

UPSCprep Free Daily Answer Writing Initiative

Subject: Sociology

Questions

Q1. Regional variations in kinship reflect on the socio-cultural diversity in Indian society.

Discuss. (20 Marks)

Q2. Where do you situate a 'live-in relationship' within the institution of marriage? (10 Marks)

Model Structures

Q1. Regional variations in kinship reflect on the socio-cultural diversity in Indian society.

Discuss. (20 Marks)

Introduction

- Kinship is a relationship among people driven by relationship based on consanguinity (blood relationship) and affinity (relationship based on marriage). Kinship is an institution that transforms individualism to collectivism.

Main Body

In Indian society, there are variations of the kinship system across various regions.

- Irawati Karwe has studied the regional variations in the kinship system
 - North Indian Kinship-Aryan Kinship System.
 - South Indian Kinship-Dravidian Kinship System.
 - Central India Kinship-Mixed Kinship System
 - Eastern India Kinship-Exclusive Kinship System.
- The variations are based on kinship terms, rules of marriage, territorial affiliation, and kin relationships.

Kinship System in North-India

- According to Louis Dumont, in North India, the kinship system is fixed. North Indian kinship is very ritualistic and integrative in character. In the North Indian kinship system, the rules of marriage are highly exhaustive because a large body of people are excluded from alliance relationships.
- In North Indian kinship, the father-son relationship precedes the husband-wife relationship. Elaborating on this Veena Das in an analysis of Punjabi kinship system indicates that natural sexual relationship between husband and wife are subdued to social established relationship between father and son thereby glorifying the values of patriarchy.

Kinship System in South-India

- In southern India kinship systems, no distinction is made between patrilineal or matrilineal. Cross cousins' marriages take place and so exogamy is not exhaustive like in North India. The relationship between husband and wife is not subdued in the father-son relationship as in the case of North India. Hostility of the relationship between the in-laws driven by suspicion is also weak in South India. Dumond considers that South Indian kinship promotes social solidarity and the exchange of wealth between two families.

Kinship System in Eastern India

- In Eastern India, kinship organisation is different. There are more tribes than caste Hindus in eastern India. The more important tribes are: Khasi, Birhor, Hos, Mundas and Uraon. The kinship organisation here has no one pattern. Santhals, Juangs, etc. practise the dormitory system where young boys and girls practise free sexuality before marriage. In Khasi and Garo society, the husband is treated as an outsider; he is not supposed to participate in any important decision. In the case of Nagas, bride capturing takes place, which leads to inter-tribal warfare.

Conclusion

- Regional variations in Kinship largely reflect on the socio-cultural diversity of Indian society and hence are very significant to carry out the unique concept of unity in diversity in India.
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Q2. Where do you situate a 'live-in relationship' within the institution of marriage? (10 Marks)

Introduction

- A live-in relationship, also known as cohabitation, is a consensual arrangement in which a couple lives together without entering a formal marriage. It need not necessarily involve sexual relations. It may be equivalent to Social Monogamy.

Main Body

- Reasons for live-in (Please give reference otherwise it looks a generalist view.)
 - to test compatibility before marriage
 - do not want the hassles of a formal marriage
 - see no benefit in the institution of marriage
 - not in a position to legally marry
- Elderly persons who have lost a partner or got divorced are increasingly preferring a live-in relationship.
- In some countries like the UK & US, there is a provision for live-in partners to get themselves registered as domestic partners, but this does not make formal divorce necessary.

Indian Scenario

- Live-in relationships are not illegal but are considered socially and morally improper.
- Legally, it is permissible only for unmarried major persons of the opposite sex. (Now no longer valid after removal of section 377)
- If a live-in relationship is continued for a long time there is a presumption of marriage,

and all the laws regarding domestic violence, the legitimacy of children, maintenance rights, inheritance rights are applicable.



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