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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 is a group of people bonded by marriage, blood or adoption that care for one another. A typical family consists of a father, a mother and a child or children. There are two types of family; the extended family and the nuclear family. The extended family is made up of many nuclear families, related by one way or another. The typical family setting of parents and children is the nuclear family. The family is the primary agent of socialization. It is where individuals are born, nurtured and given training in order to survive the world and other agents of socialization. It is the primary agent of socialization because it is where relationships are first formed.

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, labor, and property. Marriage, likewise, often gives the wife or her family control over the husband’s sexual services, labor, 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 labor, 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 been 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 junior sisters. I am the first born. I am the only child in university. My immediate younger sister is in senior secondary school while the other is still in junior school. My parents are both working. My father is a military personnel while my mother is civil servant.

OKEREKE

CHIGOZIE

KANYITO

KAOSY

KAMSY

(ME)

FELIX

CYRIL

ONYEKA

ROMANUS

CHIOMA

DESMOND

IFEANYI

IJEOMA

IFUNAYA

UZUOAMAKA

OBINNA

OGENNA

IKENNA

UCHENNA

ALBERT

IGDODIKA

AJANWU

MUOAMAIHE

ONYINYE

CHINAZA

CHIDINMA

ODINAKA

EBUKA

VICTORY

VICTOR

CHIDERA

MMACHI

ONYEDIKA

CHIDI

RUTH

CHINAKA

KOSI

AMAKA

CHISOM

AMARA

UCHE

CHIOMA

JOSHUA

CHINEYE

IFEYINWA

UCHENNA

ADA

CHIBUZOR

ONYEKA

UZUBE

ANGUS

ARINZE

SUNDAY

NONYE

HELEN

TITUS

LEONARD

VICTORIA

UDEKWELE

ODUNMEGA

EZEPUE

EFUBESI