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POLITICAL SCIENCE

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SOC 102

1. What is a family

**Answer:** Family is derived from the Latin word *“familia”.* It refers to a group of people related either by consanguinity (by recognized birth) or affinity (by marriage or other relationship). The purpose of families is to maintain the well-being of its members and of society. Ideally, families would offer predictability, structure, and safety as members mature and participate in the community. In most societies, it is within families that children acquire socialization for life outside the family. Additionally, as the basic unit for meeting the basic needs of its members, it provides a sense of boundaries for performing tasks in a safe environment, ideally builds a person into a functional adult, transmits culture, and ensures continuity of humankind with precedents of knowledge.

1. Discuss the functions of a family.

**Answer**: Family functions are remarkably similar from culture to culture though what constitutes a family is cross-culturally variable. . Family life typically provides an environment for ensuring the vital needs of food and shelter, the generation and maintenance of wealth, and the provision of care and other nonmaterial resources. Family functions, regardless of family structure, elicit similar behaviors and practices worldwide.

Societies around the world rely on the family to perform certain functions. The basic functions of the family are to:

1. Nurturing and socialization of children through care, supervision, monitoring, and interaction
2. Regulate sexual access and activity
3. Provision of status: social status; ascribed, such as birth order; and achieved, based on individual's effort
4. Provide an orderly context for procreation i.e. reproduction
5. Ensure economic stability through cooperation and division of labour
6. Ascribe social status

Families further impart affection, care, and adaptive functions. In short, family is considered the supporter of coupling, the source of nurturance and the elemental education of children, the link to the market place, the place of remediation that takes the wayward back, and the hospice where infirm and dependent members seek solace.

1. Discuss the African Traditional Family.

**Answer:** African society has undergone profound changes surrounding various aspects underlining its understanding of traditional life, in particular family life. The concept of family is one of universal precedence amongst all Africans, whether they belong to the west, east, central or southern regions. Family is a vital aspect of African livelihood. It is what unifies us. It has been said that family is the foundation which our society is built on, and is proven by the fact that all over the world, every society is structured around a family unit. However, the definition of family has begun to fall apart. The once-taboo topic of divorce is becoming a common issue amongst African households probably due to Eurocentrism.

The understanding of traditional African family life can be directly linked to the customs correlated to ‘what it means to be an African’. Traditionally, Africans coexisted within small communities, which were made up of families divided into different ethnic or cultural groups, or in some cases, into clans causing a complex yet interconnected network of relationships. Nevertheless, even though these families fragmented into an array of various peoples and traditions, family has been understood as a shared relationship among an array of various members.

Interestingly enough, the concept of family have proved to be two extremely different concepts, actually one could even say polar opposites. For instance, most day-to-day family life for a Euro-Canadian family consist of various activities that are essentially carried out in isolation from other relatives. Family, for them, consists of the immediate family solely without interference or interaction from other relatives unless in the case that they were celebrating a birthday, religious holiday or graduation.

1. Discuss your Nuclear family

**Answer:** A nuclear family is a family unit that includes two married parents of opposite genders and a child living in the same residence. However, the term "nuclear family" can mean several things in today's society. Understanding the classic roles in this type of family and how it is defined can help you understand the relationships in your own family, whether it's nuclear family or not.

However, my nuclear family is made up of my parents (my father and my mother) and myself (their child), living in the same household in Port Harcourt.

1. Draw your family tree