

**Socio-Cultural and Behavioral Changes as an Impact of Transformation of Kitchen  
(A Study in Kelardasht Town in Iran)**

**Mohammad Hadi Mansour Lakoorej<sup>1</sup>**

*Faculty Member of Islamic Azad University, Chalus Branch, Iran*

**John S. Gaikwad<sup>2</sup>**

*Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Pune, (M.S), India*

**Nafiseh Norouzi<sup>3</sup>**

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**Abstract:** *Modernization as a process also affects the way a society thinks, its attitudes, beliefs, food, dress habits, and cultural patterns at the level of individuals, and as the individuals can be seen as units of the society. In this study, an attempt has been made to understand the consequences of modernization in the traditional housing pattern as reflected in the changes in Kitchen. For the present study, qualitative and quantitative methods have been used in combination for data collection. Research of Methodology in this paper is Systematic sampling. Systematic sampling another design that gives each unit an equal selection probability. This research was undertaken in the city of Kelardasht, a city in Mazandaran in Iran. Kelardasht has a semi-traditional structure which has undergone tremendous changes due to the process of modernization this town and the surrounding villages. With the advent of technology and means of communication into the town, the life style of the locals has changed significantly. An attempt has been made to understand the effect of the process of modernization upon the various domains of life.*

**Keywords:** *Change, Socio-cultural change, Modernization, Transformation, kitchen.*

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## **Introduction**

According to Jayaswa R (1992:9) "The term changes, in the world means, a revolutionary transition from closed and rigid structures of traditional societies, to differentiated and relatively open structures of developed nations, the change associated with modernization affects the society and culture. Both, social structure and the way of life are basically transformed as the transition proceeds from the underdevelopment (traditional) to the developed (modernized) conditions." Ferraro.G (1977) from the cultural anthropological point of view, social and cultural changes are caused by both internal and external factors. Internal mechanisms lead to innovation and discovery and external mechanisms lead to the derivation and dissemination. Hence, cultural dissemination (expansion), cultural derivation, innovation and discovery are four internal and external factors of changes which are fundamental on the expanding of the modernization. From the cultural anthropological point of view, modern nations are recognizable by high level technology, industrialization, urbanism, formal educational system, Bureaucratic government, powerful economy, exact time calculating, and high movement of population, aptness, rapid changes and planning for future. These features in modernization phenomenon are known as modernization factors. According to Rogers (1962) social change is a process in which significant alteration occur in the structure and function of the particular social system". Hence, it is a continuous process without beginning and end.

Roholamini (2005:82) observes that- "One substitution came out in preparing for family needs. Tandoor and bathroom have exchanged their places. In the older days, bathroom was outside the house and tandoor was inside the house, but now it is vice-versa." The bathrooms that were outside the house were common bathrooms. Now the bathrooms are inside the house, and it is not common. In the olden days, tandoor was inside the house (yard) and it was not common. Now the tandoor is outside the house. Tandoors are owned by bakeries, from where the people can buy noon (bread). Khojaste. H. (2007:99) observes that "One of the places which have got serious changes is kitchen. Some time they were building it in middle of the yard. Sometimes it was in one corner of the yard. Baking was like an art and all women and girls knew it. Now there are many changes in the new houses." Salahinezhad A. (1998) observes that- during olden days, in the city of Kelardasht, women were bakers. Flour

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<sup>1</sup> Email: mansori\_hadi@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup> Email: dr.john.gaikwad@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup> Email: Norouzi.nafiseh@yahoo.com

was made with the help of water mill / hand mill. However with the advent of modern flour mills the traditional water mill and hand mill have almost disappeared.

### **Broad Objective**

To understand and analyze the process of modernization of traditional kitchen in the city of Kelardasht in Iran.

### **Research Methodology**

This research was undertaken in the city of Kelardasht, a city in Mazandaran province. It is about 180 km away from Tehran, the capital city of Iran. Kelardasht is in the west of Mazandaran Province. Kelardasht is considered as one of the most important tourist places in Iran (Salahinejad, A, 1997:16). The city of Kelardasht has been selected for the present study because:

1. This city of Kelardasht is a historical place of traditional and historical significance.
2. The pace of modernization is relatively rapid in the city of Kelardasht.

### **Sampling**

Proportionate sampling method was used for selection of respondents from different parts of the city of Kelardasht. Census list was used in the process of sampling. 379 households from 7 different areas in the city of Kelardasht were selected for the study.

### **Techniques applied**

Quantitative information was collected with the help of structured schedule.

Qualitative information was collected with the help of

1. Participant observations, supplemented by photographs;
2. Informal, open-ended and in-depth interviews;

### **Data Analysis**

The huge mass of logically arranged data was subjected to:

1. Intelligible and systematic organization;
2. In-depth content analysis;

### **Analysis of Data**

#### **Traditional Kitchen in Kelardasht**

It was observed that- in the past, the kitchen in the houses in Kelradasht was closed and usually it was away from the other rooms in the house. The closed kitchen was many times in the yard. In those days, the kitchen was not given much importance. It was looked upon as a shelter for house- wives/mothers while they cooked the food during all the seasons. Later on, a room was built for cooking this room was closes to the other rooms in the house. This room was closed by four walls. Nobody could see the women in the kitchen. However, the structure of the kitchen has undergone changes. Some women indicated that in the past, kitchen was a close place on one side of the house. It was far away from the living room where guest were present. The living room was built of wood. Few informants stated that in earlier days, the kitchen was primarily used for cooking. The women were involved in the important activity of cooking the food. In those days, dishes were not washed in the kitchen.

#### **Types of the Kitchen**

1. Kitchen in the traditional house
2. Kitchen in houses having a combination of both traditional and modern elements together, (Transitory phase)

In the traditional house, the kitchen was in the corner of the yard. Materials used for building the kitchen were wood and mud. Traditional kitchens did not have a chimney and this was a cause for trouble while cooking. Traditional kitchen was very simple and did not have the facility of using any accessories / equipment. Dish were not washed traditional kitchen. The kitchen indicating transitory phase has come near the house. Material used the building of kitchen was wood, along with new material like cement. According to religious norms, while cooking, the women were isolated in the kitchen and no one could enter the kitchen. Though the kitchen in the transitory phase has come nearer to the house, it still continues to be outside the house. The traditional kitchen was in the yard, outsiders could easily see the women in the kitchen. In such situation, the housewives were required to take utmost care of to properly cover their body. This was achieved by resorting to *ba-hejab* (complete / proper dress pattern).

During the olden days, the kitchen was in the yard. The family members had their breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the premises of their house. While taking their breakfast, lunch and dinner, the family members used to sit on the floor. A carpet or a rug was spread on the floor, before sitting on the floor. While cooking, the housewives in the neighbourhood could talk with each-other. During the olden days, circumstances were conducive for a close and strong interaction with each other. During the olden days all this social interaction has now become a history with the disappearance of *Kalle chal*, (and also the shifting of the kitchen inside the modern house).

In the olden days, while the women cooked food and made breads in the corner of the yard, it was very common that when all the women in the neighbourhood came together, they freely discussed about several domestic and personal problems as they were very much close and intimate to each other. However, after the shifting of the kitchen inside the modern house and as the professional bakeries started functioning, the intimate and close interaction between women in the neighbourhood was reduced to a considerable extent. Now-a- days, the practice of exchange of food items and breads among the neighbour has almost become extinct between the families in the neighbourhood. In the olden days, the process of making bread was taught by the members of the older generation, to the members of the younger generation.

### **1. Kitchen in the Modern House**

In the modern house, the structure of the kitchen has completely undergone a radical change. In the modern house, the kitchen has shifted inside the house. The kitchen has become an integral part of the house. The modern kitchen has wash basin and tap connection which has made it possible to wash the dishes inside the modern kitchen. As the kitchen has shifted in the house and has become an integral part of the house, a woman can talk to the other members, in the family while cooking. Similarly, the husband can help the wife in the cooking. The modern kitchen is well equipped with accessories and equipment such as grinder, food processor, oven, microwave oven, etc. These gadgets are useful and helping in the process of cooking. These gadgets are convenient and they also save precious time. Architecture and modern technology have contributed in bringing desirable changes in the modern kitchen. Modern kitchen has an exhaust fan for proper ventilation.

There are many changes in the style of cooking with the use of modern gadgets. As the kitchen is built inside the house efforts are taken to make it the best part of the house by using best quality materials. The owner of in the house does not hesitate to incur expenses upon the improvements and decorating the kitchen. The present day, kitchen has shifted in the modern house and has become an integral part of the house. Now the modern kitchen – includes space for dining table, and chairs. The number of chairs around the dining table varies from- 2 to 8. The guests also share the chairs. Hence, the present day kitchen in the modern house is not only a kitchen, but it is a kitchen –cum-dining hall where family members have their breakfast, lunch and dinner, over the dining table in the kitchen. In the recent past, when the kitchen had been a part of the house, it was used only for cooking. It was not used as a dining room. The present day kitchen-cum-dining hall reflects the change in the life style of the people of Kelardasht.

Modern kitchen has become an integral part of the house. In the kitchen in the house, the dress pattern of the housewives is somewhat casual, where they do not use the traditional garments and scarf on head. The housewife is allowed to use trouser/jean pant and a top/T-shirt.

**Profile of transformation of Kitchen:**

	<b>Traditional kitchen. During the olden days</b>	<b>Modern kitchen. (including social &amp; Behavioural changes</b>
<b>1</b>	Traditional kitchen- Close and outside the house, in the yard	Modern kitchen – Open and inside the house
<b>2</b>	Kale-chal used for cooking	Modern tools like gas stoves used for cooking.
<b>3</b>	Tandoor used for baking of ‘noon’ (bread) Daughters in the family were enthusiastic to learn the art of baking. Traditionally baking was responsibility of women.	‘Noon’ (bread) purchased from professional bakery / shops / malls. Daughters in the family are not enthusiastic and ready for learning the art of baking. Now the daughters in the family do not have any responsibility for baking.
<b>4</b>	While the women cooked food and baked noon (bread), the women in the neighborhood came together and co-operated with another one. After coming together, they freely discussed about several domestics and personal problems. They had strong interaction with each other. Food items were exchanged between the families in neighborhood.	The coming together of women in the yard and co-operation thereby has vanished. The free discussion between the women in the yard is not prevalent now. Strong interaction in the yard has now become a history. Exchanged of food items, is not prevalent now
<b>5</b>	Husbands never extended co-operation to their wives, while cooking / baking.	Husband’s co-operation to their wives, while cooking, is common.

**Conclusion**

- I. During the olden days, the kitchen was outside the house in the yard. In those days, yard was not a private place but it was a functional place for the women in the family. Kalle-Chal and the earthen tandir sar (traditional tandoor) were located in the yard. In the olden days, while the women cooked food and baked noon (bread), all the women in the neighbourhood came together and co-operated with each other. They freely discussed about several domestic and personal problems. Circumstances were conducive for a close and strong interaction with each other. In the olden days, young girls were learning the art of cooking of foods from their mothers and grandmothers.
- II. During these days, all the social interaction have now become a history with the shifting of the kitchen inside the modern house). Modern kitchen is open and inside the house, Modern tools like gas stoves are used for cooking.

During the present modern days

- Noon (bread) is purchased from professional bakeries / shops / malls.
- Daughters in the family are not enthusiastic and ready for learning the art of baking.
- Daughters in the family do not have any responsibility for cooking.
- With the shifting of the kitchen from the yard to the inside of the house
- The coming together of women in the yard and co-operation thereby has now become a history.
- The free discussion between the women in the yard is not prevalent now.
- Strong interaction between the women in the yard, has now become a history.
- Exchange of food items, is not prevalent now.

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