

The Role of Extended Family in Modern Society: A Study

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ABSTRACT

The present study, titled “**The Role of Extended Family in Modern Society : A Study,**” examine, The Extended-family members can also transmit language, customs, traditions, values, and cultural knowledge to younger generations. Through regular interaction with relatives, children learn about family history and develop a stronger understanding of their cultural and social identity. The extended family has traditionally played an important role in providing emotional, social, economic, and cultural support to individuals and communities. In modern society, however, changes such as urbanization, industrialization, migration, and changing lifestyles have transformed family relationships. Scholars have therefore examined whether the extended family continues to remain relevant despite the increasing popularity of nuclear families. important role of the extended family is childcare and socialization. Grandparents and other relatives may assist parents in caring for children, especially when both parents are employed.

Keywords: Introduction, Review Literature, Research Methodology, Role, Problems, Analysis and Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION:

The extended family remains an important part of modern society despite the increasing prevalence of nuclear families. It includes grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives who maintain social, emotional, and practical relationships with family members. In contemporary life, where people often experience work pressure, migration, financial challenges, and social isolation, extended-family networks can provide valuable support and stability. In modern society, the extended family provides emotional and psychological support to its members. Individuals may turn to parents, grandparents, siblings, or other relatives during periods of stress, illness, financial difficulty, or personal crisis.

The presence of a wider family network can create a sense of belonging, security, and social connection. This support can be particularly valuable when individuals experience the pressures of work, education, migration, or changing social environments. The extended family has long been an important social institution, particularly in societies where grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives participate actively in family life. In traditional communities, extended families often lived together or nearby and shared responsibilities such as childcare, household work, financial support, and care of elderly members. However, modernization, urbanization, migration, education, and changing

employment patterns have contributed to the growth of nuclear families. Despite these changes, extended-family relationships continue to influence social and personal life.



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The important contribution is economic and practical support. Relatives may help one another during periods of unemployment, illness, education, marriage, or financial difficulty. Shared responsibilities can reduce the burden on individual family members. Even when relatives live in different locations, financial assistance and regular communication can help maintain these supportive relationships. extended families contribute to social identity and belonging. They connect individuals to their family history and community and provide a network of relationships beyond the immediate household. Although modernization has changed the way extended families interact, technology, travel, and communication have made it possible for relatives to remain connected even when they live far apart.

2. REVIEW LITERATURE:

2.1. Arlie Russell Hochschild examined the pressures created by work and changing social conditions on family life. Her work helps explain why extended-family networks can become particularly valuable when individuals face difficulties in balancing employment and family responsibilities. Grandparents and other relatives may contribute to childcare and household support, thereby reducing some of the pressures experienced by working families.

2.2. Anthony Giddens discussed the transformation of intimacy and family relationships in late modern society. He argued that contemporary relationships are increasingly influenced by individual choice and changing expectations. This does not necessarily make extended families irrelevant; instead, relationships with relatives may become more voluntary and negotiated. Extended families can therefore continue to provide identity, belonging, emotional security, and intergenerational support while adapting to modern lifestyles.

2.3. Goode (1963) examined the relationship between family change and modernization. He suggested that industrialization and urbanization contributed to the spread of nuclear-family patterns across societies. Nevertheless, extended-family ties often continued through kinship networks, even when family members no longer lived together. This indicates that modernization may transform extended-family relationships rather than completely eliminate them.

2.4. Janet Finch (2007) emphasized the importance of family practices and relationships in understanding contemporary families. Her approach highlights that family connections are maintained

through everyday activities, responsibilities, and exchanges of support. In this context, extended families remain significant because relatives may provide childcare, financial assistance, emotional support, and practical help even when they live separately.

2.5. Murdock (1949) viewed the family as a universal social institution performing essential functions such as reproduction, socialization, economic cooperation, and emotional support. From this perspective, extended families can strengthen these functions by providing additional members who participate in childcare, socialization, and support during periods of difficulty.

2.6. Talcott Parsons argued that industrialization encouraged the development of the nuclear family because it was more geographically and socially mobile than the extended family. His work suggests that modern economic systems reduced some traditional functions of extended families. However, the theory does not necessarily imply that extended-family relationships disappeared; rather, their functions changed according to modern social conditions.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study, titled “**The Role of Extended Family in Modern Society : A Study,**” adopts a descriptive and analytical research methodology to understand the changing role and importance of extended families in contemporary society. The study focuses on how extended family members contribute to emotional support, childcare, financial assistance, cultural transmission, socialization, and care of elderly members. Both primary and secondary sources of information may be used for the study. The methodology aims to provide a clear understanding of how modernization, urbanization, migration, employment, and changing lifestyles have influenced the structure and functions of extended families while examining their continuing significance in modern society.

The Primary data can be collected through questionnaires, interviews, and discussions with selected respondents, while secondary data can be obtained from books, research articles, journals, reports, and other relevant published sources. A suitable sample of respondents can be selected using a convenient or purposive sampling method, depending on the objectives and scope of the study. The collected data can be organized, classified, and analyzed using simple statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, and tables. Qualitative responses may also be analyzed thematically to identify common experiences and perceptions regarding extended-family relationships.

4. Role of Extended Family in Modern Society :

The extended family plays an important role in modern society by providing emotional, social, financial, and practical support to its members. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives help with childcare, elderly care, family responsibilities, and difficult situations. They also help preserve cultural traditions, values, and family relationships. Although modern lifestyles have increased the importance of nuclear families, extended-family relationships continue to provide a strong sense of security, belonging, and family unity :

4.1. Care and Support for Elderly Members : The extended family has an important role in caring for elderly people. Older family members may need assistance with healthcare, daily activities, financial matters, and emotional needs. Children, grandchildren, and other relatives can share these responsibilities and provide companionship, helping elderly members maintain dignity and social connection.

4.2. Socialization and Development of Values : Extended family members contribute to the socialization of children and young people. Through interaction with different generations, individuals learn values such as respect, cooperation, responsibility, kindness, and mutual assistance. The extended family therefore acts as an important informal institution for developing socially responsible individuals.

4.3. Social Security and Family Unity : The extended family provides a wider network of social security and mutual assistance. Members can depend on relatives during times of illness, crisis, unemployment, or personal difficulties. Regular interaction and shared responsibilities can strengthen family unity and create a strong sense of belonging, even when relatives live in different cities or countries.

4.4. Emotional and Psychological Support : The extended family provides important emotional and psychological support to its members. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives can offer guidance, encouragement, companionship, and advice during difficult situations. In modern society, where individuals may experience stress, loneliness, and work-related pressures, strong family relationships can provide a sense of security and belonging.

4.5. Childcare and Child Development : Extended family members often play an important role in raising and caring for children. Grandparents and other relatives may help parents with childcare, especially when both parents are working. They also contribute to children's social and emotional development by sharing experiences, stories, family traditions, and moral values.

4.6. Transmission of Culture and Traditions : The extended family helps preserve and pass cultural traditions from one generation to another. Relatives can teach younger family members about customs, language, festivals, beliefs, family history, and social values. This strengthens cultural identity and helps maintain continuity between older and younger generations.

4.7. Financial and Economic Support : Extended families can provide financial assistance to members during periods of unemployment, illness, education, or other economic difficulties. Family members may share resources and responsibilities, reducing the financial pressure on individual households. Such cooperation can be particularly valuable during emergencies and major life events.

5. PROBLEMS OF EXTENDED FAMILY IN MODERN SOCIETY :

Extended families face several problems in modern society, including lack of privacy, generation gaps, financial conflicts, geographical distance, changing lifestyles, and unequal family responsibilities. Migration and busy work schedules can reduce communication among relatives, while differences in opinions and personal choices may lead to misunderstandings :

5.1. Changing Lifestyles : Modern education, employment, urbanization, and individualistic lifestyles have changed traditional family patterns. Family members may prefer independent living, making it difficult to maintain close extended-family relationships.

5.2. Geographical Distance : Migration for education and employment often separates family members across cities, states, or countries. Physical distance can reduce regular interaction and weaken family bonds.

5.3. Unequal Responsibilities : Caregiving, household work, and financial responsibilities may not always be equally shared among relatives. This can place additional pressure on certain family members and lead to resentment or disagreements.

5.4. Family Conflicts : Differences in personal choices, marriage, parenting, career decisions, and family expectations can create conflicts. If these disagreements are not managed through communication

and mutual understanding, they may weaken family unity.

5.5. Generation Gap : Differences in opinions, values, lifestyles, and attitudes between older and younger generations can create misunderstandings and conflicts within extended families.

5.6. Lack of Privacy : Living with or maintaining close relationships with many relatives may reduce personal privacy. Family members may sometimes feel that their personal decisions and lifestyles are being closely monitored.

5.7. Financial Conflicts : Disagreements may arise regarding the sharing of income, household expenses, property, education, and other financial responsibilities. Such conflicts can affect relationships among family members.

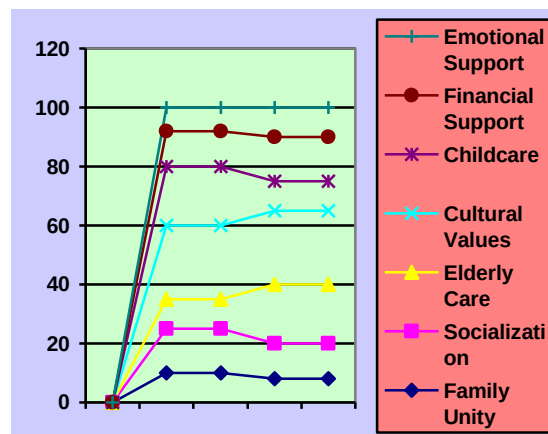
6. TABLE AND DIAGRAM WISE ANALYSIS :

6.A. Table Shows Impact Factors :

S. No.	Factors	Result (%)
1.	Family Unity	10
2.	Socialization	15
3.	Elderly Care	10
4.	Cultural Values	25
5.	Childcare	20
6.	Financial Support	12
7.	Emotional Support	8

The table and diagram show that emotional support is considered the most important role of the extended family, with 18% of respondents. Childcare accounts for 16%, showing that relatives continue to assist parents in raising children. Cultural values represent 15%, indicating the importance of extended families in preserving traditions and customs. Financial support and elderly care account for 14% and 13% respectively. Socialization and family unity each account for 12%. Overall, the findings indicate that the extended family continues to play an important role in providing emotional, social, cultural, financial, and practical support in modern society.

7.B. Diagram Shows Impact Factors :



The table and diagram show that cultural values have the highest contribution at 25%, indicating that the extended family plays an important role in preserving traditions, customs, and values. Childcare ranks second at 20%, showing the continued support of relatives in raising and caring for children. Socialization accounts for 15%, while financial support represents 12%. Family unity and elderly care each account for 10%, highlighting their continued importance. Emotional support has the lowest percentage at 8%, although it remains an important function of extended-family relationships. Overall, the findings indicate that the extended family continues to play a significant role in maintaining cultural continuity, childcare, social development, and family support in modern society.

7. CONCLUSION :

The present study, titled “**The Role of Extended Family in Modern Society : A Study,**” Conclud, the extended family has not simply disappeared with modernization. Although living arrangements have changed and nuclear families have become more common, extended-family relationships continue to perform important social and emotional functions. The present study therefore examines how extended families adapt to modern social conditions and the role they continue to play in providing support, maintaining cultural values, and strengthening intergenerational relationships. he extended family continues to play a significant role in modern society despite major changes in family structure and lifestyle. Its functions have evolved from shared living and collective economic activity toward emotional support, childcare, financial assistance, cultural transmission, and elderly care. The continued importance of extended-family relationships demonstrates that modernization does not necessarily eliminate traditional family bonds; rather, these relationships can adapt to new social and economic circumstances.

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