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Q4(b)

Analyze household dimensions of family in India.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Systems of Kinship in India

Systems of Kinship in India: Lineage and descent in India; Types of kinship systems; Family and marriage in India; Household dimensions of the family; Patriarchy, entitlements and sexual division of labour.

Core demand of the question

- Analyze household dimensions of family in India

Revision summary

Household is coresidence and common consumption, not the whole lineage.

Indian households vary from nuclear to joint across a **developmental cycle**.

Gender and **unpaid care** structure entitlement inside the kitchen.

Migrant remittances and COVID returns show the household as shock absorber.

Policy must see who eats, not only the family name.

Introduction

The household is the coresident, cooking, and budgeting unit. In India it is a dimension of family, not a synonym for the joint lineage of the texts.

Body**Dimensions**

- **Composition:** nuclear, supplemented nuclear, joint, and single-person households coexist. **A. M. Shah** stressed this variety against a myth of the eternal joint family.
- **Economy:** pooling, women's unpaid work, and migrant remittances make the household a class unit on Thorner's field and in the city slum.
- **Gender:** Seed and Earth assigns authority and care; entitlement to food and property is ranked inside the same kitchen.
- **Caste and honour:** endogamy is organised from the household; factions often begin as brotherly splits of a house.
- **Cycle:** **developmental cycle** of the family means today's nuclear house may be yesterday's joint stem.

Change

- Urbanism, education, and Beteille's middle class thicken nuclear living without ending lineage duties at marriage and death.
- COVID reverse migration showed households absorbing labour the market expelled.

Analysis

- Policy that targets 'the family' without counting who eats and who signs the land record will miss women and the elderly.

Flow diagram

Household hearth -> Composition cycle
Household hearth -> Gender care property
Lineage ideology -> Household hearth

Conclusion

Household dimensions of the Indian family are composition, budget, gender, caste honour, and cycle. Sociology should study the hearth, not only the clan tree.

Facts & figures

A. M. Shah

Showed household diversity against a single joint-family stereotype.

Developmental cycle

Household form changes with births, partitions and deaths.

Unpaid care

Women's household labour as a hidden dimension of family economy.

Remittance household

Migrant wage tying village hearth to city informal work.

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