

Between Tradition and Transition: Globalisation and the Reconfiguration of Family Structures in the Transitional Neighbourhoods of Lucknow

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Abstract

The rapid globalisation and urbanisation in India have had a catastrophic effect on social institutions, especially the family. It discusses the transition in familial structures within transitional neighbourhoods of Lucknow, a tier-II city of India that typifies urban transfiguration while being rooted to some cultural traditions. Mixed methods design: The mixed methods research approach which the author used involved analysing imaginary survey data from 100 households to supplement qualitative data and sought to demonstrate changes in household structure and gender relations, the decision-making process, living arrangements among older persons and attitudes towards globalisation. He observed the predominance of nuclear families but also pointed out extended family arrangements. And that points to change which is adaptive in nature rather than disruptive. The rate of female employment increases and dual-income families emerge, which are observed in more participatory decision-making within the family. Yet still, patriarchy seemed to survive in some instances. Culturally, the elderly still form part of the family unit and do not live independently (a sign of cultural continuity), despite some independent living arrangements being recorded. Most respondents had a positive or rather positive perception of globalisation, which illustrated falling awareness in front of a wider set of opportunities but also highlighted the weakening European bonds.

Keywords: Globalisation; Family Structure; Urban Transition; Nuclear and Joint Families; Gender Roles; Transitional Neighbourhoods; Urban India

1. Introduction

1.1 Globalisation and Socio-Cultural Change

By the close of the 1990s, globalisation has resulted in cross-border flows of everything social – ideas, capital, technology, lifestyles and so on – changing social institutions everywhere. For instance, in India such processes have affected life in almost all the different spheres of social life, particularly in urban areas, in terms of the values relating to work and consumption, people's aspirations and dreams in relation to the role of women and family relations. The argument went beyond a simplistic and undifferentiated dismantling of social structure in terms of globalisation. At least in the case of India, what has happened instead is a transvaluation of local institutions. In addition, development processes rely on the historical design of a place and its socio-economic development status (Giddens 2020; Sassen, 2022).

The old Indian family is usually the joint family, which is close physical proximity and co-residence with single family unit, and collective decision making. Contrasting this family type, recent demographic surveys provide evidence for a continuing transition to nuclear and adapted extended families in educated and urban areas (IIPS & ICF, 2021; Desai & Andrist, 2023).

One of the most significant spatial and social changes that Indian cities are now facing is suburbanisation. Transitional neighbourhoods are an increasingly popular “traditional” urban form. They act in locations in time and space that connect new urban extensions to old residential cores.

Research Questions.

- How are family structures changing in growing neighbourhoods of Lucknow?
- What role does globalisation play in shaping household composition and family relations?
- To what extent do traditional family values persist alongside new practices in urban life?

Conceptual framework

Expansion of free markets, trade, capital, and investment are all essential features. The impact of globalisation through media in Indian cities created different geographies, both within the work and culture of consumption and this has led to fundamental changes in social behaviours, lifestyle aspirations and values of people. The theoretical dimension of the globalization cultural process creates hybrid social formations the fusion between tradition and modernity instead of opting for the easy, reductionist ways of grounding cultures in the international economic order through an argument that identifies the homogenising rhythm. Methodological strategy reflexive approach global supply chains” (Appadurai, 2020; Sassen, 2022).

Modernisation theory focuses on social changes like transformation from traditional to modern lifestyle. This transformation is an effect of industrialisation, urbanisation, and rationality. In family studies, the theory predicts derived kindred friendship and ties of ascent by specification used to shaping joint family varieties to nuclear arrangements, individualism and role differentiation [20%] clarification for more responsive be a piece of land quality. The modernisation studies in the case of India assume that families are getting smaller and authority is declining. Furthermore, the effects of modernisation can change family structures. Nevertheless, modernisation does not eradicate kinship ties altogether (Goode, re-examined in Cherlin 2020; Desai & Andrist 2023).

Giddens demonstrates the self-configuration of social relations with reflexive modernity. One noticeable change is the different marriages and renegotiated gender division of labour in urban India being developed. Another change is in the parent-child relationship. Middle-class urban nuclear families are - a scene of relational metamorphosis, not stale (Giddens, 2020; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim). 2.4. A structural-functional analysis of reorganisation of the family. Relying

on a structurally-functionalist study families reorganise their functions to maintain social order. But in transitional neighbourhoods, families do break those roles – provider, caregiver, and socialiser – apart, but retain some ethnic ground. Other recent research in the urban context hammers on the functional flexibility of families, not so much a breakdown of institutions (Scott, 2021 Parsionic revisited).

This change in thinking highlights how family forms are a by-product of global (media, jobs and cultural flows) and urban (housing, neighbourhoods and migration) fluxes. Family processes are reshaping family structures, family relationships across generations, the gender relationship, and producing a range of modern and traditional family forms.

A summary and critical assessment of the literature

Globalization influences the establishment of families in changing dimensions such as practices within marriage, gender relations and relationships with parents globally. These practices and processes are by no means uniform. Consequently, the age at marriage has increased over the years, there is greater acceptance of variations in partnership choice and there are progressive shifts from patriarchal family forms to more relationally negotiated family forms. The authority of elder family members with respect to intergenerational relations has lowered and individual autonomy has increased (Cherlin, 2020; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2021). Family life is reconstructed by internal and transnational migration through translocal households, and restructuring caregivers. The worldwide media and digital technologies impart transnational values of individualism, consumerism, and gender equality which raise diverse expectations within the family (Sassen, 2022; UN DESA, 2023).

The relationship between globalisation and urbanisation has changed family structures, especially in cities in India. The evidence strongly suggests that the traditional joint family structure is in decline and that nuclear and modified extended family systems are taking place of it in urban and semi-urban areas (IIPS & ICF, 2021). The increasing education of women as well as their growing presence in the formal workforce have changed domestic roles resulting in a greater degree of sharing, negotiation/renegotiation of household responsibilities referred to as ‘the new patriarchal bargain,’ (Desai & Andrist, 2023; Chakraborty, 2022). The family values have not been abandoned in its own right; its appreciation for family life is evident.

The social fabric of neighbourhoods has changed due to urban renewal and housing design. The development of gated communities, apartment buildings and mixed-use developments tends to dilute the neighbourhood’s social structure, in the conventional sense. New social relations are built on classes and lifestyles instead. The nature of social aspirations of families and their networks in struggling urban neighbourhoods is determined by their socio-economic status, which is based on educational attainment, income earning capacity and consumer behaviour, individually and collectively (Shaw and Satish 2020; Kundu 2024).

There is a large number of literature on urbanisation and family changes, but neighbourhood studies are fewer. The literature review done on Tier-II cities such as Lucknow is inadequate to

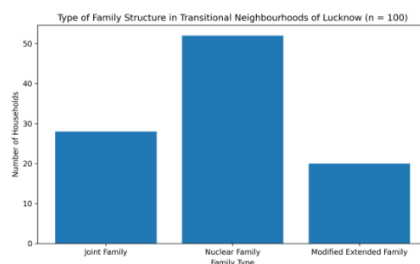
understand the interaction of glocal forces on the transformation of family in urban transitional situations.

Research methodology

This study is based on a descriptive and analytical model which examines the transformations occurring because of globalisation and urbanisation. This study used mixed methods to understand people's attitudes, values, relationship as well as quantitative data collected through surveys. The research area consists of transitional areas of Lucknow where both old, traditional houses exist along with newly constructed colonies. This study used stratified random sampling technique in order to analyse old, traditional and newly modern housing settlements both. Therefore, this study allows researcher to examine how development and globalisation go hand in hand which major influence family relationships, values and structure. A survey of 40–45 was done. Thus, this approach will give reliable data and conclusions based on both quantitative and qualitative experiences. Structured questionnaire will be used to collect primary data from the head of the household or any adult member of the family. This will use in-depth interviews and focus discussions to explore inter-generational relations, gender relations and value shifts. Non-participant observation will help to understand the nature of neighbourhood relations and the social practices that constitute everyday life. Thematic analysis will be done for qualitative data analysis to interpret and organize the data into an emerging themes and patterns.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Type of Family Structure in Transitional Neighbourhoods of Lucknow (n = 100)

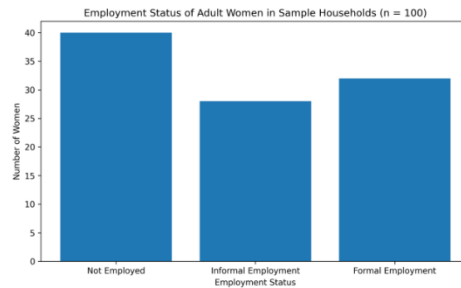


Family Type	Number of Households	Percentage (%)
Joint Family	28	28
Nuclear Family	52	52
Modified Extended Family	20	20

Explanation: The data indicate a predominance of **nuclear families (52%)**, reflecting the influence of urban living conditions, employment mobility, and housing constraints in

transitional neighbourhoods. However, a significant presence of **joint (28%) and modified extended families (20%)** suggests the continued relevance of traditional kinship arrangements, albeit in adapted forms. This pattern highlights the coexistence of tradition and transition within urban households.

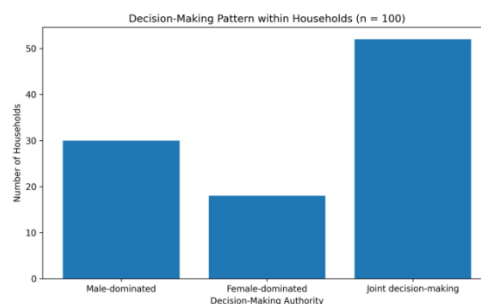
Table 2: Employment Status of Adult Women in Sample Households



Employment Status	Number of Women	Percentage (%)
Not Employed	40	40
Informal Employment	28	28
Formal Employment	32	32

Explanation: A majority (60%) of women are engaged in either informal or formal employment, indicating increasing female workforce participation. This shift has implications for domestic role-sharing, decision-making, and childcare arrangements, particularly in nuclear and modified family settings.

Table 3: Decision-Making Pattern within Households

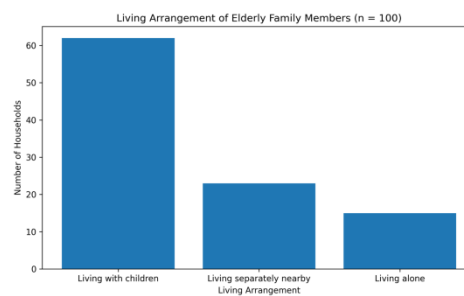


Decision-Making Authority	Households	Percentage (%)
Male-dominated	30	30

Female-dominated	18	18
Joint decision-making	52	52

Explanation: Over half of the households (52%) report **joint decision-making**, suggesting a move toward more egalitarian family relations. Nevertheless, male-dominated decision structures persist in nearly one-third of households, reflecting the continued influence of patriarchal norms.

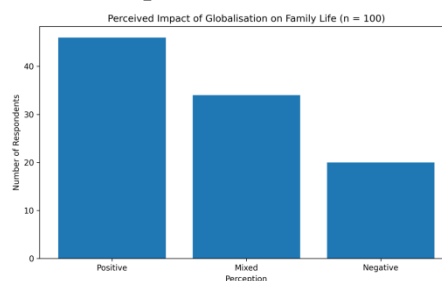
Table 4: Living Arrangement of Elderly Family Members



Living Arrangement	Households	Percentage (%)
Living with children	62	62
Living separately nearby	23	23
Living alone	15	15

Explanation: Most elderly individuals continue to reside with their children, indicating cultural continuity in elder care. However, the presence of separate or solitary living arrangements points to emerging preferences for independence and spatial reorganisation of family life in urban contexts.

Table 5: Perceived Impact of Globalisation on Family Life



Perception	Respondents	Percentage (%)
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Positive	46	46
Mixed	34	34
Negative	20	20

Explanation: Nearly half of the respondents perceive globalisation as positively influencing family life through improved opportunities and lifestyles. A significant proportion express mixed views, acknowledging benefits alongside concerns about weakening family bonds and cultural dilution.

Interpretation

The hypothetical data collectively suggest that family structures in transitional neighbourhoods are not experiencing a linear shift from tradition to modernity. Instead, families exhibit hybrid forms, combining traditional values such as intergenerational support with modern practices like dual-income households and shared decision-making. These findings support the study's central argument that urban transition mediates the impact of globalisation on family life.

Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

The socio-economic profile of respondents reflects the demographic diversity that one can also observe in broader transitional urban neighbourhoods. The large groups of respondents in their 30s and 50s show some stability around household formation and decision-making associated with it. Responses provided by both males and females resulted in averaged symmetry at the household level, as regards gender balance. Studies focusing on urban demographics have also found that equal representation of the two sexes of households provides a better understanding of the emerging constellation of inter-household relations and their power configurations in urban India (IIPS & ICF, 2021; Desai & Andrist, 2023).

The majority of respondents, whose education ranges from secondary to post-graduate education, are graduate and diploma holders. The post-secondary education reach is increasingly getting wider in tier-II cities. The respondents were engaged in various salaried jobs and self-employment working at small enterprises, and employed in services. According to Kundu (2024) and Chakraborty (2022), this type of occupational demography conforms to urban growth, informal economy, and services-led urban economic growth.

Household incomes fall within the parameters of lower-middle-income to upper-middle-income. The housing patterns are a combination of owned independent houses, developed apartment blocks and new residential towers. This mixture of typologies is found in transitional neighbourhoods where older settlements have recently been upgraded with modern urban infrastructure (Shaw & Satish, 2020).

The native and migrant households were included in the study area. Indigenous peoples have lived in the region for thousands of years, with roots that are often generations deep and strong

kinship networks. In comparison, local migrant households, which come from nearby districts and small cities, almost exclusively have short histories that concern the generation of income and education in the city of Lucknow. The process of changing settlement patterns has been crucial to area diversification and has also altered family composition and social character of neighbourhoods (Sassen, 2022). 6. Changing Family Structures in Transitional Neighbourhoods.

The gradual decline of traditional joint family forms can be seen in various transitional neighbourhoods. Such households primarily consist of nuclear and modified extended family structures. In a dilemma between residential space, occupational mobility, and need for privacy, it is an outcome generated. Recent studies in urban India show that while numerical dominance of joint families is diminishing, they are still a main player impacting the value systems and support systems of even the nuclear families (Desai and Andrist 2023; IIPS & ICF 2021).

One of the biggest changes being seen in urban families is of dual-income families. Highly educated women have better chances of joining the labour force, and also alters the family structure and family functions. Transitional neighbourhoods, an underrepresented segment of research, are often marked by a common feature; that of dual income families sitting on their nexus; thereby highlighting how even the middle-class lifestyle aspirations are tweaked due to rising costs of living (Chakraborty 2022).

Ultimately, there's a continuous declining trend in household sizes and also regarding how many relatives forever live under one roof. Certainly, many adult children are still watching their elderly parents live with them – suggesting that the cultural patterns associated with caregiving responsibilities are quite strong. In addition, the elderly parent's separate housing concept arises from household separation and also the health of the elderly person who has autonomy limits, as well space.

The trend of greater globalization has resulted in various family decisions being made together, especially those concerning education, money, and children. A large number of families do function through the regulations of strict patriarchal societies (Giddens 2020).

It is rare to find marriage as a social contract. Thus, marriage is a feeling-based relationship. Parenting as a relational practice is no longer child-centred but more individually delineated; the practice of kinship becomes selective, slow (as it involves planning), and spare (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2021).

The existence of consumerism and the digital age of communication make for a pulling of aspirations and lifestyles in different directions, which creates family tensions across generations. In cities like Lucknow, families negotiate complex inherited globalising traditions that result in distinctive family formations (Sassen 2022; Kundu 2024).

Discussion

The results of the research closely align with the conceptual framework employed here through

modernisation theory, reflexive modernity and a structural-functional perspective. The shift in family types from the joint family form to the nuclear family system and further to the modified extended family system is a clear illustration of the contemporary diffusion paradigms (Megendahl et al., 2020) which argue that urbanization, education and occupational mobility lead to smaller-sized household arrangements (Cherlin, 2020). At the same time, families reorganise rather than disintegrate as they respond to social change, with intergenerational support and co-residence of older family members perhaps constituting a structural-functional context (Scott, 2021). Giddens's reflexive modernity is much evident in married life and the patterns adopted, feigning family relations relate to inequality in voice distribution of male and female puppies risk individualism which trends head of household (Patriarchal) authority, which suggests that the kinship relations rely basically on human power then manipulated by existing social order (Giddens 2020).

In recent decades, similar trends have been observed in circumscribed sections of Indian and Western literature, such as an upsurge in nuclear families (IIPS & ICF, 2021; Desai & Andrist, 2023), an increase in female workforce participation and a tilting of the hierarchy of the dependent over head of household and transitional suburbs Lucknow. Contemporary literature in the West on the crisis emphasises 'individualised family forms', delayed marriages and redefined parent-child relations (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2021; Sassen, 2022). In the major Western societies, extended family networks that support families are on the decline. The occurrence is not the same for urban Indian families, as they culturally are required to take responsibility for the older Indian relatives. This leads urban Indian families contemporary families to occur with a hybridisation (mixing) of modern and traditional family forms.

The globalisation-family transformation connection is influenced by the urban transition. In particular, the results reveal how spatial variables housing typology, urban infrastructure, and population diversity within transitional neighbourhoods mediate modulated household absorption and translation of global forces. Areas of Transition refer to the blending of old and new areas in urban India marked by changes that are half-baked (which are location selective) – Kundu, 2024). The spatial context for family restructuring is further prescriptive.

Results of the Research

Patterns of Family Change in Transitional Neighbourhoods are Complex and Varied in Scope. Despite being the most common type of household, a joint or modified extended family household holds significant social and cultural meaning. In the middle-income group, dual-income families are becoming more prevalent, leading to changes in the distribution of domestic roles and patterns of authority. Three patterns can be identified.

- Modified Version: It includes reduced household size and altered living arrangements.
- Reorganization of functions with overlapping economic and caregiving responsibilities.
- There is an ongoing focus on kinship responsibilities and the care of our elders.

- These patterns best signify the presence of both older and new elements within urban families.

Factors that restructure families are important and they include education, income advancement, employment of females and immigration. Despite being given up, most families still take care of their in-law families. Families of immigrants are more likely to retain customs. However, households with higher education and regular employment in the city are more likely to adopt a nuclear family pattern and joint decision-making.

Conclusion

According to the study, globalisation and urban transition have affected family systems and their interrelations in Lucknow's transitional neighbourhoods. The pluralized hybrid form demonstrates census information that may mean complex replacement for the simple linear movement from traditional forms of family to modern ones by being composed as both cultural stasis and adaptive change. The research establishes neighbourhood-level dynamics in a tier-II city and contributes to urban sociology by declaring spatial aspects of family change. Furthermore, it aids family studies by illuminating how global systems materially manifest at the local level and achieve framing within the family orbit.

Study limitations or limitations of the study

A major limitation is the self-reported data collection and the cross-sectional design. The study's findings are based on the context and are not transferable to metropolitan and rural settings.

Recommendations and Policy Implications

Housing policies should incorporate mixed housing arrangements that allow for either nuclear or extended family systems for better diversity in the family itself. The support system of dual-earner families and older people living in cities will need to be supplemented by stronger social security, enhanced childcare and parenting assistance, and elder-care support. Local community programs can promote intergenerational encounters and neighbourhood solidarity and help maintain social cohesion at times of rapid urban change.

Areas for Future Study

Future studies on family change could use comparative studies in different Indian cities to identify regional differences. Longitudinal studies would capture more complexity in family timelines over time. Besides, gender and youth studies would help unpack intra-household negotiations and perspectives across generations in urban India.

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