

Knowledge organiser

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L008 • v1.0

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How does the family support industrial society?

Concept	Meaning
Functional fit	A proposed relationship between family organisation and the needs of a society.
Industrialisation	Growth of machine-based production and associated economic changes.
Nuclear family	A family unit of a couple and their dependent children, in this theoretical model.
Extended kin	Relatives beyond the nuclear unit, whether or not they share a home.
Geographical mobility	Moving between places, for example to take paid work.
Social mobility	Movement between social positions, within or across generations.
Achieved status	A position attributed to performance or attainment rather than birth.
Ascribed status	A position assigned through characteristics such as family background.

Testing the account

Concept	Meaning
Primary socialisation	Early learning of language, values and expected behaviour.
Stabilisation	Parsons's claim that close family support helps sustain adult personalities.
Specialisation	Concentration on fewer activities as others transfer to different institutions.
Instrumental role	Parsons's model of material provision and external connections.
Expressive role	Parsons's model of emotional support and internal relationships.
Structural differentiation	Institutions becoming more specialised in their activities.
Historical evidence	Records used to investigate how arrangements existed and changed.
Kinship network	Connections among relatives that may extend across several addresses.

Worked explanation

Relocation illustrates a possible demand for geographical mobility. Teaching routines illustrates primary socialisation; explain how expectations are learned. Neither detail proves the theory universally.

Avoid these confusions

Parsons's functional fit is a theoretical explanation, not a universal law. His gendered role model is attributed and open to challenge. Historical findings about Western European households are not generalised to all societies. The case is invented. Two specialised functions do not mean two exclusive activities.

Retrieve later

Tomorrow: define functional fit and industrialisation. In one week: explain a case mechanism and one limit without notes.