

**THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY TYPES****Kadirova is the daughter of Ozodakhan Musajon**

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**Abstract**

At the same time, some families might be said to cross a threshold into truly dysfunctional—the point where challenges become pathological and real harm might happen to family members. Why do families get to this point? What are the signs that a family is truly in distress? This article shows answer these questions.

**Keywords:** dysfunctional family, cause, effect

**THE MAIN PART**

Dysfunctional families are sometimes defined as those where abusive behaviors are present, or substance use impacts the family, or there is emotional, physical, or sexual abuse present (Kolko & Kazdin, 1990). In dysfunctional families, interpersonal conflict is often frequent and intense, leaving the whole family in a state of chronic stress. Or the children in the family may be engaged in dangerous or risky behaviors that put a strain on their parents and the whole family dynamic. Families in which one or more members have an especially impairing mental illness may also be considered dysfunctional if the mental illness has a strong impact on the family's overall functioning. A dysfunctional family results from dysfunctional relationships within the family (Minuchin, 1985).

Having one dysfunctional relationship within a family can be enough to stress the whole family system if the other family members get involved to try to resolve the dispute. For example, a child may be triangulated into trying to resolve their parents' arguments, and this triangulation can easily bring the child into conflict with both parents. As a result, many dysfunctional families likely have multiple problematic relationships within the family. Why are these relationships dysfunctional in the first place? We can look to a socioecological model to understand this. Socioecological models suggest that factors at multiple levels of society can and do impact most outcomes in our lives (Tudge et al., 2009). Things can go wrong at the individual, interpersonal, familial, and societal levels to cause family dysfunction. For example, a parent's diagnosis with schizophrenia may mean that they struggle to meet their parenting responsibilities. At the interpersonal level, incompatibilities of personality between parents can decrease their ability to run a household together. At the societal level, lacking money or other resources, or being in the minority in terms of race or ethnicity, can cause an otherwise well-functioning family to struggle. Dysfunctional families struggle with at least six different dynamics (Epstein et al., 1978). These are behavior control, affective involvement, affective responsiveness, roles, communication, and problem solving. Let's look at a couple of these in more detail. "Affect" in this context means emotions, so in dysfunctional families, parents may be too involved, or not involved enough, in helping their children manage their emotions. They may also ignore or discount their children's emotions instead of validating them. Parents may also be far too controlling, or not nearly controlling enough, of their children's behaviors. In terms of roles, many dysfunctional families have



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parentified children—children who have stepped into the responsibilities of a parent because their actual parents are not meeting those responsibilities. Dysfunctional family dynamics can also be understood through the lens of trying and failing to find the right balance between independence and attachment within each family relationship (Wang et al., 2020). While this is most relevant for families with teenagers, most dysfunctional families will have difficulty with family members either being too close to each other or too distant from each other. These dynamics can easily lead to greater tension in the family.

### SUMMARY

Children and adults alike in dysfunctional families may hesitate to share with the rest of the world how difficult things are at home. There is frequently shame attached to how one's family just doesn't seem to function as well as other families do (Newman, 1993). Often, children will assume that the dysfunction is driven by their own behaviors, which makes it especially shameful and hard to tell teachers or other trusted adults about what's going on. Dysfunctional families will often have too few or too many rules. For example, research has linked one's likelihood of having an eating disorder to experiencing lots of strict rules and regulations around eating in the home (Crowther et al., 2002). At the same time, parents who provide no structure or rules around food may put their children at risk of being overweight (Sleddens et al., 2011).

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