**Familyism**

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It was a striking invitation to join a book launching ceremony in one of the leading hotels of Lahore with the title of Familyism (khandaniyet) on September 04, 2022. Some prominent names were among the speakers, but the most important aspect of the session was that the organisers converted the occasion into fundraising for flood relief activities which resulted in more than 10 million rupees of donations by the participants. Familyism is a topic of global concern due to the tarnishing social fabric around the globe.

We here in the subcontinent are relatively less affected by this global phenomenon which diluted the structure of the family due to extensive modernisation, urbanisation, and commercialisation where everyone is running to attain as much luxury as possible for an enhanced experience of life. But we forgot that eventual pleasure exists in collectiveness, togetherness, and cooperativeness.

Familyism puts a priority on family advocating a societal system where families take responsibility for the care of their members rather than leaving all responsibilities to the government. It is both symbolic and ideological contrast to materialism where self-interest takes precedence over all other obligations.

[Cristiano Ronaldo becomes first player to score 700 club goals](https://www.nation.com.pk/10-Oct-2022/cristiano-ronaldo-becomes-first-player-to-score-700-club-goals)

It was 1992, my first year of professional life when I was listening to our then CEO late Mr. Haider Karrar educating us to remain vigilant on two fronts, first the family and the second financial management. He emphasised limiting expenses according to the pocket for a peaceful life and making sure to look after the family because if you don’t have a sound family ‘to aap ka baja baj gaya’ means ‘you will have a terrible life’, for harmony in life you need to have a dependable wife, he added.

The publisher in his opening remarks mentioned that when disciples of Eblis present their progress he embraces the one who managed to create friction between a husband and a wife because it is the starting point to weaken the institution of a family. He also showed his concerns over the significant increase of khula cases than divorce in recent years indicating a trend that more women are now trying to escape from the challenges and responsibilities of family life.

[Attack on school van in Swat kills driver, injures 2 students](https://www.nation.com.pk/10-Oct-2022/attack-on-school-van-in-swat-kills-driver-injures-2-students)

Being in the family is indeed demanding, needs compromises asks for sacrifices, and requires patience to accommodate the multidimensional demands of all members of the family but it has several long-term benefits e.g. most of our prosperity indices avoid looking at the miseries of old age parents in the developed countries if we can gauge their difficulties being without their families at the mercy of old age homes this single indicator will put all prosperity surveys upside down.

The author of the book, Dr Samia Raheel Qazi, in her address was appreciative of her entire family for their support to facilitate her achievements in life from her parents to her children and even grandchildren who are a source of happiness in her life. She recognised the support of every member of her family with their names explaining their contributions to her attainments.

Some leading journalists, academicians, religious scholars, representatives of NGOs, and women organisations were present on the occasion. The focus of speeches remained tacitly criticising the western family culture which I think is visible to us only through the glamorous metropolitan popular cities. The connectivity of family members in cities and towns a little away from the mainstream is relatively better.

[SBP likely to maintain current interest rate in monetary policy](https://www.nation.com.pk/10-Oct-2022/sbp-likely-to-maintain-current-interest-rate-in-monetary-policy)

But the question is why do we aspire for familyism? Is it just a long-term self-protection strategy? Is it seeking spiritual satisfaction? Is it complying with traditions? Is it to strengthen national/ societal prosperity? Or is it irritable to the Western culture? Because the facilitations which Western culture extends to their people to assist in their responsibilities linked with the families are paying them off in terms of prosperity and growth.

Western progress despite weakening family structures is awe-inspiring in terms of development and financial affluence. Is it worth sacrificing the affection, warmth, love, and care that human relations extend to each other? Life on this planet revolves around the human being, what if the living soul remains engaged in material gains and ignores the value of family bonding to attain short-lived material happiness at the cost of lasting satisfaction of enduring family relationships.

I was a bit rattled looking at a report that suggests, “In nursing homes throughout Japan, an interactive, therapeutic robot is helping provide care to elderly residents. The robot’s name is Paro, and it looks like a baby harp seal, complete with fur, soulful eyes, and even whiskers.

[Kamran Tessori to take oath as Sindh governor today](https://www.nation.com.pk/10-Oct-2022/kamran-tessori-to-take-oath-as-sindh-governor-today)

The idea of getting healthcare from a robot may seem to be the stuff of science fiction, but Paro is effective in calming elderly people with dementia and other cognitive disorders. A recent study found that loneliness rates decreased in a test group that socialised with the robot. Worldwide, about 5,000 Paros are in use, but Japan is the single biggest market for the device, with 3,000.”

Japan is a country with an increasingly aging population, and the launching of robots for the care of elderly people is indeed alarming from a social perspective despite given advantages of reducing loneliness and reduction in the cost of healthcare. Because, despite their exceptional expected efficiency and accuracy, robots can never extend kindness, sympathy, attachment, tenderness, and feelings in relationships.

Family is a part of the divine design to enrich the experience of human life in this world. Let’s not spoil this institution, let’s not culminate to Paro, let’s not perish the feelings of being from our society, let’s sacrifice for existence, let’s compromise for compassion, and let’s contribute to the warmth of life by strengthening and promoting familyism in our societies for strong, prosperous and happy future of the mankind.