

Social Institutions “The Family”



INTRODUCTION

- The family is generally regarded as a primary social institution.
- The institution of family is a basic unit in the society, and the multifaceted functions performed by it makes it a much-needed institution in a society.
- It is one of the oldest social institution on the earth. Although families differ widely around the world, they also share certain common concerns in their everyday lives.

DEFINITION

- The family is a kinship group that consists of two or more people who consider themselves related by blood, marriage, or adoption.
- A family is a group of persons directly linked by kin connections, the adult members of whom assume responsibility for caring for children.
- The family is a kin based cooperative unit.

Kinship Patterns:

- Kinship
- Kinship is a social bond based on common ancestry, marriage, or adoption.
- It is the state of being related to others.

DEFINITION

- The family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a simple household interacting and intercommunication 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.

Families of Orientation and Procreation

- During our lifetime, many of us will be members of two different types of families:
- The family of orientation is the family into which a person is born and in which early socialization usually takes place
- The family of procreation is the family that a person forms by having or adopting children.

TYPES OF FAMILY

By Size and Structure:

- A nuclear family is a family composed of one or two parents and their dependent children, all of whom live apart from other relatives.
- An extended family is a family unit composed of relatives in addition to parents and children who live in the same household.

TYPES OF FAMILY

By Marriage:

- Endogamy -- marriage between people of the same social category
- Exogamy -- marriage between people of different social groups.

TYPES OF FAMILY

- Polygamy -- marriage uniting three or more people. There are two types of polygamy:
- Polygyny, in which a man may be married to more than one woman at the same time.
- Polyandry, much less common, in which a woman may have two or more husbands simultaneously.

TYPES OF FAMILY

Residential Patterns

- Patrilocal -- married couple live with their husbands family
- Matrilocal --married couple live with their wife's family
- Neolocal -- married couple lives apart from both spouses families.

TYPES OF FAMILY

Power and Authority

- A patriarchal family is a family structure in which authority is held by the eldest male (usually the father).
- A matriarchal family is a family structure in which authority is held by the eldest female (usually the mother).

- Blended family: spouses and their children from former marriages live as a single nuclear family.
- Stem family: only one child after marriage continues to live with his parents. His siblings must leave after they marry.

FUNCTIONS OF FAMILY INSTITUTION

- **Sexual Regulation:** Families regulate the sexual activity of their members and thus control reproduction so that it occurs within specific boundaries.
- Marriage is a legally recognized relationship, established by a civil or religious ceremony, between two people who intend to live together as partners.

- There is no society which leaves people to express their sexual behaviours as they want, but there are a whole set of written and unwritten rules/norms that prohibit certain ways of sexual behaviour.

- **Reproduction:** In order to develop, each society needs new generations of young people to replace the old people and this can be merely in three ways: by reproduction, migration or conquest of other societies.
- However, in the absence of biological reproduction, any society is sentenced to disappearance.
- This essential function is also performed by the family.

- **Socialization:** Family is responsible for primary care and early learning
- It is not just a producer of biological kind, but has a fundamental role of socializing the children (language, learning a set of values, beliefs, skills, etc)
- Parents and other relatives are responsible for teaching children the necessary knowledge and skills to survive.

- **Economic Support:** Families are the basic unit of economic support. Financial support is provided to the dependent members of the families.
- Assigning assets
- Important economic production and consumption unit

- **Providing Care and Protection:** every human being needs food and shelter. In addition, we all need to be among people who care for us emotionally , who help us with the problems that arise in daily life, and who back us up when we come into conflict with others. Undoubtedly, the family often is the one group in society that meets these needs.

- **Providing social status/ Social Placement:**
Simply by being born into a family, each individual receives both material goods and a socially recognized position defined by ascribed statuses.
- These statuses include social class, caste membership and ethnic identity.
- Our family background is the most important social factor affecting our lives in society.

- **Education:** Family provides formal and informal education to its members, so that they become useful members of the society.
- **Recreation:** Family provides recreational activities within the family and outside the family to its participating members.

MARRIAGE AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

- Marriage is a socially recognized institution which is found in every society.
- Wedding ceremonies are held for the tie of marriage.
- It is basically the acceptance of new status with a new set of obligations recognized by the people who are entering through a legal contract.
- It leads to the formation of the family and the procreation of children

DEFINITION

- According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “Marriage is a physical, legal and moral union between man and woman in complete community life for the establishment of a family.”
- According to Malinowski, “Marriage is a contract for the production and maintenance of children.”

DEFINITION

- Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family.
- Marriage is a legally recognized social contract with stable relationship in which a man and a woman are socially permitted without loss of standing in community to have children.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Marriage is a universal social institution.
- Marriage is a relatively permanent bond between husband and wife. It is designed to fulfill the social, psychological, biological and religious aims.
- Marriage establishes family.

- Marriage requires social approval. The relationship between men and women must have social approval. Without which marriage is not valid. Therefore, it is always associated with some civil and religious ceremony. This social and religious ceremony provides validity to marriage.
- Marriage has certain symbols like ring, special cloths, etc.

TYPES OF MARRIAGE

- Monogamy is an ideal, widespread and rational type of marriage. Monogamy refers to a marriage of one man with one woman at a time.
- Polygamy is a type of marriage in which there is plurality of partners. It allows a man to marry more than one woman or a woman to marry more than one man at a time.

- Polygyny, in which a man may be married to more than one woman at the same time. While the majority of societies accept polygyny, the majority of people do not practice it.
- Polyandry, much less common, in which a woman may have two or more husbands simultaneously.

- Marriage may be divided into two types i.e. endogamous and exogamous marriages on the basis of choice of mate or on the basis of the rules of choice of mate
- Endogamy -- marriage between people of the same social category
- Exogamy -- marriage between people of different social groups.

- Levirate: When a woman marries her husband's brother after the death of her husband it is known as levirate.
- Sororate: When a man marries his wife's sister after the death of his wife or even when the wife is alive it is called as sororate.

FUNCTIONS OF MARRIAGE

- Procreation of children
- Regulation of sexual behaviour
- Social and economic security to women(wife)
- Socialization
- Care and Protection
- Economic Support
- Provision of Recreational facilities