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Gradual Decline of Joint Family System in the Urban Area: A Study in Patna Town

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Abstract : Family bonds are a link to our beginning and a guide to our future. The family structure in our society is changing from time to time. The traditional form of the joint family could not exist in the cities due to several factors. This disintegration in the recent decades has led to a number of problems: increased rate of divorces, remarriages, lack of family values amongst children, increased rate of crime amongst the elderly. These trends and the resulting problems that they cause, especially for the children, have brought the advantages of the traditional joint families back into focus. The objectives of this study were to find out the existing family pattern in Patna, the reasons behind the existing pattern of the family and its impact on the family members. 100 couples (age 25 to 40 years) from Patna (Boring Road, Patliputra) were taken for the study and data was collected through an interview schedule. The findings of the study clearly suggested that the nuclear family is more prevalent than the joint family system in Patna due to industrialization/

urbanization of young couples. Parents, on the other hand, did not want to stay with their children, because at this age they found it difficult to adjust in a new environment. The study also brought forward the fact that members living in a nuclear family suffered from certain emotional problems (loneliness, stress, and anxiety) and other lifestyle issues. Women staying in nuclear families also stated that they faced many problems in the upbringing of children all alone. Couples (especially fathers) were toiling day and night with little time at home to spend with their own kids, due to which children were becoming more selfish and less sensitive. Based on these conclusions, certain suggestions were formulated. Although it is difficult to put forth the proposition of the existence of the joint family system in our society again, yet, certain steps could be taken to revive the culture.

Keywords: Family pattern, Joint family, Nuclear family, Family members, Impact.

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Introduction :

Family is where our roots take hold and from where we grow. A sense of belonging is derived from the strong bond of family. Family bonds are a link to our beginning and a guide to our future. Family bonds help to instill trust and hope in the world around us and belief in ourselves. Rituals of bedtime stories, hugs, holidays and daily meals shared together, provide a sense of warmth, structure and safety.

Family can be basically categorized into two groups:

- (1) **Nuclear family :** A nuclear family can be defined as a household consisting of a father and mother and their children, who share living quarters.