SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
CHAPTER VI

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India is a land of diversity, which has people belonging to different religions, cultures, languages etc. Today India is undergoing a process of modernization in many spheres. It is only after independence and particularly since last two decades, that India is undergoing rapid socio-cultural changes. This is a result of the process of modernization. This process has influenced the India society. Increased urbanization, literacy rate, industrialization, globalization etc. have influenced the attitudes, behaviour and values of the individuals in Indian society. Thus rapid social change has brought about wide ranging socio-psychological changes, especially among the individuals residing in urban areas. Keeping these aspects in mind, in the present study 'generation gap', existed between children and their respective parents, has been studied from sociological perspective.

Generation gap refers to the difference, gap or conflict between adolescent children and their parents regarding values, attitudes and behaviour patterns. The problem of generation gap is universal. It has existed more or less in almost all societies at all times. It is because the parents are traditional and conservative, whereas the youth are modern and rebellious. As a result of this difference in nature between children and parents clashes occur between the two generations, moreover from the sociological viewpoint, children often grown up in a culture, which is different from that of their parents. Everyone, including adults and the elderly are aware of the rapid social change, but adults fail to consider this rapid social change when they are interacting with children. Thus by failing to understand the society and the changed social atmosphere in
which their children are growing up the parents often enforce rules and
social behaviour of their own generation. This inevitably leads to
intergenerational conflict further generation gap ensues.

The two generations live in different socio-cultural environments,
and experience different cultural standards. The two generations live
under the influence of different style of living, fads, media, technology,
beliefs, attitudes and values. Therefore generation gap is naturally a
cultural gap. Today computers, the internet and other technology has
made the society very complex, which cannot be fully understood by the
older generation. Meanwhile they want to maintain status quo, which is
very much opposed by youngsters, that leads to intergenerational
conflict.

The conflict between the generations never continues permanently,
but it comes to an end at particular age especially with the end of
adolescence. Therefore they continue to look to parents for basic values
and guidance in areas of life such as personal and career goals. With the
passage of time, they gain self-esteem and maturity. Most adolescents
reach an understanding of universal realities. Then they return and
accept the values, which they once questioned.

Spirit of independence is the most important source of
intergenerational conflict. By achieving independence youth want to
establish a sense of identity. Majority of adolescents irrespective of sex
prefer the company of their friends. In this modern society many college
going students attend occasional parties, which may carry on until late in
the night. The adolescents spend much time with their friends, which
force to inculcate values and customs of peer group rather than parents,
because during the stage of adolescence peer group is most powerful
force in the socialization of an adolescent. The peer group moulds the attitudes, values, and norms of the individuals, particularly adolescents. In urban areas the peer group enables the child to develop an autonomous behaviour and emancipation from the dominating influence of parents. This phenomenon is not always tolerated by the parents and results in intergenerational conflict. This leads to generation gap between the generations, where the young feel oppressed by their parents. As far as Indian society is concerned a sense of generational resentment is not been a dominant theme. However, the difference between the attitudes and values of the children and their parents has been explored in this study.

In India, industrial growth, urbanization, modernization and expansion of modern education have affected our traditional social institutions like family, caste, religion, marriage etc. The educated youth, who have developed new ideologies and values, feel that there is cultural-lag between them and their parents. The parents and old generation want to keep traditional culture and way of life. But against to them the educated youth are on the way of inculcating new values, beliefs, sentiments and ideologies. Hence there is difference of opinions and conflicts between the younger and older generations.

Today in India particularly modern education has created modernized educated youth, who are against the old fashioned uneducated old people. Modern education accelerates the values of democracy, socialism and secularism, which have been inculcated in the minds of college going youths. Thus modern educated youth have developed the spirit of equality, justice, scientific and rational thinking. As a result the youth have been sensitized to modern attitudes and
values than their parents, who belong to the older generation and they are comparatively conservative and traditional in their behaviour. The old people are more attached to traditional norms and values than the younger. Therefore modern youth tend to give modernistic responses more than their parents, which has clearly indicated the symptom of existence of generation gap. Thus college youth seemed to embrace more modern values than their parents on various social issues.

The present study not only provides significant information regarding intergenerational conflict, but has also elucidated the role and specific influence of caste, religion, income, sex, occupation of father on generation gap. However, from the obtained results the following conclusions were drawn.

An understanding of the socio-economic background of the respondents is very essential to know the nature and nurture of the respondents, because there is relationship between influence of family in the process of socialization and intergenerational conflict. Therefore the results pertaining to socio-economic background are discussed briefly.

A majority of the adolescent respondents of the present study belonged to 18 years of age, whereas a majority of the fathers of respondents are below 60 years of age. A majority of respondents' mother tongue is Kannada, which is a regional language of Karnataka. Among the students a vast majority of respondents belonged to Arts faculty. Since the respondents are being systematically selected, based on caste hierarchy, majority respondents are belonged to Hindu religion.

The family is the most important and fundamental institution of every society. In the present study the respondents are of urban areas,
where the number of nuclear families is more than joint families as a result of urbanization and industrialization. Since a majority of respondents belonged to nuclear families, naturally father is head of many families.

With regard to religious background and studying faculty of the respondents, Hindus are high in all the three, Arts, Commerce and Science, faculties. Among Christians a majority of the respondents are studying in Science faculty while among Jains a majority of the respondents are studying in Commerce faculty. This is because basically Jains are closely associated with business.

The data analysis on caste structure shows that a majority of upper caste respondents are studying in Commerce faculty and a majority of respondents from middle caste and SC/ST category are studying in Arts faculty.

The educational background of the fathers is shows that a majority of fathers belonging to Hindus, Buddhists and Jains have attained college level education. Majority of Muslims are below college level education and all the Christians have higher level of education. But a majority of mothers’ educational level is below college level. This is due to early marriages and traditional background or non-encouragement for women to get higher education in Indian society.

A majority of respondents’ fathers’ occupation is government service. This is because in urban areas government or private, and business are prominent occupations, however very few are engaged in agriculture.
So far as social class of the family is concerned a majority of the families belonged to middle social class, irrespective of religion and caste of the respondents.

Since adolescents and their parents represent different socio-cultural worlds, there are various areas of inter-generational conflict. The results of intergenerational conflicts are given as below.

1. There is no disagreement between children and parents regarding smoking habit as both generations disapprove it. As far as religions are concerned Hindus, Muslims and Jains restrict smoking habit, whereas Christians and Buddhists are more liberal regarding smoking habit.

2. There is intergenerational conflict regarding wearing modern style dresses. A majority of students irrespective of their sex and social class want to wear modern style dresses. But parents opine that the children may use modern style dresses only during some special occasions.

3. So far as friendship of the children is concerned there is intergenerational conflict. Social class has its direct influence regarding establishing the friendship with children of lower social status. The parents of upper social class have more restrictions over the nature of friendship of their children. In many families parents do not show their dissatisfaction regarding the friendship of their children infront of them. This indirectly leads to intergenerational conflict.

4. There is intergenerational conflict regarding arrival of friends of the children to home. So far as social class is concerned there is more
intergenerational conflict regarding this aspect among upper and middle social class families rather than in lower class families. Lower social class families are also not free from conflict, but the intensity of conflict is least.

5. There is intergenerational conflict regarding accepting the opinions and decisions of children pertaining to family matters.

6. Adolescents do not tolerate their comparison with their friends in front of them. This makes the children feel inferior to their friends and increases the negative attitudes toward the parents and frequent conflict between the generations.

7. As a result of western culture influence the youth prefer to eat non-vegetarian food. However a majority of parents being strict vegetarians, oppose it. This often leads to intergenerational conflict. There is intergeneration conflict regarding use of non-vegetarian even outside the family.

8. There is intergenerational conflict regarding hours of study of the children. A majority of the parents generally always force their children to study hard, which is not always being tolerated by the children.

9. The study has revealed that adolescents spend much time in front of mirror. Therefore there is intergenerational conflict regarding this behaviour of adolescents. As far as religion is concerned among the respondents of all the religions, except Christianity, there exists intergenerational conflict regarding spending much time in front of mirror.
10. A majority of parents do not tolerate the telephone conversation of their children with the friend of opposite sex. Hence telephone conversation of their children with their either boyfriend or girlfriend is concerned there is intergenerational conflict.

11. There is intergenerational conflict as far as frequent visit to restaurants and films. So far as sex of the respondents is concerned there is more freedom for boys than girls.

12. The parents make future plans for their children. But all the children do not consider it as the duty of parents. Hence projecting future plans for the children are concerned there is disagreement between children and parents.

13. There is intergenerational conflict regarding quick satisfaction of the demands of children. The adolescent respondents feel that a majority of parents quickly satisfy the needs of daughters rather than sons. This further leads to conflict.

14. The intergenerational conflict is more regarding giving permission to children to fulfill their personal demands independently. Irrespective of socio-economic status of the family, the children are in constant contrast with their parents regarding this aspect.

15. There is more intergenerational conflict regarding giving enough pocket money to the children. A majority of children have opined that the given pocket money is insufficient. It is because in modern society the aspirations and ambitions of the children are on the increase. But parents have not extended their financial help to satisfy these increased demands of the children.
16. A majority of parents do not allow their children to watch a film in theatre with the friend of opposite sex.

Let following part contains the generation gap in relation to family life, marriage, sexual life, recreation patterns and religious life.

I. Family Life

1. A majority of adolescents and their parents prefer to live in nuclear families. Therefore there is no generation gap regarding type of family prefer to live in.

2. A majority of adolescents opine that they discuss about their personal matters very closely with their friends. Parents are of the opinion that the children discuss their personal matters with parents. This shows there is generation gap regarding discussing children’s personal matters very closely.

3. The study shows that the children have close contacts with their mothers rather than any other members of the family.

4. The study shows that the parents do not always respond to the personal demands of their children, which leads to conflict and shows the generation gap.

5. Many times parents give much preference to the persons, who are being disliked by the children. Therefore there is more intergenerational conflict regarding this aspect.

6. There is generation gap regarding questioning bad habits of parents. A majority of children question the bad habits of their parents, but parents do not like it, which leads to intergenerational conflict. So far as nature of the family is concerned generation gap
regarding this aspect is more in joint families rather than in nuclear families.

7. A majority of adolescents opine that the children must question their parents if they do not make any efforts to satisfy their needs, whereas a majority of parents disapprove it. Hence there is generation gap regarding this aspect.

8. There is no generation gap concerning neglecting the authority of the parents. Adolescents even in urban areas are going according to will and wish of the parents. Because for everything children depend upon their parents.

II. Marital Life

1. The study revealed no generation gap concerning age at marriage for both boys and girls.

2. There is more generation gap regarding approval of love marriage as an ideal form of marriage. Irrespective of sex, social class, castes and religion of the respondents there is generation gap regarding love marriage.

3. There is generation gap regarding encouragement to inter-caste and inter-religious marriages.

III. Sexual Life

1. There is generation gap regarding having friendship with a person of opposite sex.

2. More generation gap is found so far as love affair is concerned.

3. There is no much generation gap regarding pre-marital sexual intercourse. A majority of adolescents and their parent have opined that easy availability of contraceptives leads to pre-marital sex.
4. There is no generation gap regarding providing sex education through school/college syllabus. Respondents have opined that sex education is very essential for adolescents for their healthy development.

5. There is also no generation gap regarding providing guidance about physical and sexual changes of adolescence stage. Providing guidance about physiological changes to their children is an urgent need of the day.

IV. Recreation

1. There is generation gap regarding going to theatre to watch a movie with their friends.

2. There is also somewhat generation gap regarding watching the favourite programme in television. Parents impose restrictions to watch the favourite programme in TV on their children.

3. There exists conflict at home if anybody change the channel, while children are watching their favourite programme. So far as nature of family is concerned more intergenerational conflict is found in nuclear families than in joint families.

4. There is no generation gap regarding various channels of TV. A majority of adolescents and their parents have opined that the various channels are sometimes misleading the youth.

5. There is generation gap regarding visiting youth clubs for entertainment. So far as sex of the respondents is concerned more boys want to visit youth clubs always, whereas girls want to visit occasionally.

6. More generation gap regarding visiting youth clubs is found among Hindus, Muslims and Jains.
V. Religious Life

1. There is no much generation gap regarding decline of morality in modern society. Respondents opined that if not completely, somewhat morality is on the decline in modern society.

2. There is no generation gap regarding control of religion over people. A majority of respondents have opined that today religion has lost its control over people.

3. There is also no generation gap regarding relationship between modern education and decrease of religious beliefs. Respondents have opined that modern education has its influence over religion and has decreased religious beliefs and rituals.

4. There is generation gap regarding forcing the children to go temples. Adolescents do not tolerate any force to go temples, but parents force their children to go temples.

5. There is also generation gap so far as forcing the children to worship at home is concerned. Parents force their children to worship at home, but adolescents do not agree with their parents.

6. There is no generation gap regarding necessity of a son to attain Moksha among Hindus. A majority of children and parents disagree with this opinion.
Suggestions to Minimize Generation Gap

The existence of generation gap promotes unhappiness in the family. Children tend to experience greater stress than their parents. Children feel that their parents have become harsh and restrictive and that their parents do not love them anymore. Children turn for consolation to their peer group and may prefer their friends to their family even if these friends comprise company that is not altogether desirable parents also feel hurt and rejected by their children. So, what can parents do to bridge the generation gap?

The generation gap is an eternal reality. The society in which parents live will forever be different from that in which their children live. Customs, attitudes, values and other factors will eternally differentiate the generations. Therefore to this extent the generation gap can never be removed. The phenomenon of generation gap is not of recent origin, but intensity of gap is more today. When parents fail to understand the intellectual, emotional and social growth that their child is experiencing in the process of developing his individuality, a generation gap increases. But generation gap is not everlasting, which comes to an end at particular age.

However, this does not mean that there are no solutions to the inevitable misunderstandings and problems in communication between parents and their adolescent children. Since it is not possible to get rid off this problem, the researcher mentions some suggestions to minimize generation gap.

Perhaps, the most important issue is for parents to realize that rebelliousness is not a child’s rejection of parental attitudes but an
expression of the child's search for individuality. The child needs an understanding attitude, concern and guidance.

Parents need to be flexible. They need to consider their child's position from his own social and developmental perspective. Parents need to be patient. They need to 'let go' gradually, even if this means allowing their child to make mistakes and get hurt; self learning through error may be the most effective way of learning certain truths.

The generation gap can be bridged by compassion and greater indepth understanding and maintain friendly relation with children. They must win the confidence of youth by mutual love and trust. It can be done only by love but not by force.

Parents must make an honest effort to understand the sentiments and aspirations of adolescents. They should not try to impose their views on their children. The parents should not insult and ill treat them before their friends.

The parents must understand the changing behaviours of their children and feel their behaviour at their adolescence age. They can maintain balance between the generations.

The parents must understand the rapid social change leading to change in the values, attitudes and behaviour of adolescents. Then act according to changing social system.

The parents must establish close contacts with their children and friendly explain the changing circumstances and status and prestige of their family in the society. Also guide them to behave without disturbing their family prestige.
Parents should not force their children to do anything, which is beyond capacity of their children parents must understand the capacity of their children and convince the usefulness of the goal and ask them to go on that direction.

Parents try to maintain similarity between the children’s aspirations and parent ambitions and projections for their children.

Parents should not frequently scold and punish their children. If they frequently punish it becomes habit to child, who often commits the same mistake.

Parents should give pocket money to their children. At the same time children are being guided for the expenditure of money.

Parents should not compare their children with their friends infront of their friends, which develop inferiority feelings among children, which hinder alround personality development of their children.

Parents should give freedom to satisfy their personal demands independently. If child commits mistake, explain the right direction with giving moral instances.

Parents should not give more preference to the persons, who are being disliked by the children. Parents may treat them in the absence of their children.

It is also desirable that there should be healthy relationship between husband and wife, between parents and other members of the family. Thus parents should be careful enough to become ‘models’ of desirable behaviour for the children and should not indulge in anything, which may be vicious.
Ultimately communication lines should be kept open at all times. As long as parents can talk to their child amicably, no generation gap can grow. If parents have always been able to talk in an understanding manner with children from childhood, strong parent-child communication lines are built in childhood and cannot be forged all of a sudden when the child becomes an adolescent.