

Kinship

By Mr. Arvind Sirohi

Teaching Assistant

Department of Sociology

Chaudhary Charan Singh University , Meerut

KINSHIP: Meaning ,Types

- Kinship is the web of social relationships that form an important part of the lives of all humans in all societies Kinship refers to the culturally defined relationships between individuals who are commonly thought of as having family ties. Kinship can refer both to the patterns of social relationships themselves, or it can refer to the study of the patterns of social relationships in one or more human cultures .

..

- Kinship refers to the culturally defined relationships between individuals who are commonly thought of as having family ties. All societies use kinship as a basis for forming social groups and for classifying people.

Definition:

- A few definition of Kinship is given below:
- Encyclopedia of Britannica defines kinship as, ‘a socially recognized relationships between people in a culture, who are either held to be biologically related or given the status of relatives by marriage, adoption, or other rituals.’
- Abercrombie states that,” The social relationships deriving from blood ties and marriages are collectively referred to as kinship.’

..

- L Stone states that 'Kinship is the recognition of relationships between persons based on descent or marriage.'

Types of Kinship:

- Most social scientists agree that kinship is based on two broad areas: birth and marriage; others say a third category of 'kinship involves social ties. These three types of kinship are:

...

- **Consanguineal:** Also known as a primary kinship, it involves people who are directly related. This kinship is based on blood—or birth(consanguineal): the relationship between parents and children as well as siblings, says the Sociology Group. This is the most basic and universal type of kinship.

...

- **Affinal:** This kinship is based on marriage (affinal). The relationship between husband and wife is also considered a basic form of kinship.
- **Social:** Really not all kinship derives from blood (consanguineal) or marriage (affinal). There are also social kinships, where individuals not connected by birth or marriage may still have a bond of kinship, he said.

Degree of Kinship:

- Kinship basically has three degrees
 - (1) Primary Kinship
 - (2) Secondary Kinship
 - (3) Tertiary Kinship

...

- **(1) Primary Kinship** On the basis of nearness or distance relatives can be classified in several categories. Some relatives are very close, direct and near, for example, father-son, sister-brother, and husband-wife. They are called primary kinship.

...

- (2) **Secondary Kinship** they are primary kin of primary kin. In other words, they are related through primary kin. They are not our primary kin but are the primary kin of our primary kin, hence our secondary kin. For example, father's brother (chacha), sister's husband (bahnoi) is secondary kin. The father is my primary kin and his brother is the primary kin of father. Therefore, father's brother is my secondary kin, the primary kin of primary kin. Similarly, sister is my primary kin but her husband is my secondary kin.

...

- **(3) Tertiary Kinship** They are the secondary kin of our primary kin or primary kin of our secondary kin. Thus the wife of brother-in-law(sala) called salhaj in Hindi is tertiary kin because brother-in-law is my secondary kin and his wife is the primary kin of brother-in-law. Similarly the brother-in-law of my brother is my tertiary kin because the brother is my primary kin and his brother-in-law is the secondary kin of my brother.
- According to Murdock, there are thirty-three secondary and 151 tertiary kin of a person.

Kinship Usages:

- Every relationship involves a particular type of behavior. There are some usages which regulate the behavior of different kin. These usages are called kinship usages. Kinship usages or the rules of kinship are significant in understanding kinship system. They serve two main purposes:

...

- They create groups or special groupings or kin. For example- family extended family, clan etc.
- Kinship rules govern the role of relationships among the kins.

Some of these relationships are: avoidance, joking relationship , avunculate, amitate, and couvades.

...

- **Avoidance:**
- In all societies the usage of avoidance is observed in one form or another. It means that the two kins should remain away from each other. Thus a father-in-law should avoid daughter-in-law. The purdah system in Hindu family in the north illustrates the usage of avoidance.

..

- **Joking relationship:**

- A joking relationship involves a particular combination of friendliness and antagonism between individuals and groups in certain social situations. It is the reverse of avoidance relationship. Under it a relation is permitted to tease or make fun of the other. The relationship between devar – bhabhi , jija - sali is joking relationship.

••

- **Avunculate:**
- This kinship usage is a peculiar feature of matriarchal system. It gives to the maternal uncle (mama) a prominent place in the life of his nephews and nieces. It refers to the special relationship that persists in some societies between a man and his mother's brother

..

- **Amitate:**
- The usage of amitate gives special role to the father's sister. When a special role given to the father's sister it is known as amitate. The father's sister gets more respect than the mother.

..

- **Couvade:**
- This is a queer usage which is found among many primitive tribes like the Khasi and the Toda. Under this usage the husband is made to lead the life of an invalid along with his wife whenever she gives birth to a child.

..

● **THANKING YOU**