Social Systems

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The word system implies a well-set arrangement and an interrelationship of parts. In the sector of the arrangement, every part has a specific role to play. These parts of the system are bound together by interaction. One can view society as a system of interrelated mutually dependent parts which cooperate to preserve an identifiable whole and to help achieve a purpose or a goal. On the other hand, social systems are an arrangement of social interaction based on shared norms and values. A social system is constituted by individuals who have a place and role to perform within it. This paper is a case study on a family and an examination of the family as a social system using 3 perspectives and 5 concepts.

Most families entail of a father, a mother and a child. It is the basic social institution and the primary group in society, which varies from culture to culture. The first theory is the social exchange theory. The beginning of this theory dates back in 1958 from an article published by an American Sociologist, George Homans (Turk & Ekeh, 2016). The sociologist came up with a framework built on a combination of basic economics and behaviorism. The theory is based on the notion that a relationship between two people is created through a process of cost-benefit analysis. This is a metric analysis derived to determine the effort poured in by an individual in a two people relationship. When the measurement of the minuses and the pluses are considered, one can determine whether an individual is putting too much effort into a relationship. This theory is unique because it does not measure relationships on emotional metrics. The systematic process of the theory relies on mathematic and logic to determine the balance within a relationship. The theory can be used to measure romantic relationship as well as to determine the balance within a friendship. In this case, the theory can be used to determine the effect of a family to an individual.

The second theory is rational choice theory. The theory came about in the late 18th century. It refers to a set of ideas about the relationship between people’s preferences and the choices they make (Sato, 2013). It is an attempt to explain social phenomenon on the basis of how self-interested individuals make choices due to the preferences they take. The theory treats social exchange similar to economic exchange in that all parties try to maximize their gain and to minimize their losses. However, the theory fails to explain certain social phenomena such as trust, altruism, and reciprocity. It also fails to explain why individuals join social groups which have collective goals rather than individual benefits. The third theory is the social network theory. The theory points out the importance of social media to social systems. With the help of social media, an individual can construct a virtual representation of their social network with all different ties (van Poucke, 2015). For instance, a family may be separated due to various reasons but still, the father is able to interact and create a virtual representation of the family via social media.

The self in relationship concept outlines the ability to form lasting relationships with other individuals. This concept is based on earlier experiences of separation and connection from the primary caregivers. There are four types of attachment highlighted in this concept (Hutchison, 2019). They include, securely attached, disorganized attachment, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant. Securely attached attachment include the ability to express the needs for closeness. The disorganized attachment includes an attachment that does not attain a sense of being cared for. Anxious-ambivalent involves maximizing effort for parental attachment and becoming hypervigilant for threat cues and signs of rejection. Lastly, the avoidant suppress overt distress and may give up proximity seeking effort to avoid rejection. The concept of stress indicates that the amount of stress for an individual may affect their relationships. Another concept is the concept of coping and adaptation. An individual may choose the problem-focused coping, which involves changing the situation by acting on the environment. The concept of social support involves interpersonal interactions and relationships that provide assistance of attachment to persons who are perceived as caring. In a family, the mother is perceived as caring.

Family diversification may entail various factor which is narrowed down to race, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, family structure, and family processes. The challenges of family diversity include family division, divorce and a lack of acceptance. Individuals in the family need to understand their differences. This ensures that they can handle difficult times together due to understanding. The challenges arising from the diversity issues of the family can be avoided. Family environment and relationship have a huge impact on life outcomes. Positive families help and individually develop a healthy life both biologically and psychologically. All families are unique. The quality of a family relationship is more important than the family composition. Regardless of who forms the family, it is important to build a strong, positive relationship that promotes the wellbeing of the family members and support the children and everyone’s mental health.

References

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