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MATRIC NO: 19/LAW01/082

COLLEGE: LAW

COURSE: SOC 102

COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY 2

ASSIGNMENT: 1) WHAT IS FAMILY

2) DISCUSS THE FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

3) DISCUSS THE AFRICAN TRADITIONAL FAMILY

4) DISCUSS YOUR NUCLEAR FAMILY

5) DRAW YOUR FAMILY TREE

QUESTION 1

The word ‘family’ came into English in the fifteenth century. Its roots lie in the Latin word ‘FAMULUS’ meaning servant. The first English meaning was close to our modern word ‘household’ meaning a group of individuals living under one roof that included blood relations and servants. A family is defined as a group of people that may be made up of parents, children, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents. A family is a basic unit consisting of parents and their children and other family relations whether residing together or not. It can be said to be a group of people sharing a common ancestor.

QUESTION 2

The family has important functions that it needs to carryout as it is the most common and fundamental social institution that performs various functions for the benefit of the human society. Different sociologists like Robertson Maclver and so on have given their own details of the function of the family. The functions of the family include the following: Procreation and rearing of children, Socialization of children, Stable satisfaction of sex needs and Protection and care of the young ones

(1). **Procreation and rearing of children**: This is an important function of the family. The family provides the legitimate basis for the production of children. It institutionalizes the process of procreation. By performing this function of procreation the family contributes to the continuity of the family lineage and eventually the human race. As a result of this, continuation of the human race or society is the most important function of the family. The family does not only procreate but also rear the children. The family is where this function is better performed by providing food, shelter, clothes and other things basic things needed for the children.

(2). **Socialization of the children:** This function deals with teaching children societal norms and values. Parents, siblings and other relatives usually serve as the earliest role models to children. The family is the first agent of socialization that most children encounter. The society’s survival depends on what families teach their children. For instance, if a family teaches its children that stealing is good, they will group will that mentality and may also teach their own children later in life the same that stealing is good and the consequence of this is that societal values will begin to fade away. So families are responsible for teaching their children what is right and wrong in the society.

(3). **Stable satisfaction of sexual needs**: This is the primary and essential function of family. Sex instinct is the natural urge of human beings. The satisfaction of this need requires both male and female live together as life partners. It is in the family where husband and wife can satisfy their sex instincts easily and comfortably. Without the family the satisfaction of sex need is impossible. A family is not only satisfying but also provides the appropriate mechanism through marriage to regulate sexual behaviour of husband and wife.

(4). **Protection of the young ones**: This is another essential function of family. It is regarded as an institution par excellence for the production and rearing of children. It is true that no other institution can take required care of the child like family. The child at birth is complete helpless and cannot survive at all without the help of the family. It is the family which provides care, protection, security (Physical, mental) and fulfils all other needs to make him fit in the society.

(5). **Provision of economic and emotional security:** The family is the basic economic unit in society. Labour is divided between both gender and age. In most industrialized nations, both men and women earn money for the family. Families also are the biggest emotional support. They are there to provide a helpful, loving environment for a child to grow up in.

QUESTION 3

In some African societies, nuclear families are contained within larger social groups that may include kinfolk, neighbours, people of the same age or gender, and others. The nuclear family does not always have its own property or decide what tasks its members will perform. Rather, relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and children often unfold within larger domestic units called households, which may consist of joint or extended families.

Households. In a household community, several generations and several nuclear families live and work together. In joint family households, all members live together in a single large homestead or compound. In extended family households, the nuclear families within the household each live in separate compounds. A joint or extended family is under the authority of its senior member, typically a grandfather or great grand-father. Such families may be patrilineal or matrilineal.

Most members of a joint or extended family household are born and raised within it or marry into it. Some, however, such as adopted children or adults, may be unrelated to the others. In sub-Saharan Africa, distant relatives are sometimes invited to settle with a household, but they usually have lower status than their hosts. A household might also include servants or, in the past, slaves. The household functions as an economic as well as a family unit. It can be described in material terms—for example, by acres of land, number of buildings, or certain tasks performed by certain members. A family compound among the Tswana of Botswana might include the huts and grain sheds of a man and his wife (or wives) and children, an unmarried brother, and an elderly mother. In rural areas, household members work together to produce food and other goods; in a town or city, the members might work to pay rent and buy groceries. In either case, the household needs to maintain itself, which means that productive new members must be added to replace the elderly, the disabled, and those who die. In this way, households are more flexible and inclusive than other family groups.

**FAMILY STRUCTURE**

Each of the many family systems in Africa can be defined in terms of two broad 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.

RELATIONSHIP OF DESCENT

Everyone is part of some sort of descent system, either patrilineal, matrilineal, or both. In patrilineal systems, property and political power pass through the male side of the family; the female side determines descent in matrilineal systems. In these relationships, senior generations have more power or status than junior ones. Younger people are expected to show respect toward older family members. In the past, this power could take the form of ownership. Among some peoples in the Congo Basin, for example, a man could sell his sister's child into slavery

RELATIONSHIP OF AFFINTY

MARRIAGE SYSTEM

In Africa are highly diverse. In sub-Saharan Africa, some pairings of men and women are temporary, others permanent. Depending on the culture, a couple may live in the husband's home or the wife's home. Among some groups, such as the Asante , each spouse continues to live in the home in which he or she was born. Children may stay with their parents until they marry, or they may spend part of their adolescence in the home of another relative. In some cultures, young people leave their families at puberty to live in villages of adolescents.

African marriage can be polygynous that is, a man may have more than one wife. In practice, though, only the senior or wealthy individuals in a society have been able to have multiple wives. When polygyny occurs, the family unit is based on mothers. Each wife has her own house and property that are generally transferred to her own children. The mother and child, rather than the husband and wife, thus form the basis of family and kinship in such communities. Christian marriages in Africa, as elsewhere, are generally monogamous, with a man having only one wife.

Question 4

A nuclear family is also called elementary family in sociology. It is a group of people who are united by ties of parenthood and consisting of a pair of adults and their socially recognized children. My nuclear family consists of my father, my mother, myself and my two brothers.

Question 5

MY NUCLEAR FAMILY

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| MR LAWRENCE EKPAH  FATHER |

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| MRS DORIS EKPAH  MOTHER |

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| MARTINS EKPAH  SON |

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| --- |
| STEPHEN EKPAH  SON |

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| LAWRENCE EKPAH  SON |