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1). Family is defined as a specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents. An example of a family is a set of parents living with their children. The definition of family is the group of people who share common ancestors. Family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption, constituting a single household and interacting with each other in their respective social positions, usually those of spouses, parents, children and siblings. The family group should be distinguished from a household, which may include boarders and roomers sharing a common residence.

2). The functions of the family are:

i. Socialization: This means that family is able to adjust its members to society. Parents teach their children the ways and norms of how a society is run and what will be expected of them as they grow up. The family is the first agent of socialization. An example of this would be that a child is born in Nigeria, so the parents must teach him or her the ways of life in Nigeria. Socialization teaches children how to behave appropriately in their particular society. Families are often the child's first exposure to socialization and how children are taught the customs and norms of their society.

ii. Economic, social and emotional security: This is another function of the family that is very important. The family brings economic, social and emotional security to its members. Jobs can stereotypically fall to males, as they do to females. For example, in some parts of the world the people see the male as the "breadwinner" and the female as the "stay at home mom" but female are starting to break to break this stereotype by entering the work force. In most industrial nations, both the male and female are responsible for earning money. The family also gives emotional security to its members. The members of the family depend on each other for

emotional support through the hard times and the good times, in addition to providing a loving and caring environment.

iii. **Reproduction:** Societies replace their own members in order to survive. The approved way to do this is through families. Parents have children, their children grow up and have more children and so on. Even though society depends on the family for reproduction, there are norms in certain societies that govern reproduction.

3). Family is very important throughout Africa. Families, not individuals, are the building blocks of African society. Most people live in households that include not only the nuclear family (mother, father, children) but also members of their extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and others). Family plays a central role in African society. It shapes such experiences as how and where individuals live and how they interact with the people around them. It can determine a person's political identity and the way money and properties are transferred. In rural areas, the family typically remains the basic unit of agricultural production. However, no single of family exists in Africa. Societies have defined family in many different ways and many bear little resemblance to the Western idea of the nuclear family. Throughout the continent, traditional family patterns are changing. Colonialism, capitalism, the growth of cities, exposure to Western culture and increasing opportunities for everyone are some of the factors that are affecting the shape of family life. Each of the family systems in Africa can be defined in terms of two kinds of relationships. Relationships of descent are genealogical –that is, based on the connections between generations. Relationships of affinity are marital –based on marriage. The interweaving of these relationships creates the family that an individual sees every day, as well as the wider network of kinship that surrounds each person.