CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Singh, J.P. (2004): The Indian society, in fact, exhibits considerable variations between regions, between classes, between rural and urban areas and finally, between different ethnic religious, and caste groups. That may be called a heap of micro-regions and sub-cultures and differences between which are quite crucial from sociological angles. Furthermore, the differences are also discernible with respect to the level of female literacy, sex ratio, age at marriage of girls, incidence of dissolution of marriage, household size, female workforce participation rate, marital practices, gender relations and authority structure within the family. Diversities inherent in Indian society are also reflected in the plurality of family types. It would be noticed from the subsequent discussion that the magnitude of changes that the Indian family has experienced over a period of a century appears to be far greater than the expectations of Indian sociologists and anthropologists.

The virtual disappearance of traditional joint family from the urban scene, increase in the life expectancy of women, rise in the proportion of female headed households, decrease in the average age of household heads, increase in the incidence of separation and divorce, greater tension and conflicts between wife and husband, parents and sons and between brothers, increased freedom of marital choice, passing of child marriages, shrinking of kinship ties, continuous consultations between sons and parents on familial matters, greater involvement of females in decision making process, increase in the mean age of female from 13 years in 1901 to 18.3 years in 2001, rise in the level of female education, decline in total fertility rate from 4.9 in 1971 to 2.76 in 2009, are concrete and clinching evidence to suggest a whole range of changes in the family system—its structure, functions, core values and regulative norms have appeared.

In course of these changes, many new problems have surfaced, while some of the old ones such as dowry, divorce, lack of intergenerational solidarity, discord between siblings and gender violence have got further intensified. Family is one of the main socializing institutions of the society. Since ancient times, the family has been the most important
childcare institute in India as children are expected to grow under the glory of family where a satisfactory rearing of child is ensured. The universal declaration of human rights prescribes the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society. Family is virtually a social organization or a unit of men and women out of relationship. The importance of family lies in bringing up the child to a full man in the family atmosphere. It has been a time honored belief in our culture that the child is a gift of God that must be nurtured with care and affection within the family and society as a future dawn. As per Confucius-the strength of a Nation is derived from the integrity of its homes. It is the famous saying that a comfortable home is a great source of happiness. It ranks immediately after health and good conscience as aptly said by Byron. Without loving heart, there is no meaning for home.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the theoretical framework of this research by defining family and giving insight into the Indian family system. Family is a basic unit of social structure, the exact definition of which can vary greatly from time to time and from culture to culture. How a society defines family as a primary group, and the functions it asks families to perform, are by no means constant. There has been much recent discussion of the nuclear family, which consists only of parents and children, but the nuclear family is by no means universal. In the United States the percentage of households consisting of a nuclear family declined from 45% in 1960 to 23.5% in 2000².(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ American family structure)

Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition (2004): In preindustrial societies, the ties of kinship bind the individual both to the family of orientation, into which one is born, and to the family of procreation, which one founds at marriage and which often includes one's spouse's relatives. The nuclear family also may be extended through the acquisition of more than one spouse, or through the common residence of two or more married couples and their children or of several generations connected in the male or female line. This is called the extended family; it is widespread in many parts of the world, by no means exclusively in pastoral and agricultural economies. The primary functions of the family are reproductive, economic, social, and educational; it is through kin itself variously defined that the child first absorbs the culture of his group.
1.2 FAMILY SYSTEM THROUGH AGES.

Mullatti, L. (1992): In India, family is the most important institution that has survived through the ages. India, like most other less Industrialized, traditional, eastern societies is a collectivist society that emphasizes family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity which is reflected in greater readiness to cooperate with family members and extended kin on decisions affecting most aspects of life, including career choice, mate selection, marriage and its continuity. In India family has been a dominant institution in the life of the individual and in the life of the community.

Shangle, S. (1995): For the Hindu family, extended family and kinship ties are of utmost importance. In India, families adhere to a patriarchal ideology, follow the patrilineal rule of descent, are patrilocal, have familialistic value orientations, and endorse traditional gender role preferences. The Indian family is considered strong, stable, close, resilient, and enduring.

Chekki, D.A. (1996): Historically; the traditional, ideal and desired family in India is the joint family. A joint family includes kinsmen and generally includes three to four living generations, including uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, and grandparents living together in the same household. It is a group composed of a number of family units living in separate rooms of the same house. These members eat the food cooked at one hearth, share a common income, common property is related to one another through kinship ties, and worship the same idols. The family supports the old; takes care of widows, never-married adults, and the disabled; assists during periods of unemployment; and provides security and a sense of support and togetherness.

Nandan, Y. and Eames, E. (1980): The joint family has always been the preferred family type in the Indian culture, and most Indians at some point in their lives have participated in joint family living. The beauty of Indian culture lies in its age-long prevailing tradition of the joint family system. It’s a system under which, even extended members of a family like one’s parents, children, the children’s spouses and their offspring, etc. live together. The elder-most, usually the male member is the head in the joint Indian family system that makes all important decisions and rules, whereas other family members abide by it dutifully
with full respect. The important factor that keeps all members-old and young united in love and peace in a joint family system in India is the importance attached to protocol. This feature is very unique to Indian families and very special. Manners like respecting elders, touching their feet as a sign of respect, speaking in a dignified manner, taking elders’ advice prior taking important decisions, etc. is something that Indian parents take care to inculcate in their kids from very beginning. The head of the family responds by caring and treating each member of the family the same. The objective behind the formation of any social unit will fail to serve its purpose if discipline is lacking and the same applies to the joint family system as well. Due to this reason, discipline is another factor given utmost importance in the joint family system in India. As a rule, it’s the say of the family head that prevails upon others. In case of any disagreement, the matter is diligently sorted out by taking suggestions from other adult members. One usually also has to follow fixed timings for returning home, eating, etc. With the advent of urbanization and modernization, younger generations are turning away from the joint family form. Some scholars hold that the modified extended family has replaced the traditional joint family that does not demand geographical proximity or occupational involvement and does not have a hierarchal authority structure.(Ibid p 22).

Kakar, S. (1981): ‘This new family form encourages frequent visits, financial assistance, aid and support in childcare and household chores and involvement, participation in events of life-cycle such as births, marriages, deaths, and festival celebrations. The familial and kinship bonds are thus maintained and sustained. Even in the more modern and nuclear families in contemporary India, many functional extensions of the traditional joint family have been retained, and the nuclear family is strongly embedded in the extended kinship matrix. In spite of the numerous changes and adaptations to a seudo-western culture and a move toward the nuclear family among the middle and upper classes, the modified extended family is preferred and continues to prevail in modern India. India is an extremely pronatalistic society and the desire to have a male child is greatly stressed and is considered by some to be a man's highest duty, a religious necessity, and a source of emotional and familial gratification.'
Pothen, S. (1993): Because male children are desired more than female children, they are treated with more respect and given special privileges. Male children are raised to be assertive, less tolerant, independent, self-reliant, demanding, and domineering.

Kumar, P., and Rohatgi, K. (1987): Females, in contrast, are socialized from an early age to be self-sacrificing, docile, accommodating, nurturing, altruistic, adaptive, tolerant, and religious and to value family above all.

Medora, N. P., Larson, J. H., and Dave, P. B. (2000): In rural areas, low-income women have always worked outside the home. In urban areas, there has been a substantial increase in the number of middle- and upper-class women working to supplement their husbands' incomes. In a traditional Indian family, the wife is typically dependent, submissive, compliant, demure, nonassertive, and goes out of her way to please her husband. Women are entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the home and caring for the children and the elderly parents and relatives. Child rearing practices in India tend to be permissive, and children are not encouraged to be independent and self-sufficient. The family is expected to provide an environment to maximize the development of a child's personality and, within the context of the Hindu beliefs and philosophy, positively influence the child's attitudes and behaviors. Adolescence and young adulthood are particularly stressful and traumatic stages in the lives of Indian youths. In one way, they desire emancipation and liberation from family but residing in the matrix of the extended family makes it difficult for them to assert themselves and exhibit any independence in thought, action, or behavior.

Social changes are gradually occurring but arranged marriages are still the norm, and dating generally is not allowed. Furthermore, sex and sexuality issues are not openly discussed, sex education is not readily available, interrelationships with the opposite sex are discouraged, and premarital sex is frowned upon. In the traditional Indian family, communication between parents and children tends to be one-sided. Children are expected to listen, respect, and obey their parents. Generally, adolescents do not share their personal concerns with their parents because they believe their parents will not listen and will not understand their problems.
1.3 FAMILY SYSTEM IN INDIAN SOCIETY.

Dr. Mahesh. C. (2011): **The Family:** The family is the basic unit of society. It is the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed. It is in the family a child learns language, the behavioral Patterns and social norms in his childhood. In some way or the other the family is a universal group. It exists in tribal, rural and urban communities and among the followers of all religions and cultures. It provides the most enduring relationship in one form or other. From the moment of birth to the moment of death the family exerts a constant influence. In spite of the universal and permanent nature of the family one can also see vast difference in its structure in different societies. In tribal and agrarian societies people of several generations live together. These societies have large and ‘joint families’. In the industrial society the family is limited to husband, wife and their children. Sociologist calls it a ‘nuclear family’. The family is formed with number of members. These members live together. They have a home. They have definite purposes in living together. In this sense the family in a group. There are certain rules and procedures at the roots of the family. In this sense the family in an institution.

**Definition of family:** While defining the term family some social scientists have seen the family as a universal institution. Others have used the terms to refer to a distinctive characteristic of the social life. Functionalist perspective defined family in terms of activity and their effect on society. Marxist perspective explains the family as the basic unit of oppression and to envisage its eventual abolition. Some of the major definitions of family are as follows: The word ‘family’ is derived from Latin Word “Famulus” which means a servant. In Roman law the word denotes a group of producers and slaves and other servants as well as members connected by common descent or marriage. Thus originally, family consisted of a man and woman with a child or children and servants. Sociologists have defined the family in a number of ways. MacIver and Page defined “family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for procreation and upbringing of children”.

According to M.F. Nimkoff; “Family is a more or less durable association of Husband and Wife with or without child, or of a man or women alone, with children”. Burgess and Locke “Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or
adoption constituting a single household interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social roles of Husband and wife father and Mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture”. Eliot and Mervill “Family is a biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children”. Elements of Family The above given definitions reveal certain elements of family which are as follows: 1) The family is a basic, definite and enduring group. 2) Family is formed by the relatively durable companionship of husband, wife. 3) Family procreates and bringing up children. 4) The Family can also be large in size in which persons belonging to several generations may live together. 5) The family may be limited to husband, wife or only the father and his children or only the mother and her children.

**Characteristics of the Family:** Living together of man and women, reproducing and bringing up children alone does not form family. Marriage plays an important role in changing the man women relationship in to the permanent relationship of husband and wife. Along with sexual relationship and procreation Psychological attachment is also necessary. No other organization of society can be companied with the family where sociological understanding is concerned. According to Mackiver and Page the Family has the following features: 1. Universality 2. Social environment which Influence the Individual’s early life. 3. Affective basis, emotionality 4. Limited size 5. Central position in social structure 6. Sense of responsibility among the members. 7. Social regulation of behavior 8. Permanent or temporary in nature. The definitions and Characteristics of family shows that on one hand it has a biological aspect in which man and women became husband and wife by certain institutional modes. Sexual and affective relationship exists between them. They procreate and bring up children. On the other hand, it has a social aspect in which the family members have responsibilities towards each other.

In a social-cultural sphere the family influences its members by the process of socialization. It also regulates the behavior of its members. The family is generally smaller in size companied to other social groups, organizations and associations. Hence it must be remembered that the size of the family is agrarian and tribal communities sometimes can be large. The nature of the family is universal because it exists in all societies. As an institution the family’s existence is enduring. The nature of a particular family may be permanent or temporary. The family has passed through many stages to reach its modern form. The
family, marriage, economic system and succession are interrelated. The structure behavioral patterns and functions of the family have been changing with the changes is socio economic order.

Anthropological studies of tribal societies and particularly Malinowski’s researches have proved that even in the tribal societies the institution of the family existed in some form or the other. Primitive social and economic systems, especially agrarian systems, require more of human labour. Therefore, the size of the family in these societies is generally large. Polygyny was also prevalent in these societies. This was also a reason of the large size of the family. The industrial-urban system has reduced the size of the family. In this system the family generally means husband, wife and their children. There are certain social and economic factors behind this. In a system which is based on labour and wages the individual is responsible for his work. The individual goes from the village to the city in search of employment. On account and small accommodation, he is forced to follow the small family norm. In the modern urban industrial system the basis of marriage is love and personal liking. This has also contributed towards the small size of the family in urban societies.

**Structure of the Family:** The structure of the family can be understood on the basis of these characteristics. The structure of the family is mainly based on the husband-wife relationship. Another basis of the familial structure is procreation. The third basis of this structure is common residence the structure of the Family is also related to economic system. The present urban industrial system and the occupations have encouraged the structure of nuclear and individualistic family. In the tribal, agrarian and rural system of economy where family is still a unit of production, we generally find large and joint families, apart from husband, wife and their procreations. These families generally include father, mother, brothers, their wives, unmarried sisters and others. The Indian joint family is the best example of this type. The family cannot be understood through clusters of members such as husband, wife, their children and relatives. These members develop affective relationship and perform their roles through social values, customs and traditions. The structure of family possess following features. 1. Nature of family- Nuclear, Joint or extended. 2. Members and ancestors. 3. Institution of Marriage, Differentiation of the roles of
Functions of the Family: The family as a social institution performs several functions. Different thinkers of the world expressed different opinion regarding the functions of the family. Kingsley Davis speaks of four main functions of the family: (i) Reproduction (ii) Maintenance, (iii) Placement, and (iv) Socialization Ogburn and Nimkoff have mentioned six major functions of the family (i) Affectional (ii) Economic (iii) Recreational (iv) protective, (v) Religious, and (vi) Educational According to Goode the family has the following functions: (i) procreation, (ii) Socio-economic security to family members (iii) Determination of status of family members (iv) socialization and emotional support (v) social control Primary and secondary functions of Family The primary functions Some of the functions of family are basic to its continued existence. They are referred to as essential functions by MacIver. They may also be regarded as,


Secondary Functions of Family

In addition to the above described essential or Primary Functions the family performs some secondary or non-essential functions in some way or the other. Of these, the following may be noted (1) Economic Functions (2) Educational Functions (3) Religious Functions (4) The Re-creational functions.

Types Forms of Family: Sociologists have classified the family on the basis of the following factors:


Before considering these factors it can be accepted that there are other bases also for classifying the family on the basis of historical chronological it is classified as ancient, medieval and modern on families. On the basis of social ecology the family can be divided in
to rural and urban families. On the basis of structure, it is divided into primitive agrarian and industrial families. After these indications, we can examine in detail this typology.

**Size:** A threefold classification can be discussed on the basis of size.

a. Nuclear families
b. Extended families

c. Joint families

in nuclear family husband, wife and their children live together. According to Murdock the Nuclear family may be further divided into two types. A) The family of orientation B) The family of procreation: By the family of orientation, is meant the family in which the individual is born and in which his parents, brothers and sisters resides. After marriage, the individual forms the family of procreation he lives with his wife and children. Generally extended families are found in tribal societies. In an extended family individual live in different households but close to each other and engage in common profession. Joint families are generally big in size. Such families include many families and people of many generations. A joint family is a lively related kin’s groups which are subject to same household and same authority. It possesses following features. a) At least three generations living together. b) Common ancestors c) Common duties d) Common residence e) Common property f) Common kitchen g) A traditional occupation h) Head of the family and his authority over family members and property

Industrialization, urbanization, occupational mobility, wage-based livelihood, modern education and individualistic ideology have been instrumental in diminishing the size, functions and importance of the joint family.

**Residence:** On the basis of residence family is divided into patrilocal and matrilocal families. In patrilocal families the bride resides with the husband’s family. Majority of the families in the world belongs to this type. In the matrilocal families the bride groom resides with the family of his wife.

**Ancestors:** On the basis of ancestors the family in classified into patrilineal and matrilineal families. In the patrilineal families the ancestors are men while in the matrilineal families the ancestors are women. Most of the families in the world belong to the patrilineal system.

**Power and authority:** On the basis of power and authority families can be divided into patriarchal and matriarchal categories. In the first type the father is the head of the family and the familial power and authority rests in the father. In the second type of family and familial authority lies with the mother and she is the head of the family.
Marriage: Sociologist has divided family on the basis of marriage also. On the basis of marriage family has been classified into three types: a) Polygamous or Polygynous family b) Polyandrous family c) Monogamous family

1.4 CHANGES IN INDIAN FAMILY SYSTEM REASONS, IMPACT AND REFORMS

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.

Bharat S. Ed. (1991): 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 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. In the context of the changes in the economic system more and more members of the family are moving away from the larger family circle and living as individuals or members of a nuclear unit in urban areas. The patterns or loyalties, obligations and expectations have changed. The cases of the child and the aged in particular have become a problem for many due to structural changes in the family.
1.5 DISAPPEARANCE OF JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM:

Singh, J.P. (2004): Since the old ages the Joint family has been one of the salient features of the Indian society. But the twentieth century brought enormous changes in the family system. Changes in the traditional family system have been so enormous that it is steadily on the wane from the urban scene. There is absolutely no chance of reversal of this trend. In villages the size of joint family has been substantially reduced or is found in its fragmented form. Some have split into several nuclear families, while others have taken the form of extended or stem families. Extended family is in fact a transitory phase between joint and nuclear family system. The available data suggest that the joint family is on its way out in rural areas too.

Census of India (2011): The joint family or extended family in rural areas is surviving in its skeleton or nominal form as a kinship group. The adults have migrated to cities either to pursue higher education or to secure more lucrative jobs or to eke out their living outside their traditional callings, ensuing from the availability of better opportunities elsewhere as well as the rising pressure of population on the limited land base. Many of the urban households are really offshoots of rural extended or joint families. A joint family in the native village is the fountainhead of nuclear families in towns. The nuclear family is now the characteristic feature of the Indian society. According to the census of India data, of all the households’ nuclear family constituted 70 percent and single member or more than one member households without spouse (or eroded families) comprised about 11 percent. The extended and joint family or households together claim merely 20 percent of all households. This is the overall picture about the entire country, whereas in the case of urban areas the proportion of nuclear family is somewhat higher still.

Singh, J.P. (2004): The available data from the National Family and Health Survey-1 of 1992-93 (henceforth NFHS) suggest that joint family does not make up more than five percent of all families in urban areas.

Skolnick, A. and Skolnick, J.H. (1980): An extended family which includes a couple with married sons or daughters and their spouses as well as household head without spouse but with at least two married sons, daughters and their spouses, constitute a little less than one
fifth of the total households. An extended family, constitute a little less than one fifth of the total households. With further industrial development, rural to urban migration, nuclearization of families and rise of divorce rate and the proportion of single member household are likely to increase steadily on the line of industrial West. This might be so because the states, which have got a higher level of urbanization, tend to have a higher proportion of single member households. More or less, a similar situation exists in other developed countries as well, and above all, not a single country has recorded decline in the proportion of single member household during the last three decades. In fact, the tendency is more towards increase in the proportion of single member households.

Singh. J. P (2004): As the process of family formation and dissolution has become relatively faster now than before, households are progressively more headed by relatively younger people. Census data from 1971 onward have clearly borne out that at the national level over three fifths of the households are headed by persons aged less than 50.

Gupta. G.R (1978): There is every reason to believe that, proportion of households headed by younger persons is likely to constitute a larger proportion than this in urban areas where the proportion of extended family, not to speak of joint family, is much smaller than that of rural areas. The emergence of financially independent, career-oriented men and women, who are confident of taking their own decisions and crave to have a sense of individual achievement, has greatly contributed to the disintegration of joint family. Disintegration of joint family has led to closer bonds between spouses, but the reverse is also true in certain cases. For many, nuclear family is a safer matrimonial home to a woman. In bygone days people generally lived in joint families, yet familial discord never escalated into extreme physical violence or death, as we so often come across such instances in our day-to-day life and also know through national dailies, both electronic and print media.

1.6 CHANGES IN STRUCTURAL AUTHORITY OF THE FAMILY.

Authority within the family was primarily in the hands of family elders commonly known as *Karta* in Hindi. The general attitude of members of the family towards the traditional patriarch was mostly one of respect. Loyalty, submissiveness, respect and deference over the household were bestowed on him. These attributes also encompassed
other relationships in the family, such as children to their parents, a wife to her husband, and younger brothers to their older brothers.

NFHS-1 (1992-93): Within a household no one was supposed to flout the will of his elders. The father, or in his absence the eldest brother, was consulted on all important family matters like pursuing litigation in courts of law, building a house, buying and selling of property and arranging marriages, etc. The joint family did not allow the neglect or disregard of elders. The age-grade hierarchy was quite strong. Now the people of younger generation, particularly those with modern tertiary education, do not seem to show the same reverence which their father had for their parents or elders. Patriarch’s wife was the paramount authority among women. In fact, women’s position depended on the position of their husbands in the household. The wife of the household head or mother-in-law was in charge of the household. Her word was law or at least had the same force. Her decisions were made for the entire family and not for the welfare of the individuals in it. Young women in the family were expected to be dutiful and obedient. Self-assertion, even in bringing up their own children, was blasphemy. Widows and those spurned by their husbands were assured of the family roof, though mostly as voiceless members. With a view to absolve themselves of responsibility now parents cleverly encourage their educated sons and daughters-in-law to take independent decision in a joint and extended family situation, leave aside urban areas, the similar situation has started to emerge in rural areas too. Now boys and girls, contrary to the old practice, are beginning to assert their wishes in mate selection. Parental decisions are no more supreme. Changes concerning erosion of authority of old guards, particularly in matters of mate selection, are on gradual decline in rural areas too. Yet another interesting fact about the change in authority structure within the family is that, about 10 percent of all the households are headed by women.

Census of India (2011): Most of the female household heads are usually independent and gainfully employed. In the absence of their husbands, either because of death, separation, transfer in job or business, women are themselves able to run the affairs of their family. Long distance migration of men for employment is also an important reason for the emergence of such households. The phenomenon of female-headed household assumes
significance in the Indian society because in the past when the joint family system was so preponderant that the female-headed household was quite an uncommon phenomenon.

1.7 CHANGES IN FORMS AND FORMATION OF FAMILY.

The traditional system of values of the Indian society, especially that of Hindus, has been such that it stood for the practice of early as well as universal marriage for females. Child marriage or pre-puberty marriage all through has been an archetype institution of India. The mean age at marriage was reported to be quite low in the 19th century and so also in earlier days. The mean age at marriage for females was about 13 years between 1901 and 1931 censuses and it did not differ much between different communities. Of all the legal measures, the Child Marriages Restraint Act 1929 (and its further amendments in 1949, 1955 and 1978) happened to be quite effective one. Rise in the age at marriage really became conspicuous during the post-independence era, that is, during the period onward 1950. The act was further amended in 1978 wherein boys’ marriage age was raised to 21 and girls’ age to 18 years. As a whole, the state level census information for the last one hundred years has revealed a clear rise in the age at marriage for girls. During 1891-1991 the age at marriage increased by 4 to 7 years in different parts of the country. The Census of India, 2011 has estimated an age of 21.5 at marriage.

UNICEF (2009): Child marriages have been prevalent in many cultures throughout human history, but have gradually diminished since some countries started to urbanize and experience changes in the ways of life for the people of these countries. An increase in the advocacy of human rights, whether as women's rights or as children's rights, has caused the traditions of child marriage to decrease greatly as it was considered unfair and dangerous for the children. Today, child marriage is usually practiced in countries where cultural practices and traditions of child marriage still have a strong influence. Although child marriages have been outlawed a long time ago, South Asia has currently the highest prevalence of child marriage of any region in the world.
Singh. K.S (1997): India, as noted above, happens to be a forerunner in this regard. Out-of-wedlock birth is highly unacceptable and hence extremely rare in India. The Indian society has been a highly endogamous. Marriage within the same sub-caste has been followed very strictly.

Polygamy, more particularly polygyny, has been one of salient features of Indian family. It has been more popular among Muslims than Hindus. Here it is not suggested that the incidence of polygyny is more common than monogamy. The polygamous males often derived support from age-old scriptures and mythological stories. But mainly those who had no issue from the first wife practiced such marriages. With the rise in the level of literacy the incidence of polygyny has receded even among the Muslims despite the fact that such marriages have got full cultural and legal sanction. While monogamy is the predominant form of marriage, there are a large number of tribes practicing sorrel polygyny and non-sorrel polygyny (Ibid).

1.8 CHANGES IN LANGITUDNALITY OF FAMILY RELATIONS

Singh. J.P (2005): The dissolution of marriage has been quite uncommon and rare in India for a long time. In case of any crisis or threat to stability of marriage, caste, community, kinsmen, tended to have played a dominant say. People had both respect for and fear of social values and public opinion. Authority of community, though implicit, has been supreme. The system of religious belief has provided enough sustenance to the institution of marriage and family. Individual choice has always been subservient to the communal sentiment or public opinion. Hindu marriage is taken as a life-long union for the couple, as it is a sacrament, rather than a contract between the couple to live in a social union so long as it is cordially feasible. Even in the event of frequent mental and physical torture, most Indian women persist in marriage, since remarriage of divorced or separated women is quite difficult. Morality relating to sex is so highly valued that every male wants to marry a virgin girl only.

In the past Hindus demanded pre-nuptial chastity on the part of both, but now it is by and large limited to females. Virginity is regarded as the girls’ greatest virtue and a symbol of respectability. Under the circumstances remarriage of women is so difficult that
annulment of marriage is a very hard choice or option. Despite all these there has been a significant change in the views and attitudes towards sanctity of marriage in the recent past, especially in cities. Marriage is no longer held to be a ‘divine match’ or a ‘sacred union’. Now it is more like a transfer of a female from one family to another, or from one kinship group to another. The marriage is no longer sanctified as it was believed in the past, and is viewed only as a bonding and nurturing life-long relationship and friendship. The rather flippant and superficial reasons given by many women and men to break a marriage may not portend well for the future. Indian marriages are still largely resilient and lasting, whereas in many developed countries they seem to break up for seemingly trivial reasons. Marriages are very vulnerable or fragile there. One in every four or five marriages breaks up despite more space and freedom in the West. The longevity of marriage in most developed countries ranges on an average from five to seven years. While in India divorce rates are among the lowest in the world. Only one out of 100 marriages ends up in divorce here. These days divorce rates in India’s urban sphere are, however, slowly mounting.

1.9 CHANGES IN NUPTIAL PATTERN:

Now, let us come to the rising problem of dowry which has become one of the serious social evils of the Indian society in the recent years. Dowry, or the bridegroom price, refers to a lump sum of money with or without some tangible assets constituting an essential part of the wedding settlement, which is transferred by the bride’s household to that of her prospective spouse before the actual solemnization of marriage. Sometimes dowry also accompanies or follows the marriage of a daughter. The dowry and its cognate problems have become so serious that the marriage of daughters tends to bring in nightmarish experiences for scores of parents these days. The menace of dowry has become so severe over the years that the Government of India had to enact the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961, which was further amended in 1986. But the legislative measures to do away with this practice have so far proved an ineffective exercise. The dowry has gained social legitimacy across all communities and regions.

Marriage negotiations tend to break down if there is no consensus between the bride's and bridegroom’s families regarding the mode or amount of payment of dowry.
Dowry, as said before, has become such an essential consideration for marriage that rarely any marriage can take place without it. It may be regarded as a functional imperative for family formation in contemporary India. In very rare cases demands for dowry are eschewed. If the groom’s parents, for instance, sense that they can reap greater economic or personal benefits in modes other than the dowry in lump cash from bride’s parents, dowry is not demanded under the pretext that it is an evil of Indian society. When the dowry amount is not considered sufficient or the expected demands are not met easily, the bride is often harassed, abused and tortured. The dissatisfied husband takes recourse to violence to show his displeasure with the marriage in order to extract additional transfers from the wife’s family by threatening her with separation if new demands are not complied with. The dowry related harassment most likely arises from complete lack of respect for the woman and rapacious avarice for money. The woman, as a bride, is subjected to humiliation and brutal behavior, because she is the softest and the surest means of extracting maximum amount of money or wealth from her parents to enhance one’s economic position in society.

Since the bride is helpless in her new home and physically so powerless that she cannot retaliate against the coercive tactics or actions of others. Not many women have enough gets to divorce their husbands on the ground of frequent mental or physical torture, since they have nothing to fall back upon in a traditional and poorly developed country like India. The disturbing fact about dowry related violence is that it is not confined to any particular group, social stratum, geographical region or even religion. Rather, it is regarded as a universal phenomenon, cutting across all sorts of boundaries, as it has already been stressed before. It is claimed to be on continuous increase in the country. It has been often reported that like clockwork every 12th hour a dowry related death claimed to have taken the lives of over 20,000 women across the country between 1990 and 1993. In view of continuing failure of the state through legal means, the civil societies should come forward to fight the menace of dowry. The crux of the matter is that those who have got sons or more sons than daughters tend to have developed vested interests in the persistence of this practice.
1.10 CHANGES IN FAMILY FUNCTION.

Singh, J.P. 2005: Violence within family settings is primarily a male activity. The prime targets are women and children. The women have been victims of humiliation and torture for as long as we have written records of the Indian society. Despite several legislative measures adopted in favor of women during the last 150 years, continuing spread of modern education and women’s gradual economic independence, countless women have continued to be victims of discrimination and violence in the country.

Increasing family violence in modern times has compelled many social scientists to be apologists for the traditional joint family-as happy and harmonious, a high-voltage emotional setting, imbued with love, affection and tenderness. India’s past has been so romanticized by certain scholars that they have regarded the joint family as the best form of family. It is evident from data that in India 40 percent of women have experienced violence by an intimate partner. These stark figures underline the fact that, although the home and community are places where women provide care for others, they are also places where millions of women experience coercion and abuse. With the rise in the level of education and exposure to mass media, women tend to have greater awareness of the notion of gender equality, faith in the effectiveness of legal action to protect their rights, and confidence in such institutions as family courts and certain voluntary organizations working for women. Yet there is no sign of abatement in gender related violence. Cases of domestic violence, like wife-battering and forced incest with the women of the household, are so personal and delicate that they are seldom reported to the police or law courts. We are sure that the recent legislation of anti-domestic violence act of 2005 would certainly take care of the problem of gender-based violence of the Indian woman to a very large extent.

There is another side of the story of domestic violence as well which has remained uncovered, particularly by feminist writers. It is roughly estimated that every year more than 58000 educated women are making the life of their husband’s hell by misusing anti-dowry law and domestic violence act and under these laws legal terrorism is continuing openly to extort money from the husbands and their families. More than 52000 married men are ending their life due to various type of harassment and domestic violence faced form their
beloved wives in the form of verbal abuse, financial abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, relationship cheating, and etc. (Ibid., p. 170-74)

1.11 CHALLENGES IN SOCIALIZING OF CHILDREN.

Children (aged 0-14) constitute a little over 30 percent of the total population of the country according to the 2001 Census of India. Evidence suggests that they are quite vulnerable and their exposure to violations of their protection rights remains widespread and multiple in natures. The manifestations of these violations are very varied, ranging from child labour and child trafficking to commercial sexual exploitation and many other forms of violence and abuse. With an estimated 12.6 million children engaged in hazardous occupations, for instance, India has the largest number of child labourers under the age of 14 in the world. Although poverty is often cited as the cause underlying child labour, other factors such as discrimination, social exclusion, as well as the lack of quality education or existing parents’ attitudes and perceptions about child labour and the role and value of education need also to be considered. (Ibid., p. 175.)

Census of India (2001): Though systematic data and information on child protection issues are still not available, evidence suggests that children in need of special protection belong to communities suffering disadvantages and social exclusion such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and the poor. The lack of available services as well as the gaps persisting in law enforcement and in rehabilitation schemes also constitute a major cause of concern. The children of poor families, especially those of artists, craftsmen, and other professions are trained by their parents and elders of the family in their vocations such as weaving, tanning, sweeping dyeing, hairdressing, painting, carpentry and agriculture. A vast number of children grow up lending a helping hand to elders in their home industries. The practice or intergenerational transfer of traditional callings more or less is still continuing. Such kids who lack formal schooling, but working and specializing in some craft or their traditional callings help them build a career. Indeed, the poverty in India forces many parents to send their children to earn extra money. The employers who hire such children pay them paltry wages. One can see boys of poor families act as vegetable vendors throughout India. Children of construction workers help in bringing water, cleaning vessels or collecting twigs for fuel. Their parents are compelled to come to cities when monsoon
fails and they cannot cultivate their lands. Children are also subjected to gender based discrimination. Discrimination against women in fact starts the day she is born. Sometimes it also starts when she is in her mother’s womb as a fetus.

The practice of female feticide, despite being illegal, is vigorously practiced in urban India. The girl child’s right to survival, health care and nutrition, education, social opportunities and protection has to be recognized and made a social and economic priority. Along with this, the basic structural inequalities that cause poverty, malnutrition and the low status of women have to be addressed, if these rights are to be ensured. Within family parents are first to practice gender based discrimination and it is the first school of learning where girls are inculcated the values of their being inferior to their brothers. Thousands of children roam in the streets of major cities around the country and receive neither education, proper food, clothing, nor a bed to sleep in at night. A mind and heart that cares awareness presentations through multi-media, contributions, talking and sharing information among friends, education, self-help initiatives and good old fashion kindness are all that is needed to get these kids off the streets. Basically they need five things for their living: food, clothing, shelter, medical assistance and education.

Contrary to the above, there are children who belong to the well-off sections of society, but they are also not free from problems. They are facing a different kind of problem either due to lack of adequate care or attention from their working parents or due to heavy expectation from them by their parents in a fiercely competitive modern world full of uncertainties in life. In cases of working mothers, children are placed in an entirely different situation. The demands of city life are such that both wife and husband tend to remain outside their home for work even at the cost of interests of their children. Working couples are unable to give proper care and affection to their children. Obviously, latchkey children of working couples are strangers to the sense of security enjoyed by their own parents. The system of surrogate mothers or the Montessori and Kindergarten systems of schooling has proved to be a very poor substitute for family as an agent of socialization. With the diminished role of family as an agent of socialization juvenile delinquency is on the increase.
In the past children enjoyed security of a kind unknown today. Now children are at greater strain than ever before because in general parents intend to accomplish those things in their life through their children what they themselves could not be able to achieve, no matter how difficult they are. Children are put under great stress and stain to score high marks at schools to be able to meet the ever-increasing challenges of fiercely competitive world of education and employment. In addition to helping their children achieve higher goals of life, women, sometimes both the parents, have to work harder with a view to attaining economic independence and maintaining a higher standard of living of their family. E group of 5-14. More than 80 percent of them in India are employed in the agricultural and non-formal sectors and many are bonded labourers, too. Most of them are either illiterate or dropped out of school after two or three years.

Saini, Debi S. (1994): The exploitation of little children for labour is an accepted practice and perceived by many as a necessity to alleviate poverty. Carpet weaving industries pay very low wages to child labourers and make them work for longer hours in unhygienic conditions.

1.12 CHALLENGES IN CARING PRACTICE OF ELDERLY.

The family has started facing a new kind of problem emanating from a relatively faster pace of demographic transition. The incredible increase in life expectancy may be a big triumph of the 20th century, but it has posed one of the toughest problems before the 21st century India. Census reports have revealed that the Indian population approximately tripled during the last 50 years, but the number of elderly people had in fact increased more than fourfold. Based on the continuation of the trend, the United Nations has predicted in one of its report that the Indian population would again grow by 50 percent by the middle of this century, whereas the elderly population is likely to have another fourfold increase in its size. It is estimated that the during the next five decades the size of the population would grow by about 50 percent, but the number of older people would increase fourfold.
UN (2008): The proportion of older people in the population would grow at a higher pace than the other groups. It is estimated that the elderly people (60+) would constitute 20 percent of the total population. The Indian policymakers must take a critical note of the rising trends of incoming age wave of older people and the declining trend of the proportion of younger people. Such developments would cause strain on the resources due to increase in more inactive people. Longer life expectancy and incremental dependency ratio will possibly strain the family and the state support system for the older people. Increase in individuals’ age is usually followed by increased prevalence of chronic diseases and disability and hence the elderly population is taken as a big burden for the family, community and ultimately the entire nation. Many young people consider the old member of their family as an obstacle to the advancement of their career as well as an economic burden for their family life, as the older parents become frail due to greater incidence of diseases and disability, eventually becoming bedridden in the family and later forced to stay in nursing homes during the terminal stages of their life.

This scenario causes young people to have a negative image of the older people and early in their life they adopt an ageist outlook towards the older people. In the past, the joint family system not only provided a suitable umbrella to manage personal risks, such as risks of premature death and excessive longevity, but also laid down the norms of intergenerational relationships as well as the role of each member. The elderly played a significant role in decision making regarding household matters, while the younger people were entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring well-being of their ageing parents. But, these days in smaller families, they are gradually marginalized in the decision-making process. Hence, the family that traditionally took care of the elderly or sick, widows and orphans is beginning to rely on society as a whole. As the number of old persons is rising and the social environment is changing, the proportion of the destitute among them may also be increasing.

These factors are also leading to the need for a large number of old-age homes where the old people may enjoy the remaining part of their life in a group of their own.
1.13 CHALLENGES IN PROTECTING INDIANISM:

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 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 cutthroat 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. In the context of the changes in the economic system more and more members of the family are moving away from the larger family circle and living as individuals or members of a nuclear unit in urban areas. The patterns or loyalties, obligations and expectations have changed. The cases of the child and the aged in particular have become a problem for many due to structural changes in the family.

Challenges faced by the Indian Family: Changing family values and ethos: Family is a link between continuity and change. It is a major source of nurturance, emotional bonding and socialization. However, urbanization, industrialization, globalization, better educational opportunities and consequent exposure to western ideals and norms, women’s movement for equal rights and status have played major roles in changing the face of Indian families. There are major signs of change and modifications in terms of family values and role relationships. These changes are more visible in the urban areas where constrains in sharing limited resources and increasing cost of living are encouraging more individualistic orientations among people. Further, participation of women in the workforce outside the home has created a drastic change in the whole family scenario. The family invasion by television, internet, mobile phone, video culture and growing consumerism has further
helped the process of value transformation. Sinha (1988) maintains that socio-economic changes in society have induced certain changes in family experiences that some as antecedents to various behavioral and psychological consequences in the individual. Further, he views the contemporary Indian family as being in a "transitional" phase where structural changes are not entirely accompanied by psychological changes. People wish to live in small, nuclear family units while continuing to draw strength from the extended family, particularly during times of stress, strain and crisis. It is especially evident in case of dual earner family, where both husband and wife work outside as full time worker. This has resulted in ambiguity in setting their roles responsibilities and expectations for growing children and adolescents.

The worst affected are the girl and woman of the family, who are expected to have both traditional as well as modern roles to play. Hence, the role of male and female are in question? The family is in a fluid, transitional state and is presenting ambiguities in roles, relationships and models for emulation. Although much has changed with women's employment patterns, much as not changed in how modern families view in the areas of marriage, work, household activities and parenthood, where gender plays a vital role. (b) Identity Confusion: With the changing family structure, function and role relationship is giving rise to the identity crises among the members of the family. Earlier studies indicated that there are large numbers of traits that are differentially ascribed to men and women in general. Men are considered frank and straightforward in social relations, intellectually rational, logical, competent and bold.

On the other hand, the stereotype for women embraces the social amenities, emotional warmth and a "concern for affairs beside the material" (Bhogle, 1995). Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the personality traits and attributes of the two sexes. Since gender stereotypes are culturally loaded, studies have tried to determine the picture of „typical” India male and female. Over the years, due to the influence of many of these factors, the role of the Indian woman is in a state of flux and therefore there is greater ambiguity about the Indian feminine stereotype (Khanna and Varghese, 1978; Srivastava, 1978). Other trends that have emerged have been an increased effort to understand processes by which people can become free of gender-based definitions of "sex-appropriate" behaviour. Now the Concern are more with "androgyny", sex role transcendence, or
departures from traditional sex typing, with the acquisition of socially prescribed sex typed
behaviours and attitudes.

As a result of the growing literacy, mass movements for education, information, exposition, women's liberation, feminist movement and globalization, gender roles are expanding both for females and males. No longer masculinity and femininity are viewed as two ends of a single continuum, rather considered as multifaceted, which can coexists within the same individual (Bhogle, 1995) (c) Family and work interface and its impact on gender roles: In today’s society, majority of men and women face the prospect of juggling both family and occupational role. Men face new responsibilities and ambiguous expectations in their family roles as society develops the ideal of more egalitarian roles. Women face new expectations to have a career while still performing the majority of child care and house work in their family roles. Thus, the work and family realms are closely inter-related for both men and women without having any demarcation between both.

According to Pleck (1977), the boundaries that exist between work and family are permeable- demands as well as rewards. One domain can spill over into the other domain. Each domain can be independent entity, but the work and family spheres also greatly impact each other through role demands that can create conflict with each other. Pleck further believed that, gender influences the amount of spill over from work to family and vice-versa. Women's and men's family roles involve different demands, which can lead to gender differences in the type of boundaries between work and family.

Therefore, as Pleck argued, the boundaries between work and family are asymmetrically permeable for men and women. Because of the differences in role expectations and constraints, women tend to have greater spill over from the family domain into the work domain, while men more often have the work domain spill into the family domain. Gender issues related to work and family roles would influence levels of conflict between the roles, and therefore levels of stress as well. This model of boundaries between the two domains illustrates how much work and family overlap in people's lives. According to Marotz- Baden, Keating and Munro (1995) the boundary between the work and family is extremely permeable. Family and work boundaries are blurred and issues from both realms become intertwined. Stress on the work domain spills into the family boundary and
influence the marital dyad's power processes. Income and educational disparities among men and women influence the roles of husbands and wives within a family.

The role structure in turn influences the processes within the dyad, in particular the power processes. This structure and its impact on family processes also have implications for identity development, socialization of children and other areas of decision making. Moreover, the work domain spills over to the family domain and influences the quality of family life intending cohesion, family decision making and family satisfaction (Das, 2007). With the family and work domains working together, a better balance of the work and family could be achieved.

1.14 STATEMENT ON THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:

Thus it may be seen that the rise in the number of single member household, breakdown of traditional joint family system, increase in cases of divorce, individual male migration to cities for work, erosion of authority of patriarch, the attrition of traditional family values, increase in the number of working mothers in cities and single parents, rise in domestic violence and practices of dowry, neglect of children and elderly, and poor regard for family laws are enough indications of the danger that the family and ultimately society are progressively facing in India. To combat the continuing erosion of values and the institution of family, there is a need of a set of strong, consistent policies to strengthen the Indian family system. Otherwise, India would be left with no choice, but to face the same problems which are generally faced by many families of developed countries culture western world now.

It is recognized that under the prevailing circumstances the civil society can play a more crucial and effective role than the state. In any case, because of rising individualism, intolerance competitiveness and openness in society and ever-increasing aspirations for higher attainments in life coupled with greater autonomy of individuals in society, an ideal family life may be a distant dream. Willingly or unwillingly, the people should by and large remain prepared to pay the likely prices of modern or post-modern way of life. Traditionalism is no answer, either. But constantly and definitely western world is looking towards the eastern world that too particularly towards India. And India Being an oldest
civilized nation of the world it becomes our fundamental duty not only to show the right path but also lead from the front by taking the initiative step of leadership. Hence in this directive the researcher has organized the present Ph.d Thesis in the following way.

Introduction, Review of Literature, Research Methodology, Profile of Study Area and Study Population, Changing Attitude of Indian families, Changing Behaviors of Indian Families, Changing Relationship of Indian Families, Structural and Functional changes of Indian Families, Summary, Conclusion and suggestion.

1.15 CHAPTERISATION

2. Introduction
3. Review of literature
4. Research methodology
5. Profile of Study Area and Study Population
6. Changing Attitude of Indian Families
7. Changing Behaviors of Indian Families
8. Changing Relationships of Indian Families
9. Structural and Functional changes of Indian Families
10. Summary, Conclusion and Suggestions.