

# Social conflict theories of the family course work

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



The theory asserts that conflict in the families is a very normal occurrence . Conflict theories view family as a class in society, which one of the group is oppressing others (Otomar & Wehr, 2002). Debatably, a family is not just a social entity of children and married couples. It is a social group in which its members are linked to each other through marriage, ancestry, living together and adoption . In addition they care for each other and share economically. Family is just but a section of society. Conflict theories have variety of roots from systematic approach of society by Marxist and intra-psychic approach of individuals by Frauds. Functionalists analyzed family as a diminutive society in which each member of the family performs different indispensable activities that will lead to survival and continuity of the family. Social conflict theories view a family as a difficult system characterized by conflict and inequality that causes social change. Conflict theory focuses the way in which members of the family struggle for different aspects of life. This include struggle for resources and power. As the family grows individuals within the social unit compete for wealth and prestige hence it leads to creation of conflict. It is not always true that families live harmoniously (Pauline, Doherty & LaRossa, 2008). Conflict theory is there to challenge on such stereotypic beliefs. In the contemporary society the economy has inflated hence there is need to struggle in order to survive. According to Marxist groups and individuals in society have different non-material and material resources. The more powerful individuals use their powers to exploit and oppress those with no power.

The conflict theory views the family as a societal unit that is in a continuous clash and a state of disharmony. The dynamics in the world have led to

changes in roles played by each member of the family. The theories identify and elaborate on the dynamism of roles and the genesis of conflicts in the family. Furthermore it uncovers ways in which the members of the family deal with conflicts, adversity and changes. In families there exist diversity of powers. For example in most communities it is believed that the father is the head of the family. When families have been separated it is important to create a good relationship. It is within the family setup that its members understand and become more emphatic to the causes of conflict (Otomar & Wehr, 2002).

It is so difficult for individuals to interact without conflict, growth of all the family members occurs through conflict. The conflicts and changes that occur in human life are important indicators of normal development and growth. The important aspect of conflict is how to manage it. Family members should learn how to manage conflicts so that it does not lead to alienated relationship.

The theories put lots of emphasis on establishing the causes and solutions of conflict. Some of the causes include; Families have disagreements on various things, from the minor ones like what to eat for supper to bigger ones on how to bring up children. Members of the family differ in interests, extent of hostility, nature, personality and how we express and react on conflicts (Pauline, Doherty & LaRossa, 2008). In a nuclear family for example the mother and father may have conflicting goals such as how to spend the salaries. Due to the development of women rights working women argue that if both members are working they should divide all the activities in the house equal, but men will always believe that the household

chores belongs to the women. The family as a unit is made up of individuals with different sex, age personalities and ideologies hence the occurrence of conflict is based on nature. Families too differ in power; some of the sources of power include love, money, physical cruelty and legitimacy. Each member of the family has power; the only difference is its degree and sources.

Perhaps, communication is the most important solution to family issues (Otomar & Wehr, 2002). Members of the family should ensure that they establish a good communication. Furthermore individuals should be understanding and empathic. The families should be ready to change in order to resolve conflict.

Conflict theories of the family have various assumptions . If families interact there is no way of escaping conflict. As a family there are conflicting interests. In addition the family will feel the social change and growth through conflict. Secondly the theories assume that change and conflict in families are ever-present, foreseeable and normal in every family relationships. The theory states conflict has been a prevalent; hence the main goal is to manage it so that it does not grow to alarming levels that may cause damage to the family members. Given a chance to develop conflict families will inevitably break and cause unhealthy separation. For example divorce occurs when issues are not solved hence becoming chronic. Families too face scarcity of resources, in most cases conflict occurs because the resources that are available are not enough to meet all the needs of the family members (Pauline, Doherty & LaRossa, 2008). We could only be free of conflict if each member gets his needs . Individuals within the family have different level of intrinsically uneven elements, hence power is not equally

distributed. Individuals who have access to power in the families work towards building themselves instead of changing the family as a whole. The conflict theories are not free from critiques. The theories emphasize on the negative sides only yet in a family there are good things. For example caring parents and couples who love is not an indicator of good relationship. The theory views this as a tool to oppress others in the family. In addition the theory emphasizes on differences within family members as the cause of conflict. Differences are appreciated and accepted because of how we were created. Certainly contemporary families do their things in a secretive manner hence it is hard to measure the level of conflict.

In conclusion family setup is not the avenue on oppression and conflict. Parents work together with their children for their betterment and for the good growth. The parents should socialize with their children and the all family so that each one of them grows to fit the dynamic society. We should learn to accommodated and appreciate our diversity within the family. The family is the primary source of all the traits in the society.

## **References**

Otomar, J & Wehr, P. (2002). Using Conflict Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pauline, B, Doherty, J. & LaRossa, R. (2008). Family Theories and Methods. A Contextual Approach. New York: Wiley.