



**FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE: B.A.LL.B 204**

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# Lecture- 11



## LECTURE 11:

IV. Disintegration of Joint Family: The following factors are responsible for the disintegration of joint family system: (i) Industrialization: The joint family system is most suited to agricultural families. India today is on the way to industrialization. With the establishment of new factories in urban areas workers from the villages move to the cities which breaks the joint family. (ii) Extension of communications and transport: As we saw above difficulties of communication and travel in ancient times compelled all the members of the family to live together and carry on the family occupation in agriculture and trade jointly. Today when the means of communication and transport have been extended it is no longer necessary for men to stay with the family and carry on the family occupation. Now they go to the city and take up any other occupation or even living in the village adopt some other trade and when they adopt a trade different from the family trade, they establish a new home. (iii) Decline of agriculture and village trades: The joint family system in India flourished in the days of yore when agriculture and trade in the villages were in a sound position. Today with the establishment of factories the commodities produced by the village craftsmen cannot compete in quality or price with those produced in factories with the result that the village industries suffer loss and after some time close down. With the closing down of the village industry the workers move to the city. Further, more and more land is being acquired by the Government for setting up big public undertakings, creating new sectors for habitation and providing public amenities. The population in the villages is growing at a faster rate than in the urban areas. Thus the pressure on land is high and not only the workers but land holders also are compelled to go to the city to find job there. Owing to the onrush of people from the villages to the cities the Hindu joint family system breaks down. Besides the decline of agriculture and trade there are other causes as well which induce people to move to the city. In the villages there are fewer facilities for entertainment and recreation, less opportunities for employment for the educated and inadequate opportunities for the education of children. A gentleman so called finds little attraction to stay on in the village. (iv) Impact of the West: India today has been greatly influenced in her social outlook by western thought and ideology. Our modern laws relating to marriage and divorce have been enacted on western pattern. Our education is entirely foreign in outlook and approach. We have begun to look at the family as a partnership and not as a sacrament. Our views especially of the young men and women on sex and family relations have undergone a change. The influence of individualism has made deep inroads in the Indian outlook. (v) New Social Legislation: The joint family system in India has been very much influenced by the new social legislations consisting of the Civil Marriage Act (1872), Hindu Marriage Act, (1955), and Hindu Succession Act (1956). The Civil Marriage Act enabled the adult boys and girls to marry against the wishes of their parents. The Hindu Marriage Act enabled the women to seek divorce under certain conditions. The Hindu Succession Act gave the right of equal inheritance to women. All these acts have influenced the solidarity of the joint family and relationships between brothers and sisters, parents and children and husbands and wives. K. S. Sambasivan, a contemporary Indian writer, dealing with the effect of the modern forces on the working class families of India writes. "Industrialization has contributed much to family disorganisation. In its result most of the important ties that bind all family members together in an agricultural society began to loosen. Again, the worker unaccustomed to the work life in the factory also becomes disorganised and in such a condition is not able to enjoy the richness of the family. This condition affects his emotions also, leading him to seek pleasure through unnatural forces like alcohol, prostitution etc. Factory occupation has made members of the same family economically independent. The joint family, so common in India, is gradually disappearing." Most of the workmen when questioned by researchers express themselves against joint family system and prefer to live in separate families. It means that the joint family system under modern influence is weakening. It is, however, to be remembered that joint family system in India has not completely died out. The causes of its disintegration are mainly social. The Indian people still keep intact the family attachment and live their traditional morality. Hindu sentiments are even today in favour of joint family. Even in cases where family property has

got divided and income of the family members is not pooled, the constituent householders consider themselves duty bound to participate in ceremonial celebrations like marriage, birthday, and religious functions. Such participation keeps the joint family feelings alive. The thinkers who criticize the system have not been able to appreciate it properly. Compromise and mutual adjustment are the keynotes of the Indian joint family system. The joint family is not a place where individuality is crushed but it is a cooperative institution where every member does his duty under the guidance of the eldest members. In it we have a synthesis of individual and common interests; here are inculcated social virtues which make man a good citizen and teach him to live for all. What is needed today is to find out the ways by which the virtues of the joint family system can be retained. And this will require the intelligent cooperation of rulers and social scientists aided by enlightened public opinion.