

**2005:**

**1 (a) (i) Define life cycle. (3)**

You should be able to give a good definition. You need not give examples.

Here is a definition from the Collins dictionary that should help you: The process of change from infancy through to old age and death, brought as a result of the interaction between 'biological events' and 'societal events'.

**(ii) Give two examples to describe what is meant by the *life cycle* of the family. [6]**

**You should not confuse between concept of the life cycle of the family and the life cycle of the individual.** (The individual goes through different life cycle, from childhood to adolescent, adult, middle age and old age, each with different obligations, roles and expectations as well as statuses).

The family also goes through different cycles. Thus when a person gets married and stays in the parents' home, the family is extended; when the person leaves and goes on his/her own there are two nuclear families; when they keep in touch with each other, the two nuclear families act as modified extended families. Later on when people retire and go to live with one of the children, the family can again become extended. Thus a nuclear family can last over some time, change and become nuclear again, while it is the same for an extended family.

Thus changes may be different in different societies as all societies do not have the same type of family structures. The above reflects more the situation in Mauritius, than elsewhere. In Mauritius, some members of the family leave and form their own nuclear family, while one person remains with the parents and the extended type continues. The nuclear family, which is on its own, may itself grow into an extended family type later when children grow up and the cycle of some leaving and forming their own nuclear family, and one staying behind and continuing an extended family may start over again.

(Note: the idea of cycle gives the impression of chronology, which may be misleading)

**(b) 'In modern industrial societies the majority of individuals live in nuclear family households'. Assess this statement. [16]**

This question is based more on a Functionalist proposition, key thinkers such as Parsons and Goode who advocated the nuclearisation of the family in industrial societies. This argument could be a starting point, to show why this question has arisen.

The changes in modern societies must then be examined. The statistics that the nuclear family is declining should then be investigated. This shows the growing of alternatives to the nuclear family.

You should also explain why such alternatives have increased. The fact that there is a cultural diversity, encouraged by migration, the need to rely on its family members, the diversity of families that have increased with increasing freedom to adopt various alternatives to the family has given rise to diversity that rival with nuclear family type.

Robert Chester argues against seeing the extent of nuclear family only in terms of households and failing to see that the extent of nuclear family must be judged from the number of people who have been part of a nuclear family, rather than just household.

Other examples of family include historical evidence of nuclear family that existed as the society modernised. Anderson, Susmann and Burchinal- USA,

The question refers to industrial societies. Your examples must be from industrial societies.

**Examiner's remark:**

The answer to the question may be dependent on the time in an individual life should be placed here. Likewise those that use the range of key thinkers such as Anderson, Laslett, Burchinal, Litwak etc. Also those candidates that make reference to a range of different types of household arrangements that may be found in a variety of different societies. Evaluation in this mark band may be implicit.

**Evaluation must be implicit- What does that mean?**

You should show why different family types exist and argue that using one family type (nuclear) to describe the major trend as if it was a dominant type should be avoided. The family like any institution is undergoing change. Arguing in favour of one, as it was implicit in Parson's and functionalists' accounts may lead to a value position that is biased.

**2 (a) (i) What do you understand by "status of childhood is relative to society"? (3)**

Children are viewed differently in different societies, with different degrees of freedom; there are also different expectations on their roles as children. Thus in some societies they are expected to be working from an early age, while in developed societies, there are legislations that prevent them to work, and are required attend compulsory schooling.

**(ii) Describe ways in which the status of children in families has changed in the last 100 years. [6]**

Show how the status of children has changed, supported by reference to the law. You should also use the work of such key thinkers as Aries. Pg 750- 97<sup>TH</sup> edition). Show the way in which these changes are not universal.

Some children are being exploited either as slaves, soldiers or even as the victims of human trafficking.

Evaluation is not necessary to enter this mark band or to receive full marks

**(b) Assess the view that the nuclear family is the ideal family type for modern industrial societies. [16]**

Here you must be cautious of the word 'ideal'

Can we have an 'ideal' family. Whose interest will it serve? It is evident from research and sociologists who have written on the family that the nuclear family based their opinion of a western, middle class model that does not reflect the realities of all societies and even social class. is more of an ideal type, and ideal types the ways it has been described by Parsons, for instance, does not necessarily exist.

Today there is a variety of families. Many people come from different cultural background and have maintained some of their traditional family values and structures. Some modified it in the new industrial context, but continue to maintain relations as in their traditional family. Thus there is a diversity of family. In fact, the industrial society itself has survived because it allowed a number of family types to exist and survive; this allowed people from a number of cultural background to migrate to industrial societies- (Modified Extended- Litwak) . Besides, immigrants and survived because they managed to build a family structure that help them support each other or even provide opportunities to others to join them. The economy has also allowed family business to continue in larger families (Asian) Other family types- mother centred and matrifocal have also continued.

There is a variety of industrial societies. In some societies, people are giving less importance to the family itself. Thus, in Japan there is an increasing number living as single persons. The number of marriage has declined as women reaching 30 and still unmarried has increased from 20% in 1970 to 40% in 2005.

A large number of lone parents. The proportion living in couple families has declined from 92% in the 1970s to 70% in 2007. Denmark and Sweden have the highest percentage of lone parents.

The percentage of people living alone has also increased; 2000- 10 percent, mostly elderly. Now younger men live on their own, 10 percent in 2000, predicted to increase to 14% by 2021.

#### **Examiner's remark:**

The best answers to this question explored the existence of nuclear families in several ways, both as a stage within which most will go through, as well as an institution that may/may not exist now or in the past.

#### **Caution:**

Some candidate wasted a lot of time by explaining in detail the four stages of the family or with definitions of the family based on Murdock that had little relevance to this question. There was also a tendency to claim that reconstituted families are not nuclear families. A number of candidates used the Nayer as an example to show that nuclear families are not the norm even though the question made specific reference to modern industrial societies.

**Here are some more questions. Some more details will follow later**

**2005:**

**3 (a) (i) What do you understand by "life chances" in relation to education? (3)**

(ii) Describe, with examples, the improvements in the educational opportunities for females in modern industrial societies. [9]

**(b) Assess the view that the education system helps to maintain social inequalities. [16]**

**4 (a) (i) Define "meritocracy"? (3)**

(ii) Describe two major aspects of the Functionalist theory of *meritocracy* in relation to education. [6]

**(b) 'The most important factor influencing educational achievement is the pupil / teacher relationship'. Assess this view.**

**7 (a) (i)** What is official statistics ? (3)

(ii) Describe two major limitations of official crime statistics. [6]

**(b)** 'There is no such thing as deviance except in the mind of the observer'. Assess this statement in relation to sociological theories on the nature of deviance. [16]

**8 (a) (i)** What do you understand by "social determination" with relation to crime?

**(ii)** Describe the differences between sociological and biological theories on the nature of crime and deviance. [9]

**(b)** 'The type of community in which people live is a major influence on whether or not they commit crimes'. Assess this view. [16]

## **Childhood**

Childhood refers roughly to the age group 0-12, supposed to be a freedom from the burdens of the adult world. In the past children were expected to survive without constant care- for example, in medieval Europe. Today, there is still much diversity on world's population of children. Being a child is still very different experience across cultures.

In 1989, almost all countries in the world signed the United Nations Convention of the Right of the Child. According to the convention, all children have the right to be protected by laws. Their survival and development, protection from harmful influences and exploitation is given prime importance. They are also expected to have full participation in family, cultural and social life, as well as access to health care, education and services for children. Child labour, child marriage, violence are all forms of childhood oppression to be overcome.

However, evidences it is evident today that cultural- traditional, religious- and economic as well as political exigencies are given more prominence by a power structure controlled by adults and this seriously questions the force of the convention to ensure that rights of children are safeguarded.

Considering four major dimensions: work, marriage, war and death- there is a wide variation across the world today and ample evidence to suggest that the world is far from a serious consideration of the rights of the child. These areas of concern also illustrate the wide variations in the world of the child, and what it is to be a child in this world for a number of children who are victims of different forms of exploitation..

## **Child Labour**

One in six children in the world today is involved in child labour. It is estimated to be 250 million under 14 and 73 million under 10, who are working. Though child labour is scorned in developed countries, some 2.5 million children work in developed countries; 125 million in Asia-Pacific region. Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest with one third children under 14 working (48 million) (Macionis & Plummer, 2007, p. 405)

## **Child Marriage**

Early child marriage is pervasive in Africa and Asia, owing mainly to economic reasons. Girls married by 18 include 74% in Dominican Republic, 70% in Niger, 50% in Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Poor parents are lured to part with their daughters through a promise of marriage, but in fact to end up into prostitution abroad. Early marriage cuts down educational opportunities for girls particularly, premature pregnancy leading to health hazards,, lifetime of domestic subservience and domestic violence. About one million of children are forced into child prostitution.

## **Children at war**

Many children are used as mine sweepers- or as spies, kamikaze attacks Children make up a half of war refugees. About 300,000 are coerced into being soldiers as active combatants in some 36 countries in Asia and Africa. In Africa about 300,000 were estimated to be in armed conflicts as early as age 9.

## **Children Illness and mortality**

21.8 million people died of AIDs by 2000 4.3 million aged 15 years old. Approximately 50% all new infections occurred among young people. It is estimated trhat half of today's 15 years old will die of AIDS. Many children in Sub-Saharan Africa are orphans of HIV/AIDS parents.

Traditionally seen as 'little innocents' needing protection, adults in the making, sociologists now see children as creating and living in their own complex worlds.

### **Approaching children and childhood**

***Socially constructed approach*** (James, Jenks, Prout, 1998)

Childhood does not exist in a fixed or essential form. It is build upon specific group and societies and times. While we view children having to work as exploitation, in many societies today, it is simply considered as normal thing to help a family survive. Children huddled in the same bed, often with adults are seen as child abuse. However, separate spaces for children, as in middle class Western societies, is unknown.