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The nuclear family is a characteristic of all the modern industrial societies. As Lowie writes: " It does not matter whether marital relations are permanent or temporary ; whether there is polygyny or polyandry or sexual licence;..... the one fact stands out beyond all others that everywhere the husband, wife and immature children constitute a unit apart from the remainder of the community". According to T. B.

Bottomore, the universality of the nuclear family can be accounted for by the important functions that it has been performing. The nuclear family has been performing the sexual, the economic, the reproductive, and the educational functions. According to him, the indispensability of these and a few other functions has contributed to universality. Anthropologists too have consistently emphasised the economic functions of the family in primitive societies. A major factor in maintaining the nuclear family is economic co-operation based upon division of labour between sexes. Levi Strauss has said much about the miserable situation of unmarried individuals in most of the primitive societies. The Structure of Nuclear Family: The nuclear family depends very much on incest taboos.

The members of the family cannot have marriage from among themselves. Hence it is confined to two generations only. A third generation can be established by the formation of new families. This can be done by an exchange of males and females between existing nuclear families. It means daughters can be given in marriage to other nuclear families and girls of the other nuclear families can be taken in as spouses to the sons.

This gives rise to two kinds of nuclear families: (a) the family of orientation, and (b) the family of procreation. Every normal adult in every human society belongs to two nuclear families. The first is the family of orientation in which the person was born and brought up, and which includes his father, mother, brothers and sisters. The second is the family of procreation which the person establishes by his marriage and which includes the husband or wife, the sons and daughters. The structure of the nuclear family is not the same everywhere.

Bottomore makes a distinction between two kinds of family system; (i) the family systems in which the nuclear family is relatively independent, and (ii) systems in which the nuclear family is incorporated in, or subordinated to, a larger group, that is to the polygamous or the extended family. The independent nuclear family is more often incorporated in some larger composite family structure. The independent nuclear family which is dominant in modern industrial societies has emerged mainly due to the growth of individualism and intense geographic and social mobility. The social welfare functions of the modern state have also affected it.

The state now comes to the help of the individual to face misfortunes. Hence he is no longer dependent on his family in times of distress. The modern nuclear family is mostly found in the advanced societies of the West and in the U. S. A. Its solidarity largely depends on sexual attractions and the companionship between husband and wife and between parents and children.

But the family bonds tend to weaken as the children grow up.