

Globalisation & Its impact of Delayed Marriage Age in India: A Gender Perspective

Dr Suchitra S Kumar *

Abstract: In the wake of contemporary globalization, the Indian subcontinent has witnessed a rapid change in its economic, cultural, religious and social settings, and human development. Recognizing the diversity of Indian society, the purpose of the present article is to demonstrate that the emerging new Upper Middle class (NMC) family is undergoing significant transformation, with both constructive response and resilience. The upper middle class family & their influence on the increasing education of women is witnessed. Their encouragement of the empowerment of the girl unlike the patriarchal family is a break through seen in globalisation, which has its impact on late marriages & thereafter.

Key words: Impact of Globalization, Marriage, Fertility, Women empowerment, education, Patriarchy.
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I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this article, is to see the impact of Globalisation on women's education, empowerment & its effect on Delay in Marriage Age & its effect thereafter. To see this effect on women we would have to realise whether globalisation has had an impact on the Middle Class Family to which the largely educated women belong. The concept of the New Middle Class family, a category not so easy to describe or delineate, especially at this time of rapid transformations that mark the post-liberalization era coupled with globalization (Patole, 2018). Today, globalization is a dominant driving force and is profoundly "restructuring the social order around the world, and families are the centre of this change" (Trask 2010: v). Indeed, globalization is transforming the family, their development, as well as Family decision-making is taking a new diversion due to its impact.

New Upper Middle Class Family: In India, Middle Class constitutes more than 50% of the Population. Origin of India's Middle Class development was identified with British rule & the growth of English education. With Globalisation the Term Middle Class especially in India Undergrew a change (Pandey V, 2009). With Globalisation the Middle Class of the 1980s, due to higher education qualification, got a boost in their Incomes, Standard of Living, Economic Status in Society grew, hence took place this 1980s Middle Class became the Upper Middle Class post globalisation. It is mainly the upper tier of the Middle Class who are globalized and upwardly mobile have greatly benefited from globalization.

Due to the influence of Modernization and Globalization, there has been a definite change in the family structure and the original structure of family has been undergoing changes. The Family size became smaller. The gap between male and female among the New Upper Middle Class Family is ever declining and new gender roles are being formed and exercised. The Educational gap within the family between siblings of opposite gender also has minimised under the New Upper Middle Class Family.

According to J.P. Singh, Indian society is witnessing transformation as never before, where the traditional joint family is virtually disappearing from the urban scene. He observes that there is an increased proportion of female-headed households, decline in the average age of household heads. More freedom of marital choice, greater involvement of females in decision making & the mutual dialogue between parents and grown-up children on familial matters are increasingly observed today (2004: 129-133).

Empowerment of Women: Giving Rise to in Double-Income Families : Studies of working married women in India have indicated that the economic need as being the most important reason for employment (Srivastava, V, 2011). The female participation ratio in various professions is positively increasing, especially in IT, outsourcing, call centres, banking, finance and related industries. Besides, the proportion of double-income households is also substantially growing. It has enormously altered the traditional and functional role of

* The Author is a Research Guide, Dept of Economics, G.N.Khalsa College, Matunga, Mumbai-19. Email: suchitraskumar@gmail.com

women, family planning while bringing about a change in the intra - household bargaining within the household decision-making.

Marriage as an Institution: Marriage is considered Universal in most Parts of South Asia. Today, an arranged marriage is safe & secure option where more family members are involved in the decision-making process (Gandhi 2016: 1). In such context, it is often observed that “even professional young men working in Western countries fly to India to get married through the aid of their families” (Khatari, pp638).

People are now more likely to be materialistic in the globalised world and marriages are now becoming optional in this era, where everybody is struggling for getting more and more riches in order to have better living standards.

Subsequently “the most interesting emerging trend heralded by portal-matrimony is that individuals participate much more in the process of arranging their marriages”, as a result of which they tend to have greater ownership“ over their marriages” (Gandhi 2016:2). Furthermore, in life partner search, even parents are found to be actively participating , according to Divya Gandhi. In recent times, the traditional marriages have been dominated by Marriage Portals (V. Kumar, pp72).

In the light of the above, let us analyse the Delay in Marriage Age of Women:

1. Education of women & Marriage : Premchand D(2009) did a study showing female Mean age at marriage and its correlation to female schooling with the Census Data for various states of India for the Years 1981, 1991 & 2001. He showed that while the Overall Indian Literacy was just 29.8% in 1981 the age of marriage of girls was 18.3. As Percentage of Overall Literacy rate increased to 54% in 2001 to the age of marriage of girls increased to 20.2%. This indicated a shift in the marriage age owing to increase in years of schooling. Kerala & Maharashtra showed higher literacy rates with 87.9% & 67.5% respectively. The 2015-16, NFHS-4 confirms, With no education, 44.7 per cent women are married before 18 years.

Education reduces marriage rates and increases marriage age. A variety of pathways have been proposed to explain such an influence. It has been observed that marital and student roles are perceived to be incompatible, reflecting the commonly held expectation that individuals do certain activities at certain ages (Raymo, 1998; 2003). Thus with increasing levels of school enrolment, marriage rates for school-age girls may decline. Further, in contexts where female schooling translates into labour force participation, getting married when in school will entail significant opportunity costs. This higher opportunity cost in terms of barriers to achieving educational and career goals may encourage women to postpone marriage (Thornton, Axinn and Teachman, 1995).

2. Women Empowerment & Independence : The government’s substantial commitment to women and girls was reflected in its infrastructure investments. New health clinics, toilets in schools, and improved access to water and electricity in rural areas had immediate positive effects on the lives of women and girls. Taken together, these investments helped create a built environment that better supports women’s economic empowerment.

As most of the millennial women mothers were either not permitted to work or voluntarily unemployed, in a yet patriarchal Indian society, with Globalisation, one saw both the parents of the millennial educated girls support their daughters. This was largely the result as the parents were the immediate gainers of Globalisation in the New Upper Middle Class Family & had the means to support the dreams of their daughters.

3. Career First, Marriage Second Option: It is largely observed that women today prefer to pay more emphasises on their career & their career path more than marriage, hence the marriage age gets delayed to late 20’s or mid 30’s. Some of them even miss getting married & remain unmarried, due to prolonged delay. Due to phobia of living an idealistic life female postpone their decision of marriage (Hina Saleem et al, 2015) .

4. Economic Factor : The economic factor is one of the major causes of late marriages & is linked with social status. Social status matters a lot now days, people do not prefer to marry unless they are not having ‘commodity income’ (Schultz, 1974)

5. Late Marriage-Age for Women lead to rush for having kids, leads to infertility & leads complications arising to childbirth: Woman in their thirties have to rush into having babies, without having spent much quality time with their spouses. Hina Saleem(2015) cited that common cause of infertility was Problems related to Ovulation. They also saw a rise in infertility amongst men. Complications also arise during childbirth for a woman in her 30’s than for a woman in her mid 20’s or late 20’s.

6. Difficulty in Making Adjustments: For an empowered women, who’s been independent for a long time & who’s used to making her own decisions, making adjustments with another person at a later stage in life becomes very difficult (A Banerjee, 2020). They have no zest for life left with them & find themselves too busy to manage career plus house. They pay more attention to the finances of the house. They barely find time for

making the foundation of their marriage stronger. This has also led to divorces increasing in India. In 2020. Out of 1000 marriages, 13 result in Divorces (Smitha, Shine, 2020)

The Question that arises for all of us : Is Women's Education & empowerment leading to a larger Socio-economic Problem in the Society for the New Upper Middle Class & Middle Class of our society, is what we need to answer. Does it necessarily delay the marital age of men too as women are not accessible for marriage, due to women's new found independence & higher salaries & women are more focussed on their jobs. Also by the time they realise they need for companionship, it is too late, Depression sets in for many due to lack of companionship (Katarzyna Adamczyk, 2017).

Some of the suggestions that could be adopted in the Delay of Marriage Age of Women in the new upper middle class group would be to take help from NGOs related to women organisations, Creating various Parental Support groups to help solve this issue, & Involving Media via various Talk shows with youngsters & therapists/specialists from various areas to resolve this issue.

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