NAME:AGBOADE RICHARD OLUWATOBI

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1. What is a family

Family is defined as a specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents.

1. Functions of the family
2. Responsible for the addition of new members through reproduction. Society must maintain a stable population in order to survive. Population growth provides a competitive advantage that usually enables a society to become wealthier.
3. Provide physical care for their members, including adults, children and dependent elderly. When families are unable to care for their members, hardship results unless the society is organized to replace the family in this function. (Eg: Retirement homes)
4. Socialize children by teaching skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes of the society. Children who learn these can work and relate to others within appropriate adult roles.
5. Controlling the behavior of members to maintain order within the family and the society in which they live. Families monitor and evaluate the behavior of individuals and provide feedback. This control contributes to the socialization process and protects the reputation of individuals identified with family group within society.
6. Maintain morale and motivate individuals to participate in society. Commitment to family may be based on a spiritual sense of duty, or economic necessity. People assume that affective nurturance, meeting the emotional needs of individuals, is the foundation of our commitment to each other. Participation in appropriate social roles contributes to the health of the society as well as providing the means with which families care for their members.
7. Economic function of producing and consuming goods and services. At one time, each family produced all the goods and services it consumed, and used only what it could produce. Now individuals sell their time and skills by producing goods and services within a specialized economy.
8. Discuss the African traditional family

Traditional African family patterns are slowly but progressively being altered as a result of the process of modernization which is exhibited through trends like urbanization. Family patterns that were the norm in traditional rural African societies are gradually being altered and substituted by modern values. Sub Saharan Africa has one of the fastest annual population growth rate. It has the fastest rate of urbanization presently taking place in the world. The transformation of societies in the sub-continent from rural to urban settings has immensely contributed in triggering changes in family structure. This has triggered the distortion of cultural /traditional norms and values that characterized rural communities in the region. African families are increasingly faced with the challenge and pressure emanating from the competition prevailing between traditional and modern family values. Hence, Contemporary family patterns in the region are increasingly subjected to transform and adapt to changing times. Discussions of family patterns in contemporary Sub Saharan Africa are usually made in reference to the process of acculturation, urbanization (the movement from rural to urban areas), which have helped to shape modern family structures, as well as fostered the prevalence of demographic changes (Kalu 1981:353). Family in sub Saharan Africa is experiencing changes which are felt in fertility rates that is the number of children women give birth to, and age at marriage to name a few.

Despite the changes taking place in sub Saharan African societies due to the modernization process, the family still remains a prominent nexus in the social life of Africans. In Africa, there is considerable importance attached to the respect for elders and ancestors. African communities are characterized by the prevalence of collectivism as opposed to individuality.major characteristic features of African household to be that they are mostly rural, patriarchal and hierarchical, polygamous and open 2 to kinship networks, and finally they attached substantial importance to lineage continuation. These features in all play a pivotal role in influencing the number of children women give birth to. The social organization of most African families is embedded in a patriarchal and hierarchical system that precludes the possibility of women, who generally have lower status than men in the society to make deliberate choice on the number of children they want to have (Makinwaadebusoye2001:5). At marriage women tend to have lower status than all the members of their husband’s family. In traditional rural societies in most sub Saharan societies, women were voiceless and powerless African societies have experienced slight distortion in the patriarchal tradition, following the advent of urbanization, as well as due to the drop in the importance attached to land and cattle in the economy. Male supremacy has also being altered a bit even though it still has a prominent strong hold in the society. There is the existence of substantial cultural importance attributed to fertility and lineage continuation, tight patriarchal traditions, wide rate of polygamy prevalence. These are the prominent features that characterized most traditional African societies. Contemporary African family patterns are subjected to changes that emanate as a result of the ameliorated economic conditions, education and health opportunities. These factors continuously exert tremendous impact on contemporary family patterns in the sub-continent. Socioeconomic circumstances in the sub-continent are encountering alterations that have to a considerable extent triggered changes in the fundamental cultural values most especially in the domain of the family. The occurrence of competition between traditional and modern family patterns illustrates a dichotomy. There is a rise in the pace towards the abandonment of traditional practices for modern ones (western). However, the most popular trend is that of the prevalence of family patterns that are increasing merging traditional and modern marriage norms, values or practices. The next section provides information on marriage; it is followed by information on family size.

1. Discuss your nuclear family

A nuclear family consists of a man and woman of nuclear descent whom bore children. Whom are not married. In my nuclear family, we are only four, **my mum,dad and my junior brother**

1. Draw your family tree

AGBOADE NUCLEAR FAMILY TREE

MR&MRS AGBOADE

RICHARD AGBOADE FEMI AGBOADE