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Session Overview

• At the end of the session, the student will
• Understand the importance of studying traditional Ghanaian social institutions
• Identify some of the unique features of traditional Ghanaian society
• Appreciate the fact that, members of traditional Ghanaian societies have established patterns of behavior which guide them in the achievement of their basic needs
The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:
• Topic One – The importance of studying traditional societies
• Topic Two – Some unique features of traditional societies
• Topic Three - The social structure of traditional societies
Reading List

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES
Why study traditional societies?

- Traditional societies are characterized by practices whose legitimacy derives from beliefs that have always existed.
- People in traditional societies also have distinct ways of thinking, behaving and/or acting which have been in existence for a long time.
- It denotes cultural continuity in social attitudes, customs and institutions.
- Despite the influences of modernity and globalization, our ways of thinking, acting and behaving as Ghanaians can be said to be influenced to some extent by our traditional norms, values and belief systems.
- The Ghanaian can therefore not separate him/her self completely from their tradition.
Why study traditional societies?

- In addition, a sizeable proportion of the population resides in the rural areas where the influences of modernity are not being experienced to a greater extent.
- The 2010 Population and Housing Census pegs the rural urban distribution of the country at 49.1% against 50.9%.
- The constant migration of people from the rural areas to the urban centers also means that they come to these urban centers with their beliefs, customs and way of life.
- There is therefore a mix of tradition and modernity even in the urban areas.
- This makes it important to know about the traditions of the people in order to understand why they behave the way they do and also to appreciate their way of life.
- It will also guide us to know how best to implement policies aimed at improving the lifestyle of the people of the country.
Topic Two

SOME UNIQUE FEATURES OF TRADITIONAL GHANAIAN SOCIETIES
Features of traditional Ghanaian societies

• Close social interaction with the members of the society
• Simple and shared way of life
• Relatively smaller population density
• Low / no social change
• Protection of religious and cultural values
Topic Three

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES
The social structure of traditional societies

- The form and manner in which the social institutions in traditional societies take in the fulfillment of the needs of the people will be studied
- The various social institutions namely the political, religious, marriage and family, education, economic and health will each be looked at extensively
- The features of these institutions as in pertains in the traditional societies will be examined