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Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Digital Urbanization and the Decline of Traditional Family Systems: Examining the Role of Big Cities, Technology, and Changing Household Dynamics****Noor ul Ain Shouq**

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*Corresponding Author, Email: drmizafar@hotmail.com**Abstract**

This study analyzed the relationship of urbanization with the changing nature of family in quantitative terms, and got 300 respondents from both urban, semi-urban and rural background. The study has been planned to investigate the research objectives to explore how rapid urbanization is reshaping the structure of traditional family systems in Pakistan's urban centers, particularly the shift from extended to nuclear and hybrid family forms, to understand how intergenerational co-residence is being redefined in cities, and what this means for care giving roles, familial hierarchy, and elder support, to analyze the evolving dynamics of gender within urban households, how responsibilities for domestic work and emotional care giving are being renegotiated amid changing social and economic pressures and to examine the impact of digital technologies and urban mobility on communication patterns, emotional bonding, and the everyday relational stability of families. Cross-sectional survey has been conducted in three major cities of Pakistan Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad to interview 300 respondents (Head of household or senior member of the family). Descriptive analysis has been carried out to explore the research objectives. The demographic profile of the sample showed that majority of the participants were young (66.7% < 35 years), urban (60%) and educated (53.3% Graduate & above), with majority being employed (66.7%) and majority being in nuclear family (46.7%) as compared to joint family (40%). Descriptive analysis reveals that migration settlement, housing and living conditions in the urban environment, economic pressure in urban setting and digital technology used are the contributing factors in transforming traditional family bonds, ties, interactions and values to the modern family traditions, structures and arrangement to cope with urban setting and arrangements. Policies should include more flexible working, paid family leave and increased access to affordable child care. The incentive to employers to offer four day a week or home working options is a strategy that would lead to less commuting time and more family time. Public outreach campaigns should help people understand the benefits of implementing technology boundaries.

Keywords: Digital technology, nuclear family, transformation of traditional family structures, urbanization.

Introduction

Urban life involves new factors such as access to education, jobs, and communication technologies. This leads to changes in values, behaviours and relationships. For example, urban families may prioritise economic self-sufficiency, individual accomplishment and privacy, which may diminish family ties (Sameroff, 2010). Other typical urban trends include women's workforce participation, late marriages, and low fertility. Additionally, living in cities has its advantages and disadvantages. Urban life

provides access to better health, education and job opportunities, but also high cost of living, small living space and work-life conflict. These factors can impact family dynamics. Older family members' authority roles may weaken and intergenerational bonds may weaken (Aghajanian & Thompson, 2013).

In Pakistan, urbanization has been more pronounced in cities such as Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad. Rural-urban migration for better economic opportunities has resulted in the weakening of traditional family structures. But cultural influences continue to be important, leading to a mixed family system with both traditional and modern features (De Valk, 2016). This research discusses the impact of urbanization on the transformation of traditional family structures, looking at the transition from extended to nuclear families, gender roles and family interactions. This knowledge is important for policymakers, sociologists, and educators, as it sheds light on the social changes taking place in urban communities.

Urbanization has emerged as one of the strongest forces that are transforming societies throughout the world and its effects on family structures are more overwhelming. In most developing nations, such as Pakistan and the other South Asian cultures, traditional family structures historically were founded on extended family, collective living and intergenerational ties. But the high rate of urbanization- that has been brought about by industrialization, migration, economic opportunities and modernization- has drastically changed these patterns that have been established over a long period of time (Ahmed & Ali, 2023). The urbanization of rural has not only transformed people in terms of their places of residence, but also the organization of families, distribution of roles and the relationships.

Historically, the extended family system was used to rule in most societies. In these systems, a number of generations of a family resided under or near each other. Grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts and cousins were found in these families who were all part of a common household economy and social structure. Deciding was usually communal and the elders had the authority to decide on crucial issues like marriage, education and distribution of property (Park, 2023). Such a system offered high levels of social security, emotional support and economic cooperation particularly in the agrarian environments where livelihoods were based on collective effort in the fields of farming and rearing of animals. But urbanization has brought new social and economic realities which question this conventional set up. Cities are also typified by lack of living room, increased prices on houses as well as hectic living.

Consequently, nuclear families (only parents and children) have become widespread. In cities, people tend to move to seek jobs, schooling or improved living conditions abandoning the extended family system in the countryside. This was a migration that is contributing to the deterioration of traditional kinship ties and promoting more autonomous household structure. Economic change is one of the factors that have played a significant role in this transformation (Angel, 2016). Wage labor, professional jobs and individual incomes are foundations of urban economies as opposed to collective farming. This change promotes economic self-sufficiency of family members. Being financially reliant on their families, young adults now aspire to autonomy in job opportunities offered in urban areas (Tanaka, 2024). This makes them more inclined to set up individual homes following marriage and less joint family units.

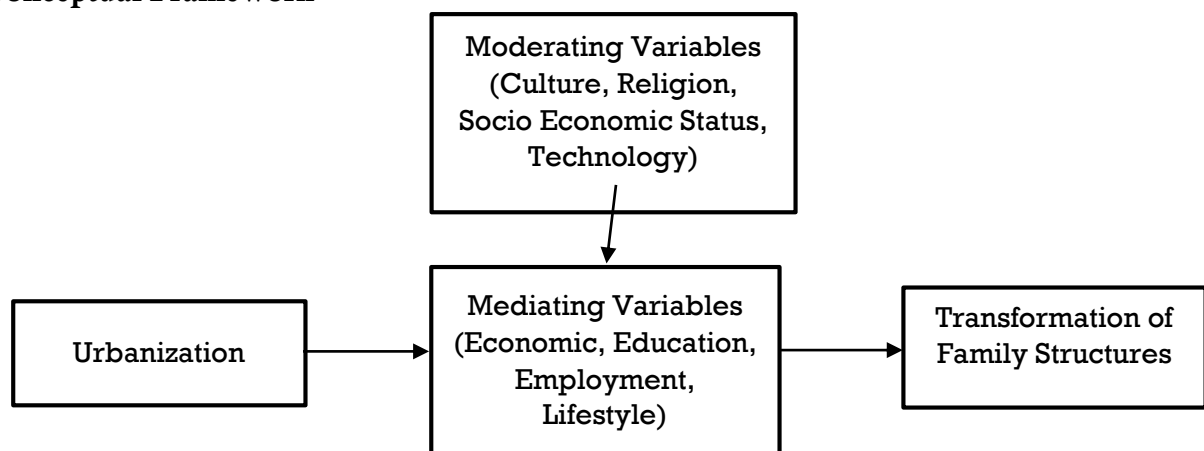
Urbanization is also strongly associated with greater access to education especially among the women. The increase in the level of higher education is involved into the establishment of new attitudes towards marriage, family roles and independence (Arif, 2022). The more educated people are, the more they are inclined to take career building and personal ambitions as priorities instead of traditional demands to live in the extended

families. The result of this change is usually late marriages, having fewer members in the families and increased tolerance towards nuclear families (Park, 2018). Urbanization has also resulted in a radical change of the gender roles in families. Within extended families, there were distinctly defined gender roles, with the males as the breadwinners, and females as the caregivers and performers of domestic tasks. Nonetheless, women in urban areas are becoming more engaged in workforce and are able to contribute to their income (Zia & Anwar, 2018). This economic involvement has transformed the roles of households and questioned the traditional authority lines.

Female empowerment has also led to the empowerment of women in making decisions in the family unit due to their financial independence. Although this has changed, the alteration of family structures is not even across the board (Aassve et al., 2016). Most urban families still have very close relations with their extended family although they may not be living with them. This has given rise to the formation of modified extended families or the hybrid family systems whereby nuclear families are still in touch with the extended families, in terms of visits and monetary aid and even in terms of shared cultural responsibility (McLanahan, 2017). In this type of set-ups, ancient values are integrated with the current living patterns and this shows a gradual and not a full disintegration of the extended family system. The process of urbanization has impacted on intergenerational relationships as well. In the traditional families, the older generations were at the centre of directing the younger generations and ensuring continuity of the culture.

But in cities where the nuclear families are common, the spatial separation between grand parents and grand children has cut down the daily interaction between the grandparents and their grand children. This has an effect on the passing of cultural values, traditions and social norms (White, 2016). Meanwhile, the diminished influence of older people has enabled the younger generations to make more liberal choices in their lives, which have led to individualism and personal freedom. The situation in urban areas where housing is an issue adds to the move towards nuclear families. Small plots and expensive houses result in few members of a large extended family residing together. The nuclear family is further supported as the urban housing units are generally meant to accommodate small families (Arnett, 2015). Moreover, urban families also value privacy and personal space as well, something that is not easily adapted to the collective living conditions of traditional families.

Conceptual Framework



Research Objectives

- To explore how rapid urbanization is reshaping the structure of traditional family systems in Pakistan's urban centers, particularly the shift from extended to nuclear and hybrid family forms.
- To understand how intergenerational co-residence is being redefined in cities, and what this means for care giving roles, familial hierarchy, and elder support.
- To analyze the evolving dynamics of gender within urban households, how responsibilities for domestic work and emotional care giving are being renegotiated amid changing social and economic pressures.
- To examine the impact of digital technologies and urban mobility on communication patterns, emotional bonding, and the everyday relational stability of families.

Methodology

The survey relied on standardized instruments that assisted in ensuring consistent, reliable and meaningful data were collected on urbanization and transformation of traditional family structures. The use of these formulated tools enabled the study to enhance the reliability and validity of the results in a large sample of respondents. The application of these tools allowed measuring several aspects of family change, such as the household structure, the transition to extended to nuclear families, the changes in family roles, relations between generations, family care, family communication, and socio-economic factors that impact family life (Hugo, 2019). Although the research found out that there are strong correlations between urbanization-related issues (including migration, education, income and housing conditions) and the transformation of traditional family structure, the research did not serve to fully understand how the changes in family structure are dynamic with time (Montgomery, 2016). However, the cross-sectional design was found to be extremely suitable to the study purposes, as it offered a clear picture of the existing family configurations and lived experiences in some urban districts in Punjab. The results provided a conceptual background on how family systems are being redefined by urban living conditions and the necessity of future longitudinal studies to examine how the changes are being manifested in succeeding generations. Cross-sectional survey has been conducted in three major cities of Pakistan Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad to interview 300 respondents (Head of household or senior member of the family). Descriptive analysis has been carried out to explore the research objectives.

Results and Discussion

This article presents analysis and interpretation of the data gathered within the study urbanization and the change of family system from traditional to modern. The SPSS version 22.0 was used in data analysis and descriptive, demographic and inferential statistical techniques were used. The primary variables of the study, namely the changes in family composition, intergenerational relationship, roles and responsibilities in the family, social values, economic condition, and the effect of urbanization on traditional family system were summarized by using measures such as mean and standard deviation. The results and discussions were presented in two major sections: the first section gave the frequency and percentage distribution of the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the second section gave the descriptive statistics of the study variables, which gave an understanding of the effects of urbanization on traditional family structures and the changing social dynamics within the family.

Demographic Information**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.**

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	165	55%
	Female	135	45%
Age	18–25 years	80	26.7%
	26–35 years	120	40%
	36–45 years	60	20%
	46+ years	40	13.3%
Education	Primary	45	15%
	Secondary	95	31.7%
	Graduate	110	36.7%
	Postgraduate	50	16.6%
Residence Type	Urban	180	60%
	Semi-urban	70	23.3%
	Rural	50	16.7%
Family Type	Joint Family	120	40%
	Nuclear Family	140	46.7%
	Extended Family	40	13.3%
Employment Status	Employed	140	46.7%
	Self-employed	60	20%
	Unemployed	50	16.7%
	Student	50	16.7%

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 300 participants, which shows that the sample is mostly young, urban, educated and employed, but with significant differences between types of age group, education, employment and city. By sex, there are slightly more males (55%) than females (45%) with a moderately balanced distribution. In

terms of age, the sample is very heavily skewed towards younger adults, with the 26-35 year old age band having the largest number (40%) followed closely by the 18-25 year old age band (26.7%) making up two-thirds (66.7%) of the total sample. Older adults (46 years or older) on the other hand, accounted for only 13.3% of participants, and results may not be generalizable to older adults. In terms of education, the sample is relatively well educated: more than half of the respondents (53.3%) possess at least a graduate degree (36.7% graduate, 16.6% postgraduate), 31.7% secondary education and only 15% primary education. This indicates that the participants could have greater health, financial or digital skills than the general population. Urban residents are clearly dominant (60%) followed by semi-urban (23.3%) and rural (16.7%) residents, so the results of the study are probably more indicative of urban lifestyles and service access. The family structure is relatively varied: Nuclear families (46.7%), Joint families (40%) and Extended families (13.3%) and this makes it possible to make comparisons between the different family types. Finally, employment status indicates that almost half (46.7%) are in employment, and a further 20% are self-employed (66.7% economically active). Unemployed participants and students are both represented at 16.7%, which may not be enough to make strong inferences about unemployment-related issues, but there is some representation of non-working groups. The sample as a whole can be described as young or middle aged, urban, educated and employed, with a lack in representation of people with only primary education, older people and those living in rural areas. As such, results from this sample must be understood within the context of the strengths and limitations of these demographic factors.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Urbanization (IV)	3.92	0.74
Migration to cities	4.10	0.69
Urban employment impact	3.88	0.81
Exposure to modern lifestyle	4.05	0.66
Transformation of family structure (DV)	3.95	0.77
Shift to nuclear family	4.12	0.70
Decline of joint family system	3.85	0.83
Change in family roles	3.90	0.75

The descriptive statistics in table 2 show that the data in the table is consistently highly urbanized and has an impact on family structures. The mean score is 3.92 for Urbanization (IV), and the standard deviation is 0.74 (on what is assumed to be a 1–5 scale, with 5 as the highest level of urban exposure); the general consensus for responses to Urbanization (IV) is high exposure to urbanization with moderate consensus. This is corroborated by the very high mean for Migration to cities (4.10, SD = 0.69), indicating high migration flows are a major contributor to urban growth. The impact of urbanization is evident in the economic and cultural aspects: Urban employment impact has a mean score of 3.88 (+/- 0.81), and Exposure to modern lifestyle has a mean score of 4.05 (+/- 0.66), indicating that living in a city has a significant impact on employment opportunities and the adoption of modern values and behaviors. When one considers the dependent variable, Transformation of family structure (mean = 3.95, SD = 0.77) is a significantly

high score of the familial transformation as a result of urbanization. More specifically, the Shift to nuclear family has the highest mean (4.12, SD = 0.70) which reflects a very strong and widely agreed upon move away from the traditional living arrangements. The Decline of joint family system (mean = 3.85, SD = 0.83) and Change in family roles (mean = 3.90, SD = 0.75) are also highly agreeable, but with a slightly larger standard deviation, indicating a bit more variation in the answers compared to other indicators. In total, the consistent high values for the mean for both independent and dependent variables suggest a strong, positive relationship between urbanisation and family structure change, particularly the increased formation of nuclear families. The relatively small standard deviations (0.66–0.83) suggest a high level of consensus among the respondents and the interpretations are therefore considered to be reliable, assuming that the exposure to the urban environment leads to substantial changes in family life, family structure and intergenerational living patterns.

Table 3: Urban Migration and Settlement.

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
My family has experienced rural-to-urban migration.	5	10	12	38	35
Urban living has improved my access to job opportunities.	6	9	18	40	27
Urban areas provide better educational facilities.	4	8	14	42	32
I prefer living in cities rather than rural areas.	10	15	20	30	25
Urbanization has increased population density in my area.	3	5	10	35	47
My family has adapted to urban lifestyle patterns.	5	10	20	40	25
Urban migration has changed my family's living arrangements.	4	8	12	38	38
City life has improved our economic conditions.	10	18	22	30	20
Urban areas offer better healthcare services.	4	7	13	41	35

In table 3, the results clearly show that the rural to urban migration experience is a key experience for the majority of the respondents, with the majority of the respondents

agreeing or strongly agreeing that their family has experienced this rural to urban migration. This geographical shift seems to be a major factor in changing the traditional family system especially in the areas of economic roles, housing pattern and lifestyle adjustment. A large majority believes access to jobs (67% agree/strongly agree), education (74%) and health care services (76%) have improved, indicating that the shift to urbanization has transformed the family from a multi-generational, agrarian, production unit to a nuclear, consumption-based, external institutions dependent unit. Nearly half (50%) agree that economic conditions in the city are better, with the relatively higher proportion of neutral and negative responses (28%) here suggesting that the benefits are not uniformly distributed and that new pressures may have emerged, such as the costs of living in the city. The most obvious proof of the change in family structure comes from the living arrangements and adaptation data. A large majority (76%) agree or strongly agree that migration to the city has affected their family's way of living (e.g. extended, co-residential families to smaller nuclear or single-parent families in urban apartments). At the same time, 65% report adapting to the patterns of urban life which suggest changes in lifestyle, gender roles (such as women entering the workforce) and intergenerational authority (younger people could be primary earners or main negotiators of urban life). Interestingly, 55% of respondents say they prefer the city life to rural life, while a significant 45% are neutral or negative, indicating some emotional or cultural preference for traditional rural life, which can be a conflict in families. Last, the overwhelming consensus (82%) that urbanization has intensified population density identifies the external factors affecting families: limited space and resources can weaken existing support networks, and the loss of privacy can cause more fragmentation. The data together reflect urbanization as a process that transforms the traditional multi-functional family with its vast, land-based living space into a more mobile family, dependent on institutions, often nuclear in structure, in search of better services but also facing adaptations stresses and economic disparities.

Table 4: Housing and Living Conditions.

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Urban housing is expensive compared to income levels.	2	5	8	35	50
My family faces space limitations in urban housing.	3	7	12	40	38
Joint family living is difficult in urban housing structures.	4	8	14	36	38
Rental costs influence family separation.	3	6	15	38	38
Urban homes are designed for nuclear families.	5	9	16	35	35

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Housing constraints force families to live separately.	4	8	18	36	34
Urban living reduces space for extended family members.	3	7	12	38	40
My household size is influenced by housing availability.	5	10	20	35	30
Urban apartments discourage large family systems.	4	8	15	34	39
Housing conditions affect family cohesion.	4	9	18	36	33

In tale 4, the housing and living patterns illustrate how the physical environment of cities can be a huge invisible force that shapes traditional family structures, by limiting the practice of joint or extended family and encouraging the nuclear family. An overwhelming 85% strongly agree or agree that in urban areas housing costs are high compared to income, a fundamental economic challenge that feeds directly into family size and composition. This financial constraint is also seen in terms of space: 78% state that their family has space problems in the urban housing. This makes it almost impossible to maintain the traditional joint family system based on large multi-generational common areas. 74% agree that it is difficult to live in joint family system in urban housing structures and 74% agree that urban apartments discourage large family systems, highlighting that the very design of cities (smaller units, fewer rooms, lack of common areas), actively works against intergenerational co-residence. Moreover, the separation of the family is directly related to both housing costs and housing design. More than three-quarters (76%) believe that rental prices have an impact on family separation and 70% believe that housing shortages contribute to family separation. This indicates that the fragmentation of traditional families into smaller family fragments (sometimes nuclear families or even single-person households) is not only a matter of preference but also economic necessity. Also, 70% agree that urban dwellings are tailored for nuclear households, reflecting a bias in the built environment towards smaller household sizes and the marginalisation of extended kinship systems. Explicit reduction of space for extended family members is cited by 78% of respondents, impacting the daily interactions, shared care of children and the care of the elderly that were a central part of the traditional systems. Interestingly, 65% of them believe that the availability of housing directly influences the size of the household and 69% believe that housing conditions impact the cohesion of the household. Especially the last is important because it suggests a vicious cycle: crowded, costly, poorly designed housing can lead to stress, loss of privacy, less collective activities and therefore less emotional bonds and intergenerational support. As a whole, this data set makes it clear that urbanization alters the family system not just culturally, but also materially: the house

becomes a filter that favours the nuclear family, economically active family, and systematically eliminates the joint family system which was the foundation of traditional social organization.

Table 5: Economic Pressure.

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Urban life increases financial pressure on families.	2	4	8	36	50
Cost of living is higher in urban areas.	1	3	6	30	60
Dual income is necessary in urban households.	3	5	10	32	50
Economic stress affects family relationships.	3	6	14	38	39
Urban employment requires long working hours.	2	5	10	35	48
Financial independence reduces family interdependence.	4	8	20	34	34
Urban families depend less on extended kin.	5	10	18	35	32
Income disparities affect family structure.	4	8	16	36	36
Urbanization increases competition for jobs.	3	6	12	34	45
Economic demands reduce family time together.	3	7	15	35	40

In table 5, the economic pressure data reflects that urbanization is a fundamental process that changes the traditional family structure, putting families under severe financial pressure that results in a reconfiguration within the family system, including roles, dependencies and relations. Almost everyone (86%) agrees or strongly agrees that city living puts extra strain on the finances of families and an almost unanimous 90% agrees that the cost of living is higher in cities. This is a widespread economic burden which is a key driver in family change. Most immediately, it compels a change from the traditional family model of one wage earner to a 'must have' family model for dual income, with 82% agreeing that in urban families two income has become a necessity. This need can change gender roles, forcing women into paid work out of the home which may lead to a re-distribution of domestic responsibilities, delayed childbearing, or decreased child care within the family. Economy stress has a direct effect on family togetherness and cohesion, in addition to the changes in role. The following are striking: 77% agree that economic stress has a negative influence on family relationships and 75% agree that the economic demands cause families to spend less time together. Parents and other relatives spend less time together in activities, meals or caring for one another, due to long working hours (83% of respondents reported). This time limitation, coupled with financial stress, can create conflict in relation to money management and less emotional support, resulting in marital stress or intergenerational tension. At the same time, the data indicates that there is a reconfiguration of interdependence. Sixty-eight percent agree that financial independence decreases family interdependence, and 67 percent agree that urban families are less dependent on extended families, although these percentages are majorities, they are slightly lower than other items which indicate that families are in a transition period. Relatives are expected to provide support for each other (e.g. support of elderly relatives in rural areas through the return of remittances, shared care of children within families) which is traditionally arranged, even though economics pressures a trend towards individualisation. Moreover, 72% agree that unequal earnings between family members (e.g., one spouse earning more than the other, younger family members earning more than older family members) influence family structure, thereby allowing a greater focus off of the authority of men or elders. Lastly, 79% believe that urbanization leads to competition for jobs, which brings another dimension to it – families might invest in education or migration of those who are likely to earn more and neglect the others. These economic stresses, together, change the traditional family from a cooperative multi-generational unit of shared subsistence and mutual dependence into an often nuclear family, poorly endowed with time and where economic necessity may sometimes over-ride the kinship ties.

Table 6: Digital Technology Use.

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
My family uses smartphones for daily communication.	2%	4%	8%	30%	56%
Technology reduces physical family interaction.	6	12	20	32	30
Social media affects family bonding.	5	10	18	36	31

Description	SD (%)	D (%)	NO (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Digital communication replaces face-to-face interaction.	7%	13%	22%	30%	28%
Technology helps maintain distant family relationships.	4	8	14	38	36
Excessive screen time reduces family time.	5	10	18	34	33
Online communication affects emotional bonding.	6	12	20	32	30
Digital platforms influence family decisions.	5	11	24	34	26
Technology connects extended family members.	4	7	15	38	36
Smartphones reduce traditional family gatherings.	6	12	20	32	30

In table 6, the digital technology use data indicates a very ambiguous change of the old families in urbanization – both as a tool to bridge a geographical gap and also as a tool to prevent the old family cohesion in the immediate vicinity. At the same time, urbanization can fragment families by separating individuals within a city, or by having them move between rural and urban areas, which makes technology an important way to keep kinship ties. There is a strong majority (74%) that agree or strongly agree that technology is good at helping to maintain relationships with family members that are far away, and a similar 74% that agree that technology is good at connecting extended family members. This indicates that while in the traditional joint family arrangement people need to be co-present in the household, smartphones, messaging apps, and social media are also making up for that, even in everyday activities, in the sense that emotional support is provided, financial issues are coordinated (e.g., remittances), or even to participate in life events (e.g., video calls during festivals or sickness). But in tandem with this positive trend, there are signs of erosion of the traditional mode of family life, namely face-to-face interaction. While an overwhelming 86% see the use of smart phones for day-to-day communication, an almost equally high proportion say that technology lowers the amount of physical family interaction (62%) and that social media negatively impacts family bonding (67%) and that excess screen time reduces family time (63%). There is a tension here: on one hand, the devices that link the transnational relatives also tend to keep the co-residential family members apart. Further to the above, the data indicates that while digital platforms have an impact on family decision making (60% agree, with a significant 24% neutral, which suggests some impact and/or uneven effects are emerging), this change is not universal. For instance, 58% agree that digital communication does replace face-to-face

communication, with 22% being neutral, meaning there is still a lot of negotiation between digital and physical communication within the family. Likewise, 62% believe online communication impacts emotional bonding and 62% believe that smartphones lead to a decrease in traditional family gatherings, which are all clearly majority numbers, but do not necessarily represent resistance or adaptation. This is a twofold pattern, a shift in the family system, first to being dispersed by urbanization, and second to the survival of a modified, "networked" system through the use of technology. But this is at the expense of what scholars refer to as "co-presence," a way of embodying the passing of values, of emotional security, and of reinforcement of hierarchical roles that were traditionally accomplished in a spontaneous manner through such things as shared meals, childcare by grandparents, and oral storytelling. Sixty-two percent agree that too much screen time leads to less family time, suggesting that extended families may occupy the same physical space, but live in different digital worlds, and that the ritual of family life, which held families together in the past, may be weakened. Overall, rather than just supplanting the old family, digital technology produces a hybrid version: families might be emotionally close despite physical distance, but with traditional family forms denuded of their dense, co-residential nature, they run the risk of becoming physically dispersed and interaction-poor, even as their emotional and symbolic connection is strengthened.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the quantitative study, it can be concluded that urban migration and settlement have emerged as significant factors contributing to the transformation of traditional family values into more modern family orientations. Urban living provides individuals and families with greater access to educational opportunities, improved economic prospects, better healthcare services, and enhanced lifestyles. These advantages have encouraged shifts in attitudes, behaviors, and family structures, leading to the gradual adoption of modern family values.

The study further reveals that urban housing conditions play a crucial role in reshaping family arrangements. High housing costs, limited living space, and increasing rental expenses often compel families to adopt nuclear family structures rather than maintaining traditional joint or extended family systems. Consequently, family cohesion and intergenerational co-residence tend to decline, while smaller household units become more common in urban settings.

In addition, urban life generates multidimensional economic pressures, including rising living costs, financial stress, long working hours, and intense competition in the labor market. These pressures reduce dependence on extended kinship networks and limit the time available for family interactions, thereby weakening traditional support systems that have historically characterized family life.

The widespread use of digital technologies has also contributed to the transformation of traditional family relationships. Although smartphones and digital communication tools facilitate instant connectivity, they often reduce face-to-face interactions among family members. Increased screen time, reduced family gatherings, weaker emotional bonds, and more distant relationships among relatives have become common features of contemporary urban life. As a result, traditional family fabrics and social connections are gradually being replaced by more individualized and technology-mediated forms of interaction.

Overall, the study concludes that urbanization is a powerful social force that fundamentally reshapes traditional family structures and values. It transforms families from multi-generational, co-residential, economically integrated, culturally rich, and patriarchally organized units into smaller, geographically dispersed, dual-income, and relatively egalitarian households. While these changes may offer greater autonomy and

economic opportunities, they also create new challenges, including time constraints, family stress, weakened intergenerational ties, and reduced social support.

The final conclusion of this study is that urbanization is an inevitable process that significantly alters the nature of traditional family life. However, its adverse effects can be mitigated through effective policy interventions aimed at addressing housing affordability, economic insecurity, work–life balance, and the decline of intergenerational support systems. Such measures can help preserve family cohesion and social well-being while enabling families to benefit from the opportunities associated with urban development.

Recommendations

1. Governments should enact inclusionary housing laws that would mandate that new developments provide affordable multi-generational housing spaces, such as 3-4 bedroom apartments that can be configured in a variety of ways, separate entries for elderly parents, and accessory dwelling units.
2. Families that contain elderly members, or those trying to live together intergenerational, should be given first priority when it comes to housing subsidies. Family size and composition should be a factor explicitly included in rent control or rental assistance programs so that extended families may live together, instead of being broken up into separate and very costly family units.
3. Policies should include more flexible working, paid family leave and increased access to affordable child care.
4. The incentive to employers to offer four day a week or home working options is a strategy that would lead to less commuting time and more family time.
5. Public outreach campaigns should help people understand the benefits of implementing technology boundaries.
6. Community centres should provide digital literacy initiatives that build on rather than replace being physically present. Fourth, take a more balanced approach to supporting the transformation of gender roles.
7. Spending should be targeted at working low-income urban families, which incur the greatest transformation costs, through progressive policies such as sliding-scale housing supports, free child care and job training. Lastly, set up longitudinal family panels to track the dynamics over time which will allow causal inference and ongoing policy feedback.

Note: The paper has been drive from Ph.D. research work entitled “Urbanization and The Transformation of Traditional Family Structures”.

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