

**Authority and Decision - Making Process
In Family : A Comparative Analysis of
Britain, Japan and India**

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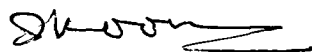
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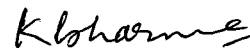
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Certified that the dissertation entitled
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This is his own work. We recommend this disserta-
tion be placed before the examiners for evaluation.



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PREFACE

'Family', one of the most fundamental units of almost all human societies, has been changing since time immemorial. The immense variety of cultures all over the world contributed to different kinds of family life in different parts of the globe. It includes, on the one extreme, the extended families consisting of three or more generations of married brothers or sisters, and on the other end the nuclear families comprising of a husband, wife and their unmarried children. In between these two extreme types there are several other varieties of families: matrilineage households, where siblings of both the sex living together with the sister's children and men merely visit their wives in latter's homes; polygamy one man having several wives or one woman, several husbands, etc.

In all these forms of families the basic functions of the married couple are sexual relations and upbringing of their children. In this process of living together and child-care the economic cooperation is a must. The men and women of a family cooperate through division of labour. This division of labour based on sex is a universal phenomena. Again, the gender based division of labour is not uniform. In some cases the sharing of work is rigid. Generally, child-rearing, household chores, and crafts

closely associated with household, tend to be performed by women, whereas the activities which take place outside the home such as war, hunting, and other services done by men. Apart from this economic division of labour, marriage has got some social and in some cases religious obligations also.

The change in the broader society, especially the change in mode of production -- from entirely manual labour based (hand-made) activities to that of the factory mode (machine-made) of production -- was a turning point in the history of 'division of labour' of the human society. With his physical strength and socio-religious sanction, man always had an upperhand in the happenings of family life. Woman, due to her physical weakness, especially during the time of pregnancy and child birth more or less depended on man. But the developments in the field of industry put an end to this kind of strict sex-role differentiation. Another most significant development in the society is that of the emergence of new democratic values. The principles of equality and dignity of labour influenced the social and political institutions. The modern democratic governments recognised the value of human rights and are committed to uphold them.

These two factors, the factory mode of production and the modern democratic values of life, threatened the rigid sex-based division of labour in the society. Women are no

longer fully dependent upon men. The economic independence of women -- working outside the house and earning an independent income -- gave them new impetus in their life.

Under these circumstances the social life and the economic co-operation within the family also has been undergoing a change. Women's awareness of their rights, men's acceptance of the women's liberty, the security to the family life provided by the modern governments etc., drastically affected the marital and familial relationship. Again this change varies in nature and in degree. The Western World being completely modernized the equality of sexes in the family and society is now fully recognised. But compared to the West in the developing parts of the world the customs and traditions are having a stronger hold over the human relationships.

The above discussion makes it clear that there is a change in the internal dynamics of the institution of family. The pattern of authority and decision-making process in the family are the important areas which had been more profoundly affected by these modern developments. These relationships within the family and outside has been changing drastically.

The study of power relationships, under various headings like "power", "authority", "dominance", "control", "influence" and the like, in contemporary families has been

a major area of investigation for the past quarter of a century in the United States. Since the publication of the work "Husbands and Wives" (Blood and Wolfe, 1960), a number of investigations have been conducted in this area. Based on Blood and Wolfe's "resource theory of family power" several efforts have been made, by family researchers and other social scientists both in U.S.A. and other parts of the world to test and re-examine this resource theory model.

In the light of these developments, in the present study an attempt has been made to analyse the patterns of authority and decision-making processes in the families of Britain, Japan and India. However, a generalisation of the changing patterns of authority and decision-making processes in the families of these three societies is nearly impossible and it is the same even if we confine ourselves only to individual countries. The bewildering complexity of the cultures of these societies, the existence of considerable variation between regions, between rural and urban areas, between classes, and finally, between different religious, ethnic, linguistic and caste groups vastly limit the scope of the study.

In the case of British family, for example, the present study is mostly based on the data derived from England and Wales and confined to the white population.

In Indian case it is mainly the Hindu population and (for modern family analysis) only the middle and upper-class urban educated samples are made use in the study. When compared to Britain and India the case of Japan is slightly different. That is, the Japanese society is almost homogeneous. However, the rural-urban, farm-non-farm, educated-uneducated differences remain same as in other cases.

As for as the various types of families are concerned present work concentrates on extended and nuclear, stem(ie) and nuclear, and joint and nuclear families in Britain, Japan and India respectively. Keeping these in mind the comparison of traditional and modern patterns of authority and decision-making processes with special reference to husband-wife and parent-child relationships within each countries and similarities and differences between the societies have been analysed. However, it should be noted that this study is based on secondary data.

The study has been divided into four chapters. The first, the introductory chapter, deals with the conceptual and methodological problems in the field. The changing socio-economic conditions of the society and its effects on family and vice-versa are analysed in the

latter part of the chapter and the significance of this type of cross-cultural study is also examined.

The second chapter, concerned with Britain, makes an overall assessment of the authority and decision-making patterns in the families of aristocracy and the labouring classes both before and after the industrial revolution. The modern family power relationships are also analysed with a view to bring out the recent changes in the authority and decision-making process in the family.

The third chapter is on Japan. The power structure of the families during the Eda era (1600-1868), and the period after Meiji Restoration (Since 1868) have been analysed. In the postwar Japanese society, with intensive modernization and westernization, happenings in the marital and family power role relationship have been dealt with in the rest of the chapter.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the Indian family. The traditional Hindu Joint family and the nature of authority and decision-making process in it as well as the modern families, particularly urban based, and the dynamics of power relationship in those are being dealt with in this chapter. And conclusion forms the last part of the dissertation.

A select bibliography is given at the end consisting of books and articles consulted for this research.

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Sakarama

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Chapter One

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Family, the most fundamental unit of all human societies, has been an area of interest for anthropologists, historians, and other social scientists in their studies on human culture and social structure. However, family study, as a systematic sub-discipline of larger social and behavioural science in general and sociology in particular is by most measures a relatively young field.¹

The continued interest of sociologists and social anthropologists in the dynamics of social change and the interrelationship of social institutions and processes has resulted in an abundance of literature on the relation between the family and society. But most of the studies undertaken so far seem to have been usually confined to the relationship between modernization and family structure. In other words, the debate has revolved around the theme of the "fit" between the conjugal family and the institutions of industrial society, and the changes which take place in the family system of traditional societies, under

1. Ronald E. Cromwell and David H. Olson, "Multidisciplinary Perspectives of Power", in Ronald E. Cromwell and David H. Olson, (ed.), Power in Families (New York, 1975), p. 15.

the impact of industrial urbanization. In short, the central conceptual issue in the sociology of the family, until recently, was limited to a single question, that is, "industrialization breaks up the extended family systems of traditional societies and replaces with them structurally isolated conjugal families".² To a certain extent this preoccupation continues. Paradoxically the theoretical significance of this problem has not engendered an empirical preoccupation with the details of the transition from "traditional" to "modern" family structure. The assumptions and hypothesis, based on which elements of change in family structure have been analysed during the past were not supported by empirical studies conducted.³ Thus, "until the sixties, theoretically, the dominant perspective throughout sociology was functionalism. And consequently issues pertaining to power and authority within any aspect of social structure — including the family — were seldom

2 David Podmore and David Chaney, "Family Norms in a Rapidly Industrializing Society : Hong Kong", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1974, p. 400.

3 This view has been particularly associated with Talcott Parsons' work on the American family. But it is important to note here that "a considerable body of data is now available which points to the existence of some kind of extended family structure in industrial societies of the West and moreover, the accumulating evidence that the conjugal family system was quite common in Europe and North America prior to industrialization throws into doubt the related notion that industrialization led directly to the emergence of the conjugal family in those parts of the world". Ibid.

raised".⁴ The functionalist approach toward analysing family power is grossly circular and is combined with a view of social order that is essentially static. There are mainly two different theories about family power relations at that time. One states that "families do what the culture tells them to do"; according to the other, "they do what their own characteristics dictate". Furthermore, it also assumed that in a stable society, the two sources of power will coincide.⁵

According to the functionalist approach, in the family the younger male learns to be task-oriented, and the younger female person-oriented. The domestic orientation of female is felt to be the critical factor in understanding her social position. This orientation is contrasted to the extra-domestic, political and military spheres of activity and interest primarily associated with male.

Through pursuing significant tasks, the male gains legitimate authority; whereas the female is effectively barred from the

4 John Scanzoni, "Social Processes and Power in Families", in Wesley R. Burr, Reuben Hill, F. Ivan Nye and Ira L. Reiss, (eds.) Contemporary Theories About the Family (New York, 1979), p. 295.

5 Robert D. Blood, Jr. and Donald M. Wolfe, Husbands and Wives (New York, 1960), p. 13.

most significant tasks, and she must necessarily be subordinate.⁶ This observation has its corollary in the fact that sexual asymmetry locates the causes of female subordination. "Man — the hunter, superior in strength, ability, and the experience derived from using tools and weapons, 'naturally' protects and defends the more vulnerable female (and children), whose biological equipment destines her for motherhood and nurturance".⁷ Finally, this biological deterministic explanation made them to believe that, "women lead lives that appear to be irrelevant to the formal articulation of social order. Their status is derived from their stages in a life cycle, from their biological functions, and in particular, from their sexual or biological ties to particular men".⁸ Thus, the basic assumption of the functionalist theory is that, social structure is static and there is always order in it. "The roles and behaviour deemed appropriate to the sexes were expressed in values, customs, laws and social roles. They also, and very importantly, were expressed in leading

6 John Scanzoni, n. 4, p. 297.

7 Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (New York, 1986), p. 17.

8 Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, "Woman, Culture and Society : A Theoretical Overview", in Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, (eds.), Woman, Culture and Society (California, 1974), p. 30.

metaphors, which became the part of the cultural construct and explanatory system".⁹ Furthermore, they also assume that "women may be important, powerful and influential, but seems that, relative to men of their age and social status, women everywhere lack generally recognized and culturally valued authority. In every human culture, women are in some way subordinate to men".¹⁰ In other words, "everywhere men have some authority over women, that is, they have a culturally legitimated right to her subordination and compliance".¹¹

Ideally, it should be possible to explain both interpersonal and intraorganizational power within a single and general theory. In practice, however, interpersonal power relationships in the family are often determined by several factors, such as the changing socio-economic conditions within the society, the relative resources (education, occupational status, socio-economic status) of family members etc.

9 Gerada Lerner, n. 7, p. 212.

10 Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, n. 8, p. 17. Emphasis added.

11 Ibid., p. 21. Emphasis added.

Now it is well known that the balance of power between men and women, for several reasons, has been changing. This change can be very well noticeable within the Western industrialised societies and also to some extent within the industrialising urban centres of the developing societies. Thus, this rapid industrialization and urbanization process have been leading to the change in the 'authority pattern' or the 'traditional cultural power structure' of the families.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, "power" became and continues to be, a common and important referent in the pursuit of knowledge about structured interaction in families. This focus on the study of power relationships and decision making patterns in contemporary families, during the last twenty-five years, resulted in abundant research studies in the marriage and family literature.¹²

Conceptual and Methodological Issues in the Study of Family Power Structure

'Power' is one of the most fundamental aspects of all social interaction. Therefore, it has been of interest to many disciplines, and has proven to be of significance in

12 For a detailed decade-wise review of literature in this area see, Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, "The Study of Family Power Structure: A Review 1960-1969", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November 1970, pp.539-52. Gerald W. McDonold, "Family Power: The Assessment a Decade of Theory and Research, 1970-1979", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November 1980, pp.841-54.

understanding the interpersonal dynamics in all types of relationships. However, the multidisciplinary nature of this concept has also proven it to be one of the most complex and elusive concepts to describe, measure and understand. Each discipline has struggled with these issues, and each has ended up using different concepts and research methods, which further resulted in various concepts and methods, that in many cases has little resemblance to each other and that rarely relate to the concepts or to the dynamics of power.¹³

In general, there are innumerable distinctive perspectives of power. For Weber, "It is the probability that a person in a social relationship will be able to carry out his or her own will in the pursuit of goals of action, regardless of resistance".¹⁴ In Marxist sociology, "power is regarded as a structural relationship, existing independently of the wills of individuals".¹⁵ That is, the existence of power is a consequence of class structure of societies. Thus,

13 David H. Olson and Ronald E. Cromwell, "Power in Families", in Ronald E. Cromwell and David H. Olson, (eds.), n. 1, pp. 3-4.

14 Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryan S. Turner, (eds.), The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology (Harmondsworth, 1984), p. 166.

15 Ibid.

according to this approach, power can be understood by analysing the relationship between (a) economic and class relations, (b) class struggle, and (c) the mode of production, within the societies. In contrast to these two approaches, Parsons defines power

"as a positive social capacity for achieving communal ends; power is analogous to money in the economy as a social system ... Power is thus regarded as widely diffused through society rather than being concentrated in a ruling elite ... permitting the whole community to participate to some degree in the political process".¹⁶

Thus, according to this approach power has not been seen as necessarily involving conflict and coercion.

This confusion in defining power becomes all the more apparent when we look into the abundant literature on marital and family power. Several authors have expressed concern about this area of study. Various approaches to the dynamics of power emergence in families continue to be both conceptually and methodologically inadequate. Even though there appears to be considerable agreement regarding the general nature of power and its multidimensional character, the complexity of power has rarely been fully explored. In addition to the variety of different conceptual domains of power,

16 Ibid.

there are also considerable differences in the way power has been measured. In fact, Cromwell and Olson, in the preface to their Power in Families rightly remarked that "the numerous studies in the field concealed and confused more than they revealed and clarified".¹⁷

At one extreme, it has been stated: "Every social act is an exercise of power, every social relationship is a power equation, and every social system is an organization of power".¹⁸ At the other extreme, concepts such as "influence", "control", "authority", "dominance", "assertiveness", "decision-making", "family power", "power structure", have all been used to describe power.¹⁹ Furthermore investigators in this area have not only used different conceptual and operational definitions for each of these terms, but sometimes the same definition has been used for different terms, and even different definitions for the same terms. Further, most of these studies give an idea that "in general, with very few exceptions in survey studies, only decision-making has been measured and the findings are discussed as if referring to familial power or authority."²⁰

17 David H. Olson and Ronald E. Cromwell, n. 1, p. xv.

18 Hawley (1963), cited in *ibid.*, p. 5.

19 For details see Olson and Cromwell, n. 1, p. 5; Safilios-Rothschild, n. 12, p. 539.

20 Safilios-Rothschild, *Ibid.*, p. 540.

Basically, a predominant model of social power, as presented by French and Raven (1959)²¹ has been widely used in the study of sociological and social psychological phenomena. Later, the family sociologists have employed this social power framework, as a useful theoretical base, in their investigations of the general domain of family power, as well as the more delineated areas of conjugal power and parental power. Therefore, initially, many of the major concepts, theoretical models and measurement tools utilised in family power study have been borrowed from small groups and social power research conducted by social psychologists.²² Currently the best theoretical and methodological approaches on the power dynamics in the marital and family system are available from family sociology, social psychology, child development, and family process literatures.

Power has been defined by French and Raven as stable potential influence in a dyadic relation between two persons.

21 French, J.R., and B. Raven, "The Bases of Social Power", pp. 150-167 in D. Cartwright (ed.), Studies in Social Power (Michigan, 1959). Initially Hallenbeck (1966), made use of this theoretical model to the marital dyad and have been further delineated for family study by Smith (1970) and later on used by almost all family scholars in family power studies.

22 Cromwell and Olson, n. 1, p. 16.

They recognized the multidimensional nature of social power and delineated five dimensions, or bases of social power:

(1) reward power — based on the ability of the person possessing power to provide rewards for the person influenced; (2) coercive power — based on the powerful person's ability to mediate punishment for the person influenced; (3) legitimate power — based on the influenced person's belief that the powerful person has the right to control his/her behaviour or opinions; (4) referent power — based on the influenced person's feeling of oneness, or desire for such an identity, with the powerful person, and (5) expert power — based on the influenced person's perception of superior knowledge and skill in the powerful person.²³ Thus, their concept of power involves mainly the willingness of one party to be influenced by the other and his perception of the influencing one.

The first major work which initially sparked interest in the substantive area of "family power" was Blood and Wolfe's Husbands and Wives (1960).²⁴ In this influential study the authors elaborated a "resource theory of family power".

23 French and Raven, n. 21, cited in Phyllis N. Hallenbeck, "An Analysis of Power Dynamics in Marriage", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1966, p. 200.

24 Blood and Wolfe, n. 5.

According to this theory, the relative power of husbands and wives in making family decisions depends upon the relative resources (such as education, employment, occupational status, income etc.) which each spouse brings into the marriage. Thus, "the power to make decisions (which will affect the life of the family) stems primarily from the resources which the individual can provide to meet the needs of his marriage partner and to upgrade his decision-making skill".²⁵

Following this "resource theory model" a large number of studies have been undertaken both in USA and elsewhere. Several family scholars and other social scientists, have involved in testing and retesting this resource theory model, and derivative models. Several cross-cultural studies also have been undertaken and a number of theoretical and methodological issues in family power research have been developed.²⁶

In her review of family power research, Safilios-Rothschild defines family power as a multidimensional concept which can be measured through the "outcome of decision-making, the pattern of tension and conflict management, or the type of prevailing

25 Ibid., p. 44.

26 For details see Hyman Rodman, "Marital Power in France, Greece, Yugoslavia and the United States : A Cross-National Discussion", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1967, pp. 320-24.

division of labour".²⁷ Similarly Olson and Cromwell described power as "the ability (potential or actual) of an individual(s) to change the behaviour of other members in a social system. Family power, a property of a family system, is the ability (potential or actual) of individual members to change the behaviour of other family members".²⁸ Further, they divided power into three distinct domains: power bases, power processes and power outcomes.

The bases of family power domain consists primarily of the resources an individual possesses which may increase his/her ability to exercise control in a given situation. The domain of family power processes includes all interactional aspects of family members, such as general family discussions, decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution and crisis management. And the domain of family power outcomes includes issues involving who makes decisions and "who wins". And they also point out that more research have focused on

27 Safilios-Rothschild, n .12, p.540

28 Olson and Cromwell, n.1, p.5.

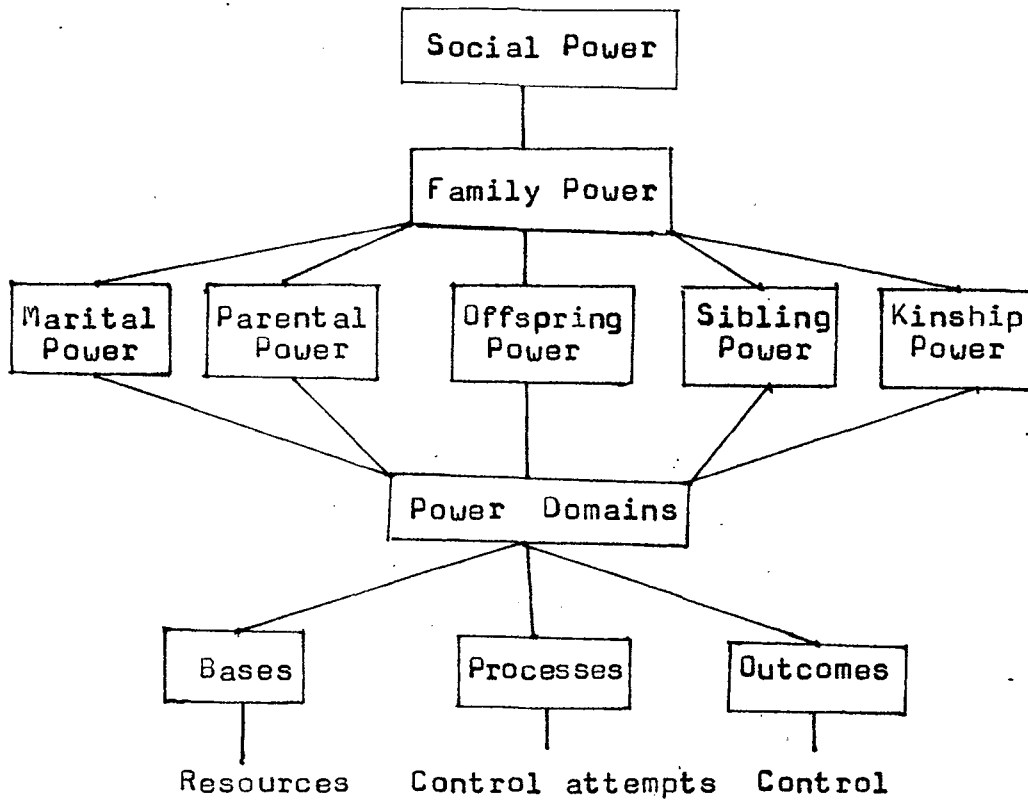
family power outcomes when compared to the other two domains of power, and more importantly, the domain of family power processes is the most neglected area of research.²⁹

Gerald W. McDonald, in his decade review of family power research gave an elaborating picture of family power. Based on Olson and Cromwell's division of power domains, McDonald observed that apart from economic resources, the sources of power also include the following normative and non-economic components: the cultural definitions of authority, the relative dependence of the person subject to it, the personality of the authority possessor and the perceived value which others attribute to it. The methods or techniques such as control attempts, assertiveness, negotiation, persuasion and influence, which are used in the family interactions come under 'power processes'. And 'power outcomes' represent the action of an individual who exercises the final and real authority.³⁰ He puts this whole analysis into a simple diagram:

29 Ibid., p. 6.

30 McDonald, n. 12, p. 843.

The Interrelatedness of the Units of Analysis
and Dimensions of Power for Family Power Research



- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. normative definitions (authority) 2. economic 3. affective 4. personal 5. cognitive | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. influence 2. persuasion 3. assertiveness | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. decision-making 2. implementation 3. defining of social/family realities |
|--|---|---|

Source: Gerald W. McDonald, "Family Power : The Assessment of a Decade of Theory and Research, 1970-1979", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November 1980, p. 844.

Thus, a number of family scholars, following social power theorists, have identified resources and authority as bases of power in marriage. For example, Wolfe stated that "two conditions are necessary for O to have power over P (a) P must have needs or goals which he feels can be satisfied or attained with the help of another's but not without such help; (b) P must perceive O as having resources which might be made more available to him."³¹ According to Blood and Wolfe a resource is "anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his needs or attain his goals."³² There is no limit for resources at one's disposal. It may vary from none or a few to a large number. While power resources are often conceived as being exclusively economic but it might also include a number of non-economic and normative resources. The strength of each resource, however, is derived from the perceived value which others attribute to it. Thus, the power

31 Donald M. Wolfe (1959: 101), cited in Boyd C. Rollins and Stephen J. Bahr, "A Theory of Power Relationships in Marriage", *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, November 1976, pp. 620-21. The actors are generally denoted as A and B or O and P.

32 Blood and Wolfe, n. 5, p. 12.

of one spouse has been viewed in relation to the power of the other. In other words, marital power is the relative ability of the two marriage partners to influence the behaviour of each other. Furthermore this relative ability of the spouses depends upon the relative authority and relative resources at their disposal, and, more significantly, depends on the relative perceptions of the spouses towards the authority and resources.³³

But if we take into account the Rollins and Bahr's view that "power and control are relevant constructs in marriage only when conflict exists between the marriage partners"³⁴ we have to further revise our definition of family or marital power. According to this approach the concept of power becomes relevant only when a conflict of goals exists between two or more persons or groups. In the case of family, for example, during the process of decision-making, there may appear a conflict of goals between the marriage partners based on their relative potential power.³⁵

33 Wolfe, n. 31; French and Raven, n. 21, and Blood and Wolfe, n. 5, etc. Similar view has been expressed.

34 Rollins and Bahr, n. 31, p. 621.

35 Ibid., p. 620.

However, it has been now found that such a conflict is not a necessary precondition for the power relations in the family.³⁶

Rodman's study of cross-national data and consequent development ^{of} the "theory of resources in cultural context" further highlights the fact that "decision-making behaviour is influenced by the interaction between resources and cultural definitions".³⁷ That is, the balance of marital power is influenced by both the interaction of relative resources of husband and wife, and the cultural and sub-cultural expectations about the distribution of marital power or authority. This model is thus called as normative resource theory.³⁸

Thus the available data on the family power structure suggest that, even though there are slight differences, among the scholars, about the use of different terms and concepts for defining power, at the same time, there appears to be general agreement on several definitional issues.

Broadly speaking, majority of these family scholars, in general, followed a definition of power, which is consistent

36 For details see McDonald, n. 12, pp. 843-44.

37 Hyman Rodman, n. 26, p. 323.

38 McDonald, n. 12, p. 846.

with the way power has been defined by social psychologists, as well as by theorists in sociology.³⁹ More specifically, most of the investigators, following Weber, defined power as the ability of an individual within a social relationship to carry out his/her own will, even though there may be resistance from others.⁴⁰ Some of the general agreements among social researchers on basic aspects of definition are as follows:

- (1) Social power is a person's potential for exerting a force toward change in another person's behaviour;
- (2) social power is not based simply upon a quality, or qualities, possessed by the powerful person; rather it is determined in a majority of cases by complex conditions governing the interdependence of individuals in a social relationship;⁴¹
- (3) Power is the ability (potential or actual) to achieve desired goals or outcomes, whether by changing the behaviour of others, or producing "intended effects";
- (4) Power has been seen as a system property, rather than the personal

39 French and Raven (1959), n. 21; Wolfe (1959), n. 31; Blood and Wolfe (1960), n. 5; Rodman (1967), n. 26; Hallenbeck (1966), n. 23.

40 Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York, 1947), p. 152.

41 Thomas Ewin Smith (1970: 861), cited in McDonald, "Determinants of Adolescent Perceptions of Maternal and Paternal Power", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November, 1979, p. 758.

attribute of an individual; (5) power has been treated of as a dynamic process, rather than static, and therefore involves reciprocal causation; (6) power has been conceived of as both a perceptual and a behavioural phenomenon; (7) power has been defined, by emphasizing the relative ability of the two persons to influence the behaviour of each other. In other words, power always involves asymmetrical relations, though the power of an individual in one "interest sphere" may be compensated by the power of the other in another "interest sphere", thus across interest spheres, power relations may be characterised as being symmetrical, or equalitarian; (8) power is multidimensional in nature, including socio-structural, interactional and outcome components.⁴²

There are several conceptual and methodological shortcomings in the existing researches on family power structure which resulted in the variability and incomparability of findings and a partial picture of the power structure in the family. One of the major conceptual problem is the continued usage of the concept of "family power" by majority of scholars.⁴³ But in practice, as we have noticed above, most of these studies avoid systematically the possible power of

42 McDonald, n. 12, pp. 842-43.

43 Ibid., p. 841.

children and other members of the kinship network, and concentrate their analyses on the unit of husband-wife dyad only.⁴⁴ Furthermore, even within this husband-wife dyad unit, most of the investigators exclusively relied only on wives' answers and opinions in their analysis of family power structure.⁴⁵

Another important area of confusion is due to the failure, on the part of the scholars, to differentiate between various related concepts such as familial, or marital decision-making, authority, influence, control and so forth. For example, authority as defined by Weber (1947), refers to power that is legitimated by social norms that prescribe who should have power. But we cannot view authority as synonymous with either power or control.⁴⁶ Actual power is different from authority because the norms may not operate in any given social

44 As already noted most of the theoretical models, concepts and measuring tools used in the analysis of family power are initially borrowed from the small groups and social power studies conducted by social psychologists. One of the major limitations of most of these analyses is that it has been restricted to interaction or acts between only two actors at a time (regardless of the size of the group) usually designated as A and B or P and O. Same has been followed by the family scholars.

45 Too much reliance on wives' opinions is mainly due to the convenience of the investigator: (1) generally much more willing to be interviewed; (2) easy to locate, and (3) low cost of interview. But it is found that, when both husbands and wives have been interviewed, considerable discrepancies have been reported between husbands' and wives' answers



situation. Control is also conceptually differentiated from attempts to exert control since the latter may not result in the actual exercise of control. In other words, the ability to influence has often been confused with the actual exercise of that ability. But in reality, an ability does not have to be exercised. For example one might have high relative power over another but makes no control attempts on his/her behaviour at all.⁴⁷ As already mentioned, with very few exceptions most of the studies continue to focus on one aspect of family power, that is, the decision-making power. However, in spite of a number of studies, there exists numerous methodological shortcomings. For example, most of the studies measured the family power through the calculation of an overall decision-making score giving equal weight to each decision and neglecting the importance of the decision to each

about the prevailing decision-making. For details see Safilios-Rothschild, n. 12, and also by the same author, "Family Sociology or Wives' Family Sociology? A Cross-Cultural Examination of Decision-Making", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1969, pp. 290-301.

- 46 Wesley R. Burr et. al. "An Empirical test of Rodman's theory of resources in cultural context", Journal of Marriage and the Family, August 1977, p. 506.
- 47 Rollins and Bahr, n. 31, p. 620.

respondent and its frequency in each family.⁴⁸ Furthermore, there is ambiguity about the comparability and validity of various methods of measuring power and decision-making. Since most of the family researchers have been influenced by the small group and social power theorists and social psychologists in their task of measuring the process of power-related phenomena, they followed the behavioural observation techniques, such as survey and structured interview schedule. But these methods, in most of the cases, failed to understand and measure a total power dynamics in the family. Having decision-making as the main (most often the only) indicator of power relations in the family, and furthermore depending on one member's views in the analyses,⁴⁹ failed to bring out the wider range of power dynamics in the family. Olson and Rabunsky stated that while individuals' reports about family power are useful indicators of "subjective reality", they are not valid measures of "objective reality".⁴⁹

48 For details see Sharon Price-Bonham, "A Comparison of Weighted and Unweighted Decision-Making Scores", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November, 1976, pp. 629-40.

49 David H. Olson and Carolyn Rabunsky, "Validity of Four Measures of Family Power", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1972, p. 231. For details see James L. Turk and Norman W. Bell, "Measuring Power in Families", Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1972, pp. 215-22.

Another major difficulty is the too much reliance on Blood and Wolfe's (1960) 'resource theory model'. Since then it has been used by scholars all over the world in their studies on family power structure. But families face different decision-making problems in different societies, we cannot depend on the same measuring instruments for different societies. For example, in order to test Blood and Wolfe's "theory of resources", marital power in the family has to be seen in relation to the following socio-economic characteristics: husband's education and occupation in relation to wife's education and employment status, and family income etc. But in most of the cultures "women are structurally deprived of equal opportunities to develop their capacities, resources and competence in competition with males".⁵⁰ In such cultures it is "the importance and flexibility of cultural norms are probably two factors that affect the extent to which husband and wife perceptions of authority differ".⁵¹ Further, the studies on blue-collar families indicated that the segregated conjugal roles continue, despite the fact that there is no

50 Dair L. Gillespie, "Who Has The Power? The Marital Struggle", Journal of Marriage and the Family, August, 1971, p. 448.

51 Rollins and Bahr, n. 31, p. 625.

disparity with regard to the resources. In these families spouses are more likely to contribute equal socio-economic resources than are those in the middle and upper-middle classes. Working outside the home and earning income by women do not affect the traditional patterns of role, both men and women adhere to the traditional segregation of tasks.⁵²

Socio-Economic Changes and the Family

For the past two hundred years there have been drastic changes in the institution of family. The changes that have been occurring in the broader social set up (such as religious, cultural, political, social and economic aspects of human life), more importantly, the significant changes in human values towards marriage and family life have led to the dramatic and pervasive changes in family structure and relationships. At the same time many of these family changes have in turn contributed for the changes in the broader society.

Traditionally, the household was the main unit of economic cooperation, there were very few activities outside

52 Karen Seccombe, "The Effects of Occupational Conditions upon the Division of Household Labour : An Application of Kohn's Theory", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November, 1986, p.840.

the home, and the family was both a unit of production and consumption, with the men, women and children dividing the labour and pooling their produce. There was a clear-cut sexual division of labour, where the husband generally directed the economic activity of the family, while the wife maintained a primary role in looking after the home and children. However, women and children often made an important contribution to the family productivity through participating in the agricultural activities of the family.⁵³

Thus, generally the older male members of the family maintained absolute control over the family economy and managed all other activities of the household. The women and younger members of the household were not allowed to own or maintain any economic enterprise independently. They were made to follow the authority of the elder members and other norms of the family. This type of family structure with a scarcity of economic alternatives outside the household made the women and young people economically completely dependent on and subordinate to the elder members in the family. In the case of women the subordination and economic dependency

53 Kathleen Gough, "The Origin of the Family" Journal of Marriage and the Family, November, 1971, pp. 760-71.

continues through most part of their life; and in the case of male children, until their fathers pass the family economic organization on to them.⁵⁴

However, with the rise of the state and particularly after the development of capitalism and industrialization there emerged other institutions and organizations in the society. For example, the school, the factory, the bank etc. challenged the monopoly of the institution of family over the man's life.⁵⁵

Increasing school enrolment and educational achievements by the individuals modified the behavioural and structural aspects of the families. The liberal democratic ideas about life and the new opportunities obtained through education provided the younger generations with an ability to acquire economic independence. Educated young men and women began working outside the boundaries of the households in the new wage economy system.⁵⁶

54 Gerda Lerner, n.7, p.218.

55 Kathleen Gough, n.53, p.766; for details see F. Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (Moscow, 1977).

56 Arland Thornton, "Reciprocal Influences of Family and Religion in a Changing World" Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1985, p.382.

The participation of married women in the work force, outside the households, and the children in schools led to the decline in the amount of time parents and children spend together at home. It also represents a shift in the locus of control from family (parents or elder members) to the public institutions. It also modified their peer group relations and increased their knowledge and skill for maintaining the family. Parents or elder members of the family find it difficult to observe, supervise and socialize them. In other words, it reduced the authority of elder members over the younger generations. Transactions with the economy outside the household modifies the pattern of interaction between the sexes and youth becomes emancipated with respect to choosing a spouse.⁵⁷ The external organizational participation increases the wife's power within the family.

Another major development in the society is the tremendous advance in the field of health and medicine. It not only reduced the disease and death in the family but also

57 Ibid.

provided effective techniques of contraception to the family members. Decrease in mortality and increased use of birth control methods affected the size and prosperity of the family. The social welfare measures and the security of life provided by the modern states further affected the traditional control of family.⁵⁸

The rapid industrialization and urbanization processes generally increased the standard of living and also brought many ideas and opportunities that were unavailable in the past. It also resulted in a rural-urban differences in the society. The attraction of city life and the new opportunities (educational, employment etc.) resulted in rural-to-urban migration. Specifically, a number of young people took jobs outside the family as wage labourers and migrated to urban areas while their parents remained in the existing rural family units.⁵⁹

The above discussed changes in the social set up and in the family directly resulted in a redefinition of

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., p.383.

parental authority. For example, in many traditional settings, marriage is closely regulated by elders, that is, in majority of cases, marriage is arranged by the elders, without considering the sentiments of the couple to be married. But the changing socio-economic aspects of life, gave the younger generation the ability to overcome this parental authority and decide their future as they like. It went to an extent of remaining single, having children born out of wedlock etc., in USA⁶⁰ and other advanced societies of the Western world, and there is a change of the attitude of the parents towards their children with regard mate choice in the developing societies of the world. Thus the modern socio-economic forces are influencing and modifying most of the social and familial relationships of human society. However, it is important to note here that a large number of factors, such as social class, ethnic group, religion, age at marriage, number of children in the family, child-spacing intervals, rural and urban differences, customs of residence and descent (extended

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 384.

or nuclear and patrilineal or matrilineal) etc., will affect the family power relations. Irrespective of the level of industrialization and urbanization of the society, these socio-demographic factors affect the power dynamics in the family.⁶¹ Moreover, in certain parts of the world and particularly, in certain sections of each and every society, the traditional cultural norms still hold good on the conjugal role relations and on family power structure.⁶² These factors stand as formidable difficulties in the way of any direct comparisons between the family power structure of different countries. Yet the most valuable cross-national results can be obtainable by making comparative study of the factors which affect family power structure in each country. For example, how is the husband's power affected by the wife's education, income, employment status, religion etc? How does power vary over the family size and with the age, sex and

61 Rebecca L. Warner, Gary R. Lee and Janet Lee, "Social Organization, Spousal Resources and Marital Power : A Cross-Cultural Study", Journal of Marriage and the Family, February, 1986, pp. 121-28.

62 David Podmore and David Chaney, n. 2, pp. 404-5.

number of the children in the family?⁶³

In the light of the above discussions it is clear that the authority pattern and decision-making process in the family are changing all over the world. In the following pages an attempt is made to analyse and compare the factors which are affecting family power structure of Britain, Japan and India. The significance of such a cross-national comparison lies in the fact that the British, the Japanese and the Indian cultures differ with regard to prevailing family ideologies, as well as in various aspects of family modernization, and finally, in the level of industrialization, urbanization and the societal complexity. Such a comparison of various sources and the extent of family power structure and the factors affecting it, will recognise the extent to which new structures and relationships are coming up and traditional ones persisting in the family power structures in industrial (Britain and Japan) and industrializing (India) societies.

Finally, these three societies, Britain, Japan and India, are of particular interest for this cross-cultural

63 Robert O. Blood, Jr. and Reuben Hill, in collaboration with Andree Michel and Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, "Comparative Analysis of Family Power Structure : Problems of Measurement and Interpretation", in Reuben Hill and Rene Konig, (ed.), Families in East and West (Paris : The Hague, 1970), p. 535.

comparison because of their unique characteristics. It is well-known that the processes of industrial and urban development are not uniform throughout the world. Further, it is also uneven among the Western societies themselves. For example, France and USA achieved their current state of industrialization and urban growth much later than Britain. In addition, France never became urbanized to the extent of England. A considerable number of French population is still living in villages and agriculture is their main occupation. In the case of Italy and the United States, urban growth and industrial development are heavily concentrated in their northern regions leaving the south more or less rural and 'underdeveloped' even in the present days.⁶⁴

Britain, the cradle of industrial revolution, reached its peak of industrialization and urbanization in the nineteenth century. Its long and successful democracy is also of an interesting feature in this regard. The political domination of Britain over most part of the world made it the

64 Robert A. Levine and Merry I. White, Human Conditions : The Cultural basis of Educational Development (London, 1986), p. 61.

spirit behind the industrial development in these nations.

Japan is a very interesting combination of both Eastern and Western cultures, the traditional and modern values and the agrarian and the industrial economies. One of the significant features of industrial development of Japan is that, it is the only country in Asia to become fully westernised in a very short span of time. Since the World War II, and with the adoption of new Civil Code in 1947, Japan is experiencing an intensive modernization process. Exposure to Western culture and science and technology modified the traditional ie system of family life in Japan.

India, predominantly a rural and agrarian society, was under the direct British rule for more than two hundred years. The rich and complex traditions of the society, the ignorance and superstitious beliefs of the people, and the British imperial interest kept Indian society in a state of underdevelopment for a long period of time. Since the independence in 1947, India has been progressing in several fields. Both the democratic government and its progressive policies in agriculture, industry, education and other fields made India as one of the biggest democratic and industrial powers among the nations of the Third World.

These varying degrees of industrial and urban development, and the differences in social and cultural values of these three societies make it significant and interesting to study their conjugal organization, the authority and decision-making patterns, and their possible relationship to other social and demographic processes. These factors are highly relevant to marital and family life and the dynamics within it. And this kind of cross-cultural comparison, for the above reasons, are of particular importance in testing the social theory developed with regard to Western social phenomena.

Chapter Two

THE PATTERNS OF AUTHORITY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN BRITISH FAMILY

During the past two hundred to two hundred and fifty years, Britain had transformed from a predominantly agrarian and rural society to a predominantly complex industrial and urban world.¹ In about a century, that is, between 1830 and 1939, both the landscape and society of Britain had undergone a tremendous change.² By the middle of the nineteenth century the typical Englishman had ceased to be a country-dweller. By 1911 about 80 per cent of the population of Britain were living in urban centres.³

This rapid urban growth was the result of many developments. Most influential among them were the rapid growth in the population, the limited employment opportunities on the land, the lack of prospects for employment in the rural areas, exploitation by some squires and farmers, lower wages, and the scarcity and poor conditions of rural housing. These circumstances, along with some of the urban attractions like greater variety of urban jobs, the higher

1 Ronald Fletcher, The Family and Marriage in Britain (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 39.

2 Andrew Wheatcraft, "General Editor's Preface", in G.E. Mingay, The Transformation of Britain, 1830-1939 (London, 1986), p. xi.

3 G.E. Mingay, n. 2, p. 1.

wages and the chances of finding accommodations made the country people (particularly the young) to desert their native heaths.⁴

This transformation had affected the largest numbers of individuals in the most visible fashion. The suddenness of the shift from rural agrarian to urban industrial conditions, the absorption of rural labour force into the urban industries, the continuity of urban centres with a pre-industrial culture — all of these very much affected both the material and social life of the people. One of the immediate effects of this was the sharp distinction between 'work' and 'life'. It affected the family economy, disturbing customary relations between husband and wife and parents and children within the family.⁵

But, it is very difficult, however, to speak about the family in Britain either 'before' or 'after' the 'industrial revolution' in any clear and definite sense. This 'industrial revolution' has, of course, not been confined to Britain; nor it is completed. Now it is well known that the process of industrial and urban development is in full

4 Ibid.

5 Michael Young and Peter Willmott, The Symmetrical Family (London, 1973), p. 73.

swing throughout the world, and rapidly affecting more and more societies and transforming the entire human condition.⁶

It is a never ending process all over the world. It is also difficult to specify a starting point for this process and Beales states that, "it is impossible, too, to find a beginning or an ending of these developments".⁷

Another major difficulty to discuss the family of pre-industrial Britain is that there is hardly any historical studies in the families of that time. Until recently family sociologists in Britain had little interest in the study of the past. Peter Laslett remarks that,

"Sociologists of the family have evidently been satisfied with contemporary materials and have tested their hypotheses about familial attitudes, the institution of marriage, and even the size and structure of the domestic group itself, with no more than occasional reference to the past".⁸

Although, in very recent times, we can come across a few works by the sociologists on particular aspects of family structure, communal relationships, and kinship ties of the past, "Historians have still to devise an approach to family

6 Ronald Fletcher, n. 1, pp. 39-57.

7 H.L. Beales, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 56.

8 Peter Laslett, "Introduction: The History of the Family", in Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, (eds.), Household and Family in Past Time (Cambridge, 1972), p. 2.

studies", writes Neal A. Ferguson, "that is capable of reconstructing and interpreting with flexibility the diverse historical experiences of the wide variety of English family types".⁹

Most of the sociologists had a very general supposition that in the past the domestic group was larger and more complex and the boundaries of this were already known and settled.¹⁰ They were analysing the present with the presumption that the process of urban and industrial development — 'modernization' — always brought simplification in the social relationships based on kinship, the decline of the tribe and the clan change in the complicated rules which have governed the marital choices, the decay of familial authority and the progressive reduction of everything towards the rational, uncomplicated and small scale familial life.¹¹

But, on the contrary, the data available now on these aspects shows that this kind of assumption and any generalization based on it are faulty and misleading.¹² For example,

9 Neal A. Ferguson, "Women in Twentieth Century England", in Barbara Kanner (ed.), The Women of England from Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present (London, 1980), p. 349.

10 C.C. Harris, The Family and Industrial Society (London, 1983), p. 95.

11 Peter Laslett, n. 8, p. 5.

12 Peter Laslett and his colleagues had shown that there was no direct connection between the industrialization and decrease in the average size of household. The large joint or

in Britain, if we look into the family, even in the period preceeding the more rapid transformation of Britain to a predominantly industrialized and urbanized society, (say since nineteenth century), it would be difficult to specify a 'type' of British family which was common amongst all the people of Britain and which was subsequently changed in a straight forward and uniform way by the effects of industrialization. The changes that have occurred in the field of agriculture, following the industrial revolution, had not uniformly affected even the agrarian classes themselves. Furthermore, the development of capitalistic enterprise and incipient mechanization in various occupations were also uneven. All these factors made it impossible to generalize 'the British family' during these times.¹³

Thus, in order to understand the British family over the period of time, a systematic analyses of the changes which took place in the British society during those years have to be made. This had to be done by keeping in mind the various socio-economic variables of the British society: the

extended family have never existed as a domestic group at any point of time in England. See, Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Laslett and Wall, n. 8.

13 Ronald Fletcher, n. 1, p. 57.

various classes with different social status, the educational ethnic and religious background of these groups as well as the rural and urban differences.¹⁴

For our own purpose, however, the process of change which had occurred in the British society so far and its effect on the family particularly on authority and decision-making process, can be analysed in three stages:¹⁵

1. The pre-industrial period;
2. The industrializing period; and
3. The modern period.

Peter Laslett speaks about the four general and fundamental characteristics of the Western family system prior to industrialization: (1) the family group was nuclear in form, consisted of parents and children themselves; (2) the age of mother at child-bearing was higher than the non-Western mothers; (3) spouses were of similar ages, or the wife was older than her husband; and (4) a significant proportion of households have 'life-cycle servants'.¹⁶

14 However, it has to be noted here that our data has been drawn primarily from sources on England and Wales, but has occasionally been supplemented by references to Scotland and Ireland

15 These three stages have been taken from the model explained by Michael Young and Peter Willmott. These stages are only rough and arbitrary divisions. Because at any one period there were, and still are, families representing all three stages can be found. M. Young and P. Willmott, n. 5, pp. 27-29.

16 Peter Laslett, Family Life and Illicit Love in earlier Generations (Cambridge, 1977), p. 12.

In the pre-industrial Britain the family was generally the unit of production. It was a closely knit social and economic unit. Men, women and children shared the productive activities of the family in home and in field. However, during this period a distinction can be made between the family of aristocracy and the family of the labouring classes.¹⁷

The Aristocratic Family

One of the fundamental characteristic features of the aristocratic family was the custom or law of primogeniture whereby the family property — essentially the landed estate — was always kept intact, and preserved within the family. This type of family was common among the social elites. This middle and upper strata of English society who were generally wealthy and literate probably found it easier and profitable to maintain this type of family.¹⁸ It was based upon long-founded traditions and was powerful and longlived. It continued throughout the earlier period of industrialization and even the greater part of the nineteenth century, by maintaining its character and status largely unchanged.¹⁹

17 Ronald Fletcher, n. 1, p. 57.

18 Ibid., pp. 57-58.

19 Ibid., pp. 63-65.

The boundary of the aristocratic family was very vast. It was open to support, advice, investigation and interference from outside, from neighbours and from kin. In other words, internal privacy of the sub-unit, the nuclear family, was non-existent. Indeed, its permeability to outside influences and its sense of loyalty to ancestors and to living kin made it an open-ended institution. As a result, neither individual autonomy nor privacy were tolerated as desirable ideals in that society. Interests of the individual members were always subordinated to the interests of parents, lineage, neighbours, kin, friends, church or the state. Even the relations between husband and wife and parents and children, within the nuclear family, were not closer than those with these groups. Thus the individual freedom was surrendered to the larger interest of the kin.²⁰ It was a highly authoritarian and patriarchal society. Even in crucial matters such as the choice of a life partner, the individual freedom was restricted. It was primarily made by parents,

20 Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London, 1977), pp. 4-5.

kin and 'friends',²¹ rather than by the bride and groom.²²

The modern English notions, such as, 'the absolute freedom of choice' and 'the paramount claims of the falling in love' were totally unknown in that society. Marriage was understood as essential for the continuation of the line, the transmission of property and the extension of affinal kinship through which influence could be exerted.²³ It was ensured and made easier by the practice of cousin marriages. During the Restoration the legality of cousin marriage was specifically affirmed in common law court, and such marriages became an accepted practice for the landed and wealthy merchant families in the eighteenth century.²⁴

Although the married couple did not usually went and lived with their parents, their family life was subject to

21 'Friends' were a group of influential advisers generally consisted of most of the senior members of the kin. Their influence was a vital one in day-to-day life. Ibid., p. 5.

22 There was no resentment from most of the young men against this type of arranged marriages. It was mainly due to the parents' authority on the property, i.e. most parents of that period had at their disposal the economic sanctions of withholding inheritances and the general funds needed for a marriage. It is hardly surprising, then, to find property being used as a weapon of authority in matters of marriage by the parents. Peter Rushton, "Property, power and Family Networks: The Problem of Disputed Marriage in Early Modern England", Journal of Family History (1986), vol. 11, n. 3, p. 210.

23 L. Stone, n. 20, p. 5.

24 Nancy F. Anderson, "Cousin Marriage in Victorian England", Journal of Family History (1986), vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 285-86.

continued interference on the part of their kin. The matters like the upbringing and the socializing of children, and the settling of the problems of marital conflicts and disputes were the responsibilities of the kin, as well as church and school. The married couple lacked privacy in all aspects of their life. Even the rich lacked privacy partly due to the architectural layout of their houses and partly because of the constant interruption by their domestic servants.²⁵

Further, the relations with one's own children were not particularly close. In the richer families, babies were put out to wet-nurse at birth, usually away from home, for between twelve and eighteen months.²⁶ Furthermore, most children irrespective of their classes, left home very early as servants or apprentices, to serve in a magnate's household,

25 L. Stone, n.20, p.6

26 One of the reasons for this system of sending new-born infants out to mercenary wet-nurses for the first years or more was that it made the appalling level of infant mortality much easier to bear. The child thus entered the home and its parents began to get acquainted with him only after he had survived the first and extremely dangerous months of life elsewhere. Children died in large numbers even with the wet-nurses. But at least the parents did not see them or know about them. Ibid., p.107.

or to go to school.²⁷ Parents and children were separated for most part of their life. Thus, the relationship between spouses as well as parents and children, in the aristocratic family were usually remote, while their relations with the extended kin and the community were vigorous and rich.

The Family of the Labouring Classes

The labouring class family, whether engaged in agriculture or in domestic industry, was a closely knit socio-economic unit. There was a clearcut division of labour between its members. Men, women and children took part in the productive activities of the family. The children were also at work from a very early age.²⁸ Since the school had

27 It was common in the early modern period of Britain, irrespective of classes, to farm out teenage children to learn a trade in other households. They were customarily unmarried and remained so until they had finished their service. Laslett observes that these servants were, generally, young, unmarried sexually matured persons waiting to be married. He further says, in England until the early 1900s servants were the largest single occupational group. The exact reason for this kind of mass exchange of children was not known. Peter Laslett, "Characteristics of the Western Family Considered over Time", Journal of Family History (1977), vol.2, no.2, pp.105. For a recent anthropological treatment of this phenomenon see Grant McCracken, "The Exchange of Children in Tudor England: An anthropological phenomenon in Historical context" Journal of Family History (1983), vol.8, no.2, pp.303-313.

28 Children were employed by their parents in their land or in the places where they worked. In those early days, the cotton and wool factories employed children and women in large numbers. Even the girls and boys below the age of eleven were employed in these factories and were made to work for long hours under poor working conditions and paid very little wages. For detail, both about the critical working conditions of children and women as well as their percentage see G.E. Mingay, n.2, p.28. Young and Willmott, n.5. pp.68-69. Ronald Fletcher, n.1, pp.71-72.

been, for the most part, an occasional and somewhat irrelevant factor for these rural people,²⁹ the children learnt from their parents and followed them; the girls helped their mothers and the boys their fathers, or, they had become servants in other households. Further, the family of the labouring class lacked extensive geographical movement (due to their attachment to the land) and was almost confined to a particular locality and the domestic group was always surrounded by a stable and extensive body of wider kinsfolk.

Within the nuclear family, the division of labour, including the socialization of the child and education, moral or otherwise, was presided over by the father. Within the domestic group the husband was the sole authority. He was the undisputed master, the patriarch of the family. The wife, and children, including servants — children from other households into his own — were all subordinate to him. The family was held together not only by affection, but also by obedience to superior authority and divine commandment. Obedience to both parents and husband had enjoyed the sanction

29 Around 1838 about two-thirds of children aged between two and fourteen attended some kind of school, though for many of them this meant only a few hours a week at a Sunday school. From 1870 onwards, gradually, there started some improvements in schooling. G.E. Mingay, n. 2, pp. 12-13.

of the scripture. Until 1860 almost all English writers accepted the authoritarian father as the pivot of the family. Indeed, the family was seen as a monarchy. And the authority of human fathers, particularly of all temporal rulers, rested on the God, the Father.³⁰

Within the family the hierarchy ran as father, eldest son (his heir), other sons, then mother, daughters, and finally servants of long standing. A certain social distance was always maintained between the patriarchal father and the rest of the members of the family.³¹

The life of the family was also regulated and influenced by various interlocking laws and customs. The common law of England, largely developed in the courts of strong medieval kings, supported the husband's power and authority.³² Under the law, a married woman lacked a separate legal identity. It regarded the wife as being almost completely subjected to her husband. The husband was

30 J.M. Mogeey, "A century of Declining Parental Authority", Marriage and Family Living (August, 1957), pp. 234-35.
Ralph A. Houlbrooke, The English Family 1450-1700 (London, 1984), p. 21.

31 J.M. Mogeey, *Ibid.*, p. 235.

32 Ralph A. Houlbrooke, n. 30, p. 22.

liable for her civil offences; he had the right to beat her.³³

The severity of his rule went to such an extent that, "It was probably the exceptional wife, who was not beaten by her husband, sometimes brutally, ..." wrote Young and Willmott.³⁴

After the marriage a woman loses her rights to own property or to enter into contracts, and her husband acquired title to her real and personal property, which he could sell at will.

It was her duty to submit to her husband and in turn she acquired such 'advantages' as sufficient food, clothes, lodging, and his liability for her debts.³⁵ In the case of

children, while both parents had duties towards their children, only the father had the rights. He was the legal guardian, he had the sole and exclusive right to decide on their education, religion and domicile.³⁶ This was upheld

by the law of England, the law of Christianity, and the Constitution of that time. Thus, the power and authority of a man, both as a father and as a husband, marked the high point of paternal authority in that society.

33 Ruth Ross, "Tradition and the Role of Women in Great Britain", in Lynne B. Iglitzin and Ruth Ross (eds.), Women in the World: A Comparative Study (Santa Barbara, 1976), p. 164. Mary Kenny, Women X Two : How to cope with a Double Life (London, 1978), pp. 13-14.

34 Young and Willmott, n. 5, p. 67.

35 Ruth Ross, n. 33, p. 164.

36 Mary Kenny, n. 33, p. 14.

Among the peasants, artisans and labourers marriage was seen as an economic necessity for partnership and division of labour whether in shop, home or field. As in the case of the rich, privacy was lacking also among these classes. The children of other households, servants and apprentices, and the poor condition of their dwellings made privacy almost impossible. Most of the houses — one or two room hovel — were overcrowded and even beds were often shared. Furthermore, the neighbours kept a watchful eye on each other in the village community.³⁷

However, it should be noted here that, in spite of the fact that the father/husband was the sole authority within the domestic group, the mutual dependence of husband and wife and of parents and children within the family unit were also strong. He needed his wife and children, almost as much as they needed him. Wife's economic value was her saving, especially if she not only worked in the home and farm but also produced for her 'employer' (husband) other workers (children). If it was a family unit without any land holdings, then her part might be even more vital. In such

³⁷ Lawrence Stone, n. 20, p. 6.

units, it was the wife who would be entirely responsible for tilling a small piece of garden and looking after any livestock, they might have, while her husband went to work as a wage labourer whenever the work was available.³⁸

Among the peasants the family counted for more than any individual member. The family as an unit worked in the land: sons helping the father; brothers helping brothers; mother, daughters and sisters helping all. The father — or whoever was the household head — was morally obligated to manage the farm in the interest of family as a whole, i.e., his wife, children, and lineage. He was a trustee, not the despot, over the resources he commanded.³⁹ In other words, what was crucial was that the family (not the individual) was the basic unit of ownership, production and social life, and the farm, the family and the individuals that composed them 'appeared as an indivisible whole'.⁴⁰

38 Young and Willmott, n. 5, pp. 67-68.

39 David Herlihy (Review Essay) "The Origins of English Individualism: The Family, Property and Social Transition", Journal of Family History, (1980), vol. 5, no. 2, p. 235.

40 C.C. Harris, n. 10, p. 100.

There was no question of the individual leaving his/her family of origin and founding 'his own' family, since individual economic independence, was unattainable. Thus, the nuclear family, among the peasants, could only exist within the family of origin of one of its members, and they would be totally dependent on the collectivity.⁴¹

Furthermore, the domestic group among the labouring classes, like that of the rich, was also short lived. Many of the children never reached maturity, marriages were much more likely to be cut short in youth or middle age due to death of one spouse, and the experience of losing a parent in childhood or adolescence was common. High rates of mortality in the family meant that a large proportion of the population (over 40 per cent) of pre-industrial Britain were children, legal minors under the authority of their parents. A further 30 per cent were adult females under the authority of their fathers or husbands. And a further proportion, more difficult to estimate, were adult servants or apprentices living in the household of their masters whereby they had the status of minors. Such a domestic system was rightly called 'patriarchal'

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

by Laslett. The domestic group was under the rule of a pater (social father), whether or not he was the genitor (biological father) of his dependants.⁴²

The Industrializing Period

The industrialization, which started first in Britain, involved a shift to the factory system of production from that of the past peasant mode of production in which the family was the production unit. The importance of industrialization was, however, not that it destroyed the family, or the kinship system, or decreased the number of composite households (as it was popularly believed until recently), but that it transformed the character of domestic group, and as a result it changed the people's relations with their kinsfolk.⁴³ Further, it had not uniformly affected all the classes and regions. For example, the pressures of urbanization and industrialization profoundly affected the poor, whereas it hardly impinged on the lives of the nobility in any significant way.

42 Ibid., pp. 105-106.

43 Laslett's findings make it clear that the households in England became more complex, in the nineteenth century, the era usually known as that of the Great Industrial Revolution. Laslett (Peter) n. 27, pp. 95-96.

The transformation, which was a result of the change in the mode of production, made employment, not family membership, a precondition of adult existence. Further it resulted in migration and increase in settlement size and affected the efficiency of traditional controls over individual behaviour.

There was an unbridgeable gap between the rich and the poor, inherent in Britain's class structure, which was further worsened due to the industrialization. And as a result of poverty and economic uncertainty, the poor people were forced to adopt a short-term calculative attitude, even towards kin, because it was quite a condition of survival.⁴⁴ Peter Laslett observes that industrialization or 'modernization' had two important effects on the household: the steady decline in the number of households with servants, and the physical separation of the father and other wage-earners from the household on working days.⁴⁵ In other words, it led to the physical separation of wives and husbands and parents and children for good part of their days and weeks. As a result of this, parents lost their traditional control over their children, since children were no more learning from their parents by watching them at work.

44 C.C. Harris, n. 10, p. 130.

45 Laslett (Peter) quoted in C.C. Harris, *ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

However, it should be noted that, the transformation from peasant and domestic mode of production to that of factory was a slow and gradual process. At the beginning, the new methods were adopted only by a few industries, and their hold, even by the middle of the nineteenth century, was not complete.⁴⁶ Initially, in some of the trades the family continued to be the unit of production, and it was especially so in the 'dishonouring trades'⁴⁷ where sweating was at its most rife and a man might be able to survive only by pressing his wife and children into service. The man supervised the work of his wife and children as he had done at his home prior to the industrialization.

But gradually the family lost its productive functions to industry just as it eventually lost some of its educational ones to the school. The peasant and small land holding family had lost its ownership of or control over land, and had become dependent entirely on its labour. There came into being, therefore, a rural population characterized by unemployment and underemployment which provided a supply of

⁴⁶ Young and Willmott, n. 5, p. 70.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

labour for the industries.⁴⁸ But the labour resources of the proto-industrial family were not sold in individualised 'packets' to outside employers, as in the case of a modern proletarian family; the family worked, rather, as a labour collective. In other words, in the early period of industrialization, the function of property owning of the family unit had been taken over and replaced by the function of labour supplying for the capitalist production.⁴⁹

The change in the mode of production altered the position of children also. No fathers were able to employ their children in their home industries or fields. The few factories where women and children were employed in the initial period also forced non-employment of the children. Their employment was gradually prohibited by law, much against the protests of their parents. And further the compulsory and free schooling made the children increasingly dependent on their family. The recognition of a new right to education affected the labouring class family in two ways:

48 There was always a class of landless rural dwellers in different parts and different times in Europe. And they were exploited by the urban manufacturers during the industrialization. C.C. Harris, n. 10, p. 118.

49 Ibid., p. 120.

children were eventually became bread-eaters without being bread winners, and the parents lost the incomes their children might have earned and also they were ceased to be the teacher or the role of a father in training his son was taken away by the school.⁵⁰ But fathers became more powerful than in the past because of the dependent status of their children. This was also true in the case of wives. Although, the housewife was responsible for housekeeping and the family budget was looked after by her, the house-keeping money was a fixed amount given by her husband. In other words, housewife was not aware of her husband's total net income. Generally the husbands kept some money back for themselves and gave a certain per centage of their total earning to their wives to run the house. There was a man's sphere and woman's, in spending as in other functions. Man spent a considerable amount on betting, tobacco and beer. In the working classes, generally, the husbands never disclosed their earnings to their wives. Even if there was a rise in prices or when additional children came, they did not increase 'their allowances to their wives' (with which they maintained the

50 Young and Willmott, n. 5, pp. 74-75.

houses) by not more than small amounts. The wives had not ordinarily had money incomes given to them. It was not easy for married women to get full-time work, especially when they had young children to look after. Child-bearing and rearing, along with other household tasks had become virtue of the domestic system and the women were made to depend upon their men, at least during their child-bearing years.⁵¹

Thus the father/husband, both in middle and poor class families, became more powerful and his superiority and authority over his wife and children were established in a more powerful fashion than the past because of the increased dependent status of the latter. Man's physical power was further strengthened by the financial power and made him the sole authority over his dependants, wife and children. Among the poor, since men's wages were commonly inadequate to maintain their families as well as themselves, wives were forced to enter the labour market in large numbers. But their earning power was far less than that of men and further men's right to take away the earnings of their wives produced a sharper deterioration in their position.⁵²

51 Ibid., pp. 74 and 77.

52 Ralph A. Houlbrooke, n. 30, p. 8.

The aristocratic family continued in the early period of industrialization without much change. But in course of time there came some changes in its members' attitude towards external kin and community as well as change in its boundary. The unquestioned loyalties of its members to lineage, kin, patron and local community were in almost all cases replaced by more universalistic loyalties to the nation-state and its head, and to a particular sect or church. Another major change was the strong awareness of nuclear family boundary by cutting off from its external influences of the pre-industrial period. The members' loyalty as well as interactions were limited to a small group. However, the State and the Church, for their own reasons, took special interest and succeeded in reinforcing the pre-existent patriarchy. As a result, the power of the husband and father over the wife and the children was further strengthened, and for all practical purposes father became a legalized petty tyrant within the home.⁵³ In the case of wives, it was usually the wealthy and urban-born girls who were married at an early age to men much older than themselves, and they easily

53 Lawrence Stone, n. 20, p. 7. Emphasis added.

submitted themselves to the domestic patriarchy. She became the companion of his leisure hours, and the man was the sole authority in home and in office.⁵⁴

The Modern Period

In modern Britain it is usual to think of the family as composed of husband, wife and their unmarried children. It is not only a popular conception, but also has been projected by media and in advertising in Britain.⁵⁵ However, for statistical purposes, the Office of Population Census and Surveys of Britain defines a family as a married couple with or without children. But, generally, most of the people when they speak of their family they often have in mind, along with their immediate domestic unit, a close kin unit of usually two or three generations, grandparents, parents and children which have special significance for them.⁵⁶

The increasing number of dual-worker families, the rising divorce rate and remarriage, the rising number of single-parent families, and the different patterns of families

54 Ralph A. Houlbrooke, n. 30, p. 26.

55 Lesley Rimmer and Malcolm Wicks, "The Family Today", in Eric Butterworth and David Weir, (eds.), The New Sociology of Modern Britain (London, 1984), p. 33.

56 Trevor Noble, Structure and Change in Modern Britain (London, 1981), p. 106.

among various ethnic groups in Britain are making the stereo-type definition of nuclear family unit, i.e., the family unit comprising of two natural parents and their respective legitimate child or children living together in their own home, as a myth in more and more cases.⁵⁷

At present, the family in Britain is an institution, wherein, by and large, households are assumed to be organised on the basis of close kinship relations, and on the basis of a division of labour between a primary breadwinner and a primary childrearer.⁵⁸

However, it should not be mistaken for the biological and personality explanations of role differentiations, those evident in pre-industrial Britain. The modern technological developments markedly changed the needs of the family in

57 Lesley Rimmer and Malcolm Wicks, n.55, p.34. Trevor Noble, n.56, p.122. Robert Chister, "Divorce" in Eric Butterworth and David Weir eds., n.55, pp.43-44.

58 However it should be noted that, it is only at the level of private social relationships, relatives retain considerable significance. But there is no moral obligation in the bonds of kinship. Connections between relatives beyond the circle of the elementary family are no longer possess any obvious structural importance. Michèle Barret and Mary McIntosh, The Anti-Social Family (London, 1982), p.7

Britain. Nineteenth-century reform reached into many obscure corners of contemporary life as well as affecting the major issues of political equality, education and social welfare in Britain. The World War I marked the end of the old Britain and the beginning of the new. The war brought on the one hand terrible loss and suffering and on the other, a greater degree of democracy, reforms in education and housing, and a generally a more egalitarian society.⁵⁹ Further, since 1945, there are trends in value-orientations of the society, such as self-realization, autonomy, equality and spontaneity, in contrast to inherited values, such as self-denial, conformity and obligation and had challenged the traditional moral authorities.⁶⁰ Lastly, the new feminist impulse, the struggle for women's rights has gradually changed the mental climate, as well as bringing material benefits like family allowances to the aid of wife and children, and gave an impetus to the new trends.⁶¹

59 G.E. Mingay, n.2, pp.170 and 200.

60 Robert Chester, "Variant Family Forms", in Eric Butterworth and David Weir, eds., n.55, p.51

61 Young and Willmott, n.5, p.85

Within marriage there is a shift in emphasis from the institutional and dutiful to the romantic and compassionate elements. In other words, the contemporary marriage is based on an innate sense of parity; the democracy and equality that are supposed to be at the centre of marriage, made it so fragile and touchy. The legal rigidity, male authority and fixed roles gave way to flexibility, equality and intimacy. And marriage is recast into a primary personal relationship.⁶² The couple and their children, are very much centred on the home, especially during the early years of children's socialization. Life has become increasingly privatized. Although there were members of extended kin, as noted earlier with whom the nuclear family members to some extent share a common life - the immediate, or nuclear family is valued more. The parents and children share so much together, because they spend much of their time together in the same space. Since the second world war, in particular, the nuclear family has

62 For all ages at marriage and in all social classes there has been a change in the link between marriage and sexual relations. The greater social freedom, availability of effective birth control, etc., have allowed **far** easier extra familial heterosexual mixing and as a result there is a change in the pattern of social norms or mores concerning marriage and sexual relationship. Choices about marriage are clearly related to decisions about other aspects of life also. Marry Kenny, n.33, p.134, Trevor Noble, n.56, pp.112-114.

become more isolated even among the working classes.⁶³

The most vital change which occurred in the family is that the roles of the sexes have become less segregated. Increasing life expectancy, lower fertility, less infant mortality, and the trend towards smaller families had profound effects on woman. A large number of woman now undertake paid work outside their home. It has been also found that, although a much higher percentage of women in Britain work outside the home only as part-time employees, the trend in the pattern of women's employment is likely to be of full-time work with a short break for childbearing. Most of the women now work between marriage and the birth of their first child, and again take up the work once the children reach the school-going age. The earnings of woman not only increases her family's standard of living but it also gives her an equal voice in the family decisions.⁶⁴ Another major eventuality of the modern families in Britain is that the large amount of work is now done in the home by men. In other words, men are taking part in the household tasks which

63 Young and Willmott, n. 5, p. 29.

64 L. Rimmer and M. Wicks, n. 55, p. 37.

were traditionally considered as women's domain. For instance, Elizabeth Bott, in her intensive study of twenty families in London, found two extreme types of couples. One extreme was a family in which the husband and wife follow a strict division of labour in the household, and carried out as many tasks as possible separately and independently of each other. He gave her a fixed amount of housekeeping money, and she was unaware of her husband's net earnings as well as his own expenditure. In their leisure time, he spent his time with his male companions and she with her female relatives and neighbours. In short, except for the festivities, they spent no leisure time together. Much more important was that they considered their act as respectful and usual in their social circle. Another extreme was a family in which couple shared as many activities and spent as much time together as possible. They tried their level best to be equal in all major family decisions, and even in minor household activities. Most of the tasks which were traditional spheres of men or women had become common to each other. Man worked in the kitchen and woman in the garden. Further they shared much of their leisure time

together, and they shared similar interests in politics, music, literature and entertainment. Like the first couple, this husband and wife felt their behaviour was typical of their social circle.⁶⁵

But even today, in Britain, the number of families in which the husband and wife share the power equally, like that of the Bott's second type couple, are a few in number. In most of the families division of labour is still the rule, i.e. man engages in man's sphere and the wife doing the household and child-rearing tasks. But the direction of change is, says Young and Willmott, from Bott's first to her second type.⁶⁶

65 Elizabeth Bott, "Family Activities", in Eric Butterworth and David Wier, (eds.), n. 55, pp. 53-54.

66 Young and Willmott, n. 5, p. 31.

Chapter Three

THE PATTERNS OF AUTHORITY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN THE JAPANESE FAMILY

Japan is one of the most highly industrialized and Westernized countries of the world. The year 1868, when the Meiji Restoration took place, was a turning point in the history of modern Japan. The establishment of Meiji Government ended the two and a half centuries long Tokugawa Shogunate rule in Japan and marked the beginning of modernization. However, the most rapid growth of modern Japan started only after the World War II. The defeat in the War and the consequent American occupation and influence in Japan were major epoch-making events in the modernization history of the country.¹

Since the Second World War, particularly with the adoption of revised Civil Code and the introduction of new democratic constitution (especially Article 24) the family system in Japan experienced drastic changes. The traditional family system known as ie, which provided the household head with executive authority was legally abolished. The Constitution guaranteed the dignity of the individual and the equality

¹ Peter Mitchell, "Roots of the Modernization Experience in Japan" in Toyomasa Fuse (ed.) Modernization and Stress in Japan (Leiden, 1975), pp. 20-22; Fumie Kumagai, "Modernization and the Family in Japan", Journal of Family History, 1986, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 371-72.

of the sexes in family life. The new Civil Code upheld the independence of individual family unit, i.e., a group consisted of only husband, wife and their unmarried children. In matters of inheritance of family property and land, the post-war Civil Code established equal property rights for all children in the family and thereby undermined the traditional practice of primogeniture, that is, the eldest son inheriting it.² It also changed the husband-wife and parent-children relationships in the family. Thus the governmental introduction of Western methods and the exposure to the Western culture, Western scientific and technical knowledge, made Japan fully Westernized within a very short span of time.

The drastic growth of industrialization and urbanization altered the marital and familial life of the people. The external or demographic features of the Japanese family, such as the prevalence of nuclear family, a very low birth rate and a reduced average family size, the freedom of choice in the mate selection, the increase in the number of elderly population and the prolongation of life expectancy, and the

2 Fumie Kumagai, *Ibid.*, p. 375.

increasing divorce rate, etc., make it resemble the family of the West.³

Even in the field of authority, status of fathers within the family has been significantly decreasing after the World War II, and Japanese fathers are ceased to be authoritarian figures in the household. The mother-children tie, particularly when the latter are young, has become much more closer than that of the father-child relations.

However, it should not be concluded that the present Japanese family and its Western counterpart are one and the same. Although the Japanese family is changing (mainly due to Westernization), the changes are apparent and confined to the external behaviour and dimensions of the family (e.g. size, fertility, divorce, life cycle etc.). And as far as internal behaviour within the family (e.g. strong vertical generational ties) are concerned there is not much change. In other words, the traditional elements of internal or structural features of the Japanese family are still persisting.

3 For details see Fumie Kumagai, "The Life Cycle of the Japanese People", Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1984, pp. 191-204. Chapters 17, 18 and 19 in Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds.), Household and Family in Past Time (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 429-543. Fumie Kumagai, "Changing divorce in Japan", Journal of Family History, 1983, pp. 85-108.

The Japanese have eagerly adopted the western scientific knowledge and technology in their day-to-day life, but at the same time they maintained their societal and cultural traditions. Thus the modern family is an harmonious blending of both the traditional and modern elements of Japan. In fact, the persistence of the modified stem family and their appreciation of the virtue of filial piety clearly underline the Japanese respect to their tradition.⁴ In the light of these analysis the authority and decision-making process in the Japanese family can be analysed in three different periods or stages and they are the pre-Meiji Restoration period (1600-1868), the post Restoration period (1868-1945) and the post-war or modern period (1945 onwards).

The pre-Meiji Restoration period (1600-1868)

Traditionally, the Japanese society was feudal in nature. The hierarchical arrangement of the Japanese family was influenced by the class and caste stratification system of the society. The four-tier class-caste was prevalent in throughout the Japanese recorded history and even in the 7th century A.D. caste was a dominant factor. The traditional

4 Fumie Kumagai, n. 1, pp. 379-80.

ie (house) family system of the feudal Edo era (1600-1868) was also completely reeled under its influence.⁵ In addition the Confucian ideology was the moral code of the Japanese life during this period and it emphasized the absolute authority of parents and total obedience of the children.

The marriage during this period was endogamous and inter class/caste marriage was prohibited. The violation of the caste rule resulted in ostracism or transfer to the eta class. Within the family, based on generation and sex, there existed a clear hierarchy of power. The succession of household headship was codified on the basis of the hierarchy of power and responsibility.⁶ The ie was 'a concept and a physical entity handed down as inheritance in direct succession from generation to generation. The headship was inherited by the oldest son, and he also succeeded to the

5 Ruth Benedict, The Chrysanthemum and The Sword : Patterns of Japanese Culture (Boston, 1946), p. 57. "These four classes consisted of shi (samurai warriors), the highest; followed by no (peasants), ko (artisans), and the lowest sho (merchants) class. There were people called eta (untouchable or under class) who did not belong to any one of these four classes. These four class-caste system was based primarily on the political considerations of the Tokugawa Shogunate rather than on the economic basis of the population "Fumie Kumagai, n. 1, p. 372.

6 Kumagai, n. 1, p. 373.

family estate'.⁷ Thus, traditionally, the Japanese family was based on patrilineal descent, patriarchal authority, and patrilocal residence. Hierarchy based on sex and generation and primogeniture were part and parcel of family life. Filial piety (a highly ethical law which Japan shares with China) which an individual owe to his parents, was the basis of authority in the household. That is, the sense of obligation to one's superior according to generation, sex and age within the stem family. The stem family ideally includes one's father and father's father, their brothers and their descendants. Therefore, filial piety, was a matter within a limited face-to-face family in Japan.⁸ There was strict subservience to the elders until they elect to go into formal retirement.⁹ There was no possibility of threat to the authority of the elders, since the family system moulds them not to revolt or rebel against the wishes of the elders.

7 Tadashi Fukutake, Japanese Society Today (Tokyo, 1974), p. 33.

8 Ruth Benedict, n. 5, pp. 50-52.

9 Retirement occurs not at the behest of the junior generation in response to the heirs maturity or his attainment of the age of marriage, but at the behest of the senior generation, when the household head reaches the age of 60. This age of sixty is culturally marked. For details see L.L. Cornell, "Retirement, inheritance, and inter-generational conflict in pre-industrial Japan", Journal of Family History, 1983, pp. 55-69.

Submission to the will of the family was demanded in the name of supreme value and of a common loyalty. It was phrased in terms of on (debt) the children owe to their parents and expected to repay. Therefore children were left with no other option but to work hard and be obedient to their parents (just to repay the debt).¹⁰ The father as male head of the household was served first at meals, goes first to the family bath, and receives with a nod, the deep bows of his family.¹¹ Children were treated with great tenderness and affection, especially when they are young. The great emotional dependence of the Japanese child on his parents made him to depend on his parents for almost all major decision, even during his high school age. There was no need for a father to dominate his children, because there was reluctance or a lack of satisfaction in making independent decisions on the part of the children. Parents gave the eldest son considerable authority over his siblings at an early age, so that he became accustomed to

10 Minako Kurokawa Maykovich, "The Japanese Family" in Man Singh Das and Panos D. Bardis (eds.), The Family in Asia (New Delhi, 1978), p. 389. Ruth Benedict, n. 5, pp. 99-102.

11 Ruth Benedict, *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

ruling them.¹²

Marriages were arranged by the parents. It was decided on by both sets of parents. The marriage of a son was seen as arrangement by which the continuity of family genealogy was assured.¹³ Since the head of the household was responsible for the veneration of ancestors, the continuity of the lineage, and the preservation of property, he was seen as the right person to control the marital choice of the son, who was the heir and the guard of family property and prestige. Ideally, the parents and one of the offspring (generally the eldest son) were not separated upon the latter's marriage. Individual wishes were ignored for the interest of the family. This type of concentration of authority in the family head was affirmed due to many reasons: Confucianism, with its stress upon absolute obedience of the children to their parents, the complexities of family composition, the prevalent political and social systems, and the

12 The elder brother decided what was good for his younger brothers, since the habits of hierarchy were strong, they accepted it. However, when the father was actual head and active enough to look after the family affairs, the eldest son (elder brother) would not show too much interest in enforcing his authority on his young siblings. Ibid., p. 53.

13 William, J. Goode, World Revolution and Family Patterns (New York, 1963), p. 330.

good son's obligation to repayment of parental on.¹⁴ Thus the feudal nature of Japanese society was very much reflected in its familial life. For example, in parent-child relationship, as seen above, the children owe loyalty and service to their parents, and in turn, the parents owe protection and support to their children.

Thus there was greater emphasis on parent-child relationship than on the conjugal relationship. The latter was a matter of contractual relationship and which could be dissolved by the decision ^{of} the husband or of the families concerned.¹⁵

The wife was completely subordinate to the authority of the household head. Her only value to the family was her ability to give birth to a son who could continue the family lineage. Until the birth of her first son, a wife was, in a sense, an outsider to her husband's family group. She was

14 Minako Kurokawa Maykovich, n. 11, p. 387. Ruth Benedict, n. 5, p. 55.

15 A woman who failed to learn what were called the Kajū (the ways of the household of her husband) or if she was not liked by her parents-in-law, and more significantly, if she failed to bear a child (son) within three years of marriage was likely to be sent back to her natal house (even if the man and woman loved each other). Robert J. Smith, "Making Village Women into "Good Wives and Wise Mothers" in pre-war Japan", Journal of Family History, 1983, p. 75.

forced to submit to the new circumstances and norms of the husband's family. Mother-in-law was the ruler and taught her the family customs and norms. However, ultimate authority on both of them was rested with the head of the household. Husband was superior to his wife and she has to show deference to him. Patrilineal relations placed the status of women low and emphasized sex role differentiation. Girls' education was not considered as very significant, and were expected to learn only the domestic chores.¹⁶

However, when the son of the head of the family took over the family authority, i.e. when the son succeeds the father, it was customary for the wife also to be given a symbol of authority. Even though it did not make her equal to her husband, the wife did achieve a certain amount of authority in the home: she conducted rituals to ancestors, disciplined the children, made household purchases, took part

16 There was a strict sex based division of labour. The man went outside to work to earn his living, the woman looked after the household activities and children. The "female education" emphasized the domestic arts of the homemaker, the requirement of absolute obedience to one's father and husband. The wife was to call her husband "master". And she was economically dependent on her husband. Although some women did manage to accumulate some money for their own use, the village men, unlike their white-collar counterparts, did not handover the household money for management by their wives, Ibid., pp. 70-84.

in seeking a spouse for her adult children, etc.¹⁷ But both the tradition and law of that time pressed her to subordinate herself fully to the decisions of the head of the family.

Another conflicting and feudal type of relationship was that of the yome-shutome (daughter-in-law mother-in-law) tie. Relative seniority and experience of mother-in-law over her young and 'strange' daughter-in-law automatically led to an hierarchical authoritarian relationship between them. It was under the mother-in-law's guidance the young wife learned the traditions of the new household.¹⁸ And in most of the cases it was noted as one of the great antagonistic relationships in the family.

Finally, it should be noted that, although the variables such as generation, sex and age were the determining factors of one's authority, those who exercised these privileges acted like trustees rather than as arbitrary autocrats. The head of the household (the father or the elder brother) was responsible for the entire household, the living,

17 W.J. Goode, n. 13, p. 345. Ruth Benedict, n. 5, p. 54.

18 In Japan, like India, this relationship was very much talked of. In ie family system this relationship was the main cause for strain. Ruth Benedict, n. 5, pp. 123-24.

dead, or unborn members of it. He was responsible for the decisions made as well as for their implementation. He was expected to exercise his authority by keeping in mind the honour of the house. However, he did not enjoy unconditional authority.¹⁹

The ie system, however, existed only among the upper strata, that is, the shogunate (lord) and samuroi (warriors). Among the rest of the population, (within the lower strata), peasants, artisans, merchants or eta, ie was not a rule. All of these classes engaged in direct economic production, and the household members included not only kin but also tenants and servants. The rule of primogeniture was not strictly followed among these classes.²⁰ Since most of the families depended on their business or farming, headship in such a household meant to succeed to the family business. Therefore,

19 Ibid., pp. 54-56.

20 Akira Hayami, "The Myth of primogeniture and impartible inheritance in Tokugawa Japan", Journal of Family History, 1983, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 3-29. Before its legal standardization by the Meiji Civil Code, the Japanese ie system was not at all uniform. The patterns of succession and inheritance were not fixed, but fluid. In the village society, especially among the middle and lower classes of peasantry the law of primogeniture or that inheritance was impartible, was not at all a strict rule. For example, women frequently headed households, especially when their husbands departed temporarily as migrants. Ibid.

in order to guaranteed the success of a family, each family selected a person with superior ability either among the male siblings or by the adoption of a man as a son-in-law.²¹

In addition, among the merchant class there was a practice of establishing bunke (branch) families beside its honke (main) family. On the other hand, a peasant family could not divide its farm land, since it was not advisable from the point of view of family economy and they established an extended family whereby one person inherited the household headship along with some responsibility for other kin of the immediate family.²² In this type of family, since the farming was the major activity, the labour of the family members was precious. These aspects of individual autonomy and economic value of each individual in these classes (regardless of their sex and age), shows that there existed more equality among the members of the lower strata when compared to that of the upper strata of the society.²³

21 Fumie Kumagai, n. 1, p. 374.

22 Ibid., Akira Hayami, n. 20, p. 19.

23 The active participation of the lower class women in economic activities of the household such as farming, fishing, silk and other small scale industries made them economically less dependent on their husbands. The bargaining position gave some voice in the family decisions for these women when compared to their counterparts in upper strata. It was very much visible in case of divorce. Many of the village women had exhibited a considerable measure of independence by walking out on unsupportable marriages in pre-war Japan. W.J. Goode, n. 13. pp. 346-47. Robert J. Smith. n. 15. p. 82.

The post-Restoration Period

The Meiji Restoration did not bring about immediate change neither in the traditional class-caste structure nor in the ie system of Japan. For example, it was only in 1898 (three decades after the Meiji Restoration), with the enforcement of the Civil Code, the traditional class-caste system was officially abolished. In the case of ie system, it became the common pattern of household for all the people (irrespective of their class) and was considered to be directly subordinate to the emperor. That is, the emperor became the symbolic head of all families. The traditional rule of primogeniture was made common to all strata of the society. As a result the farming and business families (of lower strata) where the members used to enjoy egalitarian relationships, when compared to the upper strata, lost their equality and their family structure shifted to a hierarchical vertical organization.

In addition, the adoption of Confucianism as the moral code and its compulsory teaching brought about two of its concepts viz., chū (loyalty and subordination to the Emperor) and Kō (filial piety) to limelight. These two strengthened the traditional hierarchical vertical orientation

of the human relationship in the family.²⁴ The head of the family (father or elder brother) had the control over the property and commanded the other members. Besides regulating the economic and social activities of the entire family, he decided on the distribution of income. He was also entirely responsible for the selection of mate as well as the choice of occupations of the other members of the family. Even when second and subsequent sons left and established branch families, they were also under the control of the main family head on important issues. In a way the "main family-branch family" relationship was resembling the 'master and servant' relationship.²⁵

Post-War Period

However, as noted earlier in the post-war period, with the enforcement of new Civil Code and with the adoption of new Constitution, there started a change in the internal structure of the family. Japanese traditional family structure of three generation, of parents, children and grandchildren living together in the same house, the woman

24 Fumie Kumagai, n. 1, pp. 374-75.

25 Jai-Seuk Choi, "Comparative study on the traditional families in Korea, Japan and China" in Reuben Hill and Rene Konig (ed.), Families in East and West (The Hague, 1970), p. 205.

'walking behind' the man (as an indication of low status), the 'absolute authority' of the father are virtually becoming the things of the past.²⁶

Under the new Constitution, the ie (house) as well as the head of the household with legal rights and duties are ceased to be a legal entity.²⁷ Marriages have become, in more and more cases, a matter of mutual consent of the marrying couples rather than the interest of the two families. In the case of parent-child relationship, there is an increased communication and consultation between them. The compulsory teaching of Confucian ethics and morals in schools are given up.²⁸

Increase in the number of nuclear family, the overcrowding of the home, the accessibility to the modern media like television and the press, and the relatively weakened

26 Hiroshi Wagatsuma, "Some Aspects of the Contemporary Japanese Family : Once Confucian, Now Fatherless?" The Family (Daedalus, 1977), vol. 106, no. 2, pp. 181-82.

27 The new constitution and the new civil code together guaranteed, besides many other things, equality in inheritance for all children in the family. Further the widows have a right to part of their husband's property.

28 Hiroshi Wagatsuma, n. 26, p. 184.

economic position of the father in the modern Japanese family made him to lose his traditional role of absolute authority. With their independent earning the young men and women are becoming aware of their self interest and development. The traditional subordination of women is also changing. Modern educated women are aspiring to become economically independent.

In addition to the emerging nuclear fission of the family system, Japan is also witnessing the gradual disintegration of the 'dozoku' system centred upon the patriarchal family. These gave raise to new kinship relations centred on the conjugal family which showed no distinction between male and female lines.²⁹ The rapid growth of industrialization made the second and subsequent sons in the family to migrate to cities and towns seeking new avenues of employment. This changed the traditional practice of colateral kin living together with lineal kin. However, it does not mean that socio-economic, political and legal developments of the modern Japan have entirely removed the past kinship ties. A large

29 Takashi Koyama, "Rural-urban comparison of kinship relations in Japan" in Hill and Konig (ed.), n. 25, p. 336.

segment of the small size industrial and business enterprises that were undertaken under difficult economic conditions are still based on kinship relations.³⁰

In his study on the middle class salaried men, Vogal observed that the traditional ideals of household organization were replaced by the modern ideas of privacy and equality between the couples. He also found that the Japanese husbands began to help in the domestic chores of their wives and spent more of their time with their wives and children.³¹ Another study by a social psychologist revealed that in more than 70 per cent of the sample families individual partners made independent decisions on those issues for which each one was responsible. Only in 16 per cent of the cases there were consultations between the partners.³² Another Japanese researcher found that 'husband dominated' families are prevalent more often among the less educated section of the population and 'wife-dominated' families among the more educated sections of the society. In families where husbands are highly

30 Ibid., pp. 318-19.

31 Vogal's study in 1963 quoted in Howard Wimberly "Conjugal role organization and social networks in Japan and England", Journal of Marriage and the Family, February, 1973, p. 129.

32 Hiroshi Wagatsuma, n. 26, p. 189.

educated or richer, wives enjoy considerable amount of autonomy of decision-making including those related to financial areas.³³ In the salaried class, men were willing to allow their wives to enjoy complete financial management and in a study more than 50 per cent expressed that they would hand over their entire salary to their wives.³⁴ On the other hand, in India, in most of the wealthier families the wife accepted the traditional dominant position of the husband.

As far as parent-child relationship is concerned both the father and mother had equal authority over their children; and when the offsprings grow up the role of father as disciplinarian assumes more importance. In the rural communities, father is still the disciplinarian and this traditional tendency is stronger among those with lower education and income levels. In highly educated and high income families more often mother assumes this role. In the urban, younger, better educated and wealthier families the present day Japanese mother plays a dominant role both in

33 Study of Kuniv Tanaka quoted in Ibid., p. 190.

34 Findings of Taisaku Honbu cited in Ibid., p. 191.

the household budget management and disciplining her children.³⁵ This is an indication that the father is also accepting and tolerating the autonomy and independence of his children. Chie Nakane goes to the extent of declaring that the Japanese fathers were never authoritarian as they were projected. They pretended to exercise the authority which in the first place they never possessed.³⁶ Thus in this changing circumstances, in a small nuclear family with a close physical intimacy and mutual awareness of each others economic and educational values, father or husband cannot impose his will and wish on the children or wife.³⁷

The attitude of young women in Japan had also changed. The higher education and the legally approved equal economic and social opportunities, particularly the equal employment law, created new awareness among these young women. In a recent survey it was found that majority of young women were strongly supporting the social participa-

35 Findings of Kiyomi Morioka and Kenji Tamura and Takashi Koyama cited in *Ibid.*, pp. 194-95.

36 The 1973 findings of the Chie Nakane quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 198.

37 Living condition of the people has been changing drastically in Japan, especially in the urban areas. More and more families becoming mobile due to their occupational nature. The structural change in the family is inevitable and as a result the dynamics of family authority and decision-making is also changing. For details, see Hiroshi Wagatsuma, *Ibid.*, pp. 185-89.

tion and financial independence for women. It is also interesting to note that majority of them were not interested in marriage. They do not want to be "legally bound".³⁸ However, any definite conclusion cannot be drawn on the basis of these behavioural surveys.

But, in reality, the traditional nature of family has survived in some of the practices like caring for the aged. A large proportion in the old population still want to be cared by their kin, particularly by their daughter-in-law (traditionally the duty of a daughter-in-law).³⁹ The attitude of the men and the old women (who spent their lives trying to live upto male expectation) are still against women's independence, especially outside the house. The working women are considered as not fit to be competent mothers. Irrespective of her academic background or any other qualifications she is not encouraged to work outside

38 This has been revealed by a survey conducted by the Japan Institute of Life Insurance (JILI). Thirtyseven per cent of the women in the sample said that they did not necessarily marry. And fiftysix per cent of the respondents said they need not marry because they could support themselves financially. Indian Express, New Delhi, 3 June 1987, and 11 June 1987.

39 One recent survey reveal that house and bed-bound old people needing constant attention outnumber those who were in old people's homes and hospitals. Nearly 90% of family members who were looking after those old people were women. And among those women, there were more

the house after her marriage. As in the past, women in present Japan work until their marriage and once they get marry and give birth to children they confine to the houses.⁴⁰

Another interesting study based on high school home economic course textbooks in Japan gives a similar conclusion. "Housekeeping is natural work for women, and child care is woman's mission", was the main stress of these books and only in 1975 the cooperation between husband and wife in both housekeeping and child care was introduced by the government. But when some of the modern minded teachers tried to make the home economics mandatory for both male and female students, it met with criticism from majority of parents. Thus most of the books still make it clear that home management remains women's work and the Japanese society remains clearly male dominated.⁴¹ Thus, traditional idea of sex-role identification by the Japanese is still prevailing in both rural and urban educated and uneducated, and among all the classes of the society, but, of course, with different degrees.

daughter-in-law looking after each person than any other members of the family. Keiko Higuchi, "Longevity Challenges Japan's Family Traditions", People: Japan-Lessons for the World, vol. 13, no. 4, 1986, pp. 24-25.

40 Several surveys conducted by both government and non-government agencies reported this trend.

The modern trends in marital and familial relationships in Japan are to be treated with a definite sense of rural-urban, farm-non-farm, educated and un-educated, upper-class-lower class differences. Generally in most of the cases the urban educated youths are supporting as well as following the modern values in their family life and the rural-farming and un-educated family's youths as well as old men and women all over Japan are not happy with the former's views and actions.

41 It is a study conducted by a group of Tokyo housewives. Hindu, New Delhi, January 1987.

Chapter Four

THE PATTERNS OF AUTHORITY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN INDIAN FAMILY

When compared to Britain and Japan India is more heterogeneous in character. The homogeneous nature of Japan made it rather easy to analyse a single type of family in a particular period of time. Britain with a few exceptions enjoyed the same pattern. But the Indian society cannot be compared to the other two in the sociological sense of the term 'society'. It consists of several 'societies' within the nation-state called India; e.g. the Tamil society, Bengali society, Punjabi society etc. Moreover there are other differences like rural-urban, rural farm and peasants, tribal and non-tribal and Hindus and non-Hindus which add complexities.

Since Independence, the Indian society has been undergoing tremendous change in every walk of life. The process of industrialization and urbanization began in the early part of nineteenth century. The industrial and intellectual revolution which began in other parts of the world, particularly in Europe, influenced the Indian society also. The forces of modernization entered India under the British rule.¹ Thus it

1 B.V. Shah, "Voluntary Associations - Need for Sociological Study in India" in Dhirendra Narain (ed.) Explorations in the family and other Essays (Bombay, 1975), pp. 119-20.

started with a colonial heritage in the form of an encounter between the traditional society (based upon organised group behaviour) and the modernizing West.²

But when compared to Japan and China, India's pace of industrialization had been slow, and its per capita output was low.³ The strong traditional, social and cultural values of the Indian society, its political and economic dependence on the British, and the initial refusal of the British to alter India's social organization and family customs largely hampered the growth of industrialization.⁴

Traditionally the Indian society was dominated by institutions like the joint family, caste system and the village community. All these three institutions were collectively responsible for the individual human activities of the society. Moreover, India was predominantly a rural

2 Yogendra Singh, "Historicity of Modernization" in Dhirendra Narain (ed.) Explorations in the family and other Essays (Bombay, 1975), p.656.

3 William J. Goode, World Revolution and Family Patterns (New York, 1963), p.205.

4 Ibid., p.206. However, it should be noted that this argument has been questioned by many.

and agrarian society with a subsistence economy.⁵

However, in the course of the British rule, there began a number of changes in Indian society. The commercialization of Indian agriculture (which meant the substitution of an isolated self-sufficient small village community's subsistence economy, by a market economy), the introduction of foreign machine-made goods, spread of new political institutions and secular forces (especially, modern education, Western liberal democratic values, i.e. equality and other democratic principles), the introduction of modern science and technology undermined the traditional patterns of occupations, joint families (particularly roles and position of its members) and the control of caste and religion over the individuals.⁶ Furthermore, the growth of urbanization and the introduction of modern means of transport and communications, the formal Western education, the abolition of judicial powers of caste and village panchayats, the

5 For details see M.S. Gore, Urbanization and Family Change (Bombay, 1968), particularly Chapter 1, pp.3-39.

Aileen D. Ross, Hindu Family in its Urban Setting, (Bombay, 1961) particularly Chapter 1, pp.3-32.

6 Dan A. Chekki, "Modernization and Social Change: The Family and kin Network in Urban Setting" in George Kurian (ed.) The Family in India: A Regional View (The Hague, 1974), p.221.

introduction of new legislation which favoured the individual ownership of land etc. drastically affected the traditional authoritarian Hindu religious ideology and ways of life.⁷ The growth of new cities attracted increased number of rural people, particularly the young men to take up new employment and educational opportunities in the cities. As a result the joint family, coupled with the village-based caste system lost its traditional control and dominance over the individuals. The lack of opportunities in the villages, low wages and shortage of land further intensified the geographic mobility of the people.⁸

In addition, the nationalist struggle for Independence under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership from the British rule forced a number of men and women (especially women from elite background) to break out of the traditional structures which were against their participation in the social life.⁹

7 Ibid., p.222.

8 But it has to be mentioned here that, India is still predominantly an agrarian and rural society and even today a large majority of Indians are illiterates: In 1981 about 36 percent of the population were literates (46.9 percent of males and 24.9 percent of females).

9 G.N. Ramu, "Marital Roles and Power: Perceptions and Reality in an Urban Setting" unpublished paper (Canada, 1987); Aileen D. Ross, n.5, p.24,

After the independence all these forces of modernization have been further intensified. With the implementation of nationwide plans for socio-economic development and with the adoption of the Constitution (especially whose guarantees of fundamental rights and the directive Principles) the spread of modernization process has not only intensified but also added a new dimension and direction, pervading the whole country. The constitutional objective of building an egalitarian secular society have resulted in a number of fundamental changes in social life of the people. Perhaps one of the most significant developments has been the changes in the legal status of women; and they include the granting of the adult franchise, fundamental changes in the Hindu laws of marriage, succession, adoption, and maintenance, particularly rights to ancestral property, divorce and abortion and the introduction of new laws in the field of labour and industry. All these new legislations guarantee equal rights to women. Apart from these, the introduction of land legislation (land reforms) with a view of abolishing absentee landlordism, formulation of national policies and programmes pertaining to agriculture, industry, education, health, housing, transport

and communication, social security and social welfare measures not only helped the people to improve their standards of living but also brought about changes in their socializing, working and living conditions.¹⁰ The new conditions brought new social status and economic independence to the women. It created changes in values and attitudes of the people towards life. There is a gradual change in the family structure of both rural and urban India from joint/extended families to nuclear pattern. As a result, the traditional pattern of authority structure, i.e. the head of the household, the patriarch of Karta (whether the grandfather or his eldest son) having absolute power over the entire activities of the family is losing its grounds to the individual breadwinner of the conjugal family unit. And within the nuclear family unit, the traditional pattern of marital role and distribution of power is also changing.¹¹

The traditional pattern of total subordination of

10 G.N. Ramu, *ibid.*, p.8, Mabel Fonseca, Family and Marriage in India (Jaipur, 1980), p.9.

11 V.V. Prakasa Rao and V. Nandini Rao, Marriage, the Family and Women in India (New Delhi, 1982), pp.6-7
178, G.N. Ramu, n.9, p.6.

women to men, the strict disciplinarian role of the father in relation to his children are changing toward egalitarian relations. Such a change and the consequent increasing autonomy of the conjugal pair are strengthening the solidarity between the spouses and have led to the better understanding and sharing of power between spouses. Thus, the young men and women, particularly with higher education, now no longer believe in the total surrender of their individual interests to the collectivity.¹² In other words, they are beginning to think themselves as individual first rather than as a member of a group. Their ambition, initiative, autonomy, self-development and concern with social justice are challenging the old respect for established order. However, it should be noted here that, even today in a large majority of cases in India, men are confronted with the conflict of traditional, orthodox and conservative forces on the one hand and contemporary, progressive and revolutionary forces on the other. They want new and increasing opportunities of new industrial age, but they also want old securities. Therefore, many seem to live in two worlds simultaneously; the

12 Mabel Fonseca, n.10, p.20.

traditional static, religion-oriented, caste-bound, family-centred world; and the new-Westernized rationalistic world of dynamic individualism and social progress.¹³

In the light of the above discussion, an analysis of the patterns of authority and decision-making process in Indian family will be made in the following pages. However, as mentioned in the beginning people living in different regions of India have diverse patterns of social and familial life.¹⁴ Amidst the diversity between regions, between rural and urban areas, between classes, and between different religious, ethnic, linguistic and caste groups, any generalization of "Indian Family" is nearly impossible and inappropriate.¹⁵

The sociological and social anthropological studies in the field of marriage and family conducted in India¹⁶ so far were based on several limitations. Almost all studies

13 Ibid., pp.3, 24.

14 For details see Pauline M. Kolenda, "Region, Caste and Family Structure: A Comparative Study of the Indian 'Joint' Family" in Milton Singer and Bernard S. Cohn (eds.) Structure and Change in Indian Society (Chicago, 1968) pp.423-452.

15 For details see Irawati Karve, Kinship Organization in India (Bombay, 1965), Second Revised edition. K.M. Kapadia, Marriage and Family in India (Oxford, 1959)

16 For detailed survey of literature, see Leela Dube, Sociology of Kinship (Bombay, 1974) particularly Chapter 5, pp.69-96.

were based on inadequate samples taken from a particular caste or a community (even then it was not a technically random one and not based on a genuine national sample).¹⁷ Based on a small number of western educated, middle or upper-middle class urban youths, most of the studies were confined to examining the single question, viz. "Is the joint family in India breaking down and undergoing a process of nuclearization due to urbanization?"¹⁸ and, thus, they have neglected the interpersonal relationships in the family, i.e. the marital role and power relationship between the spouses and the parent-child relationship.¹⁹

Finally the important difficulty in a family study is the lack of comparable past data. We are hardly left with any historical concrete data on the family in India. The traditional ideal type of joint family was formulated by an educated section from the previous generations' philosophical or literary comments. Thus, we are forced to compare the

17 William J. Goode, n.3, p.214.

18 T.K. Oommen, "The Urban Family in Transition" in John S. Augustine (ed.) The Indian Family in Transition (New Delhi, 1982), p.58.

19 G.N. Ramu, n.9, pp.1-3, A.A. Khatri, "Decision-Making in the Context of the Indian Family" Paper presented at XI World Congress of Sociology, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 1-2.

'ideal' patterns and attitudes of the last generations, with the contemporary expressions of values and attitudes of the people.²⁰

TRADITIONAL HINDU JOINT FAMILY

Traditionally, the basic unit of Hindu society was not the individual but the joint family. "A joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked in one kitchen, who hold property in common, participate in common family worship and are related to one another as some particular type of kindred."²¹ It was "a group consisting of adult male coparceners (joint heirs) and their dependents, who are their wives and young children."²²

The cultural values of the kinship system emphasised the filial and fraternal bonds. There were both extended or collateral types of joint families. These joint families have descended from two separate lines; the patrilineal and

20 William J. Goode, n.3, pp.215-216.

21 Irawati Karve, n.15, p.8

22 M.S. Gore, n.5, p.6.

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the matrilineal.²³

As an ideal type, the joint family consisted of a man and his wife, his unmarried children, his married son(s) and the wife(s) and children of the latter. Another possible type was made up of ego's extended family and ego's married brothers and their extended families.²⁴ In the joint family an individual male member was not supposed to be working to earn the bread for his individual conjugal family only. All earnings of the family members were pooled, and that common pool was utilised for the welfare of all the members of the family. The eldest male, whether the grandfather or the elder brother, made all important decisions in the family. Thus it was a joint unit of production and consumption. The entire family participated in family activities, both in home and in field, according to the judgement of the eldest male. The division of labour within the family was strictly based

23 The matrilineal type of family system was predominant among the Nayars of Kerala. But today there is radical alterations in this institution and only some of the very superficial aspects of the matrilineal type of family system are prevailing among the Nayars. The present discussion is confined to the patrilineal types of families which are predominant all over India.

24 M.S. Gore, n.5, p.4 Kumar Joginder, "Family Structure in Hindu Society of Rural India" in George Kurian (ed.) The Family in India - A Regional View (The Hague, 1974) p.45.

upon sex. Women looked after home, the kitchen, and the children, while the men undertook all the major occupational activities. Thus the traditional joint family was based on the authority and sharing of relations among adult males than on the conjugal bonds between a married couple.²⁵ The elder man in the family because of his experience and age becomes the head of the family. This principle was institutionalized. When the father dies, the eldest brother succeeds as the head of the family. Since most decisions were based upon tradition rather than on rational knowledge, age and sex were the main principles determining the family hierarchy.²⁶ However, while seniority and sex were the general determinants of authority, that authority cannot be used arbitrarily. The eldest male, in his role as the leader of the family must conform to specific family and caste traditions.²⁷

25 M.S. Gore, n.5, A.D. Ross, n.5, K.M. Kapadia, n.15, Irawati Karve, n.15.

26 M.S. Gore, n.5, p.14.

27 Under the traditional system, the caste panchayat or council was powerful. It played most important role in many significant activities of the joint family including marriage. Ibid.

The problem of authority between adults and children in the joint family was largely solved without any difficulty, in favour of the adult by the physical, economic and emotional dependence of the child on the adult. The authority relationship between men and women was also easily solved due to two major reasons: Firstly, in the joint family men were related to each other by birth, whereas women joined the family as strangers in different times (during the time of each brother's or son's marriage). Secondly, the relationship of the woman to the occupational sphere was effectively cut down by excluding her from inheritance or ownership of property in her own right.²⁸ These two factors made women dependent on men and thereby subordinate to them. That is why in most of the cases in the joint families the authority of the eldest male over other males was more often limited than the authority of men over women. The eldest women whether mother-in-law

²⁸ It was only a high caste phenomenon. Among the lower caste population the differentiation in status based on the right to inherit property was largely unimportant and they actively participated in the occupational spheres. However this prejudice against women was legally abolished with the enactment of the Hindu Succession Act of 1956. By this both sons and daughters get equal rights to inherit the property of an intestate Hindu. For the first time it conferred the absolute rights over the property possessed by a Hindu women. Ibid., p. 13.

or daughter-in-law, was chiefly responsible for the direction and distribution of works among the other female members in the home.²⁹ Within the sphere of women's activities, a woman's authority usually depended on the position of her husband in the family. The wife of the eldest man of the household wielded paramount authority in women's affairs.

Marriage was both a religious and a social duty for Hindu men and women. Marriages were arranged by the elders of the families. Starting with the choice of a marriage partner it was the family's interests which took precedence over the individual's. Traditionally, Hindu marriages took place when girls had not even attained puberty.³⁰ In majority of the cases the boys also young. The young bride was a stranger and, therefore, she was absolutely helpless in the new home. Caste and religious traditions also influenced the socialization process of female and made them to accept the subordinate role as wife and mother in the family.³¹

29 A.D. Ross, n. 5, p. 132, M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 18.

30 Even though most of the traditional joint family ideals which are analysed here were confined to the caste Hindus, the practice of child marriage was closely followed by all the people of India belonging to different regions and castes, including the untouchable castes. William J. Goode, op. cit., n. 3, p. 232.

31 M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 19.

Although the actual arrangements and all necessary preparations for a marriage were done according to the decisions of the head of the household, in the choice of bride, women and more particularly the eldest woman of the household had a strong say. But the eldest male could generally succeed in forcing his will upon others if, as a last resort, he wished to do so.³² Thus only adults could initiate and effectively carry out all the negotiations necessary for a valid marriage satisfactory to both the families.

There was no privacy for the married couples. Private and emotional intimacy between the spouses were considered as threats to the survival of the joint family. Some lacked privacy due to the small homes in which a large joint family lived. But even when homes were large enough to permit physical privacy, the traditional values discouraged solitude.³³

"In customary thought and before the law, the wife was on a level with servants, slaves and other members of the lower social classes in the traditional Hindu family".³⁴ As noted earlier, both within the home and society in general,

32 Ibid., p. 17, W.J. Goode, *n.* 3, pp. 247-248.

33 Ann Baker Cottrell, "Outsiders' Inside View: Western Wives' Experiences in Indian Joint Families" in Journal of Marriage and the Family (May 1975), p. 402.

34 A.D. Ross, n. 5, p. 105.

there was segregation of sexes both before and after marriage. The relation of respect between elder and younger generations made it improper, if not uncommon to have an extremely emotional relationship between the spouses as well as between parents and children in a joint family. Unegalitarian practices which served to keep the husband and the wife apart included rules against letting husband and wife eat their meals together, or even playing with their children in front of their elders, going out for walks or social visits with their husbands, etc.³⁵ In addition, women were made to follow many avoidance practices. There was restraint between people of different age and between those of opposite sex. Most cruel practice among the avoidance was that of the pardah. In extreme cases it was a total seclusion of woman. The normal practice was for a woman to draw her sari over her face when she was with her husband and another adult was present. If the elder brother-in-law or mother-in-law was

35 For details see A. Aiyappan, "Sociology of Avoidance" in Dhirendra Narain (ed.), Explorations in the Family and other Essays (Bombay, 1975), pp. 193-205.

present, she should not talk to him at all.³⁶ In the joint family, for a male, the parents come first, the children second and the wife third. There was no external expressions of love or emotional feelings between husband and wife. Husband was superior to his wife. Wife has to show respect and adoration to her husband. They cannot exchange interests and tastes. They have to find companionship among others of their own sex within the family.³⁷ Even if they happen to walk together, then it was customary for the wife to follow behind her husband. Uttering his personal name and greeting him in front of others were also prohibited.³⁸ They met each other as members of the larger family in front of other men and women.

The relationship between parents and children was often remote. Parents were not supposed to express great tenderness toward their children when elder males are present.

36 William J. Goode, n. 3, p. 251. This pattern of actually hiding the face is found mainly in north-western part of India; it is not practised in the south, the West and the East. In general this strict segregation was maintained among the rich families. But among the poor families of villagers there was a separate set of rooms or part of the house for the women and children. Ibid. For a detailed understanding of this practice see Sylvia Vatuk, Kinship and Urbanization: White Collar Migrants in North India (Berkeley, 1972), pp. 119-22 and 140-47. M.S. Gore, n. 5, particularly the chapter on "The Husband-wife and mother-son relationships", pp. 174-97.

37 David G. Mandelbaum, Society in India (Bombay, 1972), p. 38.

38 Ibid., p. 39.

The relationship between father and son was one of reserve and respect. Even after the death of the grandfather, in the joint family the individual father may not be able to fully assume the paternal role towards his child, as far as the exercise of authority is concerned. In other words in the joint family, the younger brother cannot normally exercise authority over his own children even after the death of his own father, as long as the joint family exists as an unit. It was the eldest brother who replaces his father who exercises the role of final arbiter.³⁹ And the head of the joint family was supposed to care for all his dependents, not only his children, without any discrimination. This ideal of deference to parents was rarely questioned (mainly because of the total dependence of the children on the family) and in practice it endowed the elders with an authority that was not lightly ignored by their children. Father normally becomes stern and isolated in terms of authority as the son grows into adolescence. The orders given by the father was simply obeyed by the son without questioning. Even for clarification of the important matters the son would not go

39 M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 20. W.J. Goode, n. 3, p. 240.

to the father. After the son marries, and especially when he begets a son, he can become somewhat more independent, though he must always observe great respect for his father. When the father become old and infirm the son continues to give formal respect to his father, but in practice takes over the actual authority and the direction of the household.⁴⁰

The mother-son relationship was much more tender and gratifying one than that of the father-son relationship. However, showing extraordinary tenderness or enforcing strict discipline on her child, particularly for the young mother was hard since the ultimate authority in the household was centered with the grandparents.⁴¹ Traditionally, in the time of crisis, especially when the father dies the property and other interests of the young son was protected by the mother against any possible fraud by other members of the family.⁴² Widowed mother had considerable authority in the household when the children are young. But once the son becomes old enough to look after the family's economic activities her

40 David G. Mandelbaum, n. 37, pp. 46-47.

41 Ann Baker Cottrell, n. 33, p. 405.

42 M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 8.

authority reduces. Enforcement of authority on the adult son by the widowed mother was not upheld by the tradition. It was not fully legalised and the son could assert himself without resistance from the system.⁴³ But normally, the widowed mother had control over many significant activities of the family including the marriage of her grandchildren.

The mother-in-law — daughter-in-law relationship was one of the much talked of relationship. It was due to her young age and the fact that she was a stranger, the daughter-in-law's position in her husband's home was very low. Because of her relative experience and authoritarian position over the women of the household, the mother-in-law enforces her power, most of the time very crudely, on the new wife. The young wife enjoys a little independence, only when she gives birth to a son. Further, the strong emotional bond between the mother and son continues to operate even after son's marriage. And, as a result if he supports his mother or to his wife it causes strain in the family.⁴⁴

43 Ibid., p. 15.

44 A.D. Ross, n. 5, pp. 114-15.

Thus in the traditional Hindu joint family the overall authority was centered around the eldest male.⁴⁵ Even when a household was residentially nuclear and the eldest male of the family lived in a distant village, Hindu tradition gave the right to the eldest male to make all major decisions of the family.

However, this authority of the eldest male was often delegated. For example, when the eldest son gets married and begets a son and was old enough to look after the family activities, the father delegates his authority to the son in a number of spheres. In the case of women, the eldest woman in the household (if clever and strong willed person) often gained significant authority over time and influenced, at least, indirectly in the family decisions. In any case, she had considerable authority over the other women in the household. And, finally, when father becomes old and infirm it was usual for the son to take over the actual authority, but father had continued to enjoy the status of formal head of the family until his death.⁴⁶

45 Only in cases of senility or other proved disability on the part of the eldest male makes one of the younger males to take over the authority.

46 M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 15. W.G. Goode, n. 3, pp. 247-48.

INDIAN MODERN FAMILIES

The forces of modernization and social change, which we noted in the beginning of this chapter, have altered the marital and familial life all over India. But the extent of change is uneven, more prevalent in some areas and less in others. For example, the growth of modern cities meant that the way of life in these developed areas of the society is different from their rural counterpart. Further, within the city, the rich families which have accessibility to the modern amenities of life are much affected than the poor working class families in the urban areas.⁴⁷

However, almost all studies conducted since 1950s in the field of marriage and family in India agree that the traditional joint family structure, especially its strict pattern of authority and sex-based division of labour, has been undergoing a change.⁴⁸ All of them — from Kapadia to the very recent ones — found that the modern families, both

47 For the first time, T.K. Oommen has made a systematic analysis of possible different types of authority patterns among the different classes and occupational groups of the cities in an explorative study. The variables like the class, income, property, the period of stay in the area, mode of earning, the migration etc., are taken into consideration and analysed with reference to value orientations and nature of authority among the families of these urban groups. n. 18, pp. 57-93.

48 M.S. Gore, n. 5; A.D. Ross, n. 5; K.M. Kapadia, n. 15;

in rural and urban areas, are no more under the absolute control of the patriarch (of a past and ideal tradition) but it is now based on equality and economic rationality. In other words, individualism and autonomy are becoming the common feature in an increased number of families. As a result, the domination of grandfather over his son(s), or domination of one brother over another in the family is becoming the thing of the past.⁴⁹

However, the immense diversity and vastness of India and the fact that the existing studies in the field are limited (both in number and scope) make it rather impossible for any generalised statement about the modern family in India.

One of the earlier studies on the urban family in India was made by Ross. Her study was based on relatively well-educated middle class samples from Bangalore, a South India city. Her findings showed that only ten out of the

W.J. Goode, n. 3; I.P. Desai, Some Aspects of Family in Mahuva (Bombay, 1964); A.M. Shah, The Household Dimension of the Family in India (New Delhi, 1973).

49 George H. Conklin, "The Extended Family as an Independent Factor in Social Change: A Case from India" Journal of Marriage and the Family (November, 1974), pp. 798-804; G.N. Ramu, n. 9, pp. 4-5.

168 individuals who were interviewed told that the grandfather had been the main source of authority, while more than half of the sample (93) said that father was the major decision maker and interestingly nineteen of them claimed that the mother had wielded chief authority in the family. This is a real indication of mother's authority in the family and the father is only a nominal head. In other words mother enjoyed total authority over her children as well as the day-to-day affairs of the family in the absence of the father and sometimes even when he is present. However, such an exercise of authority is not expressed in public. She also observed that there was a change in the attitude of the elders as well as the young towards the selection of mate. The love marriages and intercaste marriages were although not encouraged directly but were not uncommon. The relationship between husband and wife was almost that of a joint decision-making body, and the egalitarian values were upheld by most of the men and women even though in practice most of the women leave the final decisions to men.⁵⁰

50 A.D. Ross, n. 5, particularly chapter 4, pp. 91-135 and chapter 8, pp. 235-79.

M.S. Gore's study, based on samples of Aggarwal families around Delhi, suggests that in fortythree per cent of the sample eldest male plays a very significant role but he does consult other relatives including his spouse in important areas like mate-selection; there was considerable involvement of other kin in important decisions. In the remaining sample majority asserted that the parent, or parents of the child concerned made the decisions.

The questions included in the study were who plays a major role in important decisions like schooling, occupation and mate-selection for the children. In the joint family when compared to that of the nuclear family, all the major decisions related to these areas were made by the eldest male (i.e. not the parent of the child). He made these decisions with or without consulting others in the family. There was not much rural-urban differences found in this pattern. However, it should not be mistaken that the parents in the nuclear families have made a major ideological decision to reject the advice of their elders. But the initiative was with the parents of the child and even if the eldest male makes some decisions there was discussion about these decisions between the elder male and the individual father or the

concerned individual for whom such a decision directly affected.⁵¹ Khatri also found similar results in his study. The eldest male continued as a symbol of family authority, but he did consult his wife and other relatives, including those outside his kin, especially in important areas like mate-selection.⁵² Gore also noticed that the elders no longer attempt as firmly as they were in the past to impose the traditional ways of life on their children.⁵³

However, in case of women only the eldest female member, especially the mother-in-law, was allowed to discuss directly with the eldest male. But she had many informal ways of influencing the decisions. In the area of mate selection, even after individual family units have been established, the heads of these sub-units consulted some of the elder kins. It was not that they were just consulted, but their advice and decisions carried weight in the final decision in this matter.

51 M.S. Gore, n. 5, particularly chapter 8, pp. 135-55.

52 A.A. Khatri, n. 19, p. 6.

53 M.S. Gore, n. 5, p. 150.

In the matter of education there was hardly any outside influence. Even in the joint family, it was found that one of the younger member (younger brother) because of his more schooling, had been the authority.

As far as women were concerned the traditional Hindu values were still holding good. Even after the legal sanction of property rights to women and change in her occupational and socio-economic status she was treated as inferior to men. For example, sharing the household work with their wife was normally refused by both western and Indian husbands and this action was legitimised by the normative prescriptions of both the societies. But in addition to it, in India, there is a reluctance on the part of wives themselves to allow their husbands to share the domestic duties.⁵⁴

Seniority in age or in generational status gave her a higher symbolic rank in relation to certain men in the family, but generally (even after the change in her legal and economic status) male superiority is continuing. She was never treated equal to a man.⁵⁵

54 G.N. Ramu, "Indian Husbands: Their Role Perceptions and Performance in Single-and-Dual-Earner Families" Paper presented at XI World Congress of Sociology (New Delhi, 1986, p. 25.

55 M.S. Gore, n. 5, particularly chapter 9, pp. 156-73.

Contrary to these findings, in another sample from Hyderabad City it was found that when compared to the non-employed mothers the employed mothers had greater power in making financial decisions, like investments and budgeting within the family. The employed mother's participation in an external system entails more outside household responsibilities, and thereby a concomitant of greater power. Another finding of this study was that due to the "employed-mother" role the traditional asymmetric husband-dominated family is changing toward a more symmetric or syncretic type of family. These families started using modern institutions like part-time child-care agencies and other household equipments and also there was a change in division of labour at home. Husband, children and servants took part in the household chores along with the wife.⁵⁶ This type of changes helped in reducing the role conflict between the spouses and it also reduced the household responsibilities of woman.

By using Blood and Wolfe's methods (model) of measuring the power within the family, Straus found that

56 V.V. Rao and V.N. Rao, n. 11, pp. 190-93.

conflicts between husband and wife and parent and children were considerably greater among the working class than among the middle class. Middle-class families were found to be more egalitarian than the working class families. A greater proportion of the working class families were characterised either as wife-dominated or as husband-dominated families. In relation to the relative power of husband and wife the study concludes that the combination of being middle class and having residence in a joint family household makes a man more powerful than being in a nuclear household.⁵⁷

Ramu's study suggests that the husband and wife dominate on some items and they had joint or egalitarian powers in others. But the education and income of the spouses inversely affected the decision-making powers of the spouses. One of the findings of the study was that low income and moderately educated men were mostly under the husband-dominated category, whereas, when there was more education for both the spouses then there was always the possibility of egalitarian

57 Murry A. Straus "Some Social Class Differences in Family Patterns in Bombay" in George Kurian (ed.), The Family in India - A Regional View (The Hague, 1974), pp. 233-48.

or joint decision-making or in some cases wife-dominated pattern of family. But he makes it clear that the overall pattern is neither autocratic nor patriarchic. It was one of egalitarian where a considerable degree of mutual consultation and influence characterised the decision-making among the couples.⁵⁸

In a different study, of dual and single-earner families, Ramu found that in decision-making both types of families were becoming egalitarian, with a slightly higher degree of equality in the dual-earner families.⁵⁹

A.A. Khatri observes that the age and educational factor affected the decision-making of the adolescents. In his sample, the secondary school teacher trainees had more autonomy in personal mobility, interaction with members of the opposite sex and nature of involvement of mate selection process when compared to the primary school teacher trainees.⁶⁰

58 G.N. Ramu, n. 9, pp. 1-36.

59 G.N. Ramu, n. 54, pp. 3-35.

60 A.A. Khatri, "Heterosexual Friendships and Involvement in mate-selection process of primary and secondary teacher trainees in Ahmedabad", in George Kurian (ed.), The Family in India - A Regional View (The Hague, 1974) pp. 335-49.

Above discussions makes it clear that the factors such as age, education, income, class and the pattern of residence (nuclear/extended/joint) influence the power dynamics within the family. With regard to the rural families and less educated and poor families in the cities, the authority and decision-making pattern is not clear as there is hardly any study on them.⁶¹

The egalitarian values of the modern times affected the marital and familial role relations between the spouses and the relationship between parents and children also. The trend in both the cases are towards equality, i.e. sharing of authority and interests.

61 Now-a-days among the rural population especially among the well-to-do and the high castes, the young men and women are showing an interest towards modern values and nuclear families. For details see H.D. Lakshmi-narayana "The rural family in transition" in John S. Augustine, n. 18, pp. 41-56.

Chapter Five

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this work has been to bring out the trends in the patterns of authority and decision-making processes in the family, with special reference to husband-wife and parent-child relationships, in three societies, viz., Britain, Japan and India.

In Britain, the pre-industrial society was highly authoritarian and patriarchal. The nature of relationship within the family was also influenced by the broader social structure. The law of primogeniture, the extensive influence of neighbours, lineage, kin, friends, the Church and the State and the deep sense of loyalty of the members of the individual family to the ancestors and the living kin made the individual autonomy and privacy nearly impossible.

Individual's interest was surrendered to the greater interest of the larger family group. There was no close relations between either husband and wife or between parent and child.

The marriage was arranged by the parents in consultation with the larger kin group and friends. Women were constantly under the supervision of men. The presence of a large number



of servants in the household made privacy rare for the rich and the poor lacked privacy because of their one or two room dwellings. The practice of sending children to other households as servants and apprentices also made most of the children, irrespective of their classes, to stay away from their parents, until their marriageable age. They were under the authority of the household head, where they served.

Among most of the aristocratic families, there was a strict sex-based division of labour and men were confined to their spheres of work and women were confined to their household chores. The authority and decision-making, including the most crucial ones like selection of marriage partner was done by the head of the household by keeping in mind the larger interest of the family and kin.

In the course of time, things began to change. The industrial revolution and the modern democratic values of life which followed it, changed the family structure both externally and internally. The outside kin lost its control over the individual family units and men and women started working together in the modern factories and business institutions. The unquestioned authority of the male head of family

was threatened. The economic independence of woman and adult children, social welfare and social security services, and material developments in society enabled the young men and women to pursue independent decision-making. Husband-wife relationship became more and more egalitarian. Most of the family decisions were arrived at by couples through discussion and the marriages have become completely based on mutual understanding of the concerned individuals. The pre-marital dating and sexual relationship, divorce and re-marriage have become common. The individual's interest and actions dominated their family decisions. The parents have lost their traditional and absolute control over their adult children. The individual freedom and autonomy came to be socially and legally recognised. Modern husband especially of the dual-earner families started cooperating with their wives in the domestic chores. The rigid sex-based division of labour ceased to exist.

Among the lower strata of the society both before and after the industrialization, women had some liberty (because of their bargaining financial power) in the family when compared to that of their counterparts in the upper

strata. Woman use to look after the family budgeting and even in some of the labouring class families, where man used to go to a distant place for work, woman acted as the real decision-maker, at least, during his absence. The children in these families served as labourers and they contributed to the family economy. The independent earning of an adult son made him more autonomous and in the modern period they were more interested to be independent of their parents and kin.

In the case of Japan, the trend is still more interesting. Even though the external relationships and behaviour of the family such as the size, the life cycle, the fertility rate, the life expectancy, the love marriages etc., are same as that of the West, as far as the internal behaviour, that is, inter-personal relationship is concerned the loyalty to the elder members (filial piety) is still strong. The hierarchical-vertical nature of relationship between the family members based on sex and age is still a strong social value, among most of the Japanese.

However, the past system of strict sex-based division of labour and the absolute control of father and husband over

his wife and children is no more prevalent; but the complete snapping of ties with the kin and parents is not upheld. In majority of cases marriages have become completely an independent area of interest for the concerned couple. The independent earnings of the adult children as well as that of the wife and the nature of occupation made most of the young men and women to lead an independent life.

The equality of sexes in almost all fields of life is legally upheld. The authority and control of a father or husband depends upon the relative position of his child and the wife. In most of the cases egalitarian values are upheld and mutual negotiation and consultation have become common. Among the lower strata, female are relatively free from the men's domination as compared to the upper strata. Women enjoyed freedom in divorce and such other areas. The modern ideology and developments affected almost all aspects of life and hence in the present day Japan among lower strata also men and women relationship is becoming more egalitarian.

As far as India is concerned this type of trend is visible only in some urban pockets of the country. Even in the cities there are some tradition fashioned families, which

are following the traditional pattern of authority structure. It is partially due to the lesser degree of Westernization and modernization, and partly due to the strong and rigid cultural values. The Western education, the changed occupational structure as well as the modern democratic values, no doubt, changed the traditional position of women and children but in areas like intercaste or inter-religious marriages changes are not accepted by the majority even today.

The personal law of different religious groups in the areas of marriage, inheritance and succession made it difficult for them to accept the modern values in this field. For example, the Muslim personal law, did not allow their women to take part in public life. They were almost confined to their home. The general trend among the majority of Hindu population is towards egalitarianism. The men and women now are participating in almost all activities of the life. In the modern families, especially where both the husband and wife are educated and living in the cities these trends are clearly visible.

But even today majority of couples who live in urban areas do not fully accept the idea of total independence of women. They still respect the traditional sex role, that is,

man as the principal bread-winner and the wife as a home-maker. This tendency is also seen in the parents' behaviour towards their children. Son is preferred to daughter as a rule. The education of daughter would be neglected just for the sake of the son's schooling. With regard to selection of mate also the son is given more freedom than a daughter. That is, the daughter's marriage is almost always arranged by their parents. The socio-economic environment is not yet conducive for a dramatic shift in the definition of the sex role.

However, the traditional joint families' influence of three generations or an old male's control over the rest of the family is almost a thing of the past. Men are free to mingle with opposite sex at least in public places. The inter-personal relationship between husband and wife and parent and children is becoming more democratic. Parents discuss the matter with their adult children before taking a decision which is going to affect the latter. Before taking the final decision husband, especially of the working couple families, consults his wife on many issues which are going to effect the family life. Thus there is a greater degree of equality among the individual family members particularly

among the couples, even though they may not express it in public.

In Britain and Japan the rule of primogeniture and loyalty to the larger kin group was a common aspect. In India the eldest son succeeded as the family head, but all the other male siblings had equal share in the family property in the past and this made the joint family more an unit of cooperation wherein everybody's interest was equally respected. The formal authority was with the father, but in reality it was shared among sons.

Women during the traditional society of Britain, Japan and India were all in the same subordinate position. They were confined to the domestic affairs. And within the house, as far as women were concerned, the eldest lady generally the mother-in-law was the ruler. The relative young age and the strange circumstances of the husband's family made the daughter-in-law to subordinate herself to the wishes of her mother-in-law. In Japan and India the role of a grand-mother, and mother-in-law was very significant because she had a strong hold over the young daughters-in-law as well as her grandchildren.

To some extent the strong tie between mother and son was also responsible for this kind of situation. The new wife was helpless and the only person whom she can look for support was her husband. And in case if the son was completely on his mother's side, the situation of daughter-in-law was even more pathetic. As for as the parent-children relationship is concerned in Japan the filial piety concept made them not to revolt or rebel against their fathers. Even adult married sons with children obeyed their father. Only after their father's retirement or death they became the head of the family. In Britain also it was almost the same. But in India the loyalty was further strengthened by caste and religious customs. Even in the case of families where the sons divided their property after their father's death, they showed mutual respect and understanding, at least during important events like marriage, death and other family festivities and crisis.

The change in all these aspects as observed earlier are mere adjustments in some cases, or a partial or a total change, to the new circumstances. In the urban educated young generation the trend is toward equality between the

sexes and they do not approve the traditional control of familial life. The modern families accept the fact that equality of sexes is an inevitable thing to lead a comfortable life. For example, the wishes of the young man to have educated as well as employed wife has become a necessity to improve the standard of life.

The three countries are different in many respects, but the common trend is that from rigid authoritarian patriarchal style they are moving towards an egalitarian familial life. The nature and degree of this trend vary according to the degree of education, the residential area, the class, age, sex and also to some extent due to the psychological perception of the people. The most important factor which is affecting all these aspects of family life is the degree of industrialization and modernization.

The British society which is fully modernized and now completely based on egalitarian values accepts the individual freedom and autonomy as the basis of authority and decision-making process in the family. In contrast, in Japan, even though it is equally modernized it does not totally give up

its traditional and cultural values. The family in Japan is 'externally modernized and internally traditional'. India is in a transitional phase. Modern values are accepted half-heartedly in most of the cases. In other words, Indians do not claim themselves neither as Westernized nor fully traditional. There is a unique mixture of Western and traditional values in all walks of Indian life. Thus, industrialization and modernization are the major factors which affected the British family system and in Japan the political and legal factors played a dominant role. In the case of India the socio-religious reforms, the independent movement and the socio-legal changes introduced by the government played a vital role in this regard.

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