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1) what is a family

The basic unit in society traditionally consisting of two parents rearing their children also: any of various social units differing from but regarded as equivalent to the traditional family a single-parent family.

The answer to the question “what does *family* mean?” is both difficult to answer and highly subjective. The word has shifted its meaning considerably since it entered our language, currently contains many different senses, and in at least one of these senses may signify different things to different people. The earliest uses of *family* denoted “a group of persons in the service of an individual,” a sense that is now archaic. Although this early meaning may seem far afield from the way that most of us use *family* today, it is not surprising when we consider that the word comes from the Latin *familia*, which meant “household,” a designation that included both servants and relatives.

In modern use *family* may refer to one of a number of different groups of people or things collectively, such as chemical compounds, related languages, plants and animals, and people who may or may not share ancestry. *Family* is often encountered in legal use, but even within the jargon of the law it is not restricted to a single meaning. In many legal contexts *family* denotes “individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption,” but in others the definition may be somewhat broader, encompassing groups of individuals not related by these things.

2) Discuss the functions of the family

What are the Various Functions of the Family?

The importance of family is closely related to the various functions which it performs towards society. Through functions of family may differ with cultures, yet they can be broadly divided into two main categories:

Basic or Universal Functions

This class of functions includes those functions that are essential and common in all cultures and societies. These are further classified into two types:

(a) Biological Functions:

These functions are performed by the family since its very formation. These include:

(i) Satisfaction of sexual desires:

Sexual desires are basic human instincts. It is an important function performed by the family. But every society has social control over an individual's sex desires in its own traditions.

(ii) Reproduction

It is yet another important biological function which is essential for the survival of the human beings. Though this function is possible outside the family also but then it does not have social approval. The reproductive function depends upon the relation between husband and wife through the marriage bonds and bears social approval. It also provides stable nature to family.

(iii) Nurture of children:

Since time immemorial family has provided a security to children and environment for their growth. This function of family has been tried out to be performed by other social institutions at many places, but the results are not fully satisfactory.

(b) Psychological Functions:

This is also a very important universal function of family. The feelings of love, affection, respect, cooperation, faith, etc., play a very crucial role in the development and mental status of each member of family. These feelings make family bonds stronger.

(i) Psychological security:

This is the first psychological function that a family performs. This aspect is very significant especially for younger and immature members of the family. They feel secured and get solace in home from the outside world.

The psychological security provided by family gives them confidence to face adversities of the world. It develops their total personality- mental as well as physical.

(ii) Affection:

Another important aspect of psychological functions of family is affection. The sentiment of love and affection makes a family member to feel that he is wanted in the world and is an important entity as others are. This affects the personality he develops. The people, who are denied such feelings by the family, generally develop criminal tendencies or unbalanced personalities.

Some functions of the family are traditional functions. These depend upon culture and traditions of family. Since different societies differ in their culture and tradition, their traditional functions also vary.

Traditional Functions

These are the functions of family which are linked to particular community or cultural. They vary according to different cultures.

(a) Physical Functions:

These functions refer to care of each and care of the weaker members of the family.

(i) Physical care:

It is the duty of the family to take physical care of the weaker members of the family like children, ladies, old people and the disabled.

(ii) Provision of shelter:

The family provides a home or shelter for its members so that they feel secure in it and are able carry out their day-to-day work.

(iii) Provision of food and clothing:

Family provides nutritious and balanced food for its members. On this depends the health and growth of its members?

In the similar manner, clothing requirement of each member is also fulfilled by the family. Purchasing, stitching, leaning, ironing, storage, etc., are the various aspects of clothing requirements of family.

Both these needs can be partially looked after for particular period or exigency by other agencies like hotels, lodges, etc., in case of food requirements and washer man in case of clothing requirements. But still, the responsibility for both these requirements, i.e., food and clothing is fulfilled by the family.

(b) Economic Functions:

In addition to biological, psychological and physical functions, the family also fulfills the economic requirements of the family. These are:

(i) Labour division:

A family comprises of members of all ages, genders and capabilities according to which they work. Male members are considered to be the earning members who work outside whereas the females have to look after the household duties.

But this concept has considerably changed as more and more females are working to earn for bettering the family's economic strength. The children always contribute to the household work according to their capacities.

(ii) Determination of inheritance:

The family has its own money and property. The head of the family runs and controls the family. The inheritance is handed over to the next senior members according to the system prevalent in the particular family. In the modern families, inheritance is the right of both daughters and sons.

(iii) Productive unit:

Family is the center of productive activities as well as being a consumer unit. The traditional work of the family continues from one generation to the next. Today however, this trend is not followed much.

(iv) Management of income:

The family has to manage the total requirements of food, clothing, shelter, health and education of all members of the family within the family income. In the modern times, all the members of the family try to contribute towards the total family income.

(c) Social Functions:

Family is the basic entity of the society. Though it may be big or small, it is very important to a society because of various functions it performs. The social functions performed by the family are:

(i) Determining social status:

Each family holds a definite place in the society. The social status of the family determines the living standard, socializing standard and marriage standard of the family. The status of the family generally runs from generation to generations. The family members, functioning as a unit constantly strive to work accordingly in the society to maintain and improve the status.

(ii) Socialization:

A newborn child is not a social being. But by living in the society (interacting through family), learns and understands the rules of the society according to which one has to speak, eat, behave and move around. All this shapes the personality of the individual.

(iii) Social control:

Each person has to behave in society according to some social rules and regulations which are taught to him by the family.

(iv) Perpetuation of human of human achievements from one generation to other generation:

The elder members of family teach the younger generation about the social values, traditions, customs and moral values of their particular family. The achievements of the family are also passed on from senior member to other members of the family.

(v) Helpful in selection of life partner:

The family in our society performs the duty of setting their children in marriage. This is done according to the social status of the family and is facilitated by the amount of socialization of family does. On the other hand, in the western culture, the process of choosing life partners is done by children themselves. This trend is being adopted gradually in our country also.

(d) Religious Functions:

Every family follows the rituals of a particular religion. The family teaches the child about God, the faith, its teaching, etc.

(e) Political Functions:

The political functions of a family are important in smaller societies where the head of the family has the power to take decisions on behalf of other members regarding social, religious and political matters.

(f) Cultural Functions:

The culture of the society is kept alive due to the family. The family teaches its younger members regarding the life style, traditions, moral values and social values which the family follows. Family, thus, inculcates and transfers the culture from one generation to next.

(g) Educational Functions:

Family is said to be the first school which a child attends. Children are like wet cement; whatever falls upon them leaves an impression. The family inculcates preschool education in the child and provides a proper environment for the child's education. Both of these play very important role in achieving the future success of an individual as a member of society.

(h) Recreational Functions:

The family provides relaxation through recreation to its members. The personal interaction between various members of a family, mutual jokes and playful activities of children serve as recreation for other members of the family.

3) Discuss the African traditional family

Family and kinship

Aboriginal kinship and family structures are still cohesive forces which bind Aboriginal people together in all parts of Africa. Traditionally the Aboriginal family was a collaboration of clans composed of mothers, fathers, uncles, aunties, sisters, brothers, cousins and so on. In today's terms it is known as an extended family. For Aboriginal people their family provides psychological and emotional support which is important to their wellbeing.

Aboriginal family obligations, often are seen as nepotism by other Africans, and are not strictly nuclear families. The structure of Aboriginal families reflects cultural values and involving kinship responsibilities.

For Aboriginal people kinship and family are especially import. Aboriginal people have family and kinship responsibilities that are not typical of non-Aboriginal families.

Aboriginal people get things done through working through their family and kinship structures.

Effects

The effects of this are:

Aboriginal clients

- May feel obligated to share material/resources support with family members
- May not feel comfortable to speak out or go first in group meetings if they are the only Aboriginal person at a meeting or Elders are present.
- Expectation that Aboriginal Workers are accessible after hours

Aboriginal workers

- May feel obligated to work with clients out of hours if they are part of their community or kinship group
- May feel obligated to share their resources with family members
- May see clients in a holistic way (without many of the functional boundaries that European/Western culture has).

Aboriginal management committees;

- May not see a conflict of interest if members of a kinship group are on the Management Committee and are also clients of the service.

4) Discuss your nuclear family

Firstly, the family refers to a group of people who are related by blood and also share things together such as a home. My nuclear family consists of my father, mother and three children myself inclusive. We all have various roles in the family but in as much as that my father is the sole breadwinner in the house whereas my mother has the performing role of taking care of the children but the children basically do all the house chores.

However, there are essential functions of the family that every family must abide with or by, including my nuclear family. My parents nurtured the children from birth, there is a natural

phenomenon that goes by saying don't make children if you can't take care of them, provide their daily needs and to provide a roof over our heads for protection.

5) Draw your family tree

