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**SOCIOLOGY**

Assignment

1. What is family?

Family is defined as a specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. It can also mean a social unit consisting of parents and the children they rear. Family is a single word, with many different meanings. People have many ways of defining a family and what being a part of a family means to them. Families differ in terms of economic, cultural, social, and many other facets, but what every family have in common is that the people who call it a family are making clear that those people are important in some way to the person calling them his family. To some, the true meaning of family means a group of people related by blood or ancestry. To others, it has nothing to do with genes instead it has to do with love, compassion, and support. The definition of the word family can mean many things, therefore family isn’t always blood, it’s the people in your life who want you in theirs; the ones who accept you for who you are.

Family is not what it was 50 years ago, that’s for sure. A father, mother, and their children living under one roof is what used to be the standard when people considered what defines family. However, now an everyday family situation can be many things, like a single parent and their child, grandparents raising their grandchildren, same sex couples with adopted or surrogate children, stepparents bringing up stepchildren, blended families, even being childfree doesn’t mean you have no family. The scenarios go on and on. Humans aren’t meant to be alone, and it is through family that we are able receive the codependence we naturally seek.

2. Discuss the functions of the family.

The primary function of the family is to ensure the continuation of society, both biological through procreation, and socially through socialization. The family performs several important functions such as; the family is the primary unit for socializing children, as no society is possible without family without adequate socialization of its young. In some societies, the family is the major unit in which socialization happens. Parents, siblings, and, if the family is extended rather than nuclear, other relatives all help to socialize children from the time they are born.

Second, the family is ideally a major source of practical and emotional support for its members. It provides them food, clothing, shelter, and other essentials, and it also provides them love, comfort, help in times of emotional distress, and other types of intangible support that we all need.

Third, the family helps regulate sexual activity and sexual reproduction. All societies have norms governing with whom and how often a person should have sex. The family is the major unit for teaching norms and the major unit through which sexual reproduction occurs.

Fourth, the family provides its members with a social identity. Children are born into their parent’s social class, race and ethnicity, religion, and so on.

Therefore, the six universal function of the family includes;

1. Socialization of children
2. Maintenance and physical care
3. Love and nurturance
4. Production of goods and services
5. Social control of children
6. Addition of new members

3. 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-Sahara Africa has one of the fastest annual population growth rate. It has the fastest rate of urbanization presently taking place in the world.

As the African society has not been static, changes in the traditional family patterns will be briefly alluded to. Scholars of the African traditional family agree that the one widely known aspect that distinguishes the African traditional family, say from the European one, is the perversity of polygamy. Although polygamy is the act of an individual being married to more than one spouse at the same time, the more commonly practiced in Africa is polygyny which is the legal marriage of on men to two or more women concurrently- is permitted. Because of its perversity, the presence and absence of polygyny was a significant determinant and indicator of the nature of virtually every African social group. Family plays a crucial role in Africa. African society has been undergoing a process of profound changes affecting all aspects of its traditional life. Christianity brought some challenges to traditional African practices such as polygamy by equating it with adultery and sin. It also promotes monogamy as the only morally accepted type of marriage. Monogamy, though present and practiced in traditional Africa, was not as widely spread as polygamy.

4. Discuss your nuclear family.

A Nuclear family is a family unit consisting of a child or children living with two parents who are married to each other, especially when all live under the same roof. Nuclear family system is a family structure that consist of a couple living with their children. A nuclear family is a family consisting of two parents and their children, but not including aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. My nuclear family consist of my father, my mother, my three siblings and I. We live under one roof with our father as the head of the family to provide basic amenities we need while our mother takes care of the household.

5. A family tree is a chart representing family relationships in a conventional tree structure.

Paternal grandparent’s Maternal grandparent’s

Grandmother

Grandfather

Aunt

Sister

Sister

Me

Sister

Aunties

Mother

Father

Uncles