



MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND KINSHIP

THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University

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BLOCK 3	FAMILY, HOUSEHOLD AND MARRIAGE	Dr. Kiranmayi Bhushi	
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Course Content

Block 1	Introduction: Basic Concepts	Page No.
Unit 1	Marriage	9
Unit 2	Family	19
Unit 3	Kinship	30
Block 2	Studying Kinship	
Unit 4	Descent Approach	43
Unit 5	Alliance Approach	57
Unit 6	Fictive	69
Block 3	Family, Household And Marriage	
Unit 7	Structure and Change: Factors and Dynamics	80
Unit 8	Reimagining Families	92
Block 4	Contemporary Issues In Marriage, Family And Kinship	
Unit 9	Choice and Regulation in Marriage	108
Unit 10	Power and Discrimination in Family	119
Unit 11	New Reproductive Technologies	130
Unit 12	Marriage and Migration	141
Further Reading		151
Glossary		152

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course aims to highlight and critically examine contemporary concerns in the fields of marriage, family and kinship. It considers theoretical issues and ethnographies with particular emphasis on diversity of practices. The course has four blocks that look at some of the main themes in the study of kinship system.

Block 1 Introducing Basic Concepts looks at the three concepts central to kinship studies, namely marriage, family and kinship. **Unit 1 Marriage;** explains the institution of marriage as understood in kinship studies. The unit also discusses various perspectives and theories on marriage. By explaining the rules like incest taboo, exogamy and endogamy, we hope you are able to relate to your own kinship and family structures. The unit explains the significance of marriage in understanding family and kinship. **Unit 2 Family:** As an institution it was founded on man's essential biological and social imperative needs. It is considered as the most basic and fundamental unit in the society and therefore a universal grouping in human societies. It is the bond of kinship which primarily unites the members of a familial grouping together. The unit starts by understanding the concept of marriage, the unit also describes various types of families and their functions. The unit captures the changes in the institution of family. **Unit 3 Kinship:** the units explain kinship terminologies. The unit also discusses the kinship usage and behaviour. And analyses how kinship functions in society.

Block 2 Studying Kinship looks at the various ways in which kinship was used. **Unit 4 Descent:** The blood relation was considered as primary to any kinship formation and descent theory looks at this aspect of biology. In this unit we explain the meaning of the concept of descent in kinship studies. And trace the historical development of descent, explain how different anthropologists used decent approach to understand kinship systems and explore the application of the kinship systems in India. The critique of descent approach, in a way, paves for alliance approach to the understanding of kinship which is the next unit. **Unit 5 Alliance:** In the alliance approach, the focus shifted from blood ties to relations formed as result of marriage. The core of the theory was the exchange of women for formation of groups. The alliance theory was criticised for focusing on women as object and treating the opposition between affine and consanguine as universal. Due to the limitation of both descent and alliance theory there was a cardinal change in the way kinship was studied. The cultural approach argued that kinship could not be understood only with reference to biology. The reference to biology was seen as nothing more than ethnocentric view of kinship, derived from European culture. Kinship was to be understood with reference to cultural practices of every society. **Unit 6 Fictive:** Fictive kinship also referred as social, quasi or pseudo kinship is a common concept in anthropology and the social sciences. It refers to individuals unrelated by birth or marriage who label or treat one another as kin. It involves extension of kinship obligations and relations to individuals specifically not otherwise included in the kinship universe. This unit looks at various expressions of fictive kinship across cultures. We also discuss the problems associated with the term fictive.

Block 3 Family and Household This block comprises of two units which examine kinship system in the context of larger social structures and processes looks at various aspects of family and household in contemporary settings. **Unit 7 Structure and Change: Factors and Dynamics:** This unit discusses the variations in family in terms of their structure and form. We also critically analyse theories of change in family and apply a joint-nuclear continuum to understand

structure of family in India. The unit discusses the major forces responsible for change in the institution of family and explains the new forms of family which are not based only on biology. **Unit 8 Reimagining Families** focuses on new ways to look at family. The unit starts by focusing attention on traditional understanding of family and its critiques. The unit reflects on feminist critiques and their questioning of many of the assumptions that underlie the traditional/conventional perceptions of family and kinship. Various alternatives like families based on ideology of love and live-in relationships may be seen as possible ways to negotiate with the traditionally sexually oppressive family forms and kinship patterns.

Block 4 Contemporary Issues in Marriage, Family and Kinship The four units of this block deal with new ways to look at kinship owing to technological changes, new and expanding sense of identities, various process like globalisation etc. **Unit 9 Choice and Regulation in Marriage:** the unit starts by looking at the way marriage has been conceptualised. Following this we look at the legal aspects of marriage, mostly in the Indian context. The unit also examines various rules that inform marriage and the practices related to spouse selection. As societies change institutions like marriage or family also change. This unit takes into account and keeps these changes as backdrop to understand the institution of marriage.

Unit 10 Power and Discrimination in the Family: While family works as a strong support system in both traditional and modern societies, it is also a site of power relations and discriminations. This unit discusses the discriminatory aspects of family. While we draw your attention to inherent discriminatory practices of family we in no way undermine the existence of such families that are non discriminatory and equitable. **Unit 11 New Reproductive Technologies:** This unit examines the meaning of New Reproductive Technology and how it has redefined the understanding of parenthood. The use of technology for reproduction has challenged the traditional understanding of motherhood and maternity. We will illustrate some of the ways in which new reproductive technologies relate to larger society through a case study of NRT in Israel. **Unit 12 Marriage and Migration:** In this unit we will try and understand the relationship between marriage and migration. We will begin by looking at the factors causing migration due to marriage. In the following section we examine the regional variations in marriage migration and see the positive negative aspects of marriage migration. In the subsequent section we will discuss aspects related to kinship network and marriage migration. As you might know rules of endogamy play a huge part in marriage migration, will discuss this aspect too. And lastly we will examine marriage migration in the context of globalisation with some focus on NRI marriages.

BLOCK 1
INTRODUCTION: BASIC CONCEPTS

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UNIT 1: Marriage *

Structure

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Different Theories of Marriage

- 1.2.1 Edmund Leach- Marriage Rights
- 1.2.2 Kathleen Gough- The Nayar Marriage
- 1.2.3 Patricia Uberoi- Marriage as Contract and Sacrament

1.3 Marriage Rules

- 1.3.1 Incest Taboo
- 1.3.2 Endogamy and Exogamy
- 1.3.3 Monogamy and Polygamy

1.4 Marriage and Rules of Residence

1.5 Marriage Prestations (Economic Transactions)

- 1.5.1 Dowry
- 1.5.2 Bride Price
- 1.5.3 Bride Service

1.6 Let Us Sum Up

1.8 Further Readings

1.9 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Conceptualise the institution of marriage as understood in kinship studies;
- Explain marriage through various perspectives and theories on marriage;
- Comprehend the rules like incest taboo, exogamy and endogamy;
- Grasp the significance of marriage in understanding family and kinship.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an important social institution. It is a relationship, which is socially approved. The relationship is defined and sanctioned by custom and law. It has been defined by sociologists and anthropologist with reference to a) sexual union between men and women for procreation b) establishing the legitimacy of children born out of the union c) acquisition of certain legal rights. The institution of marriage had been define by many anthropologist and sociologist that stress on the above three dimensions. Some of the definition of marriage are:

- Marriage is a relation of one or more men to one or more women which is recognised by customs or law and involves certain rights and duties both in case of parties entering into the union and in the case of children born of it.

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- Lowie- a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates.
- Malinowski- a contract for the production and maintenance of children.
- Lundberg - consists of the rules and regulations that define the rights, duties and privileges of husband and wife with respect to each other.
- Horton and Hunt -is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family.
- Anderson and Parker –is the sanctioning by a society of a durable bond between one or more males and one or more females established to permit sexual intercourse for the implied purpose of parenthood.

The significance of the institution of marriage in society is due the different function it performs in society. It provides a recognised form for entering into a relatively enduring heterosexual relationship for the bearing and rearing of children. It is thus primarily a way of regulating human reproduction. The right of sexual relationship, that universally accompanies marriage, provides legitimisation to the children born in wedlock. This legitimacy is of great importance in the matters of inheritance and succession. In industrialised western societies marriage function beyond procreation and child rearing. It provides companionship as well as emotional, and psychological support.

1.2. DIFFERENT THEORIES OF MARRIAGE

In sociology and anthropology the institution of marriage has been theorised in multiple ways in order to comprehend its complex patterns. Different scholars have theorised marriage by formulating a cross-culturally valid definition that can cover the numerous variations they have recorded.

1.2.1. Edmund Leach

Edmund Leach defined marriage as ‘a relationship establishment 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.’ He considered marriage as a “bundle of rights” allocated to either or both spouses. In some cases it serves primarily to allocate rights to the husband and his wife’s brothers. The list of ten rights performed by marriage is:

- i. To establish the legal father of a woman’s children.
- ii. To establish the legal mother of a man’s children.
- iii. To give the husband a monopoly in the wife’s sexuality.
- iv. To give the wife a monopoly in the husband’s sexuality.
- v. To give the husband partial or monopolistic rights to the wife’s domestic and other labour services.
- vi. To give the wife partial or monopolistic rights to the husband’s labour services.
- vii. To give the husband partial or total rights over the property belonging or potentially accruing to the wife.
- viii. To give the wife partial or total rights over the property belonging or potentially accruing to the husband.
- ix. To establish a joint fund of property –a partnership– for the benefit of the children of the marriage.

- x. To establish a socially significant 'relationship of affinity' between the husband and his wife's brothers.

Leach therefore, focuses attention on rights in and regarding children, sexuality, domestic and economic services and property.

1.2.2 Kathleen Gough

Kathleen Gough questions the traditional definition of marriage in terms of union between man and women for reproducing legitimate offspring. As stated earlier, traditional understanding of marriage assumed the co-existence of three conditions- sexual union between man and woman, procreation of spring and legal legitimacy of offspring born. Gough argues that one of the above condition may or may not be present in different forms of marriage she illustrates this with the example of marriage among the Nayars of South India. The Nayar is a matrilineal society where child after birth enters the matrilineage. Among the Nayars, marriage does not serve to establish legitimacy of children. In many societies, marriage is not the only reason for acquisition of birth rites. Among the Nuer of Sudan in Africa, a man may legitimise a child of an unmarried mother upon payment of fee without getting married to the mother. In this case, marriage and legitimacy need not go together. Secondly Gough questions the assumption of paternity as the universal behavior re-strengthening the institution of marriage.

Before puberty all Nayar girls were ritually married to a suitable Nayar man in 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 owed only one duty to her *tali* husband: she had to attend his funeral to mourn his death. Once a Nayar girl reached or neared puberty she began to take a number of visiting husbands, or *sambandham* husbands. The Nayar men were usually professional warriors who spent long periods of time away from their villages acting as mercenaries. During their time in the villages they were allowed to visit any number of Nayar women who had undergone the *tali* rite and who were members of the same caste as themselves, or a lower caste. With the agreement of the woman involved, the *sambandham* husband arrived at the home of one of his wives after supper, had sexual intercourse with her, and left before breakfast the next morning. During his stay he placed his weapons outside the building to show the other *sambandham* husbands that he was there. If they arrived too late, then they were free to sleep on the veranda, but could not stay the night with their wife. Men could have unlimited numbers of *sambandham* wives, although women seem to have been limited to no more than twelve visiting husbands.

The Nayar case elaborates the understanding of marriage beyond sexual union, paternity and legitimacy. It does, at the same time, impose an important set of rules and fulfills functions that are quite understandable in the context of a lineage and caste based society. The rites and regulations assume the following significance appropriate the broader Nayar social order:

- They reflect and enforce a morality that permits open sexual relations provided that they are contracted within the limits of caste membership and uphold standards of hereditary purity.
- They contribute to the focusing of social relationships within the caste.
- They represent and underscore long term alliances among localised matrilineages, which along with caste groups constitute the core components of the society.

- They underwrite the legitimacy and social statuses of newly born children.

Activity 1

Are you aware of marriage practices in which marriage performs a different function than stated above? Write a short note on it and discuss it in your study centre.

1.2.3 Patricia Uberoi

Patricia Uberoi’s study of the Hindu marriage is an understanding of marriage in terms of law, litigation and tradition. She discusses the importance of sex and sexuality in the judicial perspective on marriage both as a sacrament and as a contract. Uberoi provides an understanding of marriage in terms of law, litigation and tradition. Taking a judicial perspective on sex and sexuality she explains marriage both as a sacrament and as a contract. The judicial cases reveal the deeply held belief that marriage is an important social institution whose stability must be maintained irrespective of individual desires. However under forces of modernity there is a shift from marriage as sacrament to a contract. That is there is a decline in the social and ritual status of marriage and it is becoming more of a kind of agreement between husband and wife.

The dichotomy of sacrament and contract has been shown through the Rakhmabai case of 1884. Rakhmabei was an educated and well-to-do girl who was married to an elderly man, Dadaji. After marriage she refused to cohabit or consummate her marriage with Dadaji and was granted a divorce as per the customary law. Dadaji approach the court for restoration of his marital rights but the petition was dismissed by Justice Pinhey on the grounds that as a minor, her consent could not be valid, unless consummated, marriage had not been completed and incompatibility of educational and social standing. Opponents argued that marriage was a divine union, indissoluble irrespective of the fact of consummation. In Hindu religion, marriage is considered divine and sacred and once married it is considered irrevocable whereas marriage as contract imply consummation else it is considered void.

Check your Progress 1

- 1) According to Edmund Leach marriage performs a set of rights. Mention any three rights.

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- 2) How is the Nayar marriage different from traditional understanding of marriage?

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1.3 MARRIAGE RULES

Every society has certain rules regulating whom one should marry or not marry, the number of spouse and the status of the group in which marriage takes place. Rules vary in terms of:

1. Exclusion or inclusion of marriage partners- there are basically two types of rules about whom one should marry or not
 - a. Rules of prohibition (Incest Taboo and Endogamy) – stating the kin or relative whom one cannot marry, that is, prohibited as marriage partners. The rule of exogamy in North India is an example of the rule of prohibition.
 - b. Rules of prescription (Endogamy) – prescribing the preferential marriage partners that are the relatives who are preferred for marriage. The practice of cross-cousin marriage among South Indians is an example of the rule of prescription.
2. Number of marriage partners – In some society people are allowed to have only one marriage partner (monogamy) whereas in many other society they are allowed have more than one marriage partners (polygamy).
3. Status of the group in which preferably girls are married – it could be a higher status group (hypergamy), lower status group (hypogamy) or equal status (isogamy).

1.3.1 Incest Taboo

One of the basic and universal rules of exclusion to marriage is the incest taboo or a rule of prohibition of marriage or sexual union between members of primary family (father, mother and siblings). In societies with unilineal descent systems (patrilineal or matrilineal), the incest taboo is often defined based on the distinction between two kinds of first cousins: parallel cousins and cross cousins.

- Sexual relations with a parallel cousin is incestuous, because they belong to the same generation and the same descent group.
- Sexual relations with a cross cousin is not incestuous because they belong to the opposite group or moiety.

There are various theories explaining the practice of incest taboo in our society. The theory of ‘Instinctive Horror’ argues that Homo sapiens are genetically programmed to avoid incest. This theory has been refuted. However, cultural universality does not necessarily entail a genetic basis (e.g., fire making). If people really were genetically programmed to avoid incest, a formal incest taboo would be unnecessary. This theory cannot explain why in some societies people can marry their cross cousins but not their parallel cousins.

The second theory, ‘biological degeneration’ argues that the incest taboo developed in response to abnormal offspring born from incestuous unions. A decline in fertility and survival does accompany brother-sister mating across several generations. However, human marriage patterns are based on specific cultural beliefs rather than universal concerns about biological degeneration several generations in the future. Neither instinctive horror nor biological degeneration can explain the very widespread custom of marrying cross cousins. Also, fears about degeneration cannot explain why sexual unions

between parallel cousins but not cross cousins are so often tabooed. Malinowski (and Freud) argued that the incest taboo originated to direct sexual feelings away from one's family to avoid disrupting the family structure and relations (familiarity increases the chances for attempt). The opposite theory argues that people are less likely to be sexually attracted to those with whom they have grown up (familiarity breeds contempt). A more accepted argument is that the taboo originated to ensure exogamy. Incest taboos force people to create and maintain wide social networks by extending peaceful relations beyond one's immediate group. With this theory, incest taboos are seen as an adaptively advantageous cultural construct. This argument focuses on the adaptive social results of exogamy, such as alliance formation, not simply on the idea of biological degeneration. Incest taboos also function to increase a group's genetic diversity.

1.3.2 Exogamy and Endogamy

Exogamy is the marriage rule that prohibits marriage within one's own defined social group. The avoidance of incest and the widening of social network are the factors that prevent people from marrying within the group. For example, the Hindus of northern India marry outside the village to ensure that spouses live in far away villages and towns. Endogamy, on the other hand, allows marriage with members of close kin group. The reason for this is that the spouse would come from a specific group. It ensures the maintenance of a strong kinship network within the group.

(Mono=one) Monogamy=one spouse
(poly" = many). Polygamy= more than one spouse
(gyny= women) Polygyny=two or more wives
Andry=men Polyandry=two or more husbands

1.3.3 Monogamy and Polygamy

Monogamy is marriage in which both partners have just one spouse. It is the most common form of marriage, primarily for economic reasons. Serial Monogamy: a marriage form in which a man or women lives with a series of partners in succession. Serial Monogamy: a marriage form in which a man or women lives with a series of partners in succession.

Polygamy: one individual having multiple spouses at the same time. There are two forms of polygamy

- i. Polygyny: marriage of a man to two or more women at the same time
- ii. Polyandry: marriage of a woman to two or more men at the same time

Polygyny is the most preferred form of marriage. It is most common in cultures that support themselves by growing crops and where the bulk of the work is done by women. Polygyny is frequently found in societies where violence, including war, is common and where many young males lose their lives in fighting. Another reason for a man to take on secondary wives is to demonstrate his high position in society. Polyandry as a form of marriage practice is quite rare with few than a dozen societies are known to favor polyandry. Some reasons why it is practiced is that woman's life expectancy is usually longer than a man's. Secondly,

Marriage Rules

–**Exogamy** (marrying out) (“exo” = “exit; “gamy” = “marriage”) prohibits people of same social group from marrying

–**Endogamy** (marrying in) (“endo” = “in”) marriage must

female infant mortality is somewhat lower creating a surplus of women in a society and thirdly, economic security and property does not need to be divided.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Explain the difference between exogamy and endogamy. Use three lines to write your answer.

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- 2) What are the factors that lead to practice of polyandry?

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1.4. MARRIAGE AND RULES OF RESIDENCE

After marriage, either one of the married couple or both have to change their residence. Post-marital residence rules specify where a person resides after marriage and, accordingly, influence the structure and size of household units. Anthropologists have identified several basic rules and related domestic forms. The following general patterns have been observed in varying societies around the world.

Patrilocal residence occurs when a newly married couple establishes their home near or in the groom’s father’s house. This makes sense in a society that follows patrilineal descent (that is, when descent is traced only from males to their offspring). This is because it allows the groom to remain near his male relatives. Women do not remain in their natal household after marriage with this residence pattern.

Type	Residence with
Patrilocal	Groom’s Father
Matrilocal	Bride’s Mother
Virilocal	Husband
Uxorilocal	Wife
Avunculocal	Mother’s Brother
Neolocal	Couple’s own residence

Matrilocal residence occurs when a newly married couple establishes their home near or in the bride’s mother’s house. This keeps women near their female relatives. Not surprisingly, this residence pattern is associated with matrilineal descent (that is, when descent is traced only from females to their offspring). Men leave their natal households when they marry.

Virilocal is the residence pattern in which a woman moves into her husband’s home.

Uxorilocal residence the residence pattern in which a man moves into his wife’s home.

Avunculocal residence occurs when a newly married couple establishes their home near or in the groom's maternal uncle's house. This is associated with matrilineal descent. It occurs when men obtain statuses, jobs, or prerogatives from their nearest elder matrilineal male relative. Having a woman's son live near her brother allows the older man to more easily teach his nephew what he needs to know in order to assume his matrilineally inherited role.

Neolocal residence occurs when a newly married couple establishes their home independent of both sets of relatives. It has become popular and common in contemporary society today largely because it suits the cultural emphasis on independence.

Ambilocal residence occurs when a newly married couple has the choice of living with or near the groom's or the bride's family. The couple may also live for a while with one set of parents and then move to live with the other.

1.5 MARRIAGE PRESTATIONS OR ECONOMIC TRANSACTIONS

The formalisation of many marriages cross-culturally is usually marked by some type of economic gift or exchange. These gifts and exchanges serve to underline that marriage involves both economic and political transaction. By marrying, a family loses a member of their household and thus their labor and help with their economic activities, as well as the labor and help of all of their potential offspring. Most marriages involve gift giving between partners, families and friends. There are three major forms of economic transaction that accompany marriage rituals and customs – dowry, brideprice (or bride wealth), and bride service

1.5.1 Dowry

Dowry is a form of marriage prestation in which there is transfer of material wealth in the form of jewellery, clothes, furniture etc. from the family of the bride to the groom and his family. It is neither to be understood as a form of bride's wealth because she has no control over it and the material/money is used by her husband and his family. Much of the dowry is presented on the wedding day, but the bride's parents and maternal uncle provide gifts periodically throughout the marriage. In India where dowry is practiced widely it has become a social problem where parents of brides are under pressure to pay huge amount to get them married. It is also related to problem of violence against women.

1.5.2 Bride Price

Bride-price, sometimes referred to as bride-wealth, is a form of marriage payment in which the bride's group receives a payment of goods, money, or livestock to compensate for the loss of a woman's labour and the children she bears. These exchange relations between families may persist over many years and in some societies constitute the chief means for the circulation of wealth. In these situations, marriage is a corporate enterprise in which control over prestige valuables is exercised by an older generation of men. Marriage payments are thus a way of establishing and securing alliances and for allocating women's labour power and fertility. Bride-price is not a payment for women, but rather is seen as a way of valuing the labor of women, the effort involved by the bride's family in raising the female, and the labour value of a woman's offspring. The payment is

a way of securing the rights of the husband’s group over the woman’s children. Although women are valued in such societies, their status relative to men’s is lower because it is the men who make the corporate household decisions. Often, payments are made in installments in case the couple divorces or fails to produce a child.

1.5.3 Bride Service

Bride service is the custom in which the groom or the husband is expected to render service for a stipulated period for the family of his wife. This custom is more common among the agricultural society and therefore it includes working in the field that belongs to wife’s father. For example among the Yonomami the husband assists his father-in-law in hunting and food gathering until he gets complete control over his wife.

Activity 2

In today’s society there is increase in ‘big fat wedding’ (expensive marriage ceremonies). Do you think this is a form of dowry? Discuss in your study centre.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Discuss the various “payments” and exchanges that accompany marriages in different societies.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have learned about the basic concept of marriage. The unit began with the definition of marriage and various theoretical understanding. Then we moved to understanding the rules of marriage according to which individual select the marriage partners and the different residence patterns after marriage. We also learnt about the economic aspect of marriage by looking at the transfer of payment accompanying marriage. The unit help us to learn that marriage is an important institution in society that regulates social relation among the members through rules of marriage and also exchange of gifts.

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1.9 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) According to Edmund Leach the following rights are performed by marriage :
 - i. To establish the legal father of a woman's children.
 - ii. To establish the legal mother of a man's children.
 - iii. To give the husband a monopoly in the wife's sexuality.
- 2) According to the traditional understanding of marriage the co-existence of three conditions (sexual union between man and woman, procreation of spring and legal legitimacy of offspring born) was necessary. However among the Nayars marriage does not serve to establish legitimacy of children. It rather elaborates the understanding of marriage beyond sexual union, paternity and legitimacy.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Exogamy is the rule of marriage which allows individuals to marry outside one's own group, for instance outside the elementary family. Whereas endogamy is the rule of marriage which allows a person to marry within one's own group, for example marriage within the same caste.
- 2) The factors for the practice of polyandry are: woman's life expectancy is usually longer than a man's, female infant mortality is somewhat lower creating a surplus of women in a society and thirdly with more than one husband there is economic security and property does not need to be divided.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The different types of marriage prestations practiced in society are :
 - a. Dowry- Transfer of wealth from bride's family to groom's family
 - b. Bride Price- Payment of a price for getting a wife, it is a kind of compensation for the loss of member in the bride's family.
 - c. Bride Service- Custom where the husband works for the family for his wife for a certain period.

UNIT 2: FAMILY*

Structure

2.0 Objective

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Conceptual Understanding

2.2.1 Definition of Family

2.2.2 Difference between Family and Kin

2.2.3 Difference between Family and Household

2.2.4 Difference between Family and Domestic Group

2.3 Main Characteristics and Functions of Family

2.3.1 Characteristics of Family

2.3.2 Functions of Family

2.4 Types of Family

2.4.1 Traditional and Modern Family

2.4.2 Biological Family – Nuclear, Joint and Extended

2.4.3 Postmodern Family – Family by Choice, Blended Family etc.

2.5 Changes in Family

2.6 Let Us Sum Up

2.7 References

2.8 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVE

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the institution of family, its characteristics and types;
- Narrate the difference between household, family and domestic group;
- Note the changes in family.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The term family comes from the Latin word ‘familia’ meaning a household. It is the most efficient example of a ‘primary group’. A family is a group and an institution, as it has certain rules and procedures at its base. Anthropologists study family with reference to different dimensions including co-residence rules, patterns of authority, descent, marriage, property and kinship terms. As an institution it was founded on man's essential biological and social imperative needs. It is considered as the most basic and fundamental unit in the society and therefore a universal grouping in human societies. It is the bond of kinship which primarily unites the members of a familial grouping together. The two fundamental principles of integration that serve as binding force to keep a family intact are based on the connections arising through marriage and descent. These principles operate to produce three major kinds of relationships are those existing between- husband and wife, parents and children and siblings.

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2.2 CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING

In sociology and anthropology there are different definitions of family that describes its main characteristics and functions.

2.2.1 Definition of Family

- George Murdock defined the family as a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relation and one or more children, owned or adopted of the sexually cohabited adults.
- Others define family as a group of people who are united by ties of marriage, ancestry or adoption and who are reorganised by the community as constituting a single household and as having responsibility of rearing children.
- The U.S.A census defines the family as two or more person who are related to each other by blood or marriage or through adoption and who live together.

According to the above definitions family is a social group characterised by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. However, it is important to differentiate family from other similar social groups like kin, household and domestic group.

2.2.2 Difference between Family and Kin

In common parlance the term family and kin appears to be the same but in anthropological literature the two are different. While the family denotes a relationship between the spouses and their children, who are described as 'siblings', the kin includes within the bound a large number of persons; and what creates a kinship will necessarily depend upon the social organisation in the context of which the term is applied. A distinction has to be made for this purpose between the biological parent and the sociological one; and in some communities the person who is called father may not be the biological parent. For example, in Malagasy, among the Tanala tribe there is a practice that the husband may claim as his own the first three children that may be born to his wife after he divorces her on the ground of adultery.

2.2.3 Difference between Family and Household

Family and household are often used interchangeably but are not the same thing. Family is a group of two people or more who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together. All such people are considered as members of one family, whereas household is a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their food supply and the satisfaction of most of their wants. Households consist of family or part of family or a part of the core members. However there may be household members who are not members of the family, such as servants or lodgers, while family membership, in terms of shared consumption, production and ties of intimacy, often extends over several households. A person living alone in a housing unit, or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit such as partners or one who occupies a room are also counted as a household. Thus the most distinct difference between family and household is that a family

is a kinship unit whereas the household is a residential unit.

2.2.4 Difference between Family and Domestic Group

A domestic group is defined as a group of human beings who habitually share a common dwelling and a common food supply. A family can be a domestic group but there are some differences between a family and domestic group. The domestic group may consist of one or more nuclear families as well as people without any kinship link including servants or any other members who work and share the same production space. At the same time, members of one family may be distributed over two or more domestic groups. As a concept domestic group is wider than family and often used synonymously with household.

Meyer Fortes in his work, 'The Developmental Cycle' has differentiated between domestic group and family. For Fortes, family is the kinship and the reproduction nucleus of the domestic domain. It consists of two or more successive generation bound through the parent-child linkage. In contrast the domestic group is essentially a house holding and housing unit organised to provide material and cultural resources needed to maintain and bring up members. By highlighting the difference between domestic group and the family, Fortes was differentiating the reproductive and productive functions.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Define the institution of family. Use around four lines.

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- 2) What is the difference between family and household?

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2.3 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND FUNCTIONS OF FAMILY

2.3.1 Characteristics of Family

The traditional family had the following characteristics as highlighted by studies done by sociologists and anthropologists:

- 1) Universality- the Family is a universal institution. It was found in many simpler societies. In advance societies, the whole social structure is built of family units. According to MacIver, "It is found in all societies, at all stages of social development and exists far below the human level among myriad species of animals". Every human being is a member of some family

- 2) Permanent relations between husband and wife-The family is constituted of the husband and wife and their children. Thus, a permanent relation of some kind is established between man and woman is the main characteristics of traditional family. This relation is considered as imperative for the nurturing and socialisation of children.
- 3) Sexual relation as the basis of family- The family rests on sexual relation between husband and wife. In the traditional understanding marriage, sexual relation and family were considered as complementary. In other words marriage of man and woman was institutionalised for legitimacy of sexual relation for procreation of offspring. This led to the formation of elementary family, the basic unit of society.
- 4) Significance of blood relations- in the traditional family, blood was substance of utmost importance. All those connected through same blood were regarded as member of the same family. In other words all members of a family are descendant of the same ancestors.
- 5) Financial and Economic sharing of responsibility- In a traditional family the financial and economic responsibility is shared among the members. That is those considered as earning members take care of the non-earning members of the family. In a traditional set up, this sharing of responsibility was on the basis of sexual division of labour. Men were assumed as bread winner and hence went out to earn livelihood. The women were assigned to the domestic sphere.
- 6) Common habitation- It was assumed that all members of a family shared a common habitation, that is, stayed together in one residence. The common habitation helped members in sharing economic responsibility.
- 7) System of Interaction and Communication: The family is composed of persons who interact and communicate with each other in their social roles such as husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter etc.
- 8) Distinctive nomenclature- Each family is identified on the basis of a distinctive nomenclature that is the family name. It was a common practice to take the name of the eldest male member as the family name. Though this practice varies from society to society the most common was the one found in patriarchal family.

2.3.2 Functions of Family

The family performs a wide range of functions in different society, some of the most common function of family are:

1. Satisfaction of Sex Needs: This is the essential function which the family performs. The sex instinct is the natural and biological urge of human beings. The satisfaction of sex desire requires that male and female should live together as husband and wife. Hence, family is the only place where husband and wife can satisfy their sex instinct. Family satisfies sexual desires of male and female through the institution of marriage. Without family the satisfaction of sex needs is impossible. The modern family satisfies sex instinct in a greater degree than the traditional family.
2. Reproduction- The task of race perpetuation has always been an important function of the family. An ongoing society must replace its members. It primarily relies on the biological reproduction of its own members. The family is an institution par excellence of the reproduction and the rearing

of children. It secures a legitimate and responsible basis for procreation by regulating sexual behaviour. It provides care and personal protection to the newly born human beings and children.

3. Organising production and consumption- in pre-industrial societies, the economic system is dependent on each family’s production much as of what it consumed. The family has been a traditional means for securing the members with their consumptions need.
4. Socialisation of children- the family is responsible not only for reproducing family but also for ensuring that its children are encouraged to accept the lifestyle it favours, to master the skills it values and perform the work required. The society provides predictable social contexts within which its children are socialised and the family is the unit for transmission from society to the new members.
5. Property Transformation- The family acts as an agency for holding and transmission of property. Most families accumulate much property such as land, goods, money and other forms of wealth. The family transmits the property from one generation to another.
6. Granting of a social status- The birth of an individual in a family assigns him/ her a social status. Thus, in the first instance, individuals define themselves in relation to the family they belong; the sense of belonging plays an important role in terms of assuming various roles within the family. In this sense, most of the prescribed statuses of a person are directly related to the family to which he belongs, for example, age, ethnicity, nationality, social class, religion etc. are conferred to an individual because he was born into a particular family.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Give any three characteristics of the family.

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- 2) Mention any three functions of family.

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2.4 TYPES OF FAMILY

Though family is a universal institution, its structure or form varies from one society to another. Sociologists and anthropologists have mentioned about different types of families found in different cultures.

2.4.1. Traditional and Modern Family

A traditional family consists of a man, woman, and one or more of their biological or adopted children. Most traditional families are extended including grandparents, uncles, aunts, parents and children. The modern family is a nuclear family, is small in size and consists of father, mother and one or two children. There are differences between traditional and modern family.

The first difference is structure of family. The typical size of traditional family has more than two generations living together. A married couple could live with their descendants and their relatives under one roof. On the other the modern family generally has three to four people. A couple has only one or two children. The second difference is the role of family members. In traditional family, the man is always the breadwinner while the woman is the housewife. The man is very patriarchal and makes decision himself. The woman has to do the housework, take care of their children and serve her parents-in-law. In contrast, the role of the man and woman in the modern one is equal. They both work outside. They share their housework and their thoughts. The last difference is the relationship of the family. In the past, the family lives and works together, so the family relationship is attached. The modern family has very limited time to spend together. The parents work all day and the children learn whole day. They rarely spend time for other members. For this reason, the relationship of the modern family is not close-knit.

Activity 1

What is the structure of the family in which you live? Compare it with the family in which your grandparents lived. Discuss the similarities and differences in the study center.

2.4.2. Biological Family – Nuclear, Joint and Extended

In the beginning sociologist and anthropologists looked at the institution of family as biological. That is they used biology as the criteria for classifying kin relation. Two types of kins were recognised- consanguine and affine. Consanguine were relatives related through blood and affine were those connected through marriage. Thus family was defined with reference to biology. Family was seen as an institution in which all members were related either through blood or marriage. However such a theorisation began to change in the beginning of 21st century and theorists have argued for conceptualising family beyond biology. Ralph Linton has classified family on the basis of blood relation into two main types namely, consanguine and conjugal.

- (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 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.

Another common method of classifying family is in terms of the composition, the different types are:

- i). Nuclear family: Nuclear family is a unit composed of husband, wife and their unmarried children. The size of the nuclear family is very small. It is free from the control of elders. It is regarded as the most dominant and ideal form of family in modern society. The nuclear family is based on conjugal bonds. While discussing the nature of nuclear family in India, Pauline Kolenda has discussed additions / modifications in nuclear family structure. She has given the following compositional categories.
- (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 with her/his unmarried children or siblings (unmarried or widowed or separated or divorced) living together.
 - (d) Single person household.
 - (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.
- ii). Extended family: The term extended family is used to indicate the combination of two or more nuclear families based on an extension of the parent-child relationships. According to Murdock, an extended family consists of two or more nuclear families affiliated through an extension of the parent-child relationship ... i.e. by joining the nuclear family of a married adult to that of his parents. In an extended family, a man and his wife live with the families of their married sons and with their unmarried sons and daughters, grand children or great grant children in the paternal or maternal line. According to Bottomore there are different types of extended family:
1. Patrilineally extended family- based on an extension of the father-son relationship
 2. Matrilineally extended family- based on the mother-daughter relationship.
 3. Fraternal or collateral family- horizontally extended family consisting of two or more brothers, their wives and children. In India, the family weather extended vertically and/or horizontally is called the joint family. Strictly speaking it is a property-sharing unit.
- iii). Joint family: Joint families are composed of sets of siblings, theirs spouses, and their dependent children. According to M.S. Gore the joint family consists of a man and his wife and their adult sons, their wives and children and younger children of the paternal couple. 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. Children of the joint family are children of all the male members in the parental generation. The conjugal ties or the relationship between husband and wife is considered less significant than the filial ties or the relations between father and son.

2.4.3. The Postmodern Family - Fictive Family and Blended Family

In postmodern society, family structures are incredibly varied and individuals have much more freedom of choice in aspects of their lives which would have been relatively constrained in the past i.e. lifestyles, personal relationships and family arrangements. In such society, family members are not necessarily bound to one another by legal marriage, blood, or adoption. The term postmodern family has been used by sociologists to refer to the new forms of family emerging in the contemporary society. The concept describes the multitude of forms in which the institution of family can occur. It brings out an alternate understanding of family that it does not require a male and female sharing a household with their biological offspring. On the contrary, a family can be formed with two individuals of the same sex, sharing a household with marriage and reproduction. Some of the different forms of the postmodern family are

1. Cohabitation families, or unwed couples who live in the same household
2. Single-parent families, which consist of one parent and one or more biological or adopted children
3. Family by choice or Same-sex families, which consist of couples of the same sex and one or more children
4. Blended Family, family formed with second marriage partner and children from previous marriage.

Let us discuss these forms of postmodern family briefly-

1. Cohabitation families – Such a family is formed when a man and woman live together in a sexual relationship without being married. Cohabiting couples may choose to live together in an effort to spend more time together or to save money on living costs. Many couples view cohabitation as a “trial run” for marriage.
2. Single-parent families- Single-parent families are those in which one parent takes care and responsibility of one or more children without the assistance of the other biological parent. The sense of marriage as a "permanent" institution has been weakened, allowing individuals to consider leaving marriages more readily than they may have in the past. Other factors for the rise of single-parent families are increase in divorce rate and separation of two parent families, birth outside of marriage, and adoption by individual within or outside marriage and some single parents choose to remain unmarried because of unavailability of marriage partners.
3. Family by Choice: A relatively newly recognised type of family, again especially in industrial countries like the United States, is the family by choice. The term was popularised by the LGBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) community to describe a family not recognised by the legal system. Family by choice can include adopted children, live-in partners, and kin of each member of the household and close friends. Increasingly family by choice is being practiced by unmarried people and families who move away from the consanguine family. The phrase ‘Families We Choose’ is used by Kath Weston to describe the ways in which GLBT folks create their own “gay families” out of their friends and ex-lovers. These family formations, which provided great emotional

and well as service support, “tended to have extremely fluid boundaries”. Gay families were chosen and individualistic in meaning, in contrast to blood family which is definitely not chosen. These families also lacked models and were free form and created a new, not necessarily mimicking blood family lines. Weston also discusses the issue of community and the social construction of a LGBTQ identity, around which a person’s life may orbit to a greater or lesser extent. She describe that white participants often experienced the gay community as their first community experience, whereas for people of color, they felt a conflict between now-competing identities and displacement of one identity while in the space of the other.

- 4. Blended family: A blended family consists of previously divorced spouses, their new marriage partners, children from previous marriage as well as multiple sets of grandparents and other relations. Blended families are becoming more common, especially in industrial societies like the United States.

Activity 2

Look around in your neighbourhood and compare two families- one having a biological child and another in which the child is adopted. Do you think attitudes differ for biological parents and for social parents by adoption? If so how? Discuss

Check Your progress 3

- 1) Discuss the concept of postmodern family. Answer in three lines.

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- 2) What do you understand by ‘Family we choose’?

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2.5 CHANGES IN FAMILY

Due to changes taking place in the socio-economic and political structure around the globe, there have been changes in the structure and relationships in the family. Today, for many individuals, families are constructed and maintained through social bonds and support networks instead of biological ties. Individuals are forming “families of choice” to whom they turn for emotional, financial, and physical assistance. Global communications such as the Internet, e-mail, and satellite linkups are facilitating these relationships over space and time. While in the past, locale mattered, today social relationships are maintained over great distances with ease.

There is also change in the way the family is perceived. Family life in traditional society was assumed to begin with marriage, proceed through birth and nurturing

of children and end with death of parents. Today, it is believed that there is neither predictable sequence nor a unified mode of formation. Couples cohabit before marriage, continue to live- in for their entire life without marriage and reproduction or end the first or second marriage, re-marry and stay with their step children. Family structures have become more diverse and complex in the last decade but despite this family will continue to play an important role in the lives of individuals. The family no longer has a definite and fixed definition as it exists in multiple forms

2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied various aspects of the institution of family. We began with various definitions of family and then studied how family is different from kins, household and domestic group. We also studied the main characteristic and functions of family as well the various types of family. It also included discussion on the emergence of new forms of family and the changes taking place

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2.8 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) A family is a group and an institution, as it has certain rules and procedures at its base. It is considered as the most basic and fundamental unit in the society and therefore a universal grouping in human societies. As a social group characterised by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction.
- 2) Family and household are often used inter changeably but are not the same thing. Family is a group of two people or more who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together. Whereas a household is a single economic unit in which all members are mutually dependent on one another for the satisfaction of most of their wants.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) The family is a universal institution. The family is constituted of the husband and wife and their children. The family is composed of persons who interact and communicate with each other in their social roles

- 2) The family performs the function of socialising the children, that is, the elder members enable younger members to learn the norms and values of the society. The family acts as an agency for holding and transmission of property. The family grants social status to the members.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The term postmodern family has been used by sociologist to refer to the new forms of family emerging in the contemporary society. The concept describes the multitude forms in which the institution of family can occur. It brings out an alternate understanding of family that it does not require a male and female sharing a household with their biological offspring.
- 2) The phrase 'Families We Choose' is used by Kath Weston to describe the ways in which LGBTQ folks create their own "gay families" out of their friends and ex-lovers. These family formations, which provided great emotional and a support system, "they tended to have extremely fluid boundaries". Gay families were chosen and individualistic in meaning, in contrast to blood family which is definitely not chosen.



UNIT 3: KINSHIP*

Structure

- 3.0 Objective
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Key Terms and Concepts
 - 3.2.1 Moiety, Phratry, Clan,
 - 3.2.2 Lineage and Descent
 - 3.2.3 Abbreviation and Diagrams
- 3.3 Types of Kin Relations
 - 3.3.1 Consanguine and Affine
 - 3.3.2 Agnatic and Cognatic
 - 3.3.3 Lineal and collateral
 - 3.3.4 Social or Cultural
- 3.4 Kinship Terminologies
 - 3.4.1 Mode of use
 - 3.4.2 Range of application
- 3.5 Kinship Usages and Behaviour
 - 3.5.1 Avoidance and Joking Relations
 - 3.5.2 Avunculate and Amitate
 - 3.5.3 Couvade
 - 3.5.4 Teknonymy
- 3.6 Functions of Kinship
 - 3.6.1 Group formation
 - 3.6.2 Regulation of Social structure
 - 3.6.3 Kinship and Rituals
- 3.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.8 References
- 3.9 Specimen Answers to check your progress

3.0. OBJECTIVE

After reading this unit you would be able to:

- Explain about kinship terminologies;
- Discuss the kinship usage and behaviour;
- Note the functions of kinship in society.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Kinship is the universal feature of human culture that served as the major organising principle in human societies. It can be defined as a principle by which individuals or groups of individuals are organised into social groups, roles, categories and genealogy by means of kinship terminologies. In Anthropology the study of kinship has existed ever since the mid-to-late 1800s, when LH.

Morgan and others invented the study of kinship. According to Robin Fox kinship is to anthropology what logic is to philosophy or the nude is to art; it is the basic discipline of the subject. The method central to the anthropological study of kinship is the comparative method - comparing similarities and differences of two cultures/societies.

Kinship has been defined by a number of anthropologist highlighting the role of biology and alliance in the formation of kin relation. Let us look at the some of the key definitions:

- *Claude Levi Strauss*- “Kinship and its related notions are at the same time prior and exterior to biological relations to which we tend to reduce them”.
- *L.H. Morgan* defines kin terms are, “reflected the forms of marriage and the related makeup of the family (system of consanguinity and affinity of woman family 1871).
- *A.R. Radcliffe- Brown* (1952) agreed that “Kinship terms are like signposts to interpersonal conducts or etiquette, with the implication of appropriate reciprocal right, duties privileges and obligations.
- *MacLennan* Writes that kinship terms are merely forms of solution and was not related to actual blood ties at all.
- *J. Beattie*, “Kinship is not set of genealogical relationships; it is set of social relationships”.

3.2.1 Moiety, Phratry, and Clan

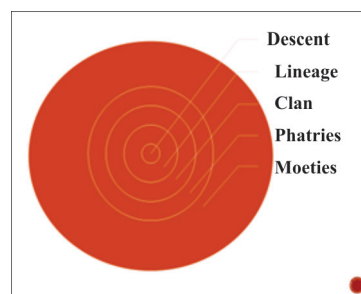
The largest unilineal social group is the moiety, which results from the division of a society into two halves based on descent. The word moiety is derived from a French word that means "half." The society is divided into two large unilineal descent groups that have reciprocal responsibilities.

When phratries breaks it up and separates it into clans. A clan is a social group made up of several houses whose heads claim genealogy from the same ancestor (Murdock). Clans are larger unilineal kinship groups than lineages. The members of this group are thought to be descended from a common ancestor, however the genealogical connections aren't specified. Clans are naturally exogamous. Clans can be divided into various categories: Clans can be patrilineal, matrilineal, ancestral, totemic, territorial, and so on.

3.2.2 Lineage and Descent

A lineage is a unilineal kin group descended from a common ancestor or founder who lived four to six generation ago and in which relationships among members can be exactly stated in genealogical terms. A lineage can also be a corporate group if it has the attributes

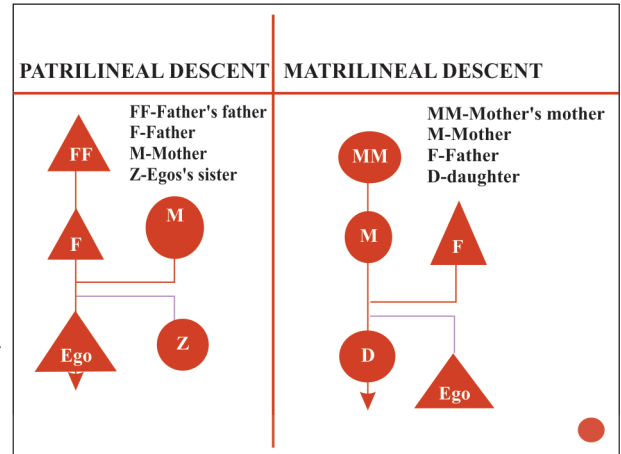
- It has a chief/council
- The group possess collective property
- Is a land owning group
- Groups as a whole is responsible for war indemnity and punishment



When a lineage becomes big in size it sub divides into descent group, though

in anthropology lineage and descent are used synonymously. Descent refers to a relationship defined by connection to an ancestor (or ancestress) through a culturally recognised sequence of parent-child links. It enables to trace of relationships inter-generationally through real, putative, or fictive parent-child links. Descent enables a person to connect to offspring and parentage, thus trace one's ancestry.

Descent can be unilineal, that is either through male line or patri-lineal or through female line or matrilineal. Descent can be traced through both male and female line and this is referred as double descent as found among the Yako of Africa (studied by Daryl Forde). Here, inheritance of immovable materials, such as land, is the domain of the patri-clan while the matri-clan controls the inheritance of moveable objects such as livestock. In certain societies it either line which is recognised for descent and this is known as cognatic descent. The Iban of Borneo (studied by Freeman) is an anthropological illustration of cognatic descent. It is also referred as bilateral or bilineal descent system.



Check Your Progress 1

1. Define kinship.

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2. Discuss the two types of unilineal descent with a suitable diagram.

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3.3 TYPES OF KINSHIP

Kinship as a concept has been used to refer to a variety of things, and has numerous meanings.

In western societies, a man's kin and affine are confined to a few close relatives for practical purposes. Whereas in non-western society kinship relations is broad and inclusive of geographical and other factors. But despite the variance, some familial and affinity links are culturally recognised in every civilization. Therefore it is important to comprehend the different types of relations reckoned as kinship.

3.3.1 Consanguineous and Affine

Consanguineous kinship refers to a blood relationship. The consanguineous kin are blood relatives, those between parents and their children, as well as between siblings. It refers to kinship ties established at the time of birth and hence considered as universal form of kinship. Consanguineous kin are primary kinship son, brother, sister, uncle ('chacha'), elder uncle ('taoo'), nephew, and cousin. In this regard, it should be noted that blood relationships can be both real and imagined. Affinal relations, on the other hand, refer to relations formed from marriage alliance. The word 'alliance' is derives from the French, where it can be used to describe marriage, or the fact of being in an 'in-law' relation. Kinship is thus based on marriage, like the relationship between husband and wife. Not only husband-wife but relatives of both families are also affinal relatives, like father, mother, sisters and brothers-in-laws, etc. Marriage is the basis of these relations and not blood.

3.3.2 Agnatic and Cognatic

The term agnatic means the reckoning of relationship by male link(s) exclusively, regardless of sex of ego (starting point for referring to the kinship diagram). Therefor an agnates are person related by patrilineal descent, that is, kin who trace their relationship by descent through males only from a common ancestor. Agnates are under the authority of a single pater and resided together. Grandfather, father, son, father's brother and grandson are all agnates. Cognatic refers to bilateral or consanguineal kinsman or kinswoman. The closest of all cognatic relationships is that between children of the same father and mother.

3.3.3 Lineal and Collateral

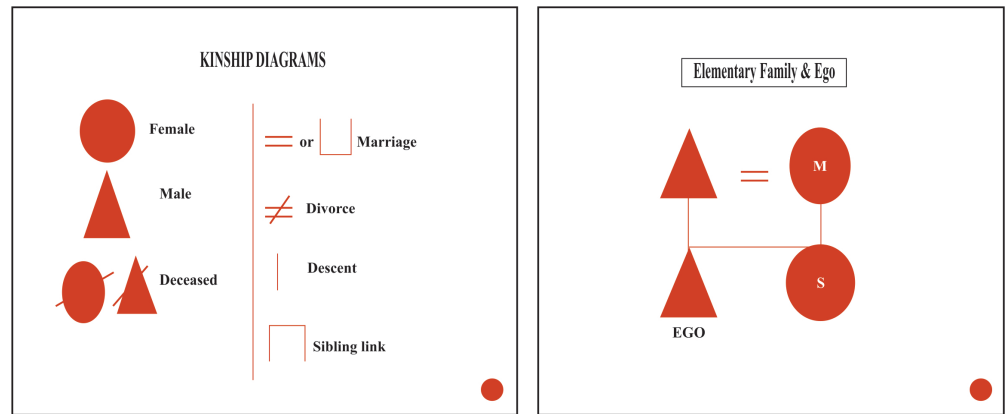
A lineal kin is a person who is related by a direct line of descent such as father, father's father, son and son's son etc. A collateral kin is a person who is related indirectly through the mediation of another relative such as father's brother, mother's sister, that is, uncle, aunts, cousins etc. Descendants of lineal kin are called collateral kin, FB (father's brother) is lineal and FBS (father's brother's son) is collateral

3.3.4 Social or Cultural

In the 20th century social anthropologist started questioning the biological understanding of kinship. According to Schneider, not all kinship is based on blood (consanguine) or marriage (affine). In his study of American family, he argued that kinship was abstract and a cultural construct. By this he meant that other than biological relation kinship involved social or cultural kin relations as well. Social kinships refers to relations in which are not necessarily related by blood or marriage and yet share a sense of kinship. In contemporary society examples of social kinship would be homosexual families, families formed due to new reproductive technologies and also relations developed due religious affiliation or social group membership.

3.3.3 Kinship Diagrams and Genealogical Abbreviation

Kinship diagrams are used by anthropologists to depict relationships. During the interview process, cultural anthropologists might use kinship diagrams to swiftly sketch out relationships between people. It also allows people to remain anonymous while visually presenting a culture's kinship pattern without resorting to names, which can be confusing. The box below gives detailed explanation of symbols used to draw for kinship diagrams.



Besides using symbols, anthropologist also make use of genealogical abbreviation in kinship diagrams. Below is list of some of the abbreviation commonly used:-

Activity 1

With help of your parent and grandparent make a genealogical chart of your family up to four generation (starting from great grandfather). Mark out relations from father’s side with red ink. Can you identify what is the type of decent followed?

Genealogical Abbreviations

F = Father	M = Mother	S = Son
D = Daughter	FZ=Father’s sister	MB=Mother’s Brother
MBD=mother’s brother daughter	B = Brother	Z = Sister
FZD=Father’s sister daughter		
W = Wife	H = Husband	SP = Spouse
LA = In-law	SI = Sibling GP = Grandparent(s)	GC = Grandchild(ren)

3.4 KINSHIP TERMINOLOGIES

The American cultural anthropologist's unlike the British Anthropologist, stress on the need to locate those features in the social structure for the origins of humanity. These structuralists argued in favour social categories that regulated human behaviour. Lewis Henry Morgan initiated the understanding of kinship system with reference to social categories. Every society use different terms to refer for distinguishing roles and responsibilities of the members. Kinship terminology thus classifies members as per the rules of group formation. According to Morgan, kinship terms enables to construct a typology of relationship in society and due to variance in the use of kinship terminology a comparative study was possible.

3.4.1 Mode of Use

According to Murdock (1949), the interrelation between kinship terminology and kinship behaviour, is reflected in the mode of use, he classifies kinship terms into two category:

- 1) *Terms of address* – kinship terms used to address some, that is, what you call someone when talking to them, e.g., "Nanna"

- 2) *Terms of reference* – means terms used to refer to a particular kin relation that is what you call someone when talking about them, e.g., "my grandmother", my mother's sister and so on.

3.4.2 Range of Application

Kinship terms are those terms which are used in designating kin of various types. According to Morgan (1870) there are two types of kinship terminology on the basis of the range of application:

1. **Classificatory**-a single term used for two or more kinds of relatives who included in a single terminology. In this system, terms that are used for lineal are also used for collateral. Thus in English terminology, a single term 'uncle' is used for both father's brother and mother's brother. Classificatory terms binds two relations, there is no difference between parental and marital relatives. The principal of classification may be applied to a wide range of relationship thereby establishing wide range of kinship. Radcliffe-Brown has identified three principles of classificatory terminology that inform kinship behaviour-
 - i) *Unity of the Sibling Group*- sister and brother belong to same descent therefore clubbed together. The elementary family is the social unit and is seen as unitary.
 - ii) *Unity of Lineage*- In patrilineal society, a man belongs to patrilineal lineage, thus his relations with father's lineage is primary and that with mother's lineage is secondary. All relatives from mothers' side- in the first ascending generation is clubbed in one group, thus all female member upto three generation are referred as mother and all male members referred as MB (mother's brother).
 - iii) *Unity of generations-same and alternate generations*-In the same generation principle there is no distinction on the basis of sex, generation is the basis of classification. In the alternate generation, that is the relation between grandparent and grandson is a relations of equality, friendlier, passing of knowledge and tradition. On the other the relation with first ascending generation is formal, between parent+ children there is a relation of superiority and subordination
2. **Descriptive** –few specific terms for relatives of 1st and 2nd order and other relatives refereed by compound of these terms, specific terms used to show exact relations, eg- FB, MZ, FBS etc.

Lineal and collateral kin are separated; for example, mother and mother's sister, although of the same generation and sex, are distinguished. The advantage of descriptive is that there is less ambiguity, distant relatives identified easily, for e.g till 5th order-MMBDD

Check Your Progress 2

1. What do you understand by kinship terminology? Discuss the functions of kinship terminology.

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2. Discuss the two types of kinship terminology as suggested by Morgan in the study of kinship.

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3.5 KINSHIP USAGES AND BEHAVIOUR

Kinship usage refers to the pattern of behavior between kins in society. It establishes what constitutes proper and acceptable role relationships. As a result, it regulates social life. Some examples of kinship usages are relations of avoidance and joking, teknonymy, avunculate, amitate, couvades.

3.5.1 Avoidance and Joking Relationship

In North India, patrilineal society, there is a cultural norm whereby kins have to remain away from each other and maintain restrictions in their behavioural pattern while interaction with each other. For example a father-in-law avoids having face-to face contact with his daughter-in-law and thus the practice of veiling or purdah system.

Joking relationship is the exact opposite form of "avoidance," In contrast to avoiding face-to-face interaction, the daughter-in-laws have the privilege to be at ease with younger kins of husband, especially brother-in-law. They share all types of jokes, including obscene sexual jokes. Typical examples are a man and his wife's younger sisters or a woman and her husband's younger brothers, cross cousins, and grandparents and grandchildren. Joking partnerships can be seen in both tribal and Hindu cultures.

According to Radcliffe-Brown relations of avoidance and joking relations balanced out relations within the household. While avoidance ensured a high level of respect to relations with restricted contact was maintained else there were chances of confrontation and conflict. Joking relations therefore eased out the seriousness of such relation. It allowed kin to freely share jokes and even show some amount of disrespect. Thus for Radcliffe-Brown, joking and avoidance interactions reduce conflict and improve social solidarity.

3.5.2 Avunculate and Amitate

Kinship usage observed between the children of a mother's brother and his sister in many matrilineal society. In these societies, the maternal uncle takes on many of the responsibilities of the father. His nephew and niece are still under his command as they are the inheritors of his possessions. Avunculate is a practice found among the Trobriand islanders of Melanesia, the Fijians, African tribes, and the Nayars of south India.

Another form of kinship usage related to the avunculate and is more common among patrilineal people is amitate. Here, the sister of the father is treated with great respect and given top priority. She is more than a mother to her nephew, and she wields influence over him in a variety of situations. In actuality, it is a social mechanism that prevents the father's sisters from being neglected, particularly when they are ejected from their in-laws' home. This form of kinship usage is seen in Polynesian Tonga, Toda of South India, and other communities.

3.5.3 Couvade

Another unusual application of kinship between a husband and his wife is found among the Toda and Khasi communities. In these communities, when a man's wife gives birth to a child, the husband is forced to live a life of austerity. Along with his wife, he must adhere to a stringent diet and obey a variety of taboos. Couvades are regarded by anthropologists as a symbolic depiction of establishing paternity on a child. This particular usage was common among the Nayars of South India, the Ainus of Japan, and a few Chinese villages a few years ago.

3.5.4. Teknonymy

The Anthropologist Edward Tylor coined the term 'teknonymy,' which was derived from a Greek word and first used in anthropology. In this type of kinship usage, a kin is not directly referred but is referred to through another kin. A kin serves as a point of contact between two kins. For example in a traditional Hindu family, a wife does not mention her husband's name. She communicates with him via her son or daughter. He is referred to by her as Guddu's or Tunnu's father.

Check Your Progress 3

1. Discuss how avoidance and joking relations are opposed to each other.

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2. Explain any two kinship usages with suitable examples.

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3.6 FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

The significance of kinship system lies in the function performed in group formation, regulation of social structure and in ritual ceremony. With social, economic and political changes though kinship no longer remains central for economic and political roles, it does retain its primary functions.

3.6.1 Group Formation

The foremost and primary function of kinship in primitive society was group formation. As a result of marriage, each woman is assigned a husband and her children become his children, forming a unique group of father, mother, and children that we refer to as "family. The groups formed on basis of kinship ties become relevant for determining rules of inheritance, for instance in a patrilineal society the agnatic members have the rights of inheritance and succession. Kin groups also regulate marriage behavior by defining marriage rules like exogamy and endogamy.

3.6.2 Regulation of Social structure

Kinship usage regulates kinship role relationships, such as how one kinsman should act in the presence of another or what one kinsman owes to another. It establishes appropriate and acceptable role relationships between father and daughter, brother and sister, son-in-law and mother-in-law, and fellow lineage members and clansmen. As a result, kinship functions as a regulariser of social life and maintains the social system's unity.

3.6.3 Kinship and Rituals

Kinship relations determines the participation of kin in life cycle rituals, especially the cradle ceremony, marriage, and death. In many societies, life cycle rituals indicate the importance of certain kin. For example, in patrilineal society, during a naming ceremony, the newborn's name must be given by the father's sister. During the marriages of daughters, specific rites and rituals must be conducted by the mother's brother. Close relatives are obligated to give gifts to newlywed couples, and they in return are equally rewarded from both the bride's and groom's family. During funeral rituals, it is customary for close kinsmen to practice mourning for specified period.

Besides role in rituals, in simple societies, kinship also regulated political life, the position of chief was hereditary. Segmentary lineage functioned to maintain law and order in stateless society as found in the Nuer society (Evans - Pritchard). With the formation of nation state the political function of kinship became institutionalised. Caste-class identity becoming flexible, the adherence to marriage rules has been affected. Despite these changes kinship system does remains an integral and universal in all societies.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have been able to learn about kinship system and definition of kinship as given by a number of anthropologist. In every society there are the different kinds of kin relations, two most important are consanguine and affine. Kinship does not only refer to biological relation but to social relations which are constructed in every day interactions. We have also learnt about the relevance of kinship usage and kinship terminology. Kinship system helps in group formation and regulates social life

3.9 REFERENCES

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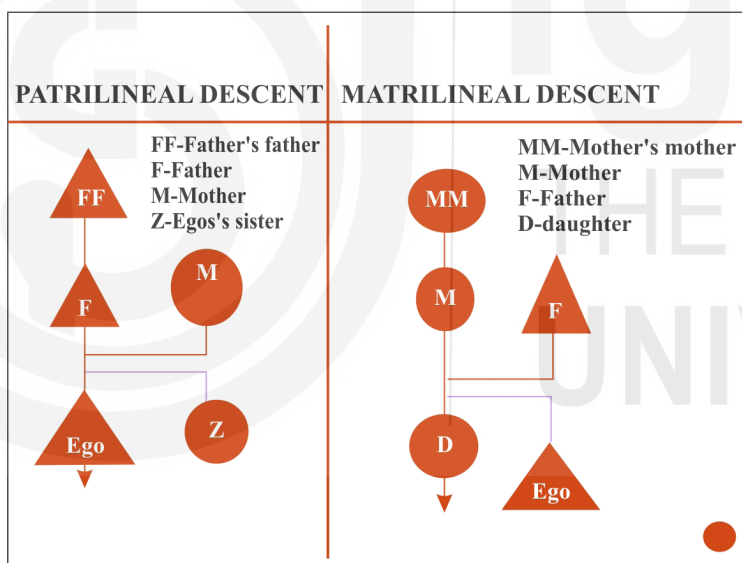
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3.10 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. Kinship can be defined as a web of relationship established through blood (consanguine) or marriage (affine). Besides blood and affinal relations, there are also social kinship that constructed in everyday interactions.
2. The two types of unilineal descent are
 - a) Patrilineal descent – the male line is used for tracing decent, all male members in the male line are members of the group known as patri-clan. Example, North Indian Kinship
 - b) Matrilineal descent- system in which descent is traced through female, line of inheritance and succession is from mother to daughter. Example- Khasis and Nayars in South India



Check Your Progress 2

1. Kinship terminologies refers terms that are used to refer to relations between persons. These terms have been assumed to identify categories of genealogical differences of sex, lineage and generation. Kinship terms help in identification and distinction of various kin on the basis of roles and responsibilities.
2. According to Morgan, kinship terminology can be classified into two categories:-
 - a) Descriptive- Distinct and separate terms are used to refer and address different kin. It enables to recognise the exact relation between individuals. Example are the terms like 'mama' and 'maasi' as used in North India.

- b) **Classificatory**-In this a number of kin, lineal, collateral and affine may be clubbed together and referred by the same term. The term 'uncle' and 'aunt' as used in English terminology refers to classificatory terminology.

Check Your Progress 3

1. Relations of avoidance and joking relations balanced out relations within the household. While avoidance ensured a high level of respect to relations with restricted contact was maintained else there were chances of confrontation and conflict. Joking relations therefore eased out the seriousness of such relation. It allowed kin to freely share jokes and even show some amount of disrespect. For example, in her in-laws house a girl maintains formal relations with father-in-law but can be at ease and openly share her view with her husband's younger brother. The relation between 'bhabhi-dewar' is the best example of joking relations.
2. i) **Avunculate** : It is a practice found among Trobriand islanders of Melanesia, the Fijians, some frican tribes and the Nayars of Kerala in India. In these societies the maternal uncle takes on many of the responsibilities of the father.
ii) **Avoidance Relationship** : In North Indian, patrilineal society, there is a cultural norm whereby kin have to remain away from each other and maintain restrictions in their behavioural pattern while interacting with each other. For example a father-in-law avoids having face-to face contact with his daughter-in-law and thus the practice of veiling or purdah system.