

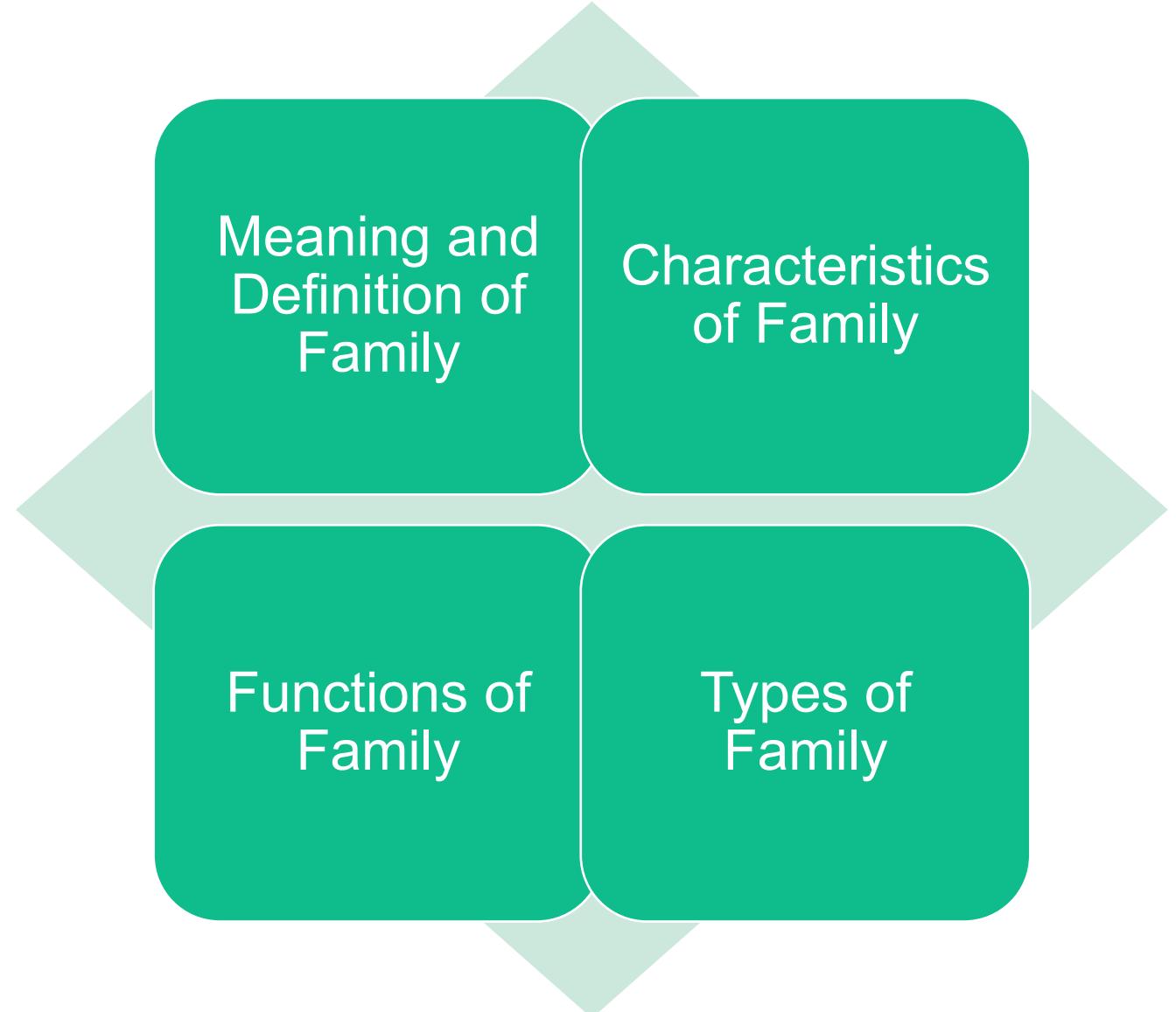
# SYM 101 Sociological Concepts

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Unit : 05

Topic : Family

# Content





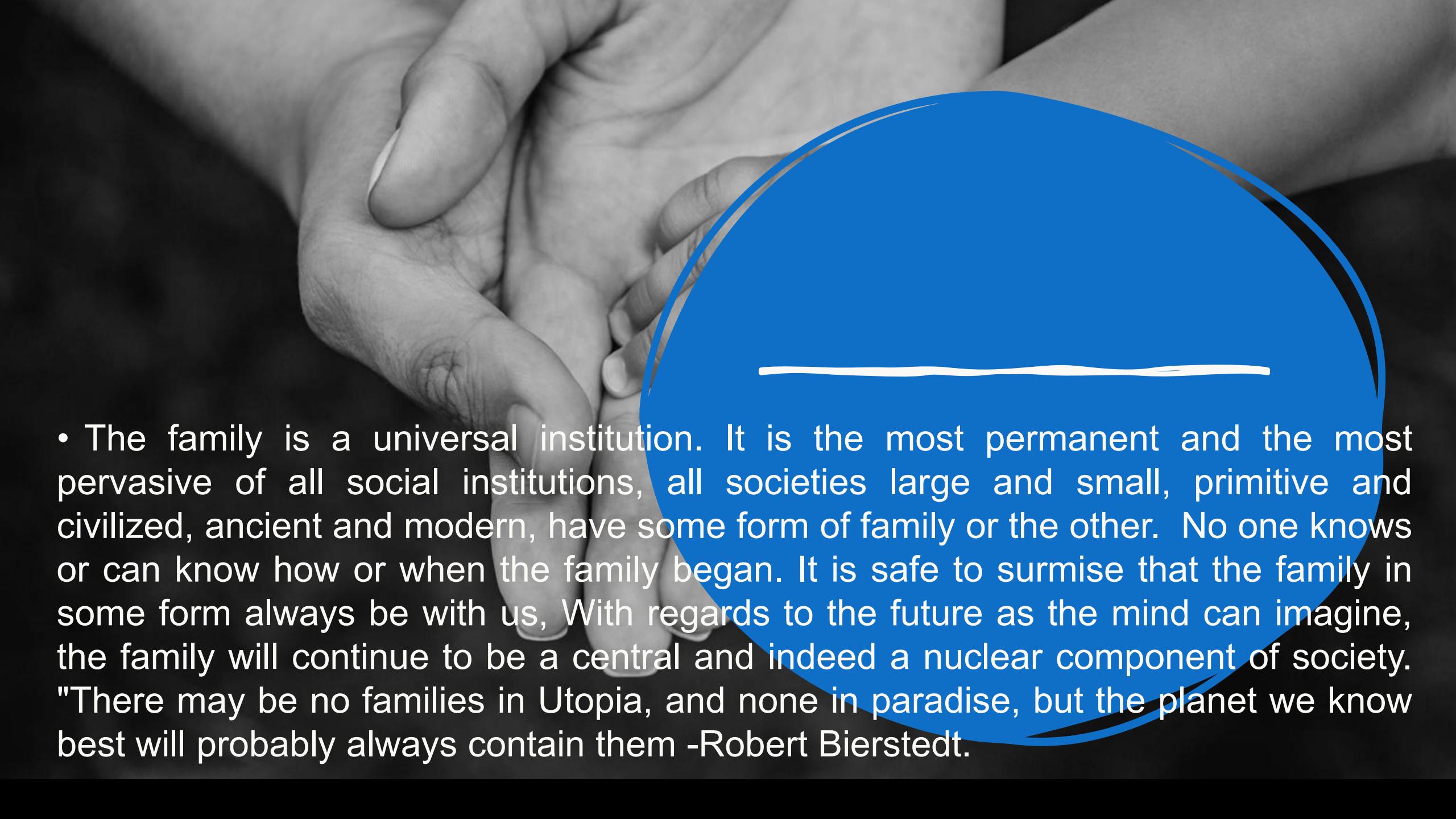
# Introduction

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- The family is the most important primary group in society. It is the simplest and the most elementary form of society. It is the most basic of all social groupings. It is the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed. It is an outstanding primary group, cause; it is in the family that the child develops one's basic attitudes.

Further, of all the groups that affect the lives of individuals in society none touches them so intimately or as continuously as does the family. From the moment of birth to the moment of death the family exerts a constant influence. The family is the first group in which we find ourselves. It provides for the most enduring relationship in one form or other. Every one of us grows up in a family and every one of us too will be a member of one family or other.

"The family, almost without question, is the most important of any of the groups that human experience offers. Other groups we join for longer or shorter periods of time for the satisfaction of one interest or that. The family, on the contrary, is with us always. Or rather more precisely, we are with it." -Robert Bierstedt.



- The family is a universal institution. It is the most permanent and the most pervasive of all social institutions, all societies large and small, primitive and civilized, ancient and modern, have some form of family or the other. No one knows or can know how or when the family began. It is safe to surmise that the family in some form always be with us, With regards to the future as the mind can imagine, the family will continue to be a central and indeed a nuclear component of society. "There may be no families in Utopia, and none in paradise, but the planet we know best will probably always contain them -Robert Bierstedt.

- It may be noted that our purpose here, is not to give counsels on family relations but to acquire sociological knowledge regarding family. The family is a small group consisting ordinarily of father, mother, one or more children and sometimes near or distant relatives. It should be noted that it is not our purpose here to offer advice on the age at which people should marry, on how to choose a husband or a wife, how to get along with a difficult mate, how many children to beget, what to do about a mother-in-law problem, how to avoid divorce, and so on. Our study is confined to the family as a social phenomenon and sociological approach.



# Meaning and definition of Family

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- The word 'Family' has been taken over from Latin word 'Famulus' which means a servant. In Roman law the word denoted a group of producers and slaves and other servants as well as members connected by common descent or marriage: Thus, originally, family consisted of a man and woman with a child or children and servants. The meaning of family can be explained better by the following definitions:
- **M.F. Nimkoff** says that "Family is a more or less durable association of husband and wife with or without child, or of a man or woman alone, with children".

**MacIver:** Family is "a group defined by sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children "

**Eliot and Merrill:** Family is "The biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children".

**Burgess and Locke** "Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture".

# General Characteristics of family

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Mating  
Relationship

Selection of  
Mates

Form of  
Marriage

System of  
Nomenclature

Way of  
Tracing the  
Descent

Common  
Residence

Economic  
Provision



# **DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE FAMILY**

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- Universality
- Emotional Basis
- Limited Size
- Formative Influence
- Nuclear Position in the Social Structure
- Responsibility of the Members
- Social Regulation
- The Permanent and Temporary Nature of the Family

# Functions of Family

- The family as a social institution performs several functions. Various opinions have been expressed regarding the functions of family.
- **Kingsley Davis** speaks of four main functions of the family:
  - (i) Reproduction
  - (ii) Maintenance
  - (iii) Placement, and
  - (iv) Socialization





# Functions of Family

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- Ogburn and Nimkoff have mentioned six major functions of family:
  - (i) Affection
  - (ii) Economic
  - (iii) Recreational
  - (iv) Protective
  - (v) Religious
  - (vi) Educational

Reed has described four functions of the family:



Race perpetuation



Socialization



Economic functions



Regulation and satisfaction of sex needs

# Functions of family

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**MacIver** classifies the functions of family into two types: **Essential and Non-essential** functions. According to him, the **essential** functions include

2

(i) the stable satisfaction of sex need

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(ii) production and rearing of children  
(iii) provision of a home.

4

**Non-essential** functions includes, religious, educational, economic, health and other functions.

# Primary functions

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Stable Satisfaction of Sex Need

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Reproduction or Procreation

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Production and rearing of the Child

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Provision of home

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Family as an Instrument of Culture Transmission and an Agent of Socialization.

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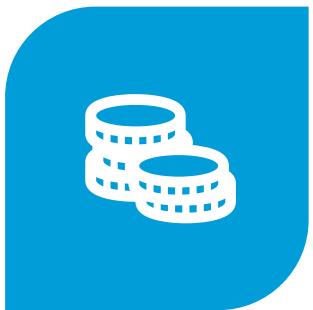
Status Ascribing Function

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People recognize us by our names, and our names are given to us by our family

# Secondary Function of Family

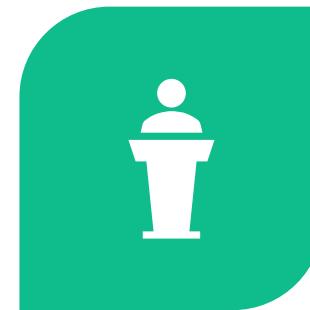
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**ECONOMIC  
FUNCTION**



**EDUCATIONAL  
FUNCTION**



**RELIGIOUS  
FUNCTION**



**RECREATIONAL  
FUNCTION**

# Types of Families

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- On the basis of marriage family has been classified into three major types:
  - (i) Polygamous Family
  - (ii) Polyandrous Family
  - (iii) Monogamous Family





Nature of residence:

Family of Matrilocal Residence

Family of Patrilocal Residence

Family of Changing Residence

On the basis of ancestry or descent:

Matrilineal Family

Patrilineal Family

Nature of authority:

Matriarchal Family

Patriarchal Family

On the basis of size or structure and the depth of generations family can be classified into two main types :

(i) The Nuclear or the Single Unit Family

(ii) The Joint or the Undivided Family

- On the basis of the Nature of Relations among the family members the family can be classified into two main types:

(i) The Conjugal Family which consists of adult members among whom there exists sex relationship, and

(ii) Consanguine Family which consists of members among whom there exists what is known as "blood relationship"—brother and sister, father and son, etc.

# Thank you

