SOCIAL PROBLEMS ARISING IN TODAY'S TURKISH FAMILY STRUCTURE

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Abstract

Family, which begins with the individual's birth and remains effective until the end of their life, shapes and directs the social development and behaviour of the individual in cultural, economic and social aspects as well as physiological. The family, which has many functions, includes features such as the socialization of those growing up, the sustainment of love, economic security, and population, and fulfilment of biological and psychological satisfaction functions. Additionally, the family passes on from generation to generation the material and moral values created in society from past to present. Family is one of the most prominent social institutions through which the effects and results of the changes and transformations occurring in countries and around the world are clearly observed.

Our world is rapidly changing and developing. Family is one of the institutions sociologically most affected by this development, evolution and change. Industrialization, and the modernization movement that it brought on affected the society in various ways, causing social problems. Document review method that is one of the qualitative research methods was used at the research. Field survey was carried out by searching relevant resources and data. Books, thesis, and articles related with the research were surveyed and the data obtained were integrated systematically.

Keywords: Family, Turkish Family Structure, Social Problem

1.INTRODUCTION

Family is the smallest building block that constitutes the foundation of society. The individual finds themselves in a family from the moment they are born. The development of the child begins and continues in the family. The family has many functions such as social, psychological, biological, religious, cultural, economic, among others. However, today's world is going through a period in which violence, insecurity and wars are always on the agenda, with all these affecting people's

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relations, and adaptation to society and family is not an easy task. In this case, the topic of family and its future is becoming increasingly complex, revealing the importance of the measures to be taken in this area.

Turkey is currently rapidly developing and changing. This rapid change poses numerous problems. The family is also affected by all these changes and encounters certain problems. In this context, various family-related problems require urgent solutions. These problems are especially more pronounced in big cities. Families migrating from rural areas to urban areas undergo change under the influence of various environmental factors, set new goals, yet their economic and social circumstances prevent them from achieving these goals. Families join the consumption race by cutting down their basic needs. In most cases, the head of the family is unable to afford this, leading to increased domestic conflicts, problems, and higher divorce rates, with cases of children running away from home, with theft, murder and similar other criminal behaviours observed. These are the main problems faced especially by families living in the city. It is seen that social change gives rise to problems in the Turkish family to a certain extent, similar to the whole world. In this context, a great number of studies have been conducted on the family, however, social problems due to change in the family have not been adequately addressed.

Whichever institution in society is shattering, it draws attention in proportion with the problem. Family is like this too. In recent years, some of the functions of the family have been fulfilled by other institutions, and social scientists are developing theories with focus on family. Any institution that is in rapid change and dissolution has attracted the attention of social scientists. Due to the problems it has been facing, the family has recently become one of the topics of focus for social scientists. This applies to the whole world.

Today, family refers to the nuclear family consisting of the mother-father and children. The nuclear family has been examined, criticized and studied in many aspects. However, the family's social problems were not paid adequate attention. Here, the family's social problems have been discussed broadly.

2. SOCIAL PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE CHANGES IN FAMILY STRUCTURE

Domestic relations effect other areas of an individual's life as well. The individual learns love, respect, compassion, etc. from their family. The child first socializes within the family. These emotions taught in the family enable to individual to always be happy. In studies conducted on the subject, it is stated that the family is directly effective on the development of personality and influenced the development of healthy domestic relations.

There are many institutions in the whole society that fulfil certain functions. Among these institutions, the family institution, which enables the continuation of lineage and where social communication first starts, besides having numerous important functions, has an important role in societies' development of their own culture as well. These institutions, which have certain functionalities in terms of fulfilling matters considered important in terms of societies, are significantly affected by the changes and transformations that take place in society. Like all social institutions, the family institution can change both structurally and functionally with social development. Therefore, in the analysis of the Turkish family structure, conducting studies aimed at the changes experienced by the family institution during this process is of importance (Şentürk Dızman, 2019a, 834).

Today, it is known that the nuclear family is quite common in the Turkish family. This family has a number of positive and negative aspects. While parents are able to raise their children as they wish, when the nuclear family is experiencing a tribulation, they have nobody to support them. This family is all alone. In cases of problems between family members, they have to take care of the problems themselves. This causes a number of problems. This is because there are many problems in the extended family as well. One of these is the child's education, the second is limited private life in the husband-wife relationship, and the third is economic negativities. However, the extended family provides great benefit during tough times. In the case of working parents, children grow up in a peaceful environment with grandparents.

As the family has lost many of its functions in the current age, relations between relatives are also extremely weakened. In fact, relations between second generation children are quite superficial. Especially today, siblings who live far apart due to their professions, come together for a short time at certain times of the year, and especially relations between the children are quite formal. In most cases the younger generations do not know distant relatives. The nuclear family has moved away from their relatives, and thus lack relatives to help and support them in the event of an affliction. Relationships between relatives has started to become a matter of interest.

The transition from the traditional family to the nuclear family has led to a reduction in the number of family members and change in both its functions and structure (Bayer, 2013: 104). The functionalist approach sees society as a system in which interrelated parts work. Parsons claims that society consists of protective, integrating, guiding, and implementing sub-systems. The family, on the other hand, is an institution that ensures the integration of society. According to functionalists, society must meet specific needs or perform certain functions in order to survive. In fact, the functionalists' view of the family also focuses on its relationship with other segments of society. They are particularly concerned with the family's contribution to society's well-being and happiness. Although it takes different forms in various sociocultural structures, family is universally found in all societies around the world. This is because it meets the six needs that are fundamental to the well-being of all communities. These are economic production, socialization of children, sick and elderly care, having fun, sexual supervision, and reproduction, respectively. There are families in every community to ensure that these needs are met. In the functional approach, it is accepted that there are changes in the family structure due to changes in society. For example, in the pre-industrial community, as the family was the basic production unit, extended families were needed. However, on the contrary, since industrial society requires a structure consisting of individuals who share some common values, the nuclear family in industrial society has been responsible for performing two basic functions such as the socialization of children and the stabilization of adults. Children who were socialized in the pre-industrial society by relatives in the extended family or members of the tribe/clan will now learn to be a social presence in the nuclear family (Kalkıner & Kasapoğlu, 2011, 9-11; Yaşar Ekici, 2014, 211-212).

As of the 1970s, 60% of families in Turkey are nuclear families, consisting of the husband and wife and unmarried children. Patriarchal extended families make up 19 percent of all families, while temporary extended families make up 13 percent, and broken and missing families make up 8 percent (Şentürk Dızman, 2019b: 17). The family structure, which we call elementary family structure today, is composed of mother, father and unmarried children. In elementary family structure; family members have become independent in many aspects. Each new individual joining the family can make their own choices in many matters, from the education they will get, to their spouse to marry, to their profession and to the house they will live in. The authority in the family is shared among family members, parents being in the first place. Compared to other family types, the effectiveness of women in domestic decisions is at the forefront. This is due to the fact that the woman is working outside and due to the education she received.

On the other hand, the fact that divorces are increasing rapidly today is a domestic problem in itself. According to the reports announced by TÜİK, the divorce rate is increasing in contrast to marriage rates with each passing year. Surely, no family is established with the intention of breaking up. What is always desired is the continuity of that family. However, when problems between spouses in the family become unresolvable, divorce, which means the end of this relationship, comes to the agenda. Children are most harmed by divorce. Studies on the subject state that as a result of the divorce, the child will grow lacking the care, attention and influence of either the mother or father, which will prevent the development of their personality.

The dominance of individualism in the social structure completely changed the economic evolution of the family and the institution of marriage, in which case the family became a freely formed togetherness with the approval of two independent individuals. Spouses' commitments are personal and reciprocal, deception is a breach of contract for both parties; divorce can be obtained on the same terms for both parties. The woman no longer has to settle for her reproductive function; reproduction has largely lost its natural service feature and has become a liability undertaken voluntarily. The extreme emphasis on freedom and individualism in today's societies has revealed different forms of

relationships between the sexes as well as extramarital relationships, with the rate of children born out of wedlock increased, and as a matter of fact, the family rapidly being replaced by couples who live together while they are not married. This has required the redefinition of the concept of family or the conceptual discussion of the situation that has emerged (Bayer, 2013, 111-112). In this context, according to the symbolic interactive theory, which draws attention to the constantly changing aspect of relations within the family and therefore argues that the family should be redefined, the traditional understanding worldwide is that family unity is maintained for life once it is established. In line with this understanding, divorces are seen as a challenge to the general value judgments of society or an escape from responsibilities as parents, in addition to being morally difficult to accept. However, it also needs to be accepted that there are some changes in family-related symbols and values depending on the general changes in many traditional values and attitudes (Kalkıner & Kasapoğlu, 2011, 5; Yaşar Ekici, 2014, 211). Changes in society have led to an increase in conflict between parents, and as a result, divorces have started to increase. The studies on the effects of divorcement on children show that the psychological and social effects of divorcement on children are often more devastating and destructive than the effects on couples.

Another family problem is domestic violence. Domestic violence has been on Turkey's agenda for many years. In many of the studies conducted, it is indicated that the rate of women who suffer violence is higher than men. In addition to this, it is stated that violence against both children and especially the elderly, which has been increasing in recent years, has increased within the family (KSGM, 2009). Factors that cause domestic violence can be listed as, excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs by one of the parents or children, the outbreak of discord between spouses, and long-term tensions and fights that arise before divorce, spouses' deception of one another, the family's lack of sufficient and continuous income due to different macroeconomic reasons, a family experiencing social problems lacking the support of relatives and neighbours, inconvenient accommodation, the acceptance of violence in society and especially in the immediate social environment, and that it is not found off enough. (Seyyar & Genç, 2010, 22).

Another reason for the tension between spouses is the woman's greater involvement in work life. As a result of the woman's greater participation in work life, the man, who has gradually lost his dominance both at work and in the family, has difficulties in keeping up with this change. While trying to display the values and roles traditionally attributed to him, and thus trying to reproduce his masculinity, he is also expected to fulfil responsibilities such as housework, childcare, and exhibit female values such as empathy, tolerance and reconciliation, which come with social transformation and do not conform to traditional definitions of masculinity. Accordingly, the tension between the identity and the self of the male identity, is reflected even more prominently in the images. Thus, the said tension becomes the justification for the appearance forms of highly problematic and depressed forms of masculinity in everyday life (Oktan, 2008, 153; Bayer, 2013, 108). Conflict theorists focus on domestic inequality relationships and, in particular, the weakened position of women in a male-dominated structure. According to them, women are abused in society under male domination. In this context, conflicts consider marriage as a means of maintaining an unequal male-dominated relationship in society. Beyond this, they claim that the woman is passed as property from one man to another, in other words, from father to husband. For generations, the woman was held responsible for meeting the needs of her father and then her brother and husband. However, it should be accepted that such a relationship of dependence or subjection has undergone profound change in our day and age. Because an increasing number of women have started to object to the conditions they previously and inevitably surrendered to, by working outside the home and therefore entering the public domain. As a result, the changes that developed in power and inequality relationships have also affected divorce rates. As women's work outside the home and organizations advocating for women's rights increased, the traditional balances regarding women's rights and responsibilities have also started to shatter (Karkıner & Kasapoğlu, 2011, 15; Yaşar Ekici, 2014, 212). Conflict in the family is the result of the woman's resentment of the man's reluctance to share his power in marriage, and in fact her display of anger in reaction to this, as much as the man's inability to accept his diminishing power.

On the other hand, cyber life is deeply affecting family, family communication, and children's development. In this context, it is useful to focus on what impacts social media has on peer-to-peer

communication. The topics which social media most affects inter-couple interaction is primarily the time spent together by couples being replaced by time spent on social media, and second, the virtual deception and lack of trust between spouses caused as a result of social media's obscurity. As soon as the majority of individuals turn on smartphones or the computer, they first check their social media accounts and spend a great deal of time on these pages. This situation between spouses causes a significant disconnection in communication. This is because couples spend time on social media, which has become the popularity of our age, instead of face-to-face communication, which is the healthiest form of communication (Şentürk Dızman, 2019c: 549). When it comes to technological developments, it is a fact that the two most important developments affecting the family are television and the internet. It is possible to see technological developments as an element that drags family relationships from sociality to individuality and often shapes the family with their negative effects.

Today's family is struggling within the network of communication and interaction, such as the internet, cell phones, Facebook, and television. In family life, parents and children are mutually likely to spend a significant portion of the time they can otherwise spend getting to know each other as passive buyers of such tools. Family members can live separately despite sharing the same space during their time together. In some cases, such tools can turn into an asylum to escape communication problems and responsibilities (Çalışkan & Aslandere, 2014, 271-272). When seeking refuge in such tools in order to forget the problem instead of making efforts to solve it, the problem further grows and confronts the individual, then turning into big problems that cannot be overcome by the individual.

Before all else, modernization transforms the family's privacy. It publicizes the family and turns it into a public phenomenon. "Private" issues related to the family appearing on television and in newspapers in recent years are striking examples in this respect. Violence within the family, divorce situations, love affairs, etc. are discussed publicly. This even includes the subject of marriage and the choice of the spouse to be married. The phenomenon that Anthony Giddens (2010) called "The Transformation of Privacy" turns into an "explosion of privacy" in the global era. While the strict rules of privacy of tradition are replaced by loose relations with modernization, they are drifted into lawlessness in the globalized period (Yıldırım, 2011, 124).

3. CONCLUSION

The family, which is the basis of society, bears all the characteristics of society. People on earth live in a family, but in different forms. This is an indication of how important family is to society.

Changes in the structure of the family push family members to loneliness and alienation. There are two kinds of loneliness: living alone and living in a group but feeling lonely. The individual, who is alone in industrial society, feels estranged from society. In our age of prevailing individual life, family does not present any solution to people's loneliness. Humanity, who set out for freedom, was liberated but was pushed to the same rate of loneliness. This is felt more prominently in the urban family. Because family members' areas of interest of family members are outside the family and personal. In the urban family, members are starting to be more concerned about their own freedom. This thus causes loneliness and alienation. In today's family, the elderly, the ailing, the disabled, in other words, the family members who require care, are not provided adequate cared. These people are deprived of love, compassion and warmth in the family and are driven to loneliness. There are two main reasons for loneliness: the first is the individual's inability to adapt to society, and the second is the structure of society unravelling. In both cases, it negatively affects the person and drives them to loneliness. Face-to-face relationships are no longer as common today, with personal interests coming to the fore in friendship relations. This thus causes individuals' isolation from society. The only thing that can save individuals from this situation is a firmly grounded family. Therefore, family should be values and family ties should be strengthened.

The family is a social institution with no other alternative. Efforts to revive the family are the best examples of this. However, it is a fact that the family suffers a loss of function and has lost its significance. The functions of the family are generation production, socialization, education, carrying national culture, economic, psychological, biological, etc. All these functions are fulfilled within the family institution. While the development process in society changes in terms of role and function

among members within the family, it also causes deterioration in the family. The family has had to perform many of its functions together with other institutions. Since it is not clear how far the family and how far other institutions will perform these functions, gaps occur and cause problems. This leads to the formation of individuals who are torn apart between institutions. Each institution expects different roles from the individual, which causes the individual to change roles frequently and thus experience identity crisis. Despite this, the family institution survives. Because it offers individuals a peaceful and happy environment.

In general terms, family is extremely important for the community. However, we see the dissolution of family today. It is important to find solutions and resolve problems at once before they grow.

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