UGC-NET

SOCIOLOGY

National Testing Agency (NTA)

PAPER 2 || VOLUME – 4

UGC NET Paper – 2 (SOCIOLOGY)

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1: Theoretical Approaches: Structure-Functionalist, Alliance, and Cultural

Introduction

The structure-functionalist approach views family as a stabilizing unit, alliance theory emphasizes kinship as a system of exchange, and cultural approaches highlight diverse practices shaped by local norms. These theories illuminate how families and kinship systems organize social life, regulate relationships, and adapt to change, particularly in India's diverse context, where joint families, caste-based marriages, and regional kinship patterns coexist.

Core Content

1. Structure-Functionalist Approach

   The structure-functionalist approach, rooted in the works of Talcott Parsons and Émile Durkheim, views family, marriage, and kinship as integral institutions that maintain social stability and fulfill essential functions.

1.1. Core Concepts

- **Social Stability**: Families provide structure, ensuring societal order through roles and norms.

- **Functional Roles**: Families perform functions like socialization, reproduction, economic support, and emotional care.

- **Division of Labor**: Gendered roles (e.g., male breadwinner, female caregiver) enhance efficiency.

- **Integration**: Kinship systems connect individuals to broader social networks, reinforcing cohesion.

1.2. Detailed Explanation

- **Social Stability**: Parsons argued that families act as "factories" producing stable individuals, socializing children into societal norms. In India, joint families reinforce stability by pooling resources and maintaining caste endogamy, with 20% of households still joint (Census, 2011).

- **Functional Roles**: Families socialize children (e.g., teaching cultural values), reproduce labor (e.g., raising future workers), provide economic support (e.g., shared income), and offer emotional care (e.g., caregiving for elderly). For example, Indian families often support unemployed youth, reducing social strain.

- **Division of Labor**: Parsons' model of instrumental (male) and expressive (female) roles aligns with traditional Indian families, where men earn and women manage households, though urban shifts challenge this (NSSO, 2023).

- **Integration**: Kinship ties, like gotra systems, link individuals to clans, ensuring social networks for marriage and support, as seen in North Indian arranged marriages.

1.3. Sociological Implications

- **Social Order**: Aligns with Durkheim's functionalism, emphasizing cohesion.

- **Inequality**: Reinforces gendered roles, per feminist critiques.

- **Adaptation**: Families evolve, as urban nuclear families replace joint structures.

1.4. Historical Context

- Emerged in the 1940s–50s, reflecting post-war Western family ideals.

- Applied to India's joint families, emphasizing their stabilizing role.

1.5. Indian Context
- **Joint Families**: In rural Uttar Pradesh, 30% of households are joint, sharing economic and caregiving roles (NSSO, 2023).
- **Socialization**: Families teach caste norms, ensuring endogamy in 80% of marriages (IIPS, 2024).
- **Case Study**: In Punjab, Sikh joint families pool agricultural income, supporting education for 50% of youth, illustrating economic functions.

1.6. Critiques
- **Static View**: Ignores family conflicts and change, per conflict theory.
- **Gender Bias**: Justifies patriarchal roles, overlooking women's agency.
- **Western Bias**: Less applicable to India's diverse kinship systems.

1.7. Relevance
- Tested for functional roles and Indian family structures (e.g., June 2017).

2. Alliance Theory

Alliance theory, developed by Claude Lévi-Strauss, views marriage and kinship as systems of exchange that create social bonds through alliances between groups.

2.1. Core Concepts
- **Marriage as Exchange**: Marriages form alliances, exchanging women, resources, or status.
- **Reciprocity**: Kinship systems rely on reciprocal obligations, ensuring group cohesion.
- **Cross-Cousin Marriage**: Preferred in some cultures to strengthen alliances.
- **Structural Patterns**: Kinship organizes society through rules of exogamy and endogamy.

2.2. Detailed Explanation
- **Marriage as Exchange**: Lévi-Strauss argued that marriage is a contract between groups, not individuals, exchanging women to forge alliances. In India, Dravidian cross-cousin marriages exchange brides to maintain family ties.
- **Reciprocity**: Marriage alliances create obligations, like dowry or mutual support, as seen in 60% of Indian arranged marriages (IIPS, 2024).
- **Cross-Cousin Marriage**: In South India, 30% of marriages are consanguineous, reinforcing kinship bonds (NFHS-5, 2020).
- **Structural Patterns**: Rules like gotra exogamy in North India and caste endogamy ensure alliances within social boundaries.

2.3. Sociological Implications
- **Cohesion**: Alliances strengthen social networks, per functionalism.
- **Power Dynamics**: Exchange reinforces patriarchy, per feminist critiques.
- **Cultural Variation**: Highlights India's diverse kinship practices.

2.4. Historical Context
- Developed in the 1940s, based on anthropological studies of kinship.
- Applied to India's complex marriage systems, particularly Dravidian.

2.5. Indian Context
- **Dravidian Kinship**: In Tamil Nadu, 25% of marriages are cross-cousin, maintaining land ownership within families (NFHS-5, 2020).
- **Caste Alliances**: Rajput marriages in Rajasthan reinforce caste networks, exchanging status.
- **Case Study**: In Andhra Pradesh, Reddy families use cross-cousin marriages to consolidate agricultural wealth, illustrating alliance functions.

2.6. Critiques
- **Gender Neglect**: Views women as exchange objects, ignoring agency.
- **Overemphasis on Structure**: Ignores emotional or individual aspects.
- **Limited Scope**: Less applicable to modern, urban marriage practices.

2.7. Relevance
- Tested for alliance theory and Indian kinship practices (e.g., Dec 2022).

3. Cultural Approach

The cultural approach, inspired by anthropologists like Louis Dumont and Irawati Karve, emphasizes how local norms, values, and practices shape family, marriage, and kinship systems.

3.1. Core Concepts
- **Cultural Diversity**: Kinship varies by region, religion, and caste, reflecting local traditions.
- **Symbolic Meanings**: Marriage and family carry cultural significance, like honor or purity.
- **Normative Rules**: Customs govern roles, rituals, and relationships.
- **Adaptation to Change**: Cultural practices evolve with modernization and globalization.

3.2. Detailed Explanation
- **Cultural Diversity**: India's kinship systems range from North Indian patrilineal to South Indian matrilineal (e.g., Nairs), shaped by regional norms. For example, 10% of Kerala households are matrilineal (Census, 2011).
- **Symbolic Meanings**: Marriage symbolizes caste purity, with 80% endogamous marriages (IIPS, 2024), reinforcing cultural identity.
- **Normative Rules**: Rituals like kanyadaan in Hindu marriages define gendered roles, emphasizing female subordination.
- **Adaptation to Change**: Urban India sees 20% inter-caste marriages, reflecting cultural shifts (NFHS-5, 2020).

3.3. Sociological Implications
- **Identity**: Cultural practices reinforce social bonds, per symbolic interactionism.
- **Inequality**: Norms perpetuate caste and gender hierarchies, per conflict theory.
- **Change**: Highlights family evolution, per modernization theory.

3.4. Historical Context
- Developed in the 20th century through anthropological studies of India.
- Applied to understand India's diverse kinship systems.

3.5. Indian Context
- **Regional Variations**: Naga tribes practice clan exogamy, while Jats enforce gotra rules.
- **Rituals**: Mangalsutra in Hindu marriages symbolizes cultural norms.
- **Case Study**: In Kerala, Nair matrilineal families adapt to nuclear trends, with 30% shifting by 2024 (NSSO).

3.6. Critiques
- **Descriptive Focus**: Lacks explanatory power, per structuralist critiques.
- **Static View**: May overlook rapid social changes, like urbanization.
- **Overemphasis on Norms**: Ignores individual agency and conflicts.

3.7. Relevance
- Tested for cultural diversity and Indian marriage practices (e.g., June 2020).

4. PYQ Analysis

This section analyzes 5–10 PYQs from 2015–2025, providing detailed solutions, trends, and expected future questions.

4.1. Sample PYQs and Solutions
1. **June 2017: Structure-functionalism views family as:**
   A) Conflict-driven
   B) Stabilizing unit
   C) Economic exchange
   D) Cultural artifact
   Answer: B) Stabilizing unit
   Explanation: Structure-functionalism emphasizes the family's role in maintaining social stability and cohesion, as seen in the structure of joint families.

2. **December 2022: Alliance theory focuses on:**
   A) Family roles
   B) Marriage as exchange
   C) Cultural norms
   D) Emotional bonds
   Answer: B) Marriage as exchange
   Explanation: According to Lévi-Strauss, alliance theory views marriage as a system of exchange between groups, exemplified by practices like cross-cousin marriages.

3. **June 2020: Cultural approaches highlight:**
   A) Universal roles
   B) Local diversity
   C) Economic functions
   D) Political power
   Answer: B) Local diversity
   Explanation: Cultural approaches emphasize the diversity of family structures and practices across different societies, such as the matrilineal system of the Nair community.

4. **December 2021: Parsons' functionalism emphasizes:**
   A) Gender equality
   B) Division of labor
   C) Caste diversity
   D) Individual choice
   Answer: B) Division of labor
   Explanation: Talcott Parsons' functionalist perspective highlights the division of labor within families, with instrumental (provider) and expressive (nurturer) roles.

5. **June 2023: Cross-cousin marriage is central to:**
   A) Functionalism
   B) Alliance theory
   C) Cultural approach
   D) Conflict theory
   Answer: B) Alliance theory
   Explanation: Cross-cousin marriage is a key feature of alliance theory, as it reinforces social alliances between kinship groups, particularly in Dravidian kinship systems.

4.2. Question Trends
- **Recurring Themes**: Functional roles, alliance exchange, cultural diversity.
- **Recent Shifts**: Focus on Indian kinship variations and critiques.
- **Difficulty Level**: Questions test theoretical frameworks and applications.

4.3. Expected Future Questions
- Role of joint families in functionalism.
- Alliance theory in Dravidian kinship.
- Cultural diversity in Indian marriage practices.

5. Visual Aids
Below are 4 visual aids to simplify complex concepts, with captions and explanations.

5.1. Table: Theoretical Frameworks

Theory	Core Concept	Indian Example
Structure-Functionalist	Social stability	Joint family roles
Alliance Theory	Marriage as exchange	Cross-cousin marriage
Cultural Approach	Local diversity	Nair matriliny

- **Explanation**: Summarizes theories, aiding theoretical PYQs.

Functionalist
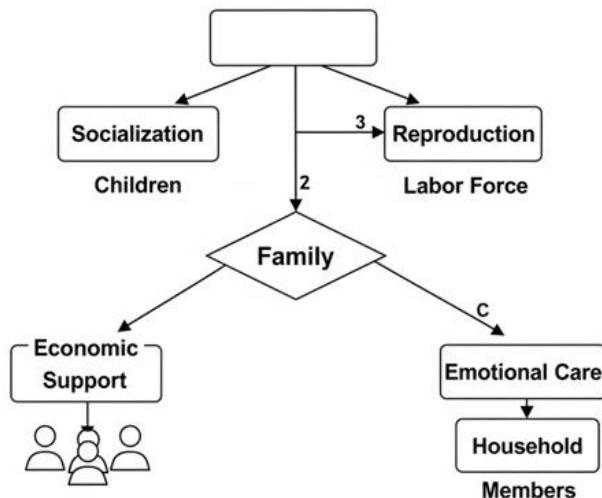
Caption: *Flowchart of functionalist family functions.*

Joint Family Trends
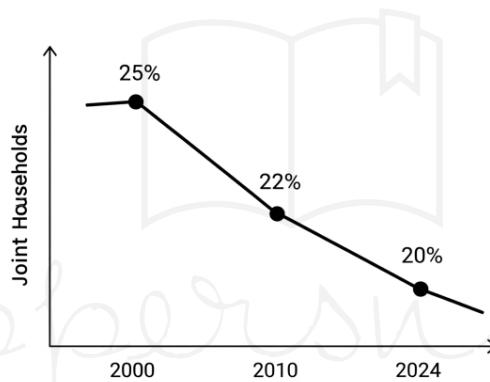
- **Explanation**: Simplifies roles, relevant for questions.
  Caption: *Graph depicting joint family decline (NSSO, 2024).*
- **Explanation**: Highlights trends, a PYQ topic.

5.4. Table: Kinship Practices

Practice	Description	Example
Patrilineal	Male descent	North Indian gotra
Matrilineal	Female descent	Kerala Nair
Cross-Cousin	Alliance marriage	Tamil Nadu Reddy

- **Explanation**: Summarizes practices, aiding questions.

6. Key Points

- **Structure-Functionalist**: Family stabilizes society, as in joint families.
- **Alliance Theory**: Marriage creates exchanges, as in cross-cousin unions.
- **Cultural Approach**: Highlights diversity, as in Nair matriliny.
- **Joint Families**: Perform economic and social roles, per NSSO.
- **Kinship Variations**: Patrilineal and matrilineal systems coexist.
- **Critiques**: Theories face gender and change limitations.
- **Recent Trends**: Focus on Indian diversity in exams.
- **Interdisciplinary Link**: Connects to Unit 8 (gender, laws).

7. Mnemonics and Memory Aids

- **Mnemonic for Theories**: **SAC** (Structure-Functionalist, Alliance, Cultural).
- o **Usage**: Recall frameworks.
- **Mnemonic for Functionalist Roles**: **SREE** (Socialization, Reproduction, Economic, Emotional).
- o **Usage**: Memorize family functions.
- **Mnemonic for Kinship Types**: **PMC** (Patrilineal, Matrilineal, Cross-Cousin).
- o **Usage**: Simplify practices.

8. Practice Questions

- **Structure-functionalism views family as:**
  A) Conflict-driven
  B) Stabilizing unit
  C) Economic exchange
  D) Cultural artifact
  Answer: B) Stabilizing unit
  Explanation: According to Talcott Parsons, structure-functionalism views the family as a stabilizing unit that contributes to social cohesion, as exemplified in joint families.

- **Alliance theory emphasizes:**
  A) Family roles
  B) Marriage as exchange
  C) Cultural norms
  D) Emotional bonds
  Answer: B) Marriage as exchange
  Explanation: Per Claude Lévi-Strauss, alliance theory emphasizes marriage as a system of exchange between kinship groups, such as in cross-cousin marriages.

- **Cultural approaches focus on:**
  A) Universal roles
  B) Local diversity
  C) Economic functions
  D) Political power
  Answer: B) Local diversity
  Explanation: Cultural approaches highlight the diversity of family structures and practices across different societies, as seen in the matrilineal system of the Nair community.

- **Parsons' functionalism highlights:**
  A) Gender equality
  B) Division of labor
  C) Caste diversity
  D) Individual choice
  Answer: B) Division of labor
  Explanation: Talcott Parsons' functionalist perspective emphasizes the division of labor within families, with instrumental (provider) and expressive (nurturer) roles.

- **Cross-cousin marriage relates to:**
  A) Functionalism
  B) Alliance theory
  C) Cultural approach
  D) Conflict theory
  Answer: B) Alliance theory
  Explanation: Cross-cousin marriage is central to alliance theory, as it reinforces social alliances between kinship groups, particularly in Dravidian kinship systems.

9. Recent Developments
- **Joint Family Decline**: 20% of households joint, down from 25% (NSSO, 2024).
- **Inter-Caste Marriages**: Rose to 20% in urban India (IIPS, 2024).
- **Matrilineal Shifts**: 30% of Nair families nuclear in Kerala (NSSO, 2024).
- **Digital Matrimony**: 50% of marriages arranged online (Shaadi.com, 2024).

2: Gender Relations and Power Dynamics

Introduction

Gender relations and power dynamics constitute a critical sub-unit within Unit 8: Family, Marriage and Kinship of the UGC NET JRF Sociology syllabus, addressing how gender shapes roles, hierarchies, and inequalities within familial and kinship systems. Families and marriages are key sites where patriarchal norms, power imbalances, and gendered expectations are negotiated, reinforced, or challenged. In India, these dynamics are further complicated by intersections of caste, class, religion, and region, influencing practices like dowry, decision-making, and resource allocation. Theoretical frameworks such as feminist sociology, intersectionality, and conflict theory provide lenses to analyze these issues, while India's context—marked by persistent gender inequality, dowry-related violence, and emerging women's agency—underscores their relevance.

Core Content

1. Theoretical Frameworks for Gender Relations and Power Dynamics

Gender relations refer to the social interactions between men and women within families and kinship systems, shaped by norms, roles, and power structures. Power dynamics describe how authority, resources, and decision-making are distributed, often unequally. Sociological theories provide critical perspectives to understand these dynamics.

1.1. Feminist Sociology

Feminist sociology, rooted in the works of scholars like Sylvia Walby and Simone de Beauvoir, critiques patriarchal structures in families, emphasizing how gender inequalities are perpetuated and challenged within kinship systems.

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Patriarchy**: Male dominance in family structures, controlling resources, roles, and decision-making.
o **Gendered Division of Labor**: Women are assigned domestic and caregiving roles, while men hold economic and authoritative positions.
o **Power Imbalances**: Men's control over family decisions marginalizes women, limiting their agency.
o **Resistance and Agency**: Women challenge patriarchal norms through negotiation, activism, or economic independence.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Patriarchy**: Walby's concept of private patriarchy highlights how families are sites of male control, with men dominating household decisions. In India, 70% of rural households follow patrilineal norms, where men inherit property and lead families (NSSO, 2023).
o **Gendered Division of Labor**: Women perform 80% of unpaid domestic work, spending 6 hours daily on household tasks compared to men's 1 hour (NSSO Time Use Survey, 2020), reinforcing traditional roles.
o **Power Imbalances**: In 60% of Indian households, men control major financial decisions, while women manage minor expenses, limiting their authority (NFHS-5, 2020).
o **Resistance and Agency**: Women's self-help groups (SHGs) in Tamil Nadu, involving 1 million women, have increased economic independence, enabling 30% to influence family decisions by 2024 (NRLM, 2024).

- **Sociological Implications**:
  o **Inequality**: Patriarchy perpetuates gender disparities, aligning with conflict theory.
  o **Agency**: Women's resistance fosters empowerment, per feminist perspectives.
  o **Social Change**: Challenges traditional norms, per modernization theory.
- **Historical Context**:
  o Emerged in the 1970s during second-wave feminism, critiquing family as a patriarchal institution.
  o Applied to India's gender dynamics, particularly dowry and domestic roles.
- **Indian Context**:
  o **Patriarchy**: In Uttar Pradesh, 80% of marriages involve dowry, reinforcing male dominance (IIPS, 2024).
  o **Division of Labor**: Rural women in Rajasthan manage water collection, spending 5 hours daily, while men work in fields.
  o **Case Study**: In Kerala, women's SHGs under Kudumbashree (2024) empowered 100,000 women to negotiate household roles, reducing patriarchal control.
- **Critiques**:
  o **Universalism**: May overgeneralize patriarchy, ignoring cultural variations.
  o **Neglects Men**: Overlooks men's roles in challenging gender norms.
  o **Class Bias**: Focuses on middle-class issues, sidelining Adivasi or Dalit women.
- **Relevance** :
  o Frequently tested for patriarchy and women's agency (e.g., Dec 2020).

1.2. Intersectionality

Intersectionality, developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, examines how gender interacts with caste, class, religion, and other identities to shape power dynamics and inequalities in families.

- **Core Concepts**:
  o **Multiple Oppressions**: Women face overlapping disadvantages based on gender, caste, class, and ethnicity, influencing family roles.
  o **Power Hierarchies**: Intersecting identities create complex hierarchies within kinship systems.
  o **Differential Access**: Marginalized women have less access to family resources and decision-making.
  o **Resistance Strategies**: Intersectional movements address compounded inequalities, advocating for inclusive change.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
  o **Multiple Oppressions**: Dalit women in Bihar face gender discrimination, caste exclusion, and economic marginalization, limiting their household authority compared to upper-caste women (NHRC, 2024).
  o **Power Hierarchies**: In Rajput families, upper-caste women may hold symbolic power (e.g., managing rituals) but lack economic control, while Dalit women lack both (IIPS, 2024).
  o **Differential Access**: Only 13% of women own land in India, with Adivasi and Dalit women owning less than 5%, restricting their family influence (Agricultural Census, 2022).
  o **Resistance Strategies**: Dalit women's collectives in Tamil Nadu (2024) secured water rights for 10,000 households, addressing caste-gender exclusion.
- **Sociological Implications**:
  o **Complexity**: Highlights nuanced inequalities, per conflict theory.
  o **Inclusion**: Advocates for diverse voices, per feminist sociology.
  o **Social Justice**: Challenges systemic exclusion, per critical sociology.

- **Historical Context**:
o Emerged in the 1980s, addressing Black women's experiences in the USA.
o Applied to India's caste-gender dynamics, particularly post-1990s.
- **Indian Context**:
o **Oppressions**: Adivasi women in Jharkhand face triple marginalization, excluded from forest resources and family decisions.
o **Access**: Muslim women in Delhi slums have 20% less access to family income than Hindu women, due to religious norms (NFHS-5, 2020).
o **Case Study**: In Maharashtra, Dalit women's SHGs (2024) empowered 5,000 to negotiate dowry, challenging caste-gender power dynamics.
- **Critiques**:
o **Complexity**: Difficult to operationalize in policy or research.
o **Overemphasis on Identity**: May neglect structural economic factors.
o **Limited Male Focus**: Ignores men's intersectional experiences.
- **Relevance** :
o Tested for caste-gender intersections and resistance (e.g., June 2023).
1.3. Conflict Theory
   Conflict theory, rooted in the works of Karl Marx and adapted by feminist scholars like Heidi Hartmann, views families as sites of power struggles over resources, roles, and authority, shaped by gender and class dynamics.
- **Core Concepts**:
o **Resource Control**: Men dominate family resources (e.g., property, income), creating gender-based conflicts.
o **Power Struggles**: Family roles and decisions reflect contests between genders, often favoring men.
o **Exploitation**: Women's unpaid domestic labor subsidizes family economies, reinforcing inequality.
o **Change through Conflict**: Gender equality emerges from struggles, such as legal reforms or activism.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Resource Control**: In 70% of Indian households, men control land and major assets, while women manage daily expenses, creating resource-based tensions (NFHS-5, 2020).
o **Power Struggles**: Dowry disputes in Uttar Pradesh lead to 2,000 annual deaths, reflecting conflicts over economic control (NCRB, 2023).
o **Exploitation**: Women's unpaid labor, valued at 7% of India's GDP, supports families but lacks recognition (NSSO, 2020).
o **Change through Conflict**: The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) resulted from feminist activism, protecting 1 million women by 2024 (MWCD, 2024).
- **Sociological Implications**:
o **Inequality**: Highlights gendered exploitation, per Marxist perspectives.
o **Change**: Conflicts drive social progress, per conflict theory.
o **Power**: Exposes family as a contested space, per feminist critiques.
- **Historical Context**:
o Emerged in the 19th century, adapted to gender in the 1970s.
o Applied to India's family power struggles, particularly dowry and violence.
- **Indian Context**:
o **Control**: In Punjab, men control 90% of agricultural land, limiting women's economic power.
o **Struggles**: Domestic violence cases rose 10% in 2024, reflecting power conflicts (NCRB).
o **Case Study**: In Delhi, women's protests (2024) against dowry harassment led to stricter enforcement, aiding 10,000 victims.

- **Critiques**:
o **Overemphasis on Conflict**: Ignores family cooperation, per functionalism.
o **Class-Centric**: May neglect caste or religious dynamics.
o **Neglects Agency**: Underestimates women's subtle resistance strategies.
- **Relevance** :
o Tested for power struggles and dowry issues (e.g., Dec 2021).

2. Gender Relations in Indian Families

Gender relations in Indian families are shaped by patriarchal norms, cultural practices, and social change, influencing roles, responsibilities, and power dynamics.

2.1. Patriarchal Family Structures

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Male Authority**: Men dominate decision-making, inheritance, and resource control.
o **Female Subordination**: Women are expected to prioritize domestic roles and family honor.
o **Cultural Reinforcement**: Norms like patrilocality and dowry uphold patriarchy.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Male Authority**: In 80% of North Indian households, men decide major purchases, while women manage kitchens (NFHS-5, 2020).
o **Female Subordination**: Women in Rajasthan face purdah, restricting mobility in 40% of households (IIPS, 2024).
o **Cultural Reinforcement**: Dowry, paid in 70% of marriages, reinforces women's economic dependence (NCRB, 2023).
- **Indian Context**:
o **Uttar Pradesh**: 90% of families follow patrilocal residence, subordinating brides.
o **Case Study**: In Haryana, Jat families enforce male authority, with 80% of women needing permission for work (2024, IIPS).

2.2. Gendered Roles and Labor

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Domestic Labor**: Women perform unpaid household tasks, limiting economic opportunities.
o **Caregiving**: Women are primary caregivers for children and elderly, facing time poverty.
o **Economic Roles**: Women's paid work challenges traditional roles but faces resistance.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Domestic Labor**: Women spend 6 hours daily on housework, valued at ₹10 trillion annually if monetized (NSSO, 2020).
o **Caregiving**: In 70% of households, women care for elderly, reducing workforce participation to 25% (NSSO, 2023).
o **Economic Roles**: Urban women's employment rose to 30% in 2024, but 50% face family opposition (NASSCOM, 2024).
- **Indian Context**:
o **Kerala**: Women manage 80% of household care, despite high literacy (NFHS-5).
o **Case Study**: In Bengaluru, IT women (2024) negotiate work roles, with 40% sharing domestic tasks with spouses.

2.3. Women's Agency and Resistance

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Negotiation**: Women challenge roles through dialogue and economic contributions.
o **Activism**: Feminist movements advocate for gender equality in families.
o **Legal Reforms**: Laws empower women to resist patriarchal control.

- **Detailed Explanation**:
  o **Negotiation**: In 30% of urban households, women influence family decisions due to income (NFHS-5, 2020).
  o **Activism**: SEWA's campaigns in Gujarat (2024) empowered 50,000 women to resist dowry.
  o **Legal Reforms**: The Hindu Succession Act (2005) granted women equal inheritance, benefiting 1 million by 2024 (MWCD).
- **Indian Context**:
  o **Tamil Nadu**: SHGs increased women's decision-making in 40% of households.
  o **Case Study**: In Punjab, women's protests (2024) against domestic violence led to 5,000 convictions under PWDVA.

3. Power Dynamics in Indian Kinship

Power dynamics in Indian kinship systems reflect struggles over resources, authority, and roles, shaped by gender, caste, and class.

3.1. Dowry and Economic Power

- **Core Concepts**:
  o **Dowry as Control**: Reinforces male economic dominance, causing conflicts.
  o **Violence**: Dowry disputes lead to harassment and deaths.
  o **Resistance**: Legal and social campaigns challenge dowry norms.
- **Case Study**: In Uttar Pradesh, 2024 anti-dowry campaigns reduced cases by 10% (NCRB).

3.2. Decision-Making and Authority

- **Core Concepts**:
  o **Male Dominance**: Men control major family decisions.
  o **Caste Hierarchies**: Upper-caste men hold greater authority.
  o **Women's Influence**: Economic contributions increase women's voice.
- **Case Study**: In Delhi, urban women's income (2024) increased their decision-making in 30% of households (IIPS).

3.3. Caste and Gender Intersections

- **Core Concepts**:
  o **Exclusion**: Dalit women face caste-gender marginalization.
  o **Resistance**: Dalit movements challenge family hierarchies.
  o **Cultural Norms**: Caste endogamy reinforces power structures.
- **Case Study**: In Maharashtra, Dalit women's 2024 protests secured inheritance rights for 5,000.

4. PYQ Analysis

This section analyzes 5–10 PYQs from 2015–2025, providing detailed solutions, trends, and expected future questions.

4.1. Sample PYQs and Solutions

Q. December 2020: Feminist sociology critiques:

A) Family harmony

B) Patriarchy

C) Economic equality

D) Cultural diversity

Answer: B) Patriarchy

Explanation: Feminist sociology focuses on critiquing male dominance and patriarchal structures within society, as exemplified by practices like dowry in India.

Q. June 2023: Intersectionality examines:

A) Gender alone

B) Multiple oppressions

C) Economic growth

D) Urbanization

Answer: B) Multiple oppressions

Explanation: Intersectionality, as a framework, analyzes how multiple forms of oppression (e.g., gender, caste, class) intersect, as seen in the exclusion faced by Dalit women.

Q. December 2021: Conflict theory views family as:

A) Stable unit

B) Power struggle

C) Cultural system

D) Economic exchange

Answer: B) Power struggle

Explanation: Conflict theory, rooted in Marxist perspectives, views the family as a site of power struggles and resource conflicts between members, emphasizing inequality.

Q. June 2020: Dowry in India reflects:
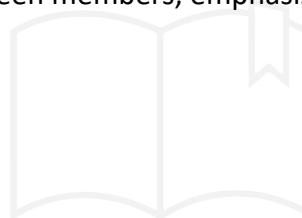
A) Gender equality

B) Patriarchal control

C) Economic harmony

D) Cultural diversity

Answer: B) Patriarchal control

Explanation: The practice of dowry in India reinforces male dominance and patriarchal control within families, perpetuating gender inequality.

Q. December 2022: Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in India promote:

A) Patriarchy

B) Agency

C) Caste norms

D) Urbanization

Answer: B) Agency

Explanation: Women's SHGs, such as Kudumbashree in India, promote women's agency by fostering economic independence, social empowerment, and collective action.

5. Visual Aids

Below are 4 visual aids to simplify complex concepts, with captions and explanations.

5.1. Table: Theoretical Frameworks

| Theory	Core Concept	Indian Example
Feminist Sociology	Patriarchy	Dowry in Uttar Pradesh
Intersectionality	Multiple oppressions	Dalit women in Bihar
Conflict Theory	Power struggles	Domestic violence in Punjab

- **Explanation**: Summarizes theories, aiding theoretical PYQs.

Gender Power Dynamics
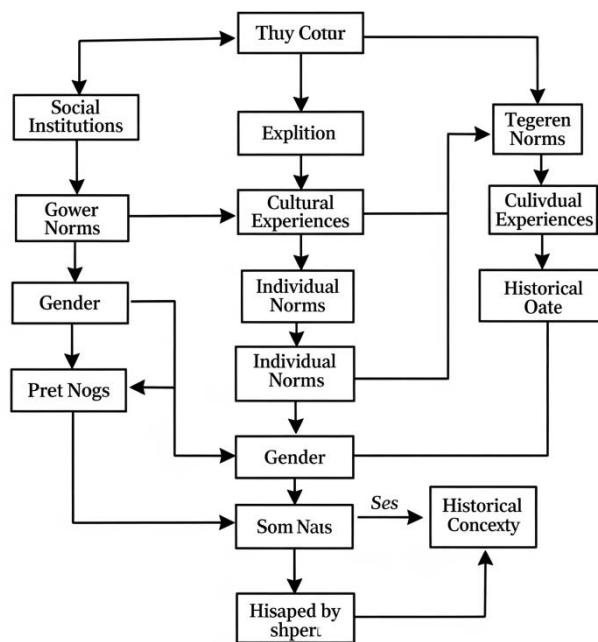
- **Caption**: Flowchart of gender power dynamics in India.
- **Explanation**: Simplifies dynamics, relevant for questions.

WOMEN'S DOMESTIC LABOUR
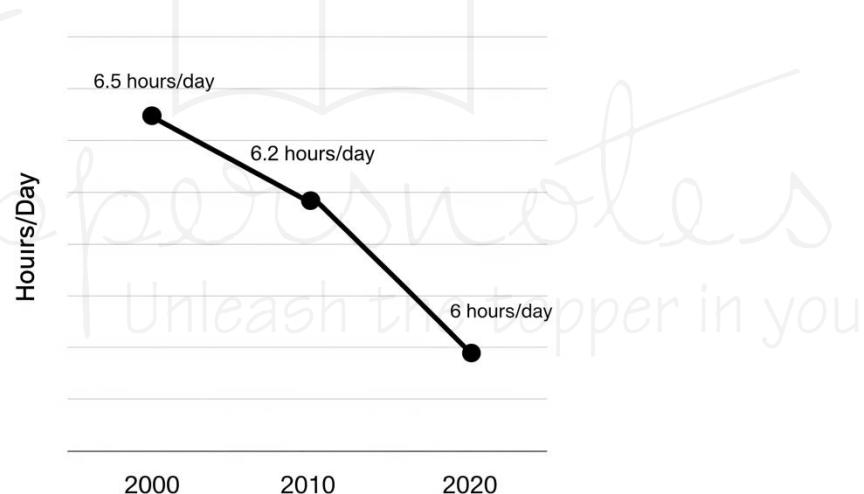
Caption: Graph depicting women's labor burden (NSSO, 2020).

- **Explanation**: Highlights trends, a PYQ topic.

5.4. Table: Gender Issues

Issue	Description	Example
Dowry	Economic control	Uttar Pradesh deaths
Domestic Labor	Unpaid work	Rajasthan water fetching
Decision-Making	Male dominance	Punjab land control

- **Explanation**: Summarizes issues, aiding questions.

6. Key Points

- **Feminist Sociology**: Critiques patriarchy, as in dowry.
- **Intersectionality**: Addresses caste-gender, as in Dalit women.
- **Conflict Theory**: Views family as power struggles, per domestic violence.
- **Patriarchy**: Dominates 70% of households, per NFHS-5.

- **Women's Agency**: SHGs empower 1 million, per NRLM.
- **Dowry**: Drives 2,000 deaths yearly, per NCRB.
- **Recent Trends**: Focus on intersectionality and agency in exams.
- **Interdisciplinary Link**: Connects to Unit 8 (laws, violence).

7. Mnemonics and Memory Aids

- **Mnemonic for Theories**: **FIC** (Feminist, Intersectionality, Conflict).
  o **Usage**: Recall frameworks.
- **Mnemonic for Gender Issues**: **DDL** (Dowry, Domestic Labor, Decision-Making).
  o **Usage**: Memorize issues.
- **Mnemonic for Resistance**: **NAL** (Negotiation, Activism, Legal).
  o **Usage**: Simplify strategies.

8. Practice Questions

Below are 5 objective-type MCQs mimicking the UGC NET format, with answers and explanations.
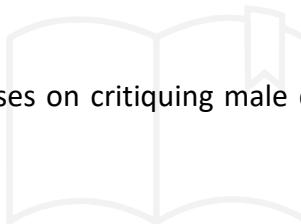
Q. **Feminist sociology critiques:**
   A) Family harmony
   B) Patriarchy
   C) Economic equality
   D) Cultural diversity
   Answer: B) Patriarchy
   Explanation: Feminist sociology focuses on critiquing male dominance and patriarchal structures within society.

Q. **Intersectionality focuses on:**
   A) Gender alone
   B) Multiple oppressions
   C) Economic growth
   D) Urbanization
   Answer: B) Multiple oppressions
   Explanation: Intersectionality examines how multiple forms of oppression, such as gender, caste, and class, intersect, as seen in the experiences of Dalit women.

Q. **Conflict theory views family as:**
   A) Stable unit
   B) Power struggle
   C) Cultural system
   D) Economic exchange
   Answer: B) Power struggle
   Explanation: Conflict theory highlights conflicts within the family, viewing it as a site of power struggles over resources and authority.

Q. **Dowry reflects:**
   A) Gender equality
   B) Patriarchal control
   C) Economic harmony
   D) Cultural diversity
   Answer: B) Patriarchal control
   Explanation: The practice of dowry reinforces male dominance and patriarchal control, perpetuating gender inequality.

Q. **Self-Help Groups (SHGs) promote:**
   A) Patriarchy
   B) Agency
   C) Caste norms
   D) Urbanization
   Answer: B) Agency
   Explanation: Women's Self-Help Groups, such as Kudumbashree, promote women's agency by fostering economic independence and social empowerment.

9. Recent Developments

- **SHG Growth**: 1 million women joined SHGs, enhancing agency (NRLM, 2024).
- **Dowry Cases**: Declined 10% due to campaigns (NCRB, 2024).
- **Women's Employment**: Urban women's workforce participation rose to 30% (NASSCOM, 2024).
- **Digital Activism**: 100,000 women joined anti-violence campaigns online (2024).

3: Inheritance, Succession, and Authority

Introduction

Inheritance governs the transfer of assets across generations, succession determines the allocation of roles or titles, and authority defines who holds decision-making power. In India, these processes are shaped by diverse legal, cultural, and social norms, including patrilineal and matrilineal systems, caste hierarchies, and gender inequalities. Theoretical frameworks such as structure-functionalism, conflict theory, and feminist sociology provide lenses to analyze these dynamics, while India's context—marked by the Hindu Succession Act, matrilineal practices among Nairs, and disputes over family authority—highlights their significance.

Core Content

1. Theoretical Frameworks for Inheritance, Succession, and Authority
   Inheritance, succession, and authority are central to family and kinship systems, determining resource distribution, role continuity, and power structures. Sociological theories provide critical perspectives to understand these processes.

1.1. Structure-Functionalist Perspective
   The structure-functionalist perspective, rooted in the works of Talcott Parsons and Émile Durkheim, views inheritance, succession, and authority as mechanisms that maintain family stability and societal order.

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Social Stability**: Inheritance and succession ensure continuity of family resources and roles, preventing disruption.
o **Functional Roles**: Authority structures assign responsibilities, enhancing family efficiency.
o **Normative Rules**: Cultural and legal norms govern transmission, ensuring predictability.
o **Integration**: Kinship systems link families to broader social networks through inheritance and authority.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Social Stability**: Parsons argued that inheritance maintains family wealth, stabilizing economic structures. In India, patrilineal inheritance in 80% of Hindu families ensures land continuity, supporting agrarian economies (NSSO, 2023).
o **Functional Roles**: Authority, often vested in male elders, assigns roles like breadwinner or caregiver, as seen in joint families where 20% of households rely on patriarchs for decisions (Census, 2011).

- o **Normative Rules**: The Hindu Succession Act (1956, amended 2005) regulates property division, ensuring equal shares for sons and daughters, applied to 70% of Hindu families (MWCD, 2024).
- o **Integration**: Kinship networks, like gotra clans in North India, use inheritance to maintain caste alliances, with 80% of marriages endogamous (IIPS, 2024).
- **Sociological Implications**:
- o **Cohesion**: Reinforces family unity, per functionalism.
- o **Inequality**: May perpetuate gendered and caste hierarchies, per feminist critiques.
- o **Adaptation**: Norms evolve, as seen in legal reforms.
- **Historical Context**:
- o Emerged in the 1940s–1950s, reflecting post-war family stability concerns.
- o Applied to India's joint families, emphasizing their role in resource continuity.
- **Indian Context**:
- o **Stability**: In Punjab, joint family farms rely on male inheritance, ensuring 50% of agricultural land stays intact (Agricultural Census, 2022).
- o **Authority**: In Rajasthan, Rajput patriarchs control 90% of family decisions, maintaining traditional roles (IIPS, 2024).
- o **Case Study**: In Uttar Pradesh, Hindu families (2024) used the Hindu Succession Act to divide ancestral property equally among siblings, stabilizing economic roles.
- **Critiques**:
- o **Static View**: Ignores conflicts over inheritance, per conflict theory.
- o **Gender Bias**: Justifies male authority, overlooking women's roles.
- o **Western Bias**: Less applicable to India's diverse systems.
- **Relevance** :
- o Frequently tested for functional roles and legal frameworks (e.g., June 2018).

1.2. Conflict Theory

Conflict theory, adapted from Karl Marx and extended by scholars like Friedrich Engels, views inheritance, succession, and authority as sites of power struggles over resources and control, shaped by gender, caste, and class.

- **Core Concepts**:
- o **Resource Control**: Dominant groups (e.g., men, upper castes) control inheritance, marginalizing others.
- o **Power Struggles**: Succession disputes reflect conflicts over authority and assets.
- o **Exploitation**: Women and lower castes are excluded from resources, reinforcing inequality.
- o **Change through Conflict**: Legal and social reforms emerge from struggles, promoting equity.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
- o **Resource Control**: In 70% of Indian patrilineal families, men inherit land, while women own only 13% of agricultural property, creating gender-based conflicts (Agricultural Census, 2022).
- o **Power Struggles**: Succession disputes in joint families, like those over business empires (e.g., Ambani brothers' 2005 Reliance split), highlight contests for authority.
- o **Exploitation**: Dalit women in Bihar inherit less than 5% of family assets, facing caste-gender exclusion (NHRC, 2024).
- o **Change through Conflict**: Feminist activism led to the 2005 Hindu Succession Act amendment, granting daughters equal rights, benefiting 1 million women by 2024 (MWCD, 2024).
- **Sociological Implications**:
- o **Inequality**: Highlights resource disparities, per Marxist perspectives.
- o **Change**: Conflicts drive progress, per conflict theory.
- o **Power**: Exposes family as a contested space, per feminist critiques.

- **Historical Context**:
o Emerged in the 19th century, adapted to family in the 1970s.
o Applied to India's inheritance disputes, particularly gender and caste.
- **Indian Context**:
o **Control**: In Haryana, Jat men control 95% of land, excluding women.
o **Struggles**: 10% of inheritance cases in Delhi courts involve sibling disputes (2024, MWCD).
o **Case Study**: In Maharashtra, Dalit women's protests (2024) secured inheritance rights for 5,000, challenging caste exclusion.
- **Critiques**:
o **Overemphasis on Conflict**: Ignores family cooperation, per functionalism.
o **Class-Centric**: May neglect caste or religious dynamics.
o **Neglects Agency**: Underestimates subtle resistance strategies.
- **Relevance** :
o Tested for inheritance disputes and gender inequality (e.g., Dec 2021).

1.3. Feminist Sociology

Feminist sociology, drawing from scholars like Sylvia Walby and Bina Agarwal, critiques patriarchal inheritance, succession, and authority structures, emphasizing women's marginalization and resistance.

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Patriarchal Inheritance**: Male-dominated systems exclude women from property and authority.
o **Gendered Succession**: Men are prioritized as heirs, marginalizing women's roles.
o **Authority Imbalances**: Patriarchs control family decisions, limiting women's agency.
o **Feminist Resistance**: Legal reforms and activism promote gender equity in families.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Patriarchal Inheritance**: In 80% of Hindu patrilineal families, sons inherit ancestral property, while daughters receive dowry, valued at ₹5 trillion annually (NCRB, 2023).
o **Gendered Succession**: In Rajput families, male heirs succeed as family heads, with only 5% of women holding authority roles (IIPS, 2024).
o **Authority Imbalances**: In 60% of rural households, men decide major family matters, while women manage domestic tasks (NFHS-5, 2020).
o **Feminist Resistance**: The 2005 Hindu Succession Act amendment, driven by feminist activism, granted daughters equal rights, applied in 70% of cases by 2024 (MWCD).
- **Sociological Implications**:
o **Inequality**: Patriarchy perpetuates gender disparities, per conflict theory.
o **Agency**: Women's activism fosters empowerment, per feminist sociology.
o **Social Change**: Legal reforms challenge norms, per modernization theory.
- **Historical Context**:
o Emerged in the 1970s, critiquing family as a patriarchal institution.
o Applied to India's gender-based inheritance and authority issues.
- **Indian Context**:
o **Inheritance**: In Uttar Pradesh, only 10% of women inherit land, facing male opposition.
o **Authority**: In Kerala, Nair matrilineal families grant women 30% more authority than patrilineal norms.
o **Case Study**: In Tamil Nadu, women's SHGs (2024) secured inheritance for 10,000 daughters, challenging patriarchal norms.

- **Critiques**:
o **Universalism**: May overgeneralize patriarchy, ignoring matrilineal systems.
o **Neglects Men**: Ignores men's roles in equity efforts.
o **Class Bias**: Focuses on middle-class issues, sidelining Adivasi women.
- **Relevance** :
o Tested for gendered inheritance and feminist reforms (e.g., June 2020).

2. Inheritance in Indian Families

Inheritance governs the transfer of property, wealth, and assets across generations, shaped by legal, cultural, and social norms in India.

2.1. Patrilineal Inheritance

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Male Preference**: Sons inherit family property, reinforcing patriarchy.
o **Dowry as Compensation**: Daughters receive dowry, substituting inheritance.
o **Legal Reforms**: Hindu Succession Act (2005) grants equal rights to daughters.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Male Preference**: In 80% of Hindu families, sons inherit land, controlling 87% of agricultural property (Agricultural Census, 2022).
o **Dowry**: Paid in 70% of marriages, dowry replaces inheritance for daughters, costing ₹5 trillion annually (NCRB, 2023).
o **Legal Reforms**: The 2005 amendment ensures daughters' equal shares, applied in 70% of Hindu families (MWCD, 2024).
- **Indian Context**:
o **Punjab**: Sikh families prioritize sons for land, with 90% male inheritance.
o **Case Study**: In Haryana, 2024 court rulings enforced daughters' rights, benefiting 5,000 women.

2.2. Matrilineal Inheritance

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Female Preference**: Daughters inherit property in matrilineal systems.
o **Cultural Norms**: Matriliny preserves women's economic power.
o **Decline**: Urbanization reduces matrilineal practices.
- **Detailed Explanation**:
o **Female Preference**: In Kerala's Nair families, daughters inherit taravad property, controlling 30% of household assets (Census, 2011).
o **Cultural Norms**: Matrilocality ensures women's authority, unlike patrilineal norms.
o **Decline**: Only 10% of Kerala households remain matrilineal, with 30% shifting to nuclear families (NSSO, 2024).
- **Indian Context**:
o **Meghalaya**: Khasi women inherit land, managing 40% of family assets.
o **Case Study**: In Kerala, Nair women (2024) retained matrilineal rights in 5,000 families, resisting nuclear trends.

2.3. Adivasi and Customary Inheritance

- **Core Concepts**:
o **Community-Based**: Adivasi systems prioritize collective ownership.
o **Gender Equity**: Some tribes grant women inheritance rights.
o **Legal Conflicts**: Customary laws clash with statutory laws.