

## Family – Core in Educating and Forming the Young Generation

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**ABSTRACT:** In any society, the family has been distinguished as a specific group, which can be characterized as a strong internal weld, maintained due to internal forces. The internal forces that unite the family are the strong feelings and emotional attachment of spouses, as well as the parents and children's, mutual respect and solidarity. To this sentimental cohesion, one will add a weave of addictions that result from economic, social and cultural functions, from duties towards children, towards parents (Voinea 2005, 11).

**KEY WORDS:** family, education, youth, social sciences, sentiment

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Through its universality, complexity and flexibility, the family continues to occupy a central place among the factors that determine and guide development, the continuity of human societies, by providing an affective, value-enhancing, orderly, securing and individualized climate (Voinea 2005, 8).

The most common definition of the family is that it „constitutes the fundamental unity of society and the natural environment for the growth and welfare of the child. Each society has a certain family

system to regulate relationships between mature men and women and between them and children. The family is a superior form of community - mainly of the husband, wife and children - based on social and biological relationships, with the supreme goal of preparing a future, healthy and well-educated generation to participate in the development of society” (Bulgaru and Dilion 2000, 103).

The family as a relatively closed group possesses a particular psychological social structure of interpersonal relationships. In their studying, there are functional links between individuals who fulfill certain roles, that is, they follow certain norms and patterns of behavior that belong to the culture they belong to. The core of intrafamilial relationships, as in any other social group, is the joint activity oriented towards family problems (Dumitrascu 1997).

If before the discovery of problems and „dysfunctions” that occurred within the family in its effort to adapt to modern society, the general view was that the family is the main source of human sociality and sociability, that the family model is - and still needs -, to be taken up in the organization of society as a whole (the old societies, as well as the current social organizations which still conform to a traditional model, preserve models of structures inspired by the family community), today the idea of anachronism of the family life, as a stand-alone institution. The idea of family autonomy over many of the social development programs, its ability to delay or even to oppose some of the provisions of these programs obviously tends to dislike the architects and manage social progress. (For example, the provisions that encourage the individual’s emancipation of structures that can affect their free personal assertion. This is particularly the case with ideologies aimed at empowering women or children and young people and attacking the basic structure and family authority). Nowadays, sociologists agree that the individual individuality of personality („individuality,” as defined by Georg Simmel) increases proportionally with the expansion

of the individual's social environment. Competition develops the specialization of individuals as they multiply, thus favoring their differentiation and separation (Bistriceanu 2006, 7).

Family history illustrates the evolution of this institution from a broad, comprehensive social group of all aspects of individual life, society itself, to the family as a small group, as a unity of a plan that embraces it (the expanded society). The tendency to diminish the area and social influence of the family left much room for „free” (here in the sense of no constraint) manifestation of the individual. Its transformation into unity seems today, rather than constituting an integrated building of individual personality, to be perceived as a stage towards its abolition as an autonomous, constraining structure (Bistriceanu 2006, 10).

French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss defines the family as an organized group that originates in marriage and consists of husband, wife, and children born of their union, of their relationship, though sometimes to this restricted group and other relatives can be added. The family group is united by moral, legal, economic, religious and social rights and obligations.

The family group varies according to its structure levels. From this point of view, we distinguish the simple family and extended family. Simple family can also be defined as primary or elementary, and consists of parents and their unmarried children (own or adopted). Within the simple family, one can speak of the *family of origin* or *consanguine*, which represents the group in which the child is born, and *the procreation* or *own family* - which each adult matures when he marries.

American sociologist Thomas Burch argues that people living in the same dwelling, whether or not relatives, are considered members of the same family unity. In this case, family unity is dwelling and is known in the sociological literature as a resistance family.

Another aspect is that, when family members do not share the same house, but live at long distances and when their husband or wife is away in the country or abroad to do work, study, make certain specializations, and visit periodically each-other. In this case, we have an *interaction* or *migrant family*.

American sociologist N.J. Smelser looked at the broad-based family as a unit of continuity, meaning that there are many generations living in the same old house, continuing the traditions, concerns and habits of the family. In this case, individuals can disappear, they are passers-by, but the family as a group is maintained for generations.

Another point of view in connection with the concept of family is the sociological names of „*normal family*” and „*abnormal family*”. A first form of understanding the notion of „normal family” is that of a family that is composed of a husband, wife, and one or more children. By „abnormal family” in this respect is meant an incomplete family, namely without one of the spouses or without children. Another form of understanding of the term „normal family” is the family officially formed in front of state organs, and the „abnormal family” is the unofficial state organ, living in concubinage. If we refer to the ethical character of the family, then the „normal family” means the family based on respect for love, and in the case of the „abnormal family” it is about building a family based on interests. Another aspect of the term „normal family” is that which refers to a family that has a dignified, honored life, and in which children receive a particular education. The term „abnormal family” refers to disorganized families, with the presence of alcoholics, chronic ill people who do not work, hobble, and practice prostitution. In these families there are „problem children”, delinquent children and other social deficiencies (Bulgaru and Dilion 2000, 103-106).

Children are the ones who bear most of the unwanted consequences of the conflict between family members. The impact of the described

phenomenon on the modern family is manifested in the increase in the number of divorces, the number of incomplete families, the decrease in the birth rate. In the social situation created, the family is a good whose loss both individuals, men and women, and the whole society, pay him dearly.

Intra-familial relationships are harmonious as far as they respond to the humanist principle - forming an attitude towards the other, which in turn implies generosity, mutual respect and exigency. All these provide a favorable psychological social climate in the family without which the necessary conditions for the education of the children cannot be created (Dumitrascu 1997).

**Family as a prototype of society.** The family belongs to the category of primary or fundamental realities, being a universal human institution. Like the community or community of man, the family can be the nucleus of understanding and explaining reality (Rotaru 2011, 5).

## 1. Anthropological approach

Research data has led to the consolidation of a consistent, more consistent knowledge base than that provided by sociological studies. This may be a cause for which the anthropological definitions given to the family are a landmark in the sociological approach. The best known and most useful definitions of the family usually have two meanings:

- ✦ the limited one, according to which **the family is a social group formed by a married couple and their children** (a definition based on marriage and couple, as an institution generating family life, a controversial conception, as we will see in the following chapters);
- ✦ the broader one, which identifies the family with **the social group whose members are linked by age, marriage or**

**adoption, which live together, cooperate economically and take care of their children** (George Peter Murdock).

In line with the above-mentioned anthropologist's definition, the *Britannica Encyclopedia* describes the family by three main features: the common home of members, economic cooperation and biological reproduction.

## 2. Historical approach

Also in the Great Britain, a special field, called *family history*, was born. In the research of British specialists in family history (as an autonomous study discipline), the investigations of this institution focused on one of three aspects (Michael Anderson):

- a) *Affective dimension* (referring to marital or parental relationships, sexual attitudes, premarital practices, etc.); the research of this direction is that the major socio-cultural changes influence the affective family profile. We consider counterproductive the difficulty of detecting and relative quantification of specific indicators.
- b) *Demographic dimension* (households surveyed, number of baptisms, marriages, funerals, and research base as civilian registers). This approach is closer to the natural sciences, providing verifiable information with a high degree of precision.
- c) *Economic and household dimension* (refers to economic relations between family members, inheritance, ownership, succession of titles and privileges, etc.).

## 3. Sociological approach

The family is therefore the purest form of manifestation of human society, which gives the profile of the first forms of collective cohabitation. For a long time, the family has been the basis and model for building society.

Particularly more attentive to the paradigmatic context than to the subjective and objective consistency of the family, sociologists place their studies in the three major theoretical perspectives: functionalism, conflicting and interactionism.

According to the functionalist perspective, the family is a social institution which, like all other social institutions, exists by virtue of exercising certain functions. The general types of family functions identified are: reproduction (producing a sufficient number of offspring to ensure the perpetuation of the community or society concerned), socialization (transmission to children - but not exclusively to them - of dominant cultural models), care, protection and affection, identifying (conferring an identity and social status by legitimating belonging to a particular kinship group), and regulating sexual behavior.

*The conflicting perspective* conceives the family as a system of permanent conflicts, negotiations and trusts. Despite the coercion to co-operate to survive, spouses compete for autonomy, authority and privileges.

*The interactive perspective* (represented by Peter Berger, Sheldon Stryker, etc.) understands the family as a dynamic entity, in which people constantly shape their existence and define their resolutions. Marriage, even the birth of children, involves the shaping of new definitions; the process is all the more complicated as they have to build a sub-world, a kind of greenhouse in which husbands, two people with different and separate biographies can coexist and interact (Bistriceanu 2006, 11- 15).

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