CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This is a sociological study of urban families in crisis and facing a breakdown. It makes an effort to study the dynamics of crisis families in an effort to service the crisis. In this attempt, some families apply to family counselling agencies, which are a part of the human service delivery systems in society.

The social change which results from rapid technological development, urbanization and industrialization poses new challenges to families in their goal striving and if the families are structurally or functionally weak, the social conditions push these families to disorganization and break down.

The family is proclaimed to be the most universal stable institution in society. It is an institution most resistive to change yet, the forces of change continue to influence the family and challenge family strength. In order to survive the crisis families take professional help.

In studying the dynamics of survival this research undertakes a detailed study of urban family crisis, support systems and response to professional help.

The researcher is a professional social worker who began her career as a Family Counsellor. The problem of
dropouts in treatment rouses the concern of all professional workers in India, including Physicians, Psychologists and Counsellors. Agencies offer expert and sophisticated services to families in crises and under stress. Urban sociologists predict that urban families will increasingly utilise organised services for smooth functioning. Yet, micro level observations continue to rouse the concern of professional workers about the resistance of clients to any form of attitudinal change or acceptance of new ideas for improved functioning. Some professional workers maintain that the family comes in the way of the ego to actively or indirectly "sabotages" professional efforts directed towards innovation and change. Clients withdraw from agencies before a satisfactory completion of their service contracts.

The phenomenon of withdrawal cannot be explained by quoting a few exemplary cases. With the desire to understand this phenomenon, the researcher set out to seek sociological interpretation of client behaviour in family counselling services. A gross observation indicates the wide gap between client and professional cultures. Many more factors must contribute to the phenomenon.

The strongest desire through the most difficult situations is preservation of family prestige. The Indian Psyche is conspicuously conditioned by the norms mores and imperatives of the family.

Sociological studies of Indian families lack in describing the dynamics of families. This study undertakes to bridge the gap by analysing family dynamics in crisis situations and by examining the functioning of different structural elements towards the goal of perpetuation of the institution of the family. This study expects to provide new insights to professional social work services.
The ideal-typical Indian family described by sociologists is the traditional Hindu joint family in India's agrarian village. Common economic activity, joint property, common kitchen, patriarchal authority and a strong caste control are the proclaimed characteristics of this ideal-typical family. The family was regarded as a self-sufficient unit, offering economic assurance, health care and social security to every member who belonged to this family by birth, blood, adoption and marriage. This family functioned as a social institution, with obligations not only related to the family but also functions and obligations towards the entire community. The family took upon itself the functions of perpetuating the caste system, norms, folkways, mores and culture patterns by socialising each individual member into the traditional social structure and behavioural expectations therefrom. There was conscious inculcation of a sense of pride in the family, name, expectations of a sense of belonging to the family and caste and caste and preservation of kinship bonds. Rules of behaviour were handed down from generation to generation and the behavioural responses and attitudes were consciously structured. Working and growing within this structure was relatively easy, as one knew what to expect.

The aspirations, ambitions, achievements, orientations, rules of tradition and caste control governed the functioning of the joint family.

Career and all future expectations of every child born into this family were all pre-planned and tailor-made. No consideration was given to individual initiative and orientation and the law of the collectivity was ultimate.

The family preserved and perpetuated a large number of social institutions like religion, caste, marriage, economy and polity. The rules of inheritance corrected the lapses and gaps
caused by deaths of individual members.

The family was self-sufficient and fully competent to meet all unprecedented events, crises, failures and breakdowns. The institution of joint property was a strong security blanket. The large number of members provided either singly or collectively avenues of replacement and buffering in crises or threats of disintegration. The insecurity due to limitations of life expectancy was also taken care of by replacement of parents and child substitutes. The stigma of sterility and childlessness was removed by Hindu adoption and unfair acts of family violence, jealousies and rivalries were radically liquidated by indigenous remedial measures. Right or wrong, the joint family offered solutions to any problem, material or emotional.

The storm of industrialisation rocked this fortress of the joint family system. Urbanization had preceded industrialisation and was certainly not its creation. Towns and cities as centres of education and seats of administration were known generations before the industrial revolution. But urban families were then a replica of the rural agrarian family with their urban land holding but varied economic activity. These families continued to make their impact on urban social structure, just as the village families dominated the agrarian rural culture. There were "professional" families, administrator-ruler families, business families, priestly families, physician families and scholarly teacher families. The distinctive urban division of labour with a variety of professions prevented any competition
between the urban joint families whereas the common interest in land generated hostile rivalries in the agrarian joint families, as agriculture was practically the only vocation. Thus they were truly the urban villagers. Rural-urban differences were in terms of occupation and inter-family relationships. The patterns of interdependence amidst the rural and urban families were more or less similar. This prevented the urban "pull" and rural "push" in pre-industrial societies.

Industrialisation altered societies radically. It added innovation, facilities and speed to the life in cities and also villages. New ambitions, demand for individual skill and individuality as a value were rapidly injected in societies. New joint families known as industrial houses emerged and generated supportive joint families called the business families. New forms of social security emerged, although the new social security measures did not in any way compete with the security offered by joint families.

Achievement orientation was implanted radically, supported by rapidly growing economic prosperity. The avenues of rapid income generation were opened, introducing the new factor of the industrial-urban "pull" and generating migration.

Migration, like urbanisation is a pre-industrial concept imbedded in the Ashram Dharma. It was conventional to send a boy of six to the gurukul as prescribed by the Ashram Dharma. He stayed with his guru till he got his degree and re-migrated
home, duly qualified to assume the responsibility of Grihas-thashram and start on his career. With the advent of the British, regional centres of formal education developed both in cities as well as at hill stations and the tradition of liberal education set in. The graduate aspired to qualify himself further and also go abroad. Liberal education to a large extent reduced the interest of educated persons in their own hometown. The individual orientation set in and with it the social reform movement which also very quickly developed into the national movement of freedom struggle. These forces had an impact on the institution of the family, with westernization setting in.

Migration is not the privilege only of the middle class and elite families. Migratory communities and nomadic tribes are a part of primitive society. Business communities settled in distant places which offered business opportunity. The Marwari community is known to migrate and settle permanently even in remote areas for trade and business. These communities continue their lifestyles as joint families, as they make use of different "family posts" like a commercial network. They have universal connections. The business communities - Baniyas, Sindhis and Marwadis today have an international business network. Economic activity brought in transition for the traditional artisan communities, especially those engaged in carpentry. The massive expansion of building activity and furnishing requirements offered attractive economic opportunity
to the Indian artisan communities in England and the middle-east and offered them an access to westernization. While the business communities continue their joint family life the artisans have no stake left in the joint family.

Sociologists apprehend the breakdown of the joint family and growth in the urban isolated nuclear family with the advent of industrialisation and urbanisation. The forces of social change to some extent altered the character of the joint family but studies reveal that the joint family is in no danger of disintegration. Parsons and Bales describe the isolated nuclear family as a functionless family in the midst of urban social disorganisation.

In India, family change takes place at a very slow pace as the urban industrial and business joint family system as well as the traditional village joint family continue to have their hold on the total social system, inclusive of the urban isolated nuclear family. In their discussion of the family in India, sociologists tend to take a dichotomous view of the family types as 1) joint and 2) isolated nuclear. The traditional agrarian joint family and its urban counterpart may at best be regarded as one end of a continuum, with a disintegrated and broken nuclear family at the other. The isolated nuclear urban family will thus occupy a place somewhere closer to the mid-point of this continuum. It is also not correct to club the concept "traditional-rural and joint" with the first set of families and the "urban isolated-nuclear"
with the latter. Very little thought has been given to the
traditional tribal communes in the discussion of the family in
India. Relatively less contribution is made to family func­tion­ing of each type of family in the preceding family research.

The emergence of current family structure of functioning
must be examined apart from urbanization and industrialization,
against the backdrop of two conditions:

1) Deprivation and loss of social functioning and
2) Displacement.

The first condition is already described by Parsons. The
phenomenon of displacement in the process of change and its
piecemeal or cumulative effect of change must be considered
in the functional analysis of the family.

The Oxford Dictionary meaning of "displacement" is an
act of shifting from its original place, or to put out of its
original place. (Britannica World language edition of the
pp. 531-532). In Physics, displacement is measured by the
amount by which any substance is displaced : the difference
between the initial position of a body and a subsequent position
(1837). In Psychology the concept is described differently.
It is more of removal of one characteristic and the replacement
of another characteristic in its place. For example, loss of
money leads a person to indulge in stealing or gambling to
replace the loss. The removal of material goods resulted in
replacement of upheld values by lowered ones. The removal
from an original position, whether temporary or permanent results in deprivation and destabilization, followed immediately by a need to restabilize and compensate the loss. The resultant striving is a combination of support and compensation. Equilibrium and homostasis is the ultimate goal of any organism and the displaced family is no exception to this rule. When this striving is complete there is a certain end result which we shall examine in the emerging new types of urban families.

Today's urban family emerges from the following original states:

1. A separated product of the traditional agrarian village joint family or its counterpart from the pre-industrial city. The transformation took place as a result of migration from rural areas or separation from urban joint family mainly for economic reasons. This is the isolated nuclear family.

2. A result of separation from a nuclear urban family of orientation and transformation into a new nuclear urban family of procreation by a young married couple, for socio-economic reasons, with a clear understanding with the family of orientation, and with mutually agreed patterns of extended family relationship with the family of birth. This is a physically separated but emotionally joint family described by A.R. Desai. This is termed as the emotionally joint nuclear urban family.

3. The physically and emotionally joint urban family joined by residence but to a large extent economically independent by
clear-cut use of division of property and income.

4. The physically broken urban isolated family, a result of structural deficiencies caused by death, divorce, desertion, separation and/or any other conditions beyond the control of the broken remnant of the nuclear family.

5. The unstructured family or the no-family norm, consisting of persons living together without being formally married, with or without "Love children" born out of this arrangement. This family retains the freedom of physical separation at mutual consent. The emotional bond within these families is not known. The child socialization is of a different type. Such a family is described on p. Chapter IX - Some illustrations cases.

Let us now examine the family support systems of each of these new family types.

1. The isolated nuclear family has been uprooted from a previously traditional joint urban or rural family. The inbuilt support systems of the former joint families have already been discussed. Usually it is a single male member of such a family who separates from the original family. The separation is generally marked by handing over to the separating members the share of moveable property from the joint family property, by means of a written or an unwritten agreement. The assets as well as the liabilities in the form of loans and even Court litigations are shared. The separation usually follows disagreement over marriage, choice of mate, career or property.
This separation spells the end of a long relationship, share in the daily routine activities, residence and economic support. The separated family bears the strain of setting up a new house, creating and expanding material resources, new family budget, an independent resolution of routine problems and crises. The affectional structure undergoes a change with considerable social and emotional segregation and there is a loss of sense of established social security. A newly added task is independent decision-making, assuming different leadership which erstwhile rested with the pater familias. Combined with this is the task of establishing a separate identity, and assuming a new formal social status through different channels of upward social mobility. There is a feeling of reduction of social status, social security, affectional ties, social and economic support and loss of property. The entire network of social relationships undergoes a change and the isolated nuclear family has to strive and create its own social circle. The responsibility of child care and child socialization rests with the young inexperienced parents. The joint family structure of child socialisation and samskaras does not exert the former strong influence. The young mother brings her own socialization to the isolated nuclear family and there is a greater influence of mother's family over the children. The larger family controls disappear and the isolated nuclear family has to find its own strength and support. Such a family is now pre-occupied with its own survival and development goals,
wiping out any residual effects of the former destabilisation. It is not able to perform any significant societal functions or have an influence on the social institutions or the larger social system. The striving on the other hand is to stabilise as a part of the social system and achieve individual goals. As a young mother cannot depend upon the joint family assistance in cooking or childcare, she has to look for supportive services outside her home. Schools, day-care centres and creches take over partly the functions of socialization and childcare. The neighbours and friends assist in emergency. Primary relationships with friends' families enrich child socialization.

The migrant isolated nuclear family needs reimplantation in a new social environment. It is isolated from the protective older generational support, caste group support, housing facility and assured status. Such families lack in the knowledge and awareness of supportive service in the city. Though the city has welfare agencies, the identification of the needy and access to referral services is absent in the cities. A major support needed is the compensatory restoration of the sense of loss. The transformation leads to change from an ascribed family status to an achieved individual status.

The uprooting from a less complex society to a more complex one brings about a radical change in the need for support systems.

2. The emotionally joint families are at the greatest advantage. They enjoy the independence and economy of living
apart and yet fall back upon family supports of a joint family which retains the emotional ties and remains only residentially separated. The extended family comes together as a matter of choice and retains its affectional bonds. In crises situations they come together and resolve the crises by mutual support and consultation. Thus in extended families the crisis acts as a further strengthening element in the extended nuclear family. These families have the strongest support system and will naturally emerge as the ideal type of urban family in India.

3. The physically broken family needs to build up the family support systems as a conscious endeavour. We may call this a family that has had no control over the attainment of its present status. The crises of death, divorce, desertion or separation has been an act of nature in the first instance and a man made disaster in the ensuring three events.

Now let us examine the phenomena of "loss" and "displacement" in these families.

1. The comfort of an "ascribed" status of a member of a well established family is lost: It is replaced by individual achievement orientation. The separated nuclear family must now work on its own to achieve a status in society. The head of the family becomes career oriented and tries to earn a decent income and better status. The family supports him in the latter striving.
2. The joint family assets and common landed property are lost. Being immovable, these assets remain behind in the village. No replacement is possible in urban areas.

3. The support and guidance of the older generation is remote. They are physically not close enough to be approached in crises. To some extent the emotional reimbursement and compensation continues if the former affectional function of the joint family still continues. If there has been a disagreement over family property or choice of mate, this support is lost. The urban nuclear family then looks for replacement, which is possible if the family is able to establish a close bond with neighbouring nuclear families or families of friends from the social and occupational circles. If these external supports cannot be developed, the isolated nuclear families continue to feel emotionally displaced and lost. Compensatory forces come into operation in the form of increased role expectations from other members of the nuclear families and any absence of response from the members creates strain, frustration and dysfunction.

4. With the new achieved status, the head of the family needs the family support as he strives for achievement. This means that members of the family, particularly the wife must be qualified to offer this support. If not, the family weakens. The modern youth often lacks for qualities of sociability and ease of common language in his mate.
5. The loss of economic assurance must be adequately compensated by individual earnings. In the absence of adequate opportunities to earn enough, the delinquent traits appear. These may be the desire to make quick money, corruption or pressurising all other members of the nuclear family to earn for the family. If the members have no skills to facilitate earning, the economic security of the family is threatened. Problems of desertion set in, with inability to maintain a family.

It thus becomes obligatory on part of the urban family to function as a support system in material as well as non-material ways. There is a great challenge to individual competence in every direction, and the family moves from its ascriptive orientation to newer achievement orientations. The pressure to achieve pushes the members to seek opportunities of personal advancement outside the family. Those who have the access to educational systems and vocational training, make use of those opportunities. Others with less knowledge and awareness of such supportive organisation seek advice of associates. This necessitates the building up of a referral service either of a formal or an informal social network.

We shall examine these support systems at a later stage. The urban family at this stage may well be appreciated as an institution in search of social support and external sources of strength in the battle for survival and development.
The Evolution of Human Service Delivery Systems

1. Concept

The present day professional social work services or human service delivery systems are of a western origin. The particular human services discussed in this study are personalised professional services for the family. Family services are provided by private or public agencies. Their aim is to assist individuals and families under stress to improve the personal and social functioning of family members and to act as agents of change in those areas of society and that can affect family life or disrupt family functioning.

2. Development in U.S.A.

The Charity Organization Society of America founded in late 1800s was a pioneer organisation doing welfare work for distressed families. In 1911 sixty two family service agencies functioning in different parts of U.S.A. formed a federation of Family Service Organisations. Their first programmes were the health and welfare of families. The staff mostly consisted of voluntary social workers, known as "Friendly Visitors". During 1900 to 1920 new developments in psychology and sociology took place. This led to the development of psychological counselling and mental testing. Family Counselling developed during the two decades. By 1898 Mary Richmond's first book on casework called "Social Diagnosis" was published and the Massachusetts School of Social Work had turned out several batches of trained social workers during the period.
The voluntary "friendly visitors" were gradually replaced by professionally trained social workers. The methods and techniques of social casework rose out of their work in Family Service Agencies. The thrust was on resolving the non-economic problems of families in crises.

In 1919 the Federation of Welfare Agencies renamed itself as the Family Service Association of America and became the chi of standard setting body for family welfare work. By 1975 the family service Association of America had 3087 member agencies from all over U.S.A. and 4500 professionally trained staff members.

A noteworthy factor here is that 50 per cent family welfare agencies in U.S.A. are sectarian, but 90 per cent member-agencies of the Family Service Association of America are non-sectarian. The Sectarian agencies are run by Catholic and Jewish organisations. American Encyclopaedia of Social Work records this fact in 1975. A similar situation is observed in India during 1977-80. The researcher noted that three out of the five agencies doing family welfare work in Maharashtra are also of a sectorian nature.

3. Developments in India

Professional social work was brought to India in 1937 by a Christian missionary Dr. Clifford Manschandt who was appointed the first Director of India's pioneering Institute of Social Work. The institutionalization and development of
professional social work carried with it the impact of westernization for practically the forty years that followed.

All over the world, professional social work is recognised as a middle class movement. The salaried staff of all welfare institutions is drawn from the educated higher and middle classes. Welfare agencies deliver professional services without charging any fees. They are run by the sanction and support of private and public charities, with very nominal grants from the Government of India and State Governments. The agencies have borrowed heavily the western concepts and ideology, but are very much Indian in rendering organized service. Their methods are scientific. The management of these institutions is done by voluntary social workers while the professional social workers who render direct services to families in distress are the paid employees of the human service agencies. These agencies are a part of the social welfare organization in India. There are specialised agencies doing welfare work for different vulnerable groups like the blind, the physically and mentally handicapped, the delinquent, sick and demented, etc.

Contrary to the western professional situation, these agencies are not a formal federation but they have a conventional co-operative network, with functional autonomy as the keyword. It is a matter of great curiosity to examine how the deprived problem section of society interacts with this westernized and sophisticated service delivery system.
While the Social Security Act 1935 gave a decisive direction to the voluntary family welfare management in the U.S.A., the Bombay Public Trusts Act 1950 offered regulation and stability to voluntary welfare organisation in Maharashtra. A series of welfare legislations that followed in 1956 defined the direction of welfare practice while the human service delivery systems are centrally or federally regulated in the west, the human service delivery system in India is very much regional in character. The nineteenth century social reform movement offered a stable background to the social institutions in India of which the human service delivery system is a part.

We shall examine the mutual interaction of this human service delivery system and the urban family in crisis in the chapters that follow.

Review of literature related to the urban family in India

Some of the most important and acclaimed studies related to the family in India are by Dr. Alieen Ross (1961), Dr. M.S. Gore (1965, 1968), Mandelbaum (1959, 1968, 1972), Karve (1964), Kapadia (1959, 1966), Kolenda (1966), I.P. Desai (1975) and Gangrade (1960), B.L. Abbi has contributed a valuable review of the work of Ross, Gore and Desai which is quoted later.

The major areas of interest for Indian Sociologists for over four to five decades of research have been: defining and analysing the Indian family structure in terms of nuclear and joint family, studying the rural urban differences, examining
the impact of urbanization and industrialisation on the family structure, disintegration of the joint family into nuclear families and an attempt at anticipating the resultant consequences. There is limited material available on understanding, evaluation and analysis of family disharmony, change, crises, conflicts and the whole gamut of such issues in this available sociological analysis of the family. I.P. Desai (1975) mentions that distinct changes are coming into joint family but the type of family that will emerge as a result of this change is not predictable. He classifies his data and distinguishes between small and large households based on their numerical compositions.

The family is a system of relationship with rights, obligations and norms attached to them. Desai puts forth the concept of household as against family as a biological unit residing in a house. There is a recent concern over social forces acting upon the family to effect changes in its pattern. This concern is being voiced since the 60's (Devanandan & another).

Gangrade (1960) in his paper attempts to discuss the dynamics of the Indian family. His parameters are hierarchy, relationships, roles and duties of the different members and the various social factors influencing the present day family form.

*A valuable guide to the researcher's review of literature is the mimeograph, Family in India - an annotated bibliography by Dr. Shalini Bharat (1986) - unpublished Mimeograph.*
Gore (1965) while commenting upon the family organization points out to the lack of factual knowledge about the changes in the traditional family structure. According to him, the change in the attitude of people is more important as an indicator of social change than one's behaviour. He stresses the use of different viewpoints and with various regional samples for arriving at a definite picture. Our study examines the residual strengths in families in crises, which continue to support the family and prevent breakdown.

Gore (1968) in his work establishes that the traditional joint Agarwal families contain within themselves the elements that act as resistors to change even in the presence of the prime movers of change, i.e., urbanization and industrialization. The change agents brought "Limited change" in the Agarwal Family.

Ishwaran (1982) studies the isolated nuclear family phenomenon in a multicastr South Indian village, Shivpur.

His conclusion is that the elementary and extended family functioned interdependently. The elementary family could not afford to exist in isolation as it has less prestige, less economical support, less cooperation from relatives during marriages, births, deaths, ceremonies, etc.

A majority of people still hold the emotionally joint family as ideal. Despite economic and other agencies of modern life, both nuclear and extended families remained embedded in the wider kinship matrix. The present day elementary family
is the modified emotionally joint family.

The incidence of nuclear family is expected to be higher in lower castes. Jointness is correlated to more educated, higher caste, property owning or business families, while the landless families tend to drift away in search of gainful activity. Employment helps promote individuality of people and decrease dependence on the Kin for survival. This dependence on Kin will be replaced by dependence on organised human sources. It is, therefore, necessary that such services are highly qualitative and personalised. Stress is laid on rapport and confidentiality. Kurian (1976) stresses that the affectional bonds in family life influenced by traditional joint family values play a very important role in maintaining the general stability of family life in modern India.

There is a change from collectivity oriented economy to self-oriented economy. There is waning interest in Kinship ties. Urbanization, gainful employment in cities, monetized economy, diversified occupations, are pointed as some of the causes of change. The traditional family system is replaced by smaller families with particularistic loyalties. Love and loyalty of large family are waning. Lal (1976) observes that the authority patterns and decision-making appeared stronger in joint family than in nuclear families.

F.G. Bailey (1960) in his paper concludes that the focus of analysis should now be on nuclear families and its role on fulfilling needs earlier met by the joint family.
There is a tendency among scholars to deny the nuclearization of the joint family. This has created confusion in the study of family change and disorganization, terms and concepts of the family, etc. All these offer hindrances in the development of a generalised methodological technique. As a result, the inadequate methodology appears as an obstacle in finding out the real picture of family dynamics. This study makes an effort to examine family dynamics in the act of interacting with a professional system organised to support families in breakdown. A combination of methods is being tested out.

Abbi B.L. (1969) reviews the problems of family change in India in the following books:

1) Ross: Hindu Family in its Urban Setting.
2) Gore: Urbanisation and Family Change.
3) Desai: Some Aspects of Family in Mahuva.

He brings out the following issues: 1) Jointness, 2) Nuclearization of families, 3) Inter-relationship among family members, 4) Family change, 5) Methodology.

In Ross's book there is lack of details regarding sample, structure of families and investigation.

With Desai - again there is lack of information on sampling structure and technique.

Gore gives more attention to the developmental aspect of the family, and his work is methodologically clear.
All these books emphasise joint family and its relationship to pre-industrial society, characteristics of modern industrial society and the nature of family and social change. Our study analyses the family in industrial society.

Agarwala B.R. (1961) in his Marwadi community study (mobile commercial community) observes that the family and community have made great progress, rise in literacy, community prosperity and cultural achievement. But few intercaste marriages no widow remarriages occur. Thus caste has acted as a stabilising force in mobile families.

Changes in the physical and social environment are factors which are assumed at a metro-city like Bombay. Shah (1968) suggests the following framework for the study of family change:

1. The normal development of processes of family.
2. Sanskritization of lower castes and westernisation of higher castes.

These processes could be visibly studied in these families. The middle class family is taken as reference group. The struggle to uphold the social values in the worst of family crises indicates the identification with middle class retention of values.

The desire to adopt a child of unknown parentage is a decisive impact of westernization, as 19.4 per cent of the adoptive parents, i.e., those couples who have resided abroad or those exposed to higher education. The westernized family is the ideal type as perceived by the agencies who recruit staff
from the middle-classes and higher middle-classes in the two cities.

3. A fresh look should be given to the impact of urbanization and industrialization on the household.

The households studied distinctly show the effects of displacement. Displacement is seen in many areas.

Loss of caste affiliation is observed in 20 per cent families.

Loss of the traditional occupation and the occupational skills create a sense of displacement as new skills have not replaced the traditional skills, giving the individuals a sense of loss and inadequacy.

Change and Stability

Literature on family related to change and stability

The two main elements (family and caste) of village social organization in India are examined in their urban context. (Mandelbaum 1963). Family functions, economic factors, family roles, family cycles and ties of kinship can be examined from available records. This study does not look into relations within the family.

Migrant urbanites carry elements of the rural social structure to the city. This is the effort made towards stability. The change caused by the urban industrial individualising values and attitudes should reflect in the society and culture of the city as well as nearby villages. Scholars claim that the most visible change must be in family types - from joint to nuclear.
Morrison's hypothesis is that more traditional castes, lesser education and traditional occupation would be associated with joint family, and the converse with the nuclear family.

Morrison's data was analysed with analysis of variance findings suggests that the joint and quasi-joint family pattern were traditional middle-class village phenomena associated with certain educational levels. Nuclear family was found to occur among better educated and more non-traditional middle and upper status of caste groupings. It is concluded that joint and quasi joint families are middle class, village phenomena.

Murmu D (1982) has identified the following factors contributing to transition in families - economy, poverty, ecology, evolution of the nuclear family, education, ostracization and missionary activities. These factors are observed in relations to tribal facilities.

Naik's study (1979) on data collected in 1958 rejects the hypothesis that the prevalence of nuclear families would be directly related to the degrees of the development in urban areas. This corroborates with the findings of this study that joint families survive in the metropolis even on the face of breakdown. Also, it is not true that only nuclear families face the threat of survival even joint families do so.

The demands on urban family functioning

The urban family essentially functions as an economic unit. The entire urban growth today is on economic foundations.
As family occupations and related business are on the wane, the way is paved for individual income earning activity. In this goal striving, the family functions less as a unit of social and economic cooperation.

Individualistic patterns and orientations have almost replaced the collectively orientation. The home is a resting place and family living is explicated for personal gain and gratification. All adults are looked upon more as instruments of money making rather than mentors.

The economic function of saving is not appreciated as well as it ought to be. Living together is in order to overcome lonesomeness.

R.C. Sinha (1981) observes that we have today some description of forms and structure of family types with little insight into the functions of the family or roles of its members and role conflicts. Sinha also suggests that one ought to adopt newer interpretations of facts and evolution in the methods of approach.

D. Sinha (1984) concludes in an article that the Indian family in the transitional stage is neither presenting stable values to the growing child, nor clearcut norms of the nuclear family of the west. He considers these to be the causes of the underlying tension among contemporary youth in India.

According to D. Narain (1975) family disorganization occurs when families actually break down in family crises, and
crisis situations. A crisis occurs in the family when a new situation arises for which the existing resources of the family are inadequate. In case the family succeeds in raising the extra resources to meet the crisis it is strictly speaking not a case of disorganization although the strain through which the family has successfully met the situation is of great interest to the students of family disorganization.

Nimkoff and Gore (1959) and A. Desai maintain that families may be structurally and functionally joint. Gore and Nimkoff conclude that the significance of the Panchayat, Hindu religion and traditional education is less as compared to the significance of agriculture and the role of the caste. Nimkoff (1960) maintains that extended families are less suitable for industrial societies especially during the early transitional stages of changes from agricultural to industrial society. The interrelations of Government industry and family take different forms in different countries.

Analyses of census reports indicate that the proportion of joint households has slightly increased during the last hundred years and the census does not support the hypothetical relations between the smaller nuclear family and urbanisation and industrialisation.

Ramanujam (1972) maintains that in the nuclear family unit the changing role and upgraded status of employed married women have given rise to new values and attitudes that are not supportive to the traditional code of behaviour. He identifies
various sources of tension, conflict and dissatisfaction and discussed their implications for the mental health of the entire family. These observations are very relevant to the nature of conflicts and tensions detected in the families studied here.

Ramu (1972) asserts that education, urbanization and modernization are factors affecting family change and nuclearization. The family is generally examined as a dependent variable through which caste culture has been perpetuated in India. Our study reveals that it is the encouragement of endogamous marriages promoted by even the urban families that sustains and perpetuates the caste in India. Support systems are weakened by intercaste marriages.

Ramu (1977) in his doctoral dissertation observes that there is a strong negative emphasis. Our study brings out the varied manifestations of the behaviour of adult children raised in each families. Another significant characteristics of Sinha's observations is that he still measures the modern family with middle class values. What values and manifestations could emerge from blue collared families is hardly recorded anywhere.

If the joint business families have still survived all external forces of disintegration, the major binding force has been the family business which ensures them a comfortable living and economic security. With blue collar and middle classes, the family has no economic stability to offer. Gore's families
of Aggarwala offer exactly the same secure existence strengthened through norms of behaviour and other instruments of social control combined with the mild threat of being disowned in the event of excess deviance from established norms. This form of social control is contained within whereas families striving for survival have practically ceased to offer any economic and emotional security from within. In the struggle for material survival, these families need a compact survival kit, which welfare agencies must devise and offer.

Families are bound to be highly materialistically oriented. The values of socialization as a most natural consequence offer a secondary place.

Another constraint is that of time. The family spends hardly any working hours together in a co-operative endeavour to fulfil all non-material needs. Leisure is limited and leisure-time activities are least valued. Entertainment and relaxation to facilitate thinking, planning review are not considered essential. All these factors produce strain on family functioning.

Strauss (1975) makes a valuable suggestion that power and mutual support should also be considered as functions of the spoue system in the family. Its other functions are the legal functions of the family.

The pre-legal texts and also give a thought to family as a social institution.
The family is also mentioned in the Smrities Customary Laws of Divorce also feature in the sample families.

**Gaps in knowledge**

Studies conducted on family largely bring out aspects of joint family system. Specific studies in urban nuclear family disorganisation based on field data is not available. Regarding inter-religious marriages, Mokashi and Naik published some non-conclusive data. Usha Bambavale's Ph.D. dissertation suffers from limitations in sampling, thus not facilitating generalization. Studies have brought out structural-functional aspects and offer parameters. This report attempts to use the parameters on available field data.

A systematic stock of delivery of inputs vis-a-vis outputs has not been undertaken in any previous study. Services for specific target groups are not brought out in a comprehensive manner. Fragmental information has failed to illustrate the inter-dependence of various variables related to nuclear family disorganisation in urban areas.

The review of literature related to Indian families indicate gaps in the knowledge related to family dynamics and dysfunction. No clinical studies related to family counselling in India have been undertaken so far. Parameters are indicated in some places but no study gives any report of measurement and quantification. Literature related to social work with Indian families has not been produced at all. No social work endeavour in India has searched for sociological explanation to individual
and family striving. This is the first study of families in Indian clinical settings.

The study has devised techniques of measurement based upon research designs published in American journals, and also tools of measurement suitable to Indian situations. The findings are discussed against the backdrop of social change, disorganisation and crises. The non-economic functions are listed and classified for a better understanding of family function. The conceptual model owes much to reports of experiments and case studies published in the Journal of Social Casework, Social Work and the Journal of Marriage and the Family.

The studies point out the need to obtain specific data from regional samples. The evidence of nuclear family is expected to be higher in lower castes. Our study will test this proposition.

Sociologists are still in search of tested out methodology to study family disorganization. This study has selected a combination of the survey and case study methods. An attempt is made to explain different phenomena with a variety of approaches, with every effort at avoiding methodological confusion.

Sinha, R. (1981) comments that although good work has been done in the field of family, there are still many gaps. There is very little evolution in the methods of approach or in newer interpretation of facts.
The neglected aspects of study of Indian families will be attended to in this research through the following research questions:

**Research Questions**

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the users of personalised professional services? What problems do they bring?
2. What services do they ask for; and what do they receive?
3. What is their capacity to make good use of such services?
4. What factors influence this capacity?
5. How do outcomes of service differ in relation to client characteristics and service inputs?
6. What are the challenges in family crises?
7. How do professional services meet the challenges?
8. Do clients actually achieve progress in coping with family problems?
9. Have human service delivery systems made adequate impact on welfare organizations and amongst other professionals?
10. What factors contribute to drop-outs in treatment and what are the factors conducive to the success of human service delivery?
11. Is westernization a factor favourable to better use of these services? Do Westernized persons make better use of these services?

Although the study is exploratory in design, it is proposed to test the following hypotheses which are the hunches of the practitioners in the Human service delivery systems:
The Hypotheses

1. Persons with strong family supports are bad subjects of family casework in India.

2. The greater the intensity of the problem, the better the utilization of family casework service.

3. The higher the level of education of the clients, the poorer the response to casework services.

4. Dropouts are due to external factors in casework process like long distance of agency from home, inconvenient timings, preoccupation with other activities, etc.

(null hypothesis)

The next chapter describes the methodology adopted to answer the research questions and to test the above hypotheses.
REFERENCES


   1) The independence between elementary and extended family in India.
   2) Marriage adjustment in the Indian family system.


