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Q5(e)

Household and domestic group.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Anthropology GS 1 · 10 marks · Family

2.4 Family: Definition and universality; Family, household and domestic groups; functions of family; Types of family (from the perspectives of structure, blood relation, marriage, residence and succession); Impact of urbanization, industrialization and feminist movements on family.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on household and domestic group
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

Household names common residence and consumption.

Domestic group names who actually cooks, earns, and cares.

Fortes showed the house as a cycle, not a fixed type.

Goody split production from reproduction.

Indian ghar studies include people the nuclear form leaves out.

Introduction

A household is a unit of common residence and consumption. A domestic group is the set of people who run that everyday economy. They are close, but they are not the same as a family or a lineage.

Body**Distinctions**

- **Meyer Fortes** treated the domestic group as a developmental cycle: a house expands and splits as children marry.
- **Jack Goody** separated production, consumption, and reproduction. A joint kitchen may feed people who belong to different lineages.
- **Leela Dube** and Indian village studies showed that a ghar can include servants, widows, and visiting kin whom a census 'family' misses.

Why it matters

- Nayar taravad, Nuer cattle camps, and urban one-room rentals all break the nuclear-family default.
- Policy that counts only the married couple undercounts care and labour.

Flow diagram

Household hearth -> Domestic group labour
Domestic group labour -> Fortes developmental cycle
Family kin terms -> Domestic group labour

Conclusion

Household is residence-plus-hearth. Domestic group is the changing labour unit around that hearth. Family and clan are other maps.

Facts & figures

Fortes

The developmental cycle of the domestic group in Ashanti and Tallensi analysis.

Goody

Warned against collapsing household, family, and kin group into one word.

Leela Dube

Indian kinship work showed gendered labour inside the house, not only descent names.

Census trap

Head-of-household forms often hide women's and servants' economic place.