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### **ASSIGNMENT**

- What is Family
- Discuss the functions of the family
- Discuss the African Traditional family
- Discuss your nuclear family
- Draw your family tree

### **Answers**

1. A family can be defined as a group of people affiliated by consanguinity, affinity, or co residence
2. The primary function of the family is to ensure the continuation of society, both biologically through procreation, and socially through socialization. Given these functions, the nature of one's role in the family changes over time. From the perspective of children, the family instils a sense of orientation: The family functions to locate children socially, and plays a major role in their socialization. From the point of view of the parents, the family's primary purpose is procreation: The family functions to produce and socialize children. In some cultures 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. Producing offspring is not the only function of the family. Marriage sometimes establishes the legal father of a woman's child or the legal mother of a man's child; it oftentimes gives the husband or his family control over the wife's sexual services, labour, and property. Marriage, likewise, often gives the wife or her family control over the husband's sexual services, labour, and property. Marriage also establishes a joint fund of property for the benefit of children and can establish a relationship between the families of the husband and wife. None of these functions are

universal, but depend on the society in which the marriage takes place and endures. In societies with a sexual division of labour, marriage, and the resulting relationship between a husband and wife, is necessary for the formation of an economically productive household. In modern societies marriage entails particular rights and privilege that encourage the formation of new families even when there is no intention of having children.

3. 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. Paulina Makinwa-Adebusoye (2001:5) outlined the major characteristic features of African household to be that they are mostly rural, patriarchal and hierarchical, polygamous and open 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 (Makinwa-adebusoye (20016). In traditional rural societies in most sub Saharan societies, women were voiceless and powerless. According to Göran Therborn (2006). 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.

4. The nuclear family is considered the "traditional" family and consists of a mother, father, and the children.

My nuclear family consists of my father, mother, I and my two senior sisters. I am the last born. My first born lives with her husband and her daughter. While we are left with I, my mum, my dad and my other senior sister who is the second born in the family.

