Family Structures: The Case of Pashtun Culture in district Quetta of Balochistan**

Muhammad Alam Tareen<sup>2</sup>  
Abdul Rahim Changezi<sup>3</sup>

### **Abstract:**

*The purpose of this study was to find out the impacts of family structure on the socio-economic characteristics of Pashto speaking population of Quetta city. A sample of 200 respondents was selected for survey based on the techniques of purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The data were analyzed using, Chi-square tests, frequencies and percentages. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between educational status of the respondents and change in family structure. Similarly, the increase in the nuclearisation of the families was found correlate with the changes in the socialization of the children. It was also found that families with higher income showed greater participation of wife in decision- making matters. A significant change was observed by the increase in income and education of female to select their mates due to inconspicuous changes in cultural and social background of the areas. The study concludes that due to wider acceptance of the nuclear family structure and also due to its financial as well as social benefits, the government should promote adoption of nuclear family structure by the masses.*

- 
1. M. Alam Tareen is Lecturer Department of Sociology, University of Balochistan, Quetta
  2. Mr. A Rahim Changezai is Assistant Professor at Department of Sociology, University of Balochsitan Quetta
-

## Introduction

Families, especially in *Pashtun* dominated areas of Quetta city, have shown some trend towards the nuclear structure from the joint system. The family structure affects the socio-economic life of the households. The family and household reflect 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. The family structure not only affects the education, income level and parental care of children but also the personality development of individuals residing in the family. Generally speaking, three types of family i.e., nuclear, joint and extended family structures exist. Nuclear family structure is defined as a wife and husband living alone or with their children in the same household, whereas an extended family structure refers to a family, if another adult was living with the married couple in the same household (Senturk et al., 2011).

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 part 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 of parents and other aspect of our social life. There is challenging questions to be answered by social scientists and social experts. The educational status of children in a family determines the socio-economic status, parental education and family income (Pinkston & Shannah, 2009). Some researchers have found that nuclear family has negative impacts on women's health (Keera Allenddorf, 2013). However, the nuclear families also offer some advantages like, the children in the nuclear families are given chances to take part in decisions (Flurry & Veech, 2009). There is a great need of exploring the scenario of current pace of change through scientific investigation. Based on

---

the above, the purpose of this paper is to (1) find out the existing structure of the families (2) to find the perceptions on types of family to be adopted and to (3) find out the socio-economic impacts of the extended and nuclear family types.

### **Family Types in the study area**

In most of developing countries of south Asia there exists agrarian social set up and that is why tribal and partly tribal social structure prevails. Single parent families can not be only be attributed to urban settlements but there are chances for these structures even within rural areas. The rural areas of country are mainly dominated by joint and extended family types. The nuclear family is considered as modern structure among rural masses. Balochistan is also dominated by the joint and extended families in the rural areas. However, the pace of urbanization, dearth of basic needs and unemployment has led to changes in both these types. This change is mostly seen in Quetta city. The types of families in the area are discussed below.

### **Nuclear family**

The nuclear family mostly dominates in urban environments. In this type of family system there is husband, wife and dependent children or unmarried children, also called simple family or elementary family. Due to more competitive and challenging life in urban areas; people adopt nuclear family structures. This is because it gives them ample easiness in economic and social needs. In nuclear family economic burdens are removed but social responsibilities are increased. Father is socially active in socialization and family matters. The economic burden is removed because of less number of dependents; the children ultimately receive better education and health facilities. In view of the above facts, nuclear family seems to be the furnished product of extended and joint family systems. Due to this modification, the roles played by the family members are also changed. The parents are not only accountable to produce livelihood and accomplish the requirements of their children, they are also presumed to start new relationship with new people and organizations for socialization of their children and meeting their social and psychological requirements.

---

**Joint family**

Joint family is presents in both urban and rural environments. This type of family is smaller as compared to extended one. The joint family consists of married couple, their children, grand and great-grand children and the relatives of the male-line. In such kind of family more earners exist and share his part to meet the family expenditures. They cook jointly and are presumed to eat together, however male family members and young children are preferably served first, whereas women are next to be served. Same treatment does reflect almost in all matter of family and social life, which in itself is an issue of gender disparity to be addressed by social specialists and scientists. The responsibilities are shared and every member and the male bread earners are relatively relaxed as compared to nuclear family heads. The other advantage is that of its inherent support mechanism. The whole capital and economic investment is shared wither one contribute to it or not. Thirdly, economic stability in this structure is a key indicator to keep them joint. Poverty compels people to go and adopt the nuclear family system.

**Extended family**

The most common kind of family is the extended family type. Literature reveals that in Balochistan, this sort of family is mostly common among *Pashtun* belt. In the *Baloch* belt; the extended and joint type of family kinds are preferred. Parents along with children and their assorted relatives living in the same house which is widely perceived some what idealized form of family life in non-industrial society. This type of family includes great-grand father-mother and their great.

---

### **Essential roles of family**

Despite the fact that many roles of family have been taken over by other associations in a modern society, until now the family continues to present some basic roles. These are

#### **Satisfaction of Sexual desires**

One of the vital roles of a family ever since the dawn of human civilization is satisfaction of sexual needs. Indeed, marriage which is part of family life is often arranged by the family heads. Here it should be pointed out that in the contemporary world; family couples can have sex satisfaction to a greater degree but the fear of conception has considerably been reduced due to use of contraceptives. Another aspect of sexual satisfaction among young is legally authorized in European countries, where young boy and girl establish sexual relationship. Sometime they produce children, without getting married. However, in our society this practice is not tolerable because of the religious concerns and is believed illegal.

#### **Reproduction of brood**

Satisfaction of sex needs leads to reproduction of children. To have children is considered both a religious as well as a social need. The Hindu philosophy also supports this idea and says that it is a curse if you have no children. Children bring about race which is the aspiration of each individual as people face immense social pressure by both family and community fellows. Reproduction of children is not the end of family. Each family is presumed to see that the children are properly brought up and that they are happy and healthy. The task of rearing up of children which was considerably difficult in the past has become easy these days because of facilities provided by nursing homes and child welfare centers.

#### **Provision of Basic Facilities**

Each family is still required to provide some basic facilities such as food, clothing and shelter. Earning members of the family are presumed to supply good food, improved clothing and shelter. At an early age of children, family is presumed to ensure all basic facilities in order to ensure continued existence, growth and participation of children as part and parcel of basic social needs of human being. . In fact that is the responsibility of the parents to provide these facilities to the children. Similarly it is the duty of

---

non-earning members of family to see the house is neat and clean and that the members get good, dependable and nourishing food.

### **Socialization**

Each family tries that its members should be socialized and they should pick up social habits and be an effective and useful part of the society. They are thought to live a social life. Habits form according to the treatment and reactions determined by his inherited capacity given to them. As they grow; start imitation of parental actions and that leads them to form habits which will affect his social life more deeply than they will identify. In our society usually we teach our children to give due respect to elders, predominantly to old family members such as grandfather, grandmother and notables of the community as well. We also teach them as part of immaterial aspect of our culture that younger member of family should meet the prospects of their parents, which includes getting mature, becoming polite and even selection a career that our parents like.

### **Protection of the young**

It is mainly necessary function of the family that the young should be carefully protected from all sorts of seen and unseen factors that can impact life of youth negatively. Some of the negative habits that our children can take from bad company are smoking, drinking, and other criminal activities etc. As children can not protect themselves easily and are easily attracted by negative activities, parents should play the role of a protective shield until they are mature enough.

### **Love and sympathy**

Love and affection is the basic psychological need of all humankind. The younger generation should be given more attention and love but not to the extent that may spoil their nature. It satiates their emotional and intellectual requirements. All members of family are therefore obliged to extend love, affection and sympathy to each other. All are presumed to solve each other's problems with a sympathetic and careful attitude. Children require affection from their parents and so is the case with husband and wife, who want

---

love from each other. Without this, life in the family has no meaning.

### **Change – an inevitable fact**

One of the major facts of changing a family structure is the change in and around human being. Change means alteration or modification of current socio-economic characteristics. This also leads to the transformation of culture and social institutions over time that is reflected in the life patterns of individuals. Different types of changes occur and are studied by social experts on the basis of their nature and area of influence. They have stressed that social change, involves changes in values and norms, status and roles, social stratification and social institutions. Other discussions have highlighted dynamic forces that recast human consciousness, human skills, and the development of formal organizations, the growth of cities, social conflict and the emergence of social movements. All these changes are closely linked to changes within the family structure. Human societies have never been stagnant altogether. It has been and is active. And this dynamism brings about changes into its basic structures and functions. This change is basically called social change. The incidence of change is still a salient feature of contemporary life as changes have been taking place in all societies around the world. Nevertheless, it's tempo, intensity and nature varies among societies and across continents depending on their socio-economic condition and geo-political importance at one given point of time.

### **Methodology**

Quetta was selected as the study area. This research is mainly concerned with the socio-economic impacts of family structure of *pshtoon* population of Quetta city. Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan is mostly dominated by the *Pashtuns*. Therefore, we based our study only to people belonging to this ethnic group in this study. A sample size of 200 families was interviewed during data collection phase. Purposive sampling method was adopted to select the respondents. Besides, intellectuals and people having view points were also contacted in order to muster information and relevant opinion regarding topics of the research study. The tools used for data collection for this study included questionnaire,

---

interviews and some focus group discussions of relevant stakeholders in the study area. This tool was found substantially suitable because it helps our research to find reliable facts. Interview schedule contained both types of fishing and shouting questions to make it more comprehensive and allow adequate space to respondents to come up with his / her viewpoint.

## Results & discussions

Table 1 given below shows the prevailing family structure in the study area. It was found that the joint and extended families structures were more common than the nuclear family structure. This may be because the nuclear family structure is not easily adopted by the *Pashtuns* due to their cultural limitations.

Table 1: Type of family structure in which respondents are residing

Type of family	No of Respondent	Percentage
Joint	75	37.5
extended	85	42.5
Nuclear	40	20
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

Majority of the respondents reported that family structure leads to personality development of the family members to some extent. Only fewer respondents reported that family structure had no impact on personality development (Table 2).

Table 2: Respondents perception of effects of Family structure on personality development in nuclear families

Personal evolution	No of Respondent	Percentage
Most of the way	72	36
To some extent	124	62
Not at all	4	2
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

The chi-square for the effects of nuclear & extended family structure on the socialization of children shows that there is a weak relationship between nuclearisation and change in the socialization



of children (Table 3). Hence the hypothesis that higher is the nuclearisation and the greater will be the change in the socialization of the children is supported.

Table 3: Effect of nuclear and extended family structure on socialization of children

Socialization of Children	Nuclea	Extended	Total	Percentage
Politely	19 (15.0)	06 (10.0)	25	33
Harshly	5 (10.2)	12 (6.8)	17	41
Moderately	36 (34.8)	22 (23.2)	58	26
Total	60	40	100	100

Chi square value = 9.398

?

Degree of freedom = 2

Level of Significance chosen = = 0.05

Co- efficient of contingency = 0.4

Regarding the impact of family structure on educational level, the chi-square test showed the Co-efficient of contingency of 0.4 (Table 4). This means that there is moderate relationship between higher rate of educational achievement and changes in family structure.

Table 4: Type of Family

Educational Level	Nuclear	Extended	Total
Illiterate	14	18	32
Low level of education	23	17	40
High level of education	22	6	28
Total	59	41	100

Chi-square value = 7.547

?

Degree of freedom = 2

Level of Significance chosen = = 0.05

Co- efficient of contingency = 0.4

About the role of educated wife in family income, most of the respondents agreed that educated wife play an important role in family income (Table 5). However, 28% of the respondents reported that even their wives are educated, but they are not allowed to do jobs by their family members. This may be again due to the

reasons that in joint and extended family systems, the family heads don't allow females to work outside their homes.

Table 5: Respondents perceptions on role of educated wife in family income

Increasing family income	No of Respondent	Percentage
Most of the way	48	24
To some extent	96	48
Not at all	56	28
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

About the perceptions on adoption of particular family types, majority of the respondents agreed to remain in joint and extended family systems (Table 6). However, the young generation was more inclined towards nuclear family systems. This may be one of the reasons that the young generation like to adopt nuclear family because they may give better education to their children.

Table 6: Respondents perceptions on adopting types of family

Family structure	No of Respondent	Percentage
Joint	99	49.5
extended	80	40
Nuclear	21	10.5
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

About the decision making authority in the family, majority of the families took their decisions on themselves (Table 7). Children were also given attention in some families (22%) in family matters. In some families (23%), the decision was taken by all the family members. This may be because, in nuclear families, the parents also consider their children to be involved in decision making regarding family matters.

Table 7: Authority of decision making regarding family matters

Nature of Decision making	No of Respondent	Percentage
Self/spouse	110	55
children	44	22
Mutual	46	23
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

### **Conclusions**

The results revealed that in *Pashtun* societies, the cultural bounds are still playing key roles in restricting the families in joint and extended family types. However, the new generation is trying to get out of the clutches of cultural norms. Results showed that some of the respondents are more inclined towards the nuclear family systems. This is evident from the results of the better educational status, more income, more decision making roles of the family members in the nuclear families. Therefore, this study recommends the adoption & promotion of nuclear family systems in *Pashtun* societies. In this way, they may play better role not only for their own family matters but also for a better nations. 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.



**References**

- 1) Flurry, Laura A., and Ann Veeck (2009). Children's relative influence in family decision making in urban China. *Journal of Macromarketing* 29.2: 145-159.
  - 2) [Keera Allendorf](#) (2013). Going Nuclear? Family Structure and Young Women's Health in India, 1992–2006. *Demography*. 3: 853-880
  - 3) Pinkston, Shannah C. (2009). A study of the relationship between family structure, socio-economic status, and self-esteem among African American college students". ETD Collection for Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. Paper 73.
  - 4) <http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations/73> date accessed: 29th August, 2013.
  - 5) Senturk V, Abas M, Berksun O and Stewart R (2011). Social support and antenatal depression in extended and nuclear family environments in Turkey: a cross-sectional survey. *BMC Psychiatry*. 11:48.
-