

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q7(b)

Discuss the regional variations of kinship system in Indian society

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2017 · Sociology GS 1 · 20 marks · Sociological Thinkers: Karl Marx

Sociological Thinkers: Karl Marx - Historical materialism, mode of production, alienation, class struggle; Emile Durkheim - Division of labour, social fact, suicide, religion and society; Max Weber - Social action, ideal types, authority, bureaucracy, protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism; Talcott Parsons - Social system, pattern variables; Robert K. Merton - Latent and manifest functions, conformity and deviance, reference groups; Mead - Self and identity.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the regional variations of the kinship system in Indian society
- Keep the discussion within a 20-mark length

Revision summary

Indian kinship varies by region and community, not as one joint-family script.

- **North:** patriliney, village exogamy, hypergamy.
- **South:** Dravidian cross-cousin alliance within mostly patrilineal groups.

Matriliney in Kerala's past Nayar form and in the Northeast.

Karve, **Dumont**, and **Trautmann** map the variation that urban migration now stretches.

Introduction

Indian kinship is not one script. Descent, marriage, residence, and inheritance vary by region, and by caste and tribe inside regions. Irawati **Karve** mapped zones. Later work added Dravidian cross-cousin rules, north Indian hypergamy, and matriliney in pockets.

Body

North

- Largely patrilineal, patrilocal, with village exogamy and a wide ban on cousin marriage among many caste Hindus.
- Kanyadan and hypergamy, as Louis **Dumont** and others discussed, shape honour and dowry pressure.
- Joint family talk is strong even when households split.

South and Dravidian zone

- Thomas **Trautmann** and **Karve** noted preferential cross-cousin marriage among many groups, which keeps alliances close.
- Patriliney still dominates, but the marriage map differs from the north Indian gotra-village pattern.
- Property and in-law intimacy follow that closer kin net.

East and west

- Bengal and the east show distinctive lineage and marriage practices among caste groups; tribal belts add clan rules.
- The west, including parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat, mixes north Indian exogamy with strong caste associations.

Matriliny and exceptions

- Kerala's Nayar taravad, now much transformed, and Meghalaya's Khasi-Garo matriline show that patriarchy is not identical with patriliney.
- Himalayan and Himalayan-fringe polyandry in some groups was a demographic-property adaptation.

Caste, tribe, religion

- Kinship varies more by community than by state line. Muslim, Christian, and Parsi personal laws add another layer.
- **Urban migration produces translocal kinship:** the region travels by phone and marriage market.

Why variation matters

- It organises women's mobility, dowry versus bride-price residues, and who counts as heir.
- A single "Indian joint family" question hides this map.

Flow diagram

Indian kinship -> North exogamy hypergamy
Indian kinship -> Dravidian cross-cousin
Indian kinship -> Matriline pockets
Indian kinship -> Tribe personal law
North exogamy hypergamy -> Gender property
Dravidian cross-cousin -> Gender property

Conclusion

Regional kinship in India varies from north Indian village exogamy and hypergamy to Dravidian cross-cousin alliance, with matriline and tribal clan systems as further types. **Karve**, **Dumont**, and **Trautmann** remain the map-makers. Gendered work and property still follow these maps.

Facts & figures

Karve

Kinship Organisation in India: regional zones of kinship practice.

Trautmann

Dravidian kinship and the logic of cross-cousin marriage.

Dumont

Alliance, hypergamy, and hierarchy in north Indian marriage talk.

Khasi matriliney

A living matrilineal system in Meghalaya, distinct from Kerala's historical taravad.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/sociology-gs-1/2017/discuss-the-regional-variations-of-kinship-system-in-indian-society/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com

WRAP Exams