



Changing Dynamics of Women Role in Family Structure

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ABSTRACT

Women businesspersons are those women who think of a business enterprise, initiate it, organise and combine factors of production, operate the enterprise and undertake risks and handle economic uncertainty involved in running it. But in family its quietly different because women may have many roles within a family system including, but not limited to, loving parent, caring partner, financial contributor, stay-at-home parent, and part-time working parent. The role of women in the family structure in India has been evolving over the years, influenced by cultural, social, economic, and legal factors. Traditionally, Indian society was patriarchal, and women's roles were largely confined to domestic responsibilities and taking care of the family. However, with the changing times and increased awareness about gender equality, women's roles in the family have been gradually shifting. Historically, women in India have been expected to fulfill certain traditional roles, such as being a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. They were responsible for managing household chores, cooking, childcare, and maintaining family harmony. Often, their opinions and decisions were overshadowed by male family members. With advancements in education and urbanization, women's access to education has improved significantly. This has led to an increasing number of women pursuing higher studies and entering the workforce. Today, women in India actively participate in various professional fields and contribute to the family's financial well-being. In urban areas, the family structure has seen greater changes compared to rural areas. Dual-income families, where both spouses work, have become more common. In such families, women play a more active role in financial decision-making and sharing household responsibilities.

Women's empowerment initiatives, legal reforms, and awareness campaigns have led to increased recognition of women's rights and gender equality. These efforts have encouraged women to assert their individuality and actively participate in family decision-making processes. The dynamics of women's roles in the family structure are undergoing significant changes worldwide, including in India. These changes are driven by various factors, including shifts in societal norms, advancements in education and technology, economic opportunities, and increasing awareness of gender equality. Here are some key aspects of the changing dynamics of women's roles in the family structure. Increased access to education for women has led to a higher number of women pursuing higher studies and entering various professional fields. Women are now more likely to have careers and play active roles in the workforce, contributing to the family's financial stability. Women's participation in the labor force has resulted in greater economic independence. This economic empowerment has given women more say in family decision-making, financial matters, and planning for the future. The concept of dual-income families, where both partners work outside the home, has become more prevalent. This trend has led to a more equitable distribution of household responsibilities and financial burdens. There is a gradual shift from the traditional joint family system to nuclear families, particularly in urban areas. In nuclear families, women may have more autonomy in decision-making and greater freedom in managing their lives. As women take on professional roles, the burden of household chores and caregiving is being shared more equally among family members. Men are increasingly participating in household tasks and parenting. Women, like men, are increasingly prioritizing their education and careers, leading to a trend of delayed marriage and parenthood. This shift allows women more time to establish themselves professionally and personally before starting a family.

KEYWORDS: Gender equality, Dual-income, Financial-ability, Decision-making, Women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of women's roles within family structures have undergone significant changes in recent decades, reflecting shifts in societal norms, economic conditions, and cultural attitudes. These changes have impacted various aspects of women's lives within the context of family, including their roles as mothers, partners, caregivers, and breadwinners. The role of women within the family has transformed over time, reflecting changes in societal norms, cultural attitudes, and economic realities. Historically, women were primarily assigned roles as homemakers and caregivers, responsible for maintaining the household, raising children, and tending to the emotional needs of family members. However, in recent decades, there has been a notable shift in these roles, with women taking on multifaceted responsibilities that extend beyond traditional boundaries. Today, women in families often play the role of partners and co-decision makers alongside their spouses or partners. They contribute to important family choices, such as financial planning, education, and lifestyle decisions. This shift is indicative of a more equitable partnership dynamic, where both partners share in the responsibilities of managing a household. As mothers, women continue to be central figures in nurturing and raising children. However, their approach to parenting has evolved to accommodate their other roles and responsibilities. Many women juggle careers or educational pursuits while also being actively involved in their children's lives, participating in activities, education, and emotional support. This more active and engaged parenting style reflects changing norms and the recognition of the importance of both parents' involvement in children's development. In addition to their roles as partners and mothers, women

often serve as caregivers for other family members, including elderly parents or relatives with health issues. The caregiving role highlights women's compassion, empathy, and willingness to support their loved ones during times of need.

Furthermore, many women contribute significantly to the family's financial stability. With more women entering the workforce and pursuing careers, they have become essential breadwinners, sharing the responsibility of providing for the family's financial needs. This financial contribution not only enhances the family's economic well-being but also underscores the evolving gender dynamics within households. Women also continue to be the emotional bedrock of families, providing emotional support, nurturing relationships, and maintaining strong social bonds. Their ability to foster open communication and create a sense of unity contributes to the overall cohesion and well-being of the family unit. Overall, the modern role of women in families reflects a complex interplay of various responsibilities, highlighting their adaptability, resilience, and ability to excel in diverse domains. This evolving role aligns with broader societal shifts toward gender equality, empowerment, and recognition of women's multifaceted contributions within the family and society as a whole. As women continue to navigate these diverse roles, their influence and impact on family dynamics remain instrumental in shaping the fabric of our communities.

PART OF WOMEN IN FAMILY STRUCTURE

Historically, women in India have often been assigned the primary responsibility of homemaking and caregiving. This includes managing household chores, cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children, elderly family members, and extended relatives. Women are often expected to fulfill traditional marital and maternal roles, which can include prioritizing the needs of their husbands and children. These roles emphasize self-sacrifice and dedication to the family's well-being. In India, many families live in joint or extended family setups, where multiple generations live together under one roof. Women often play a crucial role in maintaining harmony and relationships within the extended family, which may involve mediation and conflict resolution. While traditionally women's education was limited, there has been significant progress in recent decades. Increasing numbers of women are pursuing higher education and entering the workforce. This shift is gradually challenging traditional norms and expanding women's roles beyond the home. Women's economic contributions are often undervalued due to their unpaid labor in household activities. However, many women also contribute financially by working outside the home, often in informal sectors or as part of the agricultural workforce.

Urbanization has brought about changes in family structures, with more nuclear families and greater exposure to modern ideas. Women in urban areas often have greater access to education, career opportunities, and more autonomy in decision-making. In rural areas, women may be heavily involved in agricultural work alongside their domestic responsibilities. Their roles in farming, animal husbandry, and other activities are essential to household sustenance. Women in India are increasingly advocating for their rights and challenging traditional gender roles. Women's empowerment movements have led to greater awareness of issues such as domestic violence, dowry, and gender-based discrimination. Legal reforms, such as the prohibition of dowry and the criminalization of child marriage, have aimed to protect women's rights within families. Awareness campaigns and support networks also play a role in promoting women's well-being. India's diverse cultural and religious landscape means that women's roles can vary widely depending on local traditions and beliefs. Some communities may have more egalitarian norms, while others may adhere to more traditional gender roles.

CHANGES IN THE ROLE OF WOMEN

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality in India. Efforts to increase women's education, enhance their economic opportunities, and challenge harmful cultural practices are gradually reshaping women's roles within family structures and society at large. While traditional roles persist in some contexts, ongoing social and economic changes are gradually fostering more equitable family dynamics and empowering women to pursue diverse roles and aspirations. More women in India are pursuing higher education and entering the workforce. Education has empowered women to pursue careers, contribute to household income, and engage in decision-making processes within the family. Marriages are increasingly based on compatibility and shared values rather than solely on arranged marriages. Women have more agency in choosing their partners and asserting their preferences. Urbanization and economic opportunities have led to a shift from joint or extended families to nuclear families. In nuclear families, women often have more autonomy and decision-making power.

The rise of dual-income families has led to a more equitable distribution of financial responsibilities between partners. Women's contributions to household income are more recognized and valued. Women's empowerment movements and increased awareness of gender equality issues have led to a greater focus on women's rights within families. Women are advocating for their rights and challenging traditional norms that restrict their opportunities. Women's involvement in decision-making processes within the family has increased. They contribute to financial planning, education choices for children, and other important family matters. Women are increasingly delaying marriage and childbirth to pursue education and career goals. This has implications for family planning and the timing of childbirth. Many women successfully manage the dual responsibilities of work and family, negotiating work-life balance and often relying on supportive partners and extended family networks. Access to technology and social media has exposed women to diverse ideas and perspectives, fostering a sense of independence and encouraging them to challenge traditional roles. Legal changes, such as the criminalization of dowry and the implementation of laws against domestic violence, have aimed to protect women's rights within families and reduce harmful practices. Women's improved access to healthcare and family planning services has influenced family size and child-rearing decisions. Women have more control over their reproductive choices. There is a growing awareness of gender equality, and families are increasingly recognizing the importance of equal opportunities for their daughters and sons.

SUMMATION

The changing dynamics of women's roles in family structures reflect a broader societal shift toward gender equality, individual autonomy, and the recognition of women's diverse contributions within the family and beyond. These changes have positive implications for women's empowerment, family dynamics, and the promotion of more inclusive and equitable societies. It's important to note that while progress has been made in many parts of the world, there are still instances where gender inequality persists in household responsibilities. Women may continue to face expectations and pressures to fulfill traditional roles, even as they pursue careers and other interests. Achieving true gender equality in household responsibilities requires ongoing efforts to challenge stereotypes, promote shared responsibilities, and ensure that all members of a household have the opportunity to contribute and thrive based on their individual choices and abilities.

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