Research Paper

Sociology

An Analytical Study Of Change, In The Social Institution; The Post-modern Family

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Introduction:-

Postmodernist thought is an intentional departure from modernist approaches that had previously been dominant. The term "postmodernism" comes from its critique of the "modernist" scientific mentality of objectivity and progress associated with the EnlightenmentIt involves the belief that many, if not all, apparent realities are only social constructs, as they are subject to change inherent to time and place.

Postmodernism, particularly as an academic movement, can be understood as a reaction to modernismin the Humanities. Whereas modernism was primarily concerned with principles such as identity, unity, authority, and certainty, postmodernism is often associated with difference, plurality, textuality, and scepticism.

Post-modernism offers a revolutionary approach to the study of society: in questioning the validity of modern science and the notion of objective knowledge, this movement discards history, rejects humanism, and resists any truth claims. In this comprehensive assessment of post-modernism, PaulineRosenau highlights how post-modernism has inspired a new generation of social movements, ranging from New Age sensitivities to Third World fundamentalism, and so have the impact on all the spheres of life, including family..

Post-modernism, by no means simple to define, is characterized by a "close reading" of small units(FAMILY) rather than general theorizing about big ideas(CULTURE). The postmodern tends towards elaboration, eclecticism, ornamentation, and inclusiveness; it dismisses the existence of an absolute reality and is deeply suspicious of the concept of human progress (Doherty 1991. the term post-modern signals the end of a familiar pattern of activity and emergence of new areas of endeavour whose activities are unclear and whose meanings and implications are not yet well understood. Thus, the post-modern is characterized by uncertainty, insecurity, and doubt (Stacey 1990),

The post-modern world is shaped by :-

- Pluralism,
- Democracy,
- Religious freedom,
- So much ideological freedom
- Consumerism,
- Globalization
- Mobility, and
- Increasing access to news and entertainment.

Residents of this post-modern world are able to see that there are many beliefs, multiple realities, and an exhilarating but daunting profusion of world views - a society that has lost its faith in absolute truth and in which people have to choose what to believe (O'Hare and Anderson 1991).With the onset of the globalization, the concept and believes of post modernism has taken its roots in all the corners of the world, including India ,who from the very beginning known for its age old traditions and institutions.

Post-modern life appears to reverse, or deconstruct, many characteristics of the modern family back to pre-modern lifestyles and values, re-creating at the level of electronic images and on a global scale certain aspects of the undifferentiated life of the pre-modern village

Milarities between post modern and pre-modern families

Early social maturation in full view of adult activities
Workplace and home are often the same
Shared parenting, working mother
Contractual/consensual love
Parent-centred parent,

Nevertheless, there remain quantum differences between pre- and post-modern lifestyles.

Differences between pre- and post-modern families

Pre modern	post modern
most of life enacted on the immediate physical,	while in the life of the post modern era. most of life enacted on the electronically moved, or in symbolic plane
families, most dependent on kinship ties,	least dependent on kin
Physical labour dominate	mental labour became the means for earning
market centres had a physical existence	Changed into the virtual ones, like of online shopping.
Compulsory participation in all aspects of communal life, lack of privacy and personal choice.	optional participation in most aspects of communal life, and high levels of privacy and choice

Personal computers, electronic communications that permit work at home, and the lack of a defined working day for the higher occupational classes progressively blur the boundaries between the workplace and the home. This interpenetration of home, work, and global media coverage creates the permeability of the post-modern family. The media gather the post-modern family around the campfire of the global village, bringing the outside world into the living room and the bedroom.

In between these two, there came another ideology which governed the world for so long, with very defining features;

Modern

Sharp distinction between home and workplace
Romantic love (with Shakespeare stories............)
Idealization of mother as only legitimate caretaker
Protected late-maturing child
Child-centred parent,

These three ideology is not bound with the era's, as all three are present today on the basis of their stages of development like:-

1. Many of the characteristics of pre modern families are still present in some of the communities, who are untouched by the factors of globalization, media, and other technological advancement, like ofthe many rural and tribal communities of India,

2. villages near the cities moving towards the modern ideology,

3. And the 'A' grade cities especially the metros favour the post modern ideologies

The post-modern family

Over 30 years ago, C. Wright Mills (1959) described the post-modern period as one in which the economy would shift employment from heavy industry to non-unionized clerical, service, and new industrial sectors.(Like of the I.T industry,BPOs,freelancing,etc) He foresaw the rise of multinational corporations, trouble in the social welfare system, and decline in human freedom and choice. At that time he wondered how the human family would respond to and adjust to this new period in world history.

In the light his farsighted assumption ,We could see and analyse the changes in the culture and its adverse impact on the human family,(witness today) like of

- More divorce cases
- Single-parenting,
- Extra marital affairs
- Surrogate-mother
- Gay marriages,
- Role confusion among the couples,
- Child rearing away from the home settings, and away from the older generation,
- last days of life in old age homes,
- new vocabularies,
- Indifferent attitude towards the neighbours, but more concerned about the problems of the far areas.
- On the flip side, electronic communications and other media also foster anonymous intimacy through radio talk shows, advice columns, electronic mail, and commercially provided advisory/counselling and other personal services available. This relatively anonymous and instant intimacy in turn becomes a new basis for anonymous face-to-face social support. .

The concept of family(universally) based on some of the following features

- Marriage
- Division of labour, or role differentiation
- Values and tradition
- Child bearing and rearing practices

If we put such yardsticks into the post modern family, we could easily analyse the changes.

Marriage-as the base of the family & role differentiation

Live in relationship is one of the common discourse of our post modern society, usually end up with the anxiousness, more depression, (because of the absence of any legality and security). Same sex marriages, Surrogacy- rewarded as well as curse in many situations. Surrogate mother bear child without being member of the family, and child has been born from a womb, with whom he/she would not have any relationship.

In the 1970s, Shorter (1975) may have been the first to describe the emerging post-modern family. He noted three important characteristics: adolescent indifference to the family's identity; instability in the lives of couples, accompanied by rapidly increasing divorce rates; and destruction of the "nest" notion of nuclear family life with the liberation of women.

The positive side

Income in the hands of women is associated with a larger increase in the share of the household budget devoted to human capital. The inputs and outcomes measuring human capital in various studies have included household services, health and education, leisure and recreation, as well as more quantitative and biological measurements of child height, immunizations, survival, and nutrient intake. In theory at least, this finding implies that increases in employment opportunities for women will have a greater positive effect on child welfare (Folbre 1992) than similar increases for men.

Values and tradition

Dissolved roles, leads to the unexplained and unexpected new values and tradition, with the huge criticism on old ones.

Gergen (1991) has described the emerging family form as "the saturated family," whose members feel their lives scattering in intensified busyness. In addition to absorbing exposure to myriad values, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles, and personalities, family members have become embedded in a multiplicity of relationships. The technologies of social saturation (e.g. the car, telephone, television, and jet plane) have created family turmoil and a sense of fragmentation, chaos, and discontinuity.

Positive side

In this global village, the north India to the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, are now dotted with satellite dishes bringing in the latest news and lifestyles of the West. This permeability creates great uniformity in the standards, values, and lifestyles of the middle class throughout the world

Child bearing and rearing practices in the post modern world

With child care shared between family and day care, new problems have arisen. While some children thrive on dual socialization, others languish, unable to adjust to either environment or to the demands of daily transition from one environment to the other. The young child may be unable to form the necessary communication link between the two environments. Responsibilities may not be divided clearly between home and day-care centre; as a result, neither may provide some crucial aspects of child-rearing.

In the United States, concerns have been expressed about children raised in impoverished single-parent households by young mothers who are still children themselves. According to Elkind (1981), there also are problems with post-modern children of middle-class families as permeable families "hurry" their children to take on the physical, social, and psychological trappings of adulthood before they are prepared to deal with them

The positive side

Children growing up in the post-modern family have been called post-modern children. Parents in the post-modern family may relinquish their roles as educators (Shorter 1975). For many post-modern children there is dual socialization by family and day-care provider.

Conclusion

All the three different era of ideology namely pre modern-modern and now post modern have their distinct positive as well as negative impact on the culture and more specifically on family, like pre-modern was more cohesive , comparatively stress free, faith based, with lack in technology, more poverty, less education, colonised and rural societies, more gaps in haves and haves not, while the modern society, that was with all the overcame of the previous one, but overburdened with definitions, unaware technologies, new theories, more gap between the blue and white collar job bearers, defined roles, less female participation in all the sphere of life, world was divided very rigidly on the defined boundaries, and world wars, and in the post modern world the concept of globalisation has come up with the dissolved boundaries, dissolved roles, liberalisation of the economy, but also bring the culture confusion, identity fights and communal riots, and universal problems, (like universally fail economy ,) epidemics like swine flu, bird flu AIDS etc has take its roots.

So, we cannot judge any ideology on hundred percent positive or negative grounds, rather we have to be very care full for the problems resulting from the such ideologies, and tries to create the culture, effect less from the negative thinking, and the national planners has to be very foresighted to analyse the situation and predict the upcoming change and problems on the basis of pattern of changes in culture and ideology, and move accordingly.

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