

Family and kinship Organization among Jalaria and Vadabalija in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Dr V Venkata Lakshmi

Guest faculty, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Corresponding Author: Dr V Venkata Lakshmi

Abstract: The present study reveals to the organization of family and kinship among the two Fishing communities. Jalari and Vadabalija household is always a family unit usually consisting of an adult male, his wife and children. In some cases, it includes other kinsmen and their wives and children who are agnatically related to each other. The family among Jalari and Vadabalija is characterized by patrilineal descent, patrilocal and neolocal residence and patriarchal authority. Most of the families are monogamous type, and they are nuclear families consisting of a husband, his wife and their children. Fishing crew formation now-a-days is more like involving labour rather than an activity involving obligatory kin. This citation, as many fishermen observed, as resulted in the gradual disintegration of joint families and formation of nuclear families. As a result the traditional arrangement of kin networks socio-political control and the cultural norms gradually being eroded.

Keywords: Family, Kinship, Jalari, Organization, Vadabalija

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I. INTRODUCTION

Humans in every culture structure a set of social relations that classify its members within the framework of a family. The notion of what constitutes a family can be fairly extensive in some groups, and narrower defined in other groups. A family is a group of people who consider themselves related through kinship, while a household is defined as people who share a living space and may or may not be related (Miller, 2008). Most households consist of members who are related through kinship, although an increasing number do not. The nature of the family inevitably shifts and reflects the social and cultural changes in economics, education, and political systems (Georgas, Berry, Van de Vijver, Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2006).

A critical analysis of kinship among Jalari fishing community Kodanada Rao (1975) provided not only the nature of kinship ties in sustaining fishing culture and economy on the east coast, but also a database for understanding the south Indian kinship usage.

II. METHODOLOGY

Two traditional fishing villages in order to rural and urban dimensions, two villages representing both fishing castes from the rural areas and two villages in the urban environs of Visakhapatnam city are selected for the present study. Correspondingly, Mutyalampalem, a Vadabalija village and Jalaripeta, a Jalari village represent the rural sample while Vasavanipalem, a Vadabalija locality and Pedajalaripeta, a Jalari enclave form the urban sample. For convenience of analysis, sample sizes of 100 respondents have been taken from each village following Random sampling method. Anthropological tools like participation, schedule, interviews were employed in the present paper.

Family:

The basic domestic group among Jalaris and Vadabalijas is the family. The term *kutumbam* is invariably used for family in its wider context and is applicable to any close knit kin group, from a household to a lineage. This Jalaris count their members and describe their family groupings in terms of households. Jalari household is always a family unit usually consisting of an adult male, his wife and children. In some cases, it includes other kinsmen and their wives and children who are agnatically related to each other.

The term *illu* is used to designate the household. Household among the fisherman is a unit of food consumption and property ownership. Each household has separate productive means and a separate cooking place. The cooking place is private and others are allowed only with the permission of its owner. The household as a basic domestic group is the most clearly drawn unit in the village and its members are referred to as the group sharing the same hearth. The implication is that all members of a particular household come from the same hearth. This is locally expressed as *okekundavanta*. Such a practice of equating the domestic group with the hearth

seems to be widespread. A common dwelling may have a number of such hearths in it. Several households may live under the same roof but they function as distinct domestic units. Their separateness is clearly seen by the fact that households are not counted on the basis of the existence of houses, but on the basis of the existence of the number of hearths in the village.

Each such household invariably represents itself as distinct property owing group. However, the boats, nets and other valuable items of movable property and owned by the entire household but not by individual members of the household. Property is managed by the senior member of the household and the right to dispose of such property vests in the head of household. Earnings of different members of the household is used for its maintenance and development. However, at the time of division of the household, property is divided equally among the brothers of the household who are coparceners and their rights of property are recognized. This shows that some households in the village possess more than one house. This does not mean, however, that each house is occupied by only one household there is, in fact, one or more households living under the same roof. At the same time, there are households having more than one house of their own. The existence of more houses than the total number of households in the village is due to the fact that the members of many of the households dwell in more than one house.

In addition to this the various lineage have their peddillu in separate houses. Pedillu is the lineage shrine where the lineage deities are kept and worshipped by its members. It is considered as a sacred place and the lineage priest usually lives in that house observing various taboo related to the sacred nature of the house. The attachment of a fisher to this house is indeed great. His house is symbolic of the purpose of his existence and his endeavors in his life. As an adult, all his economic interests stem from his house and he dedicates his life to the upkeep of the house, in one capacity or another. He performs various rituals and ceremonies and worships his ancestors in his house. Again in their turn, his children immortalize him after his death by “bringing him back to his home” and “integrate him with his ancestors” to offer prayers along with other ancestors of the family. His children remain to live in the same house to continue the name of the family and to guard its reputation. The house is loved and highly valued on account of sentiments and statuses associated with it. Fishermen always place a high value on his ancestral home. The loss of one’s house, due to a fire accident or some other calamity, is a cause for great grief. They also keep the house in good condition.

Physical features of the house

The fishermen live in thatched houses which give an appearance of hutments. There are two types of houses, locally known as *gudisillu* and *vasillu*. The *gudisillu* is constructed with its roof in an umbrella shape, supported by a central pole and resting on the circular side walls and poles as the roof slopes down. The *vasillu* is rectangular in its ground construction. Both types of houses take the name *middillu* when the ceiling of the roof is six feet above the ground level and it has a slab thickly reinforced with wood and mud and plastered with dung and mud. The mud slab is covered with palmyra leaves. The thatched roof is common both for the mud plastered *middillu* and the ordinary *vasillu* and *gudisillu*, *middillu* is preferred by fishermen for protection from fire accidents. The construction of *middillu* is expensive and laborious and therefore, there are very few such houses in the village and only well-to-do families can afford such houses.

A *vasillu* is constructed either as an independent and separate structure for two or more households. The independent apartment belonging to each household is separated by a mud wall in between them. All the four *vasillu* type houses in the village belong to joining families and seem to be the most favoured type of house for them. The *gudisillu* is an independent and separate structure for each household and sometimes it is also partitioned into two. A majority of households live in single room houses.

Fishing communities’ preference for *gudisillu* type of house is well suited to the needs of independent households. One roomed house with a living room cum kitchen (*Ainillu*) is typically suited for an elementary family. As a matter of fringe adjustment, the elementary family may include a widowed mother or father, and unmarried brothers or sisters. When the family composition crosses through an extended family type, the one roomed house emerges as a full-fledged two or more roomed house to accommodate and satisfy the needs of the family generated through its internal development. This practically satisfies the needs of all the requirements of an elementary family and an extended family as well. In course of time, if the extended family divides itself into two elementary families by marriage of one of the unmarried male adults, these two families may continue to live as independent households by converting the main room into two separate units under the same roof; or the newly married adult may construct his own house. In some cases, the *gudisillu* type house may not accommodate all the members of a joint family and they live in more than one such *gudisillu*, as is the case with many of the joint households of the village.

The hearth (*poyyi*) is found either in the main room or on the edge of the verandah. A portion aligning the side walls in the main room is used to keep earthen jars permanently installed by reinforcing and pasting with mud. This is to keep grain and other necessities. Another common element in a fisherman’s house is the left *atuku*. The left is used for storing domestic equipment’s, nets, broken furniture and other accessories.

The north-east corner of the living room is screened off by a thin mud-wall of a height of four to five feet and a length of three to four feet. Such screened portion is called *gondillu*, which is used for the worship of family ancestors. It is treated as sacred place for worship and propitiation of the household ancestors only. They keep their valuable goods in this part of the house and these include gold, jewellery, cash and costly clothes used only during important festivals and ceremonies. Since this place is sacred, they believe that gold, cash, and jewellery kept in that place will be guarded by the ancestors and consequently no one would dare to steal the valuable placed in *gondillu*.

Composition of the household

The household is a small, patrilineal kin group of narrow range. It always consists of a family unit i.e., agnatically related kinsmen, their wives and children. Rarely does the household include non-agnatic kinsmen such as, sister’s children and wife siblings etc. The female members are usually the spouses of the male agnates of the household. On marriage, a woman is brought into her father-in-law’s household and the process of extension, in normal conditions, continues after the marriage of other sons of the household. On the death of the old man, the tendency of the married brothers is for division of the household and its property.

There may be cases where the household is not divided even after the death of the members of its senior generation. However, in general on the event of the death of the father, if the old mother does not like a division of the household and the property, it may be postponed temporarily, but the division would take place immediately after her death. Division of the household might sometimes take place even during the lifetime of the parents, despite their unwillingness. The married sons of the household, soon after their marriage, may ask for a partition and even establish a separate household of their own. The father may temporarily postpone the partition of the property, but not the separation of their sons from the natal family. Hence, the dissolution of the household after the marriage of the sons is a process well recognized by the fishers themselves.

The usual mode of post-marital residence is patrilocal and the exclusive rights of ownership to the property of the household are recognized only to the male agnates of the household. So when extension takes place, however, it is almost invariably in the agnatic line. The rule of patrilocal residence is strictly observed and only in exceptional cases does a man move into his wife’s residence.

The family among Jalari and Vadabalija is characterized by patrilineal descent, patrilocal and neolocal residence and patriarchal authority. Most of the families are monogamous type, and they are nuclear families consisting of a husband, his wife and their children. Joint families are also noticed but they are few. Partitioning the same house for married sons has become a compulsion in view of owning a separate house. In the realm of family relations significant changes have also been noticed. The agnatic emphasis, though still dominant, has accommodated the affinal relationships in matters of household composition. The relations between affines have become stronger. The male person goes for fishing while the female involves in domestic work and in selling the fish. Both of them contribute to family income. Boys go for fishing at the age of 10 years.

Table1: Size of the Family in Study Area

Size of the family	Mutyalammapalem	Vasuvanipalem	PedaJalari Peta	Jalaripeta
Between 1-2	27 (27.00)	10 (10.00)	16 (16.00)	16 (16.00)
Between 3-5	65 (65.00)	87 (87.00)	80 (80.00)	80 (80.00)
Between 6-10	8 (8.00)	3 (3.00)	4 (4.00)	4 (4.00)
Greater 10	0	0	0	0
	100 (100.00)	100 (100.00)	100 (100.00)	100 (100.00)

From the above table, we can clearly observe that the size of the family in fishing communities is largely limited between 3-5 members in a family, which generally is made up of two parents and their kids living jointly as a unit. In the Jalari villages as well as Vada Villages the number of family members is similar in family. More than 75% of the families have been found with family members between 3-5 in each family. Only around 5% of the families have been found with 6-10 members in a family means Joint family system gradually decreasing in fishing communities also.

Table 2: Comparison of Size of the Family

Size of the family	Rural villages (Mutyalammapalem&Jalaripeta)	Urban villages (Pedajalaripeta&Vasavani palem)	Jalari villages	Vadabalija villages	Total
Between 1-2	43 (21.5)	27 (13.30)	32 (16.00)	38 (18.72)	70 (17.37)

Between 3-5	145 (72.5)	169 (83.25)	160 (80.00)	154 (75.86)	314 (77.92)
Between 6-10	12 (6.00)	7 (3.45)	8 (4.00)	11 (5.42)	19 (4.71)
Greater 10	0	0	0		0
	200 (100.00)	203 (100.00)	200 (100.00)	203 (100.00)	403 (100.00)

Above table indicates that the sizes of the family between 3-5 members are high in urban villages (83.25) than rural villages (72.50) at the same time Jalaris (80.00) are high than Vadabalijas (75.86).

Kinship Organization:

All related households constitute a lineage and these lineages are local descent groups which play vital role in common economic, political and religious activities. Each local descent group is identified with its surnames (*intiperulu*) which are exogamous. Affinal kinship is generated through exchange of marriages between different groups. Ritual presentations express the affinity between the families and descent. The fishing communities have patrilineal descent groups called *intiperulu* (surnames) which are exogamous in nature.

The following surnames are found in the studies villages along with their designated goddesses.

<u>Mutyalammapalem</u>	
Surname	Goddess Name
Arjilli	Bangaramma thalli
Bondhi	Bangaramma thalli, Kota sakthi
Chintakayala	Mutyalamma thalli
Chodipilli	Paradesamma thalli, MasenuDevara
Koviri	Mutyalamma thalli, Korludevara
Mosa	Durgamma thalli
Vasupalli	Durgamma thalli
Mylapalli	Nookamma thalli, Vankasakthi
Titti	Paradesamma thalli, Simhadriappanna
Chepala	Daana Sakthi
Surada	Poleramma thalli, Eripoti
Merugu	Bangaramma thalli, Simhadriappanna
Gangiri	Boolokamma thalli, Korlashakthi
Ganagalla	Mutyalamma thalli, Kota shakthi
Doda	Jogupolamma thalli
Village Goddess for all the above is Bangaramma Thalli	

<u>Jalaripeta Rural</u>	
Surname	Goddess Name
Kambala	Mutylamma thalli, Masenudvara, simhadriappanna
Olisetti	Korladevara, Jogupolamma, Simhadriappanna
Nolli	Korlashakthi, sattipolamma, Korladevara, simhadriappanna
Gondu	Bangaramma thalli (Peddaammoru)
Gudlapalayya	Jogupolamma
Potti	Korladevara
Vadamodula	Jogupolamma
Kethipalli	Durgamma thalli

Mutyalamma / Jogupolamma is the village Goddess for all the above	
<u>Vasavanipalem</u>	
Surname	Goddess Name
Vasupalli	Erniamma, Korladevara, Nookalama thalli
Perla	Nallamaremma, Korladevara, Raja Rajeswari, Daana shakthi, Masenudevara
Bommidi	Erniamma, Boolokamma, Harishakthi, Nookalamma
Bogipilli	Ellamma, Mogadaramma, Daana Shakthi, Boolokamma
Bade	Nookalamma, Kota shakthi
Chenna	Polamma thalli
Marupilli	Durgalamma thalli, Masenudevara
Pukkala	Polamma thalli, Daana Shakthi
Vanka	Pydithalli, Daana shakthi
Cheepilli	MasenuDevara, Daana shakthi, simhadriappanna
Garikina	Marniamma thalli
Ga	
Surada	Nookalamma, Korladevara
Eripilli	Durgalamma thalli
Polammathalli is the Village Goddess of All the above	
<u>Jalaripeta</u>	
Surname	Goddess Name
Nolli	Gurrappadevudu, Sattamma, Bhooloka
Potti	Durgamma, RallaShakthi
Chinthapilli	Yallamma, Nestalamma
Kasarapu	Nookalammathalli, Eripoti
Ramolu	Paradesamamathalli, Mhankaalamma
Teddu	Ramanamma, Polamathalli
Kadiri	Marammathalli, Harishakthi
Vadamodula	Ramanamma, KottaAmmoru
Maddu	Gatilamma, Eripoti
Olisetti	Jogupolamma
Arisilli	Polamamba, Nallamaremma, Sattamma, Erinamma
Kokkiri	Polammathalli, Yalamma
Karuku	Oddupolamma, Sattamma
Kantumunchu	Mutyalammathalli, Oddupolamma
Pilla	Durgammathalli, Harishakthi
Surakala	Mahankalamma, Nookalammathalli
Bade	Pydithallu, Gurappalu

The kinship terminology of the fisherfolk is more or less similar to that of the neighbouring Telugu speaking Hindu castes who are use Dravidian Kinship terminology in which consanguineous marriages are permitted except with the parallel cousins. Hence a person can marry his father's sister's daughter, or his mother's brother's daughter.

Kinship Terms among Jalari and Vadabaliya

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------|
| 1. Fa | Babu, Ayya | Ah Ayya |
| 2. Fa Fa | Tata | Ah Tata |
| 3. Fa FaFa | Tata | “ |
| 4. Mo Fa | “ | “ |
| 5. Mo Fa Fa | “ | “ |
| 6. Fa Br (Elder than Fa) | Pedayya Peddayya | |

7. Fa Br (Younger than Fa)	Chinnayya	Chinnayya
8. Mo Br	Mamayya	“ Mama
9. Mo	Amma	“ Amma
10. Mo Mo	Ammamma	“ Ammamma
11. Fa Fa Mo	Ayyamma	“ Ammamma
12. Mo Fa Mo	Ammamma	“ Ammamma
13. Fa Mo	Ayyamma	“ Ayyamma
14. Fa Si	Bappa	“ Bappa
15. Mo Si (Elder than Mo)	Pedamma	“ Peddi
16. Mo Si (younger than Mo)	Chinnamma	“ Chinnamma
17. Br (el)	Anna	“ Anna
18. Br (yo)	Tammudu	“ by name
19. Fa Br So (el than ego)	Anna	“ Ah anna
20. Fa Br So (yo than ego)	Tammudu	“by name
21. Fa Si So	Menalludu	“ by name
22. Mo Br So	Menalludu	“ by name
23. Mo Si So (el)	Anna	“Ah anna
24. Mo Si So (yo)	Tammudu	“by name
25. Sister (el than ego)	Appa	“Appa
26. Sister (yo than ego)	Chellelu	“by name or Chelli
27. Fa Br Da (ol than ego)	Appa	“Ah appa
28. Fa Br Da (yo than ego)	Chellelu	“ By name or Chelli
29. Fa Si Da (el than ego)	Menakodalu	“by name
30. Fa Si Da (yo than ego)	“”	“by name
31. Mo Br Da (old than ego)	“”	“”
32. Ma Bro Da (yo than ego)	“”	“”
33. Mo Si Da (ol than ego)	Appa	“ Appa
34. Mo Si Da (yo than ego)	Challelu	“ by name or Chelli
35. Son	Koduku	“ by name or abbai
36. Br So (MS)	Koduku	“ by name or abbai
37. Br So (WS)	Menalludu	“ by name
38. Si So (MS)	“	“
39. Si So (WS)	Koduku	“ by name or Abbai
40. So So	Manumadu	‘ by name
41. So SoSo	“”	“”
42. Da So	“”	“”
43. Da So So	“”	“”
44. Da	Kuturu	“by name or ammai
45. Br Da (M.S)	“	“
46. Br Da (W.S)	Menakodalu	“ by name
47. Si Da (M.S)	“	“
48. Si Da (W.S)	Kuturu	“ by name or ammai
49. Da Da	Manumaralu	“by name
50. Da DaDa	“	“
51. So Da	“	“
52. So Da Da	“	“
53. Fa Si Hu	Nanna	Ah name
54. Hu Fa	Mamayya	Ah mama
55. Wi Fa	Mamayya	Ah mama
56. Mo el Si Hu	Pedayya	Ah peddeyya
57. Mo yo Si Hu	Chinayya	Ah chinnayya
58. Mo Br Wi	Atta	atta
59. Fa el Br Wi	Peddamma	Peddamma
60. Fa yo Br Wi	Chinnamma	chinnamma
61. Hu Mo	atta	ah atta
62. Wi Mo	Atta	Atta

63. Hu el Br	Bava	ah bava
64. Hu yo Br	Maridi	by name
65. Wi el Br	Bava	bava
66. Wi yo Br	Bavamaridi	by name
67. El Si Hu	Bava	bava
68. Yo Si Hu	bavamaridi	by name
69. Hu Si Hu	Anna/Tammudu	ah anna / tammudu
70. Wi Si Hu	Todialludu	ah anna/tammudu
71. So Wi Fa	Viyankudu	ah viyankudu
72. Da Hu Fa	“”	“”
73. Wi	Pellam	ah vatal
74. Hu el Si	Adabaduchu	by name
75. Hu yo Si	“”	“”
76. Wi el Si	Vadina	ah vadina
77. Wi yo Si	Menakodalu	by name
78. El Br Wi	Vadina	ah vadina
79. Yo Br Wi	Maradalu	by name
80. Hu el Br Wi	Todikodalu	ah appa/Chellamma
81. Hu yo Br Wi	“”	“”
82. Wi Br Wi	Appa/Chellelu	“”
83. So Wi Mo	Viyapurulu	ah viyapurulu
84. Da Hu Mo	“	“
85. DA Hu	Alludu	ah allude
86. Hu Br So	koduku	by name/abbai
87. Hu Si So	menalludu	by name
88. Wi Br So	mennaludu	by name
89. Wi Si So	koduku	by name or abbai
90. So Wi	Kodalu	ah kodalu or by name
91. Hu Br Da	kuturu	by name or ammai
92. Hu Si Da	Menakodalu	by name
93. Wi Br Da	“”	“”
94. Wi Si Da	Kuturu	by name or ammai
95. Fa Wi (other than Mo)	Savititalli	by tallamma
96. Mo Hu (other than Fa)	Babu/ayya	ayya
97. Co-wife	Saviti appa/chelli	

III. CONCLUSION

The family among Jalari and Vadabalija is characterized by patrilineal descent, patrilocal and neolocal residence and patriarchal authority. Most of the families are monogamous type, and they are nuclear families consisting of a husband, his wife and their children. Joint families are also noticed but they are few. Partitioning the same house for married sons has become a compulsion in view of owning a separate house. In the realm of family relations significant changes have also been noticed. The fishing communities have patrilineal descent groups called *intiperulu* (surnames) which are exogamous in nature. At present in many families it is the young women who are going out taking up different occupations that compel the older women to stay at home and take up domestic responsibilities. The reluctance of the educated youth in fishing has created as brought changes in the social organization of fishing and the traditional tires among fishermen. Crew formation now-a-days is more like involving labour rather than an activity involving obligatory kin. This citation, as many fishermen observed, as resulted in the gradual disintegration of joint families and formation of nuclear families. As a result the traditional arrangement of kin networks socio-political control and the cultural norms gradually being eroded.

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