

**COVENANT UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA**

*TUTORIAL KIT
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SOC 424: REGIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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QUESTIONS

1. Conceptualise ethnography and give reasons a sociologist should conduct ethnographical studies.
2. Nigeria is reputed to be the Giant of Africa. Examine the truism or otherwise of this statement in the light of contemporary realities.
3. What is your position on the evolution and creationist dialectic?
4. Identify the development challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa and proffer solutions.
5. What are the similarities and differences in the cultural expression of countries in West Africa?
6. South Africa is a leading economy in sub-Saharan Africa: what lessons can this provide for other SSA countries.
7. Ghana is emerging a democratic and economic powerhouse in West Africa. Do you agree? Reinforce your argument with facts.
8. Racism is toxic to cultural integration. Discuss.
9. Apartheid contributed to the development of South Africa. Do you agree?
10. Write short notes on the following:
 - Sub-Saharan Africa
 - Cultural Integration
 - Anthropology
 - Archaeology
 - Race and Racism

ANSWERS

QUESTION 2: NIGERIA IS REPUTED TO BE THE GIANT OF AFRICA. EXAMINE THE TRUISM OR OTHERWISE OF THIS STATEMENT IN THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY REALITIES.

Answer

Nigeria is truly the giant of Africa because of the following reasons:

1. Just after the rebasing of the Nigerian economy, the country has emerged as the largest economy in the continent of Africa.
2. Nigeria has the largest human population in Africa and the highest population of blacks all over the world.
3. Nigeria is one of the leading industrialised nations in Africa and an emerging economy predicted to lead in Africa.
4. Nigeria's oil receipts and reserves make it one of the most prosperous nations in Africa.
5. The Nigerian economy supports its neighbours such as Benin Republic, Cameroon, Togo, Niger, Chad and others.
6. Nigeria is one of the frontline African states that have contributed to peace-keeping efforts in Africa and in the world.

Apart from these positive points, there are challenges that Nigeria needs to tackle to realise its full potentials:

1. Nigeria needs to tackle insecurity challenges.
2. The problem of corruption has remained a bane of its development.
3. Ethnicity is another huge challenge.
4. Political instability which truncated democracy for many years through army coup d'états.
5. Capital flight and mismanagement of funds.
6. Infrastructural challenges among others.

QUESTION 3: WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE EVOLUTION AND CREATIONIST DIALECTIC?

Answer

Evolution is the change in the inherited characteristics of biological populations over successive generations. Evolutionary processes give rise to diversity at every level of biological organisation, including species, individual organisms and molecules such as DNA and proteins. According to this theory, life on earth evolved from a universal common ancestor approximately 3.8 billion years ago. Evolutionary theory is supported by a huge body of evidence, including the fossil record and observations of organisms alive today. That is one of the reasons it is embraced by most mainstream scientists.

On the other hand, creationism is the religious belief that life, the earth, and the universe are the creation of a supernatural being, i.e. God. As science developed during the 18th century and forward, especially with the emergence of the evolution theory, various views aimed at reconciling science with the Abrahamic creation narrative developed in western societies. Those holding that biological species had been created separately (such as Philip Gosse in 1847) were generally called "advocates of creation" but were also called "creationists" by Charles Darwin and his friends. Also, from the 1860s, forms of theistic evolution developed very strongly. This term refers to beliefs in creation which are compatible with the scientific view of evolution and the age of the earth. There are other religious people who support creationism, but in terms of allegorical interpretations of Genesis.

On one hand, the evolution-creationist dialectic suggests that there are scientific findings such as fossils and carbon dating which show that there was life that pre-existed the current earth. However, where evolution fails very gravely is its refusal to trace the development of the earth and humanity to a divine intelligence or divine being who organised it because such a position cannot be scientifically proven. They also refused to believe the accounts of the Bible regarding creation, an account that simplified the history of humanity tracing it to the creation of the world by God and the creation of the first man and woman by God. Creationists have made very gallant attempts to debunk the various illogical findings of evolution such as the development of human species from smaller species such as frog and bacteria. Today, the community of creationists is swelling because science (through archeological findings and others) is finally beginning to lose grounds to the claims of the Bible.

QUESTION 4: IDENTIFY THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES FACING SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND PROFFER SOLUTIONS.

Answer

Challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa

1. Poverty
2. Political Instability
3. Health challenges such as high child and maternal mortality and others
4. Unemployment
5. Infrastructural deficiency
6. Insecurity
7. Corruption
8. Poor leadership quality or leadership crises
9. Capital Flight
10. Lack of industrialisation
11. Police brutality

12. Over population
13. Hunger and starvation

Solutions to the challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa

1. Leadership quality
2. Entrenchment of democratic tenets
3. Employment creation for young Africans and the vulnerable sectors
4. Social welfare programmes to tackle extreme poverty
5. Infrastructural development
6. Development of and investment in the health sector
7. Strengthening of security structures
8. Responsible and responsive governments who produce popular programmes that would support Africa's development
9. Industrialisation
10. Investment in Agriculture

QUESTION 8: RACISM IS TOXIC TO CULTURAL INTEGRATION. DISCUSS.

Answer

Racism is usually defined as views, practices and actions reflecting the belief that humanity is divided into distinct biological groups called races and that members of a certain race share certain attributes which make that group as a whole less desirable, more desirable, inferior or superior. Racism involves the belief in racial differences, which acts as a justification for non-equal treatment (which some regard as "discrimination" or "marginalisation") of members of that race. The term is commonly used negatively and is usually associated with race-based prejudice, violence, dislike, discrimination, or oppression.

Cultural integration is a situation where different members of the society who share different cultural origins cooperate together to achieve certain goals. Racism is inimical to cultural integration for the following reasons:

- Racism has been a major part of the political and ideological underpinnings of genocides such as The Holocaust;
- It led to the European conquest of the Americas and colonisation of Africa, Asia and Australia;
- It was the driving force behind the transatlantic slave trade, and behind states based on racial segregation such as the USA in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and
- It was the idea behind apartheid in South Africa.
- Practices and ideologies of racism are universally condemned by the United Nations in the Declaration of Human Rights because they include hate speech, violence against innocent people whose only crime is their difference in colour, language or religion, among others.

QUESTION 9: APARTHEID CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA. DO YOU AGREE?

Answer

Apartheid was a political and ideological belief that resulted in racist actions and behaviours by white South Africans against black South Africans or coloured people in South Africa. It was a very inimical and self-preserving idea that promoted the socio-political and economic interests of white South Africans but limited the same for black South Africans. If there were any positive contributions of apartheid in South Africa, it would be that it promoted white South Africans above black South Africans and coloured people and ensured that through the policy of segregation, white South Africans dominated every human sphere of interest in South Africa to the exclusion of other members of the South African population. Therefore, one can argue that apartheid was a curse rather than a blessing to South Africa for the following reasons:

1. It was segregative; it promoted white South Africans and demoted black and coloured South Africans.
2. It created enmity between white South Africans and demoted black and coloured South Africans, pitching the South African society into political and racial camps.
3. It resulted in the domination of the socio-political and economic structures of the state by white South Africans through its exclusionary policies.
4. It created a police state where citizens were hunted like criminals because of their colour.
5. Black and coloured South Africans did not enjoy the same rights that white South Africans had.
6. It created immense poverty and backwardness for black South Africans and immense wealth for white South Africans.
7. There was much insecurity in South Africa during the Apartheid years.
8. It was during that period that Nelson Mandela was incarcerated for 27 years.
9. It was a dark period in the South African history.