

Society the positive
obligations of a family
are



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Society can be understood as a big group which consists of people.

This big group or larger system consists of various sub-groups. Various political, economic, religious, educational, familial and other groups and associations represent such sub-groups. People who enact roles are organised in these sub-groups within the larger system. Some of these sub-groups persist longer than any particular members.

Example: A particular family may continue to stay even after the death of the husband or wife. Many other sub-groups persist as 'types' longer-than any particular example of the type. Example: a family may perish due to the collapse of building in which its members lived, families as such are not going to perish. Social norms define roles and the obligations of sub-groups.

2.

Social structure consists of roles of various types: Social structure consists of not only sub-groups but also roles. Roles are found within the larger system and also within the sub-groups. The concepts of role and sub-group imply interrelationship. Role occupants are expected to fulfill obligations to other people (who are also role-occupants). For example, in family, the husband has obligations towards his wife and children; in the college teacher has obligations towards students, principal and the management and vice versa.

Further, the numbers of sub-groups that are there are not only interrelated but also subject to social norms. The political, economic, educational and other groups, for example, are interrelated through social norms.

3.

Regulative norms governing sub-groups and roles: Sub-groups and roles are governed by social norms. Social norms are of two types: (i) obligatory or relational, and (ii) permissive or regulative. Some norms specify positive obligations. But they are not commonly applied to all the roles and sub-groups. Example: The positive obligations of a family are not the same as those of business firm. Similarly, the obligations of a father are not the same as those of a son. Norms of this kind are obligatory or relational in nature.

Some other norms specify the limit of permissible action. A role-occupant of a sub-group in this case, ' must' do certain things, ' may' do certain things, and ' must not' do still others. They are called " regulative norms".

They do not differentiate between roles and between sub-groups. For example, in our society, regardless of one's role, one must not seek to influence others by threats of violence or by violence itself. 4.

Cultural values: Every society has its own cultural values. ' Values' refer to the measures of goodness or desirability. Individuals or groups are often found to be emotionally committed to values.

They help to integrate a personality or a system of interaction. They provide a means by which conflicts tend to be resolved. Still some conflicts persist, because no system of action is perfectly integrated. Values are closely related to norms, In fact, they may be regarded as " higher-order norms". Any one of these element-a sub-group, a role, a social norm, or a value-may be called a " partial structure".