Kyler Suess

Professor Moore

Anthropology 112

22 March 2024

**M12: Gender & Sexuality**

In the article provided on kinship and economics, it covers a story of parents wishing for a grandchild from their children. The parents in questions are Sanjeev Ranjan Prasad and Sadhana Prasad from India, who are actually suing their son for $650,000 thousand in damages. Their defense is that they funded their son’s pilot training, bought a new Audi, financed a lavish wedding, and covered an expensive honeymoon. After six years of marriage, the parents were desperately waiting for a grandchild, but their son wishes not to have one. In return, the parents demanded that their son and daughter-in-law have a grandchild or pay the damages.

While this story might seem ridiculous in a western society, there is a lot of moral and societal pressure to put aside your needs for the family. For example, parents will usually spend exorbitant amounts of money on their kid’s needs, and in return expect to be taken care of until death. Taking care of parents and family duties is so important in India, a law in 1956 was made so say that children were responsible for supporting their parents.

I wanted to convert this article and topic for two reasons; I find the disparity of the individualism versus collectivism between western and eastern societies. For example, in America we are raised to put ourselves before others. This is also a general societal belief amongst Americans that the individual is always more important. However, in India, the focus is on the family and putting your family before yourself. I personally think the smarter thing to do is, especially with money, is to focus on yourself. The $650,000 spent on the Prasad’s son could have been thrown into any general investment account and would have the set grandparents up for early retirement. However, that isn’t their culture, so to them that isn’t the right answer. The right answer for someone else might to support their children and when the time comes, their children will support them. In America, this idea also comes off as different thanks to the idea of the **nuclear family**. The nuclear family is a married couple and children, so supporting your parents and having them living in the same house doesn’t fit that mold.

The second reason is highly personal, I have a few friends with parents from cultures who believe in the collectivist family, and the pressure they get from their parents and other family members for decisions they make for themselves always leaves me so confused. However, the more I asked about their culture, the more I was able to learn that everyone is making some kind of sacrifice for each other, so they feel they are owed something in return. One cultural aspect I didn’t first understand was **arranged marriages**, as it is commonly confused with forced marriages. In arranged marriages, your parents are more like matchmakers, and you can say yes or no based on who they think would be a good match for you.

Cited Sources

Yasir, Sameer, and Mike Ives. “No Grandchild? Six Years after Son’s Wedding, These Parents Are Suing.” The New York Times, 29 May 2022, www.nytimes.com/2022/05/29/world/asia/india-couple-grandchild-suing.html.

‌