PREFACE

In a bid to standardize higher education in the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) based on five types of courses viz. *core, generic, discipline specific, elective, ability and skill enhancement* for graduate students of all programmes at Honours level. This brings in the semester pattern which finds efficacy in sync with credit system, credit transfer, comprehensive continuous assessments and a graded pattern of evaluation. The objective is to offer learners ample flexibility to choose from a wide gamut of courses, as also to provide them lateral mobility between various educational institutions in the country where they can carry their acquired credits. I am happy to note that the university has been recently accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC) with grade "A".

UGC (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 have mandated compliance with CBCS for U.G. programmes for all the HEIs in this mode. Welcoming this paradigm shift in higher education, Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) has resolved to adopt CBCS from the academic session 2021-22 at the Under Graduate Degree Programme level. The present syllabus, framed in the spirit of syllabi recommended by UGC, lays due stress on all aspects envisaged in the curricular framework of the apex body on higher education. It will be imparted to learners over the six semesters of the Programme.

Self Learning Material (SLMs) are the mainstay of Student Support Services (SSS) of an Open University. From a logistic point of view, NSOU has embarked upon CBCS presently with SLMs in English / Bengali. Eventually, the English version SLMs will be translated into Bengali too, for the benefit of learners. As always, all of our teaching faculties contributed in this process. In addition to this we have also requisioned the services of best academics in each domain in preparation of the new SLMs. I am sure they will be of commendable academic support. We look forward to proactive feedback from all stakeholders who will participate in the teaching-learning based on these study materials. It has been a very challenging task well executed, and I congratulate all concerned in the preparation of these SLMs.

I wish the venture a grand success.

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Vice-Chancellor

Netaji Subhas Open University

Under Graduate Degree Programme
Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)
Subject : Honours in Sociology
Core Course : CC-IX
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Sociology of Kinship

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Module I

Introduction

Unit 1 : Descent

Structure of Unit

1.1. Learning Objectives

- To develop an understanding of what is meant by descent.
- To understand the importance of descent in the social fabric.
- To understand what is meant by rules of descent and its underlying importance.
- To analytically compare and contrast between descent and other social groups and institutions.

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of clan as an important element in determining descent.

- To understand the role of descent in deciding rules of inheritance and succession.

1.2. Introduction

Descent refers to 'social recognition' of the *biological relationship* that exists between individuals. Descent traces its origin to persons who were ancestors and thereby real beings. Descent thus can be identified as something genealogical. It is a kind of link that connects the present generation with the preceding generation. For the purpose of illustration, (A) is the ego. His father was (B), his grandfather (C), his great grandfather was (D) and so on and so forth. Thus descent helps us to trace a person's origin to the one who created the generations. It is a kind of link an individual is born into that makes him feel rooted in the psycho-social order.

1.3.1. What is descent?

Following G.P. Murdock, descent refers exclusively to a cultural principle whereby an individual is socially allocated to a specific group of consanguineal kinsmen. Meyer Fortes identifies descent group as an arrangement of persons that acts to serve attainment of legitimate social and personal needs. Even though descent is essentially biological but it extends itself to serve certain social, psychological and personal needs of an individual.

1.3.2: Features of a descent group:

A consanguineal group is essentially a group which is tied by blood. The word 'blood' here does not mean biological and/or genetic connection but should be understood as 'cultural' in its connotation. Thus members of a descent group are essentially members of a blood group. If descent membership is traced for generations, the members born out of this group are members of a descent group. The common features or characteristics of a descent group can be summarized as follows:

a) The most important function of descent is it helps to form social groups based on the culturally recognized principles of tracing links with the ancestors. This is the most important feature of descent.

b) Members of a descent group trace their origin to a single ancestor who happened to live in the past.

c) The ancestor is a living being, a reality.

d) The ancestor is often also believed to be a mythological or fictitious character as for example the Australian Aborigines who believe to have descended from their totemic ancestor.

e) The members of a descent group believe that they are united by blood ties.

f) Marriage and sexual relationships are not permitted among the members of the descent group, since they belong to the same ancestor and thereby they consider themselves as brothers and sisters.

g) Members of a descent group are also related through the rules of inheritance and succession.

1.3.3 Rules of descent

The rule of descent refers to a set of principles by which an individual traces his descent. There are basically *four* basic rules of descent. These include: *unilateral descent, bilateral descent, patrilineal descent, matrilineal descent.*

While tracing the descent *how many* lines are given importance leads to the classification of descent into the following types.

a) Unilateral Descent: The members of this group generally trace their origin to a single ancestor. Most of the societies are inclined to give priority to the father's side as it is the father whose surname passes on to the child.

b) Bilateral Descent: Male and female are the two sets of ancestors from which some societies trace their descent. This is known as bilateral descent. Bremnes in his study has identified the difficulty one faces in tracing the genealogy from two different sides that is, patrilateral and matrilateral. Construction of genealogies becomes difficult with the number of preceding generations getting doubled everytime in this instance. People also are unable to remember names of ancestors more than two to three generations back making the genealogy of this kind of society very shallow.

Those people who are bound by a common ancestor they are called *cognates.* However *which* line of descent, i.e. the father's side or the mother's side is given importance leads to the further classification of descent into the following types:

c) Patrilineal Descent: Descent is traced through the father's line or the male line. The descent criterion is restricted only to the male and the descendants of a common ancestor in the male line are recognized as a kin. The kins thus involved are known

as *agnatic* or *patrilineal kins.*

d) Matrilineal Descent: Descent is traced though the mother's line or the female line in case of the matrilineal descent. The Descents are hereby called *uterine* or *matrilineal kins.*

1.3.4 Importance of the rules of descent

The rule of descent is considered of utmost importance because of two main reasons, which are as follows:

a) Rule of descent establishes for every individual a network of social positions in which he/she can participate with certain obligations and rights.

b) Rule of descent is functional in defining and thereby establishing some rights of inheritance. Inheritance and succession would go normally following the line of descent.

1.3.5 Consanguineal kin groups

The people tied by blood on the basis of rules of descent makes us divide the consanguineal kinship group into the following types:

i) Unilinear Consanguinal kin group and Lineage: The most important consanguineal kin groups which are associated with rules of descent are lineages and sibs. It is the simplest type of unilateral grouping which contains all probable kinds of blood relations of one line of descent exclusively. A blood related unilateral kingroup is called lineage, whose progenies connect through their generational relation through any known ancestors. A lineage is a unilineal descent group in which membership rests on the basis of patrilineage or patrilineal descent or matrilineage or matrilineal descent. Thus the lineage consists of descendents of either the female or the male line. These descendants know about their lineage and genealogical relationship and also are aware of their obligations towards each other. A lineage is thus small and thereby more focused, localized than the broader category of kinship. Thomas *Hylland Eriksen* identified certain general rules of lineage which includes persons who can 'indicate by stating all the intermediate links, common descent from a shared ancestor or ancestress'. As they belong to a common ancestor so exogamy is strictly followed by members of the same lineage.

ii) Cognatic Descent: When the descent is traced through both the mother's and the father's line then it is an instance of cognatic descent. It is non-unilinear in structure and can assume the following forms: *bilineal, ambilineal, parallel and bilateral descent*. Among these the most common is the *bilateral descent*. Now let us look

into the different kinds of non-unilinear descent.

This descent is also found rarely. Here, the lineage is passed from men to their daughters and from women to their sons. Rephrase the expression marked in red. Lineage cannot pass. Properties pass. Give example. This is also termed as *rope descent* by Margaret Mead and she found it among the Mundugumor, although many anthropologists questioned Mead's observation. In this system properties pass from father to daughter and mother to son.

a) Bilineal Descent: Double Descent or Double Unilineal Descent: In some societies preference is given to both matrilineal and patrilineal descent as per convenience and utilization. This existent system is known as Double Descent or Double Unilineal Descent. Example can be societies like "Yako" of Nigeria. Double descent provides bilateral kin groups known as *sections.*

b) Ambilineal Descent: It is a rare system of descent that combines unilineal patterns. It is a system that recognizes descent from either male or female sides. It is left to each generation the choice of descent through either of the father's or mother's line of descent. Thus a family may be patrilineal in one generation and matrilineal in another.

c) Parallel Descent: Parallel Descent is a rare combination of unilineal descent patterns through which men trace their origin or ancestry through the male lines and the women through the female lines. It is different from bilineal descent in terms of each individual being a member of only one descent group.

d) Bilateral consanguineal kin groups: Even though across many societies bilateral kinship acquired through bilateral rules of descent is important but they remain very loosely defined. It is known as the *kindred.* The most peculiar feature of the kindred is that its membership and duties are defined in terms of its relationship to a given ego. Thus membership among the kindred often overlaps each other robbing any exclusivity in terms of relationship with it. The connection among the kindred is not very demanding. Basically the kindred group includes all the relatives from both sides of the person who would attend his wedding and funeral even when they might not be in regular touch with him. With the death of the person the kindered group would disappear as he was the balancing factor for creation of kindred

kins following the bilateral rules of descent.

Commonly, in India two kinds of Descent systems are prevalent namely: Patrilineal Descent and Matrilineal Descent, the former being more widespread. Various studies on Kinship relations and Descent groups a wide array of socio-classical information on types of kinship systems in India. In the analyses of Guff (1956) the descent system is found to rest on the group rights in relation to land. He has elaborately discussed the role of inter personal relations in his extensive studies of kinship in India. T.N. Madan (1965) has studied the role of kinship as a form of organized ideology in the Kashmiri Brahmin society. He has elaborated on how the ideology of the strong Patrilineal system is operative in defining the kinship system of the Kashmiri Brahmins.

1.3.6 Clan or Sib

Clan having its etymological roots in the Latin words *gens* literally meaning unilinear group lead to the first understanding of clan as a unilinear group. However in English *gens* has come to mean patrilineal group. For American anthropologists *clan* is used to refer to matrilineal groups whereas *gens* is used to refer to patrilineal groups. Thus there is a distinction that exists between clan and sib. A *Sib* is made up of a *clan* and *gens* and a sib is often subdivided into a number of *subsibs.* Clan is that unit which comes just next to the family so it being exogamous also promotes cohesion among men by highlighting upon the notions of integration and brotherhood. Consisting of families bound together by factors to form a clan, we must look into those three most important factors that are instrumental in the formation of a clan:

a) a unilocal rule of residence, be it patrilocal, matrilocal or avunculocal (located or centered around the residence of the husband's maternal uncle)

b) a unilinear rule of descent be it patrilineal or matrilineal.

c) a sense of solidarity attained through some group activities.

Murdock emphasizes that a clan should only include descent group that is further channelized by Morgan to include only patriarchal descent group. Whereas British Anthropologists widens clans to incorporate both matriarchal and patriarchal clans. However, the most consensually accepted definition of a clan is that it is instrumental in determining life order of the people and plays a significant role in creating integration among the wider descent group.

i) Features of a clan: Following John Lewis a clan is observed to exhibit the following features:

a) Clan is a unit between a family and descent.

b) It is essentially *unilateral,* i.e. it is either from male side or from the female side.

c) It is exogamous in nature.

d) It puts forth rules for marriage, ceremonies, inheritance and social control.

e) It is related to some specific places.

f) It holds some kind of authority over an area.

g) It is totemic. Totem is the emblem of a particular group which acts to unite its members.

h) It traces its origin from some common area.

i) It has a common name for the members.

ii) Clan, family and lineage: A clan has got differences with both family and lineage. Often used synonymously with lineage but the existence of finer differences cannot be ignored. A lineage following Jacobs and Stern is different in terms of lineage being a subdivision of clan is composed of actual kin and not fictitious ones. Lineage following John Lewis, is a group resulting from descent reckoned either from the mother's or from the father's side. He argues that in case of clan relationship it is mostly based on assumption wheareas in case of lineage group the relationship is more specific and known as the basis of relationship needs to be demonstrated. In case of clan, Eriksen observes, the shared descent is based on assumption and not real enumeration whereas in case of lineage on the basis of intermediate links, common descent from a shared ancestor or ancestress, all these are traceable and thereby is real. A clan often has a totem attached to it and may have taboos and rituals attached to it. A family and clan share many differences but the descent system of a family cannot be ignored in any analysis of the clan system. To put the total network of family, clan and lineage together we can say that the structure of kinship is woven by a network of family, lineage and clan. Its smallest unit i.e. family render it the fundamental structure which combines to form a lineage which increase to become a clan. In the line of emergence thus it follows that the family emerged first and the clan much later.

iii) Social structure of a clan: Following Majumdar and Madan, social structure of a clan can be divided into *Phratry* and *Moeity.* The most important function of the phratry and moiety in the contemporary world is the regulation of marriages.

a) Phratry : It is also known as phratry lined clans. It is a blood related group where exogamy is practiced. In instances of the union of two or more clans it is known as phratry. It is also the case of phratry when in a large tribal group those people who have same identity through blood group unite to form a separate group. It constitutes the dual organization of the tribes.

b) Moeity: Each phratry in a tribal group is called a moiety. In a tribal group there could exist many phratries and each phratry is called a moiety. One phratry has many lineages.

Lowie has identified four possibilities of how a phratry can be formed:

Firstly many lineages can mingle without losing their all residues of earlier separation. Secondly, a lineage may be so big or comprehensive that it may divide into many small groups. In these groups the earlier precepts of unity remain atleast somewhat present. Thirdly, is the interesting possibility of extinction of a lineage. Fourthly, Lowie, had identified that the origin of lineage and Moiety may differ through separate ways and due to separate reasons. However they can mix together and form a big organization of social arrangement.

Following Doshi and Jain the social structure of a clan can be illustrated as :

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              Clan Organization
                  /         \
            Phratry      Dual Organization
                            /        \
                       Moiety         Moiety
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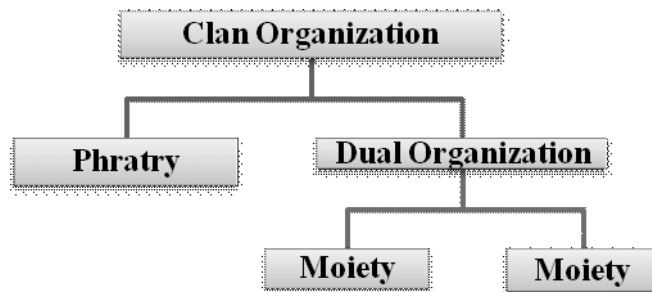
Chart 1: The Social Structure of the Clan

iv) Characteristics of clan: On the basis of various empirical data and various other studies the following are identified as characteristics of a clan:

a) The members of a clan have roots to a fictitious ancestor which could be a tree, plant, animal, bird etc.

b) It is an exogamous group. All the members are brothers and sisters so marriage is prohibited among members of the same clan.

c) Clan is an autonomous unit.

d) Traditionally members of a clan were identified with specific geographical territory.

v) Functions of clan: Kinsmen and clansmen since time immemorial have acted to provide a sense of security and support to each and every member of a society. It provides among men a sense of brotherhood and social security. It is a kind of anchor that ties people together. We now for a clearer picture of a clan get into the understanding of the specific functions that a clan performs.

a) Protection and help: A clan being an extended variant of family provides social security and economic and other material help to all the members of the group. As clan is exogamous so such practices extends support and relationships with members of other clans.

b) Political hegemony: In traditional times, politics and power revolved around groups so political hegemony was of great importance to clan. However, in the modern world politics has become highly individual oriented.

c) Wielding of sanction: Observance of particular traditions or course of action has been seen to be levied on individuals by clan men. A clan has often been seen to maintain solidarity by taking revenge, inflicting punishment on any deviant member or put in isolation a member who has disobeyed the traditions of a clan.

d) Exogamy: As all the members of a clan constitute some kind of blood relationship so exogamy is strictly practiced by members of a clan. Often deviance from the regimented rules of exogamy is severely penalized by the group.

e) Religion and Customs: Each clan has attached with it rituals that are effective in various rites and rituals that an individual engages in his lifetime. Various *rites of passage* even in the contemporary world are aimed at connecting individuals with his clan men.

Even though in the modern world we see that the various functions of a clan as diminishing in face of the contemporary forces, operative in the social world but the structure of the kinship cannot ignore the orientation imparted by kinship to render its present structure.

1.3.7 Clan-Barrios and Clan-Communities

In a local community like village which has got clans we find that often the local community becomes occupied by a single clan while other clans move out owing to the

strength of numbers of the former. It is also found that the members of a single clan often have to split owing to their increase in number. A process called *fission* is witnessed. In case of patrilocal or patrilineal clans often we find that they live in a single-clan community which is not the case with matrilineal or matrilocal clans. So in a village which constitutes of several clans, it is called *"clan-barrio"*, whereas a village consisting of a single clan is known as *"clan community"*. Even though social reality is complex and social phenomenon always require understanding of the scenarios of clan barrio and clan-communities on the basis of *approximation* in social circumstances in which it exists.

> **Do you know?**
>
> *Who are Kindred Kins?*
>
> Those relatives who are related in a bilateral succession are collectively called as kindred. These descendents can be from both sides maternal or paternal. Father's brother-sister and their children as well as mother's brother-sister and their children are considered as kindred. The basic thing about kindred is it ego-centric rather than ancestor-centric.

1.3.8 Clan solidarity and clan conflict

Clans are not always everything about solidarity and cohesion. There are also chances of friction and conflict among and across clans. The same becomes particularly true in case of marriage whereby a woman has to leave her extended family and join her husband's extended family following the rules of unilocal residence. A situation of tension is immediately built up pertaining to a lack of sense of adjustment between the family of orientation and the family of procreation. The situation is further burdened by the fact that the kinsmen of the bride show lesser interest in the life of the bride post marriage. The situation produces some kind of strain between clans. The complexity also arises owing to the fact that the woman marrying someone of a different clan also develops some kind of relationship with this new clan.

1.3.9 Types of kins

Kins are those who are connected through bonds of marriage or blood. While discussing about kinship we basically talked about types of kinship that basically included primary, secondary and tertiary kinship. Apart from that if we take into account descent then kins can be divided into the following types:

a) Filial kins: The kins who are related by father and mother are called filial kins. The filial kins are divided into *agnates* and *affines*. Agnates are the consanguineal or blood kins. Affines are the kinds related by marriage. Both agnates and affines constitute of the filial kins.

b)   Collateral kins: A person's blood relation from one generation to another is called lineal relationship. Parallel cousins are called collaterals. The relations that run parallel to the descent group are collateral kin group. Even though they reckon the same ancestor but are not directly related in the exact same way as the descent group.

c)   Corporate kins: The corporate group consists of all the kins of all the categories of partilineal, matrilineal and corporate kin. The size of this kind of group is very large as it keeps on including members on the genealogical basis from both the patrilineal and matrilineal sides.

1.3.10 Succession and Inheritance

The use of the concept of succession for the transfer of rights on the basis of kinship is quite important and cannot escape discussions on descent. Often used as a synonyms of word 'inheritance' which explains the process of transfer of post and property the word 'succession' refers to the transfer of post which can be maternal or paternal. Transfer of legal rights of persons and assets (things) is called

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is Nepotic Inheritance?**
>
> It is the system by which a man inherits his uncle's wife or wives. This kind of system is found in matrilineal societies.

inheritance. According to some sociologists, inheritance doesn't mean transfer of assets (property) only but acts to include status also. If we talk about the transfer of state then not only property but it widens to include the transfer of a person's status also. Actually, inheritance is a comprehensive concept which included transfer of property in material terms and other things like social status and posts etc. which are highly non-material in their orientation. It will be more appropriate to use the concepts of inheritance and right to accession for separate processes of transfer for both. Following W.H.R. Rivers we can refer to the clear difference among the processes and succession, inheritance and right to accession many years ago while searching the facts related to succession in ancient societies. He recommended use of the term inheritance for the transfer of property and succession for the transfer post and status.

i)   Types of Inheritance: There are four laws of inheritance—paternal, maternal, bilateral and collateral inheritance.

a)   Bilateral Inheritance: The word bilateral is used for transfer of property or status from both the male or female lines it is called bilateral inheritance. When a person inherits separately from both the sides it becomes an instance of bilateral inheritance.

    b)   Collateral Inheritance: The system of transfer of property or status is transferred to brothers instead of sons then it is called collateral inheritance.

    c)   Matrilineal Inheritance: The system of transfer of property and status to children through the female line then it is called matrilineal inheritance. This system is a special characteristic of matrilineal societies where two main forms of property transfer are observed, one is from mother to the daughter and second is from maternal uncle to nephew. In families where property belongs to women, it gets transferred to daughter in the form of inheritance.

    d)   Patrilineal Inheritance: The process of transferring the property or status occurs from father to son following the patrilineal system following the male line of descent it is called patrilineal inheritance.

ii)   Rules of Inheritance: Apart from these there are certain *rules of inheritance* that are prevalent across different societies whereby preference in inheritance is given by law, custom or usage and based on that it can be classified as:

    a)   Primogeniture: It refers to the law of inheritance according to which the first born child be it the son or the daughter (matriarchal societies) inherit the property of the parents.

    b)   Ultimogeniture: According to this rule of inheritance the youngest child inherits the (son in patrilineal and daughter in matrilineal societies) parents' property.

    c)   Unigeniture: According to this rule of inheritance one person from uterine group inherits the parent's property.

1.4. Conclusion

After having discussed about descent in details we have tried to point out that in nature not only is descent universal and linked with kinship but it varies across societies. Descent goes well beyond to include boundaries of social parentage. The practical importance of descent comes from its use as a means through which a person gets access to rights, duties, privileges, or status in relation to another person. This relationship of one person with another can arise out of one person being an ancestor to the other or simply because they claim to have a common ancestor. Descent specially is found to be important when rights to succession, inheritance, or residence follow the lines of kinship lines.

1.5. Summary

Just like the universality of the kinship system the descent system is also universally present. However variations are present across societies. In the wake of the contemporary era people have become geographically dispersed that has led to a number of changes in the traditional ideas and importance that were attached to the descent group.

1.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly : (6 marks each)

a)   Discuss about the concept of descent.

b)   Write a note on kindred kin.

c)   Differentiate between moiety and phratry.

d)   What are the features that unite a few families to form a clan?

e)   Discuss about the different rules of Inheritance.

f)   Differentiate between clan barrios and clan community. Are they mutually exclusive?

g)   Examine the dual aspects of clan solidarity and clan conflict.

2. Answer in details : (12 marks each)

a)   Elaborate upon the different types of kins.

b)   Write a note on the features of the descent group.

c)   What is meant by bilateral descent? Evaluate the instance of double descent as an operative instance of bilateral descent.

d)   Elaborate on the social organization of the clan.

e)   Critically elaborate on the different types of descent.

f)   What is meant by fission? "Families are connected to form a clan". Elaborate on the factors and conditions that are important in developing and maintaining this social unit.

3. Essay type questions : (20 marks each)

a)   What is meant by descent? Elaborate on the rules of descent.

b) Define clan. Critically evaluate the traditional functions of a clan in the backdrop of the contemporary world.

c) Elucidate on the importance of Inheritance and succession as determined by descent.

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Unit 2 : Consanguinity

Structure of Unit

2.1. Learning Objectives

- To develop an understanding about consanguinity.
- To develop an understanding about how consanguineal relationships are important factors in determining descent, family and kinship.
- To understand how such kinships are operative in structuring households.
- To understand how to compare and constrast between consanguineal groups and other social groups.

2.2. Introduction

Etymologically consanguinity means '*of the same blood*', this term is used to refer to the blood kinship ties that exist between individuals. Types of kinship are established either through 'blood' or through 'marriage'. The former ties are known as Consanguineal kinship and the later ties culminate into what can be called Affinal kinship. 'Consanguineal' kinship is contrasted with 'Affinal' kinship in the sense that it relates a man his son or daughter through bonds of consanguinity while his bond with his wife is considered as affinal. In some societies, degrees of consanguinity are important for deciding the order of inheritance or for regulating the choice of marriage partners. Because they share more of 'the same blood' it can generally be assumed that siblings are closer than cousins.

2.3.1. What is Consanguinity?

Every kinship system denotes demarcation between blood relatives which are formed through biological relatedness or by social fiction and are called *consanguineal relatives* and the ones who are formed through marriage and are known as *affinal relatives*. Consanguinity denotes the property of being from the same kinship as another person. To put it specifically, it is the quality of being descendent from the same ancestor. It implies sharing of the genes just by virtue of being identical by descent. It can be of first, second or third degrees. It is assumed that the first degree of consanguinity is the closest form.

2.3.2. Different Types of Consanguineal Kinship

It refers to the relationships based on blood. Thus it includes an individuals' relationship with one's parents or sibling. Any relationship is structured by its degree of closeness or
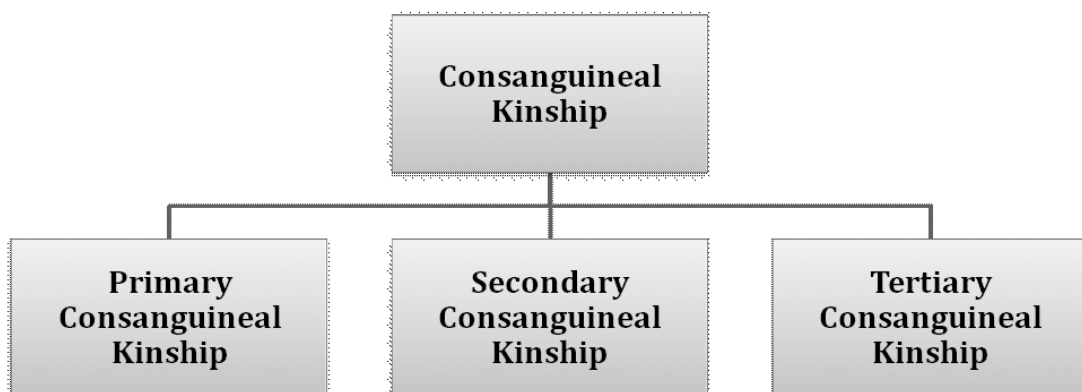
Chart 2: Depicting Different Types of Consanguineal Kinship

distance. And the distance or closeness is solely determined by the fact that how an individual is related with another. These types are based on the degree of kinship or of the proximity of the consanguineal relationship.

a) Primary Consanguineal Kinship: Primary kinship refers to the set of relationships between kins who are related directly by blood. There are *eight* primary kins – *wife father son, father daughter mother son, wife, father son, father daughter, mother son, mother daughter, brother sister and younger brother/ sister older brother/ sister.*

Coming to Primary Consanguineal Kins, they are the ones who are directly related to each other by blood, i.e. birth. Universally across all societies of the world the only primary consanguineal kins are the relationships between parents, their children and between the siblings.

b) Secondary Consanguineal Kinship: Talking about secondary kinship we need to highlight the relationships that are existent with the *primary kins of the primary kin.* Those who are directly related to the primary kins are known as secondary kins. There are almost *thirty-three* varieties of secondary kins that can be found.

Secondary Consanguineal Kins refer to the *primary consanguineal kin's primary consanguineal kins.* The most basic type of secondary consanguineal kins is relationship that exists between grandparents and their grand children. If we take the case of an individual, then his father is his/her primary kin. The parent's of the father are the father's primary kins. So the individual's secondary consanguineal kins are his/ her primary kins' (father) primary kins, i.e. their grandparents.

c) Tertiary Consanguineal Kinship: It refers to the *primary kin of primary kin's primary kin* or *secondary kin's primary kins.* Such relationships can assume roughly *one hundred and fifty-one* forms.

Tertiary consanguineal kins are the ones who are one's primary kin's (parents) primary kin's (parent's parents) primary kins (parent's parent's parents). Thus the relationship between great grandchildren and great grandparents constitute Tertiary consanguineal kinship. Thus the relationship can be perceived from different perspectives. The tertiary kins are the primary

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is meant by Consanguineal family?**
>
> A family consisting of parents, his/her children and other relatives i.e. all those who belong to the same kinship as another is known as Consanguineal family.

kin's secondary kins (parent's grandparents) or they can be constitute as the secondary kin's primary kins (grandfather's parents).

2.3.3. Degree of Consanguinity

Based on the common descent a *prohibited degree of kinship* is established and it refers to certain sets of relationships between whom certain prohibitions exists, be it in the form of marriage or sexual relationship. It is also known as incest taboo and it can be analyzed on the basis of certain degrees. The first prohibited degree of consanguinity exists between a parent-child relationship. While a second degree would be that of a sibling relationship. A third degree exists between uncle/aunt and nephew/niece and a fourth degree exists between first cousins. Even though these prohibitions in this degree are neither universal nor restricted to these kinship lines. Even though these restrictions are universally present but the degree to which they are applicable varies from society to society.

Consanguinity also can assume the following two forms. These are:

a) Lineal Consanguinity: Lineal Consanguinity is the relationship between two persons on the basis of blood. In this case, a person is a direct descendant or ascendant of the other.

b) Collateral Consanguinity: Consanguinity can assume a *collateral* form when the relationship exists between two persons who have a common ancestor but do not necessarily ascend or descend from them. Example can be relationships between cousins who have same grandparents or relationship between uncle and nephew.

2.3.4. Different Relationships of Consanguinity

As already discussed two persons are said to be related by consanguinity under the circumstances when one person is either a descendant of the other or they have a common ancestor. In case of adoption, legally the child is incorporated into the consanguineal kinship network of that of the parents. Relationship of consanguinity can assume forms depending upon the degrees of their proximity with the ego. Thus different relationships of consanguinity can be categorized as: *consanguinity of first degree*, *consanguinity of second degree*, *consanguinity of third degree* and *consanguinity of fourth degree*. The various consanguineal relatives a person can have is being elaborated in the following table :

Table 1: Various Relationships of Consanguinity

Person:	1st Degree	2nd Degree	3rd Degree	4th Degree
	Child/Parent	Grandchild, sister, brother or grandparent	Great-grandchild, niece, nephew, uncle, aunt or great-grandchildren	Great-Great-grandchild, Grandnephew, grandniece, first cousin, great aunt, great uncle or Great Great-grandparent.

2.3.5. Descent and Consanguineal Kin Group

Consanguineal kin group is the group where the kins are related by blood. When we say 'blood' relatives we take into consideration the biological relatedness among us. However taken for granted, the phenomenon of biological relatedness may appear but consanguinity may also be based on social fiction. Also in any society it is not possible for the ego to identify all sets of relatives with whom he shares his descent or is genetically connected with. So the question arises that who are the consanguineal kins of the ego? In case of large societies ego might have two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grand parents and sixteen great grand grandparents. All of them might have siblings their progenies and children who might be of ego's generation. Identifying all of them and considering them as consanguineal kins might appear as a colossal task.

So over and above blood relations what act as the binding force of society is the blood relations which constitute the active kinship system, i.e. where an individual resort to for seeking emotional help or acts to support in times of contingencies. Referring to the entire set of blood relatives does not stand feasible in times of need as approaching each of the kins and providing support to each one of them every time will lead to a situation that would not at all be helpful. Thus the circle of consanguinity is limited across societies. And it is the *principle of descent* that limits and decides on this circle of consanguinity.

The rules of descent are three in number. These include: *Patrilineal descent, matrilineal descent* and *bilateral descent*. In case of patrilineal descent each member becomes member of the kin group to which his father belongs. This similar case when an individual becomes member of the descent group of his mother, then it is known as matrilineal descent. It is the case of *unilinear descent* as the ego being closest to both of the parents either accepts all the consanguineal kins of the father or of the mother. Thus the ego is socially close to either one of the sets of grandparents. In case of *bilateral descent* the ego inherits some of the consanguineal kins of the father and some of the consanguineal kins

of the mother. It is the acknowledgement of the fact that both the grandparents of the ego are of equal importance to him. But in such societies, as the kinship networks are very wide so recognition and extension of social obligations and rights are not seen to extend beyond that of the first cousins. However *Claude Levi-Strauss* points out that no society in the world can be projected as perfectly bilateral or unilateral. For societies which have bilateral systems of descent, generally it is observed that one set of consanguineal kins are prioritized over the other. Examples can be sharing of kin name is often restricted to either side of the kins.

Again in case of unilineal descent system, it is often observed that a particular social obligation or duties are met by or met towards a set of kin who are not considered supreme in the cycle of kinship. Also there assumes a situation when among certain people they inherit both of the patrilineal and matrilineal descents and together it becomes known as double descent. Even though such kind of societies assumes rights and obligations of both sets of descent but they are not treated in a symmetrical way. In case of double descent the ego inherits his father's patrilineal kins and his mother's matrilineal kins. This system does not take into consideration either of father's matrilineal kins or mother's patrilineal kins. Thus double descent produces *bilineal kins* which are known as *sections*. A less common variant form is found where descent group traces descent lines back to the founding father and it becomes known as *stock.*

Descent plays a pivotal role in any kind of social organization as it is seen to perform the following functions. These are:

a)   It organizes people in groups on birth and thus creates a network through which rights, obligations, duties and mutual exchange of help in times of need are extended.

b)   Descent has got prescribed rules regarding marriage and sexual relationships.

c)   Inheritance and Succession of property, rights, title of ranks are all decided by descent. Testamentary freedom can be permitted or even not across societies, but descent decides on who to extend the inheritance at death, in case of who to repay the debt incurred by the deceased, the inheritance taxes etc.

Also in certain cases even though a person traces his decent from anyone of the sides but discharges his mutual obligations and duties with the kin of the other. Thus we can understand the importance of matrilineal kins in patrilineal society and patrilineal kins in matrilineal society. 'Lateral Descent' means 'on the side' whereas 'lineal descent' means 'in one line'. Thus Lucy Mair points out that if a person belongs to patrilineal society, then that person's mother's kins are not his/her matrilineal kins. Rather they are members of a different agnatic lineage from the person's own. They are the mother's aganatic kins and the ego's kins on the mother's side. This entire concept is known as *complementary*

filiation. It refers to the case of relationships with the kins of the parent from whom a person does not trace his lineage from. Mair points out the argument of Meyer Fortes in demarcating distinction between *descent* and *filiation.* The relation of a person with his own parents is known as filiation whereas a person's relationship with his ancestor is known as descent. The nearest descent a person can have is with one's grandparents.

Edmund Leach stresses on the consistency that must be involved in referring to the line of descent. In the year of 1924, W.H.R.Rivers published his book called *Social Organization* in which he argued that unilineal descent groups are only consistent as in case of non-unilinear descent group it becomes haphazard and almost impossible to trace one's line of descent. The importance of unilineal descent group is that by identifying the line of unilineal system one ensures the inheritance rights even if the person does not live close by. In practical cases, it is difficult to find descent groups who live close to one another because of a variety of reasons. Those descent groups who live close to each other and are in everyday contact are called 'local descent groups' by Leach.

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is meant by Funeral Friendship?**
>
> If a person dies then those people who are even not lineally connected come to help in the performance of funeral rites of the deceased. This practice is known as 'funeral friendship'. However it does not imply that helping in such rites will levy on the non-kin the performance of post-funeral rites which is somewhat mandatory for the people who share the same lineage.

2.3.6. Descent, Lineage and Family

Referring to Leach further we can actually talk about descent groups and lineages and find their connectedness with the family. In our everyday life lineages are constantly being divided. We find a man living with his children forms a lineage. It is the smallest form a lineage may assume. In case of the patrilineal system, the father's authority stands supreme and his sons inherit his property and accept the decision of the father. While in case of the matrilineal system, it is the mother's brother who takes the decisions, the example may be the famous case of Trobriand islanders as studied by Bronislaw Malinowski. The study of this case has been referred to as *joint* or *extended* family by the ethnographers. An extended family is defined as the family that shares common dwelling place and pool their labour and share economic responsibilities. The process of *lineage fission* occurs when the head of the family dies and the eldest son of that family does not assume long term responsibility of the other siblings, overtime each of the brothers set up their own family and thus form individual lineages.

Lineages can be of greater depth or lesser depth. Those who are connected to the lineages with relative autonomy and expresses their connectedness by referring to their performance of obligations by attending funerals of the people of the lineage is said to be a lineage connected through lesser depth. Whereas more strong and stringent involvement with the kins of the lineage are referred to as lineages with greater depth. However lineages of lesser depth are required for the fulfillment of responsibility of the lineage of greater depth.

An *Apical Ancestor* is the one who stands at the top of the lineage and it is even today the common ancestor that is used by a person to refer to his lineage. The process of induction is operative in some societies where through the process of adoption the entire population is fitted into the genealogical tree. Referring to Robin Fox's process of lineage segmentation, whereby he states that when a lineage becomes too large it somewhat becomes compelled to split the lineage and the process is known as 'lineage segmentation'[1]. The segments caused thereby are known as 'sub-lineages', which even though are segmentary in nature but Fox uses the analogy of a tree and its branches to depict the concept[2]. The main branch is technically referred to as a super-lineage or clan and its branches are known as sub-lineages. The segmentation can be economic, political or a ritual one or simply the segmentation may be a result of pressures of the land but these fissions are required in societies that have no other source of authority apart from lineage. It is always not considered so very important to trace the lineage as we find people often lose touch with their lineage members through physical dislocation, however not forgetting their common ancestor and thereby being referred to as clans practice the rules of the clan, basically that of *incest taboo* and *exogamy.*

The classic example of the *Nuer* tribe of Southern Sudan can perfectly exemplify the functionality of the segmentary lineage. Referring to the study by E.E.Evans-Pritchard (1940) we see that in the segmentary lineage (descendants of) close kin stand together against (descendants of) more distant kins. The process is so organized that the (descendants of) brothers are allied against (descendants of) of cousins. Thus this segmentary division becomes functional in uniting all the kins against any type of threat from the non-kins. This is how they continue with their enmity with the neighbouring tribe, the *Dinkas*.

If we are talking about families, it would be unfair if we do not talk about women and children. Children do not have in general rights, duties and obligations as adult members and it is evident and justified by the fact that the children are treated as half subjects. What is alarming is the position of women in the system of lineage. In both the patrilineal and

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1   Fox, Robin (2003:122)

2   Fox, Robin 92003:123)

matrilineal systems of descent the lineage is arranged keeping in mind the male line. Even in case of matrilineal societies, the lineage is based on the brother and not the women.

```
                     ┌──────────────────┐
                     │ Common Ancestor  │
                     └──────────────────┘
              ┌─────────────────┴─────────────────┐
         ┌─────────┐                         ┌─────────┐
         │  Child  │                         │  Child  │
         └─────────┘                         └─────────┘
              │                                   │
       ┌─────────────┐                     ┌─────────────┐
       │ Grandchild  │                     │ Grandchild  │
       └─────────────┘                     └─────────────┘
              │                                   │
   ┌──────────────────┐                  ┌──────────────────┐
   │ Great–Grandchild │                  │      Great–       │
   │                  │                  │   Grandchild      │
   └──────────────────┘                  └──────────────────┘
              │                                   │
        ┌──────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
        │   Great–Great–   │              │   Great–Great–   │
        │   Grandchild     │              │   Grandchild     │
        └──────────────────┘              └──────────────────┘
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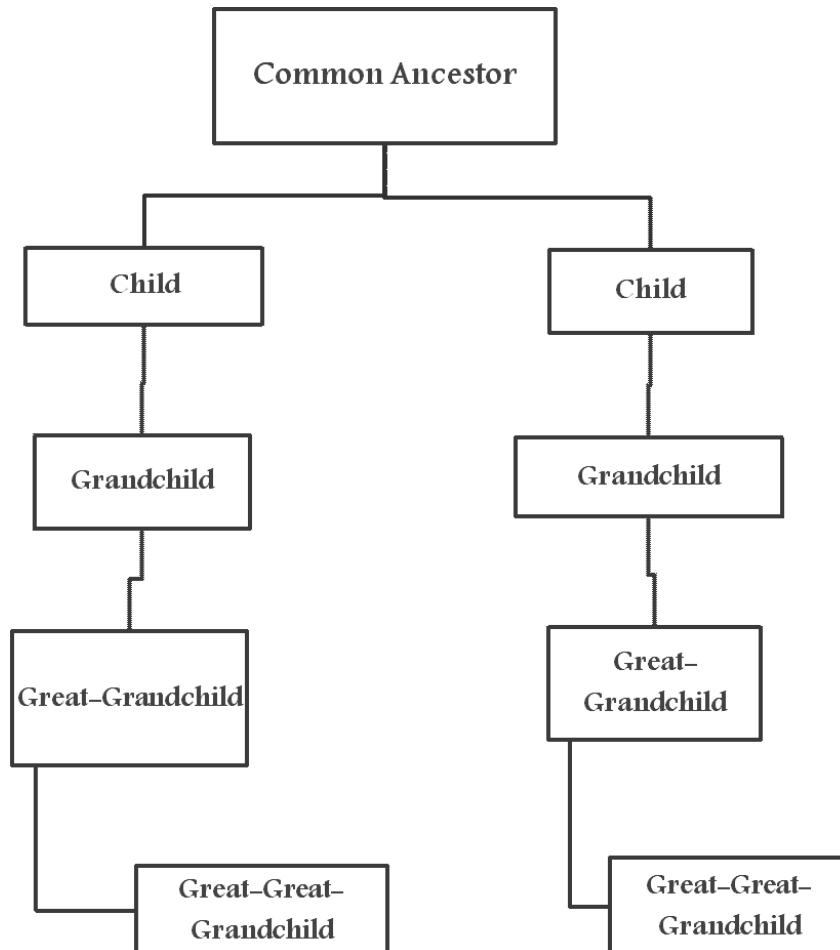
(Source: *Famouskin.com.*)

Chart 3: Depicting the Network of Consanguineal Ties.

The above figure is indicative of the consanguineal ties and highlights on the structure that kinship may assume. The descendants of a common ancestor are the children of the ancestor but are siblings themselves. Thus, each sibling's children are not only grandchildren of the ancestor but are first cousins themselves. So, when these people have their own children, they on one hand are great grandchildren of the ancestor but themselves are related to each other second cousins. When they have a progeny they on one hand are the great-great-grandchildren of the common ancestor but themselves turn out as fourth

cousins. This is how just by on the basis of consanguinity the kinship system provides a foundational ground on which the social fabric develops. If the kinship is expanded further more networks would be observable. It is this distance between the kins that make rules of marriage, incest taboo etc. operational in society.

2.3.7. Consanguineal Kin Group

The basic definition of consanguinity being the one related by blood through the common ancestry or descent obviously acts to justify and co-relate consanguinity with descent. The unilinear descent groups that associate with the unilinear rules of decent are the *lineages or sibs.* A lineage consists of descendants of the same line which can either be patrilineal or matrilineal. All those who belong to the same lineage know exactly their relationship with others and are also aware of the rights and obligations they have towards each other. In case of a *sib*, the members know their common ancestor but are not aware of their relationship each one has with the other thus the question of dispersal of mutual obligation does not arise. Thus what binds the members of the sib is the fact that they have a common ancestor and they observe some kind of solidarity by showing respect to that ancestor or to the totem that is used as the emblem of that sib. Thus the sib members who might live geographically dispersed observes common ceremonies, shares beliefs and practices that act to unite the sib members and generate some sense of mutual obligation towards the sib members. Sibs are divided into *sub-sibs* or are also grouped together to form large groups to which names are often given. Sibs are generally exogamous as marriages among the
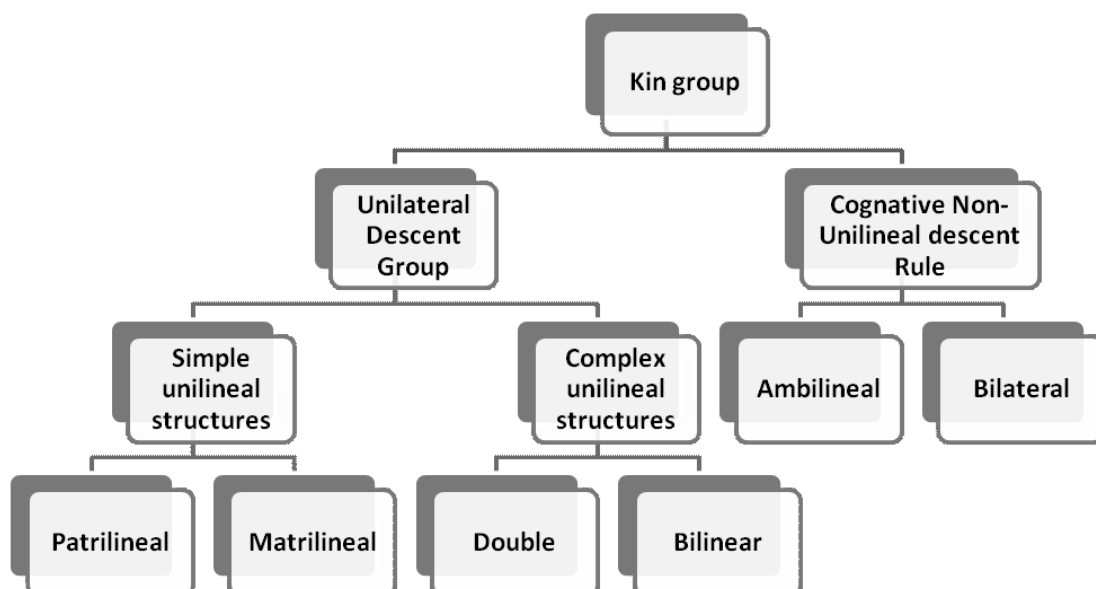

Chart 4: Depicting the Interconnectedness of Kin group with Descent

members are not permitted. In case of small kin groups they are essentially exogamous in nature. In case where marriage is seen to take place among consanguineal groups it is to be observed that either that group has not formed or the group is at its point of departure. Rules prescribing incest taboos and exogamy generally are seen to enhance the solidarity of the group.

If we look into the above chart, we find that consanguineous relationships can assume such kinds of relationships and interconnections with the descent group. When we talk about unilineal kinship, we make a direct and simple assignment of social statuses, rights and duties by confining transmission to a single descent line. It can be traced from the father's side, the system being known as *patrilineal* or from the mother's side, it being known as *matrilineal*, both constituting *simple unilineal* structures. The structure assumes some form of complexity when descent is traced through both the lines, as in cases of bilinear or when the individual resorts to the matrilineal descent line for some issues or *patrilineal* descent lines for certain others. Whereas *cognatic* groups include construction of social categories which can start with any of the individuals' acknowledged relatives and this can start with his parents. The *cognatic* nature of descent system is very much open and thus not only great variations are possible but also a greater complexity arises in this kind of descent. It as we can see can assume the form of *Bilateral* or *Ambilateral*. The former incorporates relatives from both sides of the parents within a given range. Whereas the in case of latter, the ancestor is traced focusing on any one side of the parents. Thus we can develop an idea how blood relations and descent groups are interlinked we about after going through this classification.

Now let us learn to differentiate between a *consanguine* or *agnate* and a *uterine*. In the kin group both these kins play a pivotal role. A consanguine refers to the siblings who have the same father but different mothers, whereas a uterine refers to cases of siblings who have the same mother but different fathers. Thus consanguine in this case refers to the paternal side while the uterine emphasizes on the maternal side. A sibling having both parents in common is known as a *sibling-german* or as we call them *full brother* or *full sister.*

2.3.8. Bilateral Consanguineal Kin Group

Kindred is what is used as a term to describe a situation when the consanguineal group is very loosely organized. Not only the organization but also its membership lacks any specific arrangement. It is then that the bilateral rules of descent that goes on to define the membership to the group. It basically consists of all those relatives of the ego with whom he/she shares relationships which are not at all binding in nature. The ego may stay in connection with those kins occasionally totally on the basis of his/her whims but they

generally come forward in any kind of social gatherings of the ego, be it his marriage or his funeral. What makes the kindred different from other structured groupings of kinship is that their relationship, duties and obligations are all arranged in relation to a given ego, so not only the kindred dissolves with the demise or death of the ego but also as the rules loosely define the kindred so the rights, obligations are not exclusive and often tend to overlap one another.

What is a remarkable feature of the kindred is the fact that as it features bilateral descent, so there remains a general tendency of giving importance to both sides of descent. It also highlights the fact that an ego is at liberty to settle independently of the kin group's influence. Geographical dislocation from the kin group and also setting up of nuclear families and neolocal residences add to the factors that contribute to the rise of the kindred.

2.3.9. Consanguinity and Corporate Groups

The allocation of a person in the descent group and kinship system is merely ascriptive in nature and thus a person has got no hold in deciding on his place in the system of kinship. Thus, the procedure to locate the person's place in the kinship system can be two-fold. These are:

a) To place oneself in a person's position and locate his place in the kinship system along with developing an understanding of his relationships with others.

b) To place oneself as an outsider to the kinship system and then perceive the system in its entirety.

The first method is relatively older and dates back to the times of *Morgan* that has kept him intrigued in the question regarding 'classificatory system'. The question still stands unresolved as to what is the basis that makes a person classify kins and categorize them into groups. The process of calling people 'mother', 'father', 'son', 'daughter' beyond immediate family further makes the classificatory process complex.

Time and again when we discuss about who are to be considered as kins what is found is that, even in societies where large number of people constitute the kin group on the basis of who are readily available to discharge obligations and duties ultimately turn up as close kins. All the people who are related by 'blood' anyway are known as his *'cognates'*. We can also talk about *'corporate groups'* as the group of kins in between whom sharing of property and inheritance takes place. The corporate group is totally decided on keeping in mind the line of *descent*. Again, a corporate group who is recruited by the line of descent is known as a lineage. It is not only property that a person is entitled to inherit but along with that a person can get hold of the rights and productive resources of the lineage. The

person may use these resources for setting up matrimonial alliance, settle disputes with that or may just use it as an extension of his property. Similarly, a man's title or rank is fixed by his lineage membership. Whether a person will be treated as a commoner or as a noble are decided by his membership to a particular lineage.

Also, in cases when lineage members live close by a phenomenon can be observed by the overlapping residence of 'local groupings of people', due to proximity of their 'owing kins' and kins. In times of need and discharge of obligations it is often found that services are offered by non-kins. Here there is a demarcation from the notions of kins as to be the group who essentially discharges duties and obligations. Here neighbors also offer favor just as a mark of co-operation which are also often reciprocated at in their times of need. Thus not only lineage-mates but also neighbours create a social mesh of the society. The word 'kith' is differentiated from the word 'kin'. The phrase of 'kith and kins' also can be used here to develop this understanding further. We by this time already know that who are the kins, 'Kith' means 'known' thereby are 'neighbors', the obligations that are met by the neighbours is not at all binding or permanent in nature.

2.3.10. Consanguineal Household and Matrifocality

A consanguineal household consists of living together of a group of kins without the constant presence of a male member either in the role of a husband or a father. The basis of the strength and the permanence of the household unit are attained through the relationship among the kins. This kind of society even though has got at its center but it also focuses on the cooperation that exit between the adult kins within the domestic unit. In societies, especially modern ones when such cooperating kins are absent additional social institutions take up the roles for the child's overall development. Before discussing about matrifocality we need to refer to the famous Anthropologist Raymond Smith who first developed the term in the year 1956 in his study of the Caribbean Societies. Now the question that comes to the forefront is can there be a society which is solely based on matrifocality? Rather what can be said is that all societies feature at least a few domesticities that are marked by matrifocality. Having a family with the mother and child at the centre always does not make a family matrifocal. It is when the decision of the domesticity rests with the mother only in absence of a male member makes it matrifocal. On the contrary we can also talk about the *"Dispersed family"* where even though the family centers around the mother and her children but the authority rests with the father even though he might be physically absent. Matrifocality has been identified as more of a necessity in society which has been widely affected by factors of social disorganization which may include divorce and "recurrent migration. Following *Solien,* other factors that can be associated to co-exist with consanguinity and matrifocality are as follows:

a) Seasonal migration,

b) Temporary, non-seasonal migration,

c) Continuous migration and

d) Permanent removal.

Thus, consanguinity if co-existing with other factors can give rise to matrifocality as a form of domesticity in certain circumstances.

2.3.11. Consanguineous Marriage

The marriage between individuals who are closely connected as second cousins or closer than that are known as consanguineous marriage. It is generally considered that consanguineous marriage helps in preservation of family dynamics and structure and provides cultural, economic and social support and benefits. We have now-a-days moved away from conceptions that consider consanguinity as solely a biological concept. It is now also treated from the genetics perspective. The term genetical perspective was first coined by the British evolutionary Biologist W.D. Hamilton in the year 1963 which was immediately extended in to incorporate the concept of kin selection in Anthropology in the year 1964 by Maynard Smith. It is generally argued that it is not possible for the ancestor to pass on his blood rather what passes on his genes contained in the chromosomes located in the cell nuclei. From the genetic perspective consanguinity is seen to influence the genotypes. 'Consanguinity results in the inheritance from common ancestors of both the parents the transmissible capacities to synthesize and control nucleic acids and proteins, the essential substances of all organisms'. The evils of inbreeding are so probable that across societies there exists strong justifications for prejudices that are present against consanguineal marriages. Also, as a result it has been found that many genetic diseases resulting from deleterious lethal genes inherited from common ancestors when transmitted to the off-springs which have led to many prenatal, neonatal, child morbidity or mortality has been more related to consanguineous marriages. It is generally found to be more prevalent in rural areas and is associated with factors like low age at marriage, lower economic status of the family and lower levels of education.

2.4. Conclusion

After discussing about consanguinity at length it has become quite understandable how consanguinity play a crucial role in systems of kinship. Understanding how descending from a common ancestor even though is the basic fundamental pillar of the system of consanguinity

but how different societies have structured different patterns of consanguineous relationship makes it a very interesting concept of kinship.

2.5. Summary

To conclude it can be said that the multifarious aspects of consanguinity has been explored, its various connections with other aspects of kinship has been elaborated in this section to develop an understanding how the pillars of consanguinity play an fundamental role in the social network of kinship.

2.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a) Differentiate between lineal and collateral consanguinity.

b) What are sections? What is meant by prohibited degrees of consanguinity?

c) Define stock. What is meant by lineage fission?

d) Who are known as apical ancestors? Discuss on the concept of segmentation.

e) Write a note on the interconnectedness of consanguineal household matrifocality and domesticity.

f) How does consistency in the line of descent prove to be beneficial for the kingroup?

g) What are consanguineous marriages? Can it turn out to be perilous?

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a) Define corporate groups. Discuss about the relationship that corporate groups have with consanguinity.

b) What is ambilineal descent? Write a note on consanguineal kin group.

c) What is the etymological meaning of consanguinity? What role does descent play in the social organization of the consanguineal kin group?

d) Discuss elaborately about the bilateral consanguineal kin group.

e) Elucidate on the importance of sibs and clans in case of determining of consanguineal relationship.

f) Examine how the geographical dispersion of the kin group affects the consanguineal constitution of the group.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a) Elaborate on the importance of descent in shaping of the consanguineous groups.

b) What is meant by consanguinity? Discuss in details the different forms and types consanguinity can assume.

c) Define tertiary consanguinity. Illuminate on the interconnectedness that family, lineage and descent groups have in connection with consanguinity.

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Unit 3 : Filiation

Structure of Unit

3.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the concept of filiation.
- To understand the types of filiation.
- To understand the distinction between lineage and filiation.
- To understand how filiation and affinity are connected.
- To understand the importance of filiation in the institution of kinship.

2. Introduction

At the very fundamental level, *filiation* can be defined as the relationship that exists between parent and their children. Thus the parents can be biological or social as it includes cases identified by law as involved in cases of adoption. The parents may be of same sex or different sexes. The very fact of being the child of certain parents is known as filiation. Ties of filiation are governed by a set of rules that decides on the attachment of the children to their parents and also has consequences which are social

Do you know?
What is the difference between a genitor and genitrix?
Genitor Refers to the biological father of a child whereas **genitrix** refers to the biological mother of the child.

in nature. It is the continuation of the generation that is ensured through filiation. Filiation is formed as a result of both affinal and consanguineal ties.

3.3.1. Filiation

The Penguin's Dictionary of Sociology defines filiation as the relationship that exists between parents and his children and is considered equally important from sides of both the parents irrespective of their lineage that can be traced either from the paternal or the maternal side. To be more specific, the kinship relation that exists between an individual and individual's progenitor is known as filiation. The ancestry or lineage shared by a group also falls within the ambit of filiation. It is also instrumental in determining paternity of the child. This paternity always does not have to be biological but also can be social. From the perspective of being derived from a common stock or parent filial ties that they have with their offshoots. Once after the establishment of filiation then not only it decides on the paternity of the child but also it creates rights and obligations for both the parents regardless of the circumstances in which the child was born.

Filiation is known to have the following consequences:

a)   It establishes parental authority and legal tutorship, i.e. it binds the parents and their children with rights, obligations and duties,

b)   It entitles the parents the right to name their children and

c)   It enables the child right to inheritance of the parent's property even without a will and also vice versa.

3.3.2. Types of Filiation

Filiation can assume various forms depending upon various factors. On taking a note on how filiation is attained by birth of children, filiation is seen to assume the following forms:

a) Filiation by Blood: It is the bond that establishes with a child's birth and is legal the bond of the child with his/her biological parents.

b) Filiation by Assisted Reproduction: When assisted reproductive technology is used by the parents for giving birth to the child, then that kind of filiation is said to be achieved by assisted reproduction.

c) Filiation by Adoption: Filiation by adoption is achieved between the adopted child and the parents. It extends similar rights and obligations as in the case of filiation by blood. Filiation by adoption can be achieved in either of the following ways:

    i) An adoption judgment as pronounced by the court or

    ii) An aboriginal customary adoption certificate as issued by the competent authority.

If the line of descent and inheritance is taken into account then we can divide filiation as:

a) Patri-filiation: When the inheritance occurs from the father to the son then it is known as patri-filiation. This kind of filiation is also known as *patrilineal filiation*.

b) Matri-filiation: When inheritance occurs between the mother's brother to his sister's daughter, through her mother it is known as a case of matri-filiation. This kind of filiation is also known as *matrilineal filiation*.

Filiation can also be classified as:

a) Symbolic Filiation: When myths are used to provide a basis on which the relationship of filiation is built and it is known as *symbolic filiation.* Most importantly this kind of filiation connects one to a particular descent group. It is the descent that gives rise to symbolic filiation but it is through marriage that the actual ties of filiation are created.

b) Complimentary Filiation: *Meyer Fortes* identifies that certain cases are called *complimentary filiation* when even though descent is from the patrilineal side but obligations and responsibilities extend towards the matrilineal side. Similarly, when the descent is traced through the mother but obligations and responsibilities extend towards the father's side.

3.3.3 Filial Responsibilities and Filial Obligations

Families provide psychological, social and physical resources to family members throughout their lives. The obligation includes contact among the filial kins, providing care, sharing living arrangements, informational and emotional support, financial help, routine care etc., also known as filial obligation these responsibilities extend to include a comprehensive approach to safety, security, health, well being, both physical and emotional, sociability and continued integration in society through contact with the outside world. Thus socialization also is seen as an important filial responsibility. All these obligations and responsibilities are two-fold in nature. On one hand while they are seen as duties, obligations and responsibilities on part of one of the filials, they assume the stature of rights on the part of the others. Thus these rights, obligations and duties are not considered as fixed on part of the parents. As when a child is born it is the responsibility of the parents to provide all of the above mentioned facets to ensure a healthy life and overall well being of the child. It is known as filial responsibilities. The same filial responsibilities are transferred to the child once when his/ her parents grow old and it is known as *filial obligations*.

There are various theoretical explanations that talk about the filial obligations. Firstly we can refer to the *Debt Theory*, it proposes that the investment parents make during formative years for the purpose of child rearing is a sort of debt that children have to repay once when they grow old. It makes it an obligation on the part of the child to repay the investment the parents made once when the child was young. It reduces the filial relationship between parent and children tantamount to that of the debtor and creditor. In this connection, we can refer to the theory proposed by *Jan Narveson* (1987), he points out that it is beneficial to repay what their parents invested not because of the debt but because of the gratitude and to encourage parents to make such investments in future. Referring to *Jeffrey Blustein* and *Philip J.Ivanhoe*, we can say that it is the gratitude over indebtedness and calls for filial obligations and cautions against confusion between indebtedness and gratefulness.

The next we can refer to the *Friendship Theory* in which *Jane English* propounds that children should do as much as for their parents as they would do for any of their friends with whom they share a voluntary relationship. This theory however puts forth certain conditions which act as determinants of this kind of filial obligations. These are:

a) The current status of the relationship with the parents,

b) The economic condition of the children and

c) Needs and abilities of both the parents and children.

Friendship is based on the entire notion of love and care. The needs of the parents

always do not remain, so the question of advancing help does not arise even though the children might be in good terms with their parents.

Next we take a look into *Gratitude Theory,* it proposes that the child owes gratitude in terms of the benevolence his parents forwarded towards him when he was young. *Fred Berger* (1975) accounts that what is the perfect expression of gratitude are very hard to express but references can be made to *Claudia Card's* (1988) theoretical components. It is essential to extend gratitude towards someone and for something. Often gratitude is extended not for the benefit itself but for the act of kindness that is extended, even though that effort often might not lead to the benefit itself. Gratitude is not a matter of right rather it is to be treated as an expected behavioural extension. The obligations are flexible and informal and not as fixed or precise as in the case of debt. Often the obligations may be ongoing and impossible to fulfill but that does not equate them to be demanding. To sum up, gratitude is what children owe towards one's parents and fulfilling them is a mere expression of gratitude. Again getting back to *Blustein*, it can be said that the child might not ask for all the benefits bestowed on him/her but that however does not free the child from the obligations he/she might have towards his/ her parents. Overall to sum up the theory, whatever obligations might exist it should not undermine either of 'mutual respect' and 'autonomy'. We can also briefly take a look at the *Special Goods Theory,* in which *Simon Keller* talks about three conditions which are :

a) a parent needs some special goods.

b) the parent has provided/provides with special goods to the child.

c) the child is above to provide the special good to the parent.

If any of these conditions are present they the child must provide that special good to the parent.

3.3.4 Filial and Fraternal

Filial relationship signifies the relationship that a father has with his sons, whereas fraternal relationship is the relationship one brother has with the other. Families can be formed on the basis of filial ties or fraternal ties. When parents reside with their progeny, the family becomes known as a filial family. When brothers reside together with or without their progenies and wives the family becomes known as a family based on fraternal ties. A fraternal family when residing with their respective wives and children may form a filial group in itself. Across societies the relative importance of the kin group decides on whether filial or fraternal kins are given importance. Example can be of Indian society, where fraternal relationships are given importance over filial relationships.

3.3.5 Lineagea and Filiation

Even though these two concepts are interlinked and interwoven but there are differences that seek to delineate lineage from filiation. Lineage involves the concept of descent as it traces the common ancestor and the resultant link that exit between kins. However, in case of Filiation it talks about the link that exists between parents and their children. The case of lineage is where the parents are used as a medium that connects himself, his ancestors and his progeny. Here the parents act as a genealogical predecessor of the grandparent or even earlier generation. For filiation even though that bond is originating through the lineage but the identifying unit is that of the family and more specifically the relationship existing between child and his/her parents.

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is meant by Filial Piety?**
>
> It means to be good towards one's parents by taking care of them, engaging in good conduct with them. It also extends towards one's behaviour outside one's home so that it brings good name to one's parents and ancestors. It means showing love, respect and extending of courteous behaviour to others outside the family.

3.3.6 Descent and Symbolic Filiation

Sally Falk Moore identifies the inherent paradox that he found is present in the system of kinship. He argues that marriage acts as a conjoiner of exogamous kin-group. It involves a process of acceptance of a kin group into one's own group. However that exercise calls for maintenance of the affinal relationship as a continuation or addition of one's own blood relations. The problem appears as one maintains one's connections with one's natal groups of the same generation, the other pair appears as a counter-pair. When we talk about symbolic filiation, it is believed to follow from the mythical existence of a common family from whom the descent line is created. This by itself involves a dual notion whereby one as per rules of descent must practice exogamy and marry outside one's descent group. Thus, as all people are descending from the same parents so the concept of incest and marriage by logic appears to be troublesome. Families have often been seen as the source of supplying mates and thereby *Moore* has time and again questioned and interrogated the inherent duality that lies in the parent-child relationship. Referring to *Claude Levi-Strauss* (1962) we find that he has compared totemism to the fact of symbolic pairing of brothers and sisters. He argued that animal species even though are endogamous but they are used to represent as a category through which human descent groups are compared. The basic argument is that keeping aside sexual relationships and marriages the animal groups can be used as a comparable category when it comes to analysis relating to descent.

Moore identifies descent and symbolic filiation as interlocked concepts. When we talk about the brother's sister assuming the role of father it is also an extension of symbolic filiation. Thus the brother-sister relationship which has such widespread structural importance not only specifies the system of descent but also is seen as an 'extension of symbolic parenthood'. Thus various such pervasive '*double entendre*' and the various forms it can assume act to create a mesh that forms the basis of the descent in kin-based societies.

3.3.7 Descent, Filiation and Affinity

The fact that delineates descent from filiation is not restricted to the latter by being born to a specific parent and thus is inherently 'bilateral' in nature which can assume 'equilateral' forms also. The filial relationship in its full stance is politico-jural in nature as it involves transfer of not only the social setup but also the transferring of jural status at least in the domesticity. Filiation is identified by a bond that not only connects two generations through rights, obligations but also through the transference of rights of inheritance and succession. *Meyer Fortes* has related *pedigree* with *descent* and *filiation.* Only full siblings are known to have common pedigree but any two or more persons who have the pedigrees uniting to a single common ancestor can be said to be linked by descent. At least two units of *serial filiation* are required to form a unit of descent. Thus descent connects a domestic unit to a larger social whole whereas filiation is the unit that governs relationship within the domestic unit. Successive filiation and filiation per se is often seen to coincide with each other and the former with descent itself on certain circumstances. Example can be the relationship a person has with his grandparents. Filiation even though originates in the domestic domain but descent assumes politico-jural form in its domain whereas filiation may confer title to status including rights and capacities in the politico-jural domain. If we take a look at the complementary filiation it is recognized as a rule that can be extended beyond the first degree of filiation to include successive steps of filiation as enlisted by one's pedigree. Referring to the *Meyer* we can say that since descent confers attributes of status relating to a person's place in the external social structure it is operative in placing a person in definite social categories. Descent groups are operative to unite persons for common social purposes and interests by identifying them exclusively and unambiguously with one another. Descent groups unite numerous pedigrees together and also forms au union that links all the pedigrees to a common line of descent. In societies where succession and inheritance are passed on to siblings those societies highlights on the relative importance that is imparted to the descent groups. But where succession and inheritance pass on to sons or daughters in preference to the siblings. This is governed by the rule offiliation. The rule of so-called primogeniture is a rule of succession by filiation.

3.3.8 Filiation as a Cultural Construct

Culture is seen as something which is loaded with meanings that also set to include cases of descent and filiation. It involves symbols which are culturally specific that in case of descent identifies symbolically from a genealogical figure the lineage. In case of filiation, also the same rule governs but the only difference is that it creates an interaction of a certain kind of 'dyad' that specifies filiation among all the culturally loaded symbols that are set to govern a particular society. Filiation following *David M. Schneider* is characterized by a dyadic relationship. He proposes that what kind of relationship a person may have in a descent group is what he calls a category as a whole. The parent-child child relationship is an important dyadic unit of that group. He further adds that the parent-child relation is basic to the formation of the descent group and it is through the father that a person joins the descent group.

In any particular culture when symbols mark descent groups then it is obvious that certain sets of symbols are used to differentiate on one hand a descent group and on the other hand symbols are loaded in relationships among kins which are reiterated in certain ways making this entire process successful. Thus, each symbol for kinship reaffirms this meaning of the symbols attached to that particular relationship. Also, the simultaneous process goes on through which symbols, which define the descent category as against another is reiterated by other symbols, which also mark the descent category as distinct from all others. Thus, not only the descent groups are attached to symbols that give meanings to them but those symbols are reinforced in order to keep them genealogically alive. That is however not the case with the consanguineal group as they are tied through different obligations, rights and duties, so *Schneider*, argues that even though they constitute the descent group but they are not based on culturally constructed symbols that bind them with each other. Thus he argues, that in the descent category three kinds of statuses associated with relationships are operative. These are:

i) A set of symbols for consanguinity kinship. Filiation is a special instance of this, being the relationship between the child and parent. This kind of relationship spreads both across and within the descent groups as it connects a set of affines to a relationship of filiation to their progeny.

ii) A set of symbol that stands for the unitary relationship of the descent category be it, uterine, or cognatic or maybe both.

iii) The third set of symbols will stand for affinity.

3.3.9 Paternity, Filiation and Adoption

Paternity is crucial in any of the societies because it extends social duties and obligations and often also includes financial responsibilities of the child. It is a sense of ensuring security of all sorts to the progeny. So what we find is that, in cases where the biological father assumes the paternity then the complexities do not arise. However in certain cases, the paternity has to be socially or legally assigned. Adoption is one such case when paternity of a child is legally assigned. Adoption falls within the category of filiation as it is instrumental in deciding and thereby determining the relationship between parents and their children. As operative across various societies, adoption generally assumes two forms:

a) **Simple Adoption:** It is the adoption that can be seen as a mere an extension of ties. It is setting up of the relationships of filiation between parents and their adopted children without severing of the adopted child's biological kinship ties. Here adoption legalizes the social ties of the adopted child while recognizing his/her ties related by birth.

b) **Complex or Complete Adoption:** This process of adoption is complete in the sense as in this type of adoption the biological and social kinship ties are both assigned to the adoptee. Here the previous biological kinship ties are severed and the sole recognition is assigned to the parents who adopt the child.

What kind of adoption takes place and how will paternity be assumed varies from one society to another depending upon prior history, social capabilities and prevalent values and cultures. However certain cases may call for the requirement of a certain kind of adoption. But in an overall way, in cases of complete adoption it provides a more overt sense of security in the relationships of filial ties.

3.4. Conclusion

The fact that parent-child relationship is the locus intertwined with ideas of kinship the concept of filiation stands out to be very crucial. The various factors as related to filiation has been discussed at length in this module. How filiation stood out to be an important indicator in identity formation of the children from traditional times have robbed off the idea viewing filiation as a cultural construct. How in the modern day the exclusive biological orientation of filiation goes on to involve the social dimensions by incorporating ideas of adoption rips off the biological essentialism that traditionally filiation upheld.

3.5. Summary

Apart from consanguineal and affinal bases of kinship formation we can talk about *fictive kinship* or *putative kinship.* Fictive or putative kinship refers to all forms of kinship ties which are formed apart from ties of blood or birth. The case of fictive kinship is extremely important as it is based on social ties which are very important in the contemporary world when people remain mostly geographically and physically dislocated from their kins. The cases where children are adopted also come to constitute fictive kinship. Also such kinships develop on the basis of emotional attachment which is the driving force in relationships.

Thus to conclude, we can say that kinship even though is wide enough to include all peripheries of relationships but filiation is focused on relationships between father or mother and his/her child/ren. Even though we now see that the concept of social filiation is also being incorporated but filiation as such is highly structured as it is embodied in the legal dimensions also. The court orders the order of filiation through which not only a man is named as the father of the child but also gives the father the right to custody of the child. Thus after discussing at length about filiation we have somewhat gained an insight about what constitutes filiation and how it acts as an instrument of conjoining individuals into the social whole of kinship system.

3.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a) What is meant by complementary filiation?

b) Define patrifiliation and matrifiliation.

c) What is meant by filiation? Discuss about the different consequences of filiation.

d) Discuss about serial filiation.

e) Identify the relationship of pedigree with filiation.

f) What are the different forms of adoption.

g) Differentiate between lineage and filiation.

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a) What is meant by filiation? What are the different types of filiation?

b) Elaborate between the interconnetdeness between filiation, paternity and adoption.

c) Aanlyze the connections that affinity has with filiation.

d) Analyze how filiation is culturally constructed.

e) Is there anything that can be called symbolic filiation?Illustrate your answer.

f) Examine how filiation acts as an interlocking agent of bilateral descent.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a) What is meant by filial piety? Discuss critically about the different theoretical perspectives that talk about filial obligations.

b) Elaborate with illustration the connections descent groups have with filiation.

c) Discuss the role of pedigree in filiation units. Illustrate on how inheritance and succession decide on the relative importance of descent or filiation in our society.

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Unit 4 : Incest Taboo

Structure of Unit

4.1. Learning Objectives

- Understanding incest taboo.
- Analyzing the cultural pretexts that are involved in determining incest taboo.
- Understanding how marriage rules are governed in light of incest taboo.

- Understanding the concept of inbreeding and how it acts as a determinant of incest taboo.

- Understanding the theoretical perspectives of incest taboo.

4.2. Introduction

To begin with a discussion on incest taboo we can simply say that it is prohibition of sexual relation between close relatives. Various forms of incest taboos refrain sexual relationships between father-daughter, mother-son, uterine brother-sister etc. This brings us to the question of what is primarily meant by incest.

4.3.1. What is Incest taboo

Incest is a system of sexual involvement of two people who are closely related to each other. It is the sexual relation between two close blood relatives whose marriage is not permitted. 'Taboo' is a form of prohibition of intercourse on the basis of religion and morality.

The prohibition of incest or at least 'incest avoidance' is not only universal and present across cultures but it is also considered to be one of the most complex of the social regulatory systems. Society considers incest as a prohibited activity and consigns physical intimacy between two people who belong to two separate family, society, kin group etc. In other words, incest is considered as a taboo or an activity which is prohibited by a society. The society hence restricts the practice of incest within and hence the practice of indulging sexually by one's own family is termed as incest-taboo. Society is a structure, which is constructed with the base of rules; these rules are made in such a manner that they are

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is Genetic Exogamy?**
>
> The practice of marrying outside one's group to avoid genetic disorders is known as **Genetic Exogamy.**
>
> **Example:** People of Jewish Descent marry outside of their cultural endogamy to decrease chances of their children

not supposed to be questioned. Thus, it is evident that society endorses exogamy and biologically also the practice of endogamy, i.e. the physical interaction between two members of the same family, is restricted and not allowed or is prohibited. It is a primary rule of marriage to control promiscuity that incest is prohibited across cultures. However, who are considered as kins or who fall under the ambit of close kins vary between cultures.

4.3.2. Rules Governing Marriage

Marriage across the globe is governed and controlled by the structure and rules of the society. The three rules that primarily govern marriages are that of:

a) Incest Taboo: It is defined as prohibitions of marriage or sexual intercourse among different categories of kins. Example can be prohibition of sexual relationships between father-daughter, mother-son, brother-sister etc.

b) Exogamy: In the modern parlance of the term, also known as out-marriage, it dictates that one must marry outside one's kin-groups. It goes on to include the practice that one should be marrying even outside one's tribe, village or even community. *Seligman* in the year 1950 defined it as *"Prohibition of marriage union within specified groups"*.

c) Endogamy: It refers to the custom, sanction or practice within one's own group is known as endogamy. Example can be the Hindus who are necessarily endogamous in nature and they always marry within the limits of their own caste. Both the terms *exogamy and* endogamy were introduced by *McLennan* in the year 1970.

4.3.3. The Origin and Persistence of Incest Taboo

Let us now have an overview about why incest taboo exists and why it has persisted from the following perspectives:

a) Intra-familial Sexual Relations: Incest is avoided primarily as it stands in way of spreading of network in and across societies. If people mated within families, then there would have been no need for fostering familiarity beyond the units of family. The major disadvantage of incest as pointed out by Robin Fox, and somewhat following the lines of *Kingsley Davis* is that of the one based on confusion. If people would practice incest, then a great deal of confusion would appear regarding relationships appearing out of the incest. Upsetting of the authority relations is also visible if incest is practiced.

b) Motivation for People to Avoid Incest: Even though there is no confirming the fact that whether people do not naturally want to commit incest or shy away from it or are horrified of it but following Robin Fox, we can refer to the *'Dire Consequence Theory'*. It assumes that people do not practice incest just on the ground that they fear about the major genetic consequences inbreeding can yield. However, if such consequences were unknown to men whether they would indulge in incest is of course open to further questioning. *'Mechanisms of natural aversion'* to it and the

'Natural Desire' approaches also do not stand sufficient to explain its persistence. However, *'motivations'* both conscious and unconscious appear as strong grounds of justifications that people generally present as foundations for avoiding incest.

c) Reasons why Society forbids Incest and Punishes the Offenders: There occurs a nexus between laws, feelings and happy consequences that even though might not go hand in hand but stands operative in determining that why people consider incest as ruinous. People observe incest taboo consciously or unconsciously mostly based on the sanctions that societies have against it. To put it all together: not only laws prohibiting incest are operative but along with that survival, feelings and sanctions are all woven together to give it the shape of taboo.

4.3.4. Who are Close Kins?

There is a substantial amount of debate across societies to understand or demarcate the categories of kinship, rather to be specific that who are to be considered as close kins and between whom incest can be prohibited. As many as societies are present and as many variations are existent so many perspectives have emerged to classify kinship categories. Anthropologist Tylor and Psychologist Freud have pointed out that sexual relationships with close kins are prohibited and there are serious negative sanctions in the form of punishments are present if violations are observed. It is also viewed as positively functional for the social group as it acts as a mechanism of inclusion of new members in to the group. It is a tool of expansion of groups and an effective way of forging of alliances across kinship margins. Eriksen points out the possibilities of biological degradation if such bans are non-existent. He also raises his concern that how such bans are so widely existent as the ignorant people are never aware of the genetic complexities that such practices may entail. All the prior accounts of incest taboo have a clearly defined boundary of who are referred to as close kins. There are societal differences between marriage rules among kin groups. For example: the Hindus prohibit marriage among those who belong to the same ancestral line or *sapinda*. Whereas, the Muslims permit marriage among a man and the daughter of

> **Do you know?**
>
> **Royal Incest/ Sanctioned Incest**
>
> **Reo Fortune** used the term **Royal Incest** to refer to certain forms of incest allowance among the Royals aimed at 'preserving' the Royal blood, which is referred to as **Sanctioned Incest** by **Kimball Young.**
>
> **Example: Incan** or the **Hawaiian** Royal family. The best-known Case of Incest is that of **Cleopatra of Egypt.**

the man's mother's brother. On the other hand, often religious and economic explanations are used to justify incest. The royal families, if we take the example of Cleopatra of Egypt, being Pharaoh considered as God are not supposed to marry ordinary men. The economic explanation goes as marrying outside the family would lead to the division of the royal wealth.

4.3.5. Types of Incest

Five distinct types of incest emerge which can be categorized as follows:

a) Functional Incest: This kind of Incest survives on the rules of functionality where family being a micro unit of the society serves the function of fulfillment of sexual satiation among father and daughter. The features of this kind of incest are: a patriarchal family, an 'intro-verted' or isolated one, a father mostly hailing from low socio-economic order, a wife who is not performing the role of household or sex role or both, in case the community is non-existent or connections with the community is poor, the wife gives consent of incestuous relationship between father and daughter, the union highlights moral approval of the whole family. Over a long period of time the family serves as a functional unit and finally the daughter is certainly happy atleast in the initial phase to take up the role of wife. Such types of incest when found in certain urban disorganized sectors it is because of delinquent behaviour and the family that engages in such types of incest generally withdraw them from wider social circles.

b) Accidental or Disorganized Incest: This kind of incest is found prevalent among societies which are under social disorganization and are often highly crowded. It is different in nature from functional incest as unlike the former it is not considered as a normative standard. Rather these societies experience a sort of conflict of normative standard of behaviour related to sexual promiscuity. It might also develop among people who are not aware of their relationship with each other.

c) Pathological Incest: In this case one or both of the participants in incest are mentally defective or psychotic. The participants failing to internalize the societal norms related to incest are considered as 'mentally defective' or 'extra-societal'.

d) Object Fixation Incest: It is considered as the strongest of the incest and rests upon the idea of the 'objective fixation' leading to incest. Here the sole motive remains

> **Do you know?**
>
> **Distinction between Endogamy and Exogamy**
>
> **Endogamy**: The practice of marrying or being required to marry within one's own ethnic, religious, or social group.
>
> **Exogamy**: Marriage to a person belonging to a tribe or group other than one's own as required by custom or law.

that at least one of the partner has sexual fixation upon an early object through which sexual desire was gratified.

e) Psychopathic Incest: It is a residual category and seeks to include all other forms of incest. It involves at least one adult, has a married partner who satiates sexual needs but still seduces his child even knowing that such kind of behaviour does not have social approval.

4.3.6. Types of Incest taboo

The above discussion on the various types incest that can develop within a society. We now refer to the relationships between whom incest is prohibited. Overt sexual relationship between members of a family is prohibited by the system of incest taboo. In general, there are three possibilities of incest: father-daughter, mother-son and brother-sister. They even though may appear as similar but they contain entities and the interaction between them varies greatly. The first two cases are instances of Inter-generational incest and the interaction occurs between one mature and the maturing entity, while the final one is intra-generational in nature and involves two maturing people. They may assume various forms and also these may include relationships between:

a) Adults and children: When this type of incest takes place then it generally assumes the character of child abuse. This is an example of inter-generational incest.

b) Childhood siblings: This is also known as sibling-sibling incest. When the older sibling sexually abuses the younger sibling then it is known as incest between childhood siblings. It is not altogether unknown but as it occurs within the ambit of the family so it becomes rarely reported.

c) Consenting adults within the same family: When sexual relations take place between adults consensually within the same family then it falls within this category.

d) Aunts, uncles, nieces or nephews: When sexual relationship takes place between uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces then these types of relationship fall within this category of incest.

c) Adult siblings: When incest occurs between adult siblings then it can be categorized under this category.

d) Cousin relationships: Incest is prohibited among parallel and cross cousins. Even though the rules are not universally uniform but more or less such restrictions exist among cousins.

e) Other than the one defined through marriage: Sexual relationships other than those sanctioned by the ties of marriage come under this category.

4.3.7. Incest taboo: Analyzing Inbreeding and Incest behaviour

At the very beginning, family would have not extended and expanded if there were no ban on incest as the practice of inbreeding would have been the most convenient options for human beings. Inbreeding can lead to problems which can be analyzed from the biological perspective and is based on the explanations on genetic mutation. People who carry the same single recessive gene by themselves even if it is not considered as a problem in itself but mating between them causes a condition when the child is born with harmful or deadly conditions. So inheritance of harmful traits is more possible if mating is allowed among family members. Mating between other relatives over closely related blood relatives produces off-springs with much lesser chances of abnormalities.

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is Inbreeding?**
>
> Breeding between members of a relatively small population, especially one in which most members are related.

Coming to incest behaviour it goes on to explain it as the sexual behaviour that is practiced between members who are closely related. Socially defined peripheries exist between relationships that come within the social structure. When such structures permit incest then the sexual behaviour among the kins is known as inbreeding behaviour. Based on cultural reaction when incest is permitted among kins such behaviour towards inbreeding is known as inbreeding behaviour.

4.3.8. Incest taboo as a form of social regulation and subsequent social cohesion

The ban on Incest is the most universally found social norm. Incest is any form of prohibited union between close kins. It is just the dual aspect of the ban on marriage among kins or close relations. Incest taboo is socially functional from various perspectives. As kin group or family is the buffer institution between individual and society so family can be seen as an extension of an individual's own existence. Society has got least control over this individual unit. Thus, any kind of harm or abuse an individual faces within the family is least likely to get reported. If adults and children involve in sexual activity or if an adult member and a child gets involved in sexual activity, it is known as the incest activity. Thus, to provide protection

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is Inbreeding Depression?**
>
> Inbreeding depression refers to the reduced biological fitness in a given population which is considered as a result of inbreeding or breeding among kins. It may result from a population bottleneck referring to an organism's inability to survive and perpetuate its genetic material

within the institution of family children, weaker individuals or sexes, such social regulatory measures are strongly used to structure social relationships. For example: the practice of incest between adult and children can lead to child abuse, similarly; the practice of incest between childhood siblings can lead to exploitation of a younger sibling by an older sibling, consenting adults within the same family might involve in the sexual exploitation of a younger one and by the adult who is close in relation with him/her in the family or may be more powerful in terms of familial status. Thus, from all these examples it is quite evident that society has provided with these regularity mechanisms just to ensure not just the maintenance of societal norms but to ensure equal protection of individuals in their private ambit.

4.3.9. Preferential and Preferred Marriage

Rules regarding whom one can marry also leads to the understanding that who one cannot marry. Thus there are rules which clearly specify that it is *desirable* for a man to marry one from certain categories which are known as *preferred or preferential marriage.*

Prescribed marriages on the other hand are the ones that usually takes place between matri-lateral cross cousins. Here the rule is that a man must take his wife from his mother's lineage.

4.3.10. Understanding kinship in perspective of incest taboo: An insight on Endogamy versus Exogamy

As society has fixed rules related to fixing the age of consent just as a measure to ensure that people can consensually consent in maturity for sexual activity, similarly rules are laid down to prohibit certain persons as sexual and marriage partners. The former is dictated by the rules of *incest* and the latter by rules of *exogamy.* Even though they are not mutually exclusive but they also do not coincide with one another. Incest is often regarded as a sin that goes on to the extent to call for supernatural punishers to punish the offenders. However, the question that, who are considered as kins and among whom sexual relations are prohibited varies from one society to another. Thus it negates any 'instinctive recognition' that the mating of biological kins is undesirable as the classical theories of incest taboos proposed. Even though there is a universal aversion towards incest involving father-daughter or that of the mother and son, however

> **Do you know?**
>
> **Diistinction between Endogamy and Exogamy**
>
> **Endogamy:** The practice of marrying or being required to marry within one's own ethnic, religious, or social group.
>
> **Exogamy:** Marriage to a person belonging to a tribe or group other than one's own as required by custom or law.

allowing marriage or incest among cousins is not altogether ruled out. Thus involving the dynamics of *rules of exclusion* (whom not to marry) or *rules of inclusion* (whom to marry) the incest allowance among cousins however cannot altogether be ruled out. *Rules of Endogamy* define that marriage within a particular group is stipulated by the fact that the spouse should be from a socially defined and approved category. In the rules of endogamy which often involves marriage among cousins obviously posits certain preferences among which cousin to marry over other. In case of kin-endogamy, marriage when permitted between *parallel cousins* involves children of a father and children of the father's brother, the same logic applies with mothers also. Here one point is to be understood crucially that the linking parents in case of parallel cousin marriages are generally of the same sex. Such kinds of marriages are preferred by certain Muslim groups who live in Middle-East or Northern Africa. The second form of cousin marriage is known as *cross-cousin marriage.* Here the decisive criterion is that the sex of linking parents is different. Here marriage occurs between father's daughter or son with his sister's daughter or son or likewise. Even though some Hindus of Southern India prefers cross-cousin marriage but however such kinds of marriages are very rare and insignificant in proportion to the ratio of the marriages outside the family. A study conducted in Chennai reveals that only three-fourth of all marriages were outside families while only a quarter of the whole occurred among cross-cousins or between uncles and nieces which also fall within this category. However unfamiliar it might sound marriages among cross-cousins as studies reveal always does not posit the problem of genetic disorder. Studies reveal that people who are part of cultures where cross-cousin marriages are not practiced, a very slight difference in terms of the congenital disorder of the progeny has been found. Thus this study of Southern India is indicative of the fact that such chances of genetic disorders of the progeny in cases where incest is practiced are higher in closed societies where options of choice of the partners are limited and population is circumscribed. As found in Southern India, where people have got wider options to choose their marriage partners, from a set of cross cousins, people show effective involvement in making choice that reduces chances of genetic disorder of the progeny.

4.3.11. Nature versus Nurture

It deals with the traditional debate that whether incest is practiced in terms of a social behaviour, otherwise called nurture or is it part of a social behaviour that is a product of environmental experiences. Sociobiologists of human behaviour propose that incest/inbreeding avoidance by employing research on four major areas. These include:

a) Universal nature and compliance with incest,

b) Studies on Inbreeding harm,

c) Ethological and animal research on inbreeding avoidance and

d) Investigations of marriage practices of children raised together.

All these question the human socio-biological hypotheses, specifically the *deleterious hypothesis of Inbreeding* that gives a socio-biological basis for avoidance of incest. The deleterious hypothesis is consisted of two hypothesis. The first hypothesis posist that *the frequency of homozygous combinations of deleterious recessive alleles* thereby decreasing fitness. The second hypothesis popularly called the *overdominance hypothesis.* It presents that *inbreeding increases homozygosity reducing the frequency of the superior heterozygotes.*

Thus the section below will obviously highlight these hypotheses in the form of theories as proposed by various theorists. However even though the dilemma remains but the practice of incest is more seen as a work of nurture over something explained totally from the sociobiological viewpoint.

4.3.12. Theoretical perspectives on Incest taboo

Durkheim explains the prohibition of incest at the backdrop of his general theory of totemism. Durkheim asserted that blood being a vital principle and to shed the blood of one's own totemic group is considered as a sin or crime. Since blood would be shed in the initial act of intercourse, a man must shun all women of his own totem in acts of intercourse. Thus following Durkheim incest taboo is practiced based on the principle of totemism.

However this theory has narrowed the concept of incest by restricting it strictly to totemic principles. The various other theoretical perspectives on incest taboo may be analyzed under the following classifications:

a) Psychoanalytic Theory: Sigmund Freud in this approach proposes that between closely related kins desire of strong sexual relations exist; like that between mother and son or between father and daughter. But during the process of socialization such desires are suppressed due to fear generated from parents. However such desires continue to exist. So incest taboo serves to control the sexual line or it becomes necessary for the defense against sexual relations between these close kins. Thus strong social sanctions against incest act to prohibit it.

b) Childhood Familiarity Theory: Edward Westermarck in the year 1920 proposed on the basis of a research conducted that people who are reared and socialized together develop no sexual attraction among them. Be it sibling or not those who grow up and are reared together develop no attraction among them. So, familiarity

from childhood serves as the social basis of avoidance of incest. Arthur Wolf proposed that those who are reared together develop sexual disinterest and lack of stimulation. The author further goes on to propose that such relationships develop extra-marital sexual relationships, produce lesser offsprings and also get divorced. Hilda and Seymour Parker after conducting studies on sets of father who indulged incest with daughters and the other group not doing so. It has been found that those fathers who had incestuous relationships with their daughters had little to do with their upbringing. They were mostly away from their daughters during the first three years of their daughter's life.

c) Inbreeding Avoidance Theory: This is one of the traditional approaches attached to incest taboo. It prefers avoidance of incest on the ground that certain harmful successive genes may lead to produce offsprings with illness, weakness or genetic defects or diseases. So incest taboo serves as a safety measure in these instances. However inbreeding being practiced by ancient Egyptians also did not manifest instances of harmful disease. But endogamy is still considered as harmful and inbreeding is seen as damaging. Thus biological degeneration acts to prohibit incest relationships.

d) Cooperation Theory: Eminent Anthropologist Edward B.Tylor puts forth that incest taboo enhances cooperation and healthy relationship among the family members. It is because of incest taboo that cooperation is accelerated among the members of the family and it would lead to issues related to trust. Incest among the family members might lead to issues of suspicion and hostility among members of the family. It is because of the system of exogamy people are forced to marry outside one's family and that increases cooperation with other family members and also strengthens the bond among one's own family.

e) Family Disruption Theory: Bronislaw Malinowski emphasized that if the unity and functioning of a family is to be kept intact then Incest taboo should be maintained. As Sexual relations within the same family may bring about enmity, jealousy, rivalry, disturbances and may bring about tension within the family. So, to avoid such disruptions in the family functions incest should not be permitted within the family. This theory stands in assumption with that of the theory proposed by Murdock who says that if in the world history has incest been allowed among kins then it must have been in conditions of disorder when chances of survival of some groups were minimal in conditions of extreme competition with better organized groups. Following Malinowski, the essential line of transition from nature (as in present across all animals) to culture (something peculiar to man) is marked by the prohibition of

incest. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss argued that the incest taboo in human societies should be prohibited, he claims that a part of incest should be prohibited, i.e. The endogamy must be prohibited an exogamy should be promoted. Through exogamy, unrelated households or lineages will form relationships through marriage, thus strengthening social bonds. Referring to the *Rules of Exogamy* the prohibition of marriage even among certain cognates outside the lineage what results is that the free flowing of marriage ties that run across the society creating a 'web' of kinship; is what Fortes calls but other refer it as 'network'. It also serves to reduce enmity among groups as each marriage creates not only newer blood relations but also is the basis of creating newer bonds with other groups.

Talcott Parsons from the perspective of socialization theory asserted incest taboo as a normative structure within the broad framework of the system of sanctions. The rewards and punishments attached are so strong that, it for the need of better and more rewarding experience sticks to most 'proper' behaviour. Similar sanctions are operative that guide people to the ties of marriage and kin relationships. From the sociological perspective, Kimball Young puts instinct as the source of incest prohibitions, but he advances no further explanation than to assert that the taboo is a consistent result arising from the very nature of the social interaction between parents and children and also among the children themselves.

Following Robin Fox, incestuous mating is to be treated as something to be avoided keeping in mind the disastrous results that inbreeding might bring in or to limit the demographic outcome of inbreeding. It is treated as something 'given' and so sanctions associated against it are fierce. The debate whether people knew about the biological consequences of incest and thereby tabooed it has been reiterated in the study by William Durham, he in his cross-cultural approach found that across all societies he studied, mention was made about the biological degradation that incest might entail.

4.4. Conclusion

Even though marriage is a universal institution but some or other form of restrictions comply across societies that depict between whom marital union is permitted. This unit highlighted how interestingly patterns of kinship are woven through the incest taboos that give very specific structures to individual societies. How social regulation is enacted through rules of exogamy and endogamy is very crucial in developing understandings about incest taboo.

4.5. Summary : Effects of Incest

However, we understand that incest taboo is practiced across all societies and cultures. They vary in range or degrees. However even when cultures taboo incest we find that many people mostly children become victims of incest and as incest is initiated within kins so reporting of such crimes are much less. Among cultures where incest is prohibited, those who become victims of such inter-generational or intra-generational incest face the following psycho-social problems among many others.

a)   Loss of trust: The victim often loses trust even with the family members.

b)   Become Hypervigilent: The victim may turn to be hypervigilant and subsequent loss of trust makes the victim turn hypervigilant and look and doubt each and every situation and person.

c)   Low self-esteem: The effect of such incest may lead to lower the self-esteem of the victim.

c)   Suppression and Subsequent recalling and appearance of memories in flashback: The victim often unable to report such instances may suppress such emotions which often even in subsequent life of the victim come up in flashback memories leading to psychological disturbances.

4.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a)   Explain in brief with illustration what the incest taboo forbids.

b)   Appreciate the differences between exogamy and endogamy.

c)   Explain the points that distinguish in-breeding from out-breeding.

d)   Critically elaborate on the effects that genes might have if incest is practiced.

e)   Who practices incest? What are the two major socio-economic objectives that justify the practice of incest?

f)   Elaborate on the major rules that govern marriages.

g)   Write a note on Incest behaviour.

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a)   'Nature or nurture'; which according to you plays a decisive role in explaining incest taboo.

b)   Critically elaborate on the functionalist perspectives on the practice of incest taboo.

c)   What is meant by inbreeding depression? Who does incest avoidance help in the promotion of social cohesion?

d)   Define incest. Differentiate vividly between accidental incest and pathological incest.

e)   Write a note on the origin of incest and justify the reasons for its persistence.

f)   Write a critical note on the effects of incest allowance on the family.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a)   Elucidate critically the different theoretical perspectives that just the prevalence of incest.

b)   What do you mean by Incest taboo? Highlight upon the different types and forms into which incest and incest taboo can be classified.

c)   Elaborate on how the rules that govern marriage are intrinsically connected with each other to provide necessary basis for the promotion of social cohesion.

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Unit 5 : Affinity

Structure of Unit

1. Learning Objectives

- Understanding the entire concept of affinity.

- Understanding the different theoretical perspectives of affinity.

- Understanding the different types and relationships involved in affinity.

- Understanding the concept of marriage.

- Understanding how affinity acts to structure the network of kinship.

5.2. Introduction

Affinal relationships are the ones established through marriage. Marriage creates a link between *the family of orientation* and *the family of procreation.* It is the individual's membership into these two that give rise to the kinship system. Thus the relationship that is established legally through and/or socially defined by marriage between spouses and their relatives on either side in termed as affinal kins.

5.3.1 What is Affinity?

Those who are related to each other through marital relationships are known as affines or affinal kins. The affinal kins are not related by blood. The kind of relationship that arises out of legally and/or socially defined marriage between spouses and their relationships is known as affinity or affinal relationship. A marriage creates a relationship between families who were perhaps enemy or even strangers before. In all forms of common contexts, it is generally perceived that persons who belong to the same lineage have strong unity among themselves, however such unity is minimal in cases when people from other lineages are concerned. So it is through marriages such antagonisms between lineages are often sealed. As marriage involves taking up of reciprocal roles of two individuals as that of husband and wife so we need to understand what is meant by *Conjugal Roles.* 'Conjugal' simply means 'of marriage' and the term refers to the reciprocal roles of both the marriage partners. Thus the affinal relationship developed through marriage accounts for certain prescribed patterns of behaviour between the affines. Affinal relationships develop with kiths where possibilities of renunciation remains, thus these relationships must be guided by certain behaviour patterns. These relationships are not given and are 'chosen', so these relationships must be carefully dealt with as there are possibilities that such relationships can be broken. Let us have a look into such patterns of behaviour.

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is meant by degree of affinity?**
>
> The prohibition of sexual relations between persons in affinal relationship is known as degree of affinity

5.3.2 Prescribed Bahaviour in Affinity

There are certain constraints which are operative between spouses and their kins in order to avoid any awkward situation between them and such prescribed behaviour includes the following:

a) Avoidance Relationship: Commonly known as 'formal respect' such relationships are existent among spouse and another spouses' parents or with persons who are senior to them. Such relationships are to be marked by respect, it is seen among the *Xhosa* bride of South Africa that they must avoid parts of the household where senior kinsmen stay. Even if she meets anyone of the men while passing by she has to leave the path step down on the grass as a mark of respect. The practice of putting on the veil, i.e. covering one's head by the woman in India as a mark of respect for the senior affines is also prevalent. Even avoidance is maintained in taking names of senior affines, coming in face to face contact with a senior affine or even talking about sexual references in front of them.

b) Joking Relationship: Such relationships also offer certain outlets for by allowing joking relationships with some of the affines. Insult, obscenity and outrageous in other contexts such relationships are permitted among affines of the same generation. Following *Radcliffe Brown* such relationships are based on the attitude of 'mutual disrespect'. Example can be the relationship between a man and his wife's sisters. Brown calls that joking relationships are often resorted to mitigate antagonisms that might exist between groups.

A special kind of relationship exists between mother's brother and sister's sons. This relationship is marked by one-sided 'mutual disrespect'. The sister's son can behave in particular ways with his mother's brother otherwise considered unfamiliar among kinsmen. Across all societies the mother is seen to be indulgent towards their children, such indulgences are extended towards their sibling's children. The mother's brother, going by the etymological meaning is what Brown points out as the *'male mother'*. Thus it somewhat justifies the special relationship of indulgence that the sister's son enjoys with his mother's brother.

5.3.3 Different Types of Affinities

Kinship can assume a number of forms which develop as a result of marriage. These types are indicative of the degree of kinship or of the proximity of the affinal relationship.
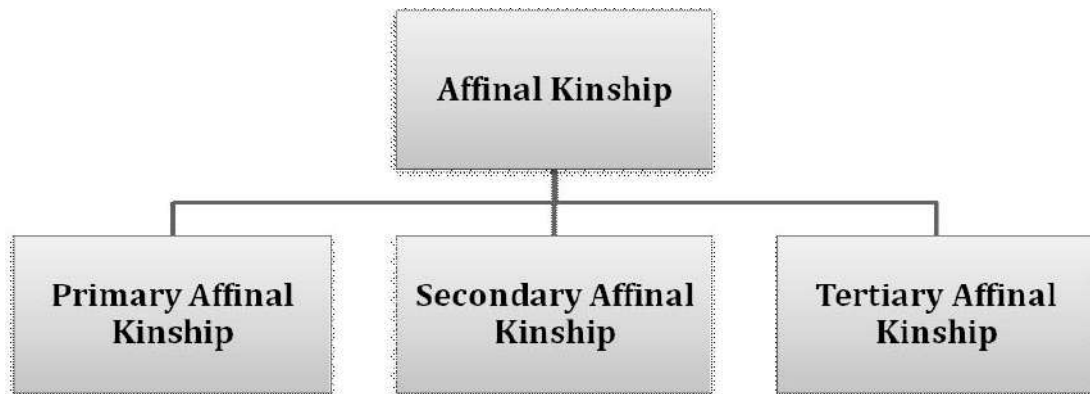
Chart 5: Depicting Different Types of Affinal Kinship

Now we go on to look into these various kinds of Affinal Kinships.

a) Primary Affinal Kinship: It refers to the direct relationship formed through marriage. The only form primary affinal kinship can assume is the relationship between husband and wife.

b) Secondary Affinal Kinship: This kind of relationship is the one that is present between *one's primary affinal kin's primary kins.* This kind of relationship is found between an individual and all his parents-in law, brothers-in-law and sisters-in–law. The spouse's primary kins become an individual's secondary afiinal kins. Also an individual's parents of brother/sister in-law also can be categorized as his/her secondary affinal kins. Any sibling or sibling's spouse or parent-in-law becomes secondary affinal kin of that person.

c) Tertiary Affinal Kinship: Tertiary Affinal kinship refers to the *primary affinal kin's primary kins' primary kins.* Also, it can include *secondary affinal kin's primary kins* or *primary affinal kin's secondary kins.* This type of affinal kinship can assume multifarious forms as the degree of complexity of this kind of relationship is much. However, examples of this kind of affinity are that an individual can have with the his/her spouse's grandparents, grand uncles and aunts or they can be with *sister/brother-in-law's spouse's* or their *children.*

If we refer to the *doctrine of affinity* developed from a *maxim* of *Canon Law,* then affinity is defined as by the relationship a person has to the blood relatives of a spouse by virtue of marriage. On the basis of this definition, we can also refer to affinity's following classification:

a) Direct Affinity: It is the relationship that exists between husband and his wife's relations by blood or between the wife and the husband's relations by blood.

b) Secondary Affinity: Secondary affinity refers to the relationship between a spouse and other spouse's relative by marriage.

c) Collateral Affinity: It is the relationship between a spouse and the relatives of the other spouse's relatives.

5.3.4 Different Relationships of Affinity

As already discussed, two persons are said to be related by affinity if they are married to each other or is related by consanguinity to the other person's spouse. Relationship of affinity can be of two degrees depending on their proximity with the ego. Thus different relationships of affinity can be categorized as: *affinity of first degree* and *affinity of second degree* and the various affines a person can have is being classified in the following table:

Table 2: Depicting the Various Degrees of Affinity.

Person:	1ˢᵗ Degree	2ⁿᵈ Degree
	Spouse, Mother-in-law, Father- in-law, Son-In-law, Daughter-in-law, Stepson, Stepdaughter, Stepmother or Stepfather	Brother-in-law, Sister-in-Law, Spouse's grandparents, Spouse's grandchild, Grandchild's spouse or Spouse of Grandparents.

5.3.5 Theories explaining Affinity and Marriage

Radcliffe-Brown proposed what he calls *'Extension Theory'*, talks about that the kinship system defines certain behaviour among certain kins as permitted ones. This categorization is helpful in understanding the behaviour of a kin within his immediate family and with that of a distant one. The most important theory is that which is known as the *'Principle of Social Extension of Siblings'*. Talking about the behaviour one has towards one's child is extended towards the children of their siblings. In case of patrilineal societies, the father is the ultimate authority and so must be treated with respect. Similarly, *Radcliffe-*

Brown points out that in some societies the father's sister is also treated as an ultimate authority and she has got immense control over her brother's children. Kinship is often referred to the basic and irreducible unit of society. The basis of the affinal relationship is marriage and in its first degree the relationship between husband and wife is important. The way and reciprocity involved in sharing of the domestic work and leisure activities is known as *joint conjugal role.*

Another kind of conjugal role is known as *segregated conjugal role.* Prior to industrialization when family was both the production and consumption unit among the primary affines i.e. between husband and wife no such segregation in terms of the responsibilities was present. However, with industrialization when men went out for work in factories the conjugal roles became more defined. Women were designated housework and child rearing and she spent time with the female kins. The male performed the role of the bread winner and became attached to the male kins and male workmates. Again, with an advanced stage we find that such segregation of conjugal roles have subsequently blurred. Domestic responsibilities are shared between husband and wife and that contributes to the closeness of the primary affines. The female withdrew herself from her kins and that is instrumental in drawing the male into the family circle. *Elizabeth Bott* presented her study in terms of 'connectedness' and 'conjugal roles'. She identified two types of networks which she termed 'close-knit' and 'loose-knit'. The individual who prior to marriage had strong relationship with his kins and were in regular contact with each other is what constituted 'close-knit' network. However a 'loose-knit' network is the one in which the individual prior to marriage did not have strong connection with his kins. People who were part of 'close-knit' network post marriage were involved in segregated conjugal roles. On the contrary those who were part of 'loose-knit' networks constituted to form joint conjugal roles with their wives. The reason behind that is people who constituted close-knit networks had a strong support system to fall back upon for companionship and emotional support. On the contrary the couples hailing from 'loose-knit' kin groups generally looked at each other for companionship and support and thereby they shared their conjugal roles and leisure activities as and when needed. This is how she correlated the aspects of 'social network' and 'conjugal roles'. This theory is important in throwing light to the fact that how kin groups can influence affinal relationships.

Rosser and Harris identifying the factor of '*domesticity*' argued that such segregation of roles was dependent upon the fact whether women were compulsorily attached to the domesticity. For woman who works outside such segregated of the conjugal role does not stand feasible. Such segregation exists for women who take up the roles of child bearing and domesticity solely. Thus, in case of 'compulsive domesticity' segregated conjugal

roles become operative. It is a further extension of Bott's theory as it is when woman goes out to work, she gets lesser time to spend with her kins so her kinship ties become loose and thereby her conjugal role becomes increasingly joint.

Any discussion on affinal roles remain incomplete if we do not take into account the Conflict perspective that highlights on the marital powers that structure the relationship between husband and wife. Starting with the classical view as proposed by *John Locke*, he argued that as marriage is a "voluntary compact", so the question of hierarchy should be non-existent in affinal relationships. However, it can generally be assumed that the reflection of the 'political hierarchy' would be present in the 'patriarchal hierarchy'. If men outside were considered as more 'able' and more powerful then it goes quite against the Lockean perspective that power and authority would be unequal in affinal relationships. Thus, decision making and allocation of responsibilities would always be done in terms, men considered as just. 'Sex' being an integral aspect that marriage as an institution legitimizes, so *Immanuel Kant* argued that in a way marriage being contractual in nature also led to the objectification of sex. Giving each of the married spouse right to each other's sexual attributes is not equal at the patriarchal set up of the society, thus also is found to possess aspects of inequality.

Blood and *Wolfe* in the year 1960 concluded that in the marital relations the partner who has got most access to value resources exercise more power in the marital relationship. Thus, men when they were the only ones engaged in paid labour force enjoyed relative supremacy in their affinal relationship. Thus, it can automatically justify the symmetrical roles and power in today's affinal relationships as a consequence of women taking part in paid labour force. The problem that lies with the household work is that it is generally considered unproductive as it is unpaid in nature, so in affinal relationships it has always been the source of marital discord. Those who have more access to paid resources generally exercise control over the otherwise symmetrical affinal relationship by not doing the household work. *Coltrane* studying in the year 2000 argued that men who did more of household chores, their wives were found to be more content and happier in their marital relationships. Their affinal relationships were happier than their counterparts. Thus, the general focus of the conflict theorists lay in the fact that marriage involved many areas of inequalities and discrepancies in terms of power and authority. These discrepancies were not only micro-level reflections of the wider social whole but also served as a source that creates conflict in affinal relationships.

G.W.F.Hegel, from the functional perspective identifies that the basis of affinity is marriage which even though can be a contract but it is a union in which both the individuals subside their prior selves in order to become a single entity and start a line of kinship.

Here even though passion may be present in affinity but that is not the supreme driving force in marriages.

Now let us take a look at the Symbolic Interactionist perspective on Affinity. Interactionist perceive the world in terms of meanings and symbols attached to them. Not only this but also, they highlight the inherent dynamism involved in the process of adding meaning to the social processes. Thus, not only is marriage a social construct and affinal roles and relationships constructed socially but the social roles that were otherwise perceived as inherent are subject to constant changes. Likewise, previously 'good father' was considered as the one who performed the assigned instrumental roles and earned for the child so as to he/she can have a secure future. But today that notion has somewhat changed and a person is considered as a 'good father', if he in addition to this role spends time with his child and assumes some of his responsibilities.

5.3.6 What is Marriage

Marriage is an essential interlocking institution that serves to connect the various building blocks of society. It provides the child a socially recognized mother and a socially recognized father. Marriage thus can be defined as a 'union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized as legitimate offspring of both the parents'. It is the institution that creates new social relationships entailing each of the spouse rights and obligations, between each and the kin of the other and also brings along rights and status of the children when they are born. It is a socially sanctioned standing in which a man and a woman are permitted to have children through sexual sanction. Apart from this the other most important criteria for requirement of marriage are: *regular or normal cohabitation in the same household* and *some degree of economic cooperation.* Ideas on marriage remain incomplete if we do not refer to *Westermarck's* ideas on marriage. In the book *'A Short History of Human Marriage',* he identifies marriage as 'one of the relationships that involve rights, duties and obligations for both the parties entering into it and also towards children born out of it.' The entire institution of marriage is regulated. It concerns rules regarding how one can enter into it, what is to be done to the children born out of it, what kind of behaviour is expected out of marriage and also how to end or dissolve it.

5.3.7 Importance of Marriage

In order to understand the importance of marriage we need to first look into the definition of marriage provided by *D.N.Majumdar* and *T.N.Madan* in their book *An Introduction to Social Anthropology.* They define 'Marriage as an institution to ensure satisfaction of biological need (that of sex) and that of psychological satisfaction (that of

having children) on the individual level and on the collective level it ensures a two-fold survival, one is that of the group and the other is that of its culture'. From this definition we can identify the importance of marriage as the following:

a)   Permittance of having sex

b)   Procreation of children and

c)   For the survival of society at large.

Similar importance has been reiterated in the study of Hindu Marriage by *P.N. Prabhu.* Marriage among Hindus is important as it serves the following functions, which are as follows:

a) *Dharma*,

b) *Praja* or Procreation of Children and

c) *Rati*, i.e. sex

The entire religion of Hinduism is based on the principle that there is no salvation or *moksa* without marriage so entering into marriage stands indispensable. Man and woman must bear children and it is sex that makes marriage stands essential.

5.3.8 Characteristics of Marriage

From the various definitions of marriage, we can enumerate and evaluate a number of characteristics that are crucial for any understanding of marriage. These are as follows:

a)   The biological need of *sex* is fulfilled through marriage. Sigmund Freud identifies sex as one of the innate needs of the individual along with hunger. It is the institution of marriage that fulfills the function of sexual gratification on an individual level.

b)   Marriage serves the function of *procreation of children*. Legitimacy to a child is only imparted only when a child is born through marriage.

c)   Not only procreation but also *upbringing* and *socialization of the child* is vested upon the parents and kins brought together through affinal ties.

d)   All marriages are *regulated*, so marriage is contracted or even solemnized on the basis of the rules of the society. So marriage ensures that the societal rules are honoured and legitimized.

e)   Marriage is *governed by the rules of society*. Similar rules prevail when one thinks of dissolving a marriage. Entering marriage or even dissolving it requires pertaining to the social rules.

f) Marriage is mostly based on some *ideology*. Among various tribes it can be the ideology of Environment or history. In contemporary societies the ideology of 'love' for selecting partners in marriage is prevalent.

5.3.9 Family, Affinity and Marriage

Marriage lays the legal foundation of the family, there has to be at least one generation in which marriage has to take place in order to establish a

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is a Family of Affinity?**
>
> People with or without blood ties or legal ties, when they feel that they belong together and self-define themselves as a family it is known as a **Family of Affinity.**

family. It is only on the basis of culturally controlled and sanctioned marital relations that a family becomes existent. It is the family of procreation wherein the *biological, psychological* and *social drives* of the individuals are met. Thus marriage and family are to be perceived as co-related and each one serves to be a necessary condition for the establishment and existence of the other. On the *individual level* it is quite understandable that marriage meets the *biological drive* (sexual satisfaction) and a *psychological satisfaction* (that is met through children) but on the *collective level* marriage serves several other functions. Marriage creates barrier by allowing sexual activities among married partners and thereby having sex outside marriage is considered illegitimate. The child thus born through marriage needs to be reared and socialized by the married partners. The *introduction of the child into the realms of culture* is done through family but most importantly through the married partners. It is the family that is vested with the work of turning a child into a *social being.* Following *Goode,* for a child born through unmarried parents lands up in an ambiguous position and faces the problems of *inadequate socialization* as the minimum legal obligations of the child is not vested upon the father or his family. The connection between marriage, family and parenthood is strong that *Bronislaw Malinowski* points out to the fact that *"Marriage cannot be defined as the licensing of sexual intercourse but rather as the licensing of parenthood." Assignment of social status* and *offering social stability* to the child are all important functions marriage serves through family. Any kind of security offered through gifts or property lacks in case of an illegitimate child, thus marriage is the most important aspect that structures or conjoins kin-groups.

Marriage as a tie between Two Kin Groups: Marriage in the lineage system is seen as a union between two kin groups over the relationship of two individuals. The marriage ceremony and the gift exchanging patterns have to be assessed in order to understand the importance of it in a particular society. In general, the couple receives gifts from their friends and family and this highlights the *individual aspect of marriage* i.e. *the marital*

relationship between husband and wife. Whereas in smaller societies as gifts are exchanged between kin groups and thus it highlights marriage as the *contract between two sets of relatives,* i.e. *as a contract between two kin groups.* Marriage also as in some societies has a system of dowry or gift giving so it is linked with a system of inheritance for the daughter and daughter's children. Also the practice of paying bride-price at the time of marriage to the family of the bride is to compensate for the loss of a working member and to pay for the price for the future children that will be produced by the bride. As kin groups, in a number of ways and forms get linked with the system of marriage so understanding marriage becomes crucial for having an understanding of the kinship system in whole. Thus marriage under any circumstances cannot be seen as an individual event, it is an instance of *social alliance.*

5.3.10 Different Forms of Marriage

Marriage can be classified into the following types largely based on certain prescriptions and proscriptions. However whatever proscriptions can be identified the most universal one is the rule of incest taboo that prohibits sexual relationship between kins. Even though sexual relationship and marriage are not to be seen as synonymous but as discussed earlier if legitimacy has to be attained then marriage provides that legitimacy not only to the child but also to the sexual intercourse between people.

a) On the Basis of the Number of Mates: On the basis of the number of mates marriage can be primarily classified into two broad types:

    i) Monogamy: The practice of having one partner in marriage is called *Monogamy.* It is the instance when one man marries one woman and vice versa. It is considered a rational and ideal type of marriage.

        a) The practice of marrying one person at a time and then after separation or in case of death of one of the spouses with that person again if the person re-marries another person, it becomes the case of *Serial Monogamy.*

        b) Then we can talk about *Non-Serial Monogamy.* In case of this kind of marriage possibilities of re-marriage does not exist. Whatever be the circumstances the question of re-marriage does not exist.

    ii) Polygamy: The practice of having more than one partner in marriage is known as *Polygamy.* Polygamy can be sub-divided into two categories:

        a) Polygyny: When one person man marries than one woman at the same time it is known as *Polygyny.* Polygyny takes the form of *Sororal*

Polygyny if a man at the same time marries several sisters at the same time. Example can be the Achuar of Ecuador who are seen to practice sororal polygyny.

b) Polyandry: On the contrary when one woman marries more than one man at the same time the practice is known as *Polyandry.* Polyandry can assume the following forms. However this form of marriage is rare and is found in societies where economic condition is poor. For Example, in Western Tibet, the wealthy nobles were found to be polygynous, whereas, men of the lower strata were found to be part of the system of polyandry. The practice of a woman marrying several brothers at the same time it is known as *Fraternal or Adelphic Polyandry.* Such is the practice that is found among the Todas. It takes the form of *Non-Fraternal Polyandry* when a woman marries several men at the same time who are not necessarily brothers.

We may also talk of *Levirate* and *Sororate* as two kinds of polygamous marriages. Both are based on the emphasis on inter-familial obligations and duties. The case when a brother marries the widow of his deceased brother and takes up their children as the progeny of the deceased man, the practice is known as *Levirate.* Similarly when a sister of the deceased woman marries her husband then the practice is known as *Sororate.* The difference between levirate and sororate is the fact that the children of the sister in case of sororate are considered as her own and not as the progeny of her husband. *Group Marriage* is also another form of polygamous marriage when two or more grooms are simultaneously married to two or more brides. It is found among the *Kaingang* of Brazil and also among *Marquesans.* Group marriage is somewhat a mixture of polygamous and polyandrous marriages.

b) On the Basis of Mate-Choice: Primarily, marriage under these circumstances can assume two forms. One is what is known as *Arranged Marriage* when the partner selection is done by the kins of the bride and the groom before marriage. It is known as *Romantic* or *Love Marriage* when the mate selection is done by the partners themselves. Marriage when takes place as per prescriptions within one's own group it is known as *Endogamy.* It may assume various forms based on certain factors and assume

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Do you know?

What is Pravara Exogamy?

Pravara means siblings. People originating from the same saint are said to belong to the same *pravara.* Thus one has to marry outside of one's pravara. One is not permitted to marry within one's pravara.

forms like: tribal endogamy, caste endogamy, class endogamy, race endogamy etc. *Exogamy* is defined as the marriage that takes place outside one's own group. Such restrictions are prevalent among Hindus. They are expected to marry outside their *'gotra'* i.e. kins who are descendent from a common ancestor. Thus Hindus practice gotra exogamy on one hand while practice caste endogamy on the other. Another example can be of the Naga tribes of Nagaland who being divided into a number of Khels are expected to marry outside of their own Khel.

c) On the Basis of the Status of the Married Partners: While one thinks of marriage apart from all the considerations that a person may take, status is also one of the most vital factors. While selecting a mate when status is considered it may assume the following forms:

   i) Hypergamy or *Anuloma*: The practice of marrying a groom who may be wealthier, more educated or even taller or older than the bride. This kind of marriage is highly appreciated by the kins of the bride as it involves a rise in the social status of the woman. For the man it however does not involve any loss of status. Such practice is prevalent in Northern India.

   ii) Hypogamy or *Pratiloma*: The practice of marrying a bride who may be wealthier, more educated or even older or taller than the groom. In this case the woman suffers from a loss of social status. Example may be highly established women in top professions in the United States.

   iii) Isogamy: The bride and the groom when are of equal status i.e. in terms of wealth, education, age or height it is known as Isogamy. This is also known as *Homogamy* as it involves some kind of parity between the status of both the bride and the groom.

d) Closed and Open Systems of Marriage: When a society has got prescribed groups which must be considered while selection of mate then such type of society can be said to be characterized by *Closed System of Marriage.* Whereas when no such prescriptions exist then such societies can be said to be featured by *Open System of Marriage.*

Other forms of Marriage: Beyond all these kinds of marriage, marriage may assume the following forms which are noted below:

   i) Companionship marriage: It is a form of marriage that is based on the understanding that before one is going to have children, if they want both of them can dissolve their marriage.

ii) Experimental Marriage: It is a state whereby man and woman are allowed to lead matrimonial life before tying up the matrimonial alliance.

iii) Marriage made to Concubinage: It is a state of living together before marriage in order to find out the compatibility.

5.4. Conclusion

Two people are related by affinity if they are married to each other, or if one person is related by consanguinity to the other person's spouse. After a detailed discussion about affinity in this unit not only have we been able to understand its different types and variations but also how marriage is crucial to the entire system of kinship has been analyzed with an understanding about its changing forms, patterns and emergent structures.

5.5. Summary

However all these other forms of marriages emphasize upon the fact that individual interest is the prime factor in locating the cause and condition of marriage which is as such not significant in our discussions of affinity. It is only after the 'proper' marriage takes place that it becomes relevant to the system of affinity.

5.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a) Discuss about the different prescribed behavioural patterns of affinity.

b) Write a note on the different forms of affinity.

c) Highlight on the importance of marriage.

d) Point out the differences between hypogamy and hypergamy.

e) What is meant by polygamy? What are the different forms that polygamy can assume?

f) What is meant by open and closed system of marriage?

g) Discuss about the different forms of monogamous marriages?

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a) Discuss about the forms of marriage.

b) Write a critical note on the different theories of marriage and affinity.

c) Elucidate on the different characteristics of marriage? How far they are relevant in today's world?

d) Elaborate on why affinal relationships are often called delicate relationships.

e) Define marriage. What functions does the marriage serve for the Hindus?

f) What is the importance of conjugal roles in marriage? Elaborate on '*Principle of Social Extension of Siblings*'.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a) What do you mean by affinity? Write a detailed note on the different forms that affinity can assume.

b) "*Marriage cannot be defined as the licensing of sexual intercourse but rather as the licensing of parenthood.*" —Who said this in the context of marriage? Do you agree? Give arguments in favour of your answer.

c) Elucidate on the interconnectedness of the institutions of affinity, family and marriage.

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Unit 6 : Family

Structure of Unit

6.1. Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of family in its entirety.

- Understanding family as the building block of the society.

- Understanding the different theoretical perspective of family.

- Understanding the dark sides of the family.

- Developing a perspective on the various alternatives to the institution of the family.

6.2. Introduction

Family is the most important, primary building block of society having both biological and social dimensions. If we try to analyze its biological aspect then the understanding of it is very basic. We all are indeed aware that the biological aspect is limited to two parents involved in producing an offspring and it generally involves the logic of doubling in the number of ancestors with each passing generation. The universal nature of the family highlights the function that family serves as a social unit engaging in not only rearing and upbringing of the children but most importantly serving as a unit of socialization. Family is the primary and thereby most important institution into which a child is born into and in most cases throughout the life of an individual it remains the most constant of the institution, however it may change in type, form or structure.

6.3.1. What is meant by family?

To begin with, family is a group of people who are related either by blood, marriage or adoption. A family serves to satisfy most importantly the primary needs of the individuals which include: i) the satisfaction of sexual urge between men and women, ii) the fulfillment of reproductive urge and finally in an attempt to fulfill these two biological and social functions it is necessarily forced to assume economic responsibilities and thereby turns out to be an economic unit. *Radcliffe Brown* puts forth in an effort to understand what determines family argues it as the necessary conditions of existence of the social organism. The family is referred to as a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. Family, following *George Peter Murdock* is an unit that has adults consisting of both the sexes, at least two of whom are into a socially approved sexual relationship and has got one or more children, own or adopted of the sexually cohabiting adults. *Levi-Strauss* based on his extensive fieldwork identifies the prime condition of a family as marriage. Looking into the definition provided by *MacIver*, we can identify family as a group which is defined by sexual relationship sufficiently precise and relatively long lasting to provide for the procreation and upbringing of the children.

6.3.2 Sociological significance of a family: family as a social group

The family is the most significant, primary unit which provides a community basis for all the individuals who are part of it. It cannot be delineated as something very static but on the contrary it is dynamic in nature undergoing processual modifications that has been undergoing parallel changes with the change in human history. It can otherwise be stated

that is on one hand, family as an unit that exhibits changes both in structure and form and on the other hand it becomes an agent of social change in itself, being the containing unit of the individuals. Family is not only *universally* present but is also the *nucleus of other social organization.*

To talk about the meaning and general characteristics of family we need to first have a clear-cut idea of family in terms of its relationship with the wider kin group. The family in this sense can be viewed as *'as a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children'*. In this sense the most fundamental factor is: *living together of mates that provide a distinctive unity to the family.* The term 'unity' is most crucial as it is universally loaded with the following characteristics:

a)   A mating relationship,

b)   A form of marriage or other institutional arrangement,

c)   A system of nomenclature, including a mode of reckoning descent,

d)   A shared economic provision by the members of the group,

e)   A common habitation, or household,

Even though these are the universally figured characteristics of family but *cultural variations* of major sorts give a very distinctive feature to each of the family.

6.3.3 How is a family distinct from a domestic group or household?

Even though family is often equated with 'domestic group' owing to its Latin origin however for the purpose of sociological distinction both can be sharply differentiated. A domestic group is a term that can alternatively be used with household is referred to as any unit consisting of a group of people who habitually share a common dwelling and a common hearth. The minimal activities of domestic group may be widely extended and so they vary both in size and also in stability. So two things are possible: one being that those who share the same household may not be connected by family ties whereas the other being those who are connected by the same family ties may not always share the same household. For

> **Do you know?**
>
> **Distinction between a 'Pater' and 'Genitor'**
>
> Considering the relationship between father and child we cannot ignore the distinction between *biological* and *social* paternity.
>
> **'Genitor':** is the biological father of a child, whereas **'Pater'** is the *social* (or/ and legally recognized) father of a child.

example, if we take the case of our contemporary times, specially in the urban or metropolitan centers we find that people who even though do not belong to the same family often share the common home and hearth or they avail similar facilities like messes or hostels to make living affordable. Similarly we find that members of the same family live apart often in separate arrangements or geographical locations thereby not sharing common household or food arrangements.

6.3.4. Elements of a family

At the very onset of this discussion two elements must be clearly taken into our consideration one being the universal nature of family certain functions that family serving certain basic functions of mankind. The second is the fact that each family has got its specific pattern depending upon interplay of social and physical environment and specific historicity. Thus we need to discuss about the various elements of the family which are as follows and can also be seen alternatively as features of family organization:

a) Procreation: Marriage provides social legitimacy to couples to have sexual rights between them. It comes with the obvious entailment of having children to carry on the line of inheritance. Procreation is segregated as the most important element of marriage.

b) Sex Relations: Promiscuity is not allowed in most of the society. So there exists a system of acquiring mates which culminates into socially approved different types of marriages. There is a universally found system of prohibition of incest relationships.

c) Economic bond: Throughout the history of evolution of family the most important aspect has been the economic one. Be it division of labour within the family, or the modern day modifications to the traditional division of instrumental and emotional roles being played by men and women respectively, Economy has been on the forefront when we discuss about family. Providing education to the young ones, making them learn skills of employment are all indicative of the crucial role of economy. Even providing support to the economically weak, unable or young or old persons highlight the significance of economy within family.

d) Long-time Group: Even though civilizations have come up and gone by, the most long-term and continuous social group has always been family. It has existed since time immemorial and is the most continuous unit. In the patriarchal society it is through the son that the continuity of the family occurs and is through the daughters in case of the matriarchal family.

e) Upbringing: Owing to the long-term nature of the new borns' dependence on their mothers family has to perform the pivotal role in upbringing of the children. The entire concept of upbringing revolves around three basic pillars that are of education, employment and transmission of family's tradition to the younger ones. It is through the process of socialization involved in the instance of upbringing that the younger members are made ready for the social world.

f) Size of family: One of the most prominent features of the family has always been the size of the family. It denotes strength, valor, power and prestige of the family. But in the contemporary world due to various forces like education, industrialization, women empowerment and participation in workforce has resulted in a trend towards nuclear family whereby the family size has remarkably reduced. However instances of all the family members uniting for any particular occasion or ceremony or crisis are found even today.

g) Emotional base: Emotion is the most operative factor that acts to tie individuals within a family. Two types of kins in general may reside in a family, one being kins, tied by blood or whom we may call blood kins and the other is marital kins, that include those tied by marriage. The kind of kinship individuals share with one another determine the kind of emotion that binds that relationship within the family.

h) Sense of Responsibility: A sense of responsibility is ever present when we talk about our families. Not only a family's major responsibility lies towards upbringing and caring of the infant but a similar responsibility is existent for the old, aged or infirm members of the family. Each individual is tied to the other within the ambit of family on the basis of a sense of responsibility. Mostly a ritual basis or order is operative that socializes individual members towards his/her sense of responsibility within the family.

i) Social Control: Family being one of the most important socializing units among other functions acts to socially control individuals as members of the family. Be it the family of birth or the family where women in patriarchal societies gets in after marriage. Rules of the family are always operative to control or rather socialize individuals of each particular family.

6.3.5. Functions of a family

What purpose does a family serve in society is obviously the most relevant question that must appear to us. Why do we need family at all? To know about the answer we need to discuss about the functions of family. Even though the functions family serve are constants but they have been viewed from different perspectives. We will be majorly taking up the

perspectives that makes society function as a social agent. Thus we will see the functions of the family from the following standpoints of importance:

a) Importance to the Individual: The family is the most important organization that acts to socialize an individual into a social being. Not only by providing basic necessities, from the time of birth until a time when the individual becomes self-sustaining family plays a pivotal role in making an individual self-reliant. The individual's sex drives are channelized, shaped and restricted by social norms which are enforced by the family. Man being a cultural being, his/her personality is largely shaped by his family of birth. In the environment provided by the family a person's both physical and emotional needs are met which are crucial in giving shape to his personality. Social status being ascribed by birth is responsible for providing individuals with a sense of security, family turns up to be the basis through which such stability and security is achieved.

> **Do you know?**
>
> The functions of family also can be categorized specifically as Social functions of the family and that sets to include the following social functions of:
>
> a) Biological reproduction
>
> b) Sexuality
>
> c) Socialization
>
> d) Welfare
>
> e) Production, Distribution and Consumption

b) Importance to the Society: From the point of view of the society, the dual roles of sexual 'control and expression' gratifies the function of the society in providing it with necessary balance. The reproductive functions along with rearing and upbringing of children are obviously important in continuity and maintenance of the social whole. The two most fundamental and irreducible pillars as identified by Talcott Parsons, on which rest the family functions are that of *'primary socialization of the children'* and *'stabilization of the adult personalities of the population of our society'*. The behaviour one learns within the family is the prototype of the behaviour of the larger social whole. Thus transmission of culture is done through families which serve the crucial role in establishing an individual's connection with not only the social whole but also with the cultural tradition.

c) Importance to the Larger Social Group: Family is no way disjointed from the larger social whole rather it is placed in a continuum that connects to the larger social body. The family transmitting values or 'expected' social behaviour is an example of how family performs the function of a social agent. The impact of the larger society on the family is massive and immediate. Family serves as a keystone to the

stratification system by socialization individuals into the stratification system. Such stratification is manifested by witnessing of people maintain their relatively higher positions by engaging in activities conducive to so.

Even though the functions of the family might appear to overlap with certain elements of the family but it must be clearly taken into account that as the constituent element of both of these aspects are the same so they cannot be categorized into water-tight compartments.

6.3.6. The cycle of an individual family

Each and every family passes through various stages that even though are experienced by all the families but as these stages are experienced differently so all the families turn out to be exclusive in their own ways. However these stages render signs which are internal to each of them. It might not be visible to someone who is not part of that family as they do not exhibit signs externally. The stages include:

a)   The formative pre-nuptial stage: it is the stage that makes two individuals ready for marriage. Across cultures this stage is of great importance as the course of the family is largely determined by understandings developed in this stage.

b)   The nuptial stage: It is aimed at establishing understanding within partners and also with the society. It is the stage which is marked by developing new interests, living with the partners, setting up of habituations and it lasts till the arrival of the offspring.

c)   The child-rearing stage: This stage fulfils the 'original' function of the family by linking the partners to their vital link i.e. children. It introduces new interests often fortifying or replacing emotions and sentiments and is tied by responsibilities.

d)   The maturity stage: It is the final stage and arrives when children no longer require parental care. It marks the fulfillment of the biological functions of the parents. Now the parents become restricted to their limited family and can take part in new interests and new activities that can be suited to their age.

6.3.7. Different theoretical perspectives of family

Different theoretical perspectives provide us with different insights about what function or role a family performs that may be motivated towards an individual, group or society as a whole. Firstly we will talk about various *Functionalist* Interpretations of the family. It highlights what functions family does as a social unit. Following the study of *George Peter Murdock* (1949) in his extensive study of 250 societies he found out four basic, universal functions of all the societies. These include: *sexual, reproductive, economic* and *educational.* Murdock refers to family as a harmonious unit who even though does not

perform all these functions alone but is the most efficient unit that can in a maximum way be functional. Coming to the theory propounded by *Talcott Parsons* (1951) family retains across all cultures and societies two most *'basic'* and *'irreducible'* functions. These include:

a) *Primary socialization of children*: The socialization that occurs during the early years of childhood and has got inherent in it two basic processes, which are:

 i) Internalization of society's culture (It is the process through which culture is absorbed and thereby social norms and roles appear as 'normal' or 'natural')

 ii) Structuring of the personality (In terms of moulding of a child's personality on the basis of society's accepted and shared values)

Within an admixture of warmth, security and mutual support as provided by the family a child's primary socialization takes place.

b) *Stabilization of adult personalities:* After the personality of an individual has developed the most essential virtue lies in stabilization of that personality. The stress and strains that the modern world provides require such support especially in case of nuclear families that are largely isolated from the kins. This support is provided by married couples to each other. The family becomes a perennial ground where such stabilization of personalities occurs.

Ezra F. Vogel and *Norman W. Bell* (1960) argue that not only positively functional but family is also dysfunctional and it is evident in the ways in which the unresolved tensions and conflicts are carried over and projected to the children. The child is then used as a scapegoat evident in instances when the mother abuses the child for possessing characteristics that she disliked in her husband. This process of scapegoating serves to stabilize personality of the adult that helps them to perform their wider social roles.

Edmund Leach (1967) presents that the nuclear family in the modern world is burdened with emotional stress as it is isolated from other kins whose support was considered essential in times of tension. Privacy is the source of fear and violence and is also the source of all discontents. Isolation within the family creates hatred that is reiterated in the wider community. Similar views are shared by *R.D. Laing* (1968) who identifies the process of *'reciprocal interiorization'*, through which members become part of one another both internally and externally.

Reviewing the Marxist perspectives we have to look into the evolutionary perspective provided by *Friedrich Engels*. In his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) he identified the evolution of families from simple to complex ones and as the family evolved, stress was given to its monogamous nature and greater sexual

restrictions were assigned to marriages. The major reason it being the progression from communally owned property to private ownership of property. *Eli Zaretsky* (1976) argued that the modern family creates an illusion of 'private life' and is largely separated from the economy. When work was considered 'alienating' family provided opportunities for satisfaction that were unavailable in the outside world. Family is also viewed as a tool that promotes capitalism by injection of domestic labour of housewives who reproduce future generations of workers. It is also crucial to analyze the role of family by it turning into a major unit of consumption and in turn letting the bourgeoisie maintain and increase the surplus value. Coming to the *Feminist* perspectives on family we have to first look into the works of *Christine Delphy* and *Diana Leonard* (1992). Identifying family as an *economic unit,* they have outlined the characteristics of family as an economic system. The characteristics include:

i) Every family household has two major roles: one being that of the head and the other the dependents or helpers. Men are always seen to perform the prior roles whereas female the latter ones.

ii) The man is the final decision maker, other members can influence him but cannot take the decision on his behalf.

iii) A share of the family property on the death of the member is what individual members get and also gets something as maintenance by the head.

iv) Age and sex are vital determinants that decide upon the amount and type of work one needs to do.

v) The payment within family is more that of in kind than in cash.

vi) Money and resources inherited or what one gets is more dependent upon one's position than amount of work done.

vii) Informal methods of negotiations are operative often involving bargains over formal contracts.

viii) The head of the family has mere monopoly over the external relations and family's property.

ix) In case of a wife being engaged in paid labour outside home then child care or other works are generally outsourced to helps that she maintains from her wages.

Germaine Greer (2000) argues that the most important roles a woman has to play is that of *a wife, a mother* and *a daughter.* All these roles are aimed at establishment of women as unequal and mostly unrewarding.

Michael Young and *Peter Willmott* (1957) identified four stages of family life which include: A type of family as a unit of production existing till industrialization, then emerged a family which was no longer a unit of production and its members were essentially wage earners included relatives beyond the nuclear family for social security. The third is the stage characterized by separation of the immediate or nuclear family from the extended one, leisure in this stage is home-based and relationship between couples is 'companionate'. This kind of family is referred to as *Symmetrical family*. They have envisioned a stage 4 family which will be more work-centered, recreation based and opportunity to get diffused throughout the stratification system. After a brief discussion on the various perspectives of the family we now move into the discussions on the various types of families.

6.3.8. Types of families

Even though families are universally present but not only across cultures but also within them a wide variety of family can be witnessed. So it is better to understand different types of families based on the criterion that calls for the variation and which ultimately culminates to the structure that the family assumes. So we discuss about the variations in family patterns on the basis of certain conditions and criterion:

a) Variations based on family circle: Based on who resides in a family or how far a family does extend its circle the following typifications of family emerge:

    i) *Conjugal and nuclear family*: the family that grows up and around the nucleus of the husband, wife and children is known as conjugal or nuclear family. When we stress on the social aspect of the family whereby the family serves as a part of the 'family system' we call it conjugal family whereas if we emphasize on the structural aspect then we refer to that kind of family, as 'nuclear family',

    ii) *Consanguineous or joint family*: in a family where blood relations emerge as central to the semi-peripheral

> **Do you know?**
>
> **How are Extended families different from Joint families?**
>
> A *joint family* exists when 'two or more lineally related kinsfolk reside with their spouses and offsprings in the same household under a single family head or authority'. A joint family is more than a mere aggregate of nuclear families. They perform more extensive functions than nuclear families. Whereas in case of *extended families* the members do not share the same household they live nearby and engage in common activities.

existence of spouses it is called consanguineous family. It is alternatively called joint family.

iii) Compound family: When a family is formed by the merging of nuclear families or part of them who may not also be essentially co-residential, it is known as compound family. A polygynous household with married couples residing with their respective children constitute a compound family, so is also the case with a widow remarried or divorced person living with children from previous marriage.

b) Variations based on post-marital residence: Where does couples live after marriage also give rise to a variety of marriages that are found across the globe. They can assume the following forms: i) *Neo-local residence:* When both the bride and groom leaves their homes and set up a new home post marriage and start living there it is known as neo-local residence. ii) *Patrilocal residence*: where post marriage the bride comes to reside in the groom's home, example of such is found majorly in India, iii) *Matrilocal residence*: where post marriage the groom comes to reside in the bride's maternal home, the khasis in Meghalaya practice such patterns of residence. iv) *Virilocal residence* is the kind of residence that is characterized by a wife joining the domestic group in which her husband resided prior marriage and the claims of property is restricted to her husband over wife, v) *Uxorilocal residence* is featured by the kind of residence that is characterized by a husband joining the domestic group in which his wife resided prior marriage and the claims of property is restricted to his wife over him. Certain *compounded families* have emerged which are known as families featured by vi) *Viripatrilocal residence:* refers to the domicile in a domestic group whose core

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Do you know?

Who are our First, Second and Third Degree Relatives?

First Degree Relatives include close blood relatives which include a person's parents, full siblings or children.

Second Degree Relatives are the ones who are defined as blood relative and include the individual's grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces or half siblings.

Third Degree Relatives also incorporates blood relatives and include an individual's first cousins, great-grandparents or great grand children.

These relatives of different degrees are the ones who are all related by blood but their variations come only in their degrees of intimacy with an individual.

includes the groom's father whereas, vii) *Uxorimatrilocal residence:* refers to the domicile in a domestic group whose core includes the bride's mother viii) *Avunculocal residence*: is used to describe residence in group where the groom's mother's brother remains at the core.

c) Variations based on the principle of descent: Family can be of the following types if we consider the mode of inheritance of family name and property, of reckoning of descent and succession to rank and office: i) Patrilineal in which property inheritance and reckoning of descent takes place following the male line, ii) *Matrilineal* in which property inheritance and reckoning of descent takes place following the female line, iii) *Bi-lateral* in which property inheritance and reckoning of descent takes place following lines of both male and female, iv) *Patronymic* in which the off-spring inherit their father's name, v) *Matronymic* in which the off-spring inherit their mother's name.

d) Variations based on authority: Family assumes the types of i) *Patriarchal* or *patripotestal* in which authority lies in the hands of the father, ii) *Matriarchal* or *matripotestal* in which authority lies in the hands of the mother iii) *Avuncu potestal* in which authority lies in the hands of the groom's mother's brother and/or iv) *Egalitarian* in which authority lies in the hands of both the mother and the father. The last case is mostly witnessed in case of the modern, contemporary, urban families.

e) Variations based on orientation and procreation: A family that one is born into is referred to as *family of orientation* whereas a family that one sets up post marriage is known as *family of procreation.*

6.3.9. Family problems today

The causes of the problems that the family faces in the contemporary world are quite complex and interplay of various factors are operative in creating problems within the family.

a) The relative instability of the modern family: Marriage and family no longer acts as an eternal institution which under any circumstances cannot be dissolved. Under certain situations necessities or functions family serves is seen to dilute, dissolve or altogether disappear under certain circumstances. It occurs under following conditions:

   i) Less social protection of family crisis: Often as physicaly dislocated and distance between the members along with decrease in the family size in times of crisis family in most cases cannot provide the support that traditionally it used to provide.

ii) Replacement of domination by cooperation: As both men and women have become economically independent and sharing of roles and responsibilities have assumed both in familial and economic nature so the relationship between man and woman has turned out to be that of cooperation and adjustment over that of subjugation and domination.

b) Other causes: The other major causes of the family problems that are surfaced today is because of the lack of fidelity among couples, problems of adjustment, romantic love being a condition of marriage which defies caste and class norms etc.

6.3.10. Dark sides of the family

We have till now discussed about the various aspects of family that has crowned it as the most fundamental and pivotal institutions of social whole. However there are various negative aspects that occur within the family that are known as the dark sides of the family.

a) Violence within the family: A wide range of violence is witnessed within the family. Be it against women, children or other members highlight instances of violence is present still today within the family.

b) Abuses within the family: From children to adult, from physical to mental and psychological to sexual abuses of various forms and of varying degrees are present within the family. Identifying the perpetrator and reporting against that person are the highest constraints that make the victim bear with such abuses that often have lifetime impacts on the lives of the victims.

6.3.11. Alternatives of the family

Family not only has undergone variations owing to a number of emergent social phenomena but also structurally newer forms of family are being found in today's world. These include:

a) Gay and Lesbian families: New laws legitimizing same-sex marriages and adoption legal of children by same-sex couples have made way for gay and lesbian families as an alternative to the traditional family.

b) Single parenthood: Increase in the rates of divorce owing to divorce, separation or death of any of the spouse leads to single parenthood. Stigma that was previously attached with divorce or separation coupled with empowerment of women have subsequently declined that have given rise to single parent families. The familial function of upbringing and rearing of children requiring essentially both the spouses have declined giving rise to single parent families. New reproductive technologies also assist in this role of single parenthood.

c) Cohabitation: Marriage being the essential condition of living together of a male and female individual has declined. Individuals are keener on ensuring compatibility between them also coupled with the tendency of not taking marital responsibilities have led to live-in relationships. Living together before getting married or living together and not getting married are witnessed in contemporary urban settings which question marriage as an essential instrument of expressing sexual desires between couples.

> **Do you know?**
>
> The **Kibbutz of Israel** lives in settlements called **communes** which can also be seen as an alternative to family. They live in settlements and collectively own property and capital. They are lined on the basis of ideology and economic principles.
>
> *Melford Spiro (1970)*

The factors that are responsible for such variations can be counted as: a) increase in the rates of divorce, b) rise in the number of lone parent household, c) ascending amount of cohabitation outside marriages, d) decline in marriage rates, e) increase in the number of step-parent families.

6.3.12. Family Continuity and Change

Not only new forms of family have emerged, but also the essential functions of family have undergone quite ramifications. In course of continuity and change some essential functions have been retained by the family while other functions have either been transferred to other social institutions or have been specialized by the family. Satiation of the sexual need, procreation and upbringing of children, providing a home, physical welfare of its members remain the essential functions of the modern family whereas other functions like functioning of the family as a reproductive unit, providing with healthcare, educational and physical needs, recreational, religious activities etc. have all been transferred and diffused throughout various other social institutions.

6.4. Conclusion

Viewing family as a social group and understanding its continuities and changes are very important owing to the fact that family stands as a fundamental building block of society. The fact that family is a pivotal and fundamental institution of society that acts as an essential bridge between an individual in particular and the society in general makes an understanding of its various forms and types very important. The essence of the family group is basically the parent-child relationship which even though is present universally

across cultures but variations across societies give shape to it as it goes to involve certain kins to its basic structure.

6.5. Summary

After having discussed this entire module on family we have developed a comprehensive idea about what constitutes family or what are the various parameters of family. Through this module we have also tried to trace the entire historical curve of family along with an understanding of how the various social forces are contouring the age-old institution of the family.

Now coming to the notion of kinship has been discussed. We have also understood that kinship is the basis on which the structure of family grows, so after realizing the vitality of the institution of kinship we can raise the question and thereby attempt to somewhat find answer to the fact that is blood or marriage the only form through which relationships are formed in society? Are birth, blood and marriage the only basis on which the bond of kinship grows? Are these the only bases that interlock individuals in and across institutions of society? To find answer to these we look into the concept of *social kinship.*

Resting on the *'principle of legitimacy'*, *Radcliffe Brown's* concept of *social kinship* highlights how relationships neither based on blood or birth or marriage constitutes important social ties. It highlights on the social connections that develop on the back of genealogical connections. Thus, as discussed earlier the social father or pator, assumes the role which is more important than role of the genitor. It is the social fatherhood that is assumed through marriage holds a more central position in society. *The rights in uxorem* and *the rights in genetricem* are the two rights that a man assumes on marriage over the woman. The former revolves around exclusive sexual rights and rights of the woman as a domestic partner. The latter takes into account the rights over the reproductive capacity of the woman as a mother, which is again quite free from the notions of paternity. Thus, what we discussed earlier about 'proxy fathers' constitute this category of kinship. The crucial binding factor of legitimacy of a child is taken up on the social basis by men.

6.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a)   How is a household different from that of a family?

b)   What are the factors that responsible in bringing about change in the traditional family system?

c)   What is distinguishing factor between joint and extended families?

d)   What is meant by cohabitation?

e)   What is meant by '*reciprocal interiorization*'?

f)   Is *privacy* of the nuclear family a boon or a curse? Justify.

g)   What are the social functions of the family?

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a)   Elucidate on the major elements of the family system.

b)   'Family is universally known to have only positive aspects' – Agree or Disagree. Justify your choice.

c)   Elaborate on the significance of the family as a social unit.

d)   Discuss about the alternatives to the family.

e)   Discuss about the forces that have brought about changes in the family system.

f)   Elaborate on the cycle that structures each and every individual family.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a)   Critically elaborate on the major theoretical perspectives of family.

b)   Define family. Elucidate on it being 'functional' or 'dysfunctional' for the social whole.

c)   Elaborate on the different types of families based on the variations that are operational in giving it respective structures.

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Unit 7 : Residence

Structure of Unit

7.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the essential connection between family and residence.

- To understand the various rules of residence.

- To understand the variations residence may assume depending on a number of factors.

- To understand how the patterns of residence influence social life of the individuals.

- To understand how residence patterns, descent, kinship and reproduction are connected.

- To understand the main predictors of residence.

7.2. Introduction

There are cross-cultural differences with certain modifications taking place over time that decides the post-marital residence of a married couple. Rules of post-marital residence are connected with the type of kinship and marriage as well as other socio-economic factors.

7.3.1 Family and Residence : Understanding the Connection

Residence literally means "the act or fact of dwelling in a place for some time".

In almost every society marriage leads to changes in the residence for at least one of the couples and that is why the term 'post-marital rule of residence' is important for the anthropologists and sociologists. One of the most classical case was found among the Nayars of Kerala in which none of the married couple change their natal residence even after marriage.

It not only makes the system of marriage obvious as a fundamental step towards moving to another household or bringing in the other person in the household, it also makes it obvious that family is primarily assumed to be of two types, which play a determining role in the pattern of residence. These include:

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is the *Nayar System?***
>
> The **Nayar (Nair) Caste** of South-East India does not pertain to the ambit of Rules of Residence as they do not have any marriage in the proper sense of the term. A marriage ceremony does take place but the 'husband' leaves the wife after three days of marriage. The women thereafter can engage in sexual relationships with any other men and the resultant children are all considered as children of the original 'husband'. All the non-sexual duties of the husband and father are performed by the women's brothers.

a) Family of Orientation: It is referred to the family in which a person is born and is reared in that family. The major processes of socialization occur in this family. It provides *emotional* in terms of assertion of self-worth, ambition, love and care in this family. In terms of *social* functions served it orients one towards religion, politics and economic motivations.

b)   Family of Procreation: It is referred to as the family one creates through marriage and by adopting or producing children. This kind of family consists of one's spouse and children and assumes the structure of the most important consumption unit of the market.

Thus, the connection between these two sets of families lie on the fact that when one partner has to leave the family of orientation for creating the family of procreation, there arises a necessary break for that partner in between these two sets of family. The continuity however is present for those partners who post-marriage continues to live with their family of orientation. So, the essential dynamics lie in the fact that if not both but pertaining to the rules of residence marriage ensures that there will be a necessary break in either of the partners' two sets of family, at least residentially. Not only the family the form and dynamics of household must also be understood in terms of: *household flexibility, ideal versus actual arrangements* and the *domestic cycle.*

There are four major principles which seem to be adopted to clarify the description of residence at the levels of the married couple and individual. These are:

i)   To define marital residence in terms of individuals rather than couples, thus delineation between the family of orientation and procreation would be possible.

ii)   All the member's residence of the community should be taken into account and not just the married couple.

iii)   The point of entry of the person gives shape to the household and that must be taken into account over the composition at any point of time.

iv)   It also should remain indicative of the fact that to understand about the social integration reference categories of household, community and sub-community should be taken into account. Thus *residential alignment* in terms takes place at the three levels:

a)   the continuous residence group (house, compound or house cluster)

b)   dispersed group within a subcommunity (ward, barrio, hamlet)

c)   dispersed group within a community.

Kinship should essentially be sought among at least any one of the three levels.

3.2   Patterns of Marital Residence: Understanding the Residence Rules

However, in today's world it might seem to be increasingly common but *George Peter*

Murdock on studying 565 societies in "World Ethnographic Sample" found out that only 5percent of the newly-weds go on to live in a separate residence of their own. So, for the majority of them they either go on to live with the bride's kins or with the groom's kins. So for the societies where the newly-weds customarily live with those kins who are close, the patterns of residence vary across and also within societies. The general norms prevalent across societies are that married couples live together, people generally marry outside their nuclear families because of the operational incest taboo. So some married children have to leave home when they marry. So if we keep aside the cases of the neo-local residence, then the patterns of residence vary because of the situation caused in cases likewise: a family from which a child leaves home post-marriage, also a child entering another residence post-marriage call for subsequent adjustments in both the cases. "*Residence Rules*" refer to the patterns in accordance with the societal norms that make the couple decide where to live. In general, there are *five* basic Rules of *Residence,* even though there are variations in them depending upon the other factors that have been discussed later in this module.

a) Neolocal Residence: When both the bride and groom leave their homes and set up a new home post marriage and start living there it is known as neo-local residence. Both son and daughter leave their parental homes, married couples live away from relatives of both the spouses. It is only the case of 5 percent of all societies. Choosing a neo-local residence is always not for a custom often in modern times as mostly children work away from home and as both the partners are mostly working so such kind of residence help in the advancement of both the partners.

b) Matrilocal Residence: Post marriage the groom comes to reside in the bride's maternal home. In this case the son leaves and the daughter stays so the newly-weds live with the wife's kins. 15 percent of all societies are accounted to be as to follow the matrilocal pattern of residence. The Khasis in Meghalaya, the Hopi of the American Southwest practice such patterns of residence.

c) Patrilocal Residence: In case of the Patrilocal residence the son stays and the daughter leaves. So the newly-weds stay with the kins of the husband. Here post marriage the bride comes to reside in the groom's home 67 percent of all the societies of the world follow patrilocal form of residence. Example of such is found majorly in India. The variation of this kind of residence is what *George Murdock* calls "*matri-patrilocal*" residence. In this kind of residence the couple post-marriage live for a time with the bride's parents and then permanently goes on to live with the groom's parents. This pattern follows what is known as 'bride service', i.e. it is a form of price that the groom pays for his bride. The groom by offering

services to the bride's parents for that period of time while he stays with them, pays the price.

d) Matrifocal Residence: A matrifocal residence consists of a woman and her children and sometimes her daughter's children. This household marks the absence of husband or other adult men as co-resident. Over cultural preference this kind of residence is marked by the inability of men to offer economic assistance to the family. It is different from matrilocal resident as here unlike the matrilocal one does not have men as co-resident in the household. Example can be single-parent family resided by women and her children.

e) Bilocal Residence: In this residence either the son or the daughter leaves the home, so either the newly-weds stay with the husbands kins or with the wife's parents. Such societies highlight some sort of flexibility in terms of the patterns of residence. World's only 7 percent of societies exhibit such patterns of residence. The "Kung Bushmen are bilocal.

f) Avunculocal Residence: In this case both the son and the daughter leave their parental homes only to live with or near the mother's brother. Only 4 percent of the societies of the world exhibit such patterns of residence.

g) Virilocal Residence: It is the kind of residence that is characterized by a wife joining the domestic group in which her husband resided prior marriage and the claims of property is restricted to her husband over wife.

h) Uxorilocal Residence: It is featured by the kind of residence that is characterized by a husband joining the domestic group in which his wife resided prior marriage and the claims of property is restricted to his wife over him.

i) Viriparilocal Residence: It refers to the domicile in a domestic group whose core includes the groom's father. It gives rise to a kind of compounded family.

j) Uxorimatrilocal Residence: refers to the domicile in a domestic group whose core includes the bride's mother.

k) Natalocal Residence: The natalocal rule of residence specifies that each partner remains

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is meant by Family of Changing Residence?**
>
> It is the case when the couple decides where to stay post-marriage. When a couple stays with the family of the husband for some time and move to the wife's house and stays there for a period of time and then again moves to the house of the husband's parents it is known as the family of changing residence.

with his or her own families of residence post marriage. If the children reside in their mother's house it leads to the formation of *domestic matrilineages* to which all the members, all males and females belong.

l) Filiolocal: When residence is defined in terms of sponsorship, it refers to the situation when the older couple is sponsored by the younger ones. However this kind of family puts forth the need of the presence of similar number of young couples in the same household.

m) Other forms of Residence: Apart from all these patterns of residence, two other forms of residence are found. These are:

> **Do you know?**
>
> **What is Amitalocal Residence?**
>
> Following George P. Murdock, even though is not hypothetically possible, but Murdock says that if social change occurs then there might be a possibility for the appearance of such a society. This calls for an extended family with a female in the nucleus of the partrilineal kin group.

> i) Ambilocal Residence: It is an instance when the couple lives with one of the family of the spouse for some times and then moves on to the house of the other spouse and lives there for some time. Eventually they decide on with whom they will live. Example can be the Hopi of the American Southwest.

> ii) Duolocal Residence: In this pattern the lineage of the couple is so very important that even though couples marry but both the partners live with their own families and apart from each other. This kind of residence is found in Japan as found in the studies by Harumi Befu.

7.3.3 Classification of Individual Residence in terms of Sponsorship

As at the very beginning of this module we referred to residence patterns classified solely in terms of sponsorship, we can follow the typology of individual residence that has been typified by *J.L.Fischer* in his article, *The Classification of Residence in Censuses* (1958). Here he has categorized residence in *three* broad categories (1958: 513). These are:

a) Neolocal Residence: In this case, the *self* is the sole sponsoring agency.

b) Consanguineolocal Residence: Broadly in this case any *consanguineal kin* remains the sponsoring agency.

> i) Patrilocal: Here the *father* or the *male patrilineal relative* of the ascending generation remains the sponsoring agency.

ii) Matrilocal: Here the *mother* or the *female patrilineal relative* of the ascending generation is the sponsoring agency.

iii) Avunculocal: Here the *mother's brother* or the *male patrilineal relative* of the ascending generation remains the sponsoring agency.

iv) Amitalocal: Here the *father's sister* or the *female patrilineal relative* of the ascending generation is the sponsoring agency.

v) Fratrilocal: *Brother* or *male parallel cousins* of own generation remains the sponsoring agency.

vi) Sororilocal: *Sister* or *female parallel cousin*s of own generation remains the sponsoring agency.

vii) Filiolocal: Here *Son or son's son* becomes the sole sponsoring agency.

viii) Filialocal: In this case the *daughter or the daughter's daughter* is the sponsoring agency of the residence pattern.

ix) Nepotilocal: *Sister's son* or any other matrilineal relative of the descending generation when sponsors a residence.

x) Heterolocal: Apart from those discussed above if any other consanguineal kin sponsors any individual that pattern of residence becomes known as Heterolocal Residence.

c) Affininolocal: Here an *affinal relative*, i.e. either the husband or the wife is the sponsoring agency. It can be sub-divided into two categories:

i) Virilocal: Here the *husband* is the sponsoring agency.

ii) Uxorilocal: In this case the *wife* remains the sponsoring agency.

After looking into so many variations in the forms of residence it might lead us to other levels of classification as many of these categories are not mutually exclusive but as per circumstances an admixture of different forms of residential pattern may be witnessed in reality.

3.4   Explaining Variations in Residence

In order to explain why different societies, have residential patterns we have to understand that these variations are largely dependent upon the culture that societies exhibit. It is evident that societies generally follow residence patterns based on their tradition, culture and descent rules. However, there are many societies that allow certain form of liberty to its members and give them choice of residence that the newly-weds are to follow.

a) Neolocal Residence: The presence and increasing cases of neo-local residence are all effects of money or commercialization of the economy. For economies that are commercial in nature people have become free to sell their labour for money. They can buy things whatever they want from the market and the advanced technological system aides in their storage. So, dependence upon exchange for procurement of food or other necessities are not required. Thus money-earning families also during periods of contingencies can resort to their own savings and does not have to depend upon other kins. Also depending upon social welfare measures offered by the governments is also resorted to over depending upon kins. However this system is impossible in case of the non-money economies. Thus system of economies which generally do not place importance to money or generally does not have money tend to place the newly-weds near kins. Thus money acts as a determining factor in case of Neolocal residence. It can further be pointed out that as couples now engage themselves in jobs that are more urban-centric, requires tenacities for high social and territorial mobility, so they prefer to live on their own and away from kins. Also living with the kins and sharing the same household can lead to tension among people that the newly-weds generally want to avoid.

b) Matrilocal versus Patrilocal Residence: The contribution to the economy of the gender determines the patterns of residence. In economies where men contribute more residence pattern assumes patrilocal form. Whereas in case of matrilocal residence the contribution of the women to the economy is more. However debates surrounding which work contribute to the economy and what is treated as paid labour remains and whether the matrilocal pattern of residence takes into account such variations is still a matter of debate. Traditionally the *type of warfare* practiced determines whether the residence pattern is to be treated as matrilocal or patrilocal. Warfare in traditional times assumed two forms. One was *internal* and the other *external.* Internal warfare is the warfare that takes place between neighbouring groups those who speak same language and reside in the nearby districts. Such societies have patrilocal pattern of residence. It has been proposed that in such societies as threats came from nearby groups so parents wanted their sons to stay with them even after marriage. In societies where external warfare is practiced i.e. warfare with groups outside their language groups, those societies become matrilocal as their patterns of residence is determined by other factors, mostly economic in nature. Also cases where men stay away from the house for work the pattern of residence is seen to take matrilocal form.

c) Bilocal Residence: It is a residence pattern in which the newly-weds decide on that which set of parents are the one with whom they intend to live. Even though

apparently it might involve a matter of choice but most studies reveal that such a type of residence is chosen out of necessity. *Elman Service* points out those societies that permit such patterns of residence are the ones that have recently suffered from drastic population loss owing to some 'new infectious diseases'. "*Residential choice*" becomes a criterion to decide post marriage where the chances of survival of the married couple become maximum. Studies suggest that European societies coming in contact with non-European societies have in major cases led to the spread of infectious diseases among the later one. The immunity of the Non-European societies to such diseases is almost absent. Generally *depopulation* acts as a major determinant in case of bi-local residence. Otherwise, societies which have not suffered from any such losses tend to have *uni-locality* as the pattern of residence. Thus, it is only out of necessity that pattern of residence assumes a bi-local form.

d) Avunculocal Residence: It is the case when the newly-weds come to live with the mother's brother. It is mostly practiced in matrilineal societies. It can be socially seen as a system to promote cohesion of males and can be seen as a system to keep male relatives closer. It also is a system whereby men can stay in the families and as the connection occurs through women so chances of the number of men coming to live with the mother's brother is also more. Coming to the warfare perspective these societies practice internal warfare so such kind of societies need more male members at home for protection. Such societies when faced with warfare from nearby enemies as are structured with a very strong form of matrilineal descent resort to Avunculocal form of residence over the patrilocal one.

e) The Emergence of Unilineal system: Unilineal kin group plays an important role in the organization of the society. Unilineal residence can be considered as one of the most vital conditions for the development of unilineal descent group. It is generally seen that unilineal societies that practice warfare are more likely to develop unilineal descent groups over their other counterparts who do not practice warfare. Based on the strong virtue of the fact, that unilineal descent groups provide unambiguous members who form alliance and then fight out with the enemies as discrete units. This development of ambiguity is totally out of question as people do have clear ideas about the descent group of which they are part and that not only renders solidarity among men but also during warfare grouping as units become easy, discrete and distinct.

f) Explaining Ambilineal and Bilateral Systems: Also, in this case depopulation acts as

a major factor that seeks to turn unilineal descent groups to ambilineal ones. In societies that are deeply affected by depopulation it is observed that family even though is patrilineal because of some reasons resort to matrilocality as a form of residence and it in turn gets connected with the kins of the mother's patrilineal descent groups just by virtue of living on that land.

Coming to bilateral system, the logic of the unilineal descent stands exactly opposite to it. As there remains sufficient indistinctness regarding which set of kins are to be resorted to for help or for tracing the descent, so warfare in such societies become difficult. But for societies that have a standing army as fighting force they do not need unilineal descent groups for creation of these units. Thus for Neolocal pattern of residence vicinity of the kins is not needed for political (in terms of warfare) protection.

A thing must be clearly kept in mind that none of these categorizations are mutually exclusive. Societal patterns reveal that these categories often overlap each other and also there are individual differences.

7.3.5 Patterns of Residence and its Effect on Social Life

Understanding patterns of residence and its effect on social life is essential as it is instrumental in giving shape to the social structure largely determined by the fact that where a newly-wed lives and with whom they interact and how in turn that goes on to shape the newly-established family of the couple. So if a couple lives with the patriarchal kins then their influence in the lives of the couple and their future becomes evident. Also for societies where any of the partners come to live in the other partner's household then often an *in-group –out-group* feeling is predominant. For the kins who have grown up together from childhood they have strong feelings for themselves and that leaves out the newly-wed partner from another kin-group as an outsider. Similar feelings are pertinent both in cases of matrilocal and patrilocal families.

The eldest member of the family taking decisions specially in cases of patriarchal societies on behalf of all the members of the family is often difficult to accept by the new bride whose pattern of socialization might not match with that of the in-laws and that might lead to situations of tension, clash and discontent.

However in case of matrilocal residence patterns the levels of psychological adjustment are not too high for the male counterparts as even though women enjoy comparatively more liberty but the decision making is bestowed on parts of the male and mostly the groom's house is not far away from the bride's house where he comes to live.

7.3.6 Residence Patterns and Kin-Groups: An Insight into the Functions Served

Marital residence largely predicts the type of kin groups that will find prominence and acts to classify their various relatives and also is used to understand how they refer to their kins. For majority of people post-marriage, live they near their kins and it is quite understandable that it will have some effect on the social life of people consquently on the and structure of society. So, it becomes necessary to study kin groups as a unit that holds many people and serves an instrumental role in structuring of the society. The following functions of kin-groups need to be understood to get a picture about how the system of kinship works to pattern residence for societies. The functions that kin-groups serve are as follows:

a) Social functions: The most important function of kin-group is to regulate marriage. Among most of the unilineal descent groups, marriage is not permitted among kins. Of course, certain variations are there but mostly incest is treated as a taboo and marriage outside the unilineal descent group or outside of the kin group offers scopes of alliance with other groups of the society. Thus, where does the married couple reside determines the priority of the kin-group, if they reside in patterns of residence beyond the neo-local one thereby determining the structure of the society.

b) Economic functions: Kin-groups especially those living in the vicinity are expected to support each other economically either in cash or through some services if need arises. For those living with patriarchal kins are generally expected to get favours and support from the patriarchal kins, if need arises. Often sharing of economic assistance and aides are found among kins who share the household.

c) Political Functions: The head of the household is the one with whom the political functions reside. Even though it was more relevant in traditional times when the head of the household decided on political functions especially the one related to warfare. In the modern times however for those who share the household, that subsequent political role of the head of the family has reduced to that of decision making.

d) Religious Functions: Not only among the tribes the kin-group of the family where the married couple lives serve to control the religious orientation of the person who comes to live within the family of their partner. They follow what can be called the *descent-group religion.* Thus, the kin-group serves to provide a sense of social security.

7.3.7 Patterns of Residence, Division of Labour and Socialization

Division of labour by sex largely determines where a couple resides post-marriage. In cases where the male dominates and societies assume patriarchal forms, in these societies generally patterns of residence is patrilocal or avunculocal. However, if the role of female is pre-dominant in any society, then society assumes matrilocal residence pattern. If neither of the sexes are determining in any society then society assumes neolocal or ambilocal residence pattern.

As we have already discussed, that in economies where males majorly contributed to the economy then residence in those societies assume patrilocal form. The same is mostly the case with matrilocal societies. Thus in patrilocal societies, the sex roles defined men to work as bread winners and thereby perform instrumental role, atleast traditionally and women are expected to perform the emotional role. Thus comes in the role of socialization that is operative and that seeks to make both men and women prepare for their future roles. The various agencies of socialization, most importantly, the family, being a primary agency of socialization right from birth creates gender differences among children by making them learn the sex-roles. Also for patrilineal societies and also perhaps for the matrilineal ones, even the child is made to socialize about the pattern of residence and the expectations about their future family of procreation. To illustrate, it can be said that in patrilineal societies where patrilocal pattern of residence is followed, a girl being born in a family is made to learn about her expected future roles as a wife, daughter-in-law, mother etc. She is also socialized to make her internalize that her family of orientation is different from her family of procreation. She is also made to learn that she has to leave all her kiths and kins on marriage and go on to live a life to her family of procreation.

7.3.8 Variations in Residence and KInship: Understanding the Women's Perspective

'*Separation Anxiety*' is considered as common and normal for women to suffer in case of patrilocal residence patterns in most marriage. Even though not many studies have been conducted to understand the psychological perspective *Leigh Minturn* studied the psychological pathos of a Rajput bride who has moved from her own family to live in the village of her in-laws. Much later when Minturn returned to India he was reported by the mother that her daughter was happy at her in-laws house. However what can be questioned is the fact that whether such happiness was real or was taken up as some form of coercive psychological adjustment on the part of the bride in order to keep up to the societal standards. However some other brides were reported were reported to be under ghost possession. or has committed suicide, serious depression etc. In case of matrilineality

whereby residence patterns take the matrilocal form are women placed in a better position is what we must look into. Referring to the study by *Alice Schlegel* matrilocal pattern of residence where women are not required to move out of their parental homes even though they are in better psychological circumstances and enjoy more equality towards sexual restrictions but authority mostly stays in the hands of their brothers. Women enjoy superior authority in matrilineal societies only in absence of brothers or husbands in the households. However there is no denying the fact that matrilineality owing to the fact that women are in charge of property gives women a better psycho-social condition over societies that are structured by patrilineality.

7.3.9 Residence Patterns, Descent and Reproduction

If we need to understand the marriage or family then understanding it from the perspective of reproduction is very important. It is needless to say that residence and descent have got a crucial effect on societal control on reproduction. Referring to the study of *Suzanne Frayser* we can look into the various forms of dilemmas related to sexuality and reproductive behaviour. Firstly, women in patrilineal societies often are seen to degrade women. So their attitudes towards women tend to decrease their number in production. While the other attitude of adoration of women leads to contradict the value of men in such societies. These two situations create a case of contradiction of values and thereby cause a dilemma that gets reflected in aspects of not only reproduction but also in descent and residence patterns. The second dilemma occurs in case of patrilineal descent when the line of kin group is traced through the males, problems with *paternity* are most pertinent. Marrying a male is essentially linked with the fact that the male must be the father, be it biological or social of the child. Thus these societies are most restrictive towards women's sexuality. Major restrictions and stigma are operative towards women's indulgence in pre-marital sex or extra-marital sex. Even divorce is majorly stigmatized in patrilineal societies. Thus residence patterns are not only indicative of the underlying gender patterns operative in any kind of society but they are major pointers of other societal forces in society.

7.3.10 The Main Predictors or Marital Residence Patterns: Understanding the Whole

In case of the Unilocal Residence the main predictor happens to be *warfare*. In case of *internal warfare* it assumes the *patrilocal residence pattern*. However the unit of *internal warfare coupled with pre-existing matrilineal descent group,* society assumes *avunculocal form.* In case of *external warfare,* men mostly working in the subsistence economy, residence pattern assume *patrilocal* form. In case women being engaged in

persistence economy *matrilocal residence* is found. In case *of Non-Unilocal Residence* the two main determinants are: *depopulation* and commercialization. In case of *Neolocal Residence* the factor of *commercialization* alone stands active but in case of bilocal residence pattern, it becomes coupled with *low and unpredictable rainfall*. However this factor can only play an important role in case of basic and non-advanced societies, like the hunting and gathering societies.

7.4. Conclusion

Residence has been an important area of study as it stands at the juncture where biological, i.e. consanguineal and marital i.e. affinal forms of kinship combine. Residence patterns are viewed as the cultural norms or common ways of life related to where generally couples start residing after their marriage. Depending upon their dependence on and proximity to their families of origin, residence patterns are viewed as very important as they structure kinship patterns within and across households. How rules of residence influence social life is what this unit have made us gather idea about.

7.5. Summary

Whatever discussions have been made keeping in mind the residence is mostly what form the residence pattern may assume. Discussions need to be made about the whole that is residence taken as a unit in the whole system of kinship. Society assumes different forms that have manifestations in different residential patterns takes shape only after it unites with other aspects of kinship.

7.6. Questions

1. Answer briefly: (6 marks each)

a) Write a note on Avunculocal residence.

b) Highlight on the connection between family, household and residence.

c) Write a note on the main predictors of the residence patterns.

d) Define unilocal residence. Differentiate between matrilocal and matrifocal patterns of residence.

e) Name the hypothetical form of residence pattern that Murdock has talked about. Write a note on the various other forms of residence patterns which are rarely present in society.

f) What is the difference between internal and external warfare? How is it significant in distinguishing between patrilocal and matrilocal residence patterns?

g) Explain why the Nayar caste of southeast India does not have a residence pattern.

2. Answer in details: (12 marks each)

a) Define kinship. Critically evaluate the functions kin-group serves in determining residence patterns.

b) Write a note on the sufferings of women in case of the patrilocal residence patterns.

c) What is meant by residence rules? Differentiate between patrilocal and matrilocal residence patterns.

d) How can you illustrate the influence of residence patterns on the social lives of the members of any particular society?

e) What do you understand by residence? Classify the different categories of individual residence.

f) Discuss about the influence of residence pattern on the family.

3. Essay type questions: (20 marks each)

a) Elaborate on how kinship acts on to provide the main structure in case of non-commercial societies.

b) Elaborate on the different patterns of residence that can be found across societies.

c) What is separation anxiety? Write a critical note on the explanations on the various forms of residence patterns.

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Module II

Approaches

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Unit 8 : Descent: Approach

Structure of the Unit

8.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the approaches to descent.
- To understand the principles of descent.
- To understand the background to the emergence of the descent theories.
- To understand the propositions of the descent theories.

8.2. Introduction

Primitive societies as viewed by classical scholars in anthropology were inherently simple classless and segmented which had their own rules of social organisation, i.e., forming people into a social group for the purpose of survival. The principle that governed this organisation could be varied and inclusive, such as- through blood, marital ties, or adoption. Kinship is understood as the system of these rules that bind people together into a more or less permanent cluster. From its very inception, Anthropology has been conceived of as a discipline that studies kinship systems across societies; the genealogy, nature, constitutive rules, rights and duties of people holding the same. Therefore, it remains so that as the dominant subject-matter of social anthropology, kinship systems define form and content of this branch of knowledge. Kinsmen could be reckoned through **blood relations** and **marital bonds**. The former is known as consanguineal relations and the latter as affinal ones. Different approaches to understand kinship systems have emerged depending on their perspectives to look at how these social groups formed and persisted over time. Two themes dominant among them are- the descent theory and the alliance theory.

8.2.1 Descent

Any kinship system uses a particular individual as its reference point. He or she is known as the 'ego'. For example- if we consider 'A' as the ego, the relations in the family will find meaning referring to her/him. Descent is one central concept in understanding how membership into a specific group is arranged and maintained. Descent is a system of tracing one's origin through the genealogical ancestors. Thus, it is predominantly connected through relations of blood, i.e., consanguineous ties. The members who identify the same ancestor/s, who are essentially non-fictitious, are therefore, understood to belong to a descent group. However, there are diversities of opinions among anthropologists regarding biological origin of a descent group. For G. P. Murdock (1940), it determines the social allocation of an individual to a consanguineal group of kinsmen. Therefore, it is more about the social recognition of an individual bearing a legitimate identity through acquiring a specific group membership. Marital or sexual relationships are prohibited within the members of a descent group.

8.2.2 Principles

Two primary models for kinship organisation are **affinal** and **consanguineal**. The former indicates marital relationship as the basis to bind kinsfolk whereas the latter has common ancestry as the affiliative principle to social relationship. There is one more category to this, a third category, which is based on lineage but here the structure takes a different

form. People who share a common ancestry but do not descent from the same parents form the circle of **collateral** kin. Ego's cousins are the example of collateral kinsmen. Within this consanguineal kinship rules the basic underlying principle, however, serves to determine which ancestors would be responsible for transmitting membership to the ego. These forms are detailed as under:

1. Unilineal: The social affiliation here, according to Murdock (1940), is restricted to one of the two parents which is gender specific. This means, this can take either of the two forms-

● **Matrilineal :** The descent is traced through the female parent and her kindred. However, the lineage rules pass on inheritance to the eldest male member in the family. Here, authority lies in the hands of mother's brother. Many societies have descent rules based on this idea. Many Australian, American Indian and Indonesian countries have matrilineal societies. In India the Khasi, Garo and Nair are examples of matrilineal descents. Also, Akan tribe from Ghana and Central Africa's Bantu tribe fall in this category. Interestingly, a matrilineal society too have men as the key power holder. However, the office and the property pass through women. Women do not themselves retain authority in this sort of arrangement. Instead of his own son a man passes inheritance rights to his sister's son. Here lies the operational difference between a patrilineal and a matrilineal society. The residential patter in a matrilineal society is strictly matrilocal. This is to mean that a wife continues to stay at her old residence with her clan members and the husband continues to keep visiting her place. A married woman does not practically bear any allegiance with her husband's clan. A husband similarly remains a member to his mother's and sister's clan.

● **Patrilineal :** In this case, the identity and inheritance rules descend from the father's kin group exclusively. The father and his male predecessors are known to form the body of kinsmen. Hence, the term 'patrilineal'. A child born of a legal marriage has property claims on his father's productive resources. Kinsmen related through the patrilineal descents are known as agnates. Most of the cattle-rearing societies are known to have patrilineal descent. The Romans, Chinese and some parts of eastern and southern Africa are examples of societies bearing such patterns of kinship. The residence is patrtilocal which denotes that a newly married couple moves to the residence of the groom's father or patrilineally related relatives. Since all relations are traced through the father's line a daughter does not belong to the lineage of his father after marriage but to that of her husband's. She severs ties with her family of orientation to be a part of her husband's lineage. The child that she gives birth

to are known to be belonging to the descent group of her husband. A patrilineal family would be typically composed of a man, his wife/wives, their sons, daughter in-laws and grandchildren. Inheritance laws descend from a man to his sons.

2. Cognatic descent: In contrast to unilineal pattern of descent groups the cognatic descent is traced through both males and females. This can be of the following types:

● **Bilateral :** This form of reckoning membership includes all possible ancestors irrespective of their gender while forming a kin group. Therefore, the kinship equally descends from all the kinsmen of both the parents of the ego. In a unilineal group the ego finds linkage with a large kin group extending up to many generations. The bilateral kin group does not bear such a huge generation depth but relates to a close kin group over a few generations. This is the most popular and widespread practice of descent formation across Europe and other continents too. This gives rise to a network of relatives. One important point that needs mention here is that the rules predominating in the unilineal kin groups, such as the joint ownership of property, regulation of marriage etc cannot be found in bilateral mode of descents. This system is found to be functional in small-scale societies facilitating greater mobility, freedom and individuality.

● **Double-descent :** As argued by Murdock (1940) double-descent essentially combines matrilineal and patrilineal descent, giving way to a 'bilinear' but not 'bilateral' form. It is different from the latter in terms of the affiliation that it extends to the ego. Bilateral kinship includes all four grandparents whereas double descent includes one grandparent from each strand of lineage, i.e., the paternal grandfather and the maternal grandmother are the affiliations that rest with the ego.

● Ambilineal descent: Unlike unilineal groups here the selection of descent is instead of being very rigid and pre- determined, remains a matter of choice. This choice rest with the both the parents to extend affiliation to their children with either of their group membership. An alternative system also allows the individual to choose his descent from the respective groups through the course of his life. However, it is argued that these groups lack in cohesiveness and commitment on the part of members.

8.3. Background

Anthropology as a discipline developed during the nineteenth century. Kinship system is the central conceptual and methodological tool in social anthropology. Most part of the

twentieth century was dominated by the study of the stateless, simple societies that lacked bureaucratic and centralised judicial system. Industrial revolution ushered in a multitude of scientific discoveries resulting in new institutions for the European countries. They embarked on overseas voyages and set up colonies. Most of these colonies had societies that operated differently from the western societies were termed 'primitives'. The property rights, duties, status and obligation in these societies, hence, were based on some other mechanism from the ones known to and administered by the industrialised societies. For the purpose of ruling and maintaining a persistent domination on these colonies knowledge rather than mere speculation was imperative. Only the possession of a fair and grounded knowledge of this primitive culture would enable the colonialists to establish authority over them. Therefore, a new investigation was heralded. Dependable, rich and detailed data necessitated field work. All this summed up to form a new discipline. This was, in short, the background in which Anthropology had emerged.

3.1 Descent Theory

Descent theory is the oldest perspective in terms of understanding kinship behaviour. It is often contrasted with the alliance theory. In the latter relationships are understood to be developing out of exchanges. Here kinsmen recognize each other through affinal arrangement (marriage). Theorists recognized the above two categories as opposed to each other. The main reason behind such opposition was the fact that here the segmentary organisation of a group was thought to have relied on marriage. Descent theory looks at that aspect of kinship which determines social organisation through the system of lineage, i.e., social affiliation of progeny. The functionalist and evolutionist schools both substantially contribute to this body of theory. Evolutionists were to a great extent inspired by Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory. Henry Maine's Ancient Law (1861) is an important oeuvre marking the beginning of evolutionist era as well as descent theory. He contrasted primitive societies with the modern ones showing the factors that contribute in making social relations in these societies. In the former social relations spring out of 'status', a condition that family is the ground of all relations. This is the key role of kinship groups. This in modern societies is formed by 'contract' which basically he defined as an agreement between individuals. Here the obligation of social relationships is on free individuals. Two of the most prominent figures- Maine and Bachofen had contrasting views regarding the authoritative models in relation to descent theory. Henry Maine spoke of societies ruled by essentially patrilineal authority. Bachofen, contradictorily, argued that matriliny emerged prior to any other form of ruling. Both these theoreticians sketched societies based on their respective societies. Evolutionism saw a transition in the early twentieth century giving way to functionalism. Functionalism took to organic analogy as an analytical category to understand the different

parts of the society as living organism and their relationship to the society as a whole. This new paradigm also had ingenious contributors. Two of the pillars are- Bronislaw Malinowski and A.

R. Radcliffe Brown. Even within functionalist school there are some specificities cutting across the thoughts of these two intellectual giants in differential patterns. While Malinowski directed his attention in the direction of what can be termed as bio-cultural functionalism, Brown adhered to the theoretical perspective of structural functionalism. The former's theory talked of varied needs of individuals (physiological, cultural, instrumental) and society's ways of mitigating those needs. Brown being a structural functionalist focussed on the societal structures. He saw the organisation of the descent groups in relations to the structures of society. Brown published several essays in this subject. Several of his followers- Pritchard, Fortes, Goody etc. conducted their fieldworks in order to know differential aspects of descent system.

In the late twentieth century again this functionalist trend lost its eminence and the evolutionary or diffusionist models regained their popularity. Debates circulated between two groups- one that saw the matrilineal societies as predecessors and the other that did not. Some of those who do not view the patrilineal societies to have evolved prior to any other forms of society have their arguments in favour of cognatic or bilateral descent. Interestingly, most theoreticians have tried to confine the rule of descent as unilineal. The unilineal principle of social activities demands great functional importance. It is argued that in societies (Nuer, Bedouin) where the political units are essentially territorial, descent performs a supplementary rule of social organisation to the former. However, even in societies where social units are not territorially determined, descent has still a significant role to play. Here, descent is considered more functional importance than societies mentioned above. Alternatively, it is held that in societies with territorially marked politico-jural units, the genealogical principle remains constant. Hence, the importance of descent rule and its administration can hardly be lowered.

8.4. Major contributors

A. R. Radcliffe Brown, Evans Pritchard and Meyer Fortes among others are the three prominent figures to the establishment of this theory. These studies were conducted after world war II, during the 1940s. From the discussion above it can be derived that this theoretical foundation holds a functionalist view and leans on the consanguineal bases of relations and holds this as the key concept in organisation of families. However, there are

other important theoreticians too, like Gluckman and Goody to have been associated to this tradition of social anthropology.

An early work on social organisation and nature and scope of laws binding them was Maine's Ancient Law (1861). Maine in this work held that the basic unit of social life never relied on segregation or so to say, individuals. The idea of individuals was non-existent in characteristic nature of primitive societies. Instead 'an aggregation of families' held together societies at that time, the basic unit seemingly being the 'family'. He preserved the idea of 'individual' as intrinsic to modern society. Maine understood the family as a corporation and any law (if it could be termed as law) governing society, hence, was corporate law. He also argued that ancient history witnessed man as living in a patriarchal family and brotherhood in this sort of society had consanguinity as its sole basis.

8.4.1 A. R. Radcliffe Brown

Radcliffe Brown's celebrated work The Mother's Brother in South Africa (1924) has remained an important reading in understanding the institutions of kinship and their functions. In a different vein from what is held by those who have struggled over establishing unilineal (patrilineal / matrilineal) operation of kinship organisations, Brown talked of a co-existence of both the institutions, perhaps in varying degree. In this work Brown primarily examines Henri Junod's proposition of the past existence of matriarchal tribes. Junod argued that their existence in the past is evident from the kinship behaviours of tribes like BaThonga (Portuguese East African tribe). Like many other primitive peoples, the Thonga system attached importance to the relationship set of mother's brother and sister's son. The normative behaviour that is associated with the above relationships are found to be indicative of the passage of societies through matriarchal systems in the past. Brown found close similarity of the BaThonga tribe with people in Friendly Islands (Tonga) and in Fiji in terms of these customs. The BaThonga, he studied, operated in a patriarchal and patrilineal tribe. This understanding of segregated performing of institutions, Brown stated (1924), is a mistake. He added that these institutions cannot be understood properly when studied in seclusion from each other. Instead of their exclusive existence they are co-existing with one another and find meaning only when studied in reference to each other. Hence, his argument proceeds that the mother's brother is only as much important as the father's sister, though in a different way. This, however, has little reference in Junod's work. There is little mention of the respect that the father's sister commands in this sort of societal arrangement.

Brown also stated the job of social anthropology in unequivocal terms. There are general kinship rules which regulate social relations in primitive societies although the patterns of behaviour mostly tend to vary from one society to another. Nevertheless, the predominating

tendencies exist in all societies. To discover and explain these is the task assigned to social anthropology. Radcliffe Brown warns us against reading the institutions of patriarchy and matriarchy emphatically to ignore their relativity. Patriarchy, he argues, is understood to 'follow' patriliny (children belonging to the social group of the father), patrilocal (wife must move to the husband's residence), inheritance and authoritarian rights rest with the male parent. Contrarily, matriarchal societies are identified through matrilocal, matrilineal families with female authorities. What Brown tried to suggest was no society was purely matriarchal or patriarchal in the pure form of the terms. These are basically ideal types, what we find in societies are deviations from these ideal types. He advocated of the existence of cross-cultural traditions, for instance the Ova Herero tribe in South Africa manifest somewhat bilateral practices. In order to provide a better explanation to the mother's brother and sister's son relationship it is necessary to study the behaviour of a man to other relatives belonging to the mother's group as well. He further added that the Friendly Islands held witness of a parity in relationship patterns between the two sets (a) mother's brother and sister's son and, (b) daughter's son and mother's father. The nature of relationships in both cases suggests a similarity where the daughter's son is known to take similar sort of liberties from his mother's father. Although, these properties are suggestive of a matrilineal institution, there is an exception. A strictly matrilineal family does not include mother's father to the group. He is supposed to belong to a different lineage. Hence, the liberty practices present in both the sets of relationships is self-evident of the absence of an absolutely functioning matriarchy here.

Brown in his work The Social Organisation of Australian Tribes (1931) talked of two basic elements of social organisation based on family and territorial ties (horde). The membership of this territorial group or horde which is based on descent. It is responsible for land holding. Each horde had some land ownership and the cluster of which engendered tribes. In both family and horde the basic organising element remained the system of descent, particularly unilineal descent. Being a functionalist, Brown attached no intrinsic importance to the individual in society (McGee and Warms, 2008). The loss of one can be compensated easily by the other where the prime goal is to maintain an effective functioning of the whole system. Here individuals are the mere holders of roles. What held society together is the function between these different roles and institutions. Individuals were not irreplaceable. While studying descent groups Brown enquired the corporate roles of these groups, i.e., the joint ownership. He repeatedly enquires the system from the Durkheimian perspective of social fact.

8.4.2 E. Evans Pritchard

Evans Pritchard has worked with a number of ethnic groups, but he has earned his

name specifically for his undertakings with the Anuak, Azande, Nuer, Shilluk. One of such well-known works include The Nuer of The Southern Sudan, published as an essay in African Political Systems (1940) edited by Meyer Fortes and Pritchard himself. The Nuer, however, was published in the same year and it is a classic piece on these people. As argued by McGee and Warms (2008), Evans Pritchard belonged to the structural functional school of the British Anthropology which thrived to extend abstract analysis of societies and create universal principles underlying social organization. In this essay he begins with a detailed description to Nuer ecology which he believed to have a significant relationship with social organisation. As a typical structural functionalist Pritchard believed that the Nuer as representing a particular cultural type, i.e., of East Africa. He did not consider them to be unique on their own. Political organisation and maintenance of social order in societies with a centralised bureaucratic structure being absent had been a major area of interest in the anthropology of his day. Therefore, it is not surprising that he attempted to study the Nuer society with a special thrust on its political organisation. Pritchard bore a great impact of Durkheim in his perception towards studying social structure and its organising principles.

Pritchard's study of the segmentary structure among the Nuer is one amongst many lasting contributions that enriched the tradition of social Anthropology. The Nuer are predominantly pastoral people. They have a territorial unity and the tribes are economically self-sufficient (cattle, fishing, etc). The cattle and the Nuer people have a great degree of co-dependence and the relationship between them were reciprocal. To emphatically reinstate this symbiotic relationship, Pritchard wrote that the loss of a human being was often compensated by cattle from the end of the slayer or his community. This is an accepted custom in resolving feud and disputes in this society. Each tribe is divided into segments-primary, secondary and tertiary sections. A tribe is a cluster of multiple primary sections and the latter is divided up into several secondary ones. Secondary sections are comprised of several tertiary sections. A few village communities and familial groups make for the tertiary units. These are all territorial segments too and represent the features of the tribe itself. Hence, it would not be a wrong statement that these groups are miniature tribes. As mentioned earlier the political organisation of the Nuer in absence of one centralised formal unit of governance had interested him. An ordered social life in absence of such an institution he termed 'ordered anarchy'. Pritchard argued that the lineage system must be accounted to take note of tribal unity here.

A clan is an exogamous group of people with a common ancestor whereas the identifiable genealogical connection among members of a clan form lineages. This segmentary structure of the Nuer tribe, as mentioned above, also has genealogical roots and hence can be termed as lineages. The Nuer lineage is agnatic (tracing kinship through male ancestors),

including all living and dead persons through a particular line of the founder. As pointed out by Evans Pritchard lineages are relative groups and the membership in a specific group is dynamic. The character of lineage and tribe is discernible depending on values and situation. The significance of a clan is determined by its association with the tribe and its size. As mentioned by Pritchard a larger clan has significant association with the tribe and resultantly its of greater significance to the Nuer. A unique interplay of opposition and correspondence characterise the embodiment of lineage in this segmentary structure of Nuer kinship. Another remarkable finding by Pritchard is the absence of corporate communities (joint control over resources by members) in the clans and lineages. There are local communities which function in a structured manner to govern the activities of the kinship groups. This arrangement is viewed as parallel to the modern notion of State by Pritchard. It is here worth noting even though known to be belonging to the structural functional school, Pritchard does not deny the due importance of individual actors in it.

8.5. Criticisms

Until the mid-20th century descent theory remained central to the British kinship studies. However, from the 1960s onwards it faced several challenges and strong theoretical criticisms. It was argued that the clearly laid down kinship models were very different from empirical realities. These models were at best normative. Often individuals could not clearly identify the lineage system that they belonged to as it is pointed out by many scholars. Moreover, most kinship systems were reduced to unilineal and essentially a patriarchal aggregate. This in line with what was held by Henry Maine was criticised by a group of theorists. Morgan, McLennan for example argued that societies originally were promiscuous and far from having any patriarchal authority. Therefore, the ubiquitous patriarchal system of kinship (barring a few exceptions) theory were substantially debated over. A major limiting scope for this theoretical perspective can be owed to the minimal importance that it allowed to marital relations in understanding kinship.

Hence, the most potential threat that the descent theory encountered was from a new model of kinship that originated with Claude Levi Strauss in the 1960s. This tradition originated in French school and several scholars have their names associated to this, such as- Louis Dumont, Rodney Needham, Edmund Leach etc. While descent theory in attempting to explain kinship structuring held on to filial relations, it denied importance to affinal relations. Alliance theory, on the contrary, opened up a whole new way in analysing kin groups and interpersonal relations. The cardinal unit of discussion shifted from a set of parents and their child/children to that of a husband wife and their children. Levi Strauss

(1949) found the rule of exchange and taboo as defining principles in formation of a group and maintaining inter-group links. The rules of exogamy had particular purpose in sustaining stateless societies. This rule of incest proscribing sexual relations among certain kins also determined a category of marriageable women in society. This played substantial role in the viability of societies. Hence, the appeal of descent theory post 1960s was largely lost. In today's anthropological study descent theory seems to have no significant place. However, it has helped in formulating some elementary concepts which have been crucial in comprehending the functioning of pre-modern and stateless societies. This has later helped in the constitution of some new models in social theory.

8.6. Conclusion

According to Parkin and Parkin (1997), descent should be understood apart from both rules of residence and the nature of authority (patriarchy/matriarchy). He argues that people linked through descent might well be territorially dispersed and that the causation should trace systems of co-residence to descent. This is to make the point that descent is arbitrary and hence people sharing a common territorial base may become descents, '.... people do not live together because they are related by descent but are related by descent because they live together' (p. 26). Likewise, the notions of authority in a unilineal descent group favouring ultimate authority to one sex to the complete exclusion of the other is erroneous. The idea of a genealogically tied group of people, '.... may be stressed more than links with a long line of probably fictitious ancestors' (p. 27). This tells us how descent served more as a theoretical idea than a practically identifiable phenomenon.

8.7. Summary

This unit helps us to understand the descent theory, and how it structures the system or kinship into normative categories through legitimate blood ties. It helped to understand the rules of the formation of groups and thereby the principles governing systems of inheritance, rights, and duties. British social anthropologists who made a principal contribution to this theoretical formulation, include Radcliffe Brown, Evans Pritchard, and Meyer Fortes. The determining factor of lineage in reckoning kinship relations later came to be regarded as an inadequate explanation where the importance of marriage in kinship was ignored. The exchange of women to form marriage alliances and sustain a particular social group through reproduction was highlighted in a new model or theory that emerged with the pioneering figure Levi Strauss. This is known as the alliance theory of kinship.

8.8. Check your Progress / Questions

I. Answer in detail:

1. What is descent? What are its principles?

2. Write a note on the theories of descent. Briefly explain its background.

3. What is cognatic descent? What are its types?

II. Answer briefly

1. Briefly explain Henri Junod's proposition of descent.

2. What did Maine argue in his Ancient Law?

3. What according to Murdoch are the two different forms of unilineal patterns of descents?

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8.11. Glossary

Affinal: The former indicates marital relationship as the basis to bind kinsfolk whereas the latter has common ancestry as the affiliative principle to social relationship.

Unilineal: The social affiliation here, according to Murdock, is restricted to one of the two parents which is gender specific.

Matrilineal: The descent is traced through the female parent and her kindred. However, the lineage rules pass on inheritance to the eldest male member in the family. Here, authority lies in the hands of mother's brother.

Patrilineal: In this case, the identity and inheritance rules descend from the father's kin group exclusively. The father and his male predecessors are known to form the body of kinsmen. Hence, the term 'patrilineal'. A child born of a legal marriage has property claims on his father's productive resources. Kinsmen related through the patrilineal descents are known as agnates.

Unit 9 : Feminist and Gendered approach to Anthropology and Kinship

Structure of the Unit

9.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the development of anthropology as a discipline.
- To understand the gendered perspective of anthropology
- To understand the gendering of anthropology

9.2. Introduction

Anthropology and kinship entails within itself the vast world of human beings, in other words, it is the study of the human both in the past and present to gain evolutionary insights into the emergence and the progress of the homo-sapiens and their varied habitat. Since human world

is variegated, Anthropology can be sub-divided to understand the world both in a piecemeal and holistic ways. But when seen through the gender prism, Anthropological analysis cannot be subtracted from the inherent gender bias. Understanding a society, ancient or otherwise requires a socio-cultural premise for perfect interpretation, and in most cases this premise is patriarchal which renders the analysis a little lopsided in favour of a particular gender. In this units, the gendered perspective in the kinship study has been dealt in an attempt to point and, in the process, rectify the gender malady inherent in any discipline.

Anthropology, as a discipline entails within itself the vast world of human beings, in other words, it is the study of the human both in the past and present to gain evolutionary insights into the emergence and the progress of the homo-sapiens and their varied habitat. Since human world is variegated, Anthropology can be sub-divided to understand the world both in a piecemeal and holistic ways. But when seen through the gender prism, Anthropological analysis cannot be subtracted from the inherent gender bias. Understanding a society, ancient or otherwise requires a socio-cultural premise for perfect interpretation, and in most cases this premise is patriarchal which renders the analysis a little lopsided in favour of a particular gender. In this chapter, the gendered perspective in the anthropological study has been dealt in an attempt to point and, in the process, rectify the gender malady inherent in any discipline.

One of the major problems in the development of the subject matter of any discipline that it generally follows an unilinear path in search of its own exclusivity. Development of Anthropology also followed the same formula till anthropological perspectives started getting used and applied giving rise of developmental anthropology. Ethnography or field research came to be dominant forms of developing anthropological accounts, thus the focus has always been on the immaculate reflection of the reality of the society under scrutiny. Though traces of anthropological ideas are found in the Greek historical and philosophical writings, in the accounts of the travelers who visited exotic regions and wrote first-hand experiences about those places, the development of gender perspective and Gender Studies as a separate discipline is rather recent. Anthropology as a discipline is known for its quest to explore societal organization and structure (or the lack of it) across various regions and along diverse forms and clusters of cultural. Unfortunately, its due emphasis on culture as distinct from biology waned while dealing the gender question in their own as well as other societies. As it is rightly argued by Reiter, "When investigating other issues, anthropologists rarely make the mistake of reading automatically from a presumed biological base to the superstructure built upon it-yet in analyzing gender they do exactly this" (p-14). Hence, these gender blinkers of anthropologists could be removed in the course of a thorough

scrutiny of conceptual categories that have been directly exported as biological givens. This reorientation to anthropological insights was offered by feminist scholarship. It coincided with the rise of the feminist movements in the late 19ᵗʰ and early 20ᵗʰ century. The need for a separate discipline to deal with the women's question also added another layer of interpretation to the already existing body of knowledge. In this chapter the gender perspective is woven with the anthropological insights to gain a better understanding of how the early and the later anthropologists have viewed and presented the underlying patriarchal structures, how the gender relations have been dealt with in various anthropological account of the varied societal structures and how this gender dynamics gave evolved in relation to anthropological ideas. Gender relation forms an inevitable part of any society, hence overlooking that can provide either a faulty or a one sided understanding of the society.

9.3. Development of Antropology

The emergence of Anthropology cannot be denoted a definitive date. Unlike disciplines like Sociology that emerged with the writings of Auguste Comte and Emile Durkheim in the 18th and 19ᵗʰ century, Anthropological perspectives could be traced in the old Greek historical writings as early as 5ᵗʰ century. In the words of Boas (1904),

"…the speculative anthropology of the 18ᵗʰ century and of the early part of the 19ᵗʰ century is distinct in its scope and method from the science which is called anthropology at the present time….Accordingly, the subject matter of anthropology is partly a branch of biology, and partly a branch of mental sciences. Among the mental phenomena language, invention, art, religion, social organization and law have received particular attention." (p-513)

With regard to the methods of investigation and theorization used by the Anthropologists Boas (1904) further adds,

"…..we find in Anthropology two distinct methods of research and aims of investigation: the one, the historical method, which endeavors to reconstruct the actual history of mankind; the other, the generalizing method, which attempts to establish the laws of its development. According to the personal inclination of the investigator, the one or the other methods prevails in his research" (p-514)

Thus Anthropology covered a wide array of issues from historical evolution of human civilization to the cultural modifications in the recent times. According to early Anthropologists like Herbert Spencer and Edward Tylor, culture emanates from a single source and spreads

across societies in varied forms; this explains the sameness of customs and beliefs in many parts of the world. It also explains that the subject matter of anthropology has developed to provide an understanding of the cultural modifications on the basis of the reporting of the realities that are 'out there'. In the due course of time, Anthropology got divided and subdivided into various branches to accommodate the differences in perception of anthropological facts. The various branches of Anthropology are:

a. Socio-cultural anthropology

b. Physical Anthropology

c. Archeological Anthropology

d. Linguistic Anthropology

e. Applied Anthropology

These branches of Anthropology are further subdivided to make Anthropological understanding more holistic. Socio-cultural anthropology is further subdivided into economic anthropology (the study of production, consumption, distribution and exchange mainly is primitive and simple societies), psychological anthropology (study of cross-cultural variation in psychological traits), political anthropology (the study of the evolution of political structures in a society), anthropology of religion (the study of evolution of religion and religious practices), ethno-archeology (study of the ancient societies based on the ruins). Physical Anthropology is sub categorized as primatology (study of the primates, different life forms), Ethnology (study of the diversities in culture and races), human biology (holistic understanding of the evolution of human beings along with the effects of cultures on human development), Paleo-anthropology (study of the biological history of mankind with the help of fossil evidences), human genetics (study of hereditary and evolution), human growth and development (study of human evolution and its effect on environment), anthropometry (anthropological science of measurement). Hence, Anthropological understanding subsumes many branches of knowledge.

The methods used in Anthropological research are unique and vastly qualitative. Until recently, before the development of anthropometry as a separate branch, anthropological explanations were vividly graphic with or without the narratives of the people studied. The most commonly used research method in anthropology Ethnography or participant observation sometimes involving structured or semi-structured interviews of the subjects studied. The use of Ethnography sets Anthropology apart from other disciplines since enthnography largely involves the in-depth study of a society using multiple data collection techniques like participant observation, interviews, focus group studies, textual analysis to provide a holistic account. Ethnography involves the researcher spending time and sometimes

actively participating in the lives of the people under study. This makes social science in general and anthropology is particular, very unique and different from natural sciences, in case of the latter the knowledge acquired is external while the latter deals with human beings and hence the knowledge gained involves certain amount of empathetic understanding of the people under study. The German word 'verstehen' can be used to describe this phenomenon (the term was first used by the German philosopher Max Weber to differentiate the subject matter of the social science from natural science, where he claimed that social science involves interpretive understanding). Anthropological methods involve interweaving of the narratives and reality to provide a detailed picture of the society. Anthropometry, on the other hand is the recent inclusion in the field of anthropology that relies on quantification of the data based on the idea that numbers reduce vagueness. It measures the human body in an attempt to develop a co-relation between physical features and racial and psychological traits.

In any Anthropological study involving participant observation or focus group study, the data is generally recorded in the form of field notes or direct recording of the narratives which are then transcribed and analyzed. Sometimes computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software packages are used to analyze large chunk of non-numerical data. From undiluted qualitative narratives to the quantification introduced by anthropometry. Anthropology has developed as a holistic social science, the effect of which is felt in other sciences as well. To adduce, there is a strong relation between anthropology and sociology, so much so that sometimes these two disciplines are treated similarly because of the similarity of subject matter. The difference lies in the fact that anthropology studies human behavior, especially primates, while sociology focuses on the group behavior and web of interactions that make the formation of society possible.

9.4. Understanding Gender and Gendered perspective

The difference between sex and gender was first introduced by Ann Oakley and this distinction became the basis of the major feminist movements around the globe. Sex came to be associated with the biological or anatomical difference between a boy and a girl while gender is the social construct. According to West and Zimmerman (1987), "doing of gender is undertaken by women and men whose competence as the members of society is hostage to its production. Doing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional and micropolitical activities that cast political pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'" (p-126). They further clarified the position by providing a clear cut

distinction between sex, sex category and gender. While keeping the phallocentric definition of the sex intact, they explained:

" Placement in a sex category is achieved through the application of sex criteria, but in everyday life, categorization is established and sustained by the socially required identificatory displays that proclaim one's membership in one or the other category. In this sense, one's sex category presumes one's sex and stands as proxy for it in many situations, but sex and sex category can vary independently; that is, it is possible to claim membership in a sex category even when the sex criteria are lacking. Gender, in contrast, is the activity of managing situated conduct in the light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category. Gender activities emerge from and bolster claims to membership in a sex category" (p-127).

The construction of gender has been further sustained with the institutionalization of the gender role differences. If Talcott Parsons' idea is to be quoted in this context, then it can be said that men are meant for the instrumental roles (roles that require physical agility and which are financially lucrative but score lower in emotional quotient) whereas women are for expressive roles (highly care giving and emotional roles). The emergence of the distinct private and public sphere adheres to the stereotypical gender roles that portray men as independent and fit to play the role of the bread winner and women essentially as care givers. Even later when the women were allowed to enter the labour market their services were concentrated in the care giving sector that resulted in the 'feminization' of few professions like nursing and teaching. This categorization of jobs based on gender and the resultant differences in pay structure have a very strong biological justification that predisposes men towards physically demanding jobs while women were considered unfit forjobsthat require physical strength and long distance of commute. Later the strict separation of sex and gender came under scrutiny with the rise of postmodern feminism that questioned the biological sex as a structured category. The unique cases of the eunuchs, who possess both the male and female reproductive organshave been cited as a counterclaim to the straitjacketed idea of sex and gender. Gender, barring the interpretation given by the later feminists, is believed to be enactment of the feminine and masculine traits, a performance that define the masculinity and femininity in an individual. Gender entails an underlying power structure that define the dynamics both within the family as well as in the society at large. Tenant leverage has been understood in a different way by the different variants of feminism. According to the liberal feminists gender cleavage or sexism refers to the denial on the part of the society to allow women to access the public sphere. Radical feminists on the other hand define sexism as the byproduct of patriarchy. They believe that the oppression of women visible in the larger society germinates especially in the family. The

definition of sexism varies a little according to the socialist feminists will believe that sexism and patriarchy in general are the byproducts of capitalism. These varied understanding of power dynamics involving the gender binary have been the strong ground for the development of gender perspective.

Gender perspective focuses on the differences in power between two genders in various social structures. It focuses mainly on the discrimination and the lack of opportunities that is meted out to one gender. When a particular discipline is placed under the gender lenses it is often seen that the initial development of the discipline has categorically remained ignorant to the gender cleavage. When a discipline is studied from a gender perspective It focuses mainly on the power differences between a man and a woman. How the power differentials have been dealt with by that discipline. For example, it is often seen that's women's contribution in any discipline or the narratives focusing mainly on women and their activities especially in the historical times have not been well documented. Reiter talked of the "double bias" of anthropologists that is embedded in their research in other cultures that prefers men to be the prime information bearers and easily accessible. "We search them out and tend to pay little attention to women. Believing that men are easier to talk to, more involved in the crucial cultural spheres, we fulfill our own prophecies in finding them to be better informants in the field" (p-14). This not only exemplifies their erroneous understanding of women as being less capable contributors to knowledge but inherently devalues and questions their experience as a legitimate source of knowledge itself. This phenomenon is known as the historical invisibility of women. Even while studying the ancient Indian history or the nationalist movement it is often seen that women are portrayed as second fiddle to men. Especially during the nationalist struggle women have been portrayed as caregivers or as surreptitiousWho assisted in hiding the freedom fighters from the British onslaught. Hence this categorical denial of position of power to women or the consistent insouciance in dealing with women's contribution in any discipline demands immediate rectification. Anthropology, as mentioned above focuses primarily on the life and the activities of the people in the primitive societies. If we dwell on the historical development of anthropology itself and the anthropological accounts, we can see a void has been created in reporting about the condition of women in those societies. In this particular chapter the effort has been made to focus on Anthropology from the gender perspective and to understand the existence or the absence of the women agency among the primates.

9.5. Gendered Perspective in Anthropology

At the outset it becomes an imperative to differentiate between anthropology of gender

and gendered perspective in Anthropology. The former refers to the rise of the evolution of the way sex and gender have been dealt with within Anthropology while the latter refers to the way how women's experience within a social structure have been categorically ignored by the early anthropologists. As pointed out by Upton (2012), "In the early ethnographic studies, gender was often synonymous with kinship or family, and a monograph might include just a single chapter on women or family issues. Despite early female pioneers in the field, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s and the real rise of the feminist anthropology that gender as a distinct area of theoretical and methodological interest took hold within the discipline". The gender loopholes or lack of narratives in the early anthropological accounts have consistently reported by the feminists and feminist anthropologists, thus forcing the later researchers to focus on the systematic inequalities based on gender, the intersection of gender, race and culture, the role of language in constructing the gender biases. The feminist anthropologists have categorically questioned the universal patriarchy and the denial to attach substantive value to the goods produced by women or the incessant display of indifference to value the nurturing roles of women in the early societies. In this regard, a mention should be made of the Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex, where she blamed the women's incapability to participate in military expeditions and hunting due to menstruation and pregnancy as the germination point for the universal subordination of women.

Later Anthropologists like Sacks (1982) and Zihlman (1989) have produced narratives that see female subordination more as a result of male observer bias and privilege and less a 'given' in a particular society. The commencement of the gender sensitivity in anthropology can be credited to the pioneering work of Margaret Mead, Sex and Temperament in three primitive Societies, where she challenged the idea of straitjacketed gender roles in the primitive societies and provided enough evidence to support the claim that gender roles are a product of social conditioning and environment rather than biological as claimed by the earlier ethnographers. Mead (1935) presented the detailed account of gender roles in the three primitive societies of the Arapesh, the Mundugumor and the Tchambuli, where the women belonging to each tribe are distinct from each other. It has been shown that women in the Tchmanbuli are at par with the women in the mainstream societies when it comes to performing various duties both in the public and in the private spheres thus breaking the myth that primitive women lived in the shadow of their male counterpart. What makes Mead different from the earlier anthropologists who have also dealt with gender, alliance and exchange of women (e.g, the famous Alliance Theory of Levi Strauss), the latter have provided the account from a neutral perspective to the partial exclusion of the role of women in the primitive societies apart from their exchange value. The Alliance Theory deals with the way women were exchanged as gifts to procure mates outside the clan, but this

theory has been propounded to study the underlying structural framework of the society rather than as a gender narrative that calls for detailed analysis and criticism. Almost all the ethnographic studies have tried to place women within the kinship structure to understand the development of relationships in any given society.

9.5.1 The rise of the Meta-Narratives

The traditional Anthropologists were mostly involved in developing a meta narrative, a unified system that underlies all the apparent cultural differences. As influenced by the structural linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure, structural anthropology also developed following the same path of recognizing the underlying uniform pattern in a hotchpotch of cultural variations. The diffusionist school of thought in Sociology has been heavily indebted to these works of the anthropologists since they elucidated the idea that culture emanates from one society then spreads to the other societies through the process of social interaction and social assimilation. Sacks and Brodkin (1982) in their famous work Sisters and Wives: The Past and Future of Sexual Equality have dealt with the gendered perspective in Anthropology in great details. According to Sacks and Brodkin (1982), women have always shown from the point of view of innatism, 'Culture is said to associate women with inferior things; women are alleged to be biologically unable to work in groups, or, closest to Spencer, are supposedly too weak and pregnant to compete directly for a place in the pecking order which is society" (p-27). Hence anthropological accounts have always paved the way for portrayal of women as being dependent on men for their survival. Women have studied as being properties of men or as war exploits that paved the way for the subservient situation of women for a long time. The portrayal of women as being subservient to men has never been consciously criticized owing to the general idea that anthropology should mirror the society as it is/was and not try to remedy it. This passage from the said book gives a clear indication of the way women narratives have always been colored'

"….this analysis did not imply granting political or social equality to women because women are not mentally ready for equality with men. First, women respond to appeals based on pity rather than equity…..Second, women focus on the immediate over the abstract. Thus mothers can see only a child's immediate problems, while fathers see beyond these to the shaping of their child's future character. Women's judgment in social affairs is weakened by this same defect. Third, since women love power, they act to strengthen government and church. Doubt or criticism of power and authority is lacking in women….Thus granting equal rights to women would have disastrous consequences for the future of the society, of women, and of the species itself" (p-31).

9.5.2 The gendering of kinship

The gendering of Anthropology is pretty clear from the extract above. The tangible anti women bias has been the hallmark of the pre-gender sensitive era of development of a discipline. The same trend has also been noticed in disciplines like History and Sociology. As mentioned above, history has always been blamed for the invisibility of women in historical events or their contribution has always been overshadowed by the men thus rendering history gendered. While the early Sociologists never considered women fit for ushering in societal changes. From Comte to Durkheim to Spencer, almost all the foundational theorists have focused on androcentric development and interpretation of the subject. The gender lines and the differences in psychology of the sexes have also been altogether ignored by symbolic interactionists like Mead on the pretext that sexual differences are subsequent differences in work facilitates societal equilibrium, perturbing which can jeopardize the inherent harmony in the society.

The notable Anthropological fact which makes the anthropological study even more gendered is the kinship structure existent in the primitive societies. Kinship study forms the very important part of the anthropological study as it helps in understanding the structure of the society by understanding the interaction patterns. Kinship structures are either organized around blood relations (affinal/fraternal/ consanguine) or around marriages (conjugal). It is mainly useful in tracing the decent to determine the property line. It has been seen in studies that almost all the primitive societies have been patrilineal (decent traced from the father's side) with few exceptions which were/are matrilineal (decent traced from the mother's side). The problem faced by the early anthropologists to distinguish decent from authority, i.e., even societies that are matrilineal the authority or the decision-making power are still in the hands of the men in the family. The patriarchal-patrilineal-patrilocal nexus have always been portrayed as given in the society thus calling for the critique from the gender perspective. Apart from the innatism, most of the kinship rules prevalent in the society are mostly androcentric and have been developed to closely monitor the conduct of the women both within and outside the four walls of home. To adduce, some rules specifically binds the limit of interactions permitted between a woman and her male kins like the rules of avoidance and the joking relation. According to the rules of avoidance, a woman should maintain a cordial distance from her father-in-law both out of respect and seniority while the joking relationship is allows for the woman to be a jokingly comfortable with her brother-in-law with no such strongly binding rules. The kinship rules surrounding marriage is premised on the idea of universal male authority and this has been discussed in details by E.E Evans Pritchard in his very famous The Position of Women in Primitive Society (1965). According to Pritchard, women in the primitive

society never strived for a superior position within the domestic sphere or outside of it and this position of women, rooted in biology, has had kept the society harmonious. This unquestioning adherence to innatism has been the major hallmark of Anthropology and guided most of the anthropological researches. Over the years mainstream in anthropology has always been 'male'stream, this calls for an immediate remedy.

9.5.3 The Challenges ahead

But there exists certain challenges in incorporating the gender sensitivity in Anthropology. The main issue lies in focusing on women's experience in a society which poses certain difficulties like the social class and background of the researcher herself/himself. The next limitation is in treating women as a category needing special attention which to some extent connects identity to gender. As explained by Shapiro (1981),

"In treating women as a group or category apart, we fail to pose a sufficiently pointed challenge to the traditional fields of scholarly inquiry. The charge that women have been relatively ignored by the social sciences, while true, does not adequately address the problem. The real issue, in my opinion, is that the social sciences have yet to come to terms with gender as a social fact. They have suffered from a tendency to relegate sex to the domain of the infra-social, to view sex roles largely in terms of how biology constrains society. The message from current sex-role research is that gender must be viewed from the perspectives of economics, politics, religion, philosophy, art- in brief, that gender is a total social fact that takes on its meaning and function from the wider cultural system of which it is a part." (p-448)

Early Ethnographers have kept the importance of sex roles obfuscated and refused to attach any special significance to them. For example, Malinowski's study of the Trobriand Islanders has never focused on the women and their roles in the said society. It has been seen that most of the anthropological studies focusing on the institution of marriage have been done from the masculine perspective. A good example of this has been presented by Shapiro (1981), where she writes that marriage among the Tiwis, an Australian aboriginal has been studied earlier but it took many years for a female ethnographer to come up with the study of marriage among the same Tiwis but from a female perspective. There is no denying the fact that the way these institutions are experienced by women is very different from men, hence it is becomes an imperative to focus on the 'other' side of the interpretation as well (in the binary understanding of the society, women are generally seen as 'other' while the men is the universal sex). This has given rise to the feminist ethnography/anthropology premised on the idea that, if there exist no anthropology of women but there can be

anthropology by women. Feminist ethnography focuses on the women's experience, needs and aspirations and preferably by 'female' ethnographers because the latter can bond with the female informants by the virtue of shared experiences- 'Women, by the virtue of being an oppressed class that has to deal with a dominant class, achieve the kind of 'double consciousness' that also characterizes economically exploited and racially stigmatized group" (ibid, p-461). The rise of feminist anthropology corresponded with the rise of feminist consciousness to a great extent. The three waves of feminist anthropology moved beyond the apparent gender dichotomy to the differences in identity formation and its repercussions among men and women. They criticized the tendency of the ethnographers to equate nature/culture division with the male/female dichotomy. They challenged the universalization of the dichotomous gender model which became the basis for the rise of the queer identity and queer theory later on.

9.6. Conclusion

The amalgamation of gender and anthropology as well as kinship has given rise to the plethora of insights into the existing narratives of the early society. The construction of patriarchal structures and its continuation is largely contingent upon the formation of the societies dating back to historic times. The systematic inequality embedded in the very societal structures have oftentimes been overlooked by the early ethnographers or anthropologists and even historians. Hence the gendered perspective in Anthropology and kinship is an attempt to remedy this 'invisibility of women' and focus on the gendered social relations.

9.7. Summary

Anthropology and kinship like in any other discipline, has been androcentric from its very inception. The preponderance of the male anthropological researchers and huge percentage of male readers have been categorically responsible for ignoring women's experience and roles in the traditional society. The development of anthropology in Indi have also followed the same trend, though according to G.S Ghurye there is a fine line separating Anthropology and sociology in India given the huge population of tribals in the country. Even then, gender sensitive discussion of the affairs, be it tribal or otherwise is tangibly missing, barring some scant reporting of social ceremonies involving women among some tribes (eg, the bow and arrow ceremony among the Todas in Nilgiris to determine

the social fatherhood of the unborn child in case of fraternal polyandry). Most of these reports mainly focus on the male's version of the phenomenon to the total or partial exclusion of the women's perspective. It can be argued that Anthropological accounts should cut across gender, caste, class or religion but taking the focus away from women's roles in the society can be taken as a faulty reporting of the phenomenon. It becomes an imperative for ethnographers and anthropologist to connect the societal variables with gender to see the overall societal structures. Hence the rise of feminist anthropology should be supported to fill the loopholes left by the early researchers while developing the discipline.

9.8. Questions

Answer the following questions very briefly :

   i.   What is Anthropology?

   ii.   What is the difference between sex and gender?

   iii.   Give the names of two branches of Anthropology.

Answer the following questions briefly :

   i.   What are the major methods of investigation used in Anthropology?

   ii.   What is the difference between enthnography and field research?

   iii.   Briefly state the underlying meaning of 'gendered perspective'.

Answer the following elaborately :

   i.   Explain how the gendered perspective applied in any discipline can enrich the understanding of the subject.

   ii.   Elucidate the development of Anthropological thought in the mainstream social sciences.

   iii.   Highlight the development of patriarchal structure in the ancient societies with special reference to India.

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Module III
Family, Household and Marriage

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Unit 10 : Changing Structure and Functions of Marriage

Structure of Unit

10.1. Learning Objectives

- To describe society's current understanding of marriage and family relationship.

- To understand the definitional debates on marriage.

- To recognize changes in marriage forms and patterns.

- To explore the changing functions of marriage.

- To extent the newness in marriage.

10.2. Introduction

Love never failed. Love embraces all or it embraces nothing. It permeates every activity of life or it simply is not there at all. Love, sex, marriage, and families are subjects of intrinsic interest to nearly everyone. Perhaps this is so because they represent common experiences that are given special errand and institutional safety in one form or another by all societies. Marriage and family are the key structures in most societies, and these are considered to be the oldest and the most basic and fundamental institutions in the sub-systems of the society. Both are important for the existence and functioning not only of society, but also for the sustenance and continuation of human being.

The concept of marriage varies in degree from community to community and nation to nation. Marriage is not merely a social channelization of instinctive impulses and motivations but it is a live social bondage. According to Horton and Hunt (1964: 206), "Marriage is the approved social pattern, whereby two or more persons establish a family". Marriage as a socially sanctioned union of male and female, is an institution devised by society to sanction the union and mating of male and female for purposes of (a) establishing a household (b) entering into sex relations, (c) procreating and (d) providing care for the offspring.

We can define marriage as a legally recognized social contract between two persons, traditionally based on a sexual relationship and implying a permanence of the union. In creating an inclusive definition, we should also consider variations, such as whether a legal union is required (think of "common-law" marriage and its equivalents), or whether more than two people can be involved (consider polygamy). Other variations on the definition of marriage might include whether spouses are of opposite sexes or the same sex, and how one of the traditional expectations of marriage (to produce children) is understood today.

In our present world, the meaning of marriage is becoming more complicated. In some areas, same-sex couples are pursuing the right to be married. Certainly, a legal recognition of this does not create or eliminate the agreements that couples make between themselves, but these couples desire that legal recognition. In addition, high divorce rates mean that many children will not be raised in a traditional family unit. Here again, the fact is that if the parents are not married, it does not mean that they may not have any family. Rather, nowadays family is constructed in newer dimension where marriage is less important.

10.3. Definitional debates

As it always has, the meaning of marriage is changing as the times change. As society changes, the institution of marriage is also changing from one form to other. These structure-functional changes may or may not be a good thing; in the end, they are probably a little of both. The meaning of marriage, in the modern world, is in a bit of flux; when people do get married, they should make sure that they agree up front on what they mean by marriage.

The early definitions of marriage that have been formulated prior to 1955 throw light on various features that are required to constitute a marriage. The anthropological source emphasized that marriage is a ritually recognized union between man and woman. It is also a relation of one or more men to one or more women, which is recognized by custom or law, and involves certain rights or duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of the children born into it (Westermarck, 1922: 26). "Marriage is a relationship established between a woman and one or more other persons, which provides that a child born to the woman under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, is accorded full birth-status rights common to normal members of his society or social stratum." (Gough, 1968: 68).

As a socially legitimate heterosexual union between a man and a woman, marriage is a biological relationship for mating and reproduction. Biologically, thus, the object of this

institutional setting is not to legalize a sexual relationship, but rather to ensure the survival of the species and of the race (Stone and Stone, 1939: 18). From this point of view, marriage is not merely a sexual union, but an institution for production and care of offspring, and for this biological reason the primitive people recognized that mating of close kin produces bad results such as abnormal or insufficient number of children and, therefore, incest taboos were created.

Anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard says that the sex is mainly bounded with marriage and the first sexual play occurs in imitation of one of the domestic routines of married life. It occurs in response to a cultural, and not to an instinctive, urge. (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 50).

The modern definitions that have been proposed after 1955 heave that angel where marriage makes demands upon the individual which are at times contrary to basic drives, sexual ones in particular. It becomes a relationship, which provides that a child born to the woman under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship is accorded full birth-status rights common to normal members of his society or social stratum (Gough, 1968: 68).

Do you know?

Marriage continues in popularity because of its nature. Indeed, it is a strongly established social habit. Social institutions such as marriage tend to be self-perpetuating. People get used to behaving in certain ways and they tend to go on behaving that way.

Thus, the definition in modern time is becoming so complicated because in some societies sexual rights, economic responsibilities, or socialization of children are not derived from relationships in marriage. As a social, legal and religious institution, marriage has undergone any number of modifications and changes; nevertheless, its basic realities remain the same. The permanent, indissoluble, sacramental union of the orthodox differs strikingly from the free, easily served, and often not even officially registered marriages. In the end of 20th century, in most societies, marriage transforms the status of a man and woman, stipulates the degree of sexual access the married partners may have to each other (exclusive, preferred), establishes the legitimacy of children born to the female part, creates relationships between the husband's and wife's kin, and specifies economic duties of husband and wife.

Presently, marriage becomes a right where homosexual elements are contained. In heterosexual case, most marriages are monogamous, involving a romantic commitment to only one mate. Polygamy is now the controversial practice of being married to more than

one person at a time. The religious elements of marriage sometime help to maintain polygyny form of polygamous marriage. Now, as an institution, marriage endows reflective rational experience with individuality and makes human beings subjects of rights and duties, finds expression in a temporal biological relationship.

Westermarck argues that marriage is a social institution that rests on a biological foundation, and developed through a process in which human males came to live together with human females for sexual gratification, companionship, mutual economic aid, procreation, and the joint rearing of offspring. On the other hand Morgan writes, But the marriage institution was as peculiar as the family. Men did not seek wives as they are sought in civilized society, from affection, for the passion of love … was unknown among them. Marriage, therefore, was not founded upon sentiment but upon convenience and necessity.

10.4. Cohabitation and Marriage: Search for an Institutional Structure

Marriage is not about love, in that love is not a necessary or sufficient condition for the institutional constraints. Marriage is not about social status, lowering household expenditures, or tax benefits. Though love, social value, cost savings, and tax credits help increase the value of marriage, they are not the reasons why we have the formal and informal rules regulating entry, exit, and behavior in this ancient institution. Rather, marriage institutions are about creating proper incentives, which often support love, social status, and the like in an effort to raise successful future generations.

One of the essential purposes of marriage is procreation. If cohabitation is to develop into a viable alternative to marriage, then it must become a good environment for children to be born and raised. Pamela Smock (2000) identifies two major issues facing these children. First, in general, cohabiting households have fewer economic resources than married households. Second, children in cohabiting households are likely to experience family instability because many cohabitational relationships terminate. Both of these matters have serious implications for the well-being of children who experience parental cohabitation.

Cohabitation serves as a transitional stage between single and married life. Cohabitation is perceived as a trial marriage that is meant to assess the viability of the partnership in the long term. In this sense, cohabitation is a pragmatic option because of its potential to weed out bad matches before marriage, with the putative intention being less chance of divorce. As noted above, the majority of cohabiting couples expect to transform their cohabitation into marriage, and most do. For example, cohabitation has rapidly become an antecedent

to marriage in developed countries like, Britain, Canada and USA. In these countries, an essential change in the gender division of labor has followed women's increased participation in the waged labor force.

Reduction in the expected economic gains from marriage has made men and women more hesitant to enter marital unions, but a shared household still offers economic advantages. Cohabitations make good sense because they capitalize on the benefits of a shared household without the economic risks associated with marriage. Apart from economic explanations, changes in social norms bound up in the rise of individualism also explain the increase in cohabitation. By contrast, contemporary cohabitation behaviour is a conscious choice, one that expresses the tension that has developed between personal goals and social norms. In this respect, cohabitation has increased because marriage can often decrease or disrupt individual goal attainment. Family turns into household, when marriage alters its form as cohabitation.

Although cohabitation has existed throughout history, modern trends are especially important because they are part of a broader pattern of social transformation affecting the family. The institution of marriage remains the dominant form of family living, but the rapid increase in cohabitation suggests this could change. Durability of marriage has been reduced to the calculation of gains and losses resulting from remaining in the relationship or breaking it up and entering a new one. All those changes of marital and family life have led to the search for new, alternative models of living as a couple. In the broad sweep of history, marriage has been dominant for a relatively short period. From this point of view, family institutions express the needs and values of society at a given time.

As such, we must take care to perceive marriage in these terms. Marriage is not necessarily a permanent institution, nor is it the best form of family organization. The dominance of marriage over the past two centuries should not be taken as evidence that other forms of family living are immoral or illegitimate. If the decline in marriage rates and increase in cohabitation rates tell us one thing, it is that the family is a flexible institution. Given that the meaning of the family has shifted throughout history, it is simply inappropriate to rule out the possibility that non-marital union will become the norm.

10.5. Elements in the Structure of Marriage and Its Change

The institution of marriage is found in all societies. In a popular sense, marriage means stabilized patterns of norms and roles associated with the mutual relationship between

husband and wife. It joins together a man (or men) and a woman (or women) in a special kind of social and legal arrangement that serves several purposes for a society. While this definition fits what is meant by marriage universally, it is not broad enough to encompass the essential features of marriage across all cultures. However, because marriage as an institution may differ in structure, function, dynamics, and meaning from one culture to another, no all-encompassing definition of marriage is possible (Kottak 1991).

If we generalize the structural elements in marriage system, we can find that as an institution, marriage consists of a set of patterned behaviours, expectations and relationships that are organized and endured over time. It includes the ceremonies, rites or rituals through which married status is achieved and as an institutional process, it is marked by gradual phenomenal changes that lead to ultimate dissolution through separation, divorce or death. The caste and religious elements in marriage structure are now changing rapidly. There has been broadening of the endogamous frontier, and greater frequency of inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. Search for spouses through the mass media (newspaper advertisements), and love marriages do occur within the caste as well as become instances of inter-caste marriages.

10.5.1. Economic element in the structure of marriage

Marriage is an economic institution, which may in various ways affect the proprietary rights of the parties. For patriarchy, it has been the husband's duty, so far as it is possible and necessary, to support his wife and children; but it may also be their duty to work for him. Even the Russian Soviet law, which does not compel either spouse to follow the other if the latter changes residence, recognizes the economic aspect of marriage by prescribing that the husband shall support his wife and the wife her husband in case the other party is necessitous and unable to work.

The definition of the marital relationship includes not only guidelines for behaviour relating to sex but also regarding things like the particular way labour is to be divided and other duties and privileges. This economic element in marriage structure has already changed and much stress is being laid on the economic value of the girl; the ethical and ideological norms of society are losing their importance. The rights of property and the percentage of contribution in economic participation can be anticipated by their position in marriage market.

The economic element in the structure of marriage depicts it as the conjugal contract – that is, 'the terms on which husbands and wives exchange goods, incomes, and services, including labour, within the household' (Whitehead, 1984: 93) The inbuilt inequality within

marital decision-making and workloads is a powerful force that works against gender equality at home, in the workplace or in government. Sociological attention focuses on rights in and regarding children, sexuality, domestic and economic services and property.

There has been a remarkable reduction in marriage rituals, including the period of celebration, but there is also a noticeable rise in conspicuous consumption. Lavish dinners and grand decorations at farmhouses, video filming of the celebrations and grand gifts are becoming the order of the day. Demands for dowry are on the rise and the inventory of things being given in dowry has been constantly changing. It is also important to note that now even daughters prod their parents to spend more on their weddings and to give them a large dowry. While the family of the bridegroom is usually blamed for the menace of dowry, the fact of daughters making excessive demands on their parents is generally overlooked.

10.5.2 Cultural element in the structure of marriage

Marriage a pivotal institution in the social functioning of all cultures. The cultural elements in marriage structure are changing with an acceleration. Polyamory may be seen as a relatively new phenomenon in postmodern western world; even in 1950s America, "wife swapping" was not an uncommon pastime. Upper-class people would have sexual relations with their friends' spouses yet maintain their marriages. In the 1970s there was "swinging," where committed partners would allow their mates to have sexual relations with relative strangers at swingers' parties (Howe, 2011). These liaisons were more about sex than love, but they raise the question of whether monogamy should be expected. Interestingly, today in the Netherlands, plural marriage is allowed (Schroeder, 2008).

Change in cultural elements creates role conflict in marital life. The fact of women entering the world of work has affected the family time-table and role responsibilities. It is also affecting child socialization – domestic servants and nursery schools perform the role of substitute carer.

Now within the consumer culture, pornography (basically "safe sex" on the part of the voyeurs consuming it) is deeply sentimental, insofar as it imagines that human eros could ever be duty-free enjoyment disconnected from the hard purposes of birth and death. Parents just about never treat their kids like machines or as resources to be exploited for their own convenience. They're reminded every moment that there's nothing about real children that's "pure consciousness," either.

> ### *Think about*
>
> What do you think? Should a committed love relationship mean that we should only have sex with that one person for the rest of our lives? Do you think humans are supposed to be monogamous? Or, is this practice a social construction? See how you feel about the different types of polyamorous unions that exist.

10.5.3 Moral element in the structure of marriage

A woman's sexual experience should be limited to intercourse with the husband has been rejected. This traditional moral element as the myth of submissive woman, for whom sexual intercourse is devoid of pleasure and exclusively constitutes a marital duty has collapsed, as well. Schroeder (2008) talks about different polyamorous marital relation configurations:

1. primary/secondary structure—a couple is committed to each other and any other liaisons are considered secondary, meaning they can never interfere with or join the first relationship.

2. multiple primary partners—there can be polyfidelity in this structure, or group marriage/ partnership, where all partners involved are married or committed to each other but no one strays outside of that group.

3. open model—in this structure, the key multiple primary partners are committed to each other but all agree that other sexual or love relationships would be acceptable.

10.5.4 Legal elements in the strucutre of marriage

One aspect of marriage that makes it an institution rather than a private con-tract is the involvement of third parties. These involvements are both formal and informal. Third party involvement in marriage is extensive. Parents often have a say regarding the choice of spouse. The state controls who gets married. In modern societies, third-party recognition is provided by state registration and therefore state definition of 'marriage'. Recently, this legal aspect of marriage becomes the sole domain of one man and one woman. Polygamous, same-sex, and nonsexual unions were never allowed to marry. Other entry conditions include age of consent, and blood relations. The state also controls the terms under which a marriage may end. Grounds for divorce were historically very limited, but the rate of divorce is getting high through legalized process.

Legal elements in the structure of marriage may serve to do the following: To establish the legal father of a woman's children; To establish the legal mother of a man's children; To give the husband a monopoly of the wife's sexuality; To give the wife a monopoly of the husband's sexuality; To give the husband partial or monopolistic rights to the husband's labour services; To give the wife partial or monopolistic rights to the husband's labour services; To give the husband partial or total rights over property belonging or potentially accruing to the wife; To give the wife partial or total rights over property belonging or potentially accruing to the husband; To establish a joint fund of property for the benefit of the children of the marriage; To establish a socially significant relationship of affinity between the husband and his wife's brothers (Leach, 1971: 107-108). Rapid development in cohabitation practices changes these elements within the structure of marriage.

10.5.5 Gendered elements in the structure of marriage

The emergence of gender studies, women's studies, and gay and lesbian studies has often meant that traditional areas such as sociology of the family and marriage have been overshadowed by new questions, methods and new foci of research. While contemporary sociologists explore gay and lesbian cultures, an older, perhaps more socially conservative, tradition, represented by the work of Peter Laslett, Peter Willmott, Michael Young, and Elizabeth Bott in Britain and by W. J. Goode in America, went into decline. This relative decline of the family as a key topic of research is ironic – given the alleged ideological dominance of heterosexuality ('heteronormativity') in mainstream society and in conventional sociology.

There have been changes in the age for marriage, coupled with rise in literacy rates. Because of late marriages, women stay longer with their parents and continue their studies to brighten the prospects of their marriage. Some join the labour force. We can imagine, however, that current sociological views of what constitutes gender and sexuality will have to change radically with changes in how humans reproduce through new reproductive technologies, surrogacy, same-sex marriages, 'designer babies,' and cloning.

10.5.6 Ecological elements in the structure of marriage

Marriage contains ecological elements in its structure. This ecological elements depict that sexual competition among family members would create so much rivalry and tension that the family could not function as an effective unit and that since the family must function effectively for society to survive, society has to curtail competition within family and that the incest taboo is imposed to avoid conflict within and disruption of the family. New born baby contains genetical imprint of mixture structure among races. This arrangement was a

positive outcome of need for survival. That means, early human populations practiced exogamy in order to live at peace with them and exogamy continued as a custom since those early times.

The changing nature of marriage structure germinates new element in it that alters this ecological element by surrogacy and adoption. The ecological representation of wedding ceremony is often based on religious belief and practice, but marriage itself is a civil institution. Now-a-day, marriage seems to be a rather resilient institution; perhaps, very gradually, the benefits for both husband and wife will become more balanced. This balanced situation makes marriage as a live-in relation without any child.

10.6. The Changing Functions of Marriage

In most societies, marriages are formed to produce children. From the perspective of evolutionary biology and sociobiology, all individual human beings, as with other species, are driven to reproduce and invest in their offspring to ensure that their genes are passed on to future generations. For at least two million years and perhaps longer, marriage or some arrangement like it has been the social relationship that has proven most effective for this purpose. Now it is suggested that the metamorphosis of housewife to bread-winner sends tremors through every relationship. Dual-earning marriages are sowing the seeds of change.

10.6.1 Sexual Functions and Its Change

Like most species of animals, human beings must mate in order to reproduce themselves. However, unlike other animals human beings tend to form relatively permanent mating pairs. By itself mating does not constitute marriage (Jha, 1994: 45). Every human society has formulated certain rules and regulations to define a formal, permanent mating relationship as marriage. Partners in a marriage have sexual rights in one another. Through marriage society organizes sex activities. As a result pre-marital and extra marital relations are increasing. Number of prostitution centers, dance bar etc. are also increasing. Marriage is made in religious place and in court at many times without parental permission.

10.6.2 Reproductive Functions and Its Change

The institution of marriage regulates and socially validates relatively long-term, legitimate sexual relations between males and females. Marriage serves as a means for getting together to satisfy sex needs and to start the reproductive process. It is through reproduction, human

species is replicated and society is perpetuated. Therefore, the institution of marriage serves biological functions. With the development of science and technology particularly with the development of genetic engineering test tube babies with surrogacy are born which greatly affects the reproductive functions of the couples. Births of more number of children are discouraged.

On the other hand, changes are being seen in fertility behaviour and in family planning practices. The continuing preference for male children has led to malpractices in the medical profession. Private clinics clandestinely conduct sonographic tests for sex determination of the embryo; as a consequence, there is a rise in the number of doctor-assisted abortion cases. Female feticide is a most worrying phenomenon. This is also a dysfunctional aspect of marital life.

10.6.3 Economic Functions and Its Change

As long as discrimination of labour by sex exists, every society has to have some mechanism by which men and women share the produce of their labour. Marriage would be one way to solve this problem. The institution of marriage solves the problem of how to share the work efforts of men and women and how to implement organized division of labour at the individual and inter-personal level (Jha, 1994: 46). Without co-operation in food getting and obtaining other necessities such as water and shelter, an individual cannot survive. Thus, the institution of marriage performs economic function in the form of bringing economic co-operation between men and women and ensuring the survival of individuals in every society. Presently, marital conflicts can be about virtually anything. Couples complain about sources of conflict ranging from verbal and physical abusiveness to personal characteristics and behaviours. Perceived inequity in a couple's division of labour is associated with marital conflict and with a tendency for the male to withdraw in response to conflict.

10.6.4 Social Functions and Its Change

Marriage is based on the desire to perpetuate one's family line. It is also a way to acquire new kinsmen, for at marriage one adds not only a spouse but most of a spouse's relatives to one's own group of kin. That means the institution of marriage brings with it, the creation and perpetuation of the family, the formation of person-to-person relations and linking of one kin group to another kin group (Jha, 1994: 46). Thus, the institution of marriage serves several social functions. In recent times, the institution of marriage has been free from the many customs, ceremonies and additional expenditures of olden times. Change in social function may expose conflict over power, which is also strongly related to marital dissatisfaction. Spouses' reports of conflict over extramarital sex, problematic drinking, or

drug use predict divorce, as do wives' reports of husbands being jealous and spending money foolishly.

10.6.5 Educational Functions and Its Change

The care and protection of offspring are at the heart of human social organization. Human infants have the longest period of infant dependency of any primate. The institution of marriage socializes the young to be responsible future parents to pass the culture from one generation to another. The child's prolonged dependence generally places the greatest burden on parent. Unless the parents educate their young through enculturation process, the young cannot acquire culture and carry out bio-social activities successfully (Jha, 1994: 46). It is the institutions of marriage that entrusts the task of educating the young to the parents and passing on culture from one generation to another. Without education or enculturation process, it cannot serve educative functions for the survival of individuals and for the continuity of culture. Presently this function is performed by different agencies.

10.6.6 Change in Marriageable Age

The right partner and development of a personal relationship with him/her are important elements in every marriage. Even today we come across instances when young boys and girls are forced to get married under external pressure from family, despite the fact that they don't seem ready or responsible enough. The 'readiness' for marriage involves the "ability to take on the responsibilities of marriage". Not only does one need to take up one's partner's responsibilities but later, problems are augmented with the birth of a child. Hence, marriage and parenthood require special skills and resources of the individuals involved. Thus, we may say, in preparing for marriage, age is the most important question.

In the Vedic period, post-puberty marriage seems to have been a usual practice (Raj Bali Pandey, 1949). After performing the initiation ceremony at the age of eight years, a man was sent to his teacher's house where he stayed for about twelve years or so. Thus, ordinarily a man was more than twenty years of age at the time of marriage. Since the ideal difference in the age of husband and wife was considered to be two to five years, we can say, girls were not married at a tender age. It was from about 400 B.C. that the marriageable age was gradually lowered and the tendency on the whole was in the direction of lower age at marriage, preferably between eight and ten years.

One most important factor which has brought change in the age for marriage is the realization of dysfunctional aspects of child marriage. Pre-puberty marriage is dysfunctional not only for the individual but also for the family and the society. It affects the health of the mother, for at an early age a woman is not fully prepared for the great physical and mental

strains of maternity. The comparative immaturity of mother in turn affects the health of her children too. Since by marrying at an early age the period available for begetting children is large, the size of the family also becomes large which makes it difficult to maintain minimum living standards. In some cases, child marriage creates maladjustments in family, ultimately leading to family disorganization, immorality, suicides, etc. All this has forced people in the present days, particularly the educated ones, to avoid child marriages. (Ahuja, 1993: 165-166)

While in India the trend ranges from early marriage to late marriage, in America and some European countries, it is just the reverse. One reason for this change from late to early marriage is that boys and girls have freedom of freely mixing with each other and the partner for marriage is selected through courtship. This sometimes results in premarital sex relations which compel them to marry earlier. Secondly, people have freedom to divorce if their marriage fails. Though Indians too seem to enjoy that freedom, yet because of the socio-cultural values, divorce is discouraged in our society. Lastly, after marriage wife is not an economic burden on her husband like her counterpart in India. She has to fend for herself.

10.6.7 Suitable Age for Marriage

The question of ability to adjust in a new environment after marriage is also very significant in determining the minimum age for marriage. An Indian girl, after marriage, is expected to accept her husband's role dominance and mother-in-law's treatment with patience. She has also to bear the habits, the ideologies, and the behaviour patterns of other members in the family and acquire their tastes. This requires not only adjustment but assertion also, if need be. A girl of tender age is mentally less capable of such adjustment and assertion. Only a girl who has crossed her adolescence, that is, who is above 20-21 years has this capability. On this basis, therefore, it may be maintained that marriage after 20-21 years is ideal.

We may suggest that the most suitable age for marriage in our society is early twenties'. About three decades ago, Ghurye (1963: 67) had also suggested that the average age of females at marriage should be about twenty-two years and in the case of males, it should not be above twenty-five years. Considering the necessity of education for the success of marriage and for the economic independence of a woman, it may be suggested that 20-21 would be a more desirable minimum age for marriage for girls and 22-23 for boys. Thus, there is a great necessity for revising our laws and raising the minimum age for marriage.

10.6.8 Stability of Marital Union

All marriages cannot succeed; some end in disharmony. In some marriages which fail, some fatalists, believing in an inescapable destiny, just drag on and pull over, some optimists who think that happiness is a state of mind try to readjust themselves; but some break their marriages. Of those who break their marital bonds, some break them functionally and some structurally. Desertion and divorce are structural breakups. Desertion – either temporary or permanent – is illegal and unofficial and is an irresponsible departure from the home on the part of either husband or wife, leaving the family to fend for itself; divorce is legal severing of marital ties or final termination of bona-fide marriage.

Desertion occurs more frequently among the lower classes and castes than among the upper economic and social groups. Mostly it is husbands who desert their wives. Though divorce is always a tragedy because the rejected mate feels crushed and humiliated, the social consequences of desertion are more dysfunctional than those of divorce, particularly in the case of a woman. She comes to suffer from many emotional, social and economic handicaps. Emotionally she is upset because she feels she has been humiliatingly rejected by her spouse; socially she suffers because she is uncertain whether her husband would return or not and what to tell the children about their father, economically she is handicapped because of the lack of financial means to support herself and her children. The poor lady neither considers herself a married woman (because she does not enjoy the marital rights of protection, economic support, etc.) nor a widow (because her husband is still alive), nor a divorcee (because she cannot remarry). For earning livelihood, either she takes up a job or is forced to send her children to work and earn.

Since in this age of vast unemployment and specialized training, getting a job is not easy for woman, some deserted women take to an immoral life. Some women who manage to find work outside home not only have to leave their children unsupervised but also find their income to be too meagre for the family. Out of such situations arise problems of child-labour, juvenile delinquency, disorganized personalities, and so on. But no sociological studies have been undertaken in India to analyze this problem of desertion. Nor we have any social security schemes in our country that the cases of the deserted wives may be brought before some public agency. We cannot, therefore, ascertain its true extent and its effects on our society. Divorce, however, has come to draw our attention in the last few decades.

10.7. Conclusion

Divorce is not always the result of marital disharmony. Some wives no doubt seek break

because of the alleged neglect, callousness and even cruelty at the hands of their husbands; but in some cases women seek divorce only because they are having trouble of one sort or another at the hands of their in-laws. Some husbands apply for divorce either because they are doubtful about their wives' single-minded devotion to them or because they find intellectual and educational gaps between themselves and their wives. In those cases where wives belong to orthodox families where their upbringing is strict and they have no opportunity to mix with the opposite sex, they are unable to keep up with their husbands' social life. The opposite also sometimes holds good (though less often) where the wife finds living with husband colourless and dull. In arranged marriages where the reason for entering into matrimony is not mutual attraction but a variety of other factors like respect for parents, good dowry, high family connections, etc., there is less chance of give and take and a low desire for adjustment and accommodation. No wonder, therefore, young people refuse to put up with their marital problems and seek divorce as an escape from an unsatisfactory marriage. (Ahuja, 1993: 182-183)

The chance of separation or divorce is higher in the cases of lower compatibility between husband and wife, in marriage union. The chance of divorce and separation is also higher if any one of husband or wife is engaged with extra marital relation. It is also higher if one of them is impotent, that is, having sexual problems. Ego clash is another reason, which is very typical, mainly in Indian society. The wife is not expected to be more educated or of earning capacity than the husband. Other than this mental stress, dilemma may cause to build anxiety in husband or wife which may lead to divorce or separation.

10.8. Summary

Marriage involves the allocation of rights and obligations among the parties to the agreement. Not all traditionalist societies subscribe to arranged marriages in which there is no parallel to "free choice" dating systems. In some (e.g., Borneo, and among the Tepoztlan of Mexico), young men initiate relationships themselves (Ramu, 1989). However, contacts that follow are, as in China, not dating but courtship. Among second generation immigrants to the West from collectivist societies, customs may be changing—more or less rapidly depending on the culture of origin and certain other factors such as education. Muslim Arab Americans, for instance, see western dating practices as threatening to several requirements of their patrilineal families. However, their boys are given more latitude to date than are their girls, and in general, group dating is preferred (DeGenova, 1997).

In her classic study of Nayar marriage arrangements, Kathleen Gough considers both the general anthropological position that marriage is a universal and that it performs a similar

set of functions in different societies (Gough, 1959a, 1959b). The Nayar are an upper caste group, who are organized politically into small kingdoms and territorially into localized matrilineal descent groups. Although many of their practices have changed after the imposition of British colonial rule, a reconstruction of their traditional system suggests that no substantial marital institutions were present, at least from a Western perspective. On reaching puberty, a woman could entertain an indefinite number of lovers, usually between three and eight, without any public concern over sexual fidelity or paternal responsibility, the two basic features of marriage in European societies.

In individualist societies, certain aspects of dating are changing. Forms of meeting and getting acquainted now include "video dating services, introduction services, computer bulletin boards, and 900 party line services" (Strong et al. 2001: 229)—often called *cyberdating*. What their effect will be is not clear, but certain changes can already be seen. For instance, in face-to-face meetings, physical appearance is the initial basis of attraction while in cyberdating, face-to-face contact is replaced by conversational skill as the basis for the initial impression. The consequence of this and other changes, however, is as yet unknown.

10.9. Questions

10.9.1 Answer in detail:

    a.   How do you justify the definitional debate in marriage system?

    b.   What are the six elements in marriage structure?

    c.   What are the major functions of marriage?

    d.   Is marriage a social institution?

10.9.2 Answer briefly:

    a.   What should a marriage consist of?

    b.   What are the legal elements of structure of marriage?

    c.   What are the changing economic functions of marriage?

    d.   Write a short note on the ecological function of marriage?

10.9.3 Answer very briefly:

    a.   What are the basic functions of marriage?

b.   How does changing status of women impact on marriage market?

c.   Why does marriage continue in popularity?

d.   Write briefly on dating.

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10.11. Glossary

Exogamy, an alternative form of **endogamy** (endo=inside, gamy=marriage), is a rule that requires selection of spouse from outside one's own kin group or community.

In vitro fertilization is a process or a medical procedure whereby an egg is fertilized by sperm in a test tube, culture dish, or elsewhere outside a living organism.

Institution is an organized way of doing something.

Marital life refers to the relationship you have with the person you are married to.

Marital Structure is any sexual arrangement of person in institutionalized marital relationships.

Monogamy is when you are married to, or in a sexual relationship with, one person at a time.

Polygamy is the practice of marrying multiple spouses. When a man is married to more than one wife at a time, sociologists call this **polygyny**. When a woman is married to more than one husband at a time, it is called **polyandry**.

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of reproductive disease or infirmity.

Surrogate mother is that woman, who bears a child on behalf of another woman, either from her own egg fertilized by the other woman's partner, or from the implantation in her uterus of a fertilized egg from the other woman.

Unit 11 : Family and Household

Structure of the unit

11.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the definitional aspect of family.

- To know about the features of a household.

- To realize sociologically the difference between family and household.

- To comprehend the determinants and types of household in 21st century.

- To recognize the recent trend and future of non-family household system.

11.2. Introduction

The family is the most important primary group in society. We care about family owing to its immense importance in the life of an individual as well as to the society and nation at large. It is the elementary form of all social groupings; the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed; an outstanding interactive unit, within which the child develops its basic attitudes. Family, almost unquestionably, is the most important of all other groups that human experience offers. We join other groups for longer or shorter periods of time to satisfy some interests or desires. The family on the contrary is always with us or more precisely we are within it.

Moreover, family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, constituting a single household and interacting with each other in their respective social positions of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister. This family group is often confused with the household. Boarders and roomers sharing a common residence may be included in a household, but it is not family. The family is also sometimes confused with kindred because of the unit of blood lines, but kindred may be divided into several households. Frequently the family is not differentiated from the married pair, but the essence of the family group is the parent-child relationship, which may be absent from many cohabiting pairs. Marriage defines the procedures for establishing and terminating the husband-wife relation, as well as the reciprocal obligations and the accepted restrictions upon its personnel.

11.3. Definitional Aspects of Family

The arguments related to define the family are mostly dependent on one's paradigm of social interaction and one's purpose in defining the term. The reformative perspectives view family from an aspect of change through the method of individualization which is based on humanistic principles. As a unit of function, family may mean a system of unequal responsibility through an aspect of gender perspective. In a commonsense knowledge, the family becomes what the individual or the researcher perceives it to be based on the purposes or needs for which the term is being used. In defining family, there is often vigorous discussion on

contrasting form or process. Beliefs, which frequently have an emotional cornerstone, bias our perception of what family is, should be or could be.

In all of the above complexities of defining family, however, within the social science community there is a strong emerging international theme based on scientific evidence. Variations in family form and process are extremely prevalent but must also acknowledge the dominant structures by which cultures define family. In contrast to the conventional themes of the 1960s and 1970s on 'traditional family,' we have observed openness to family diversity in more recent literature. As a result of greater international networks, particularly in the research communities, we are growing increasingly aware of dominant family definitions that acknowledge its great variety.

In a definitional sense the word 'family' has been borrowed from the Latin word 'famulus' which means a servant. In Roman law, the word denoted a group of producers and slaves and other servants as well as members connected by common descent and marriage. Thus, originally, family consisted of a man and a woman with a child or children and some other relatives. This model, however, does not fit into the contemporary family paradigm, specifically in diaspora studies, as there have been drastic variations in the way families are constituted today across the globe.

Sociologically, these variations occur due to the change in formation of analytical statements. Sociologist John Sirjamaki (1948), while writing in the optimistic and stable post–World War II era, concluded that the emotional attachment of spouses would ensure family stability. In modern metaphor, the family is society's most significant biosocial unit and as an entity of social behaviour it has been experiencing considerable changes. For example, from a pathological point of view of life, the family as an organic unit contains a system of nomenclature where a few is considered as deviant. This pathological view develops a clinical approach, like family therapy. Here, family rules conduct the effectiveness of this self-contained unit in relation to time and space. This pathological perception, as Mabel Agnes Elliott and Francis Ellsworth Merrill (1950) suggest, obviously indicates the dark side of intimate relations or at least the dysfunctional aspects of a common residence. Here family is defined as a biosocial unit composed of husband, wife and children. Any change in this composition or in the role relations of social behaviour affects the family's development in connection with structures, functions and interactions, both in family life and in community life.

In an urban life the unity of the family itself is emphasized by the physical separation of the homestead. It is often observed that in rural life, families are frequently at strife with one another in sparsely settled areas. This is 'a consequence of the intense and exclusive

cohesion of the rural family' (MacIver and Page, 1950/1974: 317). But in both cases its attitudes and its morals are apt to be predominantly familial. In both position family performs its role as a supplier of economic and social needs to its members. The necessities of common toil and reciprocal services strongly corroborate the ties of family relationship.

In this perspective Robert Morrison MacIver and Charles H. Page argue that in modern society, as in all complex civilizations, the family becomes definitely an association. According to them there are two major social organizations which may seem to lie on the borderline between associations and communities. They are the family and the state. For them 'family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children' (1950/1974: 238). Indeed to the child the family is a preliminary community which prepares him for the greater community. From a role perspective or from a process aspect the family is perceptibly an organization where goals of life are fulfilled. It is deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals.

In 1953, from a communication approach Ernest Burgess and Harvey Locke define family as a unit of interacting personalities. They proposed that 'family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household interacting or intercommunicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister creating a common culture' (1953: 7-8). From this cultural entity outlook, William F. Ogburn and Meyer F. Nimkoff view family as an association. They also consider this organized model in relation to persons who make up the family unit. According to them, family is 'a more or less durable association of husband and wife with or without child, or of a man or woman alone, with children' (1966: 488).

As a unit of sex relationship, as Gerald R. Leslie (1982: 12) observes, a family is defined as a group of two adults of opposite sexes, living in a socially approved sex relationship, and their own or adopted children. However, the definition of family 'should not rest on fictitious legal distinctions or genetic history, but instead should find its foundation in the reality of family life. ..[It] is the totality of the relationship as evidenced by the dedication, caring and self-sacrifice of the parties which should, in the final analysis, control' (Lamanna and Riedmann, 2006/2009: 8). The tension between familistic and individualistic values is an issue of current debate on the family life.

The family, as an institution is universal. It is the most permanent and the most pervasive of all social institutions. All societies large to small, primitive to civilized, ancient to modern have some forms of family or other. No one knows or can know how or when the family began. It is safe to surmise that the family in some form will be always with us. As the mind

can imagine of future, the family will continue to be a central and indeed a nuclear component of social life for its processes. The processes are the strategies and daily sequences of behaviour employed by family members to achieve goals. The goals are often implicit and may or may not be shared equally by every family member.

Family sociology is generally concerned with the formation, maintenance, growth, and dissolution of kinship ties and is commonly expressed in research on courtship and marriage, childrearing, marital adjustment, and divorce (Petzold, 1998). It is difficult coming to a consensus about a universal definition of the family, as families are not only racially, conceptually and inter-generationally diverse (Bedford and Blieszner, 2000), but also situationally and normatively different. These divergences foster multiple dimensions of family life. These variations also cultivate a further debate of the concept of household as family.

Families have very adaptable and changing structures (Cheal, 2008). Even the functional aspects of family members change accordingly to the demands of the changing and volatile world. Moreover, it is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, constituting a single household and interacting with each other in their respective social positions of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister. This family group is often confused with the household. Boarders and roomers sharing a common residence may be included in a household, but it is not family.

The family is also sometimes confused with kindred because of the unit of blood lines, but kindred may be divided into several households. Frequently the family is not differentiated from the married pair, but the essence of the family group is the parent-child relationship, which may be absent from many cohabiting pairs. Marriage defines the procedures for establishing and terminating the husband-wife relation, as well as the reciprocal obligations and the accepted restrictions upon its personnel. In its institutional aspects the family is also frequently confused with the institution of marriage, the complex of customs regulating the sexual relations between the cohabiting pair of adults within the family group.

11.4. Family and Household Relationship

Historically, the word family was originally associated with oikos or 'household', and the word economy originally referred to the running of a household. From micro to macro level of analysis, a new form i.e., civil society as a specific area of ethical life, exists or mediates between the family economy (an institution based on self-interest) and the state (a coercive institution). The civil society, what Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in his The Philosophy of

Right (1821 [trans. 1942]) termed as burgerliche Gesellschaft', is an area of social consensus based on agreements of norms and values. Whereas the state requires some level of force, civil society implies a degree of freedom and helps to overcome individuals' crisis in family life. The freedom of the individual and the enjoyment of rights were made possible by the historical evolution of civil society as a manifestation of bourgeois civilization.

The U.S. Census Bureau attempts to count and characterize American families. The Census Bureau defines a family as 'a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together in a household' (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). A distinction is made between a family and a household. A household consists of 'one or more people—everyone living in a housing unit makes up a household' (Bryan Strong et al., 2011: 11). Single people who live alone, roommates, lodgers, and live-in domestic service employees are all counted among members of households. Family households are those in which at least two members are related by birth, marriage, or adoption (Fields, 2004). From this point of view, family can be considered as a dynamic entity of processes, rather than a static or low vibrant institutional structure. Family processes are those strategies used to reach family goals, which could include procedures like saving money, insisting convinced beliefs on certain family habits, and restricting time use. The method communication we adopt, the technique of solving problems, and the way to set and maintain boundaries, are all examples of family processes.

Do you know?

A non-family householder is a householder living alone or with non-relatives only. Features of household, where non-relatives are living:

(1) a householder living alone or with non-relatives only;

(2) a household member who is not related to other householder;

(3) a person living in group quarters who is not an inmate with kin relations.

There are some similarities and differences between family and household. First of all the concept of household is an American one, or it is better understood as Western (Coleman, et al. 2007). In the Eastern part family holds major portion as primary unit in society. The latest figures from the U.S. Census Bureau show that two-thirds of America's dwelling units are classified as families, and a family has two or more members live in the same home and are related by birth, marriage or adoption. One-thirds units are characterized by household features. A household consists of one or more persons living in the same house, condominium or apartment. They may or may not be related. Indeed, household has no memory and no foresight; it lives only in the present.

Suzanne M. Bianchi and Lynne M. Casper (2000) in their "American Families" analysis, and Jason Fields (2003) in his "Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2002" entitled article, compare a non-family household with a family household. Like family household, a "non-family household" helps individual to relate to the society. The households and the families are also basic units of analysis in demography. Households that consist of unmarried couples living together and gay and lesbian couples, for example, would be counted as non-family households even though they might share many characteristics of a family. If these couples live with children from their current or a previous relationship, the household moves into the family category. The Census Bureau has been exploring new ways to describe and measure Americans' living arrangements beyond the family/non-family dichotomy, with terms such as cohabiting or unmarried couples and POSSLQs (persons of the opposite sex sharing living quarters).

11.5. Causes of Rise of Household System

People are living longer. They are more likely to be widowed or divorced, or they feel loneliness because they are single, or they less likely to marry early and begin childbearing. In the developed countries, households composed of unmarried couples are increasing day by day. "Single parent" and "two-parent" living arrangements gradually and steadily rise because of several reasons. Now, "adults living alone" become a most common household type. Single bed-room flat is becoming a common feature of third world urbanization where lone parent lives. The increase in cohabitation has similarly been concentrated in the younger age-groups. This may cause a rise in household system.

The changes in household structure since WWII reflect extensive social and demographic shifts. Greater numbers of people have been reaching old age, and more of them have been financially able to maintain their own households. Within the huge baby-boom cohort, young people have been delaying marriage and childbearing, and have been having fewer children. Rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock childbearing have risen; at the same time women have increasingly acquired sufficient education, employment experience and economic independence to be able to maintain their own households, either alone or with their children.

11.5.1. The Context of Child

In the context of children, who are people under 14 years of age, we can identify a household. Foster children are nonrelatives of the householder. A child of a 'single-parent' or of a 'single-mother' provides very little information except that the household is not

headed by a legally married, or by a cohabiting group of husband and wife. Hostel, child care institutions, etc. play a crucial role in shaping household structures in any country, like India; and determines two important transitions that influence household structure - transition to adulthood and transition to old age. In household, there is an advantage of encompassing non-custodial parents within a parent–child dyad. This rising trend of single living opportunities helps to increase in number of household settings.

11.5.2 The Context of Parent

A man lives alone can be identified as the "parent" of a child, who is living with her mother separately. This person is usually the child's father. This living trend, and for the rise of high divorce rate, more dwelling units are usually recognized as households. In this sense, a 'household' is usually a group of persons, who normally live together and take their meals from a common kitchen unless the exigencies of work prevent any of them from doing so. Parents in a household may be related or unrelated or a mix of both. Sociologically, there are two types of parenting.

Firstly, a "single" parent is defined as a parent who is not currently living with a spouse. Single parent may be married and not living with their spouse; they may be divorced, widowed, or never married. As with the identification of household, if a second parent is present and not married to the first, then the child is identified as living with a single parent. Unlike single-parent family, a single-parent household is constituted by an unmarried parent with his/her foster child.

Secondly, the POSSLQ household parents, who are living there for cohabitation. The indirect measure of cohabitation, Persons of the Opposite Sex Sharing Living Quarters (POSSLQ), attempts to identify these additional potential parents.   An essential change in the gender division of labor has followed women's increased participation in the waged labor force. An indirect measure of cohabitation is Persons of the Opposite Sex Sharing Living Quarters (POSSLQ). This is a household type defined by household composition. POSSLQ households are defined by the presence of only two people over age 15 in the household who are opposite sex, not related, and not married. There can be any number of people under age 15 in the household. For this reason, the percentage of children living in POSSLQ households should be calculated on the universe of children under age 15 for each characteristic.

11.5.3. The Context of Unmarried-Partner

An unmarried-partner household is a household that includes a householder and an "unmarried partner." An "unmarried partner" can be of the same or of the opposite sex of

the householder. An "unmarried partner" in an "unmarried-partner household" is an adult who is unrelated to the householder, but shares living quarters and has a close personal relationship with the householder. An unmarried-partner household may also be a family household or a non-family household, depending on the presence or absence of another person in the household who is related to the householder. There may be only one unmarried-partner per household, and an unmarried partner may not be included in a married-couple household as the householder cannot have both a spouse and an unmarried partner. The single parent may be cohabiting with another adult. Sociologists have spoken of different forms or types of family. They have taken into consideration different factors as the basis for classification of the family. A few classifications are mentioned below:

11.6. Typology of Family

Sociologists have spoken of different forms or types of family. They have taken into consideration different factors as the basis for classification of the family. A few classifications are mentioned below:

(a) **On the basis of marriage** family has been classified into two major types: (i) Polygamous, and (ii) Monogamous Family.

    i) **Polygamous Family:** Polygamous family is based on the polygamy system of marriage. This can further be classified into the polygynous and the polyandrous categories. While in the former, one man marries more than one woman and all the children born to all the wives are adopted by each of them, the latter exemplifies the type of family consisting of one woman and her several husbands. She may live with all of her husbands or may live with each of them alternatively.

    ii) **Monogamous Family:** Based on the monogamy system of marriage, a monogamous family consists of a husband and his wife. Under this type of family system, neither the husband nor the wife is allowed to have more than one spouse at a time.

(b) **On the basis of the nature of residence** family can be classified into five main forms: (i) Patrilocal Family, (ii) Matrilocal Family, (iii) Neolocal Residence, (iv) Avunculocal Family, and (v) Matri-Patri Local Family.

    i) **Patrilocal Family:** When the wife goes to live with the husband's family, it is called the patrilocal family.

ii) **Matrilocal Family:** When the couple after marriage moves to live with the wife's family, such residence is called matrilocal. The husband has a secondary position in the wife's family where his children live as well.

iii) **Neolocal Residence:** When the couple after marriage moves to settle in an independent residence which is neither attached to the bride's family of origin nor to the bridegroom's family of origin, the residence is known as neolocal.

iv) **Avunculocal Family:** In this type of family, the married couple moves to the house of the husband's maternal uncle after marriage. This type is found among the Nayars of Kerala.

v) **Matri-Patri Local Family:** In matri-patrilocal family, immediately after marriage the bridegroom moves to the house of the bride and temporarily settles there till the birth of the first child and then comes back to his family of orientation, along with wife and child for permanent settlement. The Chenchuas of Andhra Pradesh live in this type of family.

(c) **On the basis of ancestry or descent** family can be classified into two main types: (i) Matrilineal Family, and (ii) Patrilineal Family

i) **Matrilineal Family:** In this type of family descent is traced along the female line, and thereby the inheritance of property also takes place along the female line of descent. The Veddas, the North American Indians, some people of Malabar and the Khasi tribe are matrilineal. Generally, matrilineal families are matriarchal and matrilocal in character.

ii) **Patrilineal Family:** When descent is traced through the father, it is called patrilineal family. In this type of family inheritance of property takes place along the male line of descent. The ancestry of such family is determined on the basis of male line or the father. A patrilineal family is also patriarchal and patrilocal in character. This is the most common type of family prevalent today.

Besides the above types, there are other two types of family based on descent, namely, Bilateral and Ambilineal family. When the ancestry or descent is traced through both father and mother, it is called bilateral family. On the other hand, ambilineal family is one in which one's ancestry may be traced through father's line in one generation, but in the next generation one's son may trace his descent or ancestry through his mother's line.

(d) **On the basis of the nature of authority** family can be classified into two main types. (i) Matriarchal Family, and (ii) Patriarchal Family.

i) **Matriarchal Family:** The matriarchal family is also known as the mother-centred or mother-dominated family. Here, the mother or the woman is the head of the family and she exercises authority. She is the owner of the property and the manager of the household. All the other members are subordinated to her.

ii) **Patriarchal Family:** The patriarchal family is also known as father-centred or father dominated family. Here, the father or the eldest man is the head of the family and he exercises authority. He is the owner and administrator of the family property. On all family matters his is the final voice and opinion.

(e) **On the basis of size or structure and the depth of generations** family can be classified into four types: (i) Nuclear Family (ii) Joint Family (iii) Extended family, and (iv) Single Parent Family.

i) **Nuclear Family:** The nuclear family is a group of persons consisting of husband, wife and their unmarried children. This is a basic grouping of mates and their offspring's. The kinship relationship in nuclear family are: husband-wife, father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, mother-daughter, brother-brother, sister-sister, and brother-sister. This is the smallest composite family unit. There may also be 'supplemented nuclear family' units with a widowed parent of the husband or his younger brothers and sisters as residents.

ii) **Joint Family:** Joint family consists of more than one primary family. All the members are blood relations or close kins and generally share common residence, kitchen and property. Joint family generally consists of three or more generations. But two or more collateral families living together in a common residence and sharing a common kitchen and property also form a joint family. Joint family is the hallmark of traditional Indian society having very deep roots in history. Joint family in its traditional form is prevalent in India even now though, it is waning very fast.

iii) **Extended Family:** If closely related kins other than those who form the nuclear or joint family are added to the nuclear family it takes the form of an extended family. The extended families can be either those in which the nucleus is surrounded by distant consanguineous kins or those in which kinship universe is extended still further such as parents-in-law living in their son-in-law's family.

iv) **Single Parent Family:** Single-parent families are families with children under the age of 18 headed by a parent who is widowed or divorced and not remarried, or by a parent who has never married.

(f) **On the basis of the Nature of Relations among the family members** the family can be classified into two main types: (i) Consanguine Family, and (ii) Conjugal Family.

    i) **Consanguine Family:** The consanguine family is built upon the parent-child relationship (on blood-descent). The family is a descent group through the male line which is firmly vested with authority. The consanguine family comprises a nucleus of blood relatives surrounded by a fringe of wives and others who are incidental to the maintenance of the family unit. Such families can become very large. The Nayar family is a typical example.

    ii) **Conjugal Family:** The conjugal family is a nucleus of the husband, the wife and their offspring, who are surrounded by a fringe of relatives only incidental to the functioning of the family as a unit. In this type of family, the authority and solidarity of the family group reside solely in the conjugal (husband and wife) pair. In contrast to consanguine type of family, the conjugal family is much more isolated from wider kinship relationships.

The consanguine family, which is typical of an agricultural society, is large, stable, secure, self-sufficient and authoritarian. On the other hand, the conjugal family, typical of a modern society, is small, transient, isolated and relatively insecure but democratic.

11.7. Universality of Nuclear Family

Often, the term 'nuclear family' is used for such families which may or may not include a husband and wife. In such cases, the family consists of any two or more persons related to one another by blood, marriage or adoption who share a common residence. Thus, a brother and sister or a single parent and child would be a nuclear family but not strictly speaking a conjugal one. In a conjugal family, the emphasis is primarily on the conjugal bond, i.e., the marital/conjugal relationship.

In virtually all societies we can identify this type of family. In traditional societies like that of India, the nuclear family was part of a larger kinship network of some type. Anthropologist G.P. Murdock (1949) asserts that it is a 'universal human grouping'. However, there are several categories of evidence against this position. Family units comprising step-parents as a consequence of divorce or remarriage is known as 'reconstituted family'. It is a form of nuclear family in which one or both parents have had children from a previous relationship.

The family, especially the nuclear family, is the most universal social group. No culture or society has ever existed without some form of family organization. The nuclear family

is a universal human grouping. Either as the sole prevailing form of the family or as the basic unit from which more complex familial forms are compounded, it exists as a distinct and strongly functional group in every human society.

In Murdock's view, the nuclear family is a concrete unit, existing independently or as the basic building block of more complex polygamous or extended family units. In his examination of 250 cultures, he concluded that regardless of the type of family structure prevailing, the nuclear family is always visible as a functioning unit, performing important societal functions and fulfilling basic needs of its members. The nuclear family, as a specific type of unit, performs sexual, procreative, educational and economic functions. These four functions of the nuclear family account for its universality, since it is doubtful that an adequate functional substitute for the family can be found (Murdock, 1949: 11).

11.8. Typology in Household

Household refers to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and take their meals from a common kitchen unless the exigencies of work prevent any of them from doing so. Householders in a household may be related or unrelated or a mix of both. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone. From this householders perspective, there are two types of household: 1) Family household; and 2) Non-family household.

Family household: in which two people are sharing a single roof, or an apartment and they are related either by blood or by marriage or adoption or if they are in permanent socially sanctioned sexual relationship. For instance, two people A and B are sharing a room by a blood connection, or by marriage, or by adoption.

Non-family household: consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals. But this household is not the household collectively but for an individual. For instance, two people A and B are sharing a room,so for A it is her household and individually for B it is hers. Not for both A and B it is the household.

The dwelling of a non-family household may be either a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. In a household, the single parent may be cohabiting with another adult. Household members who are temporarily absent on reference day are considered part of their usual household. This single parent may be married but the spouse is absent (including separated), widowed, divorced, or never married. In some cases, the "single-parent" household is not really a single-adult household (Hantrais, 2004: 39). There may be other types. Statistical

enquiry depicts three kinds of non-family household: (a) one-person households; (b) two-person households; and (c) multi-person households.

(a) **a one-person household**: a person who lives alone in a separate housing unit or who occupies, as a lodger, a separate room (or rooms) of a housing unit but does not join with any of the other occupants of the housing unit to form part of a two-person or multi-person household. Example: a residence of a lone parent, or of a unmarried single person.

(b) **two-person household**: a group of two persons who are sharing a dwelling unit in a live-in relationship. This is obviously a multi-person household, but here the number of householders is fixed, that is two. Example: cohabiting couples, same-sex couples, stepparent households, a consensual union, etc.

(c) **a multi-person household**: a group of two or more persons who combine to occupy the whole or part of a housing unit and to provide themselves with food and possibly other essentials for living. Members of the group may pool their incomes to a greater or lesser extent. Example: a hostel, an apartment for paying guest, etc.

Construction of a one-person household is a growing trend. Of the world's two billion households, approximately 15 percent – or 300 million – are one-person households (OPHs). 2017 data[1] shows that developing countries generally have lower proportions of one-person households than developed countries. Some of the lowest rates of OPHs – less than 10 percent – are observed in India, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, the Philippines and Vietnam. Other developing countries having levels of one-person households closer to the global average include China (15 percent), Turkey (13 percent), and Singapore (12 percent). Although China's proportion of 15 percent OPHs is well below the levels of developed countries, China has the world's largest number of one-person households – 66 million are registered – due to its enormous population size of 1.4 billion people. In second place with an OPH proportion of 28 percent is the United States having approximately 35 million one-person households. The highest rates of one-person households occur in Europe. Among European countries OPHs of 40 percent or more are reported in Denmark, Finland, Germany and Norway. Other European countries with high rates of one-person households include Sweden (38 percent), Austria (37 percent), Switzerland (37 percent), Netherlands (36 percent), France (35 percent), and Italy (33 percent).

The proportion of people who live alone has grown steadily over the recent past. Since the 1960s, for example, one-person households in many countries have increased substantially. In many European countries as well as in Australia, Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, and the United States, the proportion of one-person households has more than doubled.

Also in contrast to the recent past, in at least 25 developed countries one-person households have become more numerous than two-parent or multi-parent households with children.

11.9. Future of Household and Family

Patterns of family formation and dissolution altered markedly across Europe in the last quarter of the 20th century, with the result that less institutionalised and more diversified family forms became widespread. Everywhere family size was declining, while divorce rates and the number of extramarital births were rising (Hantrais, 2004). Lone parenthood, one-person households, unmarried and same-sex cohabitation, and reconstituted families became more common and more socially acceptable living arrangements.

Non-family households showed double the growth of family households in the decade ending in 2010. Non-family households include people who live alone or nonrelatives living together, such as unmarried partners or roommates. Households no longer depend on marriage for their creation, nor on death to dissolve them, and children are encountered in a wide array of household and living arrangements. The rapid growth in cohabitation among unmarried adults has also slowed in new century. Yet family life is still evolving. Age at first marriage rose as more young adults postponed marriage and children to complete college and settle into a labour market increasingly inhospitable to poorly educated workers (Bryant and Zick, 2006). Accompanying this delay in marriage was the continued increase in births to unmarried women, though here, too, the pace of change slowed in the 1990s in the countries of postmodern culture.

Within marriage or marriage-like relationships, the appropriate roles for each partner are shifting as American society accepts and values more equal roles for men and women. The widening role of fathers has become a major agent of change in the family. There are an increasing number of father-only families, a shift toward shared custody of children by fathers and mothers after divorce, and increased father involvement with children in two-parent families. The single-person households may prefer to rent rather than buy houses. And even if they do buy a house, the preference is for multifamily homes rather than single-family ones. This may influence the structure of the housing market.

A rise in single-person households may aid labour market mobility (Bryant and Zick, 2006). With fewer attachments to property and free of marital burdens, these individuals may be more open to shifting cities for jobs. This could make the labour market more mobile than it is today. However, single-person households will have to cope with lower availability of informal personal care from partners. Such nonmarket production (as economists

would define it) may need to be replaced by purchased personal care services, especially health and nursing care, which could significantly impact the health care industry.

By treating a particular type of household and unit as the norm, "sociology reinforces the public discourse from the state" (Chambers, 2001: 19). It is particularly worrying that welfare policies are based on the findings of this kind of family-centric research. The myth is still being reproduced, and even recent definitions and modes of research that acknowledge diversity often collude with the nuclear ideal by measuring their difference from a fictitious norm.

11.10. Conclusion

A variety of living arrangements are being experienced in Western nations, including some complex multiple occupancy households that have not, as yet, been given a satisfactory label. In USA, the legal definition mentions the feature of a member by Household Law. Here a member of household is defined by state and federal laws, which varies by jurisdiction. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) defines a member of household as a person who is related to you or lives with you for the entire year as a member of your household. Rise of criticality in tax-service creates that situation where Western people prefer to live in a household.

In the developing countries like India, urban-industrial zones are saturated by household patterns. In an area of Bangladesh garment factory, several housing units are occupied by those people who work in that area and are not related by kin relationship. They can occupy an apartment, or a mobile home, or a group of rooms, or a single room as their separate living quarters. This trend is growing now. These separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other people in the building and that have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single family, or one person living alone, or two or more persons living together, or any other group of related or unrelated people who share these living quarters.

11.11. Summary

A family may be defined as a group of persons related to a specific degree, through blood, adoption, or marriage. The difficulty is that comparative data on the family in the broad definition of the term is not available. The available statistics relate to households are defined by location, community or living arrangements. The qualitative or quantitative analysis

represent that the most families are living in a household, but not all households are families. A household is defined in many surveys as a person or a group of persons that usually live and eat together. It is important to distinguish between a family, where members are related either by blood or by marriage, and a household, which involves the sharing of a housing unit, facilities and food.

The households and the families are not the same thing. A household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit. Not all households contain families. Under the U.S. Census Bureau definition, family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they also may include other unrelated people. Non-family households consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals.

Divorce and cohabitation dissolution has resulted in the significant increase in the instability of unions and cause to raise the household settlement in the developed countries. In the developing and underdeveloped countries, the rise of middle class, migration and high cost in maintaining the standard of living become chief determinants to construct household settlement.

11.12. Questions

Answer in detail:

  a. How do you justify the definitional aspect of family system?

  b. How does a family be a household? Justify with suitable examples.

  c. What are the major trends in household system?

  d. 'Most families live in a household, but not all households are families' – Justify.

  e. Write a note on the future of household system.

Answer briefly:

  a. What should a household consist of?

  b. What is the difference between "household" and "family"?

  c. Is a couple considered a family?

  d. What are the causes of acceleration in household system?

Answer very briefly:

a.   Is a family household?

b.   When do I use "household" and when do I use "family"?

c.   What legally constitutes a household?

d.   What is POSSLQ?

11.13. References

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11.14. End Notes

[1.] Accessed on 01/07/2019: 5 PM, from- http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/02/the-rise-of-one-person-households/

11.15. Glossary

A couple consists of two people who are married or otherwise closely associated romantically or sexually.

A household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit. Not all households contain families.

A single-parent means that the child's identified parent is not married and living with his or her spouse.

Consensual union refers to the situation when two persons belong to the same household, have a "marriage-like" relationship with each other, and are not married to or in a registered partnership with each other.

Family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they also may include other unrelated people. Here the householders are kin relatives.

Household income is a measure of the combined incomes of all people sharing a particular household or place of residence.

Non-family households consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals. It includes a householder living alone or with non-relatives only.

Social pathology is a concept developed in modern social science to refer both to aspects of social structures and to the behaviors and values attributed to particular social categories. Definitions of social pathology are particular to specific times and reflect the dominant moral concerns of the era.

Unit 12 : Types of Family : Extended, Joint, Neclear and Single Parent Family

Structure of the unit

12.1. **Learning Objectives**

12.2. **Introduction**

    12.2.2 **The genesis of difference**

    12.2.3 **Perspectives and Typologies**

12.3. **Four major types of family: extended family, joint family, nuclear family and single parent family.**

    12.3.1 **Extended family: Meaning and definition Uranium mining and the social movement in Meghalaya (1970s-1980s)**

        12.3.1.1 **Characteristics of extended family**

        12.3.1.2 **Functions of extended family**

        12.3.1.3 **Types of extended family**

        12.3.1.4 **Difference between joint family and extended family**

    12.3.2 **Joint family: Meaning and definition**

        12.3.2.1 **Indian joint family and its types and features**

        12.3.2.2 **Change in Joint Family in India, before and after Independence**

        12.3.2.3 **Joint family and nuclear family**

    12.3.3 **Nuclear family: Meaning and definition**

        12.3.3.1 **Characteristics and types of nuclear family**

        12.3.3.2 **Functions and dysfunctions of nuclear family**

        12.3.3.3 **Nuclear family and single parent family**

    12.3.4 **Single parent family: Meaning and definition**

        12.3.4.1 **Characteristics of single parent family**

12.1. Learning Objectives

- To learn the typified elements of family and their bases.

- To understand the nature and causes of the existence of family in some specific types.

- To study the outline of the criteria used for identifying the extended, joint, nuclear and single parent family.

- To realize the difference amongst these four types of family.

- To be aware of family life.

12.2. Introduction

Family is a basic kinship unit, in its minimal form consisting of a husband, wife, and children. The children here may have an accepted father and their mother has at least to cook for him in this kin unit (Fox, 1967: 101). In its widest sense it refers to all relatives living together or recognized as a social unit, including adopted persons. Many scholars, conducting research on family, believe that the study of family is simultaneously important and useful in solving the problems, our society faces for the various reasons.

What families do (e.g., have and rear children, solve problems, take care of each other), has remained relatively unchanged for centuries. However, how those activities are performed, who is present (i.e., the composition of family life) is ever changing and varies over time, families and cultures.

> ### *Do you know?*
>
> Family communication is usually interface interpersonal communication, which is also a universal source of nomenclature. Every family provides an individual with a name, and it is found in some form or the other, in all types of societies whether primitive or modern. It is based on emotions and sentiments. Mating, procreation, maternal and fraternal devotion, love and affection are the basis of family ties. The sharing duties and responsibilities are marked by different social roles, like those of husband, wife, mother, father, children, brothers or sisters.

We care about family owing to its immense importance in the life of an individual as well as to the society and nation at large. It is the basic form of all social groupings; the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed; an outstanding interactive unit, within which the child develops its basic attitudes. Family, almost unquestionably, is the most important of all other groups that human experience offers. We join other groups for longer or shorter periods of time to satisfy some interests or desires. The family on the contrary is always with us or more precisely we are within it.

12.2.1. The genesis of difference

Families are important. They raise us. They support us. We are emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and physically healthier when we have least some deep and affectionate relationships. Consanguine and affinal relationships in family life maintain a mode of reciprocal dependence by fulfilling the economic needs of all family members.

Distinctions between a family and a group have been discussed by researchers (e.g. Day, Gilbert, Settles, and Burr, 1995), who include: (1) family membership may be involuntary, and the connection may be more permanent; (2) actions of family members can be hidden and thus there is not only a safe environment provided for openness and honesty, but also an environment for dark activities such as abuse, addictions, and neglect; (3) family members may be more intensely bonded through emotional ties; (4) there is often a shared family paradigm or world view; and (5) there is frequently a biological connectedness that is not present in other social groups.

In the review of family concept the inclusion of those who are not the part of the family and the exclusion of those who are part of the family become vital problem. To address the problem of excluding family members, some researchers have attempted to develop definitions of the family by accounting for any type of family.

12.2.2 Perspectives and Typologies

Typification is a process of construction of intrinsic dimension of situation. For family, these situational dimensions are utilized by individuals to understand family forms and their changing dimensions. They are studied for their new forms and the constructed typologies must emerge to identify the patterns of family life, especially the position of members (Hartman, 1990; McNeece, 1995). Sociologically, all typification is viewed as consisting in the pragmatic reduction and equalization of attributes relevant to the particular purpose at hand for which the type has been formed, and involves disregarding those structural-functional differences of the typified objects that are not relevant to such a purpose.

Collectivity and humanness naturally makes man social. From sociological point of view it is evident that the social practices for extended kinship universe is composed of interlocking families. The chain of connection always involves the three basic relationships – marriage, parenthood, and sibship – and the family units are the cells with which the larger whole is constructed. Systematically different patterns of linkages between societal subsystems prevail as the society varies by family type (Davis, and Blake, 1956: 211).

These three perspectives and others can portray family forms. Structural definitions of family also attend to the types of relationships that create social bonds between members. The variations in the degree of bonding may a factor to identify family types. Researchers give emphasis on the focusing angels of the lenses by which they can typify family. As Edvard Alexander Westermarck, (1936:8) following Darwin's lead and counteracting Engels' idea, held that the male's possessiveness and assertion of property rights led first to the constitution of the monogamous type of family in which the husband's authority was predominant.

According to sociological and anthropological research, the primary function of the family is to reproduce society, either biologically, socially, or both. Thus, one's experience of one's family shifts over time. A family that constitutes an economically self-sufficient unit is known as **autonomous family**. On the other, **heteronomous family** is not economically self-sufficient but rather seeks its livelihood within an economic system based on a highly complex division of labour.

A type of family in which the members of the family are regarded as equal is known as **equalitarian family.** In this type husband, in particular, is not regarded as having more authority or privileges than the wife. It is also called the **democratic family**. From the perspective of children (birth), the unit is a **family of orientation**, where the family serves to locate children socially, and plays a major role in their enculturation and socialization. Indeed, it is that one into which an individual is born and in which he or she is socialized.

From the point of view of the parent(s), the unit is a **family of procreation** in which the goals are to produce and to acculturate, and to socialize children. It is formed by an individual when she or he marries and has children.

On the basis of marriage we can typify family as a) **monogamous family**; b) **polygynous family**; and c) **polyandrous family**. Monogamous family consists of one husband and wife, including children and is based on monogamous marriages. A polygynous family consists of one husband, and more than one wife, and all the children born to all the wives or adopted by each of them. This type of family has its basis in the polygynous form of marriage. Thirdly, the polyandrous family made up of one wife and more than one husband, and the children, either born or adopted with each one of them. This family is based on polyandrous marriage.

The structure of families traditionally hinges on relations between parents and children, between spouses, or both. Consequently, there are two types of family that we find on the basis of nature of relationship: a) **conjugal family**; and b) **consanguine family**. The conjugal family is quite different from another consanguine family. As its name implies, the conjugal family is knit together primarily by the marriage tie and consists of mother, father, and their dependent children. The emphasis is placed on the marital relationship that exists between spouses. The consanguine family, on the other hand, groups itself around a descent group or lineage whose members are said to be blood relatives and consists of parents, their children, and other siblings. According to Morgan, **punaluan family** developed out of the consanguine family. The growing complexity of marriage prohibitions makes group marriages more and more impossible; they were supplanted by the **pairing family** (Engels, 2004: 53).

Carle C. Zimmerman in his famous book *Family and Civilization* divides family into three types on the basis of the degree of individuation. These types are **atomistic family, domestic family and trusteeship family**. Individual family members have more freedom from family regulation and control. E. W. Burgess and H. J. Locke, in their 1953 book *The Family*, constructed ideal type models of family unit. One was **companionship family** and other one is **institutional family**. On the basis of residence, there are three types of families (here the term residence refers to post-marital residence) viz., **patrilocal** (or **virilocal family** - Latin word *vir* means male, and *locus* means place)**, matrilocal** (or **uxorilocal family** - Latin word *uxori* means wife, and *locus* means place)**,** and **ambilocal** (or **bilocal family** - Latin word *ambi* means wife, and *locus* means place).

On the basis of descent, there are four main types and two special types of family. The main types are **patrilineal, matrilineal, bilateral** and **ambilineal family**. The special

types are **patronymic family** and **metronymic family**. On the basis of authority and types of society, there are two special types of families. One is **matriarchal family** which is generally found in matrilineal societies, and the other is **patriarchal family** which is commonly found in all parts of the world, since most societies in the world are patrilineal societies. **Stem family** is described as a modified type of patriarchal family in which the family estate is passed on intact to one son chosen by the father.

According to size and structural composition, we can divide family into four types. These are **extended family**, **joint family**, **nuclear family** and **single parent family**. The extended family is distinguished from the joint family only in that members of the earlier live in separate compounds. The nuclear family is commonly used to refer to conjugal families. One special kind of nuclear family is **stepfamily or blended family**. On the other side, a single-parent family consist one parent together with his or her children, where the parent is either widowed, divorced and not remarried, or never married. Recently, on the basis of decision making power and the process of legitimization of that power in family life, the families are classified as **husband-dominated**, **wife-dominant**, and **equalitarian families** (Ahuja, 1993: 26). That equalitarian family where husband and wife take most of the decisions jointly is also called **syncratic family**, and the one in which equal number of separate decisions are assigned to both partners is called **autonomic family**. There are so many other types, for example, **blended family** or **stepfamily**.

Thinks to do

Try to find out the kinship obligations in family membership and attempt to understand your family type. Try also to represent diagrammatic position of family members on the basis of ego's position and relationship type. Establish the typology of family and attempt to identify the usual difference amongst these different types.

12.3. Four major types of family: extended family, joint family, nuclear family and single parent family

As part of the rise of individualization in modern societies, the family has been depicted as a site of fragmentation and of constant balancing and negotiation. Now the family life no longer happens in one place but is scattered among several different locations. The lives of individual family members, with their different rhythms, locations and demands, only rarely fit together naturally.

This new vision depicts a tension between individual life projects and the collective needs of families which are hard to resolve, and relate these trends to wider developments in a highly individualized consumer society. Now a day, Western societies are moving towards a post-familial family unlike others who have observed family change and have seen alarming signs of decline. This type of analysis identifies a range of new family forms which do not conform to the nuclear ideal but which will take their place alongside the more traditional family structure.

12.3.1. Extended family: Meaning and definition

An extended family unit has multiple generations and additional relatives other than just the parents and their children living in the same household and taking on responsibilities for that household. In most cultures, the "core" of the family is the nuclear family, the parents and their children, while additional relatives are considered "extended." The extended family system often, but not exclusively, occurs in regions in which economic conditions make it difficult for the nuclear family to achieve self-sufficiency. Necessary cooperation and aids are usually provided either from the patrilineal kin or from the matrilineal kin.

Extended family includes three or more generations. For example, an extended family may include grandparents, their unmarried children, their married sons (or daughters) together with their spouses and children. Consanguine families (organized in terms of blood relationship) usually form extended families; whereas conjugal families (based on marital relationship) may occasionally form very limited extended families. Usually conjugal families do not form such a type. According to this definition nuclear families of the same generation join together, for example through polygamy, would not be considered as extended families. On the other way it is composed of two or more nuclear families regardless of whether they are of the same or different generations, not united through polygamy. In traditional China, for example, the extended family ideally consisted of the nuclear family of the head of the household, his unmarried daughters, his sons and their families, his sons' sons' families and unmarried daughters, and so forth. The extended family may include more distant kin, but the uncles, aunts, or cousins usually belong to the same clan as members of the core lineage.

The relationships between members of the extended family are such that the form of address a person employs, consists of an extension of nuclear family terms to a wider circle of relatives within the resident clan. In a matrilineal family, for example, a person may refer to his maternal uncle as 'father' and to the latter's children as 'brothers' and 'sisters.' The extended family does not necessarily live in the same dwelling, but normally the members live close together and work in teams. It is common for the senior kin to assume the role

of mate selection for those of marriageable age, who are considered too inexperienced to make a proper choice. Qualities sought in a spouse by the interested kin in an extended family include work ability, capacity to adapt, procreative power, status, and financial worth. Though an extended family is not the mere addition of several nuclear families in terms of the functions the extended family performs. In an institutional frame, the relatives are a key source of information and resources of extended family where inequality persists.

Do you know?

Extended family is not merely an expansion of the nuclear family (parents and dependent children), usually it built around a unilineal descent group (i.e., a group in which descent through either the female or the male line is emphasized). If the family has more than one father-offspring unit each linked with a woman or more than one mother-offspring unit each linked with a man, it is called an extended family.

The extended family is the most common as a household unit, where ties between kinsmen are important for economic reasons. It was common in Europe during and just after the Industrial Revolution and, more recently, among European emigrants. It is still common in many parts of the Third World, in both agricultural and industrial contexts, and in Asian communities in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. The term extended family is also applicable to family units which do not establish a single place of residence in Great Britain also. The working-class people in London who at least in the 1950s shared domestic chores, is an example.

The key aspect of the extended family is not that it necessarily shares the same dwelling or place of residence but that the relatives give material assistance to one another, and share economic responsibilities. Typically, a group of kinsmen live together and share resources. It is evident in African family of United States where it occurs for immigration. Extended family members stay in their relatives' household temporarily or permanently when they arrive in Philadelphia from Kenya.

In a traditional context, there may be common property in the form of agricultural lands, livestock, or ritual property such as sacred objects and sacred sites. These last objects are important in some African societies and specifically among the Australian Aborigines. In modern societies the extended family offers benefits in areas where government agencies have not penetrated or where essential services are not adequate or not provided. Even where there is no common property, members of extended families may draw on one another when they need financial help.

12.3.1.1 Characteristics of extended family

The **first** key characteristic of the extended family is that there are multiple adults, who are not parents of the children. But they may also have parent-like roles and share in the responsibilities for providing for the whole family, either by contributing financially or in other ways.

Secondly, as an expansion of the nuclear family, extended family usually built around a unilineal descent group (i.e., a group in which descent through either the female or the male line is emphasized). The extended family may include more distant or fictive kin, but the uncles, aunts, or cousins usually belong to the same clan as members of the core lineage.

Thirdly, the extended family system develops in those regions in which economic conditions make it difficult for the nuclear family to achieve self-sufficiency. Cooperation being necessary, aid is recruited, usually either from the patrilineal kin or the matrilineal kin.

Fourthly, the relationships between members of the extended family are such that the form of address a person employs consists of an extension of core's relationship terms to a wider circle of relatives within the resident clan.

Fifthly, the extended family does not necessarily live in the same dwelling, but normally the members live close together and work in teams.

Sixthly, the selection of mate depends on the choice of senior member of extended family. It is common for the senior kin to assume the role of mate selection for those of marriageable age, who are considered too inexperienced to make a proper choice. Qualities sought in a spouse by the interested kin in an extended family include work ability, capacity to adapt, procreative power, status, and financial worth.

Things to do

Try to figure out an extended family diagram of your locality by drawing a family tree that consists of genealogical connections and relations between family members. Symbols are used to identify the relations such as marriages, divorces and deceased persons with sex and generation position of children, siblings or brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, great grandparents and other relatives.

12.3.1.2 Functions of extended family

American anthropologist George Peter Murdock (1949) claimed that the family has and

had four functions: 1) Sexual (it contains a controlled outlet for sexual gratification which could otherwise lead to conflict and jealousies). 2) Reproductive (Allows adult to know the biological parents of children, therefore avoiding incest and delineating lines of descents). 3) Economic (it functions as a productive and consumption unit, ensuring the survival of the family). 4) Educational (Passes on the knowledge and skills from one generation to the next). An extended family performs all these functions. But, what is special for extended family is its large size. As a grouping of majority adult boarders who are related by descent, marriage or adoption, in size, an extended family is larger than the nuclear family. It helps extended family to reassure labour force in any circumstance. This is too important and **first function** of extended family. In pre-industrial societies production largely depended on the amount of family labour accessible to in the land and the extended family was the most appropriate unit. Thus, as an economic unit, an extended family plays the basic role in maintain self-sufficiency in family life.

The **second important function** of extended family is risk-sharing. Because of its large size, it affects the degree of risk-sharing that households achieve in response to idiosyncratic crop losses. Economic theory indicates that two forces are at play in influencing the relationship between risk-sharing and the size of the risk-sharing group. On the one hand, larger groups are better able to diversify risk and thus should provide better insurance. On the other hand, they are more vulnerable to subgroups reneging and choosing to form new smaller groups, which could potentially reduce the amount of insurance that a larger group can provide (or even prevent such a group functioning at all).

The extended family is existed as a structure of collective responsibility for its members even if they did not all live together in the same household. For that reason extended family performs a crucial role in infant health promotion. This is the **third major function** of extended family. Extended family maintains role accountability, which refers to a family member's sense of responsibility for completing the tasks of an assigned role. By playing this role, the extended family fulfils central action for the survival of society itself and for its individual members.

Fourth major function of extended family is the maintenance of resource points. It plays this important role in influencing individual and household choices, and through this, their well-being. Large number members are the key source of information and resources. For example, grandmothers, aunts and sisters provide information on how to care for children, while siblings, parents and uncles may be a source of resources (monetary and in-kind) for investments, such as education or businesses. Moreover, social norms interact with the presence of extended family to affect the overall well-being of individuals and households. Importantly, "such interactions may also affect the effectiveness of policies

targeting specific behaviours and outcomes" (Kurrien & Dawn Vo, 2004: 215). Thus, it is essential to understand how the extended family influences various choices and outcomes.

12.3.1.3 Types of extended family

In common usage, the nature of extended family depends on the pattern of extension that exists among the members of extended family. In its traditional usage, the term extended family has been attributed with a variety of meanings. It may, for example, be referred to as a household that includes other kin in addition to the members of basic conjugal format. This **traditional-extended family** maintains its economy, ecology and equity centering on the 'core', i.e. the nuclear family. In this type the family axiom is clearly defined and it may be loosely maintained by all its living consanguineal kins. On the other hand, in a **modified-extended family** structure, considerably less autonomy exists among the separate units. How children are socialized or how finances are accumulated and dispersed in one parental unit are decisions that need to be coordinated with other units. In a modified-extended family, co-residence is more likely to occur, but with considerable latitude for independent living and decision making within smaller units.

12.3.1.4 Difference between joint family and extended family

Swati Talwar (2014) identified the joint family system as an extended family arrangement that was prevalent throughout the Indian subcontinent, particularly in India, consisting of many generations living in the same home, and all bound by the common relationship. In this sense, there is no precise distinction between the joint family and the extended family, and the latter can be used to encompass both. In a critical sense **firstly,** sociologists usually think of the extended family as being larger and maintaining less control over its members than does the joint family.

Secondly, the members of Indian joint family live under one roof which is not an essential feature of extended family. **Thirdly**, in most extended families, the marital bonds between spouses are stronger than the kinship bonds between, for example, the brothers who are the focal people in Indian joint families. **Fourthly**, unlike extended family, in joint family there is no such one core nuclear family. Rather it may contain more than one such pairing couple. **Fifthly**, joint family organization was an extended type in structure and bilineal in kin affiliation (Ghurye, 1955: 26-39), whereas in extended family usually built around a unilineal descent group.

12.3.2. Joint family: Meaning and definition

The Joint family system is mode of combining smaller families into larger family units

through the extension of three or more generations including at least grandparents, parents and children. It is a family which consists of members related through blood and spread over several generations living together under a common roof and work under a common head. The joint family is a much more common form of family organization, one that is typical in parts of India. In this type, a group of brothers and their wives and children live together in the same household.

In terms of residence, property rights and functions, the traditional extended form of the Hindu family unit showed its 'jointness'. The presence of multi-generation of kindred in this organizational system unit is also important in accordance with its role structure that Iravati Karve viewed in 1953, two years before Prof. G. S. Ghurye. After a thorough social anthropological analysis of Vedic and Epic periods, Karve (1953: 10) in her monograph *Kinship Organization in India* defined joint family as 'a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common, who participate in common family worship, and who are related to each other as some particular type of kindred'.

In India the joint family may have property held in common by male members of the small, coresident patrilineal kin group, though joint families in other parts of the world (traditionally in China and in parts of Africa) do not necessarily have such collective rights. Sometimes the whole joint family is a phase through which nuclear families pass, dividing upon the death of key persons and forming again as men are able to incorporate their sons' wives and children into their own household.

If one person is designated as the family leader and another (normally his eldest son) as his successor, this is often described as a stem family. Such arrangements occurred in feudal Japan, in feudal and post-feudal Europe, and among some groups of immigrant farmers in the United States. Joint and stem families do not have to be based on a patrilineal kin group. Sometimes, especially in Africa, they are composed of people related to one another in various ways, including blood ties through women and ties through marriage.

12.3.2.1 Indian joint family and its types of features

In 1956, I. P. Desai takes three criteria for explaining joint family: generation depth, rights and obligations, and property. When other factors remain constant, the criteria of generation depth divide Hindu joint family into two types. One is a unit of two generations, what he calls *marginal joint family*; and the other is composed of three generations, what he calls *traditional joint family*. By the ways of fulfilment of mutual obligations and customary rights the *functionally joint family* maintains its jointness, but residentially it is

nuclear. At last the *substantially joint family* is that *functionally joint family*, which maintains its jointness not only by the ways of fulfilment of mutual obligations and customary rights, but also for the common property privileges.

In 1958, Prof. K. M. Kapadia opens a new debate on the question of Hindu joint family. After a long discussion on Indian marriage and family varieties, he opines that Desai's *marginal joint family* is nothing but a nuclear family, because it consists of two generations. For example, a man lives with his wife, unmarried children and his married sons without issues. According to Kapadia *marginal joint family* is a special type of *nuclear family with married sons*. This type of family can be considered as *small joint family* (Ross, 1961: 34). Kapadia also proposes other three kinds of joint family in India. The first one is *lineal joint family*. Secondly, the *collateral joint family*; and the third one is a *family with widow sister and/or her children*, that is, *with a dependent* (Ahuja, 1993: 30).

Things to do

Try to draw different types of joint family trees that consist of genealogical connections between family members. You can choose those families from your neighbourhood.

Sociologist Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1962) analyzes joint family in terms of the relationship among members. There are five types of relationship in joint family: conjugal, parental-filial, inter-sibling, lineal, and affinal. Six years later, in 1968 social scientist M. S. Gore admits Mukherjee's lineal joint family where husband, wife, unmarried and married children are living together. Gore also calls this first type as *filial joint family*. Another type of joint family is *fraternal joint family,* in which husband, wife, unmarried and married children and unmarried brothers are living under one roof. The third one is the mixture of above two types, that is, *fraternal and filial joint family*. This is an ideal type construction that consists of a man and his wife, their adult sons with their wives and children, and married brothers and their families.

Pauline Kolenda in her study *Regional Differences in Family Structure in India* (1987: 11-2) presents the following types of joint family on the basis of the relatives who are its members. **a) Collateral joint family**: It comprises two or more married couples between whom there is a sibling bond. In this type, usually a brother and his wife and another brother and his wife live together with unmarried children. **b) Supplemented collateral joint family**: It is a collateral joint family along with unmarried, divorced or widowed relatives. The supplemented relatives are generally the widowed mother of the

married brothers or the widower father, or an unmarried sibling. **c) Lineal joint family**: Two couples, between whom there is a lineal link, like between a parent and his married son or some times between a parent and his married daughter, live together. **d) Supplemented lineal joint family**: It is a lineal joint family together with unmarried, divorced or widowed relatives who do not belong to either of the lineally linked nuclear families; for example, the father's widower brother or the son's wife's unmarried brother or sister. **e) Lineal collateral joint family**: In this type three or more couples are linked lineally and collaterally. For instance we can have a family consisting of parents and their two or more married sons together with the unmarried children of the couples. **f) Supplemented lineal-collateral joint family**: In this type are found a lineal collateral joint family plus unmarried, widowed, separated relatives who belong to one of the nuclear families (lineally and collaterally linked), for example, the father's widowed sister or brother or an unmarried nephew of the father.

The structural ideal of the Indian family is entirely different from the western family. There are six key aspects of an Indian joint family. These are:

- All decisions are patriarchal.

- Head of the family (*Kārtā*) takes all decisions regarding financial and economical aspects of family.

- All members live under one roof.

- Share the same hearth.

- Three generations live together (though often two or more brothers live together, or father and married son with his wife and minors live together or all the descendants of male live together).

- Income and expenditure in a common pool-property held together.

- A Common place of worship.

- No division of property until the death of the *Kārtā* (head of family or older male member).

12.3.2.2 Funtions and dysfunctions of joint family

The size of joint family is very large. Generally, the eldest male is the head of the family. The rights and duties of the members in this type of family are laid down by the hierarchy order of power and authority. Since its origin Indian joint family system has been instrumental in providing protection. It acts as a safe home for the physically or mentally handicapped, sick, old members and assures a proper living for the widows.

From economic point of view, it supports all the members of family who does work together on a cooperative basis and in that way it guarantees food, clothing and shelter to its members. It maintains a happy and recreational environment for its members. Pauline Kolenda (1987: 4) observes that the joint family ethic is very much evident in the performance of certain role obligations. These may include physical and financial assistance to kin members.

It also helps in fostering good relationship among the members. By arranging feasts on different religious, social and festive occasions it provides a space of solidarity among the members. The joking relationships in the joint family are another source of amusement. It nourishes and socializes its members and helps to flow the cultural values from one generation to other. As an important social institution it has brought about the well being of its members in several ways. It performs many other functions, like personality build up, leisure-time maintenance, social control, etc. Social virtues are learned during the process of socialization.

Albeit all these, joint family has some dysfunctional aspects. The absolute authority structure in the joint family system hinders the development of individual personality. Actually, such authoritative nature of joint family leaves little scope for the development of self-dependency. Joint family gives stress on collective responsibility. Some members take advantage of this and became lazy.

Thus, joint family plays an active part in reproducing the structure of inequality. Absence of privacy, frequent quarrels and litigation, improper care of common property, laziness of some members etc. are some other dysfunctional aspects of Indian joint family.

12.3.2.3 Change in Joint Family in India, before and after Independence

Westernization, industrialization, and urbanization may not take place at the same pace or in a neatly meshed, harmonious functional process. Referring to modern Chinese joint family, which may change without industrialization, Indian joint family alters its functionalities due to the growth of industrial and urban life. These processes of social changes may serve to strengthen its structural consolidation because an economic base has been provided to support jointness or because more hands are needed in a new family enterprise or because kin can help one another in the striving for upward mobility (Kolenda, 2001: 341).

Both in the Hindu, as well as in the Muslim joint families material exchange at the time of marriage should appear to function as a stabilizer and support for the joint family and has been a custom related to joint-family living. On the other, few attempts that have been successfully led to secular family laws such as the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929; Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961; the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1972; Special

Marriage Act, 1974, and provisions made in the Criminal Procedure Code and Indian Penal Code.

Demographically, Indian joint family has changed its age-sex composition since Independence. Preference for joint family is much higher among those whose parents are agriculturists and horticulturists and live in villages or suburban areas, and low in case of employees' category (in both cases i.e. father and mother's occupation) of urban areas. Even among the educated middle classes in modern, urban India, marriage is as much a concern of the families as it is of the individuals. These subtle changes in family compositions especially with regard to the use of authority within the family as well as an increased focus on individual autonomy are also likely to influence members' expectations of marriage and their choice of marriage partner outside the norms of caste and creed organization. With an increased onus of responsibility falling on the individual rather than on the entire family, young Indian adults today face what M. S. Gore calls 'choice anxiety' - increased autonomy and increased choice that have led to increased anxiety (Prasher, et al (eds.), 2011: 465).

Do you know?

Historically, for generations India had a prevailing tradition of the Joint Hindu Family or undivided family. When we say that the joint family is disintegrating, we do not mean its disappearance. We only mean a decrease in the number of joint households. Actually, family patterns in India do not follow the expected tracks - urbanisation and modernisation do not break up the joint family, nor is the joint family the inevitable form everywhere. The Great Indian Family doesn't make itself available for single snapshots - it is a kaleidoscope of many shifting stories.

On the other side, birth control as a national public policy in independent India has also some demographic impacts on its joint family structure. Indeed, India was the first country, in its First Five-Year Plan of 1951–56, to adopt birth control as a national public policy (Therborn, 2004). Alone in independent Asia, India had an elite continuity across the divide of the 1940s, of the Pacific War involving Japan, of the Communist Revolution in China. By the 1940s the new generation of Congress leaders had become convinced that India was facing a 'population problem', in the sense of economic growth. Jawaharlal Nehru and his more strident rival Subhas Chandra Bose agreed on this. In world history, this was a novelty, nationalist leaders thinking that the nation was running the risk of becoming too large (Visaria and Chari, 1998: 55).

After Independence, the Indian government made family planning a governmental policy. However, the issue remained controversial. M. K. Gandhi was ambiguous, in favour of sexual abstinence, but against contraception. Many of Gandhi's high-profile followers were fully against birth control. Nehru seems never to have committed himself explicitly in public to birth control (Myrdal 1968: 1510–11; Demeny, 2001). The Planning Commission of the First Five-Year Plan hoped for periodic abstinence, 'the rhythm method', because it would mean 'avoiding enormous expenditure' as well as 'securing the ethical values that community life would gain by the self-imposed restraint' (Myrdal, 1968: 2152). This idea of costless communitarianism was, of course, self-deluding idealism, and the 'soft state' of India was going to prove itself strikingly ineffective in bringing about any fertility decline, although there were a couple of early provincial instances of birth control from the late 1940s, in Kerala and among Punjabi landholders (Dasgupta, 2001; Dyson 2001).

Families bear the marks of major social changes that occur in society. Though the Indian joint family's response to social change had rather been slow and complex (Shah, 1998), since the 1980s the impact of the changes on the family has been more rapid with far-reaching implications—both in its structure and function. Changes in marriage patterns interact with changes in childbearing and affect both poverty and the composition of the poor. The extent of decline in marriage coincides with the fact that women are having fewer children hence reduction in the size of families reduces the resources needed to avoid poverty.

It is very much evident in late 1980s. The social forces influencing the family are varied; for instance, the new economic structures and institutions evolving over the past decade have been forcing broad-based changes in rural agricultural society, urban employment structures, educational and health services. These are, in fact, influencing the Indian family in many crucial ways. Similarly, the political and economic scenario espousing a decreased role of the government in the provision of social services, is to be noted as an important shift in the family policy of the country—again with long-term implications for Indian families.

12.3.2.4 Joint family and nuclear family

Joint families are larger than nuclear families. On the basis of size, a nuclear family normally consists of two parents and the number of children. Whereas joint family is an extended one that typically consists of parents, children, and the spouses and offspring of the children. The financial condition also differs in a joint family and nuclear family. In a joint family, it is very rare that you will face any crisis in your family since there is number of earners in the house, or there is self-sufficiency which is practised in everyday life, but there

is always a lack of transparency in it. Whereas in nuclear family, you may suffer some financial crisis but there is always a stability of money in the nuclear family. Lack of privacy is that point by which the nuclear family enjoys an upper hand. Because of its less number, nuclear family maintains private space, whereas in joint family things are different, members are going to get disturbed by someone, most of the time. Another element is emotion by which we can distinguish joint family from nuclear one. In case of a joint family, the primary emotion is a general affectionate bond between two generations and within the members of the generations. Here the scope of mutual support is in wider condition than nuclear family, which is principally based upon the emotion of parental love and sibling bonding and hence the structural functionalism (mechanism of relationships) is quite simple, yet the psychology involved becomes quite complex. Liberty and freedom are one of those reasons why this whole argument of joint family vs. nuclear family, has risen. It is generally believed that the foundation of a nuclear family is based on the principle of freedom and liberty to the members of the family, which basically everyone misses in the joint family concept. It is always believed that people living in the joint family has to face a lot of comparison and animosity with each other in the family. Whereas, the nuclear family is free from all these things. Another point is family dispute that prevails in both types of family. Disputes in a greater degree may prevail in joint family than nuclear one, but the scope of mitigation of those disputes is wider in joint family than the nuclear one. In conclusion it can be said that living in a joint family is tough, but worth the trouble. A nuclear family, on the other hand, is easier to live in, yet there is no food for emotions and we tend to become apes living in houses with TV's and cars.

12.3.3. Nuclear family: Meaning and definition

A nuclear family is a household consisting of two parents and their legal children (siblings), as distinct from the extended family. Whilst the family is a nearly universal cultural phenomenon, nuclear families do not form the family unit in every society. Nuclear families are typical in societies where people must be relatively mobile – such as hunter-gatherers and industrial societies. In a sense nuclear family is the basic unit of family organization, composed of a married couple and their offspring. The nuclear family may be a separate family or a part of a larger family. A husband with two wives would be a member of two nuclear families, or a compound family. The term conjugal family is sometimes used instead of nuclear family.

It is also called elementary family in sociology and anthropology. This is a group of persons united by ties of marriage and parenthood or adoption and consisting of a man, a woman, and their socially recognized children. This unit was once widely held to be the

most basic and universal form of social organization. In matrilineal societies, for example, a child may not be the responsibility of his biological genitor at all but of his mother's brother, whom he calls father. It is generally defined as a married couple and their children (including adopted and fostered children, as well as the couple's natural children). Other forms of family organization, such as compound and joint families, are in a sense built upon the nuclear family or contain units comparable to it in their structure.

The nuclear family is a much smaller unit. The central core of the nuclear family is the relationship between husband and wife. Their marriage and the creation of a new household unit may mean cutting some ties with the wider family. George Peter Murdock (1949:1) defined nuclear family and offered this description: "The family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It contains adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults."

The bond within nuclear family becomes stronger with the arrival of children who become the major responsibility of the family. 'Where the nuclear family predominates, society is made up of a series of separate two-generational households' (Wilson, 1985: 9). The number of children in a nuclear family becomes static when the mother passes over her child-bearing age (from 45 upto 50), and therefore, the size of family reaches its completion. Members of the nuclear family share the same dwelling, usually a single house or apartment. In agricultural societies the nuclear family is often the primary unit of production that shares tasks and takes collective responsibility for the income that sustains them. In both agricultural and other types of communities, the nuclear family is almost always the primary unit of economic consumption. One or both parents, and sometimes children, earn money outside the home and then share at least some of the fruits of their labour with the family as a whole.

12.3.3.1 Characteristics and types of nuclear family

The nuclear families typically center on a married couple. It is a unit composed of husband, wife and their unmarried children. It is universal. Pioneer anthropologist Bronislaw Kaspar Malinowski (1913) stated that the nuclear family had to be universal because it filled a basic biological need—caring for and protecting infants and young children. No culture could survive, he asserted, unless the birth of children was linked to both mother and father in legally based parenthood. This is also a predominant form in modern industrial societies. This type of family is based on companionship between parents and children.

The size of the nuclear family is very small. It is its primal characteristic. Secondly, it is free from the control of aged persons. Thirdly, it is regarded as the most dominant and ideal

form of family in modern society. Fourthly, the base of nuclear family is the conjugal bonds. In that reason women are more capable to take decisions. Fifthly, there is no scope of shifting responsibility, which in more precise manner advances the possibility of development of a better personality. Sixthly, the children get maximum free zone from in-laws conflict. They are given more priority in care, love and affection by their parents in this nuclear family. Seventhly, the nuclear family is independent and economically self-sufficient, and the members enjoy more freedom than the members of joint family.

While discussing the nature of nuclear family in India, Pauline Kolenda (1987) has discussed additions / modifications in nuclear family structure. She has given the following compositional categories of nuclear family.

(a) **Nuclear family** refers to a couple with or without children.

(b) **Supplemented nuclear family** indicated a nuclear family plus one or more unmarried, separated or widowed relatives of the parents, other than their unmarried children.

(c) **Sub-nuclear family** is defined as a fragment of a former nuclear family, for instance a widow/ widower or separated/ divorced with her/his unmarried children or siblings living together.

(d) **Single person household** indicates a residential pattern where one person lives.

(e) **Supplemented sub-nuclear family** refer to a group of relatives, members of a formerly complete nuclear family along with some other unmarried, divorced or widowed relative who was not a member of the nuclear family.

Sociologists may consider sub-nuclear family as a single parent family.

Things to do

Observe any five families in your neighbourhood and draw your conclusions, advantages and disadvantages of living in a joint/nuclear family.

12.3.3.2 Functions and dysfunctions of nuclear family

Murdock (1949) argues further that the nuclear family is not only universal but also universally important. Earlier writers had argued that in many tribal societies the nuclear family was insignificant and serves no important functions in the lives of most people. Murdock, in denying this view, points out that the key functions of the nuclear family and

its universal status is most apparent when viewed in reference to the relationships that made it up. The key functions include the sexual, economic, reproductive, and educational aspects of the family. The relationships include the bonds between husband and wife, father and son, father and daughter, mother and son, mother and daughter, brother and brother, sister and sister, and brother and sister. These eight relationships have come to be known as those of primary kinship, and they are normally the relationships through which all more distant ties of kinship are traced.

Functionally the nuclear family type is open ended. Since the responsibilities and expenses are on the couple they have a better family planning. Nuclear family maintain democratic decision making process. It is not a highly ritualised and institutionalised entity, but it holds the elements of those creatures. Form another functional aspect, it is a unit of interacting personalities set in a cultural framework, responsible for a limited number of social functions and for a biological function. This type of family runs by the update custom, value, belief system with cultural elements, which are also internalized by the new born or adopted member of the family only.

Unlike extended family, the interadult dynamics within the nuclear family accelerate vigorously along all dimensions such as support and antagonism. They may also have the goal of caring and providing for their children, but the cultural context in which they raise their children may be vastly different, thus contributing to different developmental

12.3.3.3 Nuclear family and single parent family

While nuclear families are shared across our country, single parent families are stigmatized as the opposite of nuclear families. If nuclear families are portrayed as wholesome and full of love, then single parent families are portrayed as unfulfilled and lacking. A single parent family has one parent and their child. It is most likely the single parent to be mothers. In several study, it is evident that the single parent children are less assertive and more aggressive and submissive than their two parent peers. On average, children in single-parent families are more likely to have problems including depression and behavioural and social problems that the majority of children who are reared by both parents in nuclear family.

These differences arise because children in single-parent versus two-biological-parent families grow up in vastly different socioeconomic contexts and because single mothers have lower educational attainment, less social support, and poorer psychological well-being.

12.3.4 Single parent family: Meaning and definition

Over the past 20 years single-parent families have become even more common than the so-called "nuclear family" consisting of a mother, father and children. Today we see all sorts of single parent families: headed by mothers, headed by fathers, headed by a grandparent raising their grandchildren.

As an effect of war or state sponsored terrorism, a single parent family may constitute. High divorce rates and people who will never marry constitute a single parent unit. Families with at least one parent and one child are viewed as a normative definition of the family in most if not all societies (Bibby, 1995; Reiss, 1965; Levin and Trost, 1992; Rothberg and Weinstein, 1966). For example, in a Swedish study done by Levin and Trost (1992), a major number of those surveyed identified as families of married couples with children, non-married, separated, or divorced couples with children and single parent and their children.

Single-parent families is a concept that defines, families in which either the father or mother is absent because of divorce, marital separation, out-of-wedlock pregnancy, or death (Greenberg, 2002: 329). The increase in single-parent families is a result of increase marital separation, divorce, and out of wedlock pregnancies rather than widowhood.

The child in single parent family is not necessarily biologically related to those providing care and nurturance. They may, for example, be adopted, grandchildren, products of other relationships, or perhaps children conceived through artificial insemination or surrogacy. Despite the lack of biological relationship the relationship can still be included as part of the normative definition of the family.

In general, in the 19th century Europe, North America, and other parts of the industrialized world, family organization was based on a wider range of social interaction than it was usual by the late 20th century. Since marriage was relatively late and life expectancy relatively short, children often remained at home throughout the lifetimes of their parents. Families were large, and older children took part in raising and teaching their younger brothers and sisters. Only in the 20th century has it become common for parents to be left alone in the household. In 21st century the dynamics of change in the process of family life is going on through multidimensional channels. These recent modifications in family formation, such as declining marriage rates, later family formation, and subsequent declining fertility rates, are crucial. This is a relevant issue because the timing and nature of women's partnership decisions have played a crucial role in the demographic changes that have characterized the family life of last decade.

12.3.4.1 Characteristics of single parent family

Divorce occurs in the context of many factors that are co-occurring both before and after the divorce (Ellis, 2000).Wade and Travis (1990) called divorce as the breaking of attachment. According to them thirty years ago, divorce was rare and shameful. Today, divorce is as common as the flu and often strikes as unpredictably, to couples married only a year as well as to couples married for decades, affecting one million children a year.

Characteristically most common problems seen in single parent families are related to children, who are suffering from depression, stress, loneliness, aggression, compliance, smoke, alcohol, narcotics addiction (Herwing, et al., 2004; Jackson, 2000). In an overview of the role of fathers in child development, Lamb (1997) summarized several reasons of father absence is associated with poor outcomes for children, and citing the emotional distress of single mother who may receive little social support, economic stressors, perceptions of abandonment by children, and predivorce and postdivorce marital conflict.

Children with single parents showed increased risks of psychiatric diseases, suicide or suicide attempt, injury, and addiction. After adjustment for confounding factors, such as socioeconomic status and parents addiction or mental disease, children in single-parent households had increased risks compared with those in two-parent households for psychiatric disease in childhood and, suicide attempt, alcohol-related disease and narcotics-related disease. Boys in single-parent families were more likely to develop psychiatric disease and narcosis related disease than were girls, and they also had a risk of all-cause mortality. Growing up in a single-parent family has disadvantages to the health or the child. Lack of household s resources plays a major part in increased risks. However, even when a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic circumstances are included in multivariate models, children of single parents still have increased risks of mortality severe morbidity, and injury (Weitoft, at al., 2003).

12.3.4.2 The functional and dysfunctional aspects of single parent family

To be quite clear: to argue that the two parent family is 'better' than the single parent family is in no way to denigrate single parent. It is akin to saying that for most purposes a two-bedroom home is better than a one-bedroom home. Moreover, just because most people prefer a two-bedroom home, it does not mean that those who have a home with only one bedroom are in it only or firstly by their choice.

There are several compelling reasons why two-parent families are the most suitable form for children (Etzioni, 1993). Firstly, child care and education are highly labour-intensive and demanding tasks. Young children are a very demanding and deserving group. They can

soak up huge amounts of care, attention and love. Secondly, parenting works are the best when there is a division of educational labour. One parent may be more supportive, the source of emotional security that all children require if they dare to grow up in a threatening world. The other parent may be more achievement oriented, pushing the children to extend themselves beyond the comfortable cradle of love.

In many countries mothers have historically often fulfilled the former role, while fathers have typically adopted the latter. But the two-piston engine of effective education can work the other way around. Indeed, in some contemporary families, children are cuddled by their fathers and disciplined by their mothers. What matters most is the two-parent mode. True, some single parents can shift back and forth between the supportive and achievement-oriented modes of parenting quite successfully. But this is difficult to accomplish on top of other difficulties faced by a single parent, who is often the sole breadwinner as well.

12.4 Conclusion

Over the decades, social scientists have struggled in their efforts to define the multidimensional concept of family. Through her research Jan Trost (1990) confirmed this overwhelming definitional dilemma experienced not only by family researchers but also by the general population. Specifically, she illustrated the difficulty and diversity with which people identify those who could or should be labelled as family members. In some of her samples, family consists of only closest family members–the nuclear type, while for others family included various other kin, friends, and even pets. For example, John Scanzoni and colleagues (1989: 27), in their attempt to expand the definition of the family in the 1980s, discussed the traditional family and defined it as a structure with two parents and a child or children as the prevailing paradigm. They stated that all other family forms or sequences tended to be labelled as deviant (as in research on minorities) or as 'alternatives' (when occurring among whites). They challenged the view held by many early writers that the traditional family was the ideal type, the type by which the success of other families could be evaluated. This statement illustrates how the definition of family is not only structurally focused but also oriented to both ideology and process.

Katherine Allen (2000: 7) further defines the ideology and process when she states, '[O]ur assumptions, values, feelings, and histories shape the scholarship we propose, the findings we generate, and the conclusions we draw. Our insights about family processes and structures are affected by our membership in particular families, by the lives of those we study, and by what we care about knowing and explaining'. These inescapable ideological

differences result in a definition of the family that is driven by theory, history, culture, and situation.

12.5. Summary

This unit has discussed the institutional frames of family in India and abroad. It has described the types of family and emphasised the continuum of the extended, joint, nuclear and the single parent family system. In its starting level, it describes the nature and types of family and then an elaborate analysis of four types with their comparison. It tries to focus on what constitutes in these four family forms. It also discusses variability in and prevalence of joint family living in India. Then it looked at the changing structural nature of other three specific types of family. Finally, it outlined some functional and dysfunctional aspects of the emerging patterns of family life.

12.6. Questions

Answer in detail:

a. How do you classify family according to different criteria? Answer with suitable examples.

b. How do you explain the changing pattern of Indian joint family?

c. What are the functions and dysfunctions of nuclear family?

d. Do you think that the single parent families are becoming increasingly common all over the world? Justify.

Answer briefly:

a. Explain in brief the genesis of family typology.

b. Why extended family is important?

c. Is a nuclear family better than joint family?

d. What are the disadvantages of a single parent family?

Answer very briefly:

a. What do you call family members?

b. What is the difference between nuclear and extended family?

c. Do you consider a single parent family as a nuclear family?

d. What causes single parent family?

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12.8. Glossary

Cohabitation is an arrangement where two people who are not married but live together.

Divorce, also known as dissolution of marriage, is the process of terminating a marriage or marital union.

Family Care is a Medicaid long-term care program for frail elders, and adults with physical, developmental, or intellectual disabilities.

Family life is defined as the interactions and activities of family members within a specific time and space.

Kin relationships are traditionally defined as ties based on blood and marriage. They include lineal generational bonds (children, parents, grandparents, and great- grandparents), collateral bonds (siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews, and aunts and uncles), and ties with in-laws.

Remarriage is a marriage that takes place after a previous marital union has ended, as through divorce or widowhood.

Same-sex family or lesbian and gay family refers to lesbian and gay individuals or same sex couples and their children. The term is sometimes used to refer to same sex partnerships or cohabiting relationships.

Unit 13 : Changing Structures and Functions of Family: Future of Family

Structure of the unit

13.1. Learning Objectives

- To learn about the determinants of change in family structure.

- To understand the role and relations in family structure.

- To realize the functional part of family.

- To know about the dimensions of functional change in family life.

- To recognize the dysfunctional aspects of family.

- To study the future of family.

13.2. Introduction

Families have very adaptable and changing structures (Cheal, 2008). Even the functional aspects of family members change accordingly to the demands of the changing and volatile world. In its institutional aspects the family is also frequently confused with the institution of marriage, the complex of customs regulating the sexual relations between the cohabiting pair of adults within the family group. The ideational and normative forces – such as the growing emphasis on personal freedom, individual prerogative and social equality – are spreading rapidly from one to other corner of this globe. These forces are related to new notes about the place and role of individuals relative to family and larger community, and to changing norms concerning marriage, the relationships between men and women, the connections across generations, and the place of children in families.

13.3. The changing sense

Family members provide close and intimate contact (usually characterized by deeply held commitment, trust, respect, and a sense of long-term obligation). It is assumed that sexual intimacy is an element of the relationship between the parents and that the family group seeks to achieve goals by acquiring, allocating, and distributing resources (i.e., time, money, space, and close personal contact).

It is also assumed that individuals choose to participate and contribute to the core sense of family life with varying degrees of enthusiasm. In some cases, the federation of individuals is loosely connected and the beliefs, ideologies, goals, and values of the individuals do not overlap as much. In other cases, there is a stronger family group sense for the presence of which, the individuals, with the family, share, subscribe, endorse, and contribute to central family ideals, ideologies, beliefs, and goals.

> ### *Do you know?*
>
> Society's definitions of family life have changed over time in response to many cultural, religious, and economic transformations. Within each general historical period, there have been a variety of idealized marital concepts. For the same reason, within one historical period, family life varies from society to society. By the way, as it would not be possible to capture all those idealized perceptions about family in one definition, it seems reasonable to follow the functional and dysfunctional sides of family.

With increasing modernization, rising levels of urbanization and migration, as well as widespread strains hastened by economic restructuring and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, many families in Africa have had to make rapid adjustments in both structure and function (Oheneba-Sakyi and Takyi (eds.), 2006). For several decades, the dynamics and structure of family formations in Africa have been in stages of transition. At the same time the new types of family forms have emerged and the roles of respective family members have also changed.

Families worldwide have experienced similar structural changes. In particular, dramatic reductions in mortality, educational expansion, increasing urbanization and migration, and faster transportation and communication networks are nearly universal.

The structural change occurs in family life due to some change in determinants. What are those? Primarily, due to change in the number of family members, it occurs. Change in the positional expected behaviour is another determinant of family's structural change. Communication pattern is also changing; unmarried cohabitation, delayed marriage and delayed childbirths are trending for young people in the recent years. Authority structure in family life has changed, which influence decision making process in family.

13.3.1. Declining fertility rates and increasing age at first birth

The reduction in average annual rate of population growth, which is a global phenomenon, primarily occurred due to reductions in fertility levels. Significant declines in fertility are being experienced not only for the reason of infertility, rather as a consequence of the increase in the proportion of never married young adults. It is becoming a gradual upward trend of the average age at marriage. An inevitable outcome of declining fertility rates and increasing age at first birth in every corner of this globe are jointly becoming a determinant of reduction in family size.

13.3.2. Declining mortality rates and improving survival rates

As new social trends, the structure of family has changed dramatically due to mortality declines, particularly infant mortality. Improved survival rates of children mean that when women reached the age of 30 they increasingly had achieved the completed family size that they desired. Mortality decline, followed by fertility decline, alters the age structure of the population and also the structure within individual families.

13.3.3. Declining in size

The reduction of the family size could be attributed partly to economic difficulties, low levels of income, the high cost of living, the costs of education of children and the desire to maintain a better standard of living, which is best achieved within the more affordable smaller size family. Consequently, the nuclear family with its parents and children became the model of society and soon ruled out the traditional, extended family usually constituting three generations. In this new structure, there is no space for old age members, who are now staying at old-age home.

13.3.4. Increasing female headed households

The increase in female headed households could be due to variety of reasons including divorce, widowhood, migration, non-marital fertility and marital instability (Bruce and Lloyd, 1992). In recent decades an increasing number of women, particularly rural women, have

become heads of households because men, the traditional heads of households, had left for work or other reasons. Moreover due to war, civil unrest, and displacement, a refugee situation exists in a number of countries in the region, often resulting in females taking over the task of running the household. The female headed households consider a new kind of division in labour and authority structure that reflects in family's structural properties.

13.3.5. Feminization of labour market

The economics of the family and the sexual division of labour within the family life are very much determined by opportunities in the labour market. Present economic globalization has facilitated the freeing of women from household chores and their entrance to the labour market. This alteration in labour markets has resulted in weakening income and employment securing and the 'feminization' of many jobs traditionally held by men. Thus, the support ratios, which measure the number of persons in the working ages per every older person, have declined and altered family structure.

13.4. General Functions of family

In their book *Family Systems in America,* Ira L. Reiss and Gary R. Lee (1988) suggest that one should define family not according to its structure, but in terms of activities of the family members. That is, instead of trying to capture all of the possibilities of who could be found in a family, it is a more useful approach to ask what family groups do with each other. They suggested four central functions of family life: providing sexual intimacy, reproduction, economic cooperation, and the socialization of children.

The family as a social institution performs several basic functions. Various opinions express their views on functions of family. Kingsley Davis (1966) speaks of four main functions of the family: reproduction, maintenance, placement and socialization. William F. Ogburn and Meyer F. Nimkoff (1966) have mentioned six major general functions of family: affectional, economic, recreational, protective, religious, and educational.

> ### *Do you know?*
>
> R. M. MacIver and Charles H. Page (1974) classify the functions of family in two types as primary or essential, and secondary or non-essential. According to them the essential functions include: the stable satisfaction of sex need, production and rearing of children, and provision of a house. Under the non-essential functions, they include: religious, educational, economic, health and recreation, and some other functions.

In a general sociological sense the functions of the family are: regulation and satisfaction of sex needs, race perpetuation, economic function, function of socialization, and other psycho-nutritional functions.

13.4.1. Regulation and satisfaction of sex needs

These are the basic and essential functions of family. The family does not allow promiscuity, though sex instinct is the natural urge of human being. The family provides society with an orderly means of reproduction, while at the same time the norms of marriage control the potentially disruptive forces of sexuality. Sex is always regulated by a system of marriage, which is not only an institution, but a specific prerequisite for the establishment of family. The family includes the husband-wife relationship to fulfill sexual function. Unlike most other female primates, the human female is, more or less, continuously receptive to sexual activity. The continuous female sexuality might have created a considerable sexual competition between males for females. To survive society might have prevented such competition and it might have developed some ways to minimize this rivalry in order to reduce the chances of lethal conflict (Jha, 1994: 67). The satisfaction of sex need requires that both male and female should live together as life partners. It is the family where the husband and wife can satisfy their sex instincts easily and comfortably. The satisfaction involved may vary from the mere release of physical appetite to the sense of total renewal in mutual love.

However, in contrast with the patriarchal family, the modern family is built on a more intimate sense of personal relationship. The choice of partners is not strictly guided by clan norms, and thus personal achievement and attraction of each partner for the other count for more. Though this personal basis for marriage carries the danger of instability and divorce, still it permits a more complete satisfaction of sex need within the family. Indeed, divorce or lack of cohesion is one of the main dysfunctional aspects of family life.

13.4.2. Construction and maintenance of race perpetuation

Race perpetuation is provided for in the proper functioning of the family. The task of perpetuating the race population of a concerned society is the basic function of family. Sexual co-habitation between the spouses automatically leads to the birth of off-spring. Indeed, it is a result of intercourse and does not create any compulsion of marriage. For example, among the Banan of New Guinea and some of the peasant societies in Eastern Europe a groom is not permitted to approach his wife until she bears him a child by a special relative of his father (Jha, 1994: 68).

With these special examples of such small numbers of societies, in a vast majority of the societies, the family institutionalizes child birth and where the couple, practising monogamy,

is unable to procure next generation, go through the process of adoption. Among some peoples it reaches an extreme frequency (Davis, 1967: 396). The modern practices of birth control have introduced *within the family* the distinction between the sexual and reproductive functions. In the unlimited patriarchal families the two were necessarily combined, and the independent satisfaction of sexual desire was commonly associated with extramarital practices. Within the limited family of the present the wife is better able to assume the role once reserved for the 'lady of love' – the concubine or prostitute – and thus within it a greater reconciliation of sex and reproduction may take place (MacIver and Page, 1974: 266). Violence over woman for her ill reproductive health is one of the main dysfunctional aspects of family life.

13.4.3. Economic function

Economic function is also served by family to maintain its autonomy. Family must, in the first place, be a biological group because reproduction requires sexual relationships between two, and biological relationships between all members of the group. It must, in the second place, be a working group with economic solidarity and division of labour between the members, because the care and support of children demand this. The family entails both sexual and economic relationships. Age and sex-based division of labour cords some reciprocal economic obligations within family life.

From ancient society the family performs its roles as an economic unit. The problem of inheritance does not arise of the property (land, buildings, and perhaps cattle), which the clan holds, because the clan in theory never dies. The surviving members as a group continue to operate the clan holdings. But familial or individual property raises the question of inheritance in an acute form. When the family is broken by death such property must usually be received by one or more surviving members (Davis, 1967: 409). Indeed, in simpler societies where the family is a self-contained unit of production, consumption and distribution, it encompasses all economic role characteristics of a society. But in advanced societies where the family is not a self-contained unit of production, consumption and distribution, it includes only some economic role characteristics of a society. Economic rewards may be seen to be distributed and consumed through the family.

The family is seen as one of the key institutions binding the individual into the fabric of social life, a universal body which serves the same functions in all societies (Wilson, 1985). Historical sociologists have argued that changes in the relationship between the family and the economy have placed a greater emphasis on emotional compatibility between marriage partners, because the basis of marriage is no longer simply an economic contract. Marriage is now guided by the romantic norms of affective individualism, namely intimacy, trust and

sexual satisfaction. However, the economic role of family has gradually diminished in modern times and like the societies of the United States is much smaller except for certain sectors such as agriculture and a few upper-class families. In Chinese culture the family as an economic unit still plays a strong role. Actually, today the economic division of labour and the parallel increase of specific social agencies have greatly diminished common participation in the various interests of life, whether in work or in play. The process is still going on, as evident by the continuing decrease of 'whole family' gatherings and the increase of special activities for the different age groups and the different sexes conducted outside the home (MacIver and Page, 1974: 267). On the other side where social base of economy is agriculture, there and in some other industrial places female members are engaged as unpaid labourers and this is one of the main dysfunctional aspects of family life.

Industrialization changed the family by converting it from a *unit of production* into a *unit of consumption,* causing a decline in fertility and a transformation in the relationship between spouses and between parents and children. This change occurred unevenly and gradually, and varied by social class and occupation. Through the nineteenth century industrial workers continued to have relatively large families; women tended to have children about every two years from marriage to age forty. Most types of workers had little motivation for limiting family size because children continued to contribute to the family economy and infant and child mortality rates remained high in industrial cities, sometimes reaching fifty percent in the first year of life. Usually women stopped working outside the home once they became mothers, but often their husbands' wages were too low to support a family, so they took in tasks such as sewing to supplement the family income; but earnings were so low, and hours so long, that households suffered even more than they did when women left the home to work (Accampo, Fuchs, and Stewart 1995). In France especially, the practice of sending children out to wet-nurses continued to be widespread, and hygiene reports blamed infant mortality on women who did not breastfeed their own children (Fuchs 1992; Cole 2000).

13.4.4. Socialization function

Socialization function is another basic role of family. The family is seen to play this key social role in helping the individual to learn the social behaviour desired by society. Whether it is formal or informal, such a socialization approach is rooted in one major sociological theory – the theory of structural functionalism. Functionalism is concerned with the overall structure of society and the processes by which social institutions work together to maintain the overall structure of that society.

The neurobiological theories, which bring attention to children's brain development and functioning, are an 'integral part of the study of the effects of child abuse and neglect' in family life (McClennen, 2010: 26). The importance of children's attachment and bonding to an important caregiver has long been known and cannot be underrated for the development of physically and emotionally healthy children. Cognitive–behavioural theories stress the imitative behaviours of adults in raising their children in the way they were raised. Primary socialization helps to internalize role structure of family process. Child rearing is the basic function of family life.

The child receives its primary socialization in the family by learning the essential ideas and values required for adult life. It is at this time that the child learns some of the traditions and culture of the society into which he or she is born. Through the socialization process the child will learn the patterns of behaviour expected in certain social roles, for instance, gender roles. However, it is argued that key elements of family life cohere to form a cultural logic of child rearing (Lareau, 2003).

Indeed, the changing nature of family and family values also involves in changing structure of gender identities and their link to value loaded actions. Feminist analyses of the so-called 'domestic violence' have highlighted the role of family values in dissimulating the extent of male violence and sexual abuse of women and children within the family. They seek to expose the ways in which the widespread romanticized ideal of the family and family values are systematically skewed to empower men and disempower women and children; and the ways which this ideal informs, are welfare and legal institutions, responding to sexual violence to the detriment of women and children, mainly denying female victims protection or redress. This perspective gives an emphasis on family litigation aspects and moves to protect legal values in a contemporary manner.

In other words, the differences among families seem to cluster together in meaningful patterns. For example, in USA and other developed countries, middle-class parents tend to adopt a cultural logic of child rearing that stresses the concerted cultivation of children. In contrast to this, working-class and poor parents tend to undertake the accomplishment of natural growth. In the accomplishment of natural growth, children experience long stretches of leisure time, child-initiated play, clear boundaries between adults and children, and daily interactions with kin. Working class and poor children, despite tremendous economic strain, often have more 'childlike' lives, with autonomy from adults and control over their extended leisure time. Although middle-class children miss out kin relationships and leisure time, they appear to (at least potentially) gain important institutional advantages. From the experience of concerted cultivation, they acquire skills that could be valuable in the future when they enter the world of work. Middle-class White and Black children in USA did

exhibit some key differences; yet the biggest gaps were not within social classes but across them. It is these class differences and their enactments in family life and child rearing that shape the ways according to which children view themselves in relation to the rest of the world.

Explanations that help to elucidate the actions of adults towards children provide further evidence of the need for prevention and early intervention strategies for making significant strides in reducing child's maltreatment by their caregivers. The concept of childhood as a special developmental period in life is a relatively new thought of postmodern society. In the previous eras, children were considered as chattel and were left at the mercy of their caregivers. Darwin's and Freud's theories emphasize on early development and these theories are among the dominant paradigmatic shifts which raised people's awareness of childhood as different from adulthood. Here it is accurate to suggest that, while sociology had little interest in children *per se*, it had more interest in childhood because, like adulthood, parenthood, family, or education system, childhood was conceptualized as a social institution rather than a naturally occurring phenomenon. Violence over children for any reason is one of the main dysfunctional aspects of family life.

13.4.5. Other psycho-nutritional functions

These functions are also performed by the family unit to maintain its heritage in the way of life. No other factor influences children as deeply as their families. As a social unit with genetic, emotional, and legal dimensions, the family can foster the child's growth, educational development, health, and well-being. The family can provide the child with affection, a sense of belongingness, and validation. Every sphere of a child's life is affected by the family. Indeed, the family provides physical and economic support to the child in its early years of dependence.

Family is the child's source of economic funds, which meet the child's various physical needs like food, shelter, and clothing and some cognitive needs like formal and informal ways of acquiring knowledge. The compulsion of performing enculturation and education functions fall primarily upon the family members. To satisfy child's psychological needs and to provide emotional security, the family members should be intimate, covey mutual respect to each other, and should be attached amongst themselves with a strong sense of family bonding. The family conveys religious and cultural beliefs and traditions to the next generation. Then, too, the family supervises that how the child receives health and hygiene care. Apart from children, the adult members of family, on the other, also demand psychological and emotional support.

The family also performs recreation or entertainment function. There may be other functions which are considered as less important. In this way one can look at the family as the major centre for leisure and recreation. The growth of the modern state with its highly developed welfare services and media entertainment is thought to have taken away some of these non-essential functions of family leaving it free to concentrate on the essential functions of socialization and the stabilization of adult personalities and identity formation. Abusive parenthood is a dysfunctional aspect of family life. However, there are so many other functions like decision making and acculturation process, which can vary according to time and society.

13.4.6. Decision making functions

Decisions within families may be classified into several types: instrumental, affective, social, economic, and technical. Instrumental decisions are those which rest on functional issues such as providing money, shelter, and food to the family members (Epstein, Bishop, and Baldwin, 1982). Affective decisions deal with choices related to feelings and emotions. Decision, such as, whether to get married is affective. Social decisions are those related to the values, roles, and goals of the family, such as decisions about whether one parent will stay at home while the children are at preschool age. Economic decisions focus on choices about using and gathering family resources. Whether an eighteen-year old child should get a job and contribute to the family income is an economic decision. Technical decisions relate to all the sub-decisions that have to be made to carry out a main decision. For instance, if a family decides that one member will quit work and go to college, then a variety of technical decisions must be made to enact that decision (Noller and Fitzpatrick, 1993).

Families use a variety of processes for actually reaching a decision. Many families have a habitual process that they use regularly whenever they need to make a decision. Other families vary in the way of approach they have to decide depending on the type of decision, their mood, and their stage of development. Researchers often discuss five possible processes that families use in reaching decisions. These include appeals to authority and status, rules, values, use of discussion and consensus, and de facto decisions.

The sociological approach allows family decisions to occur as a result of the action of the person in the family with the highest status and/or authority. For example, in some traditional families, decision making may be vested in the father. The other members of the family are thus guided by his decision. If a family is discussing where they should go for a family summer vacation, for instance, and the father decides that a camping trip is the best, the rest of the family members concur because of his authority. This method of

decision -making works for a family as long as all the members agree on the issue of the highest status and authority within the family. If the family members do not agree that the father has the authority to make decisions, they may engage in serious conflict rather than allowing the father to make a decision for them.

Further, the authority approach may be more complex than the previous discussion implies. Many families may have divided family decision-making domains. In so doing, they designate certain types of decisions as the province of one member and other types that belong to other family members. For example, many households divide the labour and then delegate authority based on who is in charge of a particular area. If a husband is in charge of maintaining the family finances, he may have authority over major buying decisions. However, he may have no authority over issues concerning the children; for instance, the decision about bedtimes may be out of his jurisdiction. In this process, everyone in the family may have authority over some decision-making concerns.

Some families grant authority and status to members based on expertise. Thus, if an adolescent knows a great deal about computers and the Internet or about automobiles, the adolescent may be the one who decides about major expenditures such as what type of computer should be bought for the family, what Internet provider to use, or which car for the family would be the best to purchase.

Finally, the complexity involved in understanding decision making by authority is revealed in examining the communication process involved in making decisions. As Kay Palan and Robert Wilkes (1997) observe, the interactions between adolescents and parents often influence the outcome of the decision even though a parent may seem to make the final decision. Palan and Wilkes find that teenagers use a wide variety of strategies which allow them to influence decisions in their families.

13.4.7. Acculturation function

The term 'acculturation' was first used to refer to the changes that take place in cultural groups as a result of contact between them: 'Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups' (Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, 1936). Later, recognizing that there are psychological changes in the group to which they belong, Theodore D. Graves (1967) coined the term 'psychological acculturation'. At both the cultural and psychological levels, the term has become widely used to refer to both the processes of change (over time) and to the longer-term outcomes (often termed as 'adaptation') of the contact.

Acculturation is different from both enculturation and socialization. The latter terms refer to the process of initial incorporation into one's primary cultural group through an informal enfolding of the individual (enculturation), or by more formal and deliberate teaching (socialization). The former refers to a later involvement with a second culture, which may or may not lead to the incorporation of individuals into it.

Intergenerational conflicts and acculturation preferences of parents and children have also attracted attention in the area of family acculturation. One study found that young Cuban Americans adopted the values of the larger American society more than their parents, whereas the parents remained more attached to their heritage cultures. These differences in acculturation led to greater intergenerational conflicts; parents lost control over their adolescent children who strived for autonomy and rejected the traditional Cuban ways (see Szapocznik and Kurtines, 1993). Jean S. Phinney, Anthony Ong, and Tanya Madden (2000) studied intergenerational value discrepancies in family obligations among both immigrant and nonimmigrant families in the United States. In the Armenian and Vietnamese families, the intergenerational discrepancy was greater in those who were residing for a long time and had in them a U.S.-born adolescent, while Mexican families did not show such a difference. The Vietnamese had the largest discrepancy compared to the other immigrant groups. Such discrepancies, however, were not found to be greater in immigrant families; European and African American families did not differ from Armenian and Mexican American families. Phinney and colleagues (2000) concluded that value discrepancies between parents and adolescents are not necessarily related to immigration, but may reflect a universal tendency in which parents strive to maintain the existing norms, and adolescents question their obligations. This type of function may be true in case of Indian family life, specifically when we study nonimmigrant Indian and immigrant Indian families. The intergenerational discrepancy is greater in Bengali families who had longer residence in India, while Bangladesi families do not show such a difference. Moreover, this function is also a source of conflict in family life.

Andrew J. Fuligni and colleagues studied attitudes toward authority, autonomy, family obligations, and perceptions of family conflict and cohesion among American adolescents with Filipino, Chinese, Mexican, Central and South American, and European backgrounds (Fuligni, 1998; Fuligni et al, 1999). Asian and Latin American adolescents had stronger beliefs and greater expectations about their obligation to assist, respect, and support their families than did European American adolescents. This finding was consistent across the adolescents' generation; the same ethnic differences held true for the third-generation adolescents (Fuligni et al., 1999).

However, in terms of beliefs and expectations about parental authority and autonomy, Fuligni (1998) found that only Chinese, Filipino, and Mexican American adolescents who come from immigrant families followed traditional norms of agreeing with parents and placing less emphasis on behavioural autonomy. Adolescents from native families were similar to European American adolescents in their beliefs and expectations. Hence, over generations, Asian and Latin American adolescents displayed influences of both their culture of origin by the endorsement of family obligations and of the American culture by the desire for greater autonomy (Fuligni et al., 1999).

Thinks to do

Think about your family and the functions it performs. Try also to represent the diagrammatic position of your family members on the basis of their importance in role relations. Establish a typology of functions which your family executes in its everyday style.

13.5. Dysfunctional aspects of Family

In the patriarchal family the adjustment between the partners through the tensions and crises of the family life cycle was imposed, if not otherwise obtained, by economic necessity and by social pressure supported by the rigid mores and manifested in the various sanctions of social control, from law to gossip. Today the necessity and the pressure are less, and the family, no longer strongly if rudely cemented by extraneous functions, must rely much more upon its own strength (or weaknesses) to survive the crises of its own life history (MacIver and Page, 1974: 268).

Our society's notion of romantic love provides the emotional support that allows an individual to cope up with the stresses and strains of adult life. Functionalists would argue that the basic functions of the family (reproduction, socialization, economic and emotional support) are to be found in all forms of family structure – that they are universal. The family is seen by functionalists to have a crucial role in maintaining stability in society. Functionalists have, therefore, been interested in the way in which the family has adapted to the forces of industrialization and urbanization. Other studies have focused on the pathology or dysfunctional aspects of the family, the possibility that the family may break down under the pressure of modernity. Underlying both of these functionalist concerns is the assumption that the family has and should continue to play an essential and positive role in society. This has led some functionalists to argue that the monogamian nuclear family is unavoidable, as

it is well suited to the modern world, a claim that is needed to examine.

The modern instability of the family is revealed by the frequency of divorce, separation, desertion, and other evidences of disharmony or lack of cohesion which come to light particularly in the courts, in the field of social work, and in 'marriage clinics'. These are the dysfunctional aspects of family. Functionalist, like Robert King Merton argues that the dysfunctions are those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system. It is important to note here that one social fact can have negative consequences for another social fact, and in this respect functionalists develop the idea of a dysfunction.

To what extent do these wider discourses about families, functional or dysfunctional, actually have impact on routine family practices? This is, clearly, a complex matter and we no longer (if we ever did) see family members as being passively at the receiving end of discourse or, to use an older term, ideology.

Individuals can and do negotiate with discourse partly because the public accounts of family are rarely completely coherent or uniform. There are frequently competing versions which are publicly available of what the family is about (Morgan, 2011: 68). Nevertheless, individual family members are clearly aware of wider family discourses and these may influence, say, step-parents or lone parents as they go about their routine practices even when, as may frequently be the case, they deny the applicability of these public accounts for their daily lives.

Violence or separation is one of the main dysfunctional aspects of family life. Many murders and a high proportion of physical assaults take place within the family. Family violence is largely directed against wives and children. Relationships within the family are often confused. Love is matched with anger, jealousy, and shame. Tension and hostility that exist between husband and wife get passed on to the child. Powerful triangular relationships form an emotional battleground. The child has an identity thrust upon it, rather than being allowed to develop a free personality.

13.6. Future of Family

In Europe and USA, falling birth rates, ageing populations, rising employment rates of mothers and increasing divorce and parental separation have all prompted questions about the future of the family institution. Demographic, economic and cultural change necessitates welfare state restructuring. Changing patterns of welfare needs and risks are giving impetus to a rethinking of the relationship between the welfare state and parents with young children.

13.6.1. Change in wedlock

In the beginning of twenty first century, family forms and family practices have been profoundly transformed throughout the globe. The main victims of this politicized socio-economic and cultural transition are children, 'as they have become increasingly neglected under current conditions of family crisis. Their situation may become further worse, either because women stay with their children under difficult material conditions, or because women, looking for autonomy and personal survival, begin to neglect their children the way men do' (Castells, 2010: 294).

What most of its defenders in Western countries call the traditional family was in fact a late, transitional phase in family development in the 1950's. This was a time at which the proportion of women out at work was still relatively low and when it was still difficult, especially for women, to obtain divorce without stigma. On the other hand, men and women by this time were more equal than they had been previously, both in fact and in law. The family had ceased to be an economic entity and the idea of romantic love as basis for marriage had replaced marriage as an economic contract.

Since then, the family has changed much further. The details vary from society to society, but the same trends are visible almost everywhere in the industrialized world. Only a minority of people now live in what might be called the standard 1950's family – both parents living together with their children of the marriage, where the mother is a full time housewife, and the father the breadwinner. In some countries, more than a third of all births happen outside wedlock, while the proportion of people living alone has gone up steeply and looks likely to rise even more (Brubaker, 1993).

13.6.2. Change in Communication and intimacy

In the traditional family, the married couple was only one part, and often not the main part, of the family system. Ties with children and other relatives tended to be equally or even more important in the day to day conduct of social life. Today the couple, married or unmarried, is at the core of what the family is. The couple came to be at the centre of family life as the economic role of the family dwindled and love, or love plus sexual attraction, became the basis of forming marriage ties.

A couple once constituted has its own exclusive history, its own biography. It is a unit based upon emotional communication or intimacy. The idea of a relationship is also surprisingly recent. Only 30 or so years ago, no one spoke of 'relationships'. They did not need to, nor did they need to speak in terms of intimacy and commitment. Marriage at that

time was the commitment, as the existence of shotgun marriages bore witness. While statistically marriage is still the normal condition, for most people its meaning has more or less completely changed. Marriage signifies that a couple is in a stable relationship, and may indeed promote that stability, since it makes a public declaration of commitment. However, marriage is no longer the chief defining basis of coupledom. Emotional communication and physical intimacy are becoming the key to what they are all about. Now the relationship has quite different dynamics from more traditional social ties. It depends upon processes of active trust - opening oneself up to the other. Self-disclosure is the basic condition of intimacy.

13.6.3. Change in Sexuality

In the traditional family, sexuality was always dominated by reproduction. This was a matter of tradition and nature combined. The absence of effective contraception meant that for most women sexuality was inevitably closely connected with child birth. There are few countries in the world where there is no intense discussion about sexual equality, the regulation of sexuality and the future of the family. And where there is no open debate, this is mostly because it is actively repressed by authoritarian governments or fundamentalist groups. In many cases, these controversies are national or local – as are the social and political reactions to them. Politicians and pressure groups will suggest that if only family policy were modified, if only divorce were made harder or easier to get in their particular country, solutions to our problems could readily be found.

> ### *Do you know?*
>
> Sexuality was regulated by the idea of female virtue. The sexual double standard is often thought of as a creation of the Victorian period. In fact, in one version or another it was central to almost all non-modern societies. It involved a dualistic view of female sexuality - a clear cut division between the virtuous woman on the one hand, and the libertine on the other.

Sexual promiscuity in many cultures has been taken as a positive defining feature of masculinity. James Bond is, or was, admired for his sexual as well as his physical heroism. Sexually adventurous women, by contrast, have nearly always been beyond the pale, no matter how much influence the mistresses of some prominent figures might have achieved.

Attitudes towards homosexuality were also governed by a mix of tradition and nature. Anthropological surveys show that homosexuality - or male homosexuality at any rate - has

been tolerated, or openly approved of, in more cultures than it has been outlawed. Those societies that have been hostile to homosexuality have usually condemned it as specifically unnatural. Western attitudes have been more extreme than most; less than half a century ago homosexuality was still widely regarded as a perversion and written up as such in manuals of psychiatry.

Antagonism towards homosexuality is still widespread and the dualistic view of women continues to be held by many - of both sexes. But over the past few decades the main elements of people's sexual lives in the West have changed in an absolutely basic way. The separation of sexuality from reproduction is in principle complete. Sexuality is for the first time something to be discovered, moulded, and altered. Sexuality, which used to be defined so strictly in relation to marriage and legitimacy, now, has little connection to them at all. Family researchers should see the increasing acceptance of homosexuality not just as a tribute to liberal tolerance. It is a logical outcome of the severance of sexuality from reproduction. Sexuality which has no content is by definition no longer dominated by heterosexuality.

13.6.4. Change in women status

A democracy of the emotions would draw no distinctions of principle between heterosexual and same-sex relationships. Gays, rather than heterosexuals, have actually been pioneers in discovering the new world of relationships and exploring its possibilities. They have had to be, because when homosexuality came out of the closet, gays were not able to depend upon the normal supports of traditional marriage. They have had to be innovators, often in a hostile community environment.

Indeed, sociologically there are no such predictions about families and social change, although it is pointed to the likely effects of increasing occupational and geographical differentiation and women's de-domestication on extended family networks. It is also suggested that both developments could lead to a decrease in extended family cohesion and a loosening of the extended social networks in which families are located. In so far as there have been different studies in the kin-connectedness of society and different forms of family structure. And it is certainly the case that higher rates of women's employment are to be found in society's middle-class areas, where families are more likely to have experienced geographical mobility and, as a result, have an external environment characterized by loose-knit networks. But these changes do not appear to have seriously undermined the ability of extended families to provide a source of moral support and social identity to their members (Carnoy, 2000).

However, the more women have conquered their autonomy, the more new generations of women cannot relate to the conditions under which their mothers and grandmothers used to live, the more feminism diversifies and transforms gender relations by shifting from emancipation to liberation, ultimately dissolving gender as a cultural category and a material institution that uses biological differences to construct the sexual division of labour (Castells, 2010: xxix).

Thus, although the changes they predicted have come to pass, they have not had the expected outcomes. It is suggested that, rather than increased occupational and geographical differentiation undermining the social solidarity of extended families; it is the pressure of time arising from increasing labour market activity of women and men which is likely to have this effect. This is because it will impinge on the ability of social actors to engage in those practices which reproduce extended families and hold them together. It would be unwise, however, to predict that this will actually happen, as there are many possible resolutions of the current contradiction between increasing participation in paid work and the continuing need for participation in care work, one being that hours of work are reduced for all, thereby enabling men as well as women to combine paid work with caring for themselves and others.

13.6.5. Change in biological reproduction

Technological change in biological reproduction has allowed the possibility of disassociating the reproduction of the species from the social and personal functions of the family. The possibilities of *in vitro* fertilization, of sperm banks, of surrogate mothers, of genetically engineered babies, open up a whole area of social experimentation that society will try to control and repress as much as possible because of its potential threat to our moral and legal foundations (Dasgupta and Chattopadhyay, 2002). Yet, the fact that women can have children on their own without having to even know the father, or that men, even after their death, can use surrogate mothers to have their children, severs the fundamental relationship between biology and society in the reproduction of the human species, thus separating socialization from parenting. Under these historical conditions, families', and people's living arrangements, are being redefined in terms still unclear.

13.7. Conclusion

A more general level of sociological analysis suggests that, the term deinstitutionalization means there are few accepted and received ways of 'doing' family and those socially acceptable alternatives coexist. The future of the family is likely to be characterized by

variations in patterns of family formation and household composition and, from this point of view there are diverse futures for the family and personal life. One future is that family life goes on much as it did in the 1960s, with high rates of contact between family members living in different households, low rates of geographical mobility and women being at the centre of kinship networks. This future includes reconstituted families with the increase in the number of potential kin in different generations that they imply. Another is that there is much greater diversity in living arrangements, with many more people choosing not to have children or not to have partner, and that there is more gender equality between couples, resulting from younger women's tendency to have higher-status occupations than their partners. Finally, there are kinship networks that link kin (and often include friends) even though they live at considerable distances from each other and that are not necessarily weakened by geographical distance. These networks condition the socially acceptable alternatives which are available to their members.

13.8. Summary

All these futures coexist, although their incidence is affected by class and culture. This diversity of family lives, and the networks within which they are embedded, needs to be taken into account by both social theorists and social policy makers. Like Therborn, it is argued that the future of families will be marked by complexity, 'a contingency of sexual relations, partnerships and family forms', but with 'a modal pattern of long-term, institutionalized heterosexual coupling' (Therborn, 2004: 314). Indeed, Therborn interprets family change over the last century in no terms of individualization but of the gradual weakening of patriarchy and the end to the '20th century industrial standardization' of the socio-sexual order (Therborn, 2004: 313). What has happened since 1960 is that the western European family has returned to its 'modern historical complexity, including non-marriage as well as marriage, variable age at marriage, informal cohabitation and extramarital births' (Therborn, 2004: 314). And it is this which distinguishes contemporary de-institutionalization.

The advantages of a restudy of Therborn's ideas are not that these allow one to predict the future of family by drawing a line from 1960 to 2012 and projecting it onward, for example, to 2042, but that it allows observers to see 1960 and 2012 in historical perspective. What had appeared to be the cast-iron social institutions of the Edwardian period gave way to the more relaxed institutions of the sixties. 'De-institutionalization', had the term been invented, could well have been applied to the era whose theme song was 'anything

goes'. 'Anything goes' can be translated as 'everything is permitted'. *Who* is permitted is the *individual*. But who does the permitting is not specified. The sociologist, coming to the aid of the song writer, would point out that there are two candidates for 'permitter': individuals, other people, acting independently of each other, who can positively or negatively sanction an individual's actions (public opinion); and 'society', that is, regularities in the actions of individuals deriving from shared, normative expectations about the actions of others. Clusters of such expectations have classically been described as 'social institutions'.

13.9. Questions

13.9.1 Answer in detail:

   a.   What is family structure? How do you justify the structural change in family patterns?

   b.   What are the major functions of family?

   c.   What are the determinants of change in family life?

   d.   What are the dysfunctional aspects of family?

13.9.2 Answer briefly:

   a.   What are the determinants of change in family structure?

   b.   What are the changing roles of family?

   c.   Write a short note on the decision-making function of family?

   d.   Does family have any future?

13.9.3 Answer very briefly:

   a.   What are the basic functions of family?

   b.   How does changing status of women impact on family function?

   c.   Shortly discuss the changing nature of biological reproduction.

   d.   "De-institutionalization of family" - Explain.

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13.11. Glossary

Family structure includes the people who are considered part of the family—present members, as well as important figures from the past—and the quality of the relationships among them.

Family function is a sum total of processes by which the family operates as a whole, including communication and manipulation of the environment for problem solving.

Feminization is the shift in gender roles and sex roles in a society, group, or organization towards a focus upon the feminine. It can also mean the incorporation of women into a

group or a profession that was once dominated by men.

Socialization is the life-long process of learning to behave in a way that is acceptable to society.

Enculturation is the process by which people learn the dynamics of their surrounding culture and acquire values and norms appropriate or necessary in that culture and worldviews.

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of reproductive disease or infirmity. Reproductive health deals with the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life.

Homosexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behaviour between members of the same sex or gender. As a sexual orientation, homosexuality is an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions to people of the same sex.

Unit 14 : Choice and Regulations in Marriage

Structure of the unit

14.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the definitional features of marriage.

- To realize the factors of mate selection.

- To recognize the typology in the ways of a getting mate.

- To comprehend the determinants of restriction in marriage.

- To evaluate different customs, norms, laws and rituals of marriage.

14.2. Introduction

Marriage is a legally and socially sanctioned union between one or more husbands and one or more wives that accords status to their offspring and is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that prescribe the rights and duties of thepartners.Sociologists view marriage as societal institution that helps to create the basic unit of social structure. Like family, marriage may be defined differently—and practiced differently—in cultures across the world. Families and marriages, like other institutions, adapt to social change. Here, an institution consists of relatively stable set of (i) norms, (ii) roles and (iii) patterned behaviour. Laws are institutional devices, but so are social norms and conventions like peer pressure and ostracism. Sociologically, an institution is, thus, the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. From this point of view, marriage is an institution that is made up of many complex layers of formal and informal rules. From religious wedding vows to threats of violence within the home, behavior within marriage is influenced by the structure of these different rules. A marriage, however, does not simply exist between the married partners, but rather, is codified as a social institution in legal, economic, social, and spiritual or religious ways.

The universality of marriage within different societies and cultures is attributed to the manybasic social and personal functions for which it provides structure, such as procreation, sexual gratification and regulation, care of children and their education and socialization, regulation of lines of descent, division of labour between the sexes, economic production and consumption, and satisfaction of personal needs for affection, status, and companionship.

In the biological evolutionary scale, the more complex the species, the longer the offspring is dependent on its mother for survival from the time of birth to maturity. Human beings, require the most time of all species to reach maturity. This imposes increased duties on

human parents for the care of their children. The best chance for the successful development of the child into adulthood occurs when both parents are deeply involved throughout the period of child rearing. Hence, marriage lays the foundation for the nuclear family, whose basic constituents are a mother, a father, and a child and which is the primary unit for ensuring the procreation of human beings and the preservation of their societies.

14.3. Courtship and Mate Selection

In most societies adolescence is marked by social as well as biological changes. Such social changes often include a new, more formal attitude towards parents and, more particularly, towards members of the opposite sex. In many societies the custom for young people in the early stages of adolescence is to spend time in same-sex groups (Vanita, 2005). Boys may attend sporting events, and girls, overnight parties. Eventually the same-sex groups come into contact with similar groups of the opposite sex at social occasions. In some societies young people go out with mixed-sex groups before they begin dating, but in other societies the practice of dating emerges from the same-sex group phase, as individual young people meet and pair off.

However, dating is a modern Westernized custom. There are examples from pre-modern societies having pre-marital relationships between boys and girls which lead to marital unions. For example the famous studies had done by Varrier Elwin (1947) on the Murias (Gond tribe of Bastar, Madhya Pradesh) and their youth dormitories, which are commonly known as *Ghotuls*. The *ghotul* is the young people's dormitory; but its use is not restricted, as in so many tribes (for this institution is very widespread), to males only. Among the Muria, children of both sexes start sleeping in the *ghotul* at an early age, and they are not segregated there.

There seem to be two types of *ghotul*, one in which each individual has his or her allotted partner to whom fidelity is due during the continuance of life in the *ghotul*, which lasts until marriage; in the other type, permanent or semi-permanent attachment to an individual is banned, and though some of the leaders of the institution may have quasi-permanent partners, the sleeping partners of the rank and file are decided for them and varied systematically every few days. Elwin regards this type as a modern variation from the one in which partnerships are expected to be continuing, but it seems possible to the reviewer that it is more likely to be a partial reversion to the less regulated promiscuity of an older pattern which had been changed gradually into the type with permanent partnerships. The *ghotul* is not as unusual or extra-ordinary as it sounds. The Nagas of North-eastern

India and North-western Myanmar have similar dormitories, which they call *morungs*. Most of the primitive tribes of South-east Asia, New Zealand, Africa and Australia have had such dormitories or "communal barracks," and these fulfill important social, sexual and religious functions.

The modern dating is often followed by a stage of 'steady dating,' in which a couple agree to date only with each other, and their exclusive dating relationship may become recognized by their peer group and others, including their respective parents. If the couple gets along well together, the phase, sometimes defined as courtship, may begin. In its strictest sense courtship usually refers to an activity, such as dating, with intent to marry. Prior to the 20th century, and still today in some societies, courtship was/is practised without dating in the modern sense. A young man may visit his intended bride in her parental home and brings gifts, discuss common interests, and perhaps go for walk. To non-traditional people these customs, if continued to courtship, may seem ridiculously old-fashioned, and it is frequently difficult in the modern era to make meaningful distinctions between 'going out,' dating, and courting. The distinctions are further blurred by modern couples' living together, either before marriage or with no intention of ever marrying.

More typically, though, the family begins with marriage, which grows out of courtship and is preceded by what sociologists call mate selection. Mate selection may be defined simply as the process often unconsciously of choosing a mate. Usually the mate is the person's intended spouse, and the traditional definition of the term has this implication. Individuals often claim that their match is made on the basis of love, but statistical studies show that other factors are also involved. For example, people usually marry within their social class and often to those of the same ethnic group or religion. This practice of 'like marrying like' is known as homogamy. The widely prevalent means of acquiring a mate in pre-modern or tribal societies are probation, capture, trial, purchase, elopement, exchange, intrusion, and service (Doshi and Jain, 2001: 218-220).

The discussion below begins with research and theory focused on *proximal* causes, or immediate psychological triggers of mate choice (such as pleasant feelings in response to seeing a physically attractive other), and moves through progressively more *distal* factors (relationship exchange, economic factors, cultural and historical factors, and evolutionary history).Like the single frames, scenes, and overall plot of a movie, these different approaches are complementary, and all are required to see the "big picture" of mate selection.

14.3.1. Individual Factors

Several theories of mate selection have focused on the psychological responses of the individual to potential mates. An influential early theory focused on reinforcement, emphasizing

the observer's affective response to potential mates (Byrne and Clore, 1970). The assumption was that a person is attracted to potential mates who make that person feel good. Researchers in this tradition focused on overt characteristics such as physical appearance and the expression of similar attitudes and values. People indeed tend to mate with others who have similar characteristics, including political attitudes, lifestyle values, personality, appearance, or ethnicity (Botwin, Buss, and Shackelford, 1997). Consistent with the theory that such features make the judge feel good, it was found that people do find it pleasant to interact with similar others.

Individual psychological responses suggest that a person decides that he or she is feeling romantic attraction for another when he or she attributes feelings of arousal to that other (Berscheid and Walster, 1974). Findings that people became attracted to others present when they were experiencing arousal due to fear of electric shock, standing on a shaky suspension bridge, or recent exercise were interpreted as support for that theory (White and Kight, 1984). An alternative interpretation of those findings emphasizes that arousal simply boosts attraction, without any necessary misinterpretation of arousal (Allen et al. 1989). Another set of factors that affects mate choice involves personality traits. Bernard Murstein's (1970) *filter theory,* for example, suggested that partners are first selected based on obvious stimulus characteristics, such as attractiveness, and are then passed through finer filters based on similar values and role compatibility.

14.3.2. Factors in the Relationship

Choice and selection of mate is a two-way process, involving more than the preferences of a single individual. The basic form of this process is exchange marriage, which is an arranged and reciprocal exchange of spouses between two groups. In this marriage pattern, the spouses' characteristics are dissimilar but the low values of one group are offset by high values of another, and this characteristic can be explained by "exchange theory" (Edwards, 1969). Often, as among some Australian Aborigines and American Subarctic peoples, a traditional ideal was for a brother and sister from one family to marry a sister and brother, respectively, from another. Sister exchange is a type of marriage agreement where two sets of siblings marry each other.

A wave of mate selection theories emphasized processes of dyadic exchange of costs and benefits. The most prevalent models of mate-selection emphasize *social exchange*: I seek a mate who brings a mix of assets and liabilities with comparable value to my own personal portfolio (Hatfield et al., 1996). Researchers focusing on *reciprocal exchange* have emphasized naturalistic studies of mate choice in relationships as they unfold over

time. Some of these approaches have suggested that, over the course of time, relationships go through different stages or phases.

The earliest dyadic exchange models focused on two basic theories in explaining possible principles on which people are attracted to each other and how individuals create sexual and romantic relationships. The "theory of homogamy" states that in their potential or actual partner's individual preference, the characteristics are similar to themselves. It is like the "birds of a feather flock together". Homogamous preferences construct an assortative mating, where the individuals are similar to each other. One of the mechanisms that can cause homogamy in partners might be sexual imprinting. According to this theory, individuals prefer in potential partners traits that are similar to those of the opposite sex parent. In contrast, the "theory of complementarity" suggests that individuals are attracted to partners with traits that are opposite to their own (Winch, 1955). In this *complementarity,* the core concept – "opposites attract" – denotes that socially dominant partners will seek socially submissive others for relationships. Females emphasize social dominance in their partners more than males do (Sadalla, Kenrick, and Vershure, 1987). From an evolutionary change perspective, homogamous preferences can be explained by the theory of kin selection and outbreeding depression avoidance, while pairing on the principle of complementarity is advantageous in terms of inbreeding avoidance.

14.3.3. Economic Factors

Mate selection is also frequently related to economic factors. For instance, before she will consent to marry him, a woman may want her intended husband to show that he is capable of supporting her. It is sometimes suggested that, in Western societies, the relative emphasis on status and power in men and physical attractiveness in women might be related to women's relatively lower economic status and that if opportunity and wage disparities were rectified, women would not prefer a man with higher socioeconomic status (Eagly and Wood, 1999). Within the United States, however, there is evidence that women who gain social status do not shift to male-like preferences for relative youth and attractiveness, but instead continue to prefer older and higher status partners (Kenrick and Keefe, 1992; Townsend, 1987).

In India, for these economic factors, the percentage of intra-caste marriages drops dramatically. This implies that caste is not just a proxy for other characteristics households also care about and that there are several potential matches for each individual, both inside and outside his or her caste. At the same time, it is also found in non-western countries that the individuals are matched with spouses who are very similar on all non-ethnic characteristics to the mate they would have selected when social order was included within

one's preferences (Buss, 2001). As a personal affair of social actors, in mate choice and selection process, other economic considerations (like class, employment, income, etc.) are getting importance today.

14.3.4. Socio-cultural and Historical Factors

Taking still another step back from the isolated individual, some researchers have focused on the cultural and historical context of mate choice (Hatfield and Rapson, 1996). In addition to cultural and historical variations in mate choice, there are many commonalities found across human societies. These range from preferred overt characteristics such as clear skin and lack of disfigurement to personality traits making for good parents and agreeable companions (Broude, 1994). A general preference for similarity in a mate is also widespread. Moreover, a number of sex differences found in Western society are found across cultures and time periods, including the tendency to judge men on the basis of physical strength, social position, and economic worth, and to place more emphasis on a woman's physical attractiveness. The preference for older versus younger partners across the life-span, is also found across numerous societies and historical time periods (Otta et al. 1999).

Due to warfare, migration, and random historical and geographic variations, there are sometimes relatively more available females than males in the pool of eligible mates, or the converse. Marcia Guttentag and Paul Secord (1983) found that a surplus of women (putting men in a "buyers' market") is associated with later marriage, more divorce, and more permissive sexual norms. A surplus of men, on the other hand, is associated with more stable relationships and male willingness to commit to monogamous relationships. Other research suggests that polyandry, though rare, is associated with conditions of extreme resource scarcity (as found in the high Himalayas in Nepal) under which survival rates for children of single males and their wives are low. In Nepal and a few other places, several brothers often combine their resources and marry a single wife, increasing survival rates for resultant children (Crook and Crook, 1988).

14.3.5. Evolutionary Factors

Men and women make different contributions to the offspring. Women contribute their bodies, through internal gestation and nursing, and men consequently value indications of fertility including healthy appearance and a waist-hip ratio characteristic of youthful sexual maturity (Cunningham, Druen, and Barbee 1997). On the other hand, men primarily contribute their genes and indirect resources such as money and shelter. Women could appraise a man's genetic potential from physical attractiveness and position in a dominance hierarchy.

His ability to provide resources could be gauged indirectly by his ambition and directly by his social status and acquired wealth (Daly and Wilson, 1983). Even with these differential tendencies, humans often cooperate in raising their offspring.

Hence a number of characteristics should be (and are) desired by both sexes, such as agreeableness, kindness, and faithfulness. People are not presumed to consciously calculate their genetic self-interest, but like all animals, to have inherited certain preferences that helped their ancestors reproduce successfully.

14.4. Ways of Mate Choice

While recognizing that mate-selection has been found to be homogamous with respect to numerous social characteristics (love, affection, religion, socio-economic status, etc.), sociologists have hypothesized that with respect to individual motivation or at the psychic level, mate-selection tends to be complementary rather than homogamous. Freud's theory of marital choice (1949), for example, is sufficientlyambiguousas to have inspired little, if any, research and attempts to test whether the Oedipal or Electra complexes influenced marital choice have not confirmed psychoanalytic theory (Kirkpatrick, 1937; Winch, 1951). Some sociologists (Kernodle, 1959; Reiss, 1960; Combs, 1961) have emphasized the primacy of cultural and social factors over individual and psychological determinants. After considering all the above mentionedfactors of mate choice, sociologically we can rethink the changing ways (from tradition to modern) of getting mates that cut across those factors.

14.4.1. Traditional Ways of Mate Choice

Marriage is important as the accepted institution for the expression of adult sexuality. A mutually satisfying sex life is important to both men and women, although social scientists point out that marital roles involve much more than this. Romantic love is only one of the reasons people marry ((Mangus, 1936). Social and economic security, and indeed social pressures, can be equally important. Moreover, societies vary in the range and definition of relatives who are considered prohibited sex and marriage partners. Many Western and define exogamous categories on the basis of degree of relationship, that is, prohibiting marriage between cousins without considerations of how they are interconnected through their parents. Prohibitions thus reflect actual biological distances and vary from group to group from less to more inclusive definitions. For example, England and Canada prohibit marriages between uncles and nieces and aunts and nephews but allow first cousins to marry. Some U.S. states follow the same pattern, but others have made first cousin marriage illegal.

Traditionally, marriage is a ubiquitous feature of human kinship and social organization and its development assumed a critical role in the history of social institutions. According to many anthropologists, the regulation of sexual relationships may in itself have formed the basis of all human social orders.

Do You Know?

From tradition to modern, several widely occurring functions of marriage can be associated with notable behavioural universals:

1. parental responsibility for long term infant nurturing and education,

2. social regulation of sexual competition,

3. organization of gendered divisions of labour,

4. assignment of individuals to social groups and statuses, and

5. the formation of intergroup alliances and exchanges.

In tribal society, group leaders practised concubinage. From this tradition, in China, the elite class maintains it and it is not uncommon for the male elite to have several concubines, and the higher in the administration an official rose, the more concubines he was likely to take (Watson and Ebrey, 1991). Whereas concubinage is different from polygamy in the sense that concubines were not formally wives of their patrons, the relationship did resemble matrimony, and the concubines lived with their patrons and gave birth to children who were considered legal children of the patron, albeit with lower social status (Ebrey, 1993).

The custom of concubinage naturally created a shortage of women and a surplus of poorer men who were unable to find a bride. It follows that even in the absence of a sex ratio imbalance poorer men were bound not to marry due to their low social standing, the practice of women marrying hypergamously and concubinage. Moreover, marriage as a condition for some aspects of citizenship, and marriage as an institution offering social and economic security, have shaped and continue to shape the ecology of choice. This also has implications for the archaeology of choice in terms of parents' role in seeing to it that their children get married. Recent research has shown that parents are closely involved in mate selection by their children. This practice challenges spousal relationships based on love and individual choice.

In traditional Indian society, mate choice refers to the characteristic manner in which a spouse is selected. It is the procedure of finding a wife or husband. It is also classified into four forms: 1) negotiated mate choice, commonly known as arranged marriage where the

consent of the parents is necessary; 2) partial free mate choice where the consent of the parents is necessary; 3) total free mate choice by one or both of the potential spouse; and 4) absolute free mate choice where the consent of the parents is not necessary.

These four broad forms of choosing a mate appear in several sub-forms. The negotiated mate choice appears in the form of mate selection by service, by negotiation, by exchange and by probation. The partial free mate choice appears in the form of mate selection by probation. The total free mate choice appears in the form of mate selection by capture, by intrusion, by trial. The absolute free mate choice occurs in the form of mate selection by elopement.

14.4.2 Modern Practices for Mate Selection

The "modern" contexts of marriage is characterised by individual choice and freedom in mate selection. It would be misleading to think that social and economic considerations in mate selection belong to "traditional" marriage customs. In nearly all cultures, marriage is distinguished from courtship or living together out of wedlock by a ceremony or series of ceremonies. These often involve bride-wealth, dowry, or simply the giving of gifts, by anyone, to the newlyweds. Wedding ceremonies may be civil, religious, or a combination of the two. The types of civil and religious customaries vary according to the nature of mate selection.

The amount of dowry depends on the basis of marriage type. The arranged marriage is more dowry centric than love marriage. Secondly, the demise of intergenerational transfer of property from the older to the younger generation further weakened patriarchal and parental power. Since large dowries and wedding feasts were labelled as "feudal extravagance" and the "bride price" was regarded as "buying and selling in marriage"(Eklund, 2013). This trend affects mate selection procedure from arranged to love.

Certainly, in the modern world, the meaning of marriage is becoming more complicated. In some areas, same-sex couples are pursuing the right to be married. Certainly, a legal recognition of this does not create or eliminate the agreements that couples make between themselves, but these couples desire that legal recognition. In addition, high divorce rates mean that many children will not be raised in a traditional family unit. Here again, the fact that the parents are not married does not mean that they are not a family, but it is changing the way that families are arranged.

The purpose of the law was to reform the family and the institution of marriage, which initially were seen as impediments to modernisation of the nation. The law further granted

the right to divorce and the freedom to choose a marriage partner (Evans, 1992; Edwards, 2000), which had ramifications for mate selection and mate separation. Sociologist Eva Illouz has given much stress on the process of mate selection. Illouz (2012) uses two concepts to analyse how strategies and practices for mate selection are shaped and reshaped – the ecology of choice and the architecture of choice.

The former refers to the social environment in which choices are made, such as policies and various social dynamics and processes. Conceptually, these are structural factors enabling or impeding certain behaviour. The latter refers to "mechanisms that are internal to the subject and shaped by culture" (ibid: 20), that is, an interaction between agency and structure. In the analysis below, language is an important aspect of the ecology of choice and architecture of choice when it comes to mate selection. It not only reflects the social world, but also creates meaning and categories through which "human beings constitute and articulate their world" (Harris, 1988: ix).

14.5. Situations for Regulations in Marriage

At the turn of the 20th century, many anthropologists believed that in an early stage of human development group marriage was common. Of the 250 societies reported by the American anthropologist George P. Murdock (1949), only the Caingang of Brazil had chosen group marriage as an alternative form of union. Much of the literature of that time attempted to demonstrate that marital unions had undergone several evolutionary stages, beginning with complete sexual license, through group marriage, polygyny, and polyandry, and culminating in monogamy. Group marriage was erroneously ascribed to peoples in Australia, Siberia, and Africa, when in actuality the particular tribes contained groups of men who had privileged sexual access to women but did not bear the domestic and economic responsibilities that constitute a true marriage.

In fact other marriage provisions within the Old Testament favour levirate marriage to a brother's widow, thus lifting the affinal ban subsequent to a brother's death. The pattern of affinal prohibitions reveals a second instance of asymmetry in the system, this time based on lineage membership. While relations with a father's brother's wife are not allowed, there is no converse restriction concerning mother's brother's wife. Accordingly, we can understand some of the extensive affinal prohibitions as supporting the cooperation among close patrilineal kin by forestalling competition over women.

Levirate Marriage
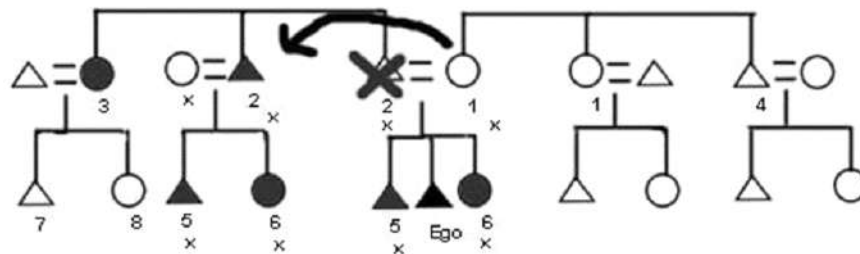
In sororate, when a man's wife died, he was expected to marry her sister. Again, an unmarried sister or other female of the same lineage would be the preferred choice, but polyandry might be permitted in cases of sororate. It is that type of marriage in which a husband engages in marriage or sexual relations with the sister of his deceased wife.

Sorrorate Marriage
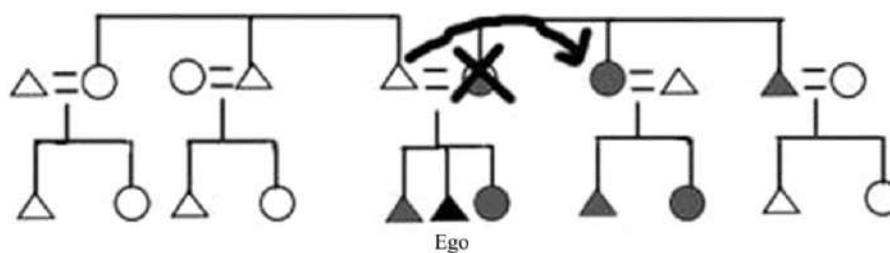
While the restrictions on relations between biological kin were even less extensive than those of contemporary Western societies, affinal restrictions were more comprehensive. Above and beyond the drastic penalties for adultery, condemnations of incest were applied to sex or marriage between a man and his son's wife, brother's wife, stepmother, father's brother's wife, wife's mother, or wife's sister. In these cases prohibitions were in force only during the lifetime of the male relative.

The sex ratio imbalance affects social structure by a change in marriage and family structure. Bride shortages are being addressed in various ways, including through cross-region marriage, kidnap marriage, and kidnapping including deception and enticement (Chao, 2005). Still, due to the bride shortage, especially poorer and less educated men, find it increasingly hard to find a wife.

Regulations in marriage result not only from a sex ratio imbalance, but also from how the institution of marriage is underpinned by social, economic, and political factors. Such factors have an impact on structural level norms about marriage and individual level expectations about getting married (Schein, 2005).

It is well documented that customary laws, referring to practices not enacted in official laws and policies, affect citizenship through various practices (Eklund, 2013: 66). The most common ones are access to land and resources, which according to customary laws are allocated to women through male relatives – through fathers before marriage and through husbands after it (Jacka and Sargeson, 2011).

14.5.1 Regulations: Endogamy or Exogamy

The selection of mate is an important affair even in tribal society. The rules of endogamy, exogamy, hypergamy, preferential mating and prohibited degrees operative simultaneously and there by considerably restrict the freedom of choice.Endogamy is imposed by structural rules as well as predominant preferences. Endogamy is a practice of marrying within a social group because of social norms that encourage or require it. Previously, it was seen as group (religious and ethnic) endogamy, village endogamy and caste endogamy. This kind of restriction is common in many cultures and ethnic groups. Several religious and ethnic groups are traditionally more endogamous. Many religions, particularly Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam, have specific regulations that both partners must subscribe to the appropriate faith in order to contract a recognized marriage within it. Ethnic minorities can use it to stay ethnically homogeneous over a long time as distinct communities within societies that have other practices and beliefs. A village community can use this restriction to resist integrating and completely merging with surrounding populations. Even now, the Hindu expectations of caste endogamy persist in parts of India and the Indian diaspora, although many researches claim that this is a form of caste discrimination, a practice made illegal in the mid-20thcentury. In industrialized and urbanized living, class endogamy persists for as a form of self-segregation.

Endogamy, the practice of marrying someone from within one's own tribe or group, is the oldest social regulation of marriage. When the forms of communication with outside groups are limited, endogamous marriage is a natural consequence. Cultural pressures to marry within one's social, economic, and ethnic group are still very strongly enforced today in some societies.

The isolationist practices of endogamy may lead to a group's extinction, as genetic diseases may develop that can affect an increasing percentage of the population. To overcome this problem, the rules of exogamy may also specify the outside group into which an individual must marry. Exogamy is usually defined through kinship rather than ethnicity, religion, or class. It is most common among groups that reckon descent through either the father (patrilineality) or the mother (matrilineality) alone. Edward Westermark (1922) said it arose in the aversion to marriage between blood relatives or near kin, that is, in horror

of incest. This is very probably the true solution. In general it is of two types: 1) genetic exogamy, which is favored within some groups because it decreases the likelihood of genetic defects; and 2) cultural exogamy that has origins in groups or classes trying to maintain the survival of family lineage.

Exogamy, the practice of marrying outside the group, is found in societies in which kinship relations are the most complex, thus barring from marriage large groups who may trace their lineage to a common ancestor. Marriage practices control the relation between the sexes and maintain the selection processes of marital partners. Exogamous groups enjoin their members to marry outside the group, sometimeseven specifying the outside group into which members must marry. Conversely, marriage outside a specific group may be forbidden, and for this restriction the term endogamy is used; more loosely it applies to a tendency to marriage within a group. Endogamy, rare among non-literate societies, is characteristic of aristocracies and religious and ethnic minorities in industrialized societies, but it is also a notable characteristic of the caste system in India and of class-conscious non-literate societies such as that of the Masai of East Africa.

Exogamy, more characteristic of nonindustrial societies, is usually based on ties of kinship, clan, or moiety (see dual organization) rather than on political or territorial lines. Since exogamous rules usually characterize unilineal descent groups, in which descent is reckoned either patrilineally or matrilineally, the marriage prohibition will apply only to one side of the family. Thus, some blood relations will inevitably be available for marriage.

Another point of regulation is marriage payment, which may consider in two ways. The first one is bridewealth, which is also called bride-price in marriage payment. This payment is made by a groom or his kin to the kin of the bride in order to ratify a marriage. In such cultures, a marriage is not reckoned to have ended until the return of bridewealth has been acknowledged, signifying divorce. The payment of bridewealth is most often a matter of social and symbolic as well as economic reciprocity, being part of a long series of exchanges between the two intermarrying families. Bridewealth may consist of money or goods, and it may be paid in one sum or in installments over a period of time. The goods transferred may include a diverse array of items such as livestock, bolts of cloth, drink, food, traditional weapons (such as spears), and vehicles. The practice is common in all parts of the globe (for example, among the Santhals of Indian society) in one form or another but, as an instrument for the legitimation of a marriage, is most highly developed in Africa.

The second one is dowry. A dowry is a transfer of parental property, gifts, property or money upon the marriage of a daughter (bride). It is an ancient custom, and its existence may well predate records of it. In its customary practices, the dowry is intended to help

set up the couple's new household, especially in cultures where it is rare for a woman to work outside the home. If a woman died without having any sons, her husband would have to return the dowry to the bride's family, deducting the value of the bride price. Dowries continue to be expected and demanded as a condition to accept a marriage proposal in some parts of the world, mainly in parts of Asia, Northern Africa and the Balkans. In some parts of the world, disputes related to dowry sometimes result in acts of violence against women, including killings and acid attacks.

14.5.2 Marital Customs and Laws

Some form of marriage has been found to exist in all human societies, past and present. Its importance canbe seen in the elaborate and complex laws and rituals surrounding it. Although these laws and rituals are varied according to cultural variations; some universals do apply.

The main legal function of marriage is to ensure the rights and define the relationships of the children within a community. Marriage universally confers a legitimate status on the offspring, which entitles him or her to the various privileges set down by the traditions of that community, including the right of inheritance. It also establishes the permissible social relations allowed to the offspring, including the acceptable selection of future spouses.

Until modern times, marriage was rarely a matter of free choice. In Western civilization, love between spouses has come to be associated with marriage. However, romantic love has not been a primary motive for matrimony in most eras, and the person whom it is considered permissible to marry has historically been carefully regulated by most societies.

The severity of enforcement of endogamous and exogamous restrictions varies greatly— from being a capital crime to one garnering only mild disapproval.In societies in which the large, or extended, family remains the basic unit, marriages are usually arranged by the family. Among Indian middle classes, the assumption is that love between the partners comes after marriage, and much thought is given to the socioeconomic advantages accruing to the larger family from the match. By contrast, in societies in which the small, or nuclear, family predominates, young adults usually choose their own mates (Chattopadhyay, 2014). It is assumed that love precedes (and determines) marriage, and less thought is normally given to the socioeconomic aspects of the match.

In societies with arranged marriages, the almost universal custom is that someone acts as an intermediary, or matchmaker. This person's chief responsibility is to arrange a marriage that will be satisfactory to the two families represented. Some form of dowry or bride-wealth is almost always exchanged in societies that use arranged marriages.

In societies in which individuals choose their own mates, dating is the most typical way for people to meet and become acquainted with prospective partners of the opposite sex. Successful dating may result in courtship, which then usually leads to marriage. This marriage should be legalized by constitutional law, which varies according to country or region.

Marriage has been restricted over the course of the history of the United States according race, sexual orientation, number of parties entering into the marriage, and familial relationships. If you get married in a EU country that is not your country of origin it is recommended to register the marriage at your home country's consular office. Any marriage will be recognised in all other EU countries - although this does not fully apply to same-sex marriages. But it is not necessary in Australia. Since changes to the Marriage Act 1961 (Cth) on 9 December 2017, it is possible for couples to be legally married in Australia, irrespective of their sex or gender identity. Marriage of Japan's formality takes the form of civil marriage. According to Articles 731–737 of the Civil Code, a man before attaining 18 years of age, a woman before attaining 16 years of age, may not marry. The legal minimum age to enter into a marriage in England and Wales is sixteen years, although this requires consent of parents and guardians if a participant is under eighteen.

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 is applicable to Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists. This Act provides for the conditions of a marriage where under the bridegroom should be the age of 21 years and bride of 18 years, they both should not be within the degree of prohibited relationship. Because of its diversity in culture and religion, each citizen of India is entitled to have his own personal laws in the matter of marriage and divorce. For example, Muslims also have their own personal law, which states that Nikah or marriage is a contract and may be permanent or temporary and permits a man four wives if he treats all of them equally. Similarly for the Parsees there is a Parsee Marriage & Divorce Act, 1939, which governs the provisions of their marriage and law.

14.5.3 Marital rituals

The rituals and ceremonies surrounding marriage are associated primarily with fecundity and validate the importance of marriage for the continuation of a clan, people, or society. They also assert a familial or communal sanction of the mutual choice, and an understanding of the difficulties and sacrifices involved in making what is considered, in most cases, to be a lifelong commitment to and responsibility for the welfare of spouse and children.

Marriage ceremonies include symbolic rites, usually sanctified by a religious order, which are thought to confer good fortune on the couple. Because economic considerations play an essential role in the success of child rearing, the offering of gifts, both real and symbolic, to the bride and bridegroom are a significant part of the marriage ritual. Where the exchange

of goods is extensive, either from the bride's family to the bridegroom's or vice versa, this usually indicates that the freedom to choose one's marital partner has been limited and determined by the families of the betrothed.

Fertility rites to ensure a fruitful marriage exist in some form in all ceremonies. Some of the oldest rituals still to be found in contemporary ceremonies include the prominent display of fruits or of cereal grains that may be sprinkled over the couple or on their nuptial bed, the accompaniment of a small child with the bride, and the breaking of an object or food to ensure a successful consummation of the marriage and an easy childbirth.

The most universal ritual is one that symbolizes a sacred union (Chattopadhyay, 2014). This may be expressed by the joining of hands, an exchange of rings or chains, or by the tying of garments. However, all the elements in marriage rituals vary greatly among different societies, and components such as time, place, and the social importance of the event are fixed by tradition and habit. Now, the act of marriage and the wedding ceremony also become a display of status. Wedding banquets have become much more extravagant in recent years, with large banquets, expensive food, and venues.

14.6. Conclusion

Relations between the sexes are to a large extent culturally as well as biologically determined.Marriage is traditionally conceived to be a legally recognized sexual relationship, between an adult male and female, that carries certain rights and obligations. However, in contemporary societies, marriage is sometimes interpreted more liberally and the phrase 'living as married' indicates that for many purposes it makes no sense to exclude cohabitation.

Much recent sociological research, both in Britain and America, has been concerned with the growing fears that marriage as an institution is in decline. These fears stem from two roots, the first being concern for increasing marital breakdown and subsequent divorce, and the second the fact that marriage is going out of fashion, with more people cohabiting and even rearing children outside matrimony. Certainly, divorce is on the increase, and if current divorce-rates in Britain continue then one in three marriages is likely to end in divorce.

14.7. Summary

In recent years, the median age at first marriage in developed countries has increased and teenage marriages have declined significantly, with a growing proportion, albeit still a

small minority, never getting married. At the same time, rates of cohabitation are increasing, with it now being virtually the norm to cohabit before marrying.

Moreover, an increasing number of children are conceived and born outside marriage. Same-sex marriage is legalized by law. Looking at these variations, one might reasonably conclude that the future of marriage looks bleak, but marriage still remains the preferred way of life for the vast majority of the adult population. Even among those whose first marriage fails, a majority are sufficiently optimistic to marry a second time, although marriage has been restricted over the course of the history in any country according race, religion, sexual orientation, number of parties entering into the marriage, and familial relationships.

14.8. Questions

14.8.1 Answer in detail:

a. How do human societies differ with regard to mate choice, and how are they similar?

b. What are the major factors of mate choice?

c. How do you justify the situations for regulations in marriage?

d. Critically analyse the marital customs and laws?

14.8.2 Answer briefly:

a. What is mate choice?

b. Discuss briefly the socio-cultural and historical factors of mate choice.

c. What are the changing ways of mate selection?

d. Write a short note on the marital rituals.

14.8.3 Answer very briefly:

a. What courtship?

b. Define monogamy.

c. Shortly discuss about the restriction of exogamy.

d. What is the youngest age you can marry in India?

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14.10. Glossary

Clan is a group of people united by actual or perceived kinship and descent. Even if lineage details are unknown, clan members may be organized around a founding member or apical ancestor.

Descent is the system of acknowledged social parentage, which varies from society to society, whereby a person may claim kinship ties with another.

Divorce is the process of terminating a marriage or marital union. It is also known as dissolution of marriage.

Hypergamy is a term used in social science for the act or practice of a person marrying a spouse of higher caste or social status than themselves. This kind of marriage has been found to be practiced more by women than by men.

Hypogamy is the act of marrying someone of a lower social and economic class than your own. Hypogamy has been found to be practiced more by men than by women.

Kinship is a system of social organization, which is based on real or putative family ties.

Levirate marriage is a type of marriage in which the brother of a deceased man is obliged to marry his brother's widow. The term levirate is itself a derivative of the Latin word levir meaning "husband's brother".

Libidois a person's overall sexual drive or desire for sexual activity. It is influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors.

Lineageis a descent group reckoned through only one parent, either the father (patrilineage) or the mother (matrilineage). All members of a lineage trace their common ancestry to a single person. A lineage may comprise any number of generations but commonly is traced through some 5 or 10.

Same-sex marriage, which is also known as gay marriage, is the marriage of two people of the same sex or gender, who are entered into in a civil or religious ceremony.

Sorrorate marriage is a type of marriage in which a husband engages in marriage or sexual relations with the sister of his wife, usually after the death of his wife or if his wife has proven infertile.

Module IV

Re-Casting Kinship

Unit 15 : Relatedness: Types of Kin Relationships: Lineal and Collateral

Structure of the unit

15.1. Learning Objectives

The primary objectives of this unit are

- To make the students aware of the various forms of relatedness that exist across societies.

- To learn about the social significance of kinship, structural principles of kinship and also the various kinship terminologies amongst other things.

- To discuss what relatedness is by highlighting the social significance of kinship.

- To understand its structural principles (through systems of descent and affinity) under types of kin relationships and analyze various kinship terminologies.

● Finally to briefly draw an understanding of kinship studies in India.

15.2. Introduction

Kinship is one of the main organizing principles of human society and kinship systems have been extensively studied by social anthropologists. Following the initial contributions of social anthropologists, even sociologists have over the years engaged themselves in kinship studies. Kinship can be investigated both as a theoretical concept and a social category, and the tension between the two generates many of our central questions. The reasons behind this tension will be clarified as we proceed into further details in due course of this module. In the South Asian regions, attempts to capture the large variety of family structures and kinship practices have offered us several classical writings showcasing fascinating studies across the region. Even recent work in this topic has shown us how the field is fast changing. Interrogating kinship, then, continues to precipitate lively debate concerning not only what kinship is 'all about' but also how it can be used as an index to understand wider changes within anthropology as well as within the societies of which anthropologists and sociologists are a part.

The module will introduce students to some of the basic concepts and theoretical debates in Sociology and Anthropology around kinship, family, and marriage.Since kinship explains the web of social relationships within family, and marriage is one amongst other ways (such as adoption) of forming family, these three social institutions are fundamentally related and entangled to each other. Though newer variations of each in modern and contemporary societies often challenge such entangled relations, at this stage let us only consider the simple understanding of these before we move into the complexities at a later stage of this module. Also with the intersection of gender and kinship we will see how they have implications on each other. The objective of this module is to acquaint students with some of the fundamental writings from the Anthropology and Sociology of kinship as well as make them observant about the changes around them through contemporary debates and developments in kinship, family and marriage. It is for this purpose that students will also learn about alternative ways of imagining the taken for granted. Some of the topics discussed here are rapidly changing fields of research and requires constant engagement on the part of the researcher. Therefore students are encouraged to engross in dialogues and debate about various contemporary social issues pivoting around kinship, marriage and family in order to grasp the discussions to its utmost capacity.

Kinship refers to a relation that links individuals and groups through blood ties, marriage or adoption. Kinship relations are by definition involved in marriage and the family but

extend much more broadly than these institutions. While in most modern societies few social obligations are involved in kinship relations extending beyond the immediate family, in many other cultures kinship is of vital importance for most aspects of social life.

The study of kinship is symbolic of the anthropological tradition. Like all traditions, it has also undergone periodic reinventions and significant reconfigurations. Scholars consider that 'the new uses of kinship theory, and the novel sites and locations where kinship study is being pursued, open up new possibilities for understanding the age-old question, What is kinship all about?' (Franklin and McKinnon 2001). It must be remembered that globalization refers to the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life. The socio-cultural milieu of individuals worldwide is changing rapidly because of globalization. It is, therefore, crucial to understand the altered significance of kinship in the contemporary context as well.

Kinship is one of the main organizing principles of human society, and kinshipsystems have been extensively studied by social anthropologists, for whom they are of particular importance because of their primacy in non-state societies. Kinship systems establish relationships between individuals and groups on the model of biological relationships between parents and children, between siblings, and between marital partners (Marshall 2006: 340). While relationships established by marriage are referred to as *affinal relationships*, those established between groups of persons related by blood are referred to as *consanguineous ties*. Broadly studies on kinship help us to understand the ties of relatedness among persons and groups. This process of constructing relatedness through everyday practice has been a substantial part of earlier societies and continues to significantly impact on understanding kinship in a globalized world, albeit in a different way from the earlier years.

As we discuss about kinship and make attempts to understand diverse forms of relatedness, it is mandatory to consider the work of the founding fathers of kinship studies. Some of the major theorists of anthropology who have made their mark in the study of kinship include Lewis Henry Morgan, Emile Durkheim, Claude Levi-Strauss, W.H.R. Rivers, Bronislaw Malinowski, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Meyer Fortes. Yet it must be remembered that the discussions in this field are no longer restricted to their work alone, and has seen some major shifts and over the years became more inclusive in order to study the dynamics of kinship and relatedness in the contemporary times.

15.3. What is Relatedness?

The question of relatedness is an intrinsic part of the research and interpretations in anthropological engagement with kinship studies. British anthropologist Janet Carsten(2000)

has extensively studied about what 'being related' mean for people living in specific localities. She has highlighted that what makes people related to each other has been transformed through time and with the drastic changes in marriage and gender relations, and also the introduction of new reproductive technologies. While earlier the most fundamental social relationships were grounded in biology and/or nature, in the contemporary times there are different new idioms of relatedness across societies. Nevertheless let us begin with understanding some of the social significance of kinship.

15.3.1. Social Significance of Kinship

The study of kinship is basically the study of what humans do with certain basic facts of life like mating, gestation, parenthood, socialization, and siblingship. The success of humankind in the history of evolution is in the ability of the species to manipulate relationships for survival. The study of kinship would show how humankind is capable of manipulating relationships in the struggle for survival. There is a great deal of group characters in the network of kinship systems reflected in the attributes of – dominance, hierarchy, territoriality, mating behavior, reproduction.

As English anthropologist **W.H.R.Rivers** put it, kinship is the social recognition of biological ties. All people who are related by 'blood' in any way to an individual are *cognates*. Those who are related to an individual by marriage are the ***affines***.

Kinship plays a very important role in the regulation of human behavior and the formation of groups. Kinship depends on social recognition and cultural implementation of relationships. The way we have organized relationships and kinship behaviors has resulted in the success of humankind in evolution. These relationships are culturally implemented through the rules of incest, taboos against certain relationships, rules of avoidance, joking relationships and others. Kinship systems include a set of terms or names and associated systems of behavioral patterns. The resulting network of the very elementary form of kinship constitutes the whole society. In a pre-industrial or non-literate society, kinship plays a very important role in maintaining group solidarity and group cohesion, because it gives a feeling of identity and belonging towards a community. Kinship groups orient people towards their own people. The diversity in kinship systems is based on the natural conditions of the groups. We must remember that the terms of kinship help us to orient our behavior towards an individual.

Therefore the significance of kinship can be understood through the following points.

i. Kinship is a universal social organization. This is responsible for the success of evolution. So kinship is a matter of *social recognition* or relation and *cultural implementation* of a relationship. For example: taboos, rules, joking relationship.

ii.   Kinship is a relationship based on descent and also consanguinity. The relationship of kinship is determined by our behavior and behavior is also governed by kinship. Kinship terms are a combination of the behavior and the relationship that people share.

iii. In primitive societies, kinship helps in maintaining group solidarity and bonding. In other words, belonging to a kinship group helps in forming an identity.

iv.   There exists a great variety of kinship systems throughout the world. Anthropologists have divided kinship systems in different groups. Such as kinship may be studied with regard to – firstly, the extent to which the genealogical and affinal relationships are recognized for social purposes. Secondly, kinship systems differ with regard to the ways in which the relatives so recognized are classified or grouped in social categories. Thirdly, the particular customs by which the behavior of relatives in their daily life that also forms a diversity of kinship. For example: the women may have to cover their heads while talking to elderkins. Fourthly, the various rights and obligations of individuals are mediated through kinship. Lastly, the linguistic forms which are used to denote the various categories of kin. For example: who is a father, mother, uncle, sibling, it is diversified through different terms. Different ethnic groups would have different terms for establishing kin relations. We find that there is a great diversity in the organization of kinship throughout the world. In certain societies, the terms 'father', 'mother' is widely extended. For example: one may have a biological father and also a social father (the head of the clan).

Therefore it can be said that the kinship system forms the building structures of society and the significance of kinship relationships is immense in every society.

Things to Remember

- *Rules of incest taboo:* These rules refer to a rigid cultural rule or norm, found in all cultures, which prohibits sexual intercourse or marriage between some categories of kin. This is considered to be one of the oldest norms of human society and has an extensive history. Typically parent-child and sibling-sibling unions are universally considered taboo. A thorough understanding of the rules of incest taboo forms an important component of the extensive normative structure which regulates family, marriage and kinship systems, and eventually the larger society.

- *Rules of avoidance:* These rules refer to institutionalized, formal rules of behavior where persons of opposite sexes who have a specific kin relationship avoid each

other as a mark of formal respect. In some societies, anthropologists have observed that mutual avoidance is maintained between mother-in-law and her sons-in-law. Sometimes there are 'avoidances' in the strict sense of the word; a person must refrain from using the name of a senior affine, must not come face-to-face with a senior affine of the opposite sex, must avoid sexual references in the presence of such a person.

● *Joking relations:* This refers to a relationship that requires people to be on friendly terms although circumstances may give rise to tensions between them. Anthropologists have observed that a joking relationship can involve ritualized banter of teasing or mocking between two individuals or groups. It is usually characteristic of the relations between a man and the brothers and sisters of his wife. Another form of joking relationship is found between grandparents and grandchildren, where interactions are characterized by gentle teasing between each other.

15.4. Structural Principles–Systems of Descent and Affinity

As we discuss about relatedness, understanding the diverse structural principles of kinship which included systems of descent and affinity needs to be studied as well. In the context of pre-industrial society, genealogy and affinity, both were very important. In modern society, it is not possible to trace the genealogical roots, as it is very widely dispersed, large and advanced.

Rules of descent – these are basic rules which connect individuals with particular sets of kins because of a known or presumed ancestor. These rules of descent, which vary from one society to another, form the various kinds of kinship ties. The practical importance of descent comes from its use as a means for one person to assert rights, duties, privileges, or status in relation to another person, who may be related to the first either because one is ancestor to the other or because the two acknowledge a common ancestor. Descent has special influence when rights to succession, inheritance, or residence follow kinship lines (Encyclopedia Britannica 2011).

Broadly there are two rules of descent –

i.　Unilineal ('lineal' meaning in a line)

ii.　Bilateral ('lateral' meaning on the side)

> **Things to Remember**
>
> ● *Unilineal* means in which descent is traced through only one line (either male or female).
>
> ● The exact opposite of unilineal would be bilineal. So, **bilineal** means a system in which descent is traced through both lines (male and female).

i. **Unilineal** rules of descent are one where a person/individual is affiliated with a group/kin through descent links of one sex only, either male or female. These descent groups are very important in small scale societies because members trace their links to a known or a presumed common ancestor. It may also happen that in a unilineal descent group some very important relatives may be excluded. For example: in a particular group the relatives on the mother's side may be excluded and may be included for some very particular customs such as at times of death.

Unilineal groups are of three types –

a) **Patrilineal** – this is the commonest type of unilineal group. A patrilineal group is where members or individuals affiliated with the kin of both sexes related to him/her through men only (father's side). That means descent or ancestry is traced through the father's side only or agnatic systems. For example: Luo of Kenya, Kapauku Papuans of central highlands of West New Guinea.

b) **Matrilineal** – individuals affiliate to kins of both sexes related to him/her through the mother's side only. In other words, ancestry is traced through the mother's side or uxorial systems. For example: Nayars of South India, Ashanti of Ghana, Chuuk a group of small islands in the Pacific.

c) **Ambilineal**– according to this rule, an individual can affiliate both to the mother's and father's side. In one generation individuals may choose to affiliate through the mother's side (that is, through matrilineal principles) and in another generation follow the descent through the father's side (that is, through patrilineal principles). There is a great deal of flexibility, for choosing the line/rule of descent. Reasons for ambilineal descent are demographic imbalances, rules/matters of successions and rules of inheritance. For example: the Samoans tribe of South Pacific is ambilineal. Thus the question of choice is present.

Unilinieal descent is a matter of ancestral status, however in case of ambilineal descent, status is not ascribed, it is a matter of choice. Rules of descent also specify the rules of succession. Kinship also serves many other purposes such as to organize property, which is done by specifying the descent. It depends on whether society is matrilineal or patrilineal.

There are various geographical and cultural reasons for which societies choose to be patrilineal or matrilineal. There can be a demographic imbalance, for example – due to warfare, the women have to take charge of the administration of household and social life. For example: the Nayars of South India practice matrilineal descent.

Things to Remember

● Descent groups are kin groups who are lineal descendants of a common ancestor. Unilineal descent is either matrilineal (if traced through the mother) or patrilineal (if traced through the father's line). Bilateral descent can be traced through both sexes line.

● Consanguineal kin refers to blood kin, which is relationship based on descent from a common (male or female) ancestor. Social anthropologists point out that fictive relationship can be just as important as actual biological ties when tracing consanguinity. Whereas affinal kin refers to kin by marriage, or what we call in-laws.

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ii. **Bilateral kinship** – many societies, including the one we live in do not follow a system of lineal descent, because they do not believe that they have descended from a common or known or presumed ancestor. As the name suggests the relatives of both the father's and mother's side are equally important. Kinship reckoning in bilateral societies does not refer to common ancestry but rather horizontal moving outwards from close to more distant relatives, rather than upwards moving towards a common ancestor. In the case of bilateral kinship, the term *kindred* becomes important. This term describes a person's bilateral set of relatives called upon for some purpose. However this group – kindred – is not a definite group, it may change with time and generations. Our father's or mother's close relatives might not be close to us as well.

The distinctiveness of the bilateral kinship is that apart from brothers and sisters, no two people belong to exactly the same kin groups. Consider thinking about your kin groups. Your kindred contain close relatives spreading out on both sides, but they are affiliated only by the way of connection to you. Thus the only thing that people in kindred have in common is the *ego*. In kinship diagrams, one individual is usually labeled as ego. This is the person to whom all kinship relationships are referred or this individual is designated as the starting point in genealogical reckoning. Therefore we must remember that when the ego changes, the group of kindred also subsequently changes.

As these discussions unfold, it must be remembered that the unilineal rule of descent is a very important principle that governs the kinship system of small scalesocieties. On the other hand, the bilateral rule of descent is found in complex societies.Largely, although the local discourse of descent often stresses its biological foundations, this should be seen as culturally constructed, since fictitious biological relationships are sometimes created by individuals and groups.

In the graphical representation that follows in the next page, students can find rules of descent in the case of patrilineal, matrilineal and ambilineal kinship relations. This has been provided with the belief that understanding this representation will aid in their process of making sense of kinship relations across societies.

15.5. Kinship Terminology

Kinship terminology plays an important role in giving us insight into various kinship organizations. People perceive and define kin relatives, different relatives in different cultures. Kinship terminology is a system of classification, a taxonomy or typology. It is a native taxonomy developed by people over generation living together in a particular society. Thus a native system of classification is based on how people perceive similarities and differences in the things being classified. Kinship terminology used in a particular society may reflect the nature of the prevailing social organization, family, rule of residence, rule of descent or rule of marriage or affinity. Kinship terminology of a particular society is usually resistant to change because they developed over generations. Kinship terms provide useful information about various social patterns of behavior. For example: if two relatives are designated by the same term we can assume that they are perceived as sharing socially significant attributes.

△ - Male

◯ - Female

Patrilineal

Matrilineal

Ambilineal
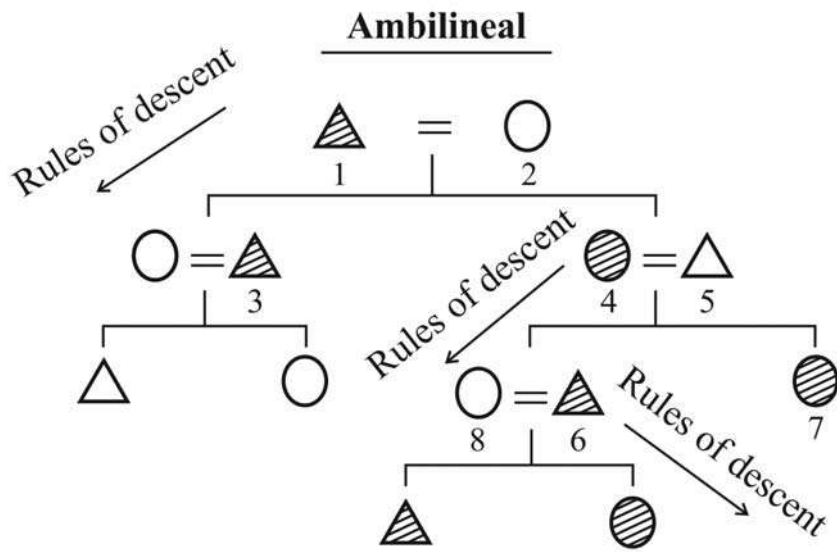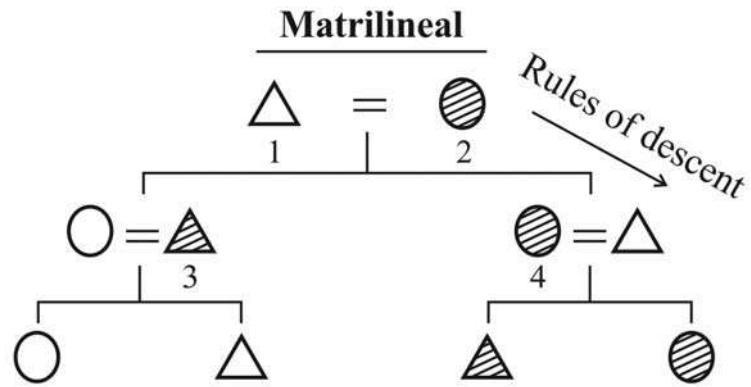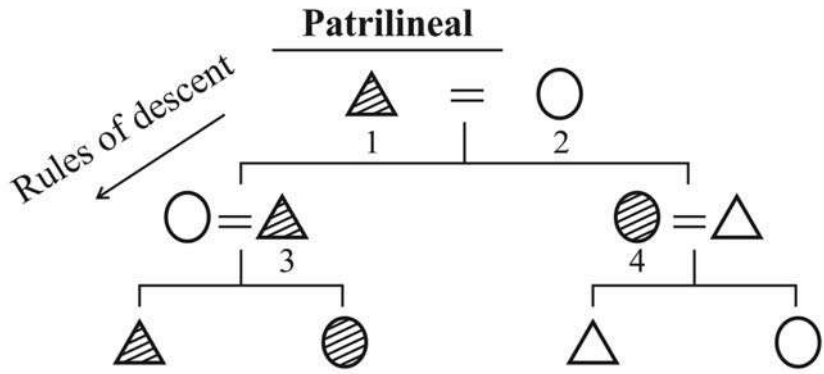
Anthropologists have discovered a limited number of patterns of classification. For instance: people who speak very different languages may use exactly the same system of kinship terminology. As such there are four ways of classifying kin on the parental generation.

The principles of the terminological system, therefore, include the following four ways

  i. Lineal

 ii. Bifurcate merging

iii. Generational

iv. Bifurcate collateral

i. **Lineal terminology** – it is generally found in the USA and Canada. In this terminological system, the nuclear family is the most important group in the kinship structure. In this system, both the father's brother and mother's brother are referred to as 'uncle' and father's sister and mother's sister is called 'aunt'. Lineal kinship terminology distinguishes lineal relatives from collateral relatives. A lineal relative is an ancestor or descendant on the direct line of descent leading to and from ego. Collateral relatives, on the other hand, are all other relatives, siblings, cousins, so forth, also uncle and aunt because they are not in a direct line of descent. Affinal relatives are those who are connected by ties of marriage, they may be both lineal or collateral. Ego's son's wife is lineal; ego's sister's husband is collateral.

For example: the Eskimo system found in the USA. In this system, no other relatives are referred to by the same term used for the members of the nuclear family. In other words, all male cousins on both sides are grouped together, all female cousins on both sides are grouped together. Uncle and aunt on both sides are grouped together. In this system, the nuclear family appears to be the most important. Found in societies with the bilateral rule of descent.

ii. **Bifurcate merging terminology** – this system splits the mother's side and father's side but also merges same-sex siblings of each parent. For example: mother and mother's sister are designated by the same term, while father and father's brother are called by the same term. There are different terms for the mother's brother and father's sister.

People use this system in societies with the unilineal rule of descent and unilocal rule of residence. In a patrilineal society, for example, father and father's brother belong to the same descent groups, same sex, and same generation, because patrilineal societies are usually patrilocal as well. Father and father's brother lives in the same social group because they share so many important attributes, ego regards them as

social equivalence and calls them by the same kinship terminology. However, the mother's brother lives elsewhere and belongs to a different social group and therefore has a different kin terminology. Likewise, mother and mother's sister belongs to the same descent group, same sex, and same generation. As they share so many social attributes, ego considers them social equivalents and refers to them with the same kinship terminology.

For example: consider the Omaha systems of the Omaha tribes of North America, who have a patrilineal rule of descent where father and father's brother are referred by the same kin term. On the other hand, mother, mother's sister, and mother's brother's daughter are referred to the same kin term. Just the reverse is the Crow system. The Crow system is based on matrilineal rule of descent where the mother and mother's sister are referred by the same kin term. On the other hand, father, father's brother and father's sister's son ar referred to by the same kin term. Then among the Iroquois tribe, father and father's brother, mother and mother's sister are referred to by the same kin terms. However both sets of cross-cousins are referred to by the same kin terms distinguished by same sex, i.e. mother's brother's daughter and father's sister's daughter are referred to by the same kin terminology. The mother's sister's son and father's brother's son are referred to by the same kin terminology.

iii. **Generational kinship terminology -** is where we have only two terms for the parental generation. Collateral relatives of the same sex are referred by the same kin terms.

For example: in the Hawaiian system all relatives of the same sex in the same generation are referred to by the same terminology. For instance, all female cousins are referred to by the same term as ego's sister and all male cousins are referred to as ego's brother. Moreover in the parental generation, every female including the mother are referred to by the same terminology. While in the parental generation every male including the father is referred to by the same terminology.

iv. **Bifurcate collateral terminology** – this system employs separate kin terms for mother, father, mother's brother, mother's sister, father's brother and father's sister, i.e. this system differentiates uncle and aunt from both parents and both sides.

For example: the Sudanese system of Sudan has a different kin term used for each relative. The Sudanese kinship terminological system is associated with political complexity, class stratification, and occupational specialization.

A lesser evolved society, simple society tends to group father and father's brother together and have a lesser kin term. But in greater evolved society, politically and economically developed societies have different kin terms for different relatives.

The Omaha system, Crow system, Iroquois and Sudanese system share one important feature, the terms used for the father's and mother's side are different.

The function of kinship terminology in interaction is a symbolic one. When it is used it defines for the participants the general mode of behavior to be followed in particular social situations. The universality and enduring character of kinship suggests its importance in binding men and women together in society and providing a foundation for the building of more specific social structures.

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Things to Remember

Anthropologists are not entirely unanimous about the application of the terms descent and descent group. The distinction between descent and filiation has been stressed by Meyer Fortes. According to him, the relation of a person with his own parents is filiation and only his relation with his ancestors should be called descent; as in dictionary usage, one's nearest ancestor is a grandparent.

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In the graphical representation that follows, one can find the four ways in which kinship terminology has been developed by anthropologists.

15.6. Kinship Studies in India

Anthropologist Iravati Karve's encyclopedic survey *Kinship Organisation in India* has been the point of reference for generations of students studying kinship. Kinship is a fundamental principle of social organization in India. There are 3 factors we need to understand in order to make sense of kinship in India and these are

   i. *Configuration of the linguistic regions* – The linguistic regions possessescertain homogeneity of culture traits and kinship organization. The common language makes communication easy, sets the limits of marital connections and confines kinship mostly within the language region. Prof. IrawatiKarve suggests that there is an interrelation of the kinship organization and the linguistic divisions such as Sanskritic, Dravidian and Mundari. Therefore kinship can be understand according to spatial patterns or geographical zones such as northern, central, southern and eastern.

Lineal Terminology

Eskino ↓ or Inuit System
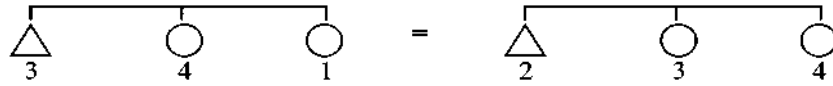
△ ○ ○ = △ ○ ○
3 4 1 2 3 4

○ 1 = Mother ⎫
△ 2 = Father ⎬ Distinguishing Between
△ 3 = Uncle ⎱ Lineal Relatives
○ 4 = Aunt ⎭

Bifurgate merging terminology

Omaha, Trow, Iroquois system

△ ○ ○ = △ △ ○
3 1 1 2 2 4

○ 1 = Mother   M, MZ —→ ○ 1   Z = Sister
△ 2 = Father   F, FB —→ △ 2   B = Brother
△ 3 = Uncle   MB —→ △ 3
○ 4 = Aunt   F.Z. —→ ○ 4
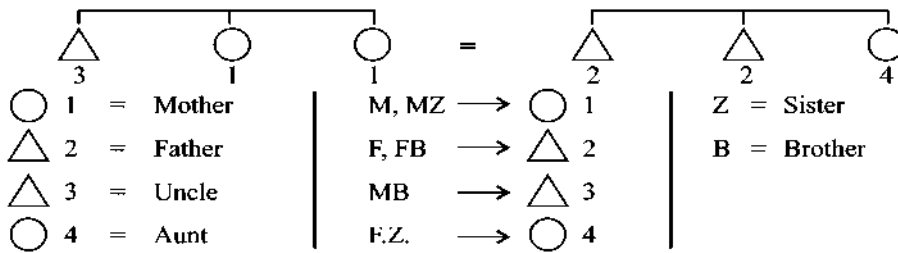
Generational Terminology

Hawalin System

△ ○ ○ = △ △ ○
3 1 1 2 2 1

M, MZ, FZ —→ △ 1
F, FB, MB —→ ○ 2

Bifurcate Collaternal Termnology

Sudanire System

△ ○ ○ = △ △ ○
6 5 1 2 3 4

○ 1 = M
△ 2 = F
△ 3 = FB
○ 4 = FZ
○ 5 = MZ
△ 6 = MB
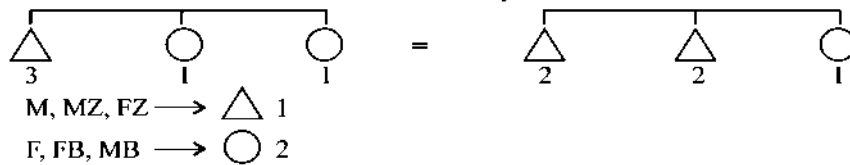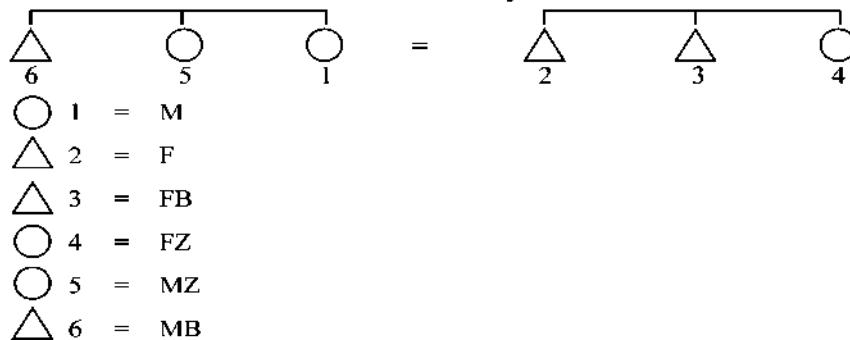
ii. Caste system

iii. Family organization

Things to Remember

- *Clan* – may be defined as an organized body of kinsmen who believe themselves to be descended from the same ancestor, though actually many clans become so large that their common ancestor is either mystical or forgotten. Usually the clan has a name, such as Wolf, Beaver, or Owl, whereas lineages do not have a specific label. The founding ancestor of a clan may also be mythical, the offspring of a human being and an animal.

- *Gotra* – the Bengali term gotra is equivalent to the English term clan. Gotra is also a part of the unilineal descent group, where members believe that they have descended from the common ancestor (in the form of 'rishi'), it may be real/ known or presumed. Hence is exogamous. An individual must marry within the caste but outside the gotra. It was initially followed by the Brahmins, then taken up by other members of the society as well.

It was considered that the kinship organization in India mainly follows the linguistic pattern. Discussed below are some key points for each zone as pointed out by Prof. Iravati Karve.

A. The Northern Zone

- The northern zone comprises that part of India which lies between the Himalayas to the north and the Vindhya ranges to the south. It comprises of several linguistic regions – areas of Sind, Punjab, Kashmir, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, parts of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, and Assam.

- The family organization throughout northern India is essentially alike and most of the castes conform to the basic pattern which has its roots in the Indo-Aryan patriarchal family.

- The modern kinship terms are mostly derived from the old Sanskritic terms.

- Dominantly patriarchal society, succession and inheritance are controlled by the men.

- Even the rules of marriage and kinship are followed through patriarchal rules. In thisnorthern zone caste endogamy is very strictly followed.

- Gotra system is an indication of superiority – where we can trace our descent to the common ancestor (mainly 'rishis'). Thereforeit is a marker of purity. Gotra per se is strictly exogamous in nature where people should marry outside their own gotra.

- Most practices in this zone was emulated in other caste groups because of Sanskritisation. Sanskritisation was used to describe the process of cultural mobility in the traditional social structure in India.Sanskritisation is therefore the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently, 'twice-born' caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community. The claim is usually made over a period of time, in fact, a generation or two, before the 'arrival' is conceded.

- All societies in the north were not gotra based, so we cannot say it is a unilineal descent group. It is only a small group who believe they descended through same ancestor i.e. gotra belong to the unilineal descent group. So the northern zone as a whole is patriarchal and generally bilateral

- Kulinism was the direct result of gotra system among the Brahmins. The Kulins were considered to be superior in comparison to other Brahmins; the system of Kulinism had several political and social importances. Brahminical patriarchy was strengthened by the twin system of gotra and kulinism. Kulin Brahmins in Bengal engaged in polygyny, i.e. a kulin groom would marry several women. The system was broken by the social reformers and the spread of education among girls.

- While a dearth of brides made poorer Jats and other communities practice polyandry, i.e. a bride was allowed to marry several grooms.

- The concept of daughter giving village and daughter receiving village were highly prevalent.

- It was considered that marriage was not between individuals but the entire family and village. Often marriage was used to gain socio-cultural alliances and for economic purposes.

- The behavior pattern of the kin-group in northern family is patri-family. The man lives with his patri-kin and comes in contact with his wife's relatives only rarely. The woman on the other hand, spends most part of her life with her affinal kin. Since ancient times the family in the north has been patrilineal, patrilocal and patriarchal. This was exclusive in nature.

B. The Central Zone

- The central zone consists of the linguistic regions of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Kathiawad, Maharashtra and Odisha.

- The marriage practices and kinship structure of the central zone reflect a transition between the northern and southern zones; it contains some cultural traits of both the northern and southern zones. But they have remained insulated from the marked differences of the north and south.

- The kinship organization of the central zone has the following features: (1) Cross-cousin marriages are prevalent among some castes – a practice not found in the north India but found in south India. (2) Many castes are divided, as in the north zone, into exogamous clans. (3) Among some castes exogamous clans are arranged in a hypergamous hierarchy, i.e. a girl in a lower clan may marry a man of a higher clan but may not marry a man of a lower clan.

- The tribal populations of this zone are important; they have autonomous culture and are indigenous in nature.

- The central zone, though differing in its various areas, has one thing in common, which is that many of its castes practice one type of cross-cousin marriage and have a definite taboo or aversion towards the other type of cross-cousin marriage. It forms in many ways a region of transition from the north to the south.

C. The Southern Zone

- The southern zone covers those areas of southern and central India where the languages of the Dravidian family are spoken. This zone includes regions of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

- The southern zone presents a very complicated pattern of kinship systems and family organization. Though the patrilineal and patrilocal family is the dominant family type for the greater number of castes and communities, there are important sections of the population which are matrilineal and matrilocal (for example, the Nayars, Tiyans and some Moplas in the Malabar region) and quite a number of whose systems possess features of both types of organizations. As in the rest of India, most castes in this zone allow the practice of polygyny and there are some who practice both polyandry and polygyny.

- Those societies of the south which are organized from the mother are matriarchal, matrilineal, matrilocal. In the matriarchal society, it is the mother's brother who is

the figure head/holder of authority. But since it is the mother's side that is considered more prominent, it is broadly regarded as matriarchal.

● The relationship between mother-i-law and daughter-in-law is different in the south as compared to the north.

● Caste endogamy and clan exogamy similar to the northern zone exist in the south but, unlike in the north, there is no village exogamy in the south.

● Preferential marriage is the most distinctive feature in the south – a feature not found in north India. Preferential marriages with elder sister's daughter, father's sister's daughter and maternal uncle's daughter are prevalent among many castes. Thus in the south a family tries to strengthen existing kin ties through marriage.

● While north represents the principle of extended exchange, a policy of expansion, incorporation of outsiders as wives, the south represents the principle of immediate exchange, a policy of consolidation, a clustering of kin group in narrow area, no sharp distinction between kin by blood and kin by marriage, greater freedom for women in a society.

● The entire southern zone is distinct and in stark contrast to the northern zone.

D. The Eastern Zone

● The eastern zone includes some of the people of the north-east and the east who speak Mundari and Monkhmer languages. The Mundari and Monkhmer languages belong to a language family called the Austro-Asiatic family of languages. Languages of this family are spoken by many peoples of south-east Asia.

● The majority of the tribal population speaks Mundari and Monkhmer languages.

● The Mundari speaking communities have patrilineal and patrilocal families. The Ho and Santhal have a peculiar practice of cross-cousin marriage. The Ho and Munda have separate dormitories for bachelors and maidens to indulge in pre-marital sexual relations. Sometimes these relationships result into marriage. After marriage the couple establishes their separate household.

● The Khasis of Assam maintain a matrilineal joint family with common worship and common graveyard but the husband and wife live in a small house of their own. After death the property passes ordinarily to his mother, or to his younger sister if mother is not alive, or to the youngest daughter if there are no female relatives. The Khasis have clan exogamy. Marriages of parallel cousins are not allowed. Cross-cousin marriage is rare. Khasi women enjoy a great amount of freedom. The maternal uncle has some rights of guardianship over the children. Largely authority

is concentrated in the hands of the women, and the societies are matriarchal in nature.

● The northern, central and southern zones are compact and geographically connected. The eastern zone shows neither of these characteristics.

Though these were the characteristic features of each zones, as a student of anthropology and sociology one must take into consideration the inter-relation of all the three streams and only then a composite understanding of Indian society and culture would be possible.

Things to Do

Try to map the different kinship patterns found across India. You can divide the patterns according to northern, southern, eastern and western zones.

15.7. Conclusion

This unit laid out the basic concepts of kinship relationships for the students where we discuss the ways of understanding kinship patterns in different cultures and the relation between kinship and gender. Then drawing from the changes that are becoming more and more visible in contemporary times, we discussed the newer ways of imagining families and establishing kinship ties. As we proceeded with the discussions we will also came across the interventions of technology on kinship studies. Having said that what needs to be kept in mind is that though kinship relationships persist in all societies through varied forms, it has immense culture specific meanings attached to it. That is precisely the reason why scholars have repeatedly argued for socially and culturally constructed understanding of kinship. Bearing upon these discussions in the present world there is a growing need to talk about 're-casting kinship' and engage with it much more consciously than before.

Kinship and family have long been of interest to social scientists. For many decades, the study of kinship was a core aspect of the discipline of social anthropology. Understanding the complexities of kinship is another aspect that has been a crucial part of studying social anthropology. With the development of feminist scholarship on reproduction, and new forms of biomedical technology and intervention this field of sociology of kinship has been reinvigorated.

Kinship systems are found to vary in different societies with respect to a number of characteristics. In the modern period, there have been a number of new directions in the

study of kinship which involve both method and theory. Kinship theory is set in the broader framework of social and cultural anthropology. The study of kinship has rested on a distinction between the 'biological' and the 'social'. But recent technological developments have made this distinction no longer self-evident. Recent studies have engaged in the impact of reproductive technologies on different social institutions namely kinship, family and marriage.

All the themes that run through this module are based on issues and concerns that numerous people are negotiating with in their everyday lives. These are not only about what we read in textbooks as abstract concepts but rather concerns very much with lived experiences of individuals and groups. Therefore there lies the relevance of these topics for young students of social science. A large amount of contemporary research has directed towards discussing 'after kinship' and the emphasis has also been shifting towards understanding the 'families we choose'. This is a fundamental point that every student of the sociology of kinship should take into account and devise new ways of understanding the society in which we live.

15.8. Summary

To summarize it can be pointed out that kinship is an integral part of anthropological and sociological research. The so called history of family and kinship studies in South Asia reflects the diverse ways in which systems of kinship has evolved across the region. Some of the core contributions of scholars span over decades of studying this field. But largely it must be remembered that a contextual understanding of kinship is a prerequisite. Therefore in order to understand relatedness, we need to understand the types of kin relationships that are prevalent in a region. Here we came across a significant contribution of Prof. IrawatiKarve in this regard on India. We saw how she has developed a four-fold explanation of kinship in these zones in India.

15.9. Questions

Critically analyze the significance and relevance of kinship in human societies.

● Why does kinship provide the main structure of social action in non-literatesocieties?

● What do you understand by 'rules of descent'?

● Discuss the role of unilineal rule of descent groups.

● Discuss the importance of kinship terminologies.

- Analyze any two terminological systems found in small scale society.

- What are the features of the kinship system in Indian society?

- Discuss the kinship organization of Northern Zone in India.

- Discuss the kinship organization of Southern Zone in India.

- Discuss the kinship organization of Central Zone in India.

- Discuss the kinship organization of Eastern Zone in India.

- Critically analyze the significance and relevance of kinship in human societies.

- Write an essay on kinship terminologies discussing its importance.

- Critically discuss the relation between kinship and gender.

- What are the contemporary social problems related to kinship and gender? Discuss with an example.

- Analyze the effects of marriage migration in India.

- Critically engage with the statement 'men migrate and women simply follow'.

- How can we re-imagine families in the global context? Elaborate with appropriate examples.

- What is the impact of New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) on kinship studies?

- How do new reproductive technologies influence the sociology of kinship?

- Write a note on adoption and surrogacy in the context of newer ties of kinship.

- Mention some of the ethical considerations that are involved in the newer ties of kinship such as adoption and surrogacy.

- Write an essay on recasting kinship with appropriate examples from the global context.

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15.12. Glossary

Adoption - refers to the legal transformation of a child's familial status, through which individuals permanently assume the major responsibilities of birth parents.

Affinal kin- refers to kin by marriage, or what we call in-laws.

Ambilocal-in this family the married couple has the choice of living with or in the locality of either the groom or the bride.

Avunculocal - in such a family the married couple moves to or near the residence of the groom's mother's brother(s).

Bilateral descent- can be traced through either line of descent.

Clan – may be defined as an organized body of kinsmen who believe themselves to be descended from the same ancestor, though actually many clans become so large that their common ancestor is either mystical or forgotten.

Cohabitation - is an arrangement in which two unrelated people who are not married but live together and are in a sexual relationship.

Collateral kin – are the other descendants of one's lineal kin (parents' siblings, cousins, etc.).

Consanguineal kin- refers to blood kin, which is relationship based on descent from a common (male or female) ancestor.

Descent groups – these are kin groups who are lineal descendants of a common ancestor.

Endogamy - refers to the rule whereby persons must marry within a certain social category or group.

Exogamy- refers to the rule whereby persons must marry outside a certain social category or group.

Fostering - indicates a temporary, mutually agreed upon delegation of the nurturance or educational elements of the parental role, or both.

Gender - concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women.

Gender relations – refers to the societally patterned interactions between men and women.

Gender roles – refers to social roles assigned to each sex and labeled as masculine or feminine.

Homophobia - refers to an aversion to or hatred of homosexuals and their lifestyles

Internal migration- is the migration of persons within a country.

International migration- refers to the movement of people from one country to another.

Kinship – it refers culturally established relationships between individuals and groups on the model of biological relationships between parents and children, between siblings, and between marital partners.

Lineal kin – are the direct ancestors and descendants of an individual: his parents, grandparents, etc. and his children, grandchildren, etc.

Matrilocal- in this case the married couple lives with or near the bride's kin.

Migration -involves the (more or less) permanent movement of individuals and groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas and communities.

Monogamous - in such marriage one man has only one wife at a time.

Neolocal - in this case the married couple creates a new household for themselves, living with kin of neither the groom nor the bride.

Patrilocal- in such a family the married couple lives with or near the groom's kin.

Polyandrous family – in such family one woman is married to several men at a time.

Polygamous - in such marriage there can be multiple partners at a time.

Polygynous family – it is opposite of polyandrous family, here one man is married to more than one woman at a time.

Queer – describes sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people may all identify with the word queer.

Sex- refers to the physical/biological characteristics that distinguish males and females.

Unilineal descent– refers to either **matrilineal** (if traced through the mother) or **patrilineal** (if traced through the father's line).

Unit 16 : Kinship and Gender

Structure of the unit

16.1. Learning Objectives

As both men and women are raising new questions about gender identity, over the years there has been a renewed interest in the topic even among researchers. These essentially begins with a question to what extent are women considered "second-class citizens" and why is such universal subjugation of women to men still continuing in the contemporary times. The main objectives of this unit are:

- To familiarize the learners about the lines of intersection between kinship and gender.

- To consider some of the basic concepts related to these.

- To lay out the details of kinship structure and its relation to gender with reference to residence patterns and marriage.

- To focus on a discussion about kinship and gender specifically in the South Asian context.

- Finally, to discuss kinship and gender keeping in mind the contemporary social problems such as honour killing.

16.2. Introduction

Kinship and gender are key issues in social anthropology and widely discussed topics. Whereas kinship has to a certain extent framed the discipline of anthropology, gender studies first gained momentum in the 1970s, provoking a critical perspective on the discipline of social sciences as a whole, including kinship. As analytical concepts, kinship and gender cover a vast range of debates, and the purview of this unit will be restricted to some of those debates. Within contemporary anthropology, kinship and gender are viewed as mutually constitutive; one cannot be properly grasped without paying due attention to the other. Both kinship and gender are about relational practices, that is about articulating different forms of relatedness. Moreover, there is a general recognition that not only are there cross-cultural variations in the way kinship and gender are perceived and practiced but that also within any one society there may be different elaborations of kinship and gender. In this unit, we will discuss some of the ways in which kinship and gender are closely related to the study of social anthropology.

Whereas the study of gender has increased its significance within complex, modern societies, the contrary, it appears, holds true for kinship. Among social scientists, there has been a tendency to assume that with modernity, kinship loses its organizing and explanatory force. However, it needs to be remembered that both kinship and gender are central to our understandings of contemporary societies. And knowledge about the kinship patterns opens up a new lens to observe the social structures in different societies.

16.3. Understanding Kinship and Gender Concepts

Anthropologist Janet Carsten notes that 'From the 1960s onward the feminist movement and the scholarship it inspired have had a very obvious impact on kinship studies. This resulted first in a number of important works that documented the lives of women, which

had previously been omitted from ethnographic accounts. Women's involvement in households and domestic arrangements, trade, exchange, labour, religion, and economic life was rendered in detail, making the gaps in previous cross-cultural studies all too visible.By the end of the 1970s, attention had begun to shift from women to the symbolization of gender itself. This shift can be connected to a broader questioning of gender roles outside (and within) the academy and was marked by the analytical separation of the terms gender and sex, among other things' (Carsten 2004). As the study of kinship came under attack from feminist and gender scholars, scholars started assigning a more prominent place to gender in kinship studies.

We begin with unfolding some of the key concepts that are related to kinship and gender. These are some of the foundational concepts that will assist students at multiple stages of this module.

16.3.1 Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

First, we must start with the basic contrast in sociology between sex and gender. 'Sex' refers to the physical characteristics (such as the female uterus and male/female genitalia) that distinguish males and females. 'Gender', by contrast, concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women. It also includes the social roles that women and men play in the society, which varies widely across cultures.

In many countries, but especially in the developed world, important aspects of people's sexual lives have been altered in fundamental ways since the 1960s. The previously dominant view that sexuality was tied to the process of reproduction as it is clear that, for many people, sexuality and reproduction are not necessarily linked. Gender and sexuality are dimensions of life for each individual to explore and shape, and the widespread assumption of heteronormativity – the prevalenthypothesis that heterosexuality is 'normal' and 'right' while other sexualities are in some way deviant – is fast losing ground. If sexuality was once 'defined' in terms of heterosexuality and monogamy in the context of marital relations, there is today a growing acceptance of diverse forms of sexuality, sexual identities, and sexual activity. In spite of this, many discussions of gender differences and sexuality still make biological assumptions that there are basic or 'natural' differences between men and women.

16.3.2. Social Construction of Gender

Gender is linked to socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity and is not necessarily or inevitably a direct product of biological sex. In sociology, one important early approach was gender socialization – the learning of gender roles via social agencies such

as the family, state and mass media. This approach distinguishes biological sex from social-cultural gender – an infant is born with the first but develops the second. Through contact with various agencies of socialization, both primary and secondary, children gradually internalize the social norms and expectations that, according to dominant ideas, correspond to their biological sex. Hence, gender differences are not biologically determined but culturally produced as men and women are socialized into different roles. Theories of gender socialization see boys and girls learning 'sex roles' and the male and female identities – involving masculine and feminine norms – that accompany them (Giddens 2006). It must be kept in mind that family, kinship, and marriage are different social institutions that provide the base for the social construction of gender.

16.3.3. Queer theory

The idea that, theoretically, it is possible to separate gender from sexuality altogether marks the starting point of queer theory, which breaks with many conventional sociological ideas of identity. Queer theory is heavily influenced by poststructuralist thought, particularly associated with Judith Butler (1990) and Michel Foucault (1978). In particular, queer theorists challenge the very concept of 'identity' as something that is relatively fixed or assigned to people by socializing agents. Drawing from Foucault, queer theorists argue that gender and sexuality, along with all of the other terms that come with these concepts, constitute a specific discourse rather than referring to something objectively real or 'natural'.

For example, in his work on the history of sexuality during the 1970s and 1980s, Foucault argued that the male homosexual identity today associated with gay men was not part of the dominant discourse on sexuality in the nineteenth century or previously. Therefore, this form of identity just did not exist for people until it became part of, or was created within, the discourses of medicine and psychiatry. Identities can then be seen as pluralistic, unstable and subject to change over time.

The queer theory, therefore, challenges all fixed or apparently 'authentic' identities, including those which appear to be opposed to the dominant heterosexual norm. Although concepts such as 'gay' and 'lesbian' may well have been politically useful in pressing claims for equal rights, queer theorists argue that they remain tied to binary opposition, as the 'other' to the norm of heterosexuality, which consistently favors the powerful 'heteronormative discourse' in society (Rahman and Jackson 2010:128).

Having discussed some of these key concepts related to kinship and gender in this unit, and the lines of descent in the previous unit, in the following section we will move on to discuss kinship structure on the basis of residence and on the basis of marriage.

16.4. Kinship Structures and Its Relation to Gender

In the previous unit on relatedness, kinship structure was discussed on the basis of descent, where we saw a discussion on unilineal and bilateral lines of descent. However, it must be kept in mind that kinship structures can also be understood on the basis of residence and marriage. Both these being closely related to gender will be taken up here.

16.4.1. On the Basis of Residence

Anthropologist Linda Stone has pointed out that 'In any society, descent needs to be considered in conjunction with residence patterns, since the physical closeness of people related by descent has a lotto do with the strength of the ties between them' (Stone 2009: 15).Though there are various cultural differences across the world, the combination of descent and residence patterns is crucial as it affects the texture of life in communities. Residence is closely related to the structure of the domestic group, where people live together and even share resources for their subsistence. Some of the standard post-marital residence patterns include:

a) **Patrilocal:** In such a family the married couple lives with or near the groom's kin.

b) **Matrilocal:** In this case the married couple lives with or near the bride's kin.

c) **Ambilocal:** In this family the married couple has the choice of living with or in the locality of either the groom or the bride.

d) **Neolocal:** In this case the married couple creates a new household for themselves, living with kin of neither the groom nor the bride.

e) **Avunculocal:** In such a family the married couple moves to or near the residence of the groom's mother's brother(s).

Any given society may exhibit one dominant mode of post-marital residence but can at the same time show exceptions to it. In other words, more than one pattern of residence may be observable in a society.

16.4.2. On the Basis of Marriage

Apart from the relations based on descent, kinship also concerns relationships established through marriage or affinal relationships. Marriage is found in all societies, albeit in different forms. The institution of marriage reflects one of the ways of understanding kinship structures and gender. There are two basic marriage forms, namely

a) **Monogamous:** In such marriage one man has only one wife at a time.

b) **Polygamous:**In such marriage there can be multiple partners at a time. It comprises of two sub-types –

 i) **Polyandrous family** – In such family one woman is married to several men at a time.

 ii) **Polygynous family** – It is opposite of polyandrous family, here one man is married to more than one woman at a time.

Monogamy is the most common form of marriage across the world. While polygyny is permitted in some societies, polyandry is the rarest form of marriage.

Things to Remember

Apart from these understandings on the basis of marriage, two other important terms are exogamy and endogamy.

● *Exogamy* refers to the rule whereby persons must marry outside a certain social category or group. For example, some societies impose a rule of village exogamy. In this case, all persons of one village would be prohibited from marrying within it and would have to find spouses from other villages.

● *Endogamy* refers to the rule whereby persons must marry within a certain social category or group. For example, societies that are stratified by caste usually have rules prescribing caste endogamy, or marriage within the caste.

[Source: Stone (2009) *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction.*]

16.5. Kinship and Gender in South Asia

Kinship organizes social relations in terms of cultural patterns. Eminent sociologist LeelaDube has pointed out that 'kinship systems are an important context within which gender relations are located' (1994). It has been asserted that gender relations are constructed differently in different cultures and since kinship subsumes marriage and family organization, gender is closely associated with kinship. She notes 'kinship needs to be seen as providing the organizing principles for group placement and social identity, inheritance and resource distribution, socialization, post-marital residence and women's relationship to space, the formation of basic kin groups, marriage and conjugal relations, authority and power, and rights over children. The very notion of entitlement to various kinds of resources including

food, health and nutrition, and the obligations and responsibilities of members of the group in the business of living, can be understood by keeping in view the fact that it is the kinship system which provides the language for all these and gives them legitimacy' (Dube 1994).

Following our discussion on the kinship structures and terminologies in the previous unit, we have learned that different societies adhere to different kinship patterns. Dube claimed that 'the basic differences in the statuses of male and female children between patrilineal societies on the one hand and matrilineal as well as bilateral societies on the other are in the nature of their membership of descent groups and familial and kinship units. Under patriliny both boys and girls take their social identity from the father and are places in his lineage, *khandan/kutumb* and family. But while a son is a permanent member of these units, a daughter is viewed as a transient or impermanent member. A son has the potential to continue the patriline but a daughter enters the family only for a short sojourn. The cultural emphasis on marriage and the perceived inevitability of a girl's departure from her natal home on marriage are deeply entrenched. The possibility of intra-kin marriage, such as marriage between cross-cousins or between a maternal uncle and niece, available to Hindu communities in southern India, and between both cross and parallel cousins to most Muslim communities in the subcontinent, does not do away with the element of compulsion in regard to a daughter's exit. For a daughter, marriage implies loss of membership of her natal home, and in normal circumstances marriage is viewed as a must' (Dube 1994).

Things to Do

● Firstly, look up on *Rules of Inheritance* in patrilineal and matrilineal societies. Note down the points of similarity and dissimilarity between these societies.

● Secondly, look up on Rules of Inheritance among different religious communities such as Hindus, Muslims, and Christians for instance. Make note of what are the points of convergence and divergence between different religious communities.

Here we see that kinship and marriage are considered to be a defining factor in the relationship between kinship and gender. Having discussed the patrilineal societies at large, now let us turn towards the matrilineal societies in South Asia. In matrilineal communities, on the other hand, children of both sexes acquire permanent membership of the mother's descent group, which consists of relatives connected through female links. They are believed to share common blood. A child thus derives its social identity from its mother. But while a sister is the perpetuator of the line and augments the lineage or descent group, e.g. the *taravad* among the Nayar of Kerala and the Lakshadweep Muslims, or the *kpoh* (womb) among the Khasi, a brother's children belong to his wife's lineage. The observability of the

birth process rooted in nature thus has different meanings in matrilineal and patrilineal societies. Membership of descent groups under matriliny does not change at marriage. In bilateral societies a child is reckoned to be the child equally of both its parents (Dube 1994).

From the above discussion, we get an idea about how kinship and gender operate in patrilineal and matrilineal societies. In addition to that, the patterns of residence and rights over space are another aspect that needs to be considered when we speak of kinship and gender. The ideal-typical household in large parts of India is patrilineal and patrilocal joint family. However, with the passage of time, different factors such as diversity of occupations, migration and more individualistic approaches to family life have often contributed to the breaking up of the joint family household. Despite the absence of a joint household, close male patrikin and their wives and children are viewed as belonging to one 'family' and often live in clusters of houses close to each other. Thus even a nuclear family is embedded in a larger patrilineal familial entity. Here the female members are socialized in a particular way to follow the ideals of the patriarchal family system. An important implication of residence in the patrilineal, patrilocal communities of South Asia is a woman's loss of rights in her natal home and acquisition of no rights over space as such. Every society makes some provision for the transfer of property and social position on death and the transfer is usually to a kinsman.

Related to these is the pattern of marriage that is established by members in a particular society. The prohibition on marriage within the group is called *exogamy*. This can possibly be better stated as a positive injunction – to marry out of the group. When there is a rule that we must marry within the group it is called the rule of *endogamy*. Therefore the recording and analysis of these systems suggest the ways in which women are allowed to establish their conjugal relations. The rolesassociated with the relationships to which a woman has to adhere has the underlying tones of kinship and gender. Therefore it can be said that the important question about different kinship systems and the situation of women is something which is intrinsically context specific.

Do you know?

In the nineteenth century, a caste group of Kerala in southern India called the Nayars seemed to have treated sex and economic relations between men and women as things separate from marriage. About the time of puberty, all Nayar girls took ritual husbands through the *tali*-rite. After the ritual marriage had taken place, however, the *tali* husband did not live with his wife and was under

no obligation to have any contact with her whatsoever. The wife owned only one duty to her *tali* husband: she had to attend his funeral to mourn his death.

The bride lived in a large household with her family, where she was visited over the subsequent years by other "visiting husbands". The Nayar situation seems to have been a special response to the problem of extended male absence during military service. In more recent times, military service has ceased to be a common occupation of the Nayars and stable married relationships have become the norm. British anthropologist Kathleen Gough (1959) provided a detailed description of the very interesting kinship traditions of the Nayar society. Whereas the husband-wife bonds were weak, the brother-sister ties were strong, for which reason the Nayar case was readily used by anthropologist to illustrate the matrilineal puzzle.

16.6. Kinship, Gender and Contemporary Social Problems

As anthropologist Linda Stone points out, 'Not so long ago many people, including many anthropologists, thought that as societies around the world modernized and industrialized, or asglobalization set in, kinship would cease to be so significant and prominent in human affairs' (Stone 2009: 26). This prediction was mainly based on the idea that kinship and kin networks were a feature of the 'primitive' societies. Though kinship systems have undergone transformation over the decades, it needs to be understood that it has not completely perished. Several ideas and practices concerning kinship are now roots in contemporary societies and often become the reason behind diverse social problems. This section will develop this point by taking into consideration the example of honour killing. Though it may be observed and debated in diverse societies, we will consider here incidents from the Indian context only.

The issue of 'crimes of honour' has become prominent in the South Asian context in the recent years, but sadly no strict laws have been formulated in order to curb such practices. Since in these regions it is considered that the honour of the family lies with the women, anyone who transgresses the familial codes of honourare targeted. In India, several ethnographic studies have suggested that caste panchayats (village councils) regulate such matters and propagate patriarchal politics of shame and honour. It has been a huge reason of concern even among human rights activists, who constantly make efforts to fight such practices. Honour killings have been reported in northern regions of India, mainly in the Indian states of Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and the southern state of Tamil

Nadu. The main reason for these incidents of crimes is a result of people marrying without their family's acceptance, especially when it is between members of two different castes or religious groups. In contrast, honour killings are less prevalent in West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

It is in this context, that we should understand the role of khappanchayats (caste councils of village elders) in Haryana. Writing in this context sociologist RavinderKaur pointed out that 'Ostensibly "society" takes offence at these marriages, and khappanchayats as representatives of society proceed to judge and punish couples and their families' (Kaur 2010: 14). Several modes of disciplining, coercion, restriction and violence are resorted to in order to maintain the honour of the family and community. Honour killings, along with female foeticide are considered to be the twin evils operating among communities in the northern states of India. Family honour and status are important considerations for Indian society, at the same time it should be realized that the women in the family have to be empowered and educated. There has been growing demand from the women's movement to address such incidents with strict laws.

Mostly, incidents of honour killings in India can be found reported in daily newspapers, but now with the increasing presence of individuals on various social media platforms we find common masses sharing their views, thoughts and even fears related to such incidents. For that matter, the Manoj-Bablihonour killing case of 2007 was something that had shook the nation. However it is quite disheartening to see that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) prefers to leave out data on honour killings from their reports by citing them as vague (The Telegraph Online, 2019). Therefore this leaves us with much more need for research and engagement on such topic.

Things to Do

Visit a library or look up on the Internet, and read further about the practice of honour killings in other societies outside India as well. This will be an eye-opener for most that are unaware of this evil and at the same time it will help locate the debate on kinship and gender on a global scale.

16.8. Conclusion

One major domain where kinship and gender intersect is the reproduction, amply evident in practices of assisted conception and the expected roles of individuals in the society.

Another foremost ground where kinship and gender intersect is inheritance. Ideas and practices of kinship and gender are also vital to politics, economy, religion, and law, race and identity. In the course of this unit, we will come across diverse aspects of kinship and gender and understand its importance in various stages.

There is a sense that accounts on gender and the terms of studying kinship or relatedness are necessarily reformulated over time. The central concern of much recent work on the cross-cultural study of gender has been the extent to which gender identity is performative rather than biologically given (Carsten 2000). Therefore a lot of anthropological study of gender in the 1970s and 80s in many respects encompassed the study of kinship.

16.8. Summary

This unit examined a variety of ways in which kinship and gender are culturally interrelated but had not been explored by scholars until 1970s when a conscious effort was made in this regard. As the critiques grew stronger, the approach of kinship studies in gender became more prominent and well-researched. In the following units of this module, we will read further about the inroads that gender made in kinship studies through developments such as reproductive technologies. Therefore in the 20[th] century research on kinship studies showcased a renewed rigor. However it must be kept in mind that all human societies throughout history have continually constructed and reconstructed kinship and gender, thereby seeking meanings and identity within the cultural constructions.

16.7. Questions

- Critically discuss the relation between kinship and gender.
- What can the study of the evolution of human kinship tell us about human gender?
- What is gender socialization?
- Would it be either possible or desirable to eliminate gender differences in society?
- Discuss the functioning of kinship and gender in South Asia.
- What are the contemporary social problems related to kinship and gender? Discuss with an example.

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Unit 17 :   Marriage Migration

Structure of the unit

17.1. Learning Objectives

- To understand the concept of migration
- To understand the concept of marriage migration
- To understand the idea of internal migration
- To make the learners aware of the debate surrounding the marriage migration in Asia.

17.2. Introduction

Migration involves the (more or less) permanent movement of individuals and groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas and communities. According to Gordon Marshall, 'Sociological studies of migration are diverse and usually form part of larger problems in (for example) research into kinship, social networks, or economic development' (2006: 415).

It is an often repeated phrase that 'women have always migrated'. Yet, earlier gender and migration debates on the "feminization of migration" have largely downplayed this reality, implying that women have only recently begun to migrate. To the contrary, female migrants have always outnumbered male migrants. Based on academic research conducted in rural and urban communities across the globe, scholars have observed varied patterns of women's migration. Amongst them marriage migration, that is migration among women as dependent on men after marriage is an common phenomenon. Even non-academic researches on migration patterns suggest that 'Marriage is the biggest reason why women migrate from one place to another. The findings from 2011 Census, which were published recently show that marriage made up for 46 percent of the total migrations in India, of which 97 percent are women' (Srivastava 2019). The insights pertain to the multidirectional trajectories followed by marriage migrants, mostly for the long-term and in rare cases for the short-term. There have been previous studies that have focused on the analysis of these movements using the global south to the global north geographical framework. But as highlighted by Scott Fulford, 'The lack of attention to marriage migration means that very little is known about its extent, geographical distribution, how it has changed over time, and its relationship with age, distance,caste, household consumption, and geography' (2015: 3). Therefore, an overall focus on marriage migration is a growing area of research among social scientists. Both at micro and macro level, a gendered perspective on migration patterns have been emerging in different geographical contexts.

This unit will uncover some of the debates related to the field of migration and specifically engage with patterns of marriage migration. While marriage may be considered as something that hinders individual growth, marriage migration is one of the major reasons for permanent movement of women. Therefore it impedes women's participation in regular workforce in several cases. Thereby leaving them with the only option of becoming a part of contractual workforce in the host destination (it can be country or state or city). It has also been pointed out that migration due to marriage may lead to increasing cases of forms of crimes against women, such as domestic violence and dowry deaths. This is mainly due to the physical absence of the natal kins to support the women post migration. There are also cases where brides are forcibly brought in from other states and then there are instances of maladjustment and cultural isolation among the brides who are not allowed to travel to their native place. However before we probe deeper on those patterns, it is mandatory to explore what constitutes migration and why is marriage migration an important aspect of understanding the demography. And more importantly, we need to question whether marriage migration concerns only the women in our society. In the following sections of this unit, we will therefore highlight the significance of marriage-related migrations.

17.3. What is Migration?

Migration is the third component of population change, the other two being mortality and fertility. The nature of migration as a factor affecting population size is different from that of mortality and fertility. For one thing, migration is not a biological variable, while both mortality and fertility operate within the biological framework, though social, cultural, economic and political factors do exercise some influence on it. Migration movements are largely a product of the social, cultural, economic, political and/or physical circumstances in which individuals and societies find themselves. Migration may increase or decrease the size and change the structure of any population quite drastically at any point in time, especially when large numbers move into a particular area or move out of another. But the data required for the study of migration are not easily available, especially when we talk about marriage migration. Before we discuss the topic of marriage migration further, let us first understand the two major types of migration.

It is customary to study migration with respect to **(1) Internal migration** and **(2) International migration**. Internal migration is the migration of persons within a country, while international migration refers to the movement of people from one country to another.

Just as group differentials are observed for mortality and fertility, distinct group differentials are also observed for migration, which is studied by comparing the characteristics of migrants with those who do not migrate but continue to stay in the place of origin and/or with those who live in the place of destination.

Migration as a topic may be approached from multiple angles. Researchers of demography and sociology are interested in the study of migration differentials from a different point of view. For example, students of demography are interested in the age-sex patterns of migrants as they affect the age-sex structure of the place of origin and that of the place of destination. Other characteristics of migrants, such as marital status, levels of education, levels of fertility, occupational and ethnic composition, are of interest to various experts in different fields. Sociologists are interested in the study of migration as it relates to problems of adjustments and assimilation of migrants. For such a study, the attributes of migrants and non-migrants have to be known. The study of differential migration is also necessary for a building up of an understanding of the factors which affect migration – that is, why some persons move while some others stay back or what distinguishes a person who migrates from one who does not.

17.4. Understanding Marriage Migration

Although decades have passed since transnational Asian marriages increased in the 1990s (Amrith 2011; Jones and Shen 2008; Tseng 2010) most researchers see marriage migration as a female migration flow from the global south to the global north which has been variously described as "hypergamy" (Schans 2012) or "global marriage-scapes" (Constable 2005). According to Constable (2005:4), a key commentator on marriage migration, 'a majority of international marriage migrants are women, and most of these women move from poorer countries to wealthier ones, from the less developed global 'south' to the more industrialized 'north''. Similar arguments regarding marriage migration as female migration flow from the south to the north are also observed by other scholars. The reason is simple: the body of research has thus far focused on only the initial migration of the brides. There remains more scope of research to analyze the effects of marriage migration on the family members of the marriage migrants such as children and elderly parents. And more importantly to question the belief that marriage migration only concerns the women in our society and not the men.

Some scholars have pointed out that the terms 'marriage-related migration' and 'spousal migration' are umbrella terms encompassing all situations where marriage plays a substantial role in an individual's migration. Fulford argues that 'two thirds of all Indian women have migrated for marriage, around 300 million women, but not much is known about this vast migration' (2015: 1). Through this detailed accounting of he argues that 'marriage migration varies substantially across India, and appears to have changed little over the previous 40 years. Contrary to conventional wisdom, marriage migration does not contribute to risk sharing or consumption smoothing. Nor is it driven by sex ratio imbalances' (Fulford 2015: 1). He suggests that marriage migration is part of the larger puzzle of low workforce participation, education, and bargaining power of women in India, rather than an independent phenomenon.

Think critically

● What do you think is 'transnational match-making'?

● Do you think the cases of marriage migration has increased in present times following the influence of social media and especially the growing uses of online matrimonial sites?

17.5. Internal Migration in India

As mentioned earlier, internal migration is the migration of persons within their country of origin. The main source for the study of internal migration in India is provided by the decennial population census. In each census, since 1881, a question has been asked from each person about his/her place of birth. The reply to this question provides the basis for an analysis of internal migration in India. The large percentage of short-distance female migration is mainly due to marriage. According to social customs, a bride is generally selected from another village, and this leads to a heavy short-distance migration of females in India. The findings have been confirmed by several other Indian studies. Marriage has been the most important reason for female migration, with nearly 85 percent of female migrants in rural areas migrating for reasons of marriage.

However, we need to understand that the phenomenon of sex selectivity of migrants is not as clear-cut as that of age selectivity. Reventsein, while stating the laws of migration, generalized as early as in 1885: 'Females appear to dominate among short-journey migrants'. In a study conducted in Southern Maharashtra, it was found that rural migration was dominated by females, a pattern very common in India. Most of this female migration was due to marriage. Thus it has been observed that the selectivity with respect to sex is not the same in the rural-urban and rural-rural streams of migration in Indian conditions. Comparatively less information is available on migration differentials by marital status. The most serious difficulty in such a study is the lack of information on the marital status of the migrants at the time of migration. Socio-economic surveys conducted have revealed that a large proportion of Indian adult male migrants to cities are married and that they leave their families behind in rural areas. In some cases, wife and children migrate to urban areas only after years of marriage and also when there are serious problems in the rural household. Interestingly, about half of the female migrants to cities migrate because of marriage. In Latin America, on the other hand, young married females moved to urban areas in search of employment.

Marriage migration has a close relation to geographically imbalanced sex ratios. That is, areas with low female to male ratios may pull women in as the demand for brides is higher in these areas. This may lead to a situation where most of the adult women in a village were born outside of it. Children in Punjab and Haryana are only 45% female while the percentage is close to 49% in some other states. Within each state and across India there is substantial village-level variance as well. In some states, the variance is much higher because of smaller village sizes (Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal) in other much lower because of large village

sizes (Kerala).

With the changes in the family structure and the breakdown of the joint family household, several cases of marriage migration are becoming more and more visible in the urban areas. It is critical to note that access to education plays a significant role in the lives of women engaging in marriage migration. It needs to be remembered that migration leads to separate living. Earlier people often refrained from marriage migration due to concerns about being a single child and their responsibilities towards aging parents. But over the years people have become more flexible in those regards and are ready to move to different places within the country and also abroad. In the following sections of this unit, we will look at what are the implications of these in further detail. As of now keep in mind that marriage migration essentially deals with the women, given the patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal patterns that are prevalent in most parts of the Indian society.

Things to do

Check the following websites to read further on the topic of internal migration in India

● *What is the biggest reason for migration in India?* by Varun B. Krishnan - https://www.thehindu.com/data/india-migration-patterns-2011-census/article28620772.ece

● *Female migration in India* by D.P. Singh - http://ijsw.tiss.edu/greenstone/collect/ijsw/archives/HASHeadb/2461958e.dir/doc.pdf

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17.6. International Migration

In this age of globalization, migration is a very common feature. There are scholars who have been interested to explain more complex and diversified migratory trajectories that include marriage migration at a transnational level. As mentioned earlier in most of these cases the women move from poorer countries to wealthier ones and preferably from the less developed global south to the more industrialized global north. Here the analysis of the so-called push-and-pull factors, sometimes understood in the world system theory in terms of rich centers and poor peripheries become evident. Also in a huge number of cases, these migrants are dependents and it is the status of the husband that they try to fit into.

Understanding the patterns of marriage migrants especially when we consider them to be a part of a global diaspora is crucial. Many marriage migration studies 'pay due attention

to gendered aspects of transnationalism' (Kofman 2004). There are studies that are concerned with the conceptual framework for supporting marriage migrants' access to full citizenship. In the context of migrants seeking to claim 'full citizenship', migrants who cross borders for marriage, their children, elderly parents, and siblings may be regarded as members of a transnational diaspora even though they do not see themselves as such (Ishii 2016). However not all marriage migrants are diasporic.

Things to Remember

Diaspora – refers to populations, such as members of an ethnic or religious group that originated from the same place but dispersed to different locations. The basic feature of diasporas is the dispersion from a common origin. A diaspora is a dispersion of people throughout the world, but the term originated in the context of Jews.

According to Marshall, 'During the late 1980s and 1990s, diaspora studies of *trans*national experiences and communities developed as a self-conscious critique of earlier sociological approaches to *inter*national migration, this shift in terminology reflecting the more general turn towards globalization as a theme in microsociology (although post-modernism and post-structuralism are also evident influences). Proponents argue that improvements in transport (such as cheap air fares) and communications (electronic mail, satellite television, the Internet) have made it possible for diaspora communities, scattered across the globe, to sustain their own distinctive identities, life-styles, and economic ties' (Marshall 2006:158-159).

17.7. Some Debates around Marriage Migration in Asia

In this unit, we have been discussing gender-sensitive perspectives related to marriage and migration, in both intra- and trans-national contexts. As has been debated by sociologists Rajni Palriwala and Patricia Uberoi, given the specific rules of marriage and patterns of post-marital residence, mostly it entails the women's migration (2005). In much of Asia, marriage has meant and still continues to mean the shift in place of women. Since patrilocal form of residence is the most prevalent form where the wife moves into the house of the husband, this shift is common in Asia. Territorial dislocation, as it is referred to in migration studies, occurs in the case of the young women. They observe that 'Statistically speaking, in societies where patrilocality is the rule (and this goes for the greater part of South and

East Asia), women's "marriage migration" has invariably constituted a large proportion of total migration and the overwhelming bulk of female migration' (2005: vii). This being precisely the reason behind why marriage migration is not studied by most social scientists and demographers who take it for granted but has been considered by feminist writers. At large a gendered nature of migration on marriage needs to be focused by scholars of kinship studies.

They also point out that sometimes marriage can be 'used as an individual and family strategy to facilitate migration, and conversely, how migration may become an important factor in the making of marriages' (Palriwala and Uberoi 2005: v). This is therefore, considered as a life strategy and in certain cases a route to upward social mobility. In several instances, grooms are ranked as desirable depending on their likelihood or assurance of their permanent settlement abroad, mainly in North America. In this serious business of status mobility and international migration, one can also locate the culturally embedded notions of 'hypergamy'. Therefore, here the aspirations and mobility strategies of most individuals and families get highlighted.

Things to Remember'

Hypergamy', in anthropological parlance, refers to women marrying 'up' in the social hierarchy; it is contrasted with 'isogamy', the marriage of social equals, and *'hypogamy'*, where women marry down. In the Indian context, hypergamy refers to the marriage of a woman with a man of higher caste status, but there are also overlapping, territorially-based hierarchies of direction and of place, arising from the fact that, in north India in particular, daughters must not be given in marriage to the kinship groups or local communities from whom brides have been taken. Therefore the rules of bride giving villages and bride receiving villages emerge.

[Source: Palriwala and Uberoi (2005: xxvi-xxvii)
Marriage and Migration in Asia].

Another concept that needs to be considered in this regard is that of 'mail-order brides', which has been taken up in the academic and feminist literature. This has also been critiqued by several scholars because of the extent to which the wife is treated as a mere 'commodity' in this case.

The grounds of strong concern however arise when we talk about the fluid boundaries between matchmaking and trafficking of women within the context of marriage. This has to do with the commercially negotiated marriages, which comprises of the 'sale' of a

daughter or the 'buying' of a wife. As Palriwala and Uberoi notes, 'A woman so bought (or duped into marriage) may be further traded by her husband to another man, into sex work or into other forms of bonded labour and servitude' (2005: xiv).

Finally, if we were to consider the political economy of marriage transactions then it must be pointed out that several societies have different marriage payments such as bridewealth or dowry, which are considered to be a part of 'custom' and 'tradition'. They note that 'The burden of dowry and, even more, of conspicuous consumption at weddings, are also factors in marriages among the Indian diaspora' (Palriwala and Uberoi 2005: xix). These are some of the important points that we need to keep in mind while discussing this topic in the Asian context. As the scholars elucidate these are observable in almost all societies across Asia.

Think Critically

How can the links between marriage migration, the law and the multiple results of their combination be gauged empirically?

17.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that understanding the patterns of marriage migration depends to a large extent on the community, religious and educational background and power relations present in the migrants' life. Especially in a globalized world, cases of migration have increased tremendously. As some scholars have pointed out in this age of globalization and transnational encounters, people's mobility often intersects with intimate issues such as love and sex, reproduction and obligation, and family and conjugal matters. The changes in the family structure are something that has interested social scientists for decades and in a fast-changing world post-globalization, these changes in social structure have become more and more pronounced.

17.9. Summary

Therefore, further attention is required to examine the multiple directions in which marriage migration takes place. Understanding the dynamic of the study of migration, gender and power is, of course, the need of the hour. This unit attempted to explore the entanglement of mobility and intimacy in various configurations, at various levels, and in diverse geographical

locations. Conclusively, it can be said that this has been done within this module of kinship because engagement with migration studies shall assist in stretching the limits of kinship studies in a much more productive way in new directions.

17.10. Questions

- Write a note on marriage migration.

- Analyze the effects of marriage migration in India.

- Critically engage with the statement 'men migrate and women simply follow'.

17.11. References

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Unit 18 : Re-imagining Families: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Live-in Relationships

Structure of the unit

18.1. Learning Objectives

The primary objectives of this unit are as followed :

● To question the existing forms of family and thereby re-imagine families in newer ways.

● To observe some of the ways in which family is resilient and yet the meanings attached to it are shifting.

● Try understanding what were the atypical ways in which families across societies were studied by anthropologists.

● To focus on families that emerge out of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and live-in relationships.

18.2. Introduction

The family has often been regarded as the cornerstone of society. Undoubtedly, studies of family, kinship and marriage are integral part of anthropologists' and sociologists' preoccupation and engagement with the societies across the world. In pre-modern and modern societies alike it has been seen as the most basic unit of social organization and one which carries out vital tasks such as socializing children. Broadly, family can be defined as a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household, interacting or intercommunicating with each other in their respective roles of husband and wife, father and mother, brother and sister, son and daughter, thereby creating a common culture.

18.3. Re-imagining Families

We begin by understanding some of the traditional or conventional meanings attached with family. American anthropologist **George Peter Murdock** defined the family as a social group characterized by common residence, economic co-operation, and reproduction. Now consider the question 'Is the family universal?' The answer would be yes. The family is a universal institution because it is found in all human society in some form or another. Therefore, whether the family is regarded as universal ultimately depends on how the family is defined. Clearly, though, a wide variety of domestic arrangements have been devised by human beings which are quite distinctive from the 'conventional' families of modern industrial societies. As Diana Gittins puts it, 'Relationships are universal, so is some form of co-residence, of intimacy, sexuality and emotional bonds. But the *forms* these can take are infinitely variable and can be changed and challenged as well as embraced. By analysing the ways in which culture has prescribed certain, and proscribed other, forms of behaviour, it should be possible to begin to see the historical and cultural specificity of what is really meant when reference is made to 'the family'' (Gittins, 1993: 72).

In their book on Sociology, Haralambos and Heald (2017:389) note that 'it may be a somewhat pointless exercise to try to find a single definition that embraces all the types of household and relationship which can reasonably be called families'.

According to **Murdock**, the family performs four basic functions in society –

i. Reproductive function

ii. Sexual function

iii. Economic function

iv. Educational function

i. **Reproductive function** – Family is the site of biological reproduction. Human fertility is both determined by and impacts upon family values and structures in the wider context of society and culture. This is a very complex reciprocal relationship and a subject of considerable academic controversy. In a very influential article, Kingsley Davis had speculated that the dysfunctional levels of fertility that we find in certain underdeveloped and agrarian societies such as India are linked to the prevailing type of family organization. In such a system Davis observed, the nuclear family of procreation is able to share the burden of child-raising with a wider kin group. Consequently, the age at marriage is quite low and numerous offspring especially male offspring are viewed as an asset to the group.

ii. **Sexual function** – There is an intimate connection between sexuality and procreation. If we refer to the Indological or the Sanskritic model of conjugal sexual relations we find that sexuality is considered legitimate only for the production of male offspring and not for pleasure. Otherwise sexual activities for the male are perceived as a source of sin, impurity, and danger. A second exploration of sexuality may be found in the extensive anthropological literature on Hindu lifecycle rituals particularly those of marriage, childbirth and the onset of female puberty. In many communities throughout South Asia, the onset of puberty in women is marked by a series of rituals that celebrate the attainment of fecundity and marriageability while at the same time underlying her state of impurity and vulnerability. Thirdly, an assessment of social reform efforts in India in the last century and a half reveals an attempt to regulate female sexuality inside and outside marriage in linewith the upper caste Sanskritic norms of propriety. Deconstruction of the discourse of social reform shows that both the nationalist and reformist agendas were ambiguous and complex. Finally, in the context of the global AIDS crisis, it is likely that the theme of sexuality will focus on the aspect of Indian sexuality beyond procreation both inside and outside marriage.

iii. **Economic function** – With regard to this function, it is very important to distinguish a family and a household. The conceptual distinction between the two is that family is a genealogical construct and the household is a residential and commensal unit. Here Murdock referred to the division of labor within the family whereby the husband specializes in certain activities, the wife in others.

iv. **Educational function** – The family is the primary agency of socialization. According to André Béteille, it is the institution of family in contemporary India that now

ensures social placement of the younger generation that is arranging schools, colleges, professional training, etc. Another very important aspect of the family is the socialization of the girl child and her internalization of the feminine gender identity.

Murdock's analysis of family has faced criticisms on several grounds. It has been argued that Murdock has not examined alternatives to the family. D.H.J. Morgan notes that Murdock does not answer 'to what extent these basic functions are inevitably linked with the institution of the nuclear family' (Haralambos and Heald 2017:397). Therefore critics have pointed out that Murdock's description of the family is too good to be true. Recently, some feminists have questioned the tendency of other scholars to make blanket considerations of family life and have emphasized the different experiences of women in families. Some have rejected the idea that there is such a thing as 'the family' rather than simply different domestic arrangements. They have, however, continued to identify ways in which domestic life can disadvantage women.

In this section, we start with the familiar idea of 'the family' – a social institution which appears to be timeless and universal. But this notion often limits our understanding of the empirical reality and there is a need to outline an alternative approach – in which people engage and which they acknowledge as being in some way 'familial'. In the next section, we will observe what it means to consider family as an institution and ideology. Obviously as the discussion unfolds in the following pages of this unit, we will find that some of the institutional and ideological bases of family will be targeted by what happens in the real world.

18.4. 'The family' as an institution and ideology

The sociology of the family has involved contrasting theoretical perspectives for more than a century. Most of these perspectives concentrated on studying the family as a central social institution that performs important functions for individuals, communities, society and the capitalist economic system. However, these conventional approaches seem much less convincing today in the light of trends towards heightened individualism and the diversification of family forms. This divergence is reflected in the increasing use of 'families' rather than 'family' in contemporary literature. It is also evident in the disjunction between official discourses promoting the nuclear family as the norm and people's lived experience of diverse and changing family forms.

A family is a group whose members are linked by ties of blood, marriage, or adoption. Although extended family ties have important influences on individual's lives, the greatest

significance of the institution for the gendering of social life is in the household unit based on kinship. Kinship need not be legally based: People are considered socially married if they are in a cohabiting, economically interdependent, sexual relationship with the expectation of permanence. This broader meaning is becoming more widely accepted. For example, cohabiting couples, heterosexual and homosexual, are increasingly accorded the legal rights and responsibilities of marriage.

Despite the diversity of lifestyles and ethnic, racial, and social class backgrounds that characterize Indian society today, one experience that remains common to almost all people is that of growing up in a family-based household. The large majority goes on to spend significant portions of adulthood in family-based households, although an increasing proportion of the population lives alone or with "roommates" for sizable periods in their lives.

Sociologists emphasize that family is a social institution, sharing many common patterns of structure and process, regardless of the particular composition of each small group. In the following sections, we will learn more about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) families and other newer types of families. In other words, we will be taking up some of the challenges of family in the modern world.

18.5. LGBT families and parnerships

Another type of household that may contradict Murdock's claims about the universality of the family, as defined by him, is gay and lesbian households. By definition, such households will not contain 'adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship' (Murdock 1949). Such households may, however, include children who are cared for by two adult females or two adult males. The children may have been adopted, be the result of a previous heterosexual relationship, or they may have been produced using new reproductive technologies involving sperm donation or surrogate motherhood. A lesbian may have sex with a man in order to conceive a child to be raised by her and her female partner.

Most children of gay couples (homosexual couple, used especially of a man) result from a previous heterosexual relationship. Lesbian mothers are rather more common than gay fathers, due to the difficulties gay men are likely to have in being granted custody or given adopted children. Thus, while households consisting of gay partners and one or more children may not be very common, they do exist. This raises the question of whether such households should be regarded as families.

Rather like lone-parent families, households with gay parents are seen by some as not being 'proper' families. It must be remembered that many people today live as same-sex couples. Because most countries still do not sanction same-sex marriage (though this is changing), intimate relationships between gay men and lesbians are grounded in personal commitment and mutual trust rather than in law. The term '**families of choice**' has sometimes been applied to LGBT partnerships to reflect the positive and creative new forms of family life. Many traditional features of heterosexual partnerships – such as mutual support, care, and responsibility in illness, the joining of finances, and so on – are becoming integrated into gay and lesbian relationships in ways that were not possible in earlier times.

A very significant recent trend in Western European countries, which has long been campaigned for by lesbian and gay movements, is the introduction of registered or civil partnerships and the extension of marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Civil partnerships are legally recognized unions between two people of the same sex, though technically they are not 'marriages' in any religious sense. Nonetheless, couples who become legally 'partnered' generally have the same legal rights as married couples on a range of issues. For example, civil partners can expect equal treatment on financial matters such as inheritance, pensions and child maintenance, and they have new rights as 'next kin'.

Denmark was the first state to grant same-sex partners the same rights as married couples, in 1989, followed in 1996 by Norway, Sweden and Iceland, and in 2000 by Finland. The Netherlands introduced full civil marriage rights in 2001. Belgium and Spain introduced gay marriage rights in 2003 and 2005 respectively, while England and Wales and Scotland legislated for same-sex marriage in 2014.

Since the 1980s there has been growing research interest in LGBT partnerships. Sociologists have seen homosexual relationships as displaying forms of intimacy and equality that are sometimes and in some respects quite different from those common among heterosexual couples. Because homosexuals have been excluded from the institution of marriage and because traditional gender roles are not easily applicable, homosexual partnerships must be constructed and negotiated outside the norms and guidelines that govern heterosexual unions. Some have suggested that the 1980s AIDS epidemic was an important factor in the development of a distinctive culture of care and commitment among same-sex partners.

A good deal of recent research has explored the shifting social and legal position of same-sex relations in the world's societies, though there is a growing appreciation of the wider diversity of sexual minorities, including bisexual and transgender people. This section

focuses on the changing position of lesbian and gay people and attitudes towards same-sex relations since the late 1960s.

The proportion of the population (both male and female) who have had same-sex experiences or experienced strong inclinations towards the same sex is larger than those who follow an openly gay lifestyle. Attitudes of intolerance towards lesbians and gay men have been so pronounced in the past that it is only during recent years that some of the myths surrounding the subject have been dispelled. **Homophobia**, a term coined in the late 1960s, refers to an aversion to or hatred of homosexuals and their lifestyles, along with behavior based on these. Homophobia is a form of prejudice that is reflected not only in overt acts of hostility and violence but also in verbal abuse.

Doyou know?

The award-winning movie *Milk*(2008) was based on the life of gay rights activist and politician Harvey Milk, who was the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California, in the US. There are other documentaries and movies based on the Stonewall riots of 1969 as well, which focus on the rise of the gay community.

According to Jeffrey Weeks, Catherine Donovan and Brian Heaphy (2001), gay and lesbians often look upon their households and even their relationships as involving a greater degree of choice than those in more conventional heterosexual families. They choose who to include in their family and negotiate what are often fairly egalitarian relationships. Some see their families as an alternative type of family that they are consciously developing. Weeks, et.al.(2001) argue that this may be part of wider social changes in which people culturally prioritize individual choice and the acceptance of diversity. Thereby, making commitment increasingly a matter of negotiations rather than ascription, as it was earlier.

For most people in the developed world, the couple – married or unmarried – is at the core of what family life is. Family forms today are very diverse indeed. Here as we discuss some of the ways in which individuals are re-imagining families across the globe, we will also expand our understandings of how several societal changes and shifting attitudes have transformed the domain of family and personal life today.

Think Critically

Why has there been unexpected popularity of the term "gay families" across the world? Why are lesbians and gay men busy recasting their close friends as kin? Is this suggestive of a social change?

Some within the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) community view marriage as tainted by its long history as an exclusively heterosexual institution, others see things differently. Weeks et al. (2001) point to three significant patterns within gay and lesbian partnerships. First, there is more opportunity for equality between partners because they are not guided by the gendered cultural assumptions that underpin heterosexual relationships. Gay and lesbian couples may choose to shape their relationships to avoid the inequalities and power imbalances characteristic of many heterosexual couples. Second, homosexual partners negotiate the parameters and inner workings of the relationship. If heterosexual couples are influenced by socially embedded gender roles, same-sex couples face fewer expectations about who should do what within the relationship. Women tend to do more housework and childcare in heterosexual marriages, but there are no such expectations within homosexual partnerships. Everything becomes a matter of negotiation, which may result in a more equal sharing of responsibilities. Third, LGBT partnerships demonstrate a particular form of commitment that lacks institutional backing. Mutual trust, a willingness to work at difficulties and a shared responsibility for 'emotional labour' seem to be the hallmarks of such partnerships (Weeks, et. al. 2001). It will be interesting for sociologists to observe how the new civil partnerships and gay marriage rights affect such commitment and mutual trust as they become fully established.

A relaxation of previously intolerant attitudes towards homosexuality has been accompanied by a growing willingness to use techniques of artificial insemination for lesbian couples to have children and become parents without any heterosexual contact. A number of recent legal victories for homosexual couples indicate that their rights are gradually becoming enshrined in law. In Britain, a landmark 1999 ruling declared that a homosexual couple in a stable relationship could be defined as a 'family'. This classification of homosexual partners as 'members of the family' will affect legal categories in immigration, social security, taxation, inheritance and child support.

> **Do you know?**
>
> Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was abolished in India on 6th September 2018, marking the consensual homosexual sex between adults permissible, but Section 377 remains in force relating to sex with minors, non-consensual sexual acts, and bestiality.

18.6. Kinship relations

As family structures become more fluid and diverse, sociologists are increasingly interested

in understanding what is happening to relationships between family members. What ties exist among siblings and how do they perceive their obligations towards each other and to parents, grandparents and other family members? Indeed, who counts as kin anyway?

In an early study of kinship in the UK, Raymond Firth (1956) made a distinction between 'effective' and 'non-effective' kin. Effective kin is those with whom we have active social relationships; non-effective kin is those with whom we do not have regular contact but who form part of the extended family group. For example, we may be in contact with sisters and brothers every day but speak to certain cousins or uncles and aunts only at annual events such as birthdays. The distinction between effective and non-effective kin works with conventional family groups assumed to share biological forms of kinship, but it is less able to capture the diversity of contemporary familial relations.

It is also commonplace for people to describe certain non-family members in kinship terms. For example, close friends may be known as 'uncle' or 'aunt'. Anthropologists refer to such relationships as 'fictive kin'. An awareness of different categories of kinship blurs the boundary between family and non-family members, showing that what people perceive to be 'the family' is socially constructed. As a result, kin relations have come to be discussed in terms of the wider concept of 'relatedness', which allows cross-cultural comparisons to be made without imposing the Western idea (and ideal) of what constitutes kinship (Carsten 2000). Like David Morgan's (1996, 1999) idea of family practices, the focus of this research moves from the sociologist's descriptive categories onto people's own sense of 'relatedness'.

18.7. Re-imagining families in the global context

Today there is a diversity of family forms across the world's societies. In some areas, such as remote regions in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Rim, longstanding family patterns are little altered. In most developing countries, however, widespread changes are complex, but several factors can be picked out as important. One is the spread of Western culture through mass media such as television, film and more recently, the Internet. Western ideals of romantic love have spread to societies in which they were previously unknown. Another factor is the development of centralized government in areas previously composed of autonomous smaller societies. People's lives become influenced by their involvement in a national political system, and governments make active attempts to alter traditional ways of life.

States frequently introduce programs that advocate smaller families – as in China – the use of contraception, and so forth, as a way of tackling rapid population growth. A further influence is a large-scale migration from rural to urban areas. Often men go to work in towns or cities, leaving family members in their home village. Alternatively, a nuclear family group will move as a unit to the city. In both cases, traditional family forms and kinship systems may become weakened as a result. Finally, employment opportunities away from the land and in organizations such as government bureaucracies, mines and plantations, and – where they exist – industrial firms tend to have disruptive consequences for family systems previously centered on agricultural production in the local community.

The combination of these factors has generated a worldwide movement towards the breaking down of extended family systems and household kinship groups, though relations between people continue to be important sources of social bonds. William J. Goode (1963) argued that, as modernization spreads across the world, the nuclear family would become the dominant form, as it allows the kind of geographical mobility required by industrial capitalism. Since the late 1960s the pace of globalization and its impact on families has led to changes that Goode simply could not have foreseen, and families today are more notable for their diverse range of forms than any uniform character. Therefore, it has now become a requisite for the sociologists and anthropologists to study the dynamic nature of family structure rather than holding on to the age-old static ideas attached to family. In the context of the rapid changes in technological, economic and demographic forms, it is therefore necessary to also consider families as continuously evolving units.

Do you know?

In *The Normal Chaos of Love,* sociologists Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1995) examine the tumultuous nature of personal relationships, marriages and family patterns against the backdrop of a rapidly changing world. They argue that the traditions, rules, and guidelines used to govern personal relationships no longer apply and that individuals are confronted with an endless series of choices as part of constructing, adjusting, improving or dissolving the unions they form with others. They claim that the 'battle between the sexes' is the 'central drama of our times', evidenced by the growth of the marriage-counseling industry, family courts, marital self-help groups, and high divorce rates.

[Source: Giddens (2006) Sociology].

Merging or diversifying family patterns?

Recent empirical studies of family lives in a global perspective have reinforced the conclusion that diversity best characterizes family structures around the world. The Swedish sociologist **Goran Therborn's** *Between Sex and Power* (2004) is an extensive global history of the family over the entire twentieth century. Therborn discusses five major family types that have been shaped by particular religious or philosophical worldviews: sub-Saharan African (Animist); European/North American (Christian); East Asian (Confucian); South Asian (Hindu) and West Asian/North African (Islamic). Two others – South-East Asian and Creole American – are described as 'interstitial system', combining elements from more than one of the five major types. The institution of the family, Therborn argues, has been structured by three central elements across all these types: patriarchy or male dominance, marriage and non-marriage in the regulation of sexual behavior, and fertility and birth control measures in the production of demographic trends. Focusing on these three elements allows international comparisons to be made, and we can take each element in turn.

Patriarchal power within the family has generally declined over the twentieth century. And Therborn identifies two key periods of change. The first was during and after the First World War (1914-18), when women demonstrated by contributing to the war effort that there were no physical barriers to women's work, while the Russian Revolution of 1917 challenged the patriarchal ideology of women's 'natural' domestic role in favor of egalitarian ideals. The second was between the sexual revolution of the late 1960s and the 1975 'International Women's Year' when second-wave feminism reinforced the shifting position of women and legislative measures enabled them to participate more equally in public life.

Of course, the social realities of life 'on the ground' are not suddenly transformed by the formal lifting of legal restrictions, and the extent of gender inequality remains a matter of research and debate. The second period of change, argues Therborn, was more noticeable in Europe and America, with less pronounced changes in the family situations of South Asia, West Asia, and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. In more recent years, he sees evidence that the economic power of women has been growing in the textile and electronics industries in the developing world, which could reshape patriarchal family relations there too.

Marriage and family patterns changed across the world in the twentieth century, but Therborn's studies lead to a different conclusion from that reached by Goode. The different family types are not becoming increasingly similar, nor are they conforming to the Western nuclear family model, as suggested by structural functionalist theory. In most developed

countries, intimate relationships have become more open and less bound by tradition, especially since the 1960s. The combination of increasing rates of divorce, high remarriage rates and more people living alone seems to disprove the thesis of convergence of family structures, even in the West itself. Therborn also argues there is no evidence that such change and fluidity in family life are spreading globally. For example, in most of Asia people remain committed to monogamy within marriage, while in sub-Saharan Africa polygamous relationships continue to be the norm. The nuclear family, so important to functionalist theory, no longer looks set to dominate in the twenty-first century.

Finally, Therborn sees possibly the major change of the last century to be a falling global fertility rate, with the significant exception of sub-Saharan Africa. This is the product of more effective birth control methods, rising economic prosperity and the increasing movement of women into the workforce, thereby improving their own position.

If diversity is the most notable feature of families across the world, are there any general patterns emerging? The most important general changes are that clans and other kin-based groups are declining in influence, there is a trend towards the free selection of a spouse, the rights of women are becoming more widely recognized at a formal level in both the initiation of marriage and within families, there are higher levels of sexual freedom for men and women, there is a general trend towards granting and extending children's rights and finally, there is an increased acceptance of same-sex partnerships, though this is unevenly distributed across the world.

How increasing levels of short and long-term migration will alter the global situation in terms of family and kinship cannot be forecast with any certainty. What is clear is that the sociology of the family, which was for quite some time considered an increasingly moribund field of inquiry, has become a thriving specialism again. This is mainly a result of the major changes we have rehearsed in this unit. These have prompted a new generation of sociologists to seek out fresh approaches and research methods that are adequate for the study of families and personal life as they are lived today. We can expect that process to continue into the future.

Yet many, perhaps most, people see family as the most significant part of their lives. And, as the movement for civil partnerships and equality of marriage for LGBT couples also demonstrates, 'family' still has an enormous attraction not just legally, but morally and emotionally too. There may well be different incarnations of the previous form of the family while continuing to perform vital functions for individuals, communities, and societies. However changed and diverse it may be today, the institution of 'family' remains a fundamental part of most people's experience.

Need for new terminologies

As scholars try to negotiate with questions such as - What vocabulary do we have to speak about alternatives and what gives us even a sliver of a concept to build another reality on? – we must realise that social science engagement with family is ever evolving and even demands new terminologies to adapt with the modern world.

Family is seen as a space to imbibe and learn, as also a place for discipline, coercion, and restriction. Members of the family are burdened with the duty of replicating the structure, and if that does not happen, there is guilt for defiance or failure. The family is also often considered a space for caring, nurturing and sharing, and most importantly, the sharing of property. Therefore it is considered that families are also not open for any and every one, in every society there are certain gates for entry in the form of birth and marriage. This simply means that, in the most conventional sense we become a part of the family by being born into that family or by marrying into that family.

One of the major points of debate and concern in recent times has been the mainstream cultural or community space that queer, marginalized sexualities have occupied. The monolith of marriage and a typical family set-up dominates the cultural space.

Is marriage changing, or are other relationships becoming more acceptable and secure? Will homosexual or gay marriages change the structure of the heterosexual marriage itself? The outcry against gay marriage (one of the issues on which George Bush supposedly won the elections) and the fear that it will sully and destroy the sanctity of the institution suggests that it will, in a way, subvert marriage from within. The other question that arises is why, when there is a strong queer feminist critique of marriage as a problematic institution, are we supporting gay marriage? In the given context, where the only legally and socially sanctioned institution for cohabiting is marriage, and family through that marriage, it is what people will choose to be able to live legal and secure lives, at least in terms of the law. As for whether these moves will strengthen or subvert marriage, we can only wait and watch.

Creating new families and adding newer understandings to existing concepts is crucial. Rebelling against the family and putting other people above blood relatives has always been guilt-ridden. Not being close to the family of birth is seen as loss and emptiness and even adoption is seen in the same way, the second-best to having your own biological child. There is a difference in the way we see the relationships we cherish and having to measure them or fit them into the form of structures relationships or bonds of monogamy and marriage.

While we struggle to find peace with the families we are born in, we are also creating new families that may not be similar. The objective is to have acceptance of our gender, sexualities, and lives in the former; it is also to create, not acceptance or tolerance, but a rightful space for the latter, as units or non-units that may be beyond clearly defined structures.

Alternative sexualities and families cannot simply be defined in relation to the 'other' or the mainstream but must be seen as ways to seek or negotiate relationships based on particular perspectives.

Doyou know?

Pride Parade are outdoor events organized across the world to celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary and queer social and self-acceptance, achievements, legal rights and pride. The events also at times serve as demonstrations for legal rights such as same-same marriage.Most pride events occur annually, and some take place around June to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, a pivotal moment in modern LGBTQ social movements. The parades seek to create community and honour the history of the movement. In India, it is celebrated every year in various metropolitan cities, often referred as Rainbow Pride or Pride March.

Before we conclude this section, we need to understand another important aspect of the LGBT community, which is intersex. When children are both with reproductive and sexual anatomy that does not fit the typical definitions of male or female, they are termed as intersex. This is a large spectrum with numerous possible combinations. Most people confuse sex with gender. As mentioned earlier, while "sex" refers to the biological differences between males and females from the perspective of sexual and reproductive organs and genetics; "gender" is more about the role of a male or a female in the society or an individual's gender identity. In order words, a child born with a certain type of sexual/reproductive organ need not necessarily relate to the associated gender. A child born with male aspects could identify as a girl or vice versa.

Another misconception is that transgender and intersex are the same. A transgender is a person who identifies with a particular gender opposite to the gender that was assigned at birth basis their sexual and reproductive orders and genetic built. For example, a typical male sex person might identify more with the female gender and choose to convert, either surgically or just behaviorally to a female. Being intersex, on the other hand, is used for a

person born with variations or ambiguity in their sexual and reproductive organs. An intersex person might identify with either gender even if their body does not conform to any of them totally from a sexual or reproductive perspective.

Things to Do

Examine the make-up of all the families you are in contact with, noting which are nuclear, which are extended, single parent, LGBT, and so on. As you do so, be careful to observe whether your sample roughly representative of the wider society?

18.8. Live-in relationship

Changes in household living patterns over the last 20 years or so have been marked with more people living alone, children moving between either parent's house and more 'non-family' households being formed. This portrays how there have been important shifts in the ways people construct intimate relationships. Expectations, commitments, and practices have changed significantly in intimate relationships and family life in recent decades across the globe. This is very much apparent in patterns of family formation and dissolution, the demonstration by trends in cohabitation, marriage, and divorce. The few comfortable certainties about the best ways of being a family as a man and woman, with conventional gender roles, is something that no longer remains widely accepted. The normative connection between sexual relationships and marriage or marriage-like relationships is also less powerful than it was earlier. Not only is greater sexual experimentation being gradually accepted, but it is now accepted at an earlier age.

The fact that change in family life and intimate relationships have been so pervasive has resulted in renewed research interest from sociologists and other scholars. The increasing amount of research and attention is being channelized towards understanding the family in recent years. Public commentary on social change points out that live-in relationships have become increasingly popular in the Indian context with more and more couples choosing for this new pattern of the household. The fact that young couples are open about it and accept staying together itself marks a remarkable shift in the notions of family, private life and relationships.

Cohabitation is an arrangement in which two unrelated people who are not married but live together and are in a sexual relationship. Because it is based on emotional rather than

legal ties, cohabitation is a distinct family form, neither singlehood nor marriage. So many people premarital cohabitation is a step between dating and marriage.

In contemporary India, the binaries of "arranged" and "love" marriage had been popularly used to understand the changing marriage practices, where the arranged marriage pattern stood for traditional India and the love marriage as an indicator of change, progress, and modernity. The element of "choice" is something that is becoming more and more significant in the lives of individuals in this globalized world. There are differing expectations for men and women with regard to how partnership and relationship should be like. Especially given the situation where people are constantly working towards acquiring professional mobility, the social burden of marriage is something that most want to avoid. However, there are also cases where the couple prefers to stay in a live-in relationship and understand their compatibility before they commit to fixed relations as a husband and a wife. This "non-marriage", yet living together phase gives men and women the appropriate experience of diverse romantic encounters, individualism, freedom, and liberty. However intergenerational interactions and acceptance of live-in relationships by parents and neighbors often become a concern for several couples that they have to negotiate in their everyday life. In a lot of cases it becomes evident that when people have moved from their place of origin and settle in some metropolitan cities, the level of anonymity that city life ensures allows people to experiment further with their sexuality and relationships as well. The experience of individual freedom and choice is the most significant aspect of these relationships, regardless of whether these have been short-lived or long-lived relationships.

18.9. Conclusion

In other words, a family is a domestic group in which parents and children live together in its elementary form. While some scholars have questioned the universality of family, others have engaged in attempts to re-imagine families. Though there might be disagreements on specific grounds, scholars have largely agreed that there have been major shifts in the conventional understanding of family in the recent years. Some scholars have even harped on the postmodern family structure. As a whole it must be realized that family is no longer a taken for granted aspect of society and is now constantly challenging and doing away with several prior notions of family life.

In this unit as we discussed about newer ways of looking at what is a family, we took into consideration some of the new forms of conjugal family structures. We explored such questions by examining changes in family as a social institution.

18.10. Summary

This unit lays out some of points where kinship studies intersect with family studies. Yet it also holds on to the contemporary and modern, ever-changing grounds of both these fields. It explores some of the questions that are challenging the earlier studies on family, kinship and marriage and thereby pointing a finger on the growing gap between the earlier forms of anthropological studies and the requirements in future research. Therefore the changes linked to the family in the 21st century are multiple and highly engrossing for students of social sciences.

18.11. Questions

Explain with appropriate examples how can families be understood in contemporary times.

✓ How can we re-imagine families in the global context?

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Unit 19 : New Reproductive Technologies

Structure of the unit

19.1. Learning Objectives

- To discuss the influence of technologies in the field of reproduction, especially in the Indian context.

- To touch upon the emerging field of medical tourism to see how that affects practices and patterns of procreation.

- Finally to try observing the implications of NRTs on kinship relations that open up challenges for future researchers in this field.

19.2. Introduction

We are living in a time when it seems we have unprecedented technological options available to enhance our everyday lives. The impact of the revolution in information and biotechnologies is as great in the personal sphere of sexuality, consumption, and leisure as it is in production. Our bodies are being reconstituted by advances in medical technologies and genetic engineering. Reproductive technologies have held out particular promise for

women, offering liberation from a previously ordained gender order and transforming women's lives for the better.

In much early feminist writing, reproductive technology was seen as particularly progressive because it opened up the potential for finally severing the link between sexuality and reproduction. Writers such as Shulamith Firestone (1970) located women's oppression in their biology, and in the control of women's bodies, especially their sexuality and fertility, by men. The literature on reproductive technology has continued to be rife with technological determinist arguments which assume that changes in technology are the key to the massive social changes that have occurred for women's equality. The technologies of pregnancy and childbirth are said to have put an end to the dangerous and painful aspects of childbearing. The pill is seen as having caused the sexual revolution, smaller families and women's greater participation in the paid workforce. Advances in the technologies of fertility control are credited with making sexual equality possible. However, there is no simple correlation between the development of these new technologies and the dawning of a new egalitarian era of intimate relationships. Though there are obvious connections between reproductive technologies and gender, what do New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) have to do with kinship? That is precisely the question we will be scouting in this unit.

Since the time of its introduction, New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) have been surrounded by controversy and raised several legal and moral issues. Like it was mentioned above, there are profound implications of it for gender. But at the same time, it also challenges some of the deepest ideas and values concerning kinship.

19.3. Exploring New Reproductive Technologies

Anthropologists have been conducting ethnographic analyses of reproductive technologies by studying the people intimately engaged with these varying technologies for some time now. As anthropologist Linda Stone (2009) states reproductive technologies as such are not new. She notes that 'Various forms of contraception, abortion, fertility-enhancing concoctions, cesarean surgery, and so on have existed for a long time' (2009: 290). There are also several culture specific local techniques for assisting conception, some methods of contraception, as well as methods for inducing or ending pregnancy. Throughout most of human history biological motherhood was taken for granted, but an equivalent 'paternal certainty' did not exist. With the development of DNA testing methods, determining biological fatherhood was made available. In what follows we will explore some of the new technologies.

The technologies of biological reproduction

Much of the recent literature on technoscience has concentrated on human biological reproduction – technologies for the body. Scholars point out that techniques such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF), egg donation, artificial insemination (AI), surrogacy and most recently the possibility of human cloning have generated considerable excitement, as well as anxiety, about their potential to disrupt the whole notion of genetic parenthood, thus placing conventional nuclear family relationships in jeopardy. However, these new technologies which appear to offer fantastic opportunities for self-realization are in reality making the individual choice highly constrained. Some argue that in this process we are actually selecting from a very restricted range of technological options, which are themselves shaped by particular political and economic interests (MacKenzie and Wajcman 1999:275).

Do you know?

Artificial insemination (AI) is a simple technique. Donor sperm is simply placed into the uterus of the female at the proper stage of her menstrual cycle. Nature does the rest.Artificial insemination can also be used by women who seek pregnancy without sexual intercourse. For example, a single woman may wish to have a child without involvement of the biological father beyond anonymous sperm donation. Or a woman may wish to serve as a "surrogate" mother for a married couple who cannot have a child of their own due to the wife's infertility. In this case the surrogate is artificially inseminated with the husband's sperm. The sperm donor is obviously not anonymous, but sexual intercourse between the husband and the surrogate is unnecessary.

[Source: Stone (2009) *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction*.]

Linda Stone argues that 'With both IVF and AI, the biological father can also be the would-be legal father of the child, or the biological father may be a sperm donor. With AI, too, one woman may be the legal mother while another woman is the biological mother. But with IVF, something altogether new happens to "motherhood." The woman who contributes the oocytes may or may not be the woman who carries the child and gives birth. Once the eggs of one woman are fertilized outside the womb, they may be implanted either back into her or into another woman. This is an important point…' (2009: 295).

Before the introduction of in-vitro fertilization and embryo transfer, the investigation and treatment of infertility had long been afforded low status in the medical hierarchy. Many of the procedures were carried out by general practitioners, as they required little special

knowledge. In-vitro fertilization provides gynaecologists with an exciting high-status area of research as well as technically complex practice. Status and substantial financial rewards are to be had, as well as job satisfaction. Indeed, procreation has now become a highly profitable industry for the private medical sector and for the multinational pharmaceutical companies that supply fertility drugs. Professionalization strategies and commercialism are central to the development of biomedical technologies.

For hundreds of years, childbirth and child-rearing have dominated the lives of most women across the globe. In traditional societies, contraception was ineffective or, in some societies even unknown. Both in developed and developing countries, it was common for women to experience as many as twenty pregnancies (often including miscarriages and infant deaths). Improved methods of conception have helped alter this situation in a fundamental way. Far from any longer being natural, it is almost unknown in the industrial countries for women to undergo so many pregnancies in their lifetime. Advances in contraceptive technology enable most women and men to control whether and when they choose to have children, alongside controlling the number of children per family.

Things to Remember

- The acronym **ART** refers to '**Assisted Reproductive Technology**' in biomedicine, whereby medical procedures are used primarily to address infertility. There are two main types of ART namely Artificial Insemination (AI) and In vitro fertilization (IVF).

- **In-vitro fertilization (IVF)** is a technique whereby sperm and eggs are fertilized outside the body, then transferred as embryos to a woman's uterus.

- **Intrauterine insemination (IUI) (i.e., artificial insemination)** is a technique whereby sperm (male partner's or donor's) are injected directly into the uterus, sometimes following sperm-sorting for sex selection.

Contraception is only one example of a **procreative technology**. Procreative technology refers to techniques for influencing the human reproductive process. Some of the other areas in which natural processes have become social are described below.

a) Childbirth

Medical science has not always been involved with major life transitions from birth to death. The medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth developed slowly, as local physicians and midwives were displaced by paediatric specialists. Today in industrialized societies, most births occur in a hospital with the help of a specialized medical team. In the past, new

parents had to wait until the day of birth to learn the sex of their baby and whether it would be healthy. Today, prenatal tests such as the sonogram (an image of the foetus produced by using ultrasound waves) and amniocentesis (which draws off some of the amniotic fluid from around the foetus) can be used to discover structural or chromosomal abnormalities before the baby's birth. Such new technology presents couples and society with new ethical and legal decisions. When a disorder is detected, the couple is faced with the decision of whether or not to have the baby, knowing it may be seriously disabled throughout its life.

b) Genetic engineering

A great deal of scientific endeavor these days is being devoted to the expansion of genetic engineering; that is, intervening in the genetic make-up of the fetus so as to influence its subsequent development. This is being done mainly in plants and animals, and for ethical reasons has not been carried out in humans. Yet the likely social impact of genetic engineering is starting to provoke debates almost as intense as those that surround the issue of abortion.

c) The abortion debate

Perhaps the most controversial ethical dilemma created by modern reproductive technologies in modern societies is this: under what conditions should abortion be available to women? Those who are 'pro-life' believe that abortion is always wrong except in extreme circumstances because it is equivalent to murder. For them, ethical issues are above all subject to the value that must be placed on human life. Those who are 'pro-choice' argue that the mother's control over her own body – her own right to live a rewarding life – must be the primary consideration.

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Do you know?

Some Additional NRTs:

Among the NRTs available, a few are not widely used as yet but may become more prevalent in the future. One, called **embryo adoption**. Here, the mother cannot conceive but can bear a child. Instead of using IVF with donor eggs, the husband could artificially inseminate another woman who serves as a very temporary surrogate. After a week, the embryo is flushed out of the surrogate's uterus and inserted into the uterus of the mother. Another type of reproductive technology is called **oocyte freezing**, a procedure in which oocytes, or eggs, are taken from a woman and frozen for later use. So far this procedure has not proven very successful, but if perfected, it could open a whole range of reproductive options. For example, a woman could freeze her oocytes when

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she is young and healthy and use them later in life when her fertility would otherwise be lower. Technically, she could use them even past menopause. Alternatively, a much older woman could take oocytes donated by a young women. These could be thawed, fertilized in IVF, and then implanted in the older woman. Already one woman aged fifty-nine has given birth through oocyte donation. Some people are repulsed by the image of very old women giving birth or becoming mothers. Others point out that men have all along been able to reproduce at any age.Finally, we consider the technique known as cloning, which may one day be applied to human reproduction.Unintended cloning occurs naturally in humans. It produces identical twins, the result of the early splitting of a single fertilized egg into two separate embryos. Identical twins are thus clones of each other. Note that another kind of twins, called "fraternal twins," are not genetically identical because they are the result of two different eggs fertilized by two different sperm cells and are thus no more similar or different than ordinary brothersor sisters.

[Source: Stone (2009) *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction*.]

19.4. Influences of New Reproductive Technologies in India

The ways in which new reproductive technologies have conflicted and contested the constructs in the field of family, kinship, and personhood in contemporary India has been the research question for several scholars. The assumption that the new reproductive technologies are controversial simply because they threaten established ideals of the family and motherhood has become increasingly debatable in the present times.

NiveditaMenon notes that new technological developments in reproductive science have made it possible to separate three different aspects of the biological experience of motherhood. Three different women could potentially perform what she terms the key 'mother functions' – providing genetic material (the egg donor); gestating the foetus for nine months (the surrogate or 'gestational mother'), and rearing and bringing up the child (the 'social mother'). In the older biological understanding of motherhood, these three functions are assumed to be fused in one woman; but now there could be two or three women performing these three separate roles in each pregnancy (Menon, 2012:47).

Menon further notes that thus a woman can now carry in her uterus through in-vitro fertilization (IVF), which is fertilized outside the body, an embryo that could be from her

own egg or another woman's, fertilized by a donor's sperm or that of her husband or lover. The child born out of this process is often meant for someone else to bring up (surrogacy), but women may also opt for their own child using this process. This means that a woman who does not want a man in her life can become pregnant through donor sperm; this process may also be used by married women if they or their husbands cannot produce the required quality of egg or sperm.

There are legitimate feminist concerns about the exploitation of poor women who perform commercial surrogacy. But what needs to be addressed here is that what are the implications of these technologies for a feminist understanding of 'family'? Here, the most significant feminist concern is that the promotion of these technologies by major drug companies and market forces reinforces the patriarchal assumption that only biologically related children are one's 'own', thus attempting to marginalize the option of adoption. At the same time, though, many feminists also recognize the potential of these scientific-technological developments to fracture, in principle, patriarchal constructions of 'motherhood' which conflate the social role with 'biology'. That is, what does it do to the idea of 'motherhood' once the 'womb' (the surrogate) has been separated from the 'mother' (the 'social' mother who will bring up the child)? And is it not possible that these developments could potentially reduce the heterosexual monopoly over the family by enabling 'socially infertile people' as Chayanika Shah terms them – that is, single women, single men, and same-sex couples – to have biologically related offspring?

It is also important to open up and unravel the very idea of 'biologically' related families, which are assumed to be the only kind of family possible. In the context of new reproductive technologies, we find that potential parents contracting with a surrogate are reassured by drug companies and medical practitioners that if the genetic matter is theirs (that is, the egg and the sperm), then the child is 'biologically' theirs, since the surrogate's womb only acts as 'an oven', 'a rented room' and so on. However, in cases in which a woman wants to carry a donor sperm and a donor egg IVF baby for herself, in her own womb, then the same companies and doctors reassure her that the real work of 'making the baby' happens in the womb, and the baby is, in fact, 'biologically' related to the woman in whose womb the fetus grow.

In other words, as we have seen already, 'biological' relationships are also socially constructed. Like most technological developments, the social implications of surrogacy would vary from context to context. In the Western countries, NRTs are becoming increasingly available but reproduction seems to be diminishing. Several effective contraception techniques have decreased unwanted births and also a more accepting social climate allows more single women to keep their children. Also with rising levels of environmental pollution,

natural fertility has been decreasing with a fall in sperm count among male and decreasing female fertility.

Things to do

Explore further to understand the impact of new reproductive technologies and know more case studies from India -

- https://main.icmr.nic.in/sites/default/files/art/ART_Pdf.pdf
- https://thewire.in/health/medical-egg-freezing-ivf-embryos-reproductive-insurance
- https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/43024281.pdf

19.5. Recent Trends in Reproductive Medical Travel

The global commercialized market in assisted reproductive treatment has been expanding at a very high rate, especially in low resource countries in Asia. Although no accurate statistics on the numbers of patients traveling cross-border for reproductive care exist, particularly in developing countries, several survey evidences continually suggests that the market is growing. Andrea Whittaker (2011) pointed out that in Asia, India and Thailand are major hubs for international assisted reproductive care, although Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea are increasingly important as destinations, especially for regional patients. 'These services have usually evolved through a combination of sophisticated medical infrastructure and expertise, particular regulatory frameworks (or the lack of them), and lower wage structures, which allow for lower, competitive costs. In addition, good tourism infrastructure and visa requirements, government policies supportive of medical travel in general… all play important roles in determining the popularity of these sites' (Whittaker 2011:108).

Surrogacy in India has become a significant aspect of the changing landscape of international reproduction tourism. Reproductive tourism is part of the growing travel circuits of infertile couples especially from the developed and developing world to other parts of the world where affordable infertility care such as India, Thailand, Mexico, and Brazil can be arranged. This reproductive tourism includes circuits of egg donors traveling across the world to donate their biogenetic matter for fertility procedures.

According to Sunita Reddy and Imrana Qadeer (2013), IVF and transnational commercial surrogacy are essential parts of the burgeoning new medical tourism industry in India. This

industry caters to most major health services, including organ transplantation, intensive surgeries, and intensive care. Within this industry, the IVF culture occupies an important place in the procreative/reproductive tourism industry, which is now being spearheaded by the "surrogacy industry".

Do you know?

24th July is celebrated as the ***World IVF Day*** to commemorate the birth of the world's first 'test-tube baby' born through IVF, Lousie Brown, born in 1978 in England. Human conception had taken place inside a Petri dish, outside the womb, and without sexual intercourse. Thousands of babies have been created in this way by now.

19.6. New Kinship Studies

Of all the anthropological work that has been written about ARTs, the most substantial and most foundational, in some sense, is that which explores the effects of these technologies on kinship and notions of family. Several scholars have worked on this topic to understand, redefine and expand the notions of relatedness. Inhorn and Birenbaum-Carmeli (2008) argue that ARTs have destabilized the biological within parenthood through the assistance of technologies and third parties. They argue that 'as ARTs are applied to an ever-expanding range of people and problems, they are unseating core notions of kinship and undermining the traditional family by introducing a whole range of quasi-, semi-, or pseudo biological forms of parenting. ARTs are also unseating traditional notions of heterosexual parenthood by creating previously inconceivable offspring for single-sex couples (Inhorn and Birenbaum-Carmeli 2008: 183).

The ties of kinship and family have been thrown into sharp relief by the most recent developments in the new genetics and other medical technologies. In this unit, we have discussed how the ideologies of family and motherhood came to be questioned at different stages with the development of reproductive technologies. However, some scholars point out that the political effect of the significance attached to maintaining the stability of this 'building block of society' should not be underestimated (MacKenzie and Wajcman 1999:276). The scope of research in this field is wide and needs further engagement by social scientists.

19.7. Conclusion

As has been discussed in this unit, the NRTs have started questioning what was so long for centuries taken for granted. Therefore these have instigated a blurred sense of identity in several situations. Anthropologist Linda Stone notes that Robert Snowden and his colleagues (1983: 34) claim that, with the advent of NRTs, we now need a total of ten different terms to cover the concepts of "mother" and "father." The terms they propose are as follows:

1. Genetic mother

2. Carrying mother

3. Nurturing mother

4. Complete mother

5. Genetic/carrying mother

6. Genetic/nurturing mother

7. Carrying/nurturing mother

8. Genetic father

9. Nurturing father

10. Complete father

The first three terms cover the distinct stages of conception, gestation, and care for a child. These three aspects of motherhood can be carried out by one, two, or three different women. If one woman does all three, she is the "complete" mother. Note that a child could conceivably have five different persons as "parents" in this system (1–3 as mothers and 8 and 9 as fathers), even without including stepparents (Blank 1990: 10). But it is really only motherhood that has fragmented as a result of the NRTs, since we have long been accustomed to the idea that a child can have one man as its "genetic" or "biological" father and another as its "nurturing" (or perhaps a better word here might be "legal") father. Similarly, we are familiar with the idea that "legal" or "nurturing" mothers can be different from "natural" or "biological" mothers. What is new is the division of biological motherhood into two parts: conception and gestation.

19.8. Summary

Stone notes that 'We do not know what the future may bring. But what seems to be happening at present is that those involved with the NRTs are not discarding the old cultural ideas about kinship but, on the contrary, are making every effort to preserve the notions of "real" biological parenthood. Toward this end, they are reinterpreting the NRTs and their tricky implications so as to reconcile them with these core cultural notions of biological parenthood and the resulting family ideal' (2009: 307). This process she notes played out in two very interesting contexts – one concerns lesbian couples and another concerns surrogate motherhood. This topic of surrogacy will be taken up in the next unit. Finally it can be said that throughout history, we have continually constructed kinship and gender, even seeking meaning and identity within cultural constructions. In that sense, NRTs are changing the dynamics of the present world and ushering in changes to adapt with the future.

19.9. Questions

- Write an essay about the implications of New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) in the global context.

- Write an essay about the implications of New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) in the Indian context.

- What is the impact of New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) on kinship studies?

- How do new reproductive technologies influence the sociology of kinship?

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Unit 20 : Newer Ties of Kinship: Adoption and Surrogacy

Structure of the unit

20.1. Learning Objectives

The primary objectives of this unit are:

- To introduce the current ties of kinship such as adoption and surrogacy to the students.

- To understand their implications in the present society

- To examine their policy implications.

20.2. Introduction

As noted earlier in this module, the ramifications of kinship are considerable. British sociologist Tom Bottomore has pointed out that 'Social anthropologists have devoted much of their effort to analyzing kinship systems of particular societies, and to the comparative

study of kinship' (2014: 172). Though modern sociologists have shown little interest in kinship in the industrial societies, over the years with the establishing of newer ties among individuals and families, several newer ways of imagining kinship is now taking place. Along with the evolution of family and society, more recent work on kinship studies is now being added to the existing body of literature. The distinction between 'biological' kinship and 'social' kinship gets renewed within anthropological studies on kinship analysis, with the prevalence of adoption and surrogacy.

Unlike gay and lesbian relationships, new reproductive technologies add an entirely new dimension to family diversity. Yet another kind of diversity is added when we talk about adoption and surrogacy. Both these processes have changed the way human societies were perceived and exposed researchers to recent ties of kinship. In this section, we will talk about some of these ties.

20.3. Exploring Newer Ties of Kinship

20.3.1. Adoption

Adoption of children born by others is practiced in some form or another in all known societies. Adoption mainly took place in cases of childless married couples, because of their desire to have a child or heir, and also for reasons of inheritance of property. Although ethnographic monographs from all over the world have made numerous brief references to local adoption and/or fostering practices, very little sustained interpretative interest has, until recently, been directed at this social phenomenon. With the sudden and rapid increase in **transnational adoption** – people in Western Europe and North America adopt children from countries in the south and the former Soviet empire – a new-found anthropological interest in adoption has been observed. Signe Howell (2009: 150) observes that 'the adoption of children born by others is practiced in some form or another in all known societies, and it is a practice that raises theoretical and analytical questions about the meaning and role of kinship'.

Things to Remember

Adoption and fostering are customary or optional procedures for taking as one's own a child of other parents. The term *adoption* usually refers to the legal transformation of a child's familial status, through which individuals permanently assume the major responsibilities of parents. The term *fostering*

> usually indicates a temporary, mutually agreed upon delegation of the nurturance or educational elements of the parental role, or both. Fostering also more often concerns the process of child rearing and not necessarily the jural (legal) definition of the child's status or relationships. Adoption and fostering, however, are defined and performed differently depending on the time, location, and societies involved; as such, scholars also sometimes use *fosterage* to describe substitute parenting arrangements in premodern or non-Western cultures.
>
> [Source: Stryker (2018) Adoption and Fostering].

According to Jack Goody (1969), the function of adoption may be divided into three main types: 'To provide homes for orphans, bastards, foundlings and the children of impaired families. To provide childless couples with social progeny. To provide an individual or couple with an heir to their property'. Several celebrities (such as Angelina Jolie) from North America have joined the bandwagon of **transnational adoption**, whereby they adopt children from Africa. Though celebrity adoption was earlier seen with a lot of awe earlier, it has now become undeniably mainstream, and is no longer considered exotic. Along with transnational adoption, another practice that is being observed by scholars is **transracial adoption**. SunAh Laybourn notes that 'Transnational adoption changed ideas around family and kinship as children were not only being adopted cross-nationally but also cross-racially. Because transnational adoption quickly began to transgress the race-matching procedures that guided initial intercountry and domestic adoptions, this new form of family making drew both public attention and research interests' (2020). It has been further noted that 'As research continued, attention reflected disciplinary foci expanding from outcome studies to examinations of the effect of policies, politics (domestic and geopolitical), and race, class, and gender. Given the growth of transnational adoption globally, in 1995 the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-Operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption entered into force with the goal of securing the "best interests of the child" and preventing child trafficking and other abuses' (2020).

a) Asian Adoption

It is considered that the 'baby market' are continuously expanding. Scholars suggest that transnational adoption from Asia to the US changed conceptions of US family making. Research on US couples engaging in Chinese adoption, Vietnamese adoption, and Korean adoption have changed the perception of Asia among the Westerners.

Look up Further

- On transnational adoption, particularly on Operation Babylift (https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/museum/exhibits/babylift/ and https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/operation-baby-lift-concludes).

- On gay and lesbian adoption (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_adoption).

A study of adoption becomes an inquiry into fundamental beliefs about the person and personal connections as these intertwine with political, economic, and historical developments. In India, the practice of adoption and fostering has been practiced for several decades. With the formalization of adoption through different government agencies had made the practice more popular among childless couples and also those who choose to adopt a child.

Do you know?

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India. It functions as the nodal body for the adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions. CARA primarily deals with the adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated/recognized adoption agencies. (Source: http://cara.nic.in/)

Studying adoption especially in the course on the sociology of kinship is quite interesting since the practice of adoption questions and challenges many of the ways in which kinship patterns are established in our society. It is often believed that without biological kinship as a model, adoption stands as a meaningless practice. Since adoption does not render the attributes of biological descent, it is considered as a kind of limiting case that appears on the borderland between biology and choice. Understanding the complexities of adoption has been a relatively new field of research in the sociology of kinship.

Think Critically

Do you think single women can adopt a child in India?

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b) Latinx Adoption

Adoption from Latin American countries is an understudied yet increasingly relevant topic. This to a large extent shapes the impact on Latino diaspora and at the same time

engages with contemporary race theories.

Summing up the discussion on adoption, it can be said that with the rapidly changing technological, economic and demographic factors across the globalized world, new meanings of kinship relations also need to be explored. And debates centering around adoption simply opens up some of these debates. The multiple trajectories in which individuals and groups are now resorting to fictive kinship ties with the adopted heir in a modern world is a fascinating ground of research for social scientists. Though most debates so far has largely focused on heterosexual couples parental rights upon adoption, we must also be open to homosexual couples' desires to adopt children as well. In both these instances, and also in local, transnational and transracial adoption practices, the post-adoptive services are highly important.

The Surrogacy Billis under scanner (Source: Indian Express 2019)

20.3.2. Surrogacy

Surrogacy in India has gained increased popularity amongst intended parents in the country because of the relatively low costs and easy access offered by Indian surrogacy agencies. Across the country, agencies and clinics that promote surrogacy have not only increased rapidly but they offer a complete package, including fertilization, surrogate's fees and costs for the delivery of the baby at a hospital. In addition to all these facilities, the agencies and clinics also offer to provide the expecting surrogate mothers with medical, nutritional and overall health care through the surrogacy agreements.

Scholars Sayantani Dasgupta and Shamita Das Dasgupta in their book note that 'Commercial surrogacy was legalized in India in 2002. However, the phenomenon of Indian surrogates gestating babies for foreign couples came to the fore of Indian and international attention in 2003 when Dr. Nayna H. Patel of Anand, Gujarat, enabled a local grandmother to become the gestational surrogate for her daughter residing in Britain. Once famous for its successful dairy cooperative, Anand has since become the global surrogacy capital of India with the Akanksha Infertility Clinic featured in innumerableinternational media reports. The charismatic Dr. Nayna Patel is now (in) famous as the medical face of India's "womb for rent" industry, seen on the Oprah Winfrey show and interviewed for numerous other Western news venues. Due to the lack of regulations, including any system of national registration, data collection, or firm ethical practice guidelines, there are no real numbers on how many surrogacy centers operate in India' (2014: ix-x). Sources from the daily newspapers point out that some reports suggest that in 2012, around 600 clinics were registered under the government, while another 400 operated outside it. In the years that followed these numbers have only increased as surrogacy gained more popularity. Most major Indian cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Indore and Kolkata now have such clinics mushrooming to cater to the requirements of gestational surrogacy.

What has made surrogacy so popular in India as compared to several other countries is the low cost at which intended parents can expect to have a child. Scholar AninditaMajumdar (2019) has pointed out that 'the commercial gestational surrogacy arrangement, since 2013, has suffered from lower "footfalls" of foreign couples due to a directive from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, which restricts access to everyone but foreign heterosexual couples, married for two years and unable to conceive. This meant that foreign gay couples cannot contract a surrogacy arrangement in India, leading to reduced transnational traffic'.

Majumdar notes that 'infertility has been popularly represented as a "lifestyle disease", impacting only a few who belong to the middle and upper-middle classes. Lifestyle choices

such as late marriage, stress, and an inhospitable urban environment impact fertility. Stories of infertility "epidemic" amongst the educated urban middle class made it a disease that had to be countered fast. This, infertility and its treatment are constructed and marketed to a largely urban clientele, disregarding patients and requirements in the semi-urban and rural sectors' (Majumdar 2019).

Commercial surrogacy is a phenomenon that frontally raises the issue of commodification of the woman's body, as well as the question of agency and choice. The term gestational surrogacy (or surrogate pregnancy) generally refers to a woman carrying to term in her uterus, an embryo implanted through in-vitro fertilization (IVF). Commercial gestational surrogacy normally involves the sperm and egg of the contracting party and a financial transaction in which the contracting party pays the woman who will bear the foetus for them in her uterus.

Do you know?

In 1987 Mary Beth Whitehead sought custody of a child, the famous Baby M, whom she had borne through a surrogacy contract. She had agreed to bear a child for William Stern, using his donor sperm. Stern's wife, Elizabeth, felt that because she had a mild case of multiple sclerosis, a pregnancy would be too great a risk to her health. The case went through two New Jersey courts. Both awarded custody of Baby M to Stern, although the higher court ruled that the surrogacy contract was invalid.

[Source: Stone (2009) *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction*.]

A complex field of ethical concerns around commercial surrogacy has been outlined by feminists over the last decade or so. In-vitro fertilization, as a medical intervention, has long been under the feminist scanner for the tremendous physical and emotional stress it places on women who undergo the process. With commercial surrogacy, a whole new arena of power relations has opened up between relatively powerless surrogates from poorer parts of the globe and wealthy heterosexual, and also homosexual, contracting couples. And veritable cottage industries of commercial surrogacy have sprung up in several parts of the world. Feminists have raised the question of national health priorities: Is infertility really the most important health problem in poor countries? They have also placed the surrogacy debate within the framework of reproductive rights and justice, trying to bring to the force the rights of the poor women who become surrogates. Given the language used in technological and contractual reproduction, it dehumanizes women; the surrogates become

mere reproductive machines and are seen as nothing more than the sum of their reproductive parts.

The realities are such that in the new millennium, the gestation of a child may be outsourced in the style of multinational corporations (MNCs) manufacturing their products in Third World countries. The practice of outsourcing childbirth through transnational surrogacy involves a woman being contracted to carry the genetic fetus of an infertile foreign couple and being paid to deliver the finished product, the baby. Such international gestational outsourcing is a clear by-product of globalization as well as capitalism, and is midwifed by economic and political power differentials between countries. **Transnational surrogacy** has given rise to a thriving international industry where money is being 'legally' exchanged for babies and 'reproductive labor' has taken on a serious commercial aspect. Incontrovertibly, due to the stark inconsistency of economies and regulations among countries, parenthood for infertile individuals is now as close as traveling to another nation to 'rent-a-womb'(Dasgupta and Das Dasgupta 2014: viii).

Think Critically

Look up on 'rent-a-womb', what do you think are the ethical concerns attached to this?

Another kind of feminist response, however, emphasizes the agency of women entering into a surrogacy contract, and in an argument that parallels feminist debates on sex work, explores the positive implications of treating surrogacy as a form of labour. Amrita Pande suggests that we should think of commercial surrogacy in a poor country such as India, in terms of new forms of 'informal, gendered and stigmatized work', with commercial surrogacy being a form of 'sexualized care work' (2009). Studies of commercial surrogates in Israel and India have found that they have a complex understanding of what they are doing; and different ways of conceptually separating their role as mothers towards the children they bear for themselves, and their relationship to the children they bear for others for money. They are not simply brainwashed and helpless dupes, but women who have made certain choices having thought the circumstances through (Pande 2009; Teman 2003).

Even as women's organizations and feminists are beginning to come to terms with this phenomenon, a draft Assisted Reproductive Technologies (Regulation) Bill is already on the anvil. Feminist analyses of the Bill reveal that the stakeholders are assumed to be two parties only – the contracting parents and the medical practitioners. The surrogate mother is addressed only in terms of the interests of the contracting parents; for instance, she

cannot have sex for a year and a half from the beginning of the process until delivery; a married woman requires the permission of her husband. On the other hand, the terms of her compensation and the agent who will compensate her are not clear; there are no anticipation of or remedies considered in the event of her becoming HIV positive in the process. The Bill, in effect, turns most of the surrogate's transactions into a private undertaking with the future parents, with no safeguards built in to protect her interests (Qadeer and John 2008).

Do you know?

Grandparents are sometimes *surrogates* because they provide regular care or raise the grandchildren. Though this is a common practice in some societies and also aids in the process of socialization, this is separate from surrogacy in terms of reproductive technologies.

One of the reasons for the absence of the voice of surrogates themselves in this debate has to do with the anonymity preferred by most surrogate mothers, because of prevailing social prejudices. But in any case, feminist politics tends to be representational; that is, there is a sense in which 'feminists' assume they know what is in the interests of 'women'. So, if democratic pressure is built up, women's organizations and feminist scholars/activists can become involved in the drafting of the legislation. But unless some sort of community of surrogate mothers themselves comes into being, evolving its own rules, even such a legislation may not protect their interests. A law devised by feminists representing the interests of 'women who become surrogates', whose interests we presume to understand because 'we are all women', can at best be potentially useful but at worst, may make it difficult for women to make an income in this way.

For instance, one feminist intervention in the debate demands an end to the anonymity of surrogate mothers because that can leave them in a very vulnerable position. While one understands the feminist impulse behind this demand, how many women are empowered enough to risk their identity being known, given the sexualized understanding of the work? Why should they not have the right to remain anonymous? An insistence on removing anonymity could reduce opportunities for women to take up such work.

When women doing commercial surrogacy organize themselves, and start to voice their experiences, then we will begin to understand dimensions of this work that we are not in a position to at this time (Menon 2012:194-95).

> **Do you know?**
>
> The *Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2019* stipulates that "a married woman between the ages of 25 and 35 who has a child of her own can be a surrogate or can help in surrogacy by donating her egg. The surrogate mother needs to be a close relative of the intending couple and can become a surrogate only once in her lifetime". As per the Bill, only altruistic surrogacy will be permitted in India, in cases where either or both members of the couple suffer from infertility, of which the certificate of essentiality is proof. Therefore commercial surrogacy which involves monetary considerations is banned in India. According to the Bill, if an individual is found advertising or undertaking surrogacy, exploiting the surrogate mother, selling, importing, purchasing or trading human embryos or gametes for surrogacy, conducting sex selection for surrogacy, or has abandoned, exploited or disowned a surrogate child, he/she can be liable for imprisonment of up to 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh.
>
> [Source: Indian Express 2019].

Surrogate motherhood involves one woman carrying a foetus produced by the egg of another woman. This raises questions about who the parents of a child are and questions about what constitutes a family. Thus examples of surrogate motherhood force us to consider the adequacy of conventional kinship terms. Technology has largely been made available to heterosexual couples of normal child-bearing age, but they have also been used by lesbians, homosexuals, and single and older women. The implication of new reproductive technologies is that biology will no longer restrict the possibilities for forming or enlarging families by having children. They, therefore, add considerably to the range of potential family types and thus contribute to growing diversity.

While most commentators agree that single parenthood can create problems for individual parents, many sociologists do not see it as a social problem, and some believe that it is a sign of social progress. As Sarah Melanahan and Karen Booth have said – 'some view the mother-only family as an indicator of social disorganization, signaling the "demise of the family". Others regard it as an alternative family form consistent with the emerging economic independence of women'.

The burden of 'failed fertility' falls almost exclusively on women, causing extreme socio-psychological and even physical harm (Dyer et. al. 2005). At the same time, there is the other curious phenomenon of 'medical tourism', wherein neo-liberalization of healthcare and the rise of private-sector corporate hospitals, several countries in the global south have

become hotspots for fertility technology. More recently, there is the growing trend of young white women flying to fertility 'hotspots' like Indiaand Cambodia, to provide their eggs and fulfilling the need for making (white) babies for cheap in the global fertility market (Pande and Moll 2018). While India, till a few years ago, was the 'mother destination of surrogacy (or paid pregnancy services), several African countries are emerging hotspots for reproductive technologies banned elsewhere'.

Dasgupta and Das Dasgupta argue that 'some feminist theorists embrace gestational surrogacy as a way to de-essentialize biological parenting and "queer" or disrupt traditional family and kinship structures. In addition, reproductive technologies, like technology in general, are embraced as a transgressive space in which to interrogate gender, sexuality, genetics, and biology. The notion that surrogacy is a new form of labor, a mechanism for women's economic empowerment, both in the United States and India, has also been underscored in this perspective (Purdy 1989). This is consistent with the formulation, in Western societies, of bodies as objects and resources that are owned as property (Vora 2010–2011)' (2014: 13).

As several celebrities are now opting for the techniques of surrogacy to start their family, the practice is gaining a great deal of public attention as well. Nevertheless, surrogacy has gained a deal of significance in several people's lives for the possibilities it opens up.

Think critically

Sociologist **Arlie Hochschild** defined *'emotional labour'* as the process of managing feelings and expressions to fulfill the emotional requirements of a job. Does commercial surrogate experience emotional labour?

Watch the Documentary

The 2009 documentary *'Google Baby'*, directed by Zippi Brand Frank is about the baby production industry and also touches upon outsourcing surrogacy to India(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9Kh7dr1JuU).

20.4. Conclusion

Kinship and family have long been of interest to social scientists. For many decades, the study of kinship was a core aspect of the discipline of social anthropology. Understanding the complexities of kinship is another aspect that has been a crucial part of studying social

anthropology. With the development of feminist scholarship on reproduction, and new forms of biomedical technology and intervention this field of sociology of kinship has been reinvigorated.

Kinship systems are found to vary in different societies with respect to a number of characteristics. In the modern period, there have been a number of new directions in the study of kinship which involve both method and theory. Kinship theory is set in the broader framework of social and cultural anthropology. The study of kinship has rested on a distinction between the 'biological' and the 'social'. But recent technological developments have made this distinction no longer self-evident. Recent studies have engaged in the impact of reproductive technologies on different social institutions namely kinship, family and marriage.

All the themes that run through this module are based on issues and concerns that numerous people are negotiating with in their everyday lives. These are not only about what we read in textbooks as abstract concepts but rather concerns very much with lived experiences of individuals and groups. Therefore, there lies the relevance of these topics for young students of social science. A large amount of contemporary research has directed towards discussing 'after kinship' and the emphasis has also been shifting towards understanding the 'families we choose'. This is a fundamental point that every student of the sociology of kinship should take into account and devise new ways of understanding the society in which we live.

20.5. Summary

The new reproductive technologies posed challenges to the conceptual basis of kinship, adoption and surrogacy, and opened fresh debates on how kinship studies should reformulate itself in order to adjust with the changes in other aspects of human existence. Since the 'natural' and universal ways of kinship could no longer be taken for granted, the project shifted towards comprehending newer ties of kinship across societies. Studies on both adoption and surrogacy revealed that new imagined forms of kinship has to be established based on families people choose to develop beyond the ties of consanguinity and affinity. For obvious reasons this is both a sensitive and challenging area of deliberation. And also involves negotiating with several legal rights and obligations. Therefore, in all likelihood research in these new areas on the sociology of kinship will emerge as one of the fascinating areas in the discipline.

20.6. Questions

- If diversification best describes families in a global context, what might this tell us about the globalization process?

- Write a note on adoption and surrogacy in the context of newer ties of kinship.

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20.8. Suggested Readings

- ➢ Critically analyze the significance and relevance of kinship in human societies.

- ➢ Write an essay on kinship terminologies discussing its importance.

- ➢ Critically discuss the relation between kinship and gender.

- ➢ What are the contemporary social problems related to kinship and gender? Discuss with an example.

- ➢ Analyze the effects of marriage migration in India.

- ➢ Critically engage with the statement 'men migrate and women simply follow'.

- ➢ How can we re-imagine families in the global context? Elaborate with appropriate examples.

- ➢ What is the impact of New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs) on kinship studies?

- ➢ How do new reproductive technologies influence the sociology of kinship?

- ➢ Write a note on adoption and surrogacy in the context of newer ties of kinship.

- ➢ Mention some of the ethical considerations that are involved in the newer ties of kinship such as adoption and surrogacy.

- ➢ Write an essay on recasting kinship with appropriate examples from the global context.

20.9. Glossary for Module IV

Adoption - refers to the legal transformation of a child's familial status, through which individuals permanently assume the major responsibilities of birth parents.

Affinal kin- refers to kin by marriage, or what we call in-laws.

Ambilocal-in this family the married couple has the choice of living with or in the locality of either the groom or the bride.

Avunculocal - in such a family the married couple moves to or near the residence of the groom's mother's brother(s).

Bilateral descent- can be traced through either line of descent.

Clan – may be defined as an organized body of kinsmen who believe themselves to be descended from the same ancestor, though actually many clans become so large that their common ancestor is either mystical or forgotten.

Cohabitation - is an arrangement in which two unrelated people who are not married but live together and are in a sexual relationship.

Collateral kin – are the other descendants of one's lineal kin (parents' siblings, cousins, etc.).

Consanguineal kin- refers to blood kin, which is relationship based on descent from a common (male or female) ancestor.

Descent groups – these are kin groups who are lineal descendants of a common ancestor.

Endogamy - refers to the rule whereby persons must marry within a certain social category or group.

Exogamy- refers to the rule whereby persons must marry outside a certain social category or group.

Fostering - indicates a temporary, mutually agreed upon delegation of the nurturance or educational elements of the parental role, or both.

Gender - concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women.

Gender relations – refers to the societally patterned interactions between men and women.

Gender roles – refers to social roles assigned to each sex and labeled as masculine or feminine.

Homophobia -refers to an aversion to or hatred of homosexuals and their lifestyles

Internal migration- is the migration of persons within a country.

International migration- refers to the movement of people from one country to another.

Kinship – it refers culturally established relationships between individuals and groups on the model of biological relationships between parents and children, between siblings, and between marital partners.

Lineal kin – are the direct ancestors and descendants of an individual: his parents, grandparents, etc. and his children, grandchildren, etc.

Matrilocal- in this case the married couple lives with or near the bride's kin.

Migration -involves the (more or less) permanent movement of individuals and groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas and communities.

Monogamous - in such marriage one man has only one wife at a time.

Neolocal - in this case the married couple creates a new household for themselves, living with kin of neither the groom nor the bride.

Patrilocal- in such a family the married couple lives with or near the groom's kin.

Polyandrous family – in such family one woman is married to several men at a time.

Polygamous - in such marriage there can be multiple partners at a time.

Polygynous family – it is opposite of polyandrous family, here one man is married to more than one woman at a time.

Queer – describes sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people may all identify with the word queer.

Sex- refers to the physical/biological characteristics that distinguish males and females.

Unilineal descent– refers to either **matrilineal** (if traced through the mother) or **patrilineal** (if traced through the father's line).

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