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| **Learning Table 1: The Functions of the Family: MARXISM** | | |
| **Analysis** | **Evaluation** | **Application** |
| Marxists, like functionalists, adopt a structural perspective on the family. However, unlike functionalists, Marxists do not view the nuclear family as necessary. Marxists see the family within the framework of a capitalist society, which is based on private property, driven by profit and riddled with conflict between social classes with opposing interests. Marxists argue that the nuclear family is concerned with social control by teaching its members to submit to the capitalist class, and they emphasise the ways the family reproduces unequal relationships and works to damp down inevitable social conflict.  ***Engels***   * Early traditional Marxists like Engels believed that the monogamous nuclear family developed as a means of passing on private property to heirs. The family, coupled with monogamy, was an ideal mechanism as it provided proof of paternity (who the father was) and so property could be passed on to the right people. * Women’s position in this family was not much different to that of prostitutes in that a financial deal was struck – she provided sex and heirs in return for the economic security her husband offered.   ***Althusser***   * Althusser (1971) argued that in order for capitalism to survive, the working class must submit to the ruling class or bourgeoisie. * He suggested that the family is one of the ideological state apparatuses, along with others such as the education system and the media, which are concerned with social control and passing on the ideology of the ruling class. * Through socialisation into this ideology in the family, the ruling class tries to maintain false class consciousness by winning the hearts and minds of the working class. | ***Old-fashioned***   * The traditional Marxist idea that men marry and have children to pass on property ignores other reasons for getting married or forming families. * Many women now work or have independent incomes, and in many cases they are more successful than men in some areas of the labour market. * Women are therefore far less likely to marry for economic security.   ***Redundancy of Marriage***   * Marriage is now less of a social necessity. The idea that families exist basically to pass on ruling-class ideology ignores the many other things that go on in families. * A 2003 report by the Institute of Education, *Changing Britain, Changing Lives,* found that people are now more likely to marry for love and affection rather than as a social obligation. * There is a growing emphasis on the emotional aspects of a relationship and personal fulfilment both for men and, especially, for women. |  |