Chapter 7

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In early 1990s, India opened its iron doors for foreign companies and entered into a new era of globalization. Soon, globalization started spreading its wings through the means of establishment of multinational companies all around in India. Consequently, a number of multinational companies mainly dealing in information technology initiated their set ups in state of art architectures. In north India, Gurgaon emerged as a main hub of these companies and rapidly witnessed a new-fangled environment of multinational companies. These companies began to hire people from the engineering institutes in which most of them belonged to middle class families. In order to get better opportunities and handsome pay packages, these people took the job offered by these companies hand to hand. And accordingly, they started living in Gurgaon apart from their parents.

The nuances of the appearance of these companies were not only restricted to the field of industries, but also penetrated into the personal lives of people working with these organizations. The people (respondents of the present study) employed in these companies belonged to middle class families where traditions and values were given utmost importance. On the contrary, they faced a new type of environment at their work place, totally different from the government sector companies. The strict time limits for meeting the targets always keep them busy during the working hours and many of the times even after that. But once they form their own family of procreation and enter into the married life, it brings many transformations in many fronts of their personal and professional life. Many research participants experience themselves locked into jobs, inside and outside the home. This structural interlocking of household and the corporate system delineates the regions that this study has explored.

In the present scenario, it would be justified calling these families as the representative of new elite segment of the society which is gradually shaping up. They have their own philosophy and do not bother spending leisurely on amenities of modern life. They are
the face of ‘progressive middle class’ of the present Indian society which believe in living global life.

In the present study I found that role strain is one of the major issues in such type of families. The research families have accommodated more or less successfully to dilemmas posed for them by work and family relationships. They are facing role strain between different roles as a professional, as a husband, as a son, as a component of their parent family and most importantly as a careerist. These people are steadily withdrawing themselves from their collective social life, from their traditional kinship network and to a great extent from their ‘social desires’. The disagreement in the demands of different type of roles from their parents’ side and from organization produces role strain in the mind of these professionals. Eventually, this role strain effects their orientation and they are gradually withdrawing themselves from the family congregations. But from this type of attitude one should not draw the conclusion that they have gone far away from their parental family. I found that most of the time they leave the issues related to role strain unresolved. This clearly symbolizes their deep attachment to the traditional Indian family values where obeying the parents is still considered as a value.

Another major aspect of role strain arises between the different roles performed by the female counterpart of the family. In present study, all wives except one, work as an IT professional in MNCs. Here, different pattern came out with respect to the household roles of the women. Conventionally, in Indian family, women are supposed to take care of household works while in the present case they almost equally contribute in the household economy. So it would be trivial to associate them with the domestic duties. In present study, they are not assigned to do those domestic tasks. In many of the cases, their husband equally contributes in the household tasks. Here, we can see a slight shift in the traditional roles associated with the status of a woman in a family setting. These families of two members utilize time and space and rely on their physical, emotional availability to each other.

Family is supposed to be a system which absorbs all the tensions and conflicts. But, here only two members constitute the family. So at times situation goes beyond control
due to lack of human resource at home and work pressure at office. Additional family member like parents of any of the member found to be very constructive in these situations. As in one case, presence of mother of husband helped in resolving the household related issues and that inflow the true essence of leisure in real sense of matter.

Perception regarding having the children seems to be taken over by new ideology. Tendency of having children late after marriage is found to be increasing among these families. The reason behind it might be their fascination towards the corporate life which gives them money to fulfil their desire of spending a plentiful life. They consider children as a hindrance at this point of their rapidly rising career and do not want to think for having them at least for 7-8 years. This tendency shows different patterns than that of traditional Hindu notion of having children which is associated with the concept of successors.

On the other hand, these families of young professionals also spare some time for the devotional deeds. They truly believe in Hindu deities and their worship. They clearly outline the boundary of separation between corporate culture of professional life and religious behaviours and practices of Hindu family. They all show full faith in Hindu religion and believe in practicing the rituals. However, their attitude towards other religions is sensible.

We have seen that ‘lack of time’ in corporate setting is a factor in limiting the research families’ abilities to arrange their family and maintain its values in more satisfying ways. An increase in the time of family vis-à-vis work organization appears critical in altering the inclination towards traditional values. They desire to queue up in the elite club and earn all the amenities of modern lifestyle. In spite of their corporate lifestyles, they still dream in the world of traditional values. They are coloured with the corporate essence only from outside while from inside they are still deeply attached to their traditional values. Planting a *tulsi* plant in their terrace garden and hidden social desires to bring repute to their parental family clearly indicate that they do not want to leave their embodied traditions. Hence, the modern ideology of family also leads people to expect that emotional needs will be met within the context of family and its values.
Addressing the multi-dimensional analysis of family in corporate setting, it can be said that these families of young professionals truly represent the progressive middle class of urban Indian society who are gradually moving away from their traditional family values. In their personal lives, both husband and wife rely on each other overwhelmingly. Their relation to their parents is of neutral kind neither too warm as before nor cold. They want to have children at least 7-8 years after their proper settlement in career. They all seem to be very ambitious and do not consider traditions a hurdle in their way of progress. They believe in leading a global life and wish to earn all modern amenities of elite lifestyle. Though they spend most of their time in the corporate environment created by multinational organizations, they still keep faith in religion and perform rituals as they should be and give appropriate regards to their parental family and its traditions.

This study also indicates the viability of gaining entry into families for purpose of observation. Coupled with intensive interviewing, observations of even few hours in the lives of families can help us develop baseline information about them. Gaining entry depends on the rapport developed in the initial interviews whereby the input of the family is seriously solicited and considered. And when research questions have meaning for them, the procedure is clear and their assistance is valued. Such a collaborative research procedure involves research families in the active process of learning about themselves. The potential of this type of process can be consciously helpful in developing a new methodology.

As a researcher we can help to draw out the interfaces of family with the modern work culture by considering a collaborative approach to the research process. Just as organizations have advisory board, we might consider developing similar procedures in conducting large scale family research. Social Scientists can participate in this process by critically examining the connections between social relations and other social institutions. Research such as that reported here, which describes the interactional universe between family values and corporate culture in a small number of families, is only one step towards raising these issues for public discussions and increasing our understanding of the forces that shape everyday life at the workplace and in the home.
Therefore, one can feel and realize the dynamics of family in the rapidly changing global environment. The society itself draws its legitimacy of existence on the foundation of family. Without the institution of family, one cannot imagine the existence of society. Thus the relevance of family as an institution has always been there. Even in contemporary time, in the rapidly advanced corporate world, family might have changed structurally but continues to deliver important functions for its members. It might not have remained the same as it used to be earlier and might have lost its traditional flavour. It might not be the place of common residence or it might no longer be acting as a common economic group but at the same time it continues to bind its members emotionally. The members of the family still draw their strength from it and family serves as an outlet of their emotions and motivates and guides them at all levels i.e. at professional level and at social front.