PART I

Trends in Couple and Family Relationships

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From Form to Function

Contemporary Choices, Changes, and Challenges

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Families have undergone profound changes and will continue to do so as their members respond to the pressures, opportunities, and constraints they experience from within and beyond their bounds. Family transitions both reflect societal trends and fuel further changes, including population size and structure, the economy, the physical environment, and social values. Family-level changes include those relating to the prevalence of different family structures or forms (such as single-parent families and couple families with and without children); the paths leading to these various forms; and some of the ways that families operate or function, including the roles that parents have in families.

Nevertheless, some of the fundamental things about families do not change. Most importantly, they remain the basic unit of society—a unit in which much "caring and sharing" occurs—and importantly, the site in which most children are raised. As such, families play a central role in shaping the health and well-being of all immediate family members.

In Western societies, it is the parents who typically have the responsibility for raising their children to become healthy, well-adjusted, and contributing members of society. The extent to which these ends are achieved varies with circumstances, constraints, and opportunity. Parents are also expected to ensure that their family is linked in productive ways to the wider society, and to draw on community resources to help meet their responsibilities.

Given the pivotal role that families play in promoting the well-being of their members, and of society more generally, it is hardly surprising that family trends attract a great deal of

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attention. Trends related to families reflect the broad directions in which societies are heading. Governments increasingly monitor these trends closely to adjust policies affecting family life and the well-being of individuals and their communities.

Much of the attention of researchers, policy makers, and practitioners also focuses on trends in family-related transitions, such as couple formation and stability, and on associated family forms, with family functioning often being inferred from these. Yet, by definition, family functioning determines whether a family is a haven, a site of damaging dysfunction, or something in between. As will be shown below, comparisons of family forms tend to amplify, artificially, differences in family functioning between family forms, while ignoring differences in family functioning within the same form. As such, the focus on form risks generating unrealistic stereotypes. These stereotypes can have unfortunate consequences, including the danger that negative stereotypes based on family form can affect the ways members of these families are treated and the ways they see themselves, possibly leading to inappropriately negative, self-fulfilling prophecies.

In this chapter we first examine the prevalence of different family forms that are apparent today. We show the extent to which their prevalence has changed, and discuss factors contributing to these trends. This section is followed by an examination of family functioning, where attention is directed to: (a) the ways some aspects of family functioning have evolved over the generations, reflecting social and demographic changes; (b) the ways in which family functioning can lead to changes in family form; (c) the influences of the evolving context; and (d) the impact of family functioning on child well-being. This section highlights the fact that circumstances relating to family form tend to affect functioning and points to the need to identify the mechanisms underlying such dynamics.

It is worth noting at the outset that the family forms that are identified depend on the dimensions of interest—for instance, attention can be directed to families that vary in terms of: the number of generations present; the number of children present; the age or gender of the children; parents' age or their marital, employment, or socioeconomic status; the families' residential location (e.g., metropolitan, outer urban, rural, and remote); or cultural background. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to capture all the different ways in which family forms can be categorized, in the following section we focus first on the more "traditional" ways of understanding family forms, then we describe some of the other forms of families. Brief attention is also given to some of the family-related transitions that have contributed to today's most common family forms.

Unpacking Family Form

Definitions of "family" vary, partly because they tend to be developed for different purposes. Defining family frequently involves drawing boundaries that identify the persons who are to be included as "family" and those who are to be excluded. Family boundaries are fluid, and change through partnership formation and separation, as well as births and deaths. This fluidity along with other socio-cultural forces contributes to the diversity that exists in family forms.

"Traditional" family forms

Although the proportion of Australian families that are indigenous is small, there is considerable diversity across indigenous groups. Despite this diversity, indigenous families are "traditional" in the full sense of this term and will therefore be mentioned first. The other "traditional" set of family forms discussed below is based on statistics that define family on the basis of blood and marriage or de facto relationships.

Indigenous families. In indigenous communities a family may include more than 200 widely dispersed people with a common origin, who thereby hold obligations to visit and share with other members. In many cases, the elders play a pivotal role, while the children are seen as the responsibility of the entire family. Children may be raised by family members other than their biological parents, with many moving around their family in the course of their lives (see Bourke, 1993; Butler, 1993; McDonald, 1995).[1]

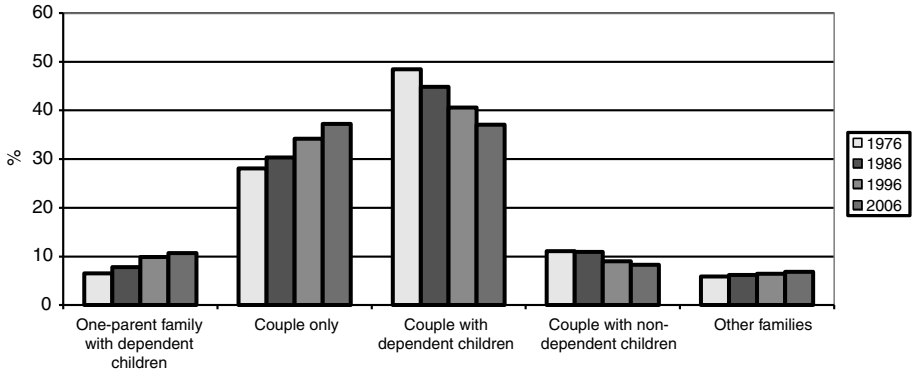
In fact, Morphy (2006) shows that kinship terminology used in some indigenous communities can vary across communities and differs markedly from that of the "Anglo-Celtic" system. This difference means that the family system as understood in some indigenous cultures cannot be translated into a system understood in the mainstream culture. Indeed, the classification of family forms used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reflects those of the mainstream culture (outlined below).

Household family forms identified by the ABS. For statistical purposes, the ABS (2008) defines families as follows:

> Two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering; and who are usually resident in the same household. The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent–child relationship or other blood relationship. Some households will, therefore, contain more than one family (p. 50).[2]

Under this "household family" definition, families may be composed of: couples with or without co-resident children of any age; single parents with co-resident children of any age; grandparents caring for grandchildren; and other families of related adults, such as brothers or sisters living together, where no couple or parent–child relationship exists—although the boundary excludes relatives beyond first cousins (ABS, 2005a). It is important to acknowledge that the ABS definition differs from that used by individuals. Almost all people will see their family as crossing household boundaries and some will view their family in more or less inclusive ways than others. For example, the point at which a separated parent's new partner is seen as "family" may vary for all concerned, with some children possibly never extending their family boundary to include this person. Some children may eventually see their parent's partner as their stepparent, but exclude the stepparent's own parents. These parents, in turn, may or may not see these children as members of their extended family.

On the basis of the ABS definition of "family," most of today's households in Australia are family households. However, the average household size has declined over the 20th



Note: "Other families" includes one-parent families with nondependent children and nonclassifiable families, such as brothers and sisters.

Figure 1.1 "Traditionally-derived" family forms, 1976–2006
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001, 2002, 2007a)

century and family household has become less "statistically dominant." The average size of households was 2.6 in 2006, falling from 4.5 in 1911. Family households as a percentage of all households declined from 77% in 1986 to 72% in 2006.

Figure 1.1 decomposes family households into five forms derived by the ABS, and shows the proportional representation of each of these forms over four decades, from 1976 to 2006. Although families with dependent children were the most common of all five forms between 1976 and 1996, this was no longer the case by 2006. By this time, couple-only families were just as common as families with dependent children, with each of these forms representing 37% of all family households. The "couple-only" families include couples who have yet to (or may never) have children, those whose children have left home, and couples in which one or both partners have had children of previous relationships who are living elsewhere.

Specifically, the representation of families with dependent children decreased (from 48% to 37% of all household families), while the representation of couple-only families and one-parent families increased (couple-only families: from 28% to 37%; one-parent families: from 7% to 11%). Trends for the other two groups changed to a lesser extent (couples with nondependent children only, and "other families"), but it is perhaps noteworthy that one of these two groups (couples with nondependent children only) became progressively less common (decreasing from 11% to 8%). Very little change was apparent for "other families" (ranging from 6% to 7% of all family households). These families comprised related adults such as siblings, and one-parent families with nondependent children.

It is also worth noting that advances in reproductive technologies have created couples with children whose members come from origins that would have been "inconceivable" in the past—children born to a surrogate mother or via donated sperm or eggs.[3] Gilding (2002) argues that such technological developments will continue, as in the past, to help shape "the scale and scope of family change."

Less common family forms

Other family forms not mentioned above are becoming more visible either because they have become more common, or because their very existence is increasingly being acknowledged. Some of those family forms are listed below.

Extended household families and "grandparent families." The traditional household family approach does not capture the fact that some households contain more than two generations and/or siblings, aunts or uncles of the parents, or cousins of one of the generations.[4] For instance, a grandparent may live with an adult child, or in what in Australia is called a "granny flat" on the property of their adult child, while in other cases a single-parent family may move to live with the children's grandparents. In each of three surveys conducted by the ABS (in 1997, 2003, and 2006–07), multifamily households—covering both extended household families and families whose members are not related to each other—accounted for 3–4% of all family households (ABS, 2008).

"Grandparent families" refers to families in which the grandparents are the guardians or main carers of children aged less than 18 years who are living with them. Such families represented only 0.2% of all families in 2006–07, with the number during this period being lower than that which was apparent in 2003 (14,000 vs. 23,000) (ABS, 2008). However, the often tragic circumstances that lead to such circumstances (e.g., mental health problems or substance abuse of the children's parents) and the multifaceted difficulties that may be experienced within these families (e.g., grandparents' grief, health issues, and financial difficulties; children's traumatization associated with past events), mean that there has been growing attention to the needs of these families (e.g., ABS, 2005b; Dunne & Kettler, 2008; Fitzpatrick & Reeve, 2003; Ochiltree, 2006).

Step- and blended families. Among families with children aged less than 18 years old in 2006–07, 4% were stepfamilies and 3% were blended families. These proportions are the same as those apparent in 1997 and 2003 (ABS, 2008). A stepfamily is formed when a parent re-partners and there is at least one child who is a stepchild to one of the partners, and there are no children born of, or adopted by, the couple. Blended families, on the other hand, include a stepchild and a child who was born of, or adopted by, the couple.

Same-sex couples. Little is known about prevalence of same-sex relationships in Australia. In the 2006 census, 0.6% of individuals were identified as being in a same-sex relationship. However, this statistic may represent a considerable underestimate of the prevalence of same-sex couples, given that some of these couples may be reluctant to disclose the nature of their relationship. The 2001 census showed slightly more same-sex male couples than same-sex female couples (de Vaus, 2004), and this trend is also reflected in the 2006 census data.[5]

Compared to those in heterosexual relationships, individuals in same-sex relationships appear to be younger and better educated, and seem more likely to hold professional occupations and to have no religious affiliation (de Vaus, 2004). However, it is possible

that such differences may partly result from some same-sex couples sharing these demographic characteristics compared with others in same-sex relationships who are reluctant to disclose demographic information.

Living apart together. Another form of couple relationship, called *living apart together (LAT)*, has been observed by social scientists in recent decades. Definitions of LAT vary in terms of whether the couple may be married. For instance, Strohm, Seltzer, Cochran, and Mays (2009) define these relationships as unmarried partners living separately but identifying themselves as a couple.

Levin and Trost (1999), on the other hand, also treat married couples that have two households as being in an LAT relationship. And while Strohm et al. refer to married couples who live apart as being in "commuter marriages," Levin and Trost use the term "commuting marriages" to refer to cases in which each partner lives in the same household, while one or both has another apartment where they stay "away from home." Presumably, "commuting marriages," as understood by Levin and Trost, would include cohabiting partners who see themselves as having one home which they share and another apartment where they sometimes stay. Of course each partner may have a different idea about whether they are living in the same home as the other partner, in two homes, or in the home in which the other partner does not live.

Such definitional variations indicate that LAT is a "fuzzy" and difficult to identify family form. Notwithstanding this difficulty, Wave 5 of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia HILDA Survey suggests that, in 2005, 1% of married people under 65 years and 19% of unmarried people of this age who were in an intimate, ongoing relationship spent less than half the time living with their spouse or partner.

Reasons for living apart together vary. For example, some couples in an intimate relationship may not yet feel ready emotionally or financially to move in together, and some couples may live in separate households to pursue employment in different locations or to maintain greater autonomy than would otherwise be possible. One partner may move to a new location in order to gain employment, with the other partner following if and when the leaver has become established and is certain that the decision to move is appropriate. The reasons tend to vary according to the age of the partners (e.g., young people who are still living in the parental home, compared with older widowed or divorced individuals who have already established their separate dwellings, Strohm et al., 2009).

Separated families with different patterns of care-time arrangements. Children in general reside with their mothers after the parents separate. Around 85% of single-parent families with children under 18 years old are headed by mothers (ABS, 2008). However, this statistic masks the diverse care-time arrangements that parents make after separation. The closer the equality of time with each parent, the more likely it may be that the children see themselves as having "two homes."

Based on the experience of parents who separated between July 2006 and 2008, Kaspiew et al. (2009) identified nine different care-time arrangements for their children (see Table 1.1), ranging from children who never see their fathers to those who never see their mothers, with some spending equal time with each parent.[6] As evident in Table 1.1, the care-time arrangements vary with children's age. Of course, children's time with each

Table 1.1 Care-Time Arrangements: Proportion of nights per year that children spent with each parent by age of child, 2008

Proportion of nights per year with each parent	*Age of child (years)*					*All children*
	0–2	*3–4*	*5–11*	*12–14*	*15–17*	
			%			
Father never sees child	16.2	8.4	5.3	10.6	13.0	11.1
Father sees in daytime only	34.4	15.5	12.0	14.0	22.6	22.5
87–99% with mother (1–13% father)	13.8	13.9	13.7	14.3	18.3	14.1
66–86% with mother (14–34% father)	25.4	37.1	37.2	31.1	18.7	31.0
53–65% with mother (35–47% father)	5.0	9.3	11.6	7.8	3.3	7.8
48–52% with each parent (i.e., equal care time)	2.1	9.3	11.8	10.7	6.4	7.0
35–47% with mother (53–65% with father)	0.4	1.7	2.3	1.7	1.1	1.3
14–34% with mother (66–86% with father)	0.8	1.9	2.8	3.5	3.7	1.9
1–13% with mother (87–99% with father)	0.5	0.7	1.3	2.3	4.2	1.1
Mother sees child in daytime only	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.7	4.4	1.3
Mother never sees child	0.4	1.0	0.9	2.5	4.3	1.0
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Number of observations	2,684	1,309	2,538	627	560	7,718

Source: Kaspiew et al. (2009)

parent may also change according to the changing circumstances of each parent (e.g., one parent's re-partnering, relocation, or changing employment circumstances, or shifts in the quality of the inter-parental relationship).

A number of interacting factors have contributed to the trends outlined in this chapter. These include changes in the dynamics of the labor market, as well as the increased participation of women in education and the labor force (especially including those with children), and the introduction and widespread availability of reliable contraception. Other clearly important and related factors include the rise in cohabitation, increased relationship instability, and delays in achieving those milestones that were once seen as important markers of adulthood: leaving home, marrying, and having children (see de Vaus, 2004; chapter 2 in this volume; Weston & Qu, 2007).

For many young adults, partnership formation and childbearing are now choices to be considered within the range of lifestyle options that are available to them. Thus, societal trends and the choices afforded to contemporary families have significantly added to the diversity of family forms. The various family forms outlined in this chapter differ systematically in ways that can affect the nature and quality of their functioning. However, in discussing such differences, there is always the danger that attention to differences masks the overlap in *quality* of functioning. Such issues are examined in the next section.

Family Functioning

Family functioning has many dimensions and relates not only to internal family dynamics but also to the ways in which family members interact with the outside world. Functioning cannot be understood simply by investigating family members in isolation (Cook, 2010).

Some aspects of family functioning can be measured objectively (e.g., paid work hours of each parent), but many can only be assessed subjectively. It is particularly difficult to infer family functioning on the basis of the latter, for different family members can hold quite different views about how well their family is functioning. It has long been shown that family members differ in their reports concerning issues such as family cohesion, adaptability, sharing of household tasks, and parenting (see Baxter, 1997, 2002; Crouter & Seery, 1994; Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1983). This is not to suggest that subjectively derived information has little use. In fact, the ways family members interpret such dynamics may well influence their behavior and well-being. Thus, an important issue concerns the ways in which form and function influence the well-being of family members. This matter will now be addressed.

Functioning over form?

Stereotypes exist about the quality of functioning of families of different forms, such as single-parent families and stepfamilies. However, family form alone is by no means a reasonable proxy for the nature or quality of family functioning. For example, some couples who live together tend to live quite separate or parallel lives—possibly reflecting a distant, unhappy relationship that may end in separation. These couples could be said to be "living together apart."[7] And as Robinson (2009) points out, single mothers are a diverse group, as evidenced by the different pathways that have led to their status as a single mother, and the fact that some are well-resourced at the outset, and some move successfully from reliance on welfare to reliance on paid work.[8] Furthermore, many sole-parent and couple families that are financially disadvantaged function extremely well, with some clearly doing better than some affluent families, especially those on the brink of separation.

The quality of family functioning is clearly more important than family form to the well-being of family members. While there is evidence supporting the commonsense notion that children are particularly likely to thrive if they live with both biological parents who care deeply for them as well as for each other (see Amato, 2005; Ambert, 1997), children whose parents are locked in acrimonious conflict appear to be better off if their parents separate (Amato & Booth, 2005; see also chapter 8 in this volume).

Comparisons of family forms, however, do suggest differences in the average well-being of family members. For example, children with separated parents have a higher risk of negative outcomes than children in intact married families (see Amato, 2005). But this risk is modest and outcomes for most children of separated families are no different from those of most children in intact families. The risk remains a serious concern, however, because the *number* (rather than proportion) of children adversely affected is substantial (Amato, 2005). The differences in children's well-being can be explained by the

interaction of many factors including those relating to the child, parent, family (including its resources and functioning), neighborhood, and broader community.[9]

The importance of family functioning to child well-being within separated families has recently been demonstrated in the evaluation of the 2006 family law reforms undertaken by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Kaspiew et al., 2009). This study showed that separated parents' assessments of their children's well-being varied according to the quality of their relationship with the other parent. Children whose separated parents reported a highly conflictual or fearful inter-parental relationship appeared to be progressing less well over a range of indicators compared with those whose parents held friendly or cooperative relationships (Figure 1.2). These findings echo the past findings of Noller and colleagues (see chapter 8 and chapter 23 in this volume).

The evaluation also suggested that children were at an increased risk of experiencing negative outcomes where there had been a history of family violence, mental health and/or substance abuse problems, and where one parent experienced safety concerns (for themselves or their child) linked with ongoing contact with the other parent. Furthermore, the risk of lowered well-being (as reported by mothers) appeared to be particularly elevated where the children experienced equal time with each parent but the mother held serious concerns for her and/or the children's safety.

Past experiences are also important. For example, parental separation is but a step in the longer process of relationship breakdown and readjustment, and the outcomes for children depend on their experiences during the entire process (Amato, 2000). These experiences relate to the quality of functioning in the family, with family violence, child abuse, and parents' substance abuse being extreme examples of poor functioning that may have contributed to the separation and would have had detrimental effects on the children. Under these circumstances, the children would normally be better off through parental separation.

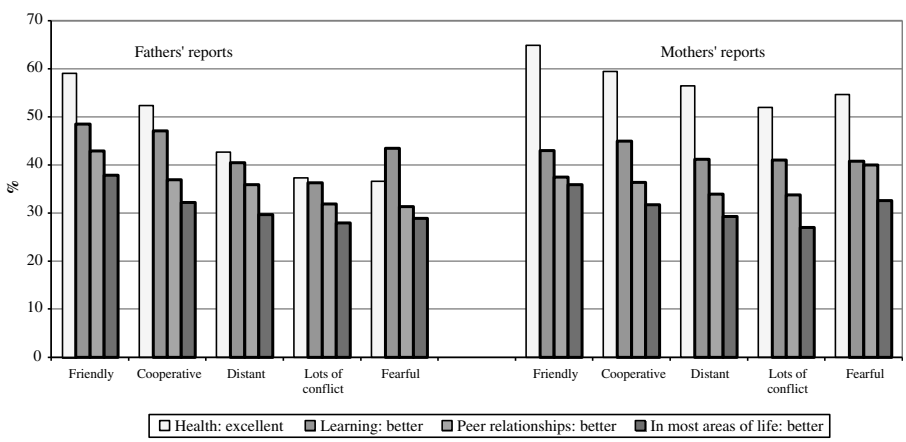


Figure 1.2 Proportion of separated parents who rated their children's health as excellent or doing better than other children in three areas (learning, peer relationships, most areas of life) by perceived quality of inter-parental relationships
Source: Adapted from Kaspiew et al. (2009) based on Figure 11.10

The number and nature of family forms that individuals experience, especially during their childhood, also require monitoring. Recent research suggests that successive changes in family forms require adjustments that can be very difficult for children to handle and increase the risk of negative developmental outcomes (Cherlin, 2008; Teachman, 2008; Wolfinger, 2005). These changes themselves may reflect continuing or successive problems in family functioning to which children may have contributed (e.g., if they are unhappy with the parents' new partner).

Challenges for families and for policy

It is important to point out that family functioning is complex and is influenced by internal and external forces. It reflects the way the families respond to environmental forces, such as shifts in the economy which influence the way they allocate breadwinning and homemaking responsibilities. Such changes have impacts, not only within the family, but also for society. In turn, they also have implications for policy and the provision of supports to families. Two specific issues are explored below.

Breadwinning and homemaking responsibilities. In some ways, life was simpler with a clear division of breadwinning and homemaking responsibilities, although such a situation was by no means ideal for everyone concerned. Nor is such a division the norm these days. For example, in 1983, just over half the couple families with dependent children had only one parent in paid work (whether full-time or part-time) while 40% had both parents in paid work. Over the years, the proportion of dual-earner couple families increased, so that by 2007, 60% of couple families with dependent children had both parents in paid work and only 35% had only one parent in paid work. Couple families with one parent working full-time (father or mother) and the other working part-time are considerably more common than those in which both parents work full-time (36% vs. 24% in 2007). The move of mothers into the workforce also applies to families headed by mothers. The proportion of single mothers with dependent children who are in the workforce increased from 32% in 1983 to 57% in 2007 (ABS, 2007b; Renda, 2003). Such changes have had ripple effects, requiring other adjustments within the home, workplace, and community to facilitate this new way of life.

Outside the family, various policies have been implemented in the workplace and community to accommodate the family commitments of employees, including the introduction of flexible work hours and leave to look after family members, both young and old, the provision of formal child care, and for some, paid maternity leave. However, access to family-friendly work practices varies considerably within and between organizations (Gray & Tuddbull, 2003).

In addition, as increasing numbers of couples have mothers in paid work, pressures have mounted on fathers to increase their share in the couple's homemaking responsibilities. There is now a detectable shift, however, in fathers' behavior consistent with these expectations, although mothers are still doing the lion's share around the home (see Baxter, 2002; Bittman, 2004a, 2004b). It is therefore not surprising that mothers with full-time paid work and with young children are more likely than their counterparts with

part-time or no paid work to experience time pressures (see Baxter, Gray, Alexander, Strazdins, & Bittman, 2007).

The above example illustrates one way in which changes in the different strategies for managing parental responsibilities can generate their own set of needs which must be met if the family is to function well. The meeting of these needs is not something that families can do on their own. While some receive support from their extended families, such families also need the support of their workplaces, their communities, and governments.

Impact of the information age. Advances in information technology represent another set of societal changes that have added to the complexity of family life. For example, technology has contributed to a blurring of the boundaries between work and family life. While these changes have enabled some parents to work from home, which may help them better manage their work- and family-life responsibilities, they can also increase the chance that work demands interfere with home life.

These advances in information technology have affected many other aspects of family life, such as the amount of time that family members spend in contact with others via mobile telephones and the Internet. Family members' potential access to pornography, violence, bullying through the Internet, along with all the information that assists them in their work (relating to school or employment), can also have a profound impact on behavior in the home (Donnerstein, 2010).

Conclusion – Pitfalls of Form and Prospects of Functioning

Regardless of family form, there are basic needs common to all families. For instance, parents need to provide their children with the resources to meet their basic requirements for remaining healthy, feeling safe and secure, and growing up to become happy, well-adjusted, and productive members of the community. The meeting of these needs can be enhanced or threatened by a variety of interacting forces relating to characteristics of the family members, the family as a whole (including its form and especially its functioning), and external factors, such as the economic climate, government policies, and technological advancements.

The prevalence of different family forms has changed and some new types of families are emerging. These trends result from broad societal forces and personal circumstances of individuals including their values and aspirations as well as the opportunities available to them. Such trends and their contributing factors need to be monitored closely in order to develop proactive policies.

However, while monitoring the different family forms is important, it is also important to avoid inferring family functioning from family form. In other words, particular attention needs to be given to family functioning (in all its diversity) that occurs within these different forms, and the impact of such functioning on the well-being of family members.

This task is by no means an easy one. It is far simpler to measure family form and socio-demographic characteristics associated with family form, such as the family's household

income and residential location—and to compare the well-being of family members in different family forms as these relate to their socio-demographic correlates. Family functioning is important as a mediator between form and these other correlates on the one hand, and well-being outcomes on the other (see Chase-Lansdale, Cherlin, & Kiernan, 1995; Pryor & Rodgers, 2001).

The family needs to be understood in its wider social context, for this context plays a central role in the overall functioning and lifestyle of the family. While "it takes a village to raise a child," a supportive village is also necessary for families to thrive, meet the needs of their members, and thereby enhance the well-being of their village. There are many ways in which Australia now supports its families, including the financial support targeting different groups, and the provision of various services (Gray, Qu, & Weston, 2008). There is a need, however, for policy to take a lifespan development approach to support families whatever their forms. This approach emphasizes the fact that development is a multifaceted, multidirectional, and lifelong process, and highlights factors influencing developmental directions (e.g. Baltes, 1987). Such an approach throws light on the appropriate nature and timing of supports required. Strong support needs to be directed not only at the "front-end" (e.g., early childhood; relationship education), but across the life course, in all its diversity.

Notes

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the authors and may not reflect the views of the Australian Institute of Family Studies or the Australian government.

1. While this lifestyle is foreign to the mainstream Australian families, Schaffer and Emerson (1964) observed that children have networks of attachment that extend beyond the family.
2. Hugo (2001) notes that it is only in recent decades that census information about relationships in the family has been used to organize the data in such a way that the structure and composition of families can be identified.
3. Surrogacy involves a woman having a child for another woman, using the sperm of the partner of the latter ("commissioning" woman). The "commissioning woman's" eggs may be fertilized, with the embryos then being transplanted into the surrogate mother, or the eggs of the surrogate mother may be used. Such procedures are not legal in all states, and the latter procedure may not be practiced.
4. If a single mother and her children live with both her parents, then the ABS treats them as two separate families living in one household.
5. The information based on the 2006 census was computed by the authors using the 2006 TableBuilder.
6. Any number of categories could have been identified from these data.
7. Some of these couples may well separate when their children have left home.
8. Some of the circumstances of single-mother families created by relationship breakdown are discussed later in this chapter.
9. See Bronfenbrenner and Crouter (1983) for an excellent discussion of the ways in which characteristics of the context, process, and individual child interact to affect children's developmental outcomes.

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