

Kinship diagram essay sample

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



With the kinship diagram, I am focusing on my matrilineal descent. Kinship is a word used by anthropologists to describe certain family relationships; while a kinship diagram is basically a family tree. Fictive kin members bring character and different cultural beliefs into the family. Even though they are not part of the immediate family, they are still part of the family in relation; therefore they still represent the family and are included in all family activities. Sometimes it is good to have fictive kin members because they can help solve family arguments by seeing the views from a semi-etic perspective. With the six different kinship systems, my family closely represents the Eskimo system. My family represents the Eskimo system of living because we are a close working family.

In an Eskimo or Inuit system both the father side and the mother side have equal importance. In my family that is also true. However, in most Taiwanese families, the father side of the family is often the focus instead of the matrilineal descent. This cultural act is because often in the Taiwanese culture children take the last names of the father and are of patrilocal residence therefore special attentions are made to the patrilineal descent.

From my mother's side, the relationships are endogamous, with the exception of one of my aunts (my mother's younger sister). The beliefs of the newer generations have changed tremendously, but there are still not a lot of exogamous relationships. My aunt had the only exogamous relationship that I know of. She married an American, but because of cultural differences and the lack of understanding, the relationship ended with a divorce. Another reason why my aunt's exogamous relationship did not work out was because they had a language problem. Not all words in English can be translated into

Chinese with the outcome of the same expression, and vice versa. My cousins ended up be in the custody of my aunt and the seldom visits from my “ American Uncle.” Each of the members of my family basically has ordinary roles of any modern family.

My parents are the sole providers and I as a teen still have the responsibility of going to school and doing my chores. The extended family is not as involved in my life as of now. Since I am currently attending school in the US while most of my family members are still in Taiwan, I do not see them as often. But while in Taiwan my extended family often meets with my immediate family at family gatherings and at special events. The extended families often are the “ referees” during arguments and they are especially appreciated during the major holidays. The relationship of my kin members impacts my daily life because they are the sole provider of my education. They are the ones that I go to whenever I have any important decisions to make, and they are always there to support me in the time of need.

The roles of males and females are somewhat defined in my family. Since women have come a long way establishing their social standings, females are no longer just housewives. In my family there is a mixture of basic old fashion gender differentiation, where the males are expected to bring home the majority of the income and provide a sense of security while the females are at home taking care of the elderly and the young. But in my family some females go away from the norms by not taking the role of housewives and taking on the task of bring in the family income. Expectations have definitely changed over the generations. Now a day if you are not a housewife it is

understandable and you will still be respected as a part of the family. In the past if you did not bore your husband a healthy son and keep the house presentable you are considered a terrible wife and a daughter-in-law who does not appreciate the family she has.