Globalization and Transformation of Family Care

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The effect of globalization on family care traditions has emerged as a significant issue of academic debate in recent years. Globalization and the growth of liberal market economy in local areas has rapidly transformed the traditional pattern of family structure, livelihood strategies of the family members, and care giving practices to the elderly in Nepal. Traditionally, the older people used to live in joint family comprised of their married son and their children. The reciprocal exchange of care between the parents and children was associated with the religious conception of virtue and vice. If the off-springs would not take care for their parents, it was considered as a great sin. This tradition has been gradually eroding with the migration of youths to different destination in search of opportunities for their education and employment. This migratory process has weakened the traditional role of families as care giving institutions to old parents and disable member in the family. The old parents are now increasingly shelter to care homes for their caring. The children maintain their ties with their parents mainly by economic support for their maintenance. The old people have been unable to receive any moral care and support from other members of their family. This article examines the changes on the traditional responsibility of family as a care giving unit for the old people. It discusses the issues based on data gathered through in-depth interviews and case study of 37 senior citizens living in Siddhi Shaligram Senior Citizens Home (SSSCH) at Bhaktapur district. The secondary sources of information have also been used to sharpen the conceptual issues related to this field.

Keywords: globalization, migration, elderly care, transformation, senior citizen, Nepal

Introduction

The author begins with a story of global settlement of a family. Mr. Khanal's family was well up in Kathmandu. After school education, his two sons and a daughter were interested to go Australia and America for further education. They went and did not return rather they got married and settled there. They have been sending sufficient amount of money but Mr. Khanal missed personal care, love, and proximity with them. He said, "Sons and daughter could not serve hot water food and bed tea which are essential for me at the age of 70 years. We expect love and care of our family members from the old care center". Sons, daughter, and grand children became American and Australian citizen. They have very good job. They did not like to settle in Nepal whereas Mr. Khanal did not like to stay America and Australia. Mr. Khanal said that if his sons were in Nepal, he would not stay care home. Khanal opinioned that care centers could provide all technical necessary of the elderly people but they could not fulfill psychological and social loss of the elderly living in the care centers. Mr. Khanal said that they have regular audio-visual communication with sons and they have been remitting foreign currency to buy care for their parents in Nepal. He again said that it was global society and there was not fixity of family and

moral values. His sons and daughter were out of Nepal not because they were poor but because of global education and profession. Khanal's story clearly shows that the elderly people who are not living with their siblings face loneliness and social isolation.

Globalization is open system extended from individual household to beyond the national boundaries. Globalization, in this more comprehensive, social sense of the term, is everywhere. In this paper, the author follows the lines of Giddens' argument (2000, p. 30) that "Globalization is not only about what is 'out there', remote and far away from the individual. It is an 'in here' phenomenon too, influencing intimate and personal aspects of our lives". Giddens stressed that globalization reshaped our intimate and personal moral values, relations and larger world views. Globalization has changed traditional moral and cultural values in Nepal. Global economic penetration placed mathematical quality on social life and encouraged formerly autonomous states to regress into penal states that value production, competition, and profit above all else, including social issues (Bourdieu, 1999). This brought changes on livelihood strategies of people and traditional homely services and family care transformed into commodity of liberal market (Kreager, 2006). In many lower income countries, a large numbers of youths are out of country and urban families are highly individualistic (Yoon, 2000). Therefore, large numbers of the elderly from village to city are either abandoned in their own home or dropped at elderly care homes in city.

In Nepal, family has sole authority, responsibility, and morality of caring elderly people until recently. In the past, the most senior members were looked on as persons to be respected, emulated, listened to, and obeyed, and they were provided with whatever care they needed, primarily by the family or relatives. Caring of old parents is considered as essential "Dharma" (Marriott, 1990; Dumont, 1980). The most of older people felt culturally comfortable to live with their families and usually with a married son. One of the untold stories of son preference among the Hindu people embedded with old age care and religious value and virtue. The reciprocity of caring between parents and children has been transcended vice and virtue earning religious interpretation of heaven and hell after this life. If parents were not cared by own offspring that was great sin and vice versa. It is believed that the offender of the family duties will have suffered beyond this life. In contrast, recently in Nepal, it is breaking up this type of family morality and loyalty. Joint family system is breaking in to nuclear family, compelling older persons to live alone without any family member to look after them. Furthermore, old parents are abandoned at care home, discarded from own home, and neglected by the own offspring.

The circumstances of the aged, and individual aging itself, have dramatically changed because of international labor migration and changes on family structures in Nepal (Gautam, 2005). Witnessing a substantial number of abandoned elderly people at "Pashupati Bridhasharm" and mushrooming old care homes in urban areas are testimony to interrogate the functional status of traditional value, family integrity, and interpretation of morality of family. In name of advancement towards 21st century, it has made Nepalese sons more and more self-centered without any morality, obligation, and responsibilities towards their parents. There has been long debate recently about whether the function of the family has been declined since the development of labor migration and modernization (Gautam, 2008).

Some researchers (Popenoe, 1993; Swartz, 2009) stated that the function of the family has declined since more and more people are inclined to invest less time, money, and energy in the family matters than in pursuing a more individualistic self-fulfilled life. It has been thought that in response to the fluctuations characteristics in

the recent society such as labor market, instability of relationships, intergenerational families acting as adaptive support systems are contributive.

One of the principal themes in socio-cultural studies of South Asia over the past several decades has been the notions of person and family (Marriott, 1990). Studies claimed that south Asian persons are not thought to be bound and self contained individuals but rather connected substantially with family, kinship relations, places, and social network. By means of substantial transactions of childbirth, feeding, caring-living together, touching, exchanging pain, pleasure, and socialization, people are thought to absorb parts of themselves. In spite of this self as incomplete personhood cultural orientation, many elderly are compelled to live either alone in their own family or end up to old care centers. The traditional responsibility and morality of the family to care old parents are also in crisis because of migration and rapid changing pattern of family and livelihood strategies (Asato & Kusaka, 2010).

In this study, the author focuses on that the abandoned parents who had fulfilled their duties of caring their offspring are out of family, place, and social network now. Besides demographic changes and biological problems of old age, they have been suffering economic and social problems of out of kin, out of family and social relations. Though, there is provision of nominal cash support to elderly people in the name of social security, the number of elderly homes is increasing in urban areas. There is some gap between social security fund of the state and luring care management of internationally funded elderly homes. State policy of social security demands some improvement and research for proper direction and management. Desertion, social isolation and exclusion are a particular problem for elders in Nepal, and whilst recognized by a number of agencies, it is not widely acknowledged as a societal problem. Some literatures have found just about the concept of ageing and demographic status of elders in Nepal (Singh, 2003; Yadav, 2012). While, there is no sufficient research in the field of ageing and related problem in Nepal.

This generation of elderly peoples are the most unfortunate because they cared their children and when they became young either they went out of the family or parents were abandoned in old care centers. Another interesting factor is witnessing increase in life expectancy in the most of the country because of biomedicine and technology. Care is required for longer time in comparison to earlier generations. Therefore, caring for the elderly becomes an important issue in current age. On the basis of this introductory remark, this study tries to examine changes on traditional morality and responsibility of family through the stories of deserted elders at care home.

Methodology

This article is based on the author's M.Phil. Dissertation in Sociology, from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. This is a qualitative study. A total of 37 elderly in a care home were purposely selected and interviewed for the study. Out of them, 26 were female and 11 were male. Besides demographic findings, individual stories of arrival in care home, care home life, and their world views were collected two month long field work in May-July 2016 in Bhaktapur.

Siddhi Shaligram Senior Citizen's Home

Siddhi Shaligram Senior Citizen's Home (SSSCH) was established in 2005 with major contributions from Nepal highlife Beilngries Germany to give proper care for the elderly people who have been either abandoned at urban or abandoned in their own home. The care home is adjoining with hospital. There are three categories

of care room available. The first category is paid room and service. The middleclass elderly whose family member abandoned him/her came to there for proper homely and nursing care. They paid good amount of money to the care home. The second category of the elderly was poor.

SSSCH offers support to senior citizen in need, regardless of their status, wealth, caste, religion, gender, ethnicity, and relationship. The services at SSSCH are available to those aged 60 and above who meet any of listed criteria such as: lack of family support, neglected by family, lack of local support, physical limitation, inadequate housing, or limited access to information about available social agencies for emergency assistance.

SSSCH provides care and services of basic medical attention by trained healthcare staff, daytime activities promoting socialization, space for communal “*pooja*” (prayer and offering), “*bhajan*” (singing), “*satsang*” (religious discourse), and “*yoga*” (exercise). Members of the home also get the opportunity to develop skill while enjoying activities such as gardening and small handicrafts. SSSCH’s residents are provided meals prepared under health norms and served with love and care. Accommodations include basic clean living facilities, a reading room/library, lounges, recreation areas, and a garden.

Socio-economic Features of Elders

Home District

Home district is another significant component of socio-economic study, which derives the various information of respondent about origin place and home places. The senior citizens who have been currently living and getting shelter, food, and care, also are migrated and shifted from various places, which is presented by following table

Table 1

Distribution of the Elderly by District

District	Frequency	Percent (%)
Kathmandu	16	43.25
Bhaktapur	14	37.84
Lalitpur	2	5.40
Kavre	1	2.70
Dhading	1	2.70
Lamjung	1	2.70
Others	2	5.40
Total	37	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Since SSSCH is located in Bhaktapur district, the most of the respondents were from Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and the neighboring districts. The other category respondents were from Delhi and Kalinpong, India.

On the basis of the table, it can be argued that urban elderly have more pitiable condition than rural elders. The central argument of the thesis is that urban livelihood strategy has been completely changed with the neo-liberal economic policies. With this circumstances, elderly people experienced different scenario which they never expected in the family. The supporting stories in next section match this argument.

Family Status

Family status is as being in a parent and child relationship. This can also mean a parent and child type of

relationship that may not be based on blood or adoption ties, but that is based on care, responsibility, and commitment. Examples include parents caring for children, people caring for aging parents or relatives with disabilities etc. In this regard, the elderly who are landed up in care home were with the relationship and caring with someone (see Table 2).

Table 2

Living With Family Member in the Past

Living the past with	Number	Percent (%)
Son and daughter-in-law	8	21.62
Daughter and son-in-law	3	8.11
Husband/wife	4	10.81
Alone	12	32.43
Other kin	7	18.91
Others	3	8.10
Total	37	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 2 clearly shows that before coming to the care home, most of the respondent lived alone (32.43%) followed by with their son and daughter in-law (21.62%). It shows that those elderly who are alone are most vulnerable.

Ownership Over Property

The property and ownership of aged people also plays great role in determining presents status. Therefore, it is important factor in studying socio-economic condition of elderly people. Having ownership on official record is not only vital role in determine the status of the aged people who and how they are used and manipulated having important values. Table 3 shows the condition of elder's ownership over property.

Table 3

Property of Respondents

Property	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	27	72.98
No	10	27.02
Total	37	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents have own property in their name. Among 27 respondents having ownership on property, 10 have bank balance, five have home, five have ornament, three have land, and only four have all type property. And remaining 10 elders have not any property in their name past and present.

Furthermore, the sources of income of the elderly people are also home rent, land lease, bank balance including ornaments, and old age allowances. This indicate that, though having sufficient own property, elders coerce to desert in care home instead of live own home.

Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marriage is not biological event as birth and death rather it is a social event that is determined by society within the norms and cultural values. Broadly, speaking marriage is social obligation in Nepal. In Nepal, marriage signifies the beginning of socially sanctioned sexual relation and taken as the way of family bond.

It is expected that married people have children and their responsibility is supposed to take care their parents at old age. So, the marital status of elderly people living in the care home is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Respondent by Sex and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex of respondent				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Married	2	5.40	2	5.40	4	10.82
Unmarried	1	2.70	5	13.51	6	16.21
Divorce	2	5.40	0	0	2	5.40
Widow/widower	4	10.81	17	45.94	21	56.75
Separated	2	5.40	2	5.40	4	10.82
Total	11	29.74	26	70.26	37	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2016.

The Table 4 clearly shows that never married and widow are more vulnerable to be abandoned. There is an equal chance of desertion of currently married and separated male and female elderly. In comparison to currently married, never married and widow/widower are more vulnerable to be abandoned. Therefore, elderly abandonment is directly related to socio-cultural processes like marriage, divorce, separation, and widowhood of the society.

Number of Children

It is taken as having many children will secure the life of old age in the Hindu religion. Moreover, having boy child is taken as best care taker, bread winner at time of economic crisis in family at the time of alive and after death of parents. Not only have that, the majority of elders people lived with their married son. By tradition, the reciprocity of caring each other has been transcended vice virtue earning religious interpretation heaven and hell after this life. If parents were not cared by their offspring, that was taken as the great sin.

Therefore, number of children holds the meaning of parent's abandonment or not in care home in this modern time (Table 5).

Table 5

Number of Children of Respondents

Number of children	Frequency	Percent (%)
Having only-one children	8	21.62
Having two children	10	27.03
Having more two children	8	21.62
Having no children	11	29.73
Total	37	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

The Table 5 shows that the parents without children are abandoned in care home.

Transformation of Traditional Care Responsibility

The traditional notion of the family has been changing because of global economic penetration. In traditional family, parents have to live with preferably their sons. If they did not have son, they compromise

with daughter and other close relatives. Because of livelihood change and economic liberalization, close relatives did not show interest to care close elderly relatives. Own sons and daughter also started to analysis of economic profit of caring own parents. So, it can be said that because of excessive penetration of global economic policy and open access of new economic and livelihood opportunity, new generations want to live standard of life.

They want to consume modernity as much as they can. The elderly also understood selfish nature of new generation. One day, daughter of “Bhakta Laxmi”, asked all property in her name but mother denied to give all property to daughter’s name. Then the conflict aroused between mother and daughter. Because of over greediness of daughter, the mother sold her own property and went to care home. She did not trust her only one daughter. The daughter also did not care her mother. The stories are as follows: *“When my daughter got married, she and her husband lived with me for a while. At that time her husband wanted my house and land. Daughter and her husband said me, ‘you should give this house and land to us’. I knew that they really needed more money. I think that, if I gave them this house and land I would not have a house to live in. So, I did not listen to them. Also she said, ‘I don’t want to live with you. Why don’t you die?’ I did not know why she said that. I already gave her sufficient money and ornaments, goods, as a dowry. She never called me to have meal from that day. She listened to her husband much more than me. Day by day she shouted at me in the name of money, house, and land. Then, one day I decided to separate from them. Like this, I separated from my daughter by shifting care home. I did not sign house and land to her; instead I sold this house and land. This was the last property I had. Then I saved all the cash in bank. Now, I am sustaining from the bank balance and monthly interest”*. By analyzing the story, it can be argued that traditional values and morality has been changed. New generation youths have global opportunity of livelihood. Parents are also ready to face unintended problems of global society.

Changing Traditional Family Values and Morality

“Motimaya” and her husband have been living in the care home since two years. They have two sons and two daughters. All of them were married and busy on their job. When Motimaya suffered from many health problems including Parkinson, their sons and daughter-in-laws proposed to keep them in care home. Though they pay fee for the stay but elderly parents missed their family live, home, and lovely grandchildren. They desired to die in the home but they were compelled to live care home as they compared hell. This story makes more alive of this concept; *“our sons and daughter-in-laws said that they could not do no more care of mother and father because they have jobs and own family member to care. Because of my wife and I, they felt disturbed. They said that they have to go outside for entertainment, visits, tours, enjoyments; therefore they suggested us to live care home. We thought sons and daughters were insurance of old age. Look! Our sons and daughter in-law prioritized to job, entertainment, and comfort than care of us. Whenever we were able to look their children and household chores, they loved and cared but when we unable to care their children and work, they dropped us at the care home. We (old people) still believed that parents are god and goddess but in these days (Kali Yug) parents are regarded as machine and family value and morality is lost. We were compelled to buy care, love, and support which were considered essential family morality in traditional society. The roles and responsibility of the sons and daughter-in-laws is transferred to nurse and care providers (Third party)”*.

This story indicated the effect of globalization which makes people more individualistic and global competitive human. Then the traditional roles and responsibilities of the family have been shifted into the

commercial care home where the elderly missed flavors of family attachment, love, and care. This also articulated that because of commercialization of livelihood, the family prioritized job and comfort rather than care of elderly people. Parents are thought like producing machine these days. When parents become old, they are taken as family burden and some of the families dropped their parents in commercial care home, whereas the elders thought that their offspring are the insurance for old age.

Some of them were dropped at care home by their relatives. Their stories articulate either force abandoned or strategically abandoned by their family and close relatives. Therefore, they were called abandoned senior citizen. "Pradip Limbu" has similar story of abandonment at care home. The political economy of his abandonment is also link with foreign labor migration and weakens kinship relations with his brother's family with his gradual weakening of body. He was dropped at road side and came to the care home with the support of other lady. He said that, *"When my wife went Thailand after marriage and she did not return Nepal, I became alone. I waited her so long time but she did not contact me. When I felt loneliness then I started to drink and smoking. I would not like to stay at home. I sold land and animal property for the purpose manages money for drink and expense for relax. Then I became property less and reached to my big uncle house to stay at Kathmandu. My big uncle was popular and very rich man with many housemaid and workers at home and office. Though, I have to work at their hostel's kitchen sometimes. I spent about 20 years at my uncle's house of being as a labor. Suddenly I caught up by sugar disease then I could not do more labor as I did at past. When I could not work they started to misbehave me. One day my cousin took me on his car. After driving about an hour, we arrived at one house, then he stopped the car near a house and tea shop and asked me to step out to buy cigarette. Then he started the vehicle, and before I could call out to him, he drove off. Then one lady of near the house arrived and said, let's go for treatment, we will cure your disease and we can prevent this, you have live here with us for long time to cure the sugar she says. Initially, I thought he'd gone to fill petrol or buy something but he did not returned then, the truth dawned me that I'd been abandoned by my own cousin brother"*. On the basis of this story, it can be argued that elderly people were deserted at care home either because of lack of close kin close to them or degrading traditional family values and religious morality. Pradip Limbu has live stories of effect of globalization and transformed care morality. Pradip's wife went to Thailand for labor but she did not returned to him. His wife did not stay with him in spite that they have sufficient land property to sustain. She went Thailand to get more facility and made more money to enjoy individual life. She forgot to return home and never ever thought that she is married and has to think and care her husband also. While, in Nepalese context, husband and wife are taken as strong bond at this life and next life also.

Changed Perception of Care

Mr. and Mrs. Khanal were indirectly deserted in their own home and they chose better care center. They willingly came to stay in the care home. They denied that they were deserted but their sons, daughters were in foreign countries and rarely visited them. Deserted does not mean that family members children didn't give money and care for their parents. If family members left, only the elderly in own home are also called abandoned in home.

They claimed that modern senior citizens preferred care home. We were habituated with modern culture therefore we did not miss family care. Because of absence of caring relatives, Mr. Khanal's couple compromised to stay in care home. The following lines of stories makes more clears: *"We let them our children to go abroad because, we would like to see them to go more income and opportunities. They would get*

advanced study and develop their career. If they lived with us, they would have no scope to advanced study even they would have not get suitable job also. We have enough parental property too. We understood that, it's the modern age and time of globalization. Movement of younger generations is natural to go and live around the world. This migration will be better to our children. For the brighter future of the children, we sacrificed our life. We did not confine them at home and around us. They have not deserted us, we ourselves shifted here to get better care. We are living satisfied life in this care home. All caring facility has provided. We are living free and secured life here. So, at last we want to say that, we are not deserted by our children but we shifted here to get best care facility and hopes of long age".

They argued that only traditional family expected to be cared by own close relatives. The societies have changed because of globalization and neo-liberal market. Classical expectations of the elderly also changed and they were prepared to stay at care home. Some orthodox religious elderly denied to going at care home otherwise many of elderly felt happy to stay at care home. They compared care home culture with western countries.

Conclusion

Empirical studies show that this generation of elderly people is the most unfortunate because they expect similar type of family care in their home as they have cared their children and the elderly. They felt family morality crisis and transformation of familial responsibilities. Globalization, as well as other spirit of social changes for instance, educational status and gender roles are major agents of breaking tradition forms of family morality and family roles and responsibilities. Women were specially considered as care taker of children and the elderly in the family. Women educational campaigns and global labor (skill and unskilled) migration changed traditional livelihood strategies of urban as well as rural people. Youths either migrated foreign countries or shifted at urban areas within the country and separated from their parents. Then, parents are abandoned either their own home or they are compelled to go commercial care home. Another interesting fact is that because of biomedicine and technology, life expectancy of peoples has been increasing and number of the elderly also increased in the country. Care is required for longer time in comparison to earlier generations. Therefore, traditional function of family has been transforming from home to commercial old care centers. Elderly people are taken as economic problem and burden of family now. But, until recently, in some decades, ageing was considered as socially and culturally high upgraded status in society. Eldest male member of the family or the community automatically took the role of head-ship in family and community. Almost all social, cultural, and economic activities and decision were guided by him/her. His/ her views and words were taken as the rules and regulation to follow for family and community. Individual who cross the aged 75 believed as those who have attained the God-hood. This shows the high respects shown by Nepalese culture towards their aged person.

In contrast in recently joint family system has been breaking in to nuclear family, compelling older persons to live alone without any family member to look after them. Furthermore, old parents are abandoned at care home, discarded from own home, and neglected by the own offspring. Mentioned stories and evidences make clear that traditional family value and morality have been eroded and changed by the time passes. Moreover, globalization and capitalist market economy have supported for individualistic life and living which has badly affected the life of elderly people.

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