FAMILY

Group in which both relations of affinity and consanguinity (adoption) are found

**GP MURDOCH**

Elementary family was found everywhere (studied 250 societies)

Characteristics:
- Common residence
- Economic coordination
- Sexual reproduction
- Socially approved sexual relations b/w adults of both sexes
- Children born to adults or adopted

Murdoch thought these characteristics are universal but blacks in Southern USA/Nayars were exceptions.

So his family is not universal.
Anthony Giddens
Gives simplified definition of family
As a group of person directly linked by kin connection, adult members of which assume responsibility of caring of children.
He emphasizes on criterion of commitment over and above traditional features of family.
TYPES OF FAMILY

1. Conjugal or Companionate: deliberately avoid having kids. DINK (Double income no kids)
2. Nuclear (children born out of monogamous)
3. Compound (children – polygamous)
4. Lineally extended (3 or more generations)
5. Laterally extended (2 or more couples)
6. Extended joint (Henry Maine coined this. Property held jointly)
Can also be based on

Descent (patri, matri bilateral- ex nairs of Malabar and khasis of Meghalaya are matrilineal)

Residence (Matri, patri, neo, duo local, Avunco)

Authority (patriarchy, matriarchy, filiocentric)

Name (patronymic, metronymic)

Conjugal and Consanguinal
Contemporary Trends

T Parsons

Pre industrial society had extended family
(Life expectancy short
Need social support
Labor intensive economy
Simple skills required taught in family)

Industrialization
(specialized skills
Less labour intensive
High social/geographical mobility
Universalistic value against particularistic value of family)

So nucleated family becomes structural fit in industrial society
Therefore, Family becomes structurally isolated from other Social Institutions
William Goode
Supports Parsons
Occupational Statuses to be achieved not Ascribed
Ideology of individualism against ethos of family
Role bargain increasing where people selectively maintain relations with important kins

Nuclear Family helped industrialisation
Thus, nuclear family becoming a culture
COUNTER VIEWS
(against nuclearization)

Elizabeth Roberts
Industrialization lead to growth in extended family due to help provided

Wilmert and Young
In England - Regular contacts with extended family by working/middle class
Babysitting
In USA – Structurally isolated nuclear family rare.
Found only in dual-career, professional middle class families. Maintained no ties with kins because of self-sufficiency
Even super-rich maintain kin ties

Colin Bell
Physical distance overcome by internet, telephone and air travel
(frequency less but quality more of contact)
‘Modified or dispersed extended family’
Common residence might not be there but kinship ties are maintained

Bade Thorne
‘Cereal packet image’
i.e. problem of monolithic image of family
There is plurality of family forms
New Developments

Reconstituted Family
(spouses live with children of previous as well as current marriage)
Single parent
Live in
Dual career (Mowrer)
Rapaport (single parent, homosexual, commune living, live in)
New Developments

Contemporary Trends (overall)

Marriage losing appeal
Diversity in family forms growing
Rising divorces/separation/
Sanctity of marriage declining
Law has made divorce easy
Stigma of divorce vanishing

Giddens
‘For ever ever love’ changing into ‘love till further notice’ (‘plastic love’)

Frederic Leplay
Uses the term unstable for working class family
Contemporary Trends (India)

Marriage still important
Major event in life
Caste active – Technology re-inforcing
Class becoming important as well
Urban areas – Rise of live-in
Rise of divorce rate in IT professionals
Joint Family has Sentimental value
Girl’s choice is increasingly getting considered
Male still seen as major, important bread winner
Role of elderly getting confined to only rituals
Rise of Filiocentric approach
6 pocket syndrome family
Functional Aspect of Family

G Murdock
In his book ‘social structure’
4 functions
- Economic
- Controls reproduction
- Regulates sexual relations
- Socialises children

T Parsons
Identifies two basic functions
1) Primary socialization of children
2) Stabilization of Adult Personality
Ronald Fletcher
Talked about multifunctional family
In which the basic function may exist and other functions are being reinvented
Further functions can be divided as

**Individual perspective**
- Physical security (childhood)
- Emotional/psychological security
- Economic security
- Legitimate means of sexual gratification
- Entertainment
- Gives readymade status
- Initial socialization
Changing trends in Individual perspective

Individual rely more on peers/friends for securities
Rise of alternative institutions like hospital, play school, multiplexes, media etc which are taking some functions of family
Societal Perspective

Reproduction (providing members to the society)
Cultural transmission (socialization and transmission of values but media/school etc are playing major roles now)
Mechanism of social control (now police/law etc)
Unit of economic production (readymade jobs but now focus on corporate jobs)

Ronald Fletcher says that function of family has increased in this regard As family provides for making necessary provisions for training and choice of forces
Criticisms of Family Dysfunctions

Family is often accused to be status quoist
For ex Karl Marx argues that family assures conformity of the individual, thereby, submitting to the exploitation of haves.

David Cooper in his book ‘death of family’ consider it as ideological conditioning device in exploitative society

Family is accused of producing psychological disorders in children
ex: RD Laing in his book ‘politics of family’ studies schizophrenic children and concludes it is due to expectations of the parents

Family produces emotional stress in the members leading to conflicts within family.
Edmond Leach in his book ‘A runaway world?’ concludes that the members expect too much of each other.
Criticisms of Family Dysfunctions

Family legitimizes the exploitation of the women. Ex household work done by them goes unnoticed and family legitimizes sexual abuse.

Family legitimizes domestic violence as it is often ignored or even accepted. Ex Murray Strauss states Marriage licence is a hitting licence.

Family is used as neutralization device to justify deviant acts. Ex corruption.

It is argued family hampers creativity of individual when he submits his desires to family.