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 WHAT IS FAMILY.

Family is defined as a specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parent, aunty, uncles, cousins and grandparent.

Family is the group of people who share common ancestors.

Family means a group of things that are simile

A family is a group of people related either by consanguinity or affinity, the purpose of families is to maintain the well-being of its member and of society. In most societies, it is within families that children acquire socialization for life outside the family.

 DISCUSS THE FUNCTIONS OF FAMILY

The primary functions of family is to ensure the continuation of society, both biologically through procreation. Given these functions, the nature of one’s role in the family change over time. From the perspective of children, the family Instills a sense of orientation. From the point of view of parent, the family’s primary purpose is procreation: the family functions to produce and socialize children. In some culture marriage imposes upon women the obligation to bear children, in Northern Ghana, for example, payment of bride wealth signifies a woman’s requirement to bear children, and women using birth control face substantial threats of physical abuse and reprisals.

Other function of the family includes: production offspring is not the only function of the family. Marriage sometimes establish the legal father of a woman’s child or the legal mother of a man’s child; it oftentimes given the husband or his family control over the wife’s sexual services, Labor, and property. Marriage also established a joint fund of property for the benefit of children and can establish a relationship between the family of the husband and wife. None of these functions are universal, but depend on the society in which the marriage takes place and ensures. In societies with a sexual division of labor, marriage, and the resulting relationship between a husband and wife, is necessary for the formation of an economically productive household. In most societies marriage entails particular right and privilege that encourage the formation of new families even when there is no intention of having children.

 DISCUSS THE AFRICAN TRADITIONAL FAMILY

The traditional African family patterns are slowly but progressively being altered as a result of the process of mobilization which is exhibited through trend like urbanization. Family patterns that were the norm in traditional rural African society are gradually being altered and substituted by modern value. Sub-suharan African has one of the fastest annual population growth rate (marrick 202:41). It has the fastest rate of urbanization presently taken place in the word. The transformation of societies in the sub-continent from rural to urban settings has immensely contributed in triggering changed in family structure. This has triggered the distorted of cultural /traditional norms and values that characterized rural communities in the region, African families are increasingly faced with the challenges and pressure emanating from the competition prevailing between traditional and modern family values. Contemporary family patterns in the region are increasing subjected to transform and adapt to changing times.

 This article seeks to examine the trends that depict family patterns in most sub Saharan African countries. It aims at examining two key issues connected with African family patterns, that is; marriage and family size, with the goal of illuminating the changes that are characterizing their prevalence. Discussion on the latter will be limited to the discourse of fertility rate which in this paper encapsulates the number of children women in the region give birth to. In essence it is centred on the discourse of childbirth that is number of children per woman. It is unconceivable to discuss family pattern in the region, without assessing the issue of marriage. The main interest is that of portraying the changes taking place in marriage in region, from which information can be derived on the changed that have so far been encountered in its contraction.

Marriage: marriage can be perceived from different facets, as an institution, a partnership, a lifecycle phase and as a role. Marriage as an institution is confrontation with the process of adapting to the process of modernization with inherently help to mold modern marriage structure. Marriage in sub Saharan Africa is universal. These is early and universal female marriage (Caldwell and Caldwell 1987:411). The age at first marriage is experiencing slight delay than it was before. Marriage in African is subjected to the task of adapting amidst sporadic changes emanating from the society. This in essence set the pace for the redefinition of its role and characteristics (kalu1981:350). Marriage is still quite important in African communities, the age at first marriage ranged between 17 to 22 years for women (boogaarts et al 1984). It varies across region depending on regional and ethnical practices. Goran therborn(2006:36)portrays the fact that age of first marriage has experience a slight increase in most countries. It has risen since the 1950s to 1990s in guinea from 16 to 19 years, from 15 to 18 years in Nigerian in Niger. In Nigerian it has risen from 19 to 20 years, ivory coast from 19 to 21 years and Zimbabwe from 19 to 21 years during the 1980s and early 1990s. countries like south African and Botswana have much later ages of marriage which has rose from 26 to 27 years.

Family size: The advent of modernity has inherent fostered a progressive transformation of African family organization marked by the draft from larger family size to small size households. Demographers often identify the changes taking place in family patterns such as changed in family size to be a characteristic of the second demographic transition process (perelli-harries 2005:57). It is marked by the reorientation of family value from extended families to smaller family size.

Conclusion: African family patterns are increasingly faced with the challenge and pressure between traditional and modern family value and structure. There is the steady increase in the pace towards the abandonment of traditional practice of modern ones (western). However, how most popular trend is that of prevalence of family patterns that are increasing merging traditional and modern marriage norms or practices (kalu1981:2). This paper has presented a short description of the change that are characterizing marriage and family size in contemporary sub Saharan African. There are other practices taking places such as non-marital childbearing, single parenthood, non-marital unions that were not discussed that are as well paper that practices that depicted rural sub Saharan African societies are progressively being transformed, this is marked by the shift from polygamy marriages that dominated rural sub Saharan African communities to monogamous marriage and the movement from large household to small ones.

 Discuss your nuclear family

 Nuclear family

 The nuclear family is considered the traditional family and it consists of a mother, father, and the children. The two parent nuclear family has become less prevalent, and alternative, single-parent household, and adopting individual are more common. The nuclear family is also choosing to have fewer children than in the past. The percentage of married-couple households with children under 18 has declined to 23.5% of all household in 2000 from 25.6% in 1990, and from 45%in 1960. However, 64 percent of children still reside in a two-parent as of 201.