

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Family Studies

TRUE-FALSE

1. An institution is a recognized area of social life that is organized along a system of norms regulating behaviour.

Answer: True *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 3 *Skill:* conceptual

2. In complex societies like Canada, the institution of the family has a great deal of stability.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 3 *Skill:* conceptual

3. Jennifer lives with her grandparents, John and Susan Smith. She is living in a horizontal nuclear family.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 4 *Skill:* applied

4. John cohabits with Jane. Jane was previously married to Jack. While Jane was married to Jack, they had two children, Sam and Edith. Sam and Edith now live with John and Jane. This is referred to as a extended nuclear family.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 4 *Skill:* applied

5. Marriage is a more or less recent cultural invention in the history of humanity and so should not be equated with families.

Answer: True *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 5 *Skill:* factual

6. One of the problems with including friends in an inclusive definition of the family is that family is an acquired status and friends are ascribed.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 5 *Skill:* conceptual

7. Consistent with popular belief, multi-generational extended family households have been the norm in Canada throughout at least the last 200 years.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 6 *Skill:* conceptual

8. A social structural orientation to the study of families would analyze a family's living conditions from a political, economic, and cultural perspective rather than through an individual family member's deficits or merits.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 11 *Skill:* conceptual

9. Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the formation of meanings and self-concept.

Answer: True *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 14 *Skill:* conceptual

10. An important feature of the developmental perspective in family studies is the emphasis it places on cross-sectional analysis.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 16 *Skill:* conceptual

11. A social construct is a socially accepted definition of a situation; it is a cultural interpretation.

Answer: True *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 18 *Skill:* conceptual

12. The following statement is an example of social stratification by gender: The household division of labour is still largely unequal in that it gives more flexibility to males because they can choose the activities they engage in at home.

Answer: True *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 19 *Skill:* conceptual

13. The analysis of motherhood as a social product rather than as a purely natural product is the focus of the behaviour genetics perspective.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 25 *Skill:* conceptual

14. Quantitative research methods are more scientific than qualitative research methods.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 29 *Skill:* conceptual

15. Qualitative data and anecdotes are the same.

Answer: False *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 29 *Skill:* conceptual

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. A society transmits its values and traditions to the next generation through the process of
 - a. social control.
 - b. socialization.
 - c. institutionalization.
 - d. reproduction.

e. role models.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 3 *Skill:* conceptual

2. The minimum requirement to meet the definition of the family consists of
- two close friends who share a household.
 - the extended family.
 - a husband and a wife.
 - two related generations in one household.
 - a monogamous relationship.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 3 *Skill:* conceptual

3. A horizontal family
- includes grandparents in the household.
 - sisters, or brothers, or cousins living together without the parent generation.
 - includes remarried or cohabiting spouses residing with at least one child from a previous union.
 - refers to a temporary period in which a LAT family shares a household residence.
 - refers to a situation in which adult children return to live with parents.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 4 *Skill:* conceptual

4. Juanita lives with her mother part of the time but spends weekends and holidays with her father. She is living in
- a binuclear family.
 - an extended family.
 - a horizontal nuclear family.
 - a reconstituted family.
 - a LAT family.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 6 *Skill:* applied

5. Fictive kinship refers to
- parents' friends who are incorporated in the family as uncles and aunts.
 - relatives or extended family.
 - families in fiction or novels.
 - adoption.
 - polygamous relationships.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 7 *Skill:* conceptual

6. Which of the following statements regarding polygamous marriage is most accurate?
- A woman most likely to enter a polygamous marriage lives in a community with a sex ratio imbalance of more women than men.
 - A woman most likely to enter a polygamous marriage lives in a urban setting, has a fairly high level of education, and comes from a upper class family.
 - A woman most likely to enter a polygamous marriage lives in a rural setting, has little education, and comes from a disadvantaged family.
 - A woman most likely to enter a polygamous relationship lives in a society in which polygamous unions are widely accepted.
 - A woman most likely to enter a polygamous marriage lives in society where gender inequality is unknown.

Answer: c *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 8 *Skill:* conceptual

7. Complete the following statement: _____ is a set of interrelated propositions that explains a particular phenomenon and guides research.
- A sociological orientation
 - A theory
 - Structural functionalism
 - Macrosociology
 - Exchange theory

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 10 *Skill:* conceptual

8. Social system refers to
- institutionalized behaviour patterns.
 - processes and interactions.
 - individual roles within the family.
 - complimentary parts in an organism such as society.
 - family structure.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 10 *Skill:* applied

9. Which one of the following points about structural functionalism is NOT true?
- Structural functionalism is a conservative theory.
 - Structural functionalism addresses and redresses inequalities in the social structure.
 - Structural functionalism considers the family as an important unit that fulfills certain functions for society.
 - Structural functionalism is all about consensus and equilibrium.
 - Structural functionalism treats society as an organic system.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 10-11 *Skill:* conceptual

10. Gender differentiation within a structural functionalist perspective holds that there is an instrumental role and an expressive role to be fulfilled within the family. An example of the instrumental role would be
- a father as breadwinner and conduit between family and society.
 - a mother as caregiver and domestic labourer.
 - a heterosexual couple fulfilling the economic needs of the family through wage labour.
 - children engaged in domestic chores suitable to their age and development.
 - a mother engaged in maintaining community relations between family and society.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 11 *Skill:* conceptual

11. According to structural functionalism, when Maria is engaged in making a meal for her family and her husband, Phillipe, is still at work, she is engaging in a(n) _____ function and he is engaging in a(n) _____ function.
- masculine, feminine
 - feminine, masculine
 - instrumental, expressive
 - expressive, instrumental
 - cooking, earning money

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 11 *Skill:* applied

12. Nghia, 26, is contemplating marriage with his girlfriend whom he has been dating since high school. His decision is complicated because another woman, whom he finds very attractive, has made it very clear that she is interested in him. Compared to his girlfriend, she is better educated and has a better job. His difficulty in making this decision best reflects the tenets of
- feminist perspectives.
 - interactional-transactional perspectives.
 - developmental perspectives.
 - rational theory.
 - social exchange theory.

Answer: e *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 12 *Skill:* applied

13. Which of the following concepts most closely relates to the collective socialization of children?
- social capital
 - resources
 - effective community
 - human capital
 - state supported childcare

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 13 *Skill:* conceptual

14. A family whose members often interact informally with a number of politicians and their families have more _____ than a family who never has an opportunity to meet with politicians on an informal basis.
- rational choices
 - human capital
 - social capital
 - economic alternatives
 - instrumental value

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 13 *Skill:* applied

15. Which of the following concepts is most closely identified with the catch phrase “it takes a village to raise a child”?
- Effective community
 - Cultural capital
 - Distributive justice
 - Altruistic motives
 - Social closure

Answer: a *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 13 *Skill:* conceptual

16. Symbolic interactionism is highly suitable for the study of _____, a previously neglected aspect of the study of family life.
- significant others
 - emotions
 - the development of gender identity
 - ascribed status
 - the looking glass self

Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 14 *Skill:* conceptual

17. A reference group refers to
- the self-concept.
 - people or a group that children use as role models.
 - adults who can provide references for employment.
 - a group of social actors.
 - a group whose function it is to provide a sense of belonging.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 14 *Skill:* conceptual

18. The interactional-transactional perspective explains how, for instance,
- interactions between parents and children feedback upon each other.
 - family members develop their feelings of group solidarity.
 - the transactions between parents and the economic system operate.
 - family members are part of a larger kinship system.
 - fictive kin become important to a nuclear family.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 15 *Skill:* conceptual

19. When parents are teaching their children to ride a bicycle, they are dependent upon the interest and cooperation of their children in order to be successful. This example underlines the importance of
- parent-child bonding.
 - discipline in parent-child relations.
 - good balance.
 - seeing the child as an active social actor.
 - teaching children the skills necessary to interact with peers.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 15 *Skill:* applied

20. Longitudinal studies are those that
- interview parents and then later on their children.
 - interview seniors about their past life.
 - compare one age group with another.
 - follow up the same individuals over time.
 - concentrate only on macrosociological changes to the family.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 16 *Skill:* factual

21. Which of the following is an example of an off-time family event?
- A child graduating from high school at eighteen years of age
 - A mother bearing her first child at age fifteen
 - A mother returning to waged labour when her child starts kindergarten
 - Becoming a grandparent when middle-aged
 - A couple choosing to have their first child after completing post-secondary education

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 16 *Skill:* applied

22. The recognition that the age at which couples have their first child will affect family dynamics, child development, and life chances is derived from
- social structural perspectives.
 - symbolic interactionism.
 - rational theory.
 - feminist perspectives.
 - developmental perspectives.

Answer: e *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 18 *Skill:* conceptual

23. An example of a social construct is
- a social definition.
 - childhood.

- c. the description of a woman who nurses her child.
- d. a cultural invention.
- e. a function for which the family as an institution is responsible.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 18 *Skill:* applied

24. The way in which motherhood is socially constructed in a particular society is primarily a product of
- a. the internal practices of family interaction.
 - b. the choices parents make in socializing their children.
 - c. genetics.
 - d. the economic system.
 - e. the socioeconomic status of a particular family.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 19 *Skill:* conceptual

25. According to behaviour genetics, child development is a product of
- a. biological determinism.
 - b. the genetic makeup of the parents.
 - c. evolutionary processes.
 - d. the interaction between genetics and environment.
 - e. the shared environment of genetically related individuals.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 22 *Skill:* conceptual

26. Gender stratification refers to
- a. the organization of society whereby males have access to more resources, power, and autonomy than women.
 - b. gender roles.
 - c. the analysis of the social system within a feminist perspective.
 - d. the organization of social classes.
 - e. the intersection of race, class, and gender.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 24 *Skill:* conceptual

27. The overall focus of feminist theories is
- a. the family as an institution in which gendered behaviours are normalized.
 - b. the natural process of gender role development in children.
 - c. women's experiences of life in a patriarchal society.
 - d. undermining marriage as a patriarchal institution.
 - e. the impact of motherhood on women's opportunities.

Answer: c *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 25 *Skill:* factual

28. That the family is understood to be a private institution, unaffected by external inequities, is criticized by both

- a. structural functionalism and feminist perspectives.
- b. rational theory and feminist perspectives.
- c. structuralism and feminist perspectives.
- d. symbolic interactionism and feminist perspectives.
- e. social constructionism and feminist perspectives.

Answer: c *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 25 *Skill:* conceptual

29. In the following statement, which is the independent variable? “Children who are cared for in day care centres develop a high degree of comfort in social interaction with both peers and adults.”
- a. children who are cared for in day care centres
 - b. children who are not cared for in day care centres
 - c. child care
 - d. degree of comfort in social interaction
 - e. peers and adults

Answer: c *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 27 *Skill:* applied

30. In the following statement, which is the dependent variable? “Husbands who beat their wives were raised in abusive families.”
- a. abusive families
 - b. wives
 - c. degree of physical harm to wives
 - d. husbands who beat their wives
 - e. spousal abuse

Answer: e *Difficulty:* challenging *Page:* 27 *Skill:* applied

31. Which of the following is stated as a testable hypothesis?
- a. A hypothesis is a testable prediction or sentence.
 - b. Families come in many different shapes and sizes..
 - c. Women with higher earnings than their husbands receive more help in housework than women with lower earnings than their husbands.
 - d. Husbands and wives tended to lead entirely separate lives among lower-class Romans 22 centuries ago.
 - e. Young single mothers make up the majority of Canada’s urban poor.

Answer: c *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 23 *Skill:* applied

32. The HIV ‘epidemic’ in South Africa has created enormous numbers of orphaned children. This event provides an opportunity for
- a. observation.
 - b. a ‘natural’ experiment.
 - c. a contextual analysis.
 - d. an invasion of private grief.

e. evaluative research.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 28 *Skill:* applied

33. What concerns us most as family sociologists is choosing
- statistical methods that include very large samples.
 - a research method that can best describe the human reality we wish to study within its social context.
 - a method that allows us to draw from personal experience.
 - a research method that is longitudinal.
 - a research method that is most suitable to the nuclear family structure.

Answer: b *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 30 *Skill:* factual

34. Open-ended questions are
- anecdotes.
 - widely used in surveys.
 - unethical.
 - the opposite of multiple-choice questions.
 - not scientifically valid.

Answer: d *Difficulty:* easy *Page:* 30 *Skill:* factual

35. Which of the following statements is the most accurate? The family is an ideal phenomenon for
- making associations between microsociological and macrosociological analysis.
 - recognizing the polarization of micro and macro level sociological analysis.
 - creating holistic theories about social institutions.
 - debunking the ability of sociologists to adequately explain small groups.
 - recognizing that sociological analysis is primarily commonsense.

Answer: a *Difficulty:* moderate *Page:* 31 *Skill:* conceptual

SHORT ANSWER

1. Describe how developmental (life course) perspectives are unique to the study of families.

Answer: Family development theory is unique to the study of families for two reasons: This perspective considers families in relation to their internal dynamics at the microsociological level while at the same time studying families within the historical context of their society at the macrosociological level. Microsociology concentrates on interactions between individuals within small groups while macrosociology concentrates on large-scale social phenomena such as economic forces, gender, race, class, and cultural context. At the micro

level, the life course perspective holds that families change throughout the course of their life cycle so that the roles of individual family members but also the family as a whole change or adapt according to the part of the cycle in which they happen to be located. For example, the birth of a newborn results in the new roles of father and mother (or parenthood), and children moving out of the house at a later stage in the family's development bring about other changes to the family dynamic at a later stage in the family's life cycle. At the macro level, families are influenced by global social developments and thus change and adapt accordingly. For example, changes in changes in technology but also normative influences such as socially accepted ages at which child-bearing occurs influence the internal dynamics of family decision-making and role adaptation. Families are affected by the interaction of both of these levels of society. It is necessary to study both the internal dynamics of family life and human development as well as how these factors are affected by larger social contexts.

Difficulty: challenging *Page:* 16-18 *Skill:* conceptual

2. Describe the interactional–transactional approach and its use in the study of the family.

Answer: The interactional–transactional approach proposes that individuals construct their own environment, at the interpersonal level, at the same time as they are being shaped by their environment. Interactions between family members feed back on each other. Parents affect children while, at the same time, children affect parents. This approach is sensitive to the diversity of the family and stresses the multiplicity of factors and interactions that impact on family members.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 15 *Skill:* conceptual

3. How are social constructionism and feminism related in the study of the family?

Answer: Social constructionism argues that family life is a cultural invention or a socially accepted definition of how people should make families and interact within families. The power of socially approved constructions encourages people to follow the norms that have developed in regard to family life in a particular society during a particular historical period. The definitions which arise come from those who are in power and those who produce valued knowledge at a particular time in history. This knowledge can be religious, medical, psychological, or legal and have all developed from a masculine power base. Feminists study the effects of a patriarchal society on women's experiences and how gender roles develop within various cultural groups during different periods of history. Patriarchal societies are understood to be male dominated.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 19 *Skill:* conceptual

4. How is family defined in this chapter? In what ways is this definition an exclusive one? In what ways is it an inclusive one? What are the problems with definitions of family that are too inclusive?

Answer: The author defines family in the following way: A family is a social group and institution. At its most basic and essential level, family consists of at least two generations in one household or it can refer to persons living together who are related to one another through another generation, such as siblings or cousins. Family members are related to one another by blood, adoption, or marriage/cohabitation. This definition is exclusive in the sense that family membership is an enduring ascribed status such that it does not include unrelated single people living together in the same household based on their achieved status which are fleeting and may change over time (boarders, friends or roommates sharing the same house, neighbours, and ex-spouses). This definition is inclusive in that it also includes same sex parents, single parents, and number of parents. When families are defined too inclusively we run into the following analytical problems: First, an inclusive family group has much in common with the concepts of social networks and support networks such as friends and neighbours and so the specificity of the concept family becomes too broad and cumbersome. Second, social policies at the level of the state require a high degree of definitional precision in order to determine, for example, who qualifies for parental benefits. Third, if we broaden the definition of the family too much, the term family becomes meaningless and, more importantly, it would become difficult to compare contemporary families with those of the past.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 3, 5 *Skill:* conceptual

5. What is the distinction between the concepts of gender stratification and gender roles? Explain how these two concepts relate to each other.

Answer: Gender roles represent the social definition of what, in a society, is constructed as appropriately masculine or feminine in terms of behaviour. Gender roles are norms or rules that define how males and females should think and behave. Together, they result in men and women accepting their proper place in society according to the dictates of gendered structural arrangements. Gender roles occur at the interface of macro and microsociological levels of interaction. At the macro level, gender roles are supported by the masculine, patriarchal organization or stratification system of society that provides more power and resources to men than to women. This affects relationships between men and women at an interpersonal level and contributes to differentiated gender roles.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 24 *Skill:* conceptual

6. How can quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other?

Answer: Qualitative methods are based on numbers, percentages, and averages and they provide correlational information about broad patterns of behaviour. Quantitative methods provide opportunities for family members to express their understandings of their experiences and are arrived at through diaries, case studies, summaries, quotes, and open-ended questions. Together they provide a more holistic perspective on family experiences.

Difficulty: moderate *Page:* 25 *Skill:* conceptual