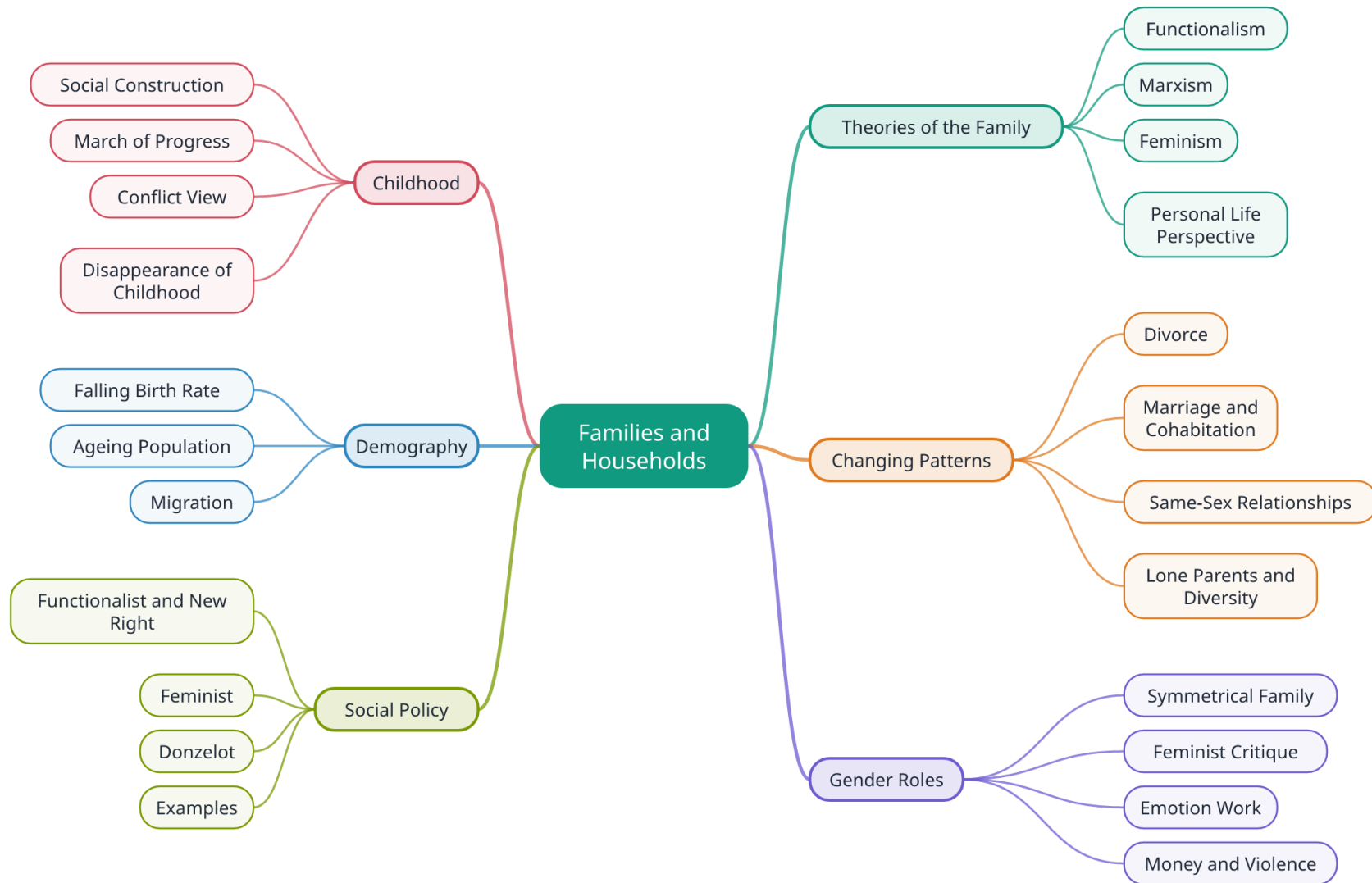


Families and Households Mind Map (A Level Sociology)

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Families and Households mind map explained

Theories of the Family

What the family does for individuals and society.

Functionalism

Murdock: the family has four functions, sexual, reproductive, economic and educational. Parsons: the nuclear family fits industrial society and has two irreducible functions, primary socialisation and stabilising adult personalities.

Marxism

The family serves capitalism: passing on private property, reproducing an ideology of acceptance, and acting as a unit of consumption. Zaretsky saw it as a refuge from capitalism that cannot really meet people's needs.

Feminism

Liberal feminists see gradual progress towards equality; Marxist feminists link women's oppression to capitalism; radical feminists see the family as patriarchal at its core.

Personal Life Perspective

Smart and others focus on the relationships that matter to people, including friends and fictive kin, rather than only blood or marriage ties.

Changing Patterns

How family life in the UK has changed since the 1960s.

Divorce

Rose after the Divorce Reform Act 1969, which came into effect in 1971. Explanations include easier laws, declining stigma, secularisation, women's financial independence and rising expectations of marriage.

Marriage and Cohabitation

Fewer people marry, and later. Cohabitation has become common, often as a step before or instead of marriage.

Same-Sex Relationships

Civil partnerships were introduced by the Civil Partnership Act 2004, and same-sex marriage began in England and Wales in 2014.

Lone Parents and Diversity

More lone-parent, reconstituted and single-person households. Rapoport identified five types of family diversity: organisational, cultural, class, life-stage and generational.

Gender Roles

How domestic labour, power and decision-making are shared.

Symmetrical Family

Young and Willmott (1973) argued roles were becoming more equal, with couples sharing tasks and leisure.

Feminist Critique

Oakley (1974) found little evidence of symmetry: men's help with housework was limited. Women in paid work may carry a dual burden of paid and domestic work.

Emotion Work

Duncombe and Marsden argued women also carry the emotional work of the family, a triple shift.

Money and Violence

Pahl studied how couples control money. Dobash and Dobash studied domestic violence as an outcome of patriarchal power.

Childhood

Childhood as a social construction that varies between times and places.

Social Construction

Ariès argued that in the Middle Ages childhood as a separate stage barely existed; children were treated as mini-adults.

March of Progress

The view that children today are better cared for, healthier and more protected than ever.

Conflict View

Critics argue children remain controlled and unequal, and that childhood differs by class, gender and ethnicity.

Disappearance of Childhood

Postman argued television blurs the line between childhood and adulthood. Palmer's idea of toxic childhood points to technology and consumer culture.

Demography

Changes in births, deaths and migration, and their effect on families.

Falling Birth Rate

Linked to women's changing position, contraception, lower infant mortality, and children becoming an economic cost rather than an asset.

Ageing Population

Falling death rates and rising life expectancy mean more older people, raising the dependency ratio and creating beanpole families (Brannen).

Migration

Immigration has increased cultural diversity in family types and affected the age structure of the population.

Social Policy

How laws and policies shape family life, seen from different perspectives.

Functionalist and New Right

Functionalists see policy helping families perform their functions. The New Right argues some policies, such as generous benefits, undermine the traditional nuclear family.

Feminist

Feminists argue many policies assume and reinforce a male breadwinner and female carer.

Donzelot

Saw policy as a way of policing families, with professionals such as social workers controlling poorer families in particular.

Examples

The Divorce Reform Act 1969, the Civil Partnership Act 2004 and the introduction of same-sex marriage, changes to maternity and paternity leave, and child benefit rules.

How to revise with this mind map

1. Learn a named sociologist and a date for each key idea, and the perspective they belong to. Top-band answers are full of specific references.
2. Use statistics on change, such as divorce rates or the age of first marriage, and explain them with sociological reasons rather than common sense.
3. Evaluate from other perspectives. Criticise the functionalist view of the family with feminist and Marxist arguments, and vice versa.

4. Practise the item-based questions. Use the item's content in your answer: questions often reward pulling ideas from it directly.
5. Make it yours. Build your own families map in Mindmapi from your notes, and ask the AI about any study or statistic you are unsure of. The answer is saved into that branch's notes for next time.