

Student's name

Professor's Name

Course

Date

Kinship and Descent

Kinship is the aspect of being related to other people through blood, affinity brought about by marriages or consanguinity. It has a very close relationship with every social stage because it informs how people interact with each other, whom they interact with and how they understand themselves. According to Robin Fox, a renowned American Anthropologist, kinship is the study of what humans do with the various aspects of life such as socialization, parenthood, gestation, and sibling ship among others. Kinship also refers to the manner in which groups or individuals share roles and responsibilities thus forming a joint social group. The descent, on the other hand, is the aspect of tracing kinships through parentage. The tracing can either be bilateral descent involving both parents and unilateral descent involving recognizing kinship through one parent.

In societies where sectors such financial institutions and centralized, governments do not exist at all or exist, but are ineffective; such societies depend on a very strong kinship system for protection and support. Such societies require kinship system in order to ensure food security, protection, shelter and other necessities. In contemporary societies, such responsibility is a preserve of the government or other institutions created by the government. However, in societies where governments are non-existent, kinships come into play and assume the role of the governments. This, therefore, explains the importance of kinship system in such societies.

Secondly, kinship is important in societies because it ensures social order by formulating morals and prescribing punishment for offenders. Any given society must act within the established norms and rules. Kinships, therefore, play a significant role in moralizing the society.

Thirdly, kinships provide basic necessities to members and ensure adequate availability of basic needs. They do this by regulating production, consumption, and distribution of the available items in order to ensure there is always adequate supply to serve the society. Without any form of regulation, chances are very high that the available commodities would be wasted or utilized by a few members of the family to the detriment of others. Further, some of the available commodities could be sold since nobody is keen to monitor such movements. Kinships are, therefore, necessary to carry out such roles.

Kinships also ensure continuity of societies by promoting marriages from within and without. Marriages ensure new members are born to replace the departed and thus maintaining continuity. Marriages within the members of the society also promote good relationships and reduce any chances of disunity or hatred amongst the members. The upshot of such relationships is that members will always stick together and help one another whenever help is called for.

There is also the aspect of psychological support amongst members of a given society. It could have been very difficult for humans to live in isolation. In fact, very little can be achieved if humans decided to live a life of solitude and refuse to work together with others in harmony. Every person needs psychological support from his or her relatives in order to live harmoniously. Further, many people could have died out of stress because of lack of psychological support. Therefore, kinships are important because members support each other psychologically.

Further, kinships promote peace and tranquility within societies. Since there are no courts to arbitrate over disputes amongst members, such responsibilities are assumed by kinships. They

set regulations on how the disputes are resolved and play a role in reconciling the disputing parties.