

RURAL SOCIOLOGY

An African Perspective



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Table of Contents

	PAGE
Preface	i
Acknowledgment	ii
Dedication	iii
Foreword	iv
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter 1	1
Introduction	1
Definition of Sociology	6
Sociology as a Scientific Discipline	8
Relationship Between Sociology and Some other Disciplines	10
The Meaning and Scope of Rural Sociology	10
Chapter 2	14
Rural Social Values and Norms: and Rural Social Organizations	14
Rural Social Values and Norms	14
Rural Social Organizations	19
Chapter 3	24
Social Differentiation and Participation in Rural Societies	24
Social Stratification in Rural societies	29
Social Participation in Rural Societies	37
Land - Tenure Systems and Problems	40
Systems of Farming	43
Soil Manure	43

Chapter 4	45
Rural Social Institutions	45
The Family and Marriage Institutions	54
Religious Institutions	62
Political Institutions	65
Economic Institutions	72
Traditional Educational Institutions	72

Chapter 5	75
Social Change and Adaptation to Change in Rural Societies:	75
The Influence of Christianity and Islam	80
Agriculture and Its Changing Pattern	87
The Role of Government	90
The Influence of Science and Technology	96
Rural - Urban Migration	99
The Nature of Rural - Urban Differentials	108
Social Stratification and Change	115

Chapter 6	119
Rural Development:	119
The Practice of Rural Development:	119
The Role of Women in Rural Development	127
The Underdevelopment of rural Societies	133
Strategies for Improving Rural Societies	138

BIBLIOGRAPHY:	145
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INDEX:	150
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Definition of Sociology

Sociology is concerned with the study of human societies. It is concerned with man in his society, changes taking place and the problems emanating from those changes. The focus of sociology according to Giddens (1982:19) is the study of the institutions of the advanced or the 'industrialised' societies, and of the conditions of transformation of those institutions.

Sociology deals with events of social life in human society. Onyeneke (1996:26) stated that sociology is interested in aspects of human social life for which explanations sought will be empirical. Sociology as a discipline arose because of the need to treat human relationships in their entirety since the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Bertrand (1958:3) defined sociology simply as the scientific study of human relationships. No other discipline focuses attention primarily on human relationships per se, and it is thus that sociology differs from all other studies.

Sociology is not interested in the individual or naturalistic occurrences, rather it studies the influence of the group life on the individual or the effect of naturalistic occurrence on the group life or human society. Owo (1994:2) defined sociology as the scientific and systematic study of people in groups. It provides us with the framework to understand the totality of human social interaction in groups. There are primary and secondary groups the family is an example of a primary group, while Rotafact Club membership is an example of a secondary group relationship.

In 1838, Auguste Comte invented the concept 'Sociology' which he defined as the systematic study of society. Comte and pioneers like Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim wanted the new discipline to follow the scientific line because that is the only

way data could be reliable. According to Otite (1994:1) Sociologists equally study international social institutions especially as these impinge on the social aggregates and the social structures of the various composite nations and the societies within them. Sociologists regard human interactions and relationships among peoples, groups, and nations as problematic.

Origin of Sociology:

Sociology grows through the dedicated attention of its scholars to internal issues and problems. The following are some major factors in the historical shaping and forming of sociology as a discipline.

The 19th Century Origin of Sociology

In this period in history, change occurred more rapidly than at any other time. The first French revolution of 1789 was quite different from earlier rebellions Giddens (1982:5). Peasants had sometimes rebelled against their feudal masters, for example, but generally in an attempt to remove specific individual from power, or to secure reductions in prices or taxes. The anti-colonial revolution in North America in 1776 according to Giddens (1982:5), was the first time in history this took place and it brought about the overall dissolution of a social order by a movement guided by purely secular ideas - universal liberty and equity. Industrial revolution, urbanization and political upheavals - set in motion by the French and Americans of the late 18th century made the centre not to hold again.

Many people were then facing problems and scholars looked forward to a new discipline that would be capable of solving man's problems. Among them were philosophers and scientists hence there were floating ideas about the expected new discipline which Comte had the credit of christening "sociology" in 1838.

Social Reform:

Social conditions in the 19th century were particularly difficult for the industrial revolution, and rapid urbanization had generated appalling conditions. The 'industrial revolution' according to Giddens (1982:6) traced to Britain in the late eighteenth century, and spread in the nineteenth century throughout Western Europe and the United States.

Because of the industrial revolution, many people left their rural areas for the industrial areas. In the villages, homogeneity was the order of the day where man was his brother's keeper but coming out to the heterogeneous urban environment, man was left at his own destiny. A lot of problems arose which included labour dispute, terrible housing conditions, political systems were undermined; family patterns were disrupted, villages gave way to noisy cities. All these had their corresponding social problems. Sociologists believe that any social change must bring a social problem or problems. With these developments, Americans first used sociology in social reform and the idea sooner or later spread to other nations.

Efforts At Making The Discipline a Science

With all these turmoil and confusion, it is no wonder that the scientific perspectives that were influencing the physical science should be turned to social issues. This is because, science is now on the ascendancy. And many of the pioneers of sociology have science backgrounds and following the progress in science which make it possible for data to be reliable, insisted that if nature can be studied scientifically, then it is possible to study society scientifically.

Some Of The Founding Fathers of Sociology:

AUGUSTE COMTE (1798 - 1857) *Philosopher and Sociologist.*

He gave the discipline its name, "Sociology" in 1838. He believed that society is governed by certain 'social laws' just as the

physical universe is governed by certain physical laws. He believed that locating and describing these social laws are central to sociology. In his law of three stages of human development, he opined that every society has to pass through the theological, metaphysical and positive states. Each state, according to him, is a way of thinking or reasoning. For him, what matters is which one is dominant since you can always see elements of one in the other. HERBERT SPENCER (1820 -1903) *Philosopher and Scientist*.

His three - volume *Principles of Sociology* published 1877, was the first full-scale, systematic study of sociological analysis. He described sociology as the study of the family, politics, religion, social control and industry. However, he is mostly noted for evolutionism where he identified two types of societies, the militant and industrial. The militant society, was military-oriented while in the industrial society, societal stability was based on mutual interdependence.

EMILE DURKHEIM (1858 - 1917.)

He studied and taught philosophy but was more interested in the study of society and its problems.

His works in sociology include: *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893), *The Rules of Sociological Method*, (1895), *Suicide* (1897) and *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). *The Division of Labour in Society* helps to integrate society and maintain social solidarity. In the *Elementary forms of Religious Life* according to Otite and Ogionwo (1985:25), the main function of religion involves a collective sharing of beliefs, uniting of people, creating and maintaining social solidarity. In *Suicide*, he treated suicide as a sociological phenomenon which varies with the degree of social integration. In the *Division of Labour*, he identified two types of societies based on social solidarity, namely mechanical and organic societies. Mechanical society is for traditional society while organic society is for industrial society. The first is homogeneous while the later is heterogeneous in

nature.

KARL MARX (1818 - 1883).

Marx helped shape not only intellectual life but the historical course of the entire world. Many governments and political opposition groups today invoke his name with special reverence and try to establish policies that are consistent with his writings. Marx was a genius who was ahead of his own generation in reasoning. He was a man of many interests and strong moral sense of justice hence he was shocked at the misery of the working classes whom he accused of living under false consciousness.

Marx believed, that a revolutionary does not need arms and ammunition but his instrument of work is creating awareness on the part of the suffering masses. Through this, they will realize their true worth in their working places. He insisted that capitalism sows the seeds of its own destruction by impoverishing the workers and creating situations of distress and misery. Under this situation, the workers will revolt against the owners of the means of production. The liquidation of capitalism will usher in the dictatorship of the proletariat. This will bring an end to exploitation and set up socialism but socialism will turn to communism when the state has disappeared. Then, each will be given according to ability and need.

His predictions did not take place in the capitalist countries but rather in the agriculturally backward societies like the Cuban revolution, the Chinese revolution, etc. The reasons are that the capitalist societies are open class societies and free education and others are used to cushion off the effects of capitalism. But the agriculturally backward societies where the revolution took place were closed class societies.

MAX WEBER (1864 - 1920).

He studied laws, History and Economics. His most famous work is *The Protestant Ethics and the spirit of capitalism*. The subjects on which Weber wrote extensively include religion,

various aspects of economic life, including money and the division of labour, political parties and other forms, of political organizations, authority and bureaucracy. Max Weber's sociology is based centrally on the science of social action. Otite and Ogionwo (1985:37). The analyses of the four types of social actions forms the basis for Weber's Sociology as a comprehensive science of social action. It attempts to interpret and explain social action. Weber's economic action was directed towards the satisfaction of a desire by controlling and using available resources.

Foundation For Modern Sociology

The first university to have a department of Sociology is Chicago University in the United States of America, in 1893. However, there were resistance to this strange new discipline among the more conservative, elite schools. This is because sociology is radical in origin and nature. This delayed the establishment of sociology by other American universities. However, Harvard established a department of Sociology in 1930. Lester Ward, a disciple of Comte, was one the earliest American sociologists.

African sociologists are the products of Western institutions of learning. However, basic knowledge of sociology is very important for creating a genuine sociology of Africa which is sure of its past and conscious of its future. The African sociologist has learnt to reject the ethnocentrism associated with westernization. Sociology is indigenous to Africa and some people had studied the society even before Comte.

Sociology As A Scientific Discipline

The purpose of science is to add to our knowledge by describing reality accurately. A science according to Ogburn and Meyer (1960:10) is to be judged by three criteria: the reliability of it's body of knowledge, its organization, and its method.

Sociology is a science since it maintains the above three criteria. Comte insisted that the only way data can be reliable is to insist on the following methods: observation, experimentation, comparison and historical method - since social systems are ever - changing. The last one is peculiar to sociology while the other three are general to all sciences.

Science, according to Chinweuba Owo (1994:6) is a body of organized, verified knowledge which is based on scientific investigation. Most of the founding fathers of sociology insisted that sociology should be studied using scientific methods. Comte insisted that with rigorous application of the method of other sciences sociology will one day become a real science discipline. Herbert Spencer tried to apply Darwin's principle of natural selection to social phenomenon. Emile Durkheim studied suicide sociologically and came to the conclusion that suicide rate varies with the degree of social integration.

Sociologists spend much of their time in research projects - some lasting only a few days, others lasting years - which are efforts to collect facts that help to solve some perplexing human problems. In short, sociology is research - oriented.

How far our ideal can be achieved in sociology like in any of the social sciences is a subject of debate among scholars. Material objects of the physical sciences are things which are inert, fixed, and which have no consciousness, Onyeneke (1996:15) hence no knowledge of themselves as subjects of study. Their lines of behaviour can be regarded as fixed and quite independent of scholar trying to work on them. In the case of human beings, on the other hand, their existence in human society is of a different order. The following reasons are why sociologists insist that sociology is a scientific discipline.

Sociology Is Empirical

Scientific knowledge is based on veritable evidence that is concrete factual observations which other observers can see,

weigh, measure and counter - check for accuracy. Sociology is not interested in the individual or natural occurrence. Sociology is not interested in the supernatural per se, but rather studies how man's reliance on the supernatural affects his behaviour.

Sociology Is Theoretical:

A theory is a clear general statement establishing some definite link between two or more phenomena, but the statement remains open for further verification on empirical grounds. For instance, suicide rates vary with the degree of social integration. This could be researched further to prove or disprove it.

Sociology Is Value-Free

Sociologists do not bother about the morality of their object of study. For instance, sociologists studying prostitution do not question its morality. If one says that prostitution is morally bad before embarking on the research, of what use is the research then? It will be a useless exercise. The proper thing to do is, after the preliminary preparations you move into the field and interview prostitutes, those who patronize them and some selected members of society, ignoring the morality of your object of research.

Sociology Is Cumulative

Sociological findings are part of existing knowledge about a given social phenomena. When new findings are made they add to the already known knowledge. While carrying out a research one can use one or two existing theories but at the end of the research can discover another theory. Hence, increasing the cumulative.

The Relationship Between Sociology And Some Other Disciplines:

The social sciences deal with man in his social and cultural contexts. Each has its own historical development, perspectives

and interest, and its own special emphasis in methods and techniques of research.

Relationship With Political Science

Political Science deals with human behaviour in relation to the distribution and exercise of power. It involves getting and using (or attempting to get and use) power and authority. Political science is narrower than sociology because it studies only the political institutions. Sociology studies other social institutions including political institutions.

Sociology and Political Science share in common many areas of interest such as social control, power, authority and legitimacy and collective behaviour. The two disciplines meet and form a sub-discipline called Political Sociology.

Relationship With Economics:

Economics concerns itself with the study of the ways in which people earn their living under conditions of relative scarcity and choice. However, economic institutions are plainly always connected with other institutions in social systems, which are influenced by them.

One major difference between sociology and economics is that while economics deals with the management of scarce resources to the satisfaction of economic need of man, sociology looks beyond satisfaction of economic need but satisfaction attained because of group life. While economics sees man as a single individual that can take decision on his own, sociology looks at the relationship between people in different classes.

Relationship With Psychology

Psychology studies individual and group behaviour Otite and Ogionwo (1985:5). It deals with interpersonal and intergroup or person-to-group relations as well as the general determinants of behaviour. It deals with such areas as learning, thinking,

memory, perception, imagination, emotion and motivation. Sociology and Psychology have similar subject matter.

Sociology studies the whole network of human interaction, while psychology deals with the individual mind. Sociologists borrow concepts like personality and symbolism from psychology. At times, psychologists can carry out experiment in a controlled laboratory unlike the sociologist who deal with variables.

According to Otite (1994:2) Sociological or Social History links history and sociology together as the latter is interested in the regularities implicit in historical events and as it deals with problems of institutional changes and the place of the past in the present. Legal Sociology or Sociology of law, deals with matters of social control mechanisms, and the complex relationship between legal and other social/cultural institutions. Through this concern both the discipline of law and sociology are closely linked. Sociology and Geography deal with demography and migration studies. Sociology and religion deal with belief systems, both sociology and agriculture deal with organization of rural societies, their occupations and development.

The Meaning And Scope Of Rural Sociology

Rural sociology is an aspect of main sociology which is meant to understand the various social relationships that are within the rural societies. It aims at understanding the rural social structure, organizations, varying forms of social relationships and other issues that are related to life within rural societies. Bertrand (1958:8). In its broadest definition, rural sociology is the study of human relationships in the rural environment. According to Smith (1953:10) the systematized knowledge of rural social relationships could more aptly be called the Sociology of rural life.

The study of rural society is concerned with social institutions and social relationship and their changes with reasons for such change. Ogburn and Kolh (1940:3). Neighbourhood and

family groups have played and continued to play very important roles in the more personal drama of rural life. Otite (1994:119) noted that Rural Sociology has to do with the study of rural social relationships and social groups.

It should be noted that the focus of rural sociology is not necessarily exclusive to rural - farm people, even though their way of life may have been the basic subject matter in the past. However today, the rural sociologist also has a legitimate interest in the none - farm person who settles in rural societies.

As a result of urbanization and modernization, many rural societies are afflicted with various problems which needed a special discipline to study them. Rural sociology as a sub-discipline did not start all that early.

Rural sociology started in the 1930's in the United States of America. America then had a well developed sub-discipline of rural sociology which was used to study rural dynamics as it affected agriculture. In Eastern Europe, rural sociology has been given specific attention in view of the fact that there are still reasonable number of rural communities, even though studies on peasants tend to throw a challenge to that of rural sociology. However, it received little attention because of the rapid rate of industrialization in Western Europe. Many rural societies have now turned into urban societies.

With problems of development affecting many rural societies and with increasing socio-economic stagnation and poor infrastructure in the rural areas, there is a need to understand the rural dynamics as it affects many ruralites, possibly to help in suggesting ways of improving their lot. Rural sociology will therefore draw on various theories, concepts and methods that have been evolved in main sociology in the analysis of rural societies.

Bertrand (1960:433) said that Rural Sociology, like any speciality within the broad field of Sociology must derive most of its theoretical orientation from the parent discipline; at the same time, it is in position to make important contributions to the

general body of sociological theory. It does so in two ways. First, the rural sociologist may formulate hypotheses or propositions of such basic importance that they eventually become a central part of the body of the theory. Second, he may test the existing propositions, devising new methods for doing so.

More than half of the world population live in rural areas according to Idriss (1992:4). Out of a population of some four billion in 114 developing countries, more than 2.5 billion live in rural areas, and of these, approximately 1 billion live below the poverty line: 633 million in Asia; 204 million in Africa; 27 million in the Near East and North Africa; and 76 million in Latin America and the Caribbean. Data for 1985 - 86 demonstrate that less than half of the rural population in 114 developing countries has access to clean water or sanitation, and only 60 percent had any access to health services. The massive persistence of poverty, particularly in rural areas represents a problem for the popular acceptance of continued economic adjustment; and it represents a problem for growth itself.

The poverty of nations and the poverty of people are not as easily separable as was often thought in the past. In many cases, it is difficult to envisage national growth with strong economic development among the poor themselves - not as objects, but as subjects of development.

The poorest of the poor according to Idriss (1992:4), include the nomadic population of 26 million, of which over half are located in the African Sahel, is becoming increasingly impoverished as a result of drought and the expansion of arable agriculture onto grazing land. Small - scale fishermen are suffering from a shortage of fish resources not only as the result of encroachment by industrial fishing, but also from their isolation and the marked under - provision of infrastructure and services.

Many development programmes in developing countries failed because the sociology of rural life was not recognized according to Otite (1994:12). It was later realized that one of the

primary reasons for this failure was that rural people would not blindly accept innovations that were introduced. Many strategies were resisted for social and psychological reasons. Hence, the planners began to realize that they needed to know more about the people themselves. Rural sociologists have been able to help development planners to design strategies more suitable to the needs, desires and life styles of the rural people and, therefore, more acceptable to them. The dynamics of poverty are reversible, but only in collaboration with the poor themselves. This is because the most valid spokesmen of the poor are the poor themselves.

CHAPTER TWO

Rural Social Values And Norms

All desires are according to choice which is behind motive. There is a scale of preference which ~~was~~ prompted by choice. This choice is due to values and it is dependent on motives. Values are relative worth attached to objects or behavioural patterns, while norm is a standard of reference in accordance with which an entity or state of an affair is approved or disapproved.

Our standards of right and wrong, truth and false. Value is a twin brother of norm. People are expected to behave in accordance with values held by the groups to which they belong, and this 'expected' behaviour is nomadic behaviour. Sociology sees man as a nomadic being because man is a product of his cultural and social environment - unlike Economics that sees man as a rational being.

Social integration is achieved because societal members carry in their heads during the process of socialization what they ought to do and what they ought not to do under certain situations. Each person judges himself and his fellows according to these subtle and ubiquitous rules, and any violation no matter how minor is not encouraged but rather attracts punishment though it could be slight or great depending on the gravity of the violation.

The sociologist is faced with more obstacles than any of the other social scientists because believing that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts he examines the nature of human values subjecting the mores and basic institutions to objective analysis.

Classification Of Norms

Many distinctions that cross one another are seen therefore suggesting that a systematic classification is difficult. Sociologists, while admitting that the classification is crude, group norms into broad classes, e.g. folk ways, mores and laws.

Folkways

Folkways are simply the customary, normal habitual ways a group does things. Different societies have a wide variety of workable patterns. A group may eat once, twice or several times each day, they may eat while standing, seated in chairs, or squatting. A child is surrounded by folkways therefore, a behaviour is accepted, repeated and then passed on to succeeding generations and becomes one of the ways of the folk. Folkways are therefore relatively durable standardized practice regarded as must for every societal member for proper conduct under different situations. Conformity is done by informal social controls like gossip, ridicule, ostracism, etc.

Mores

These ideas of right and wrong attached to certain of the folkways are called mores. Mores are a class of folkways which must be followed because they are believed to be essential to group welfare. Mores relate to the fundamental needs of society more directly than do folkways. These mores therefore, represent the hardest core of the nomadic systems. Mores could be expressed in the negative form like taboos. Mores are simply beliefs in the rightness or wrongness of acts. Mores originate without consciousness or intention but through customary practices of a people. Every society punishes those who violate their mores and when the mores are fully internalized by an individual, it is self-policing because it controls behaviour.

Folkways and mores are similar in that the sanctions are informal and communal in nature, depending on the sentiments of the group. The African bushmen, when untouched by civilization, apparently enjoyed an entirely informal system of social control. Schapera (1930:151). The absence of any organized system of public control does not imply that the bushmen have no laws. On the contrary all their institutions, manners and customs serve to regulate the relationships between the members of the band, and

thus to maintain law and order. The child at birth comes into a world where there already exist definite forms of organization, and behaviour, of ceremonial, of manners and fashions, and as he grows up he falls more or less unconsciously into acting and thinking like those around him, and in this way comes to conform to social norms. There are moreover more or less deliberate means of impressing upon young people the social sentiments necessary for the maintenance of law and order of the community. The education they receive in the households of their parents and outside the households, and above all the high - important teaching at the puberty ceremonies for boys, instruct them in tribal lore and traditions, inculcate social norms, and determine their activities accordingly.

There are further, various sanctions by which non-fulfilment or breach of any recognized custom is penalized or followed automatically by evil results, without any direct interference on the part of the community. The breaking of a taboo, for instance, is held to produce serious consequences, such as death or disease or ill-luck. Girls who do not observe the restrictions imposed upon them at the time of puberty are believed to change into frogs, while men who are seen by the girls at this time become permanently fixed in whatever position they then occupy, and so on. And again there are numerous observances and avoidances associated with hunting, which if neglected will result in ill-success, the loss or wounding of animals, etc.

Other breaches of custom, however, involve the direct intervention of the members of the community. In general, when disputes arise between members of the band, there is usually no appeal to any supreme authority. The only remedy is self-help. Blood vengeance indeed is the principal, if not the only recognized way of dealing with serious offences committed against a person even by members of the same band.

Customary Law:

The ideas of right and wrong attached to certain of the folkways are called mores. Customary laws serve to reinforce the mores. Those who do not conform are punished and the fear of being punished is enough to make some people conform. Under customary law, the law is not coded but there is special organization for the enforcement of the social rules. The Hottentots, an African people did have a tribal council. Among the offences tried before this council were murder, manslaughter, treason, theft, incest, adultery and sodomy. The following procedure applied in trial according to Shappera (1930:139):

As soon as a man was known or suspected to have committed such an offence, every member of Kraal considered it a duty to arrest him or her at first opportunity, unless he succeeded in making his escape. Once captured, he was safely held until the council assembled, which was always as soon as possible. The councillors sat in a circle, and the accused was placed in the centre, where he could hear all that were said and himself be heard by everybody around. The accuser then stated his case, and produced all his proofs supported by witnesses. The prisoner, in return, offered all means of defending the case would suggest, advancing any contradictory evidence at his command, and his answer was listened to with undivided attention. The matter was then thoroughly discussed by the councillors, the verdict being arrived at by the decision of the majority. If the accused was acquitted, a few heads of cattle from the herds of his accusers were adjudged to him as compensation. But if he was found guilty, and the headman, in whose hands the final sentence lay, pronounced in favour of death, the sentence was immediately executed. The headman, as chief executioner, rushed towards the criminal and felled him to the ground with a heavy blow of the KIRI, all the other men then violently attacked him until he was beaten to death.

Custom

Custom is closer to folkways than mores and indicate the traditional method of doing things. Custom refers to practices that have taken place and handed down from generation to generation as part of social heritage of a people. People respond because it has been the practice from the time of their ancestors. It therefore connotes long established usage and contrasted with what is new.

For instance, in most traditional societies, adultery is frowned at, although adultery concerns women in most traditional societies, the men have right to enjoy themselves outside the marriage circles. However, there are exceptions among the Dagari, Grunshi, Nunuma, Somba and Wala, Voltaic people. Married women commonly have recognized lovers, who make gifts to the husband and do field work for him in return for the wife's favours.

Morality

Morality implies real sentiment behind the observation of the rule not because of punishment awaiting offenders but because of certain amount of principle and firmness of character in one's conduct. The norm is not being observed because others are doing the same but because it conforms to an abstract principle of justice, purity, fairness and truth internalized by the individual.

In many rural societies, the elders who hold Ofo (a piece of wood cut from tree) which is not a spirit but the symbol of authority which descends from the ancestors, serve as a guarantee of truth. In traditional societies, it is believed that any immoral person holding the Ofo will die a bad death.

Religion

Religion is the natural belief in power or powers beyond our control, and upon which we feel ourselves dependent. Religion has given oil to the heart and it is the spirit of God in one that tells the person whether an action is right or wrong.

The concept of religion restricts one from doing evil since

one realises that God will reward everyone according to his deeds. Religion controls stress and gives consolation to worries in life. Religion teaches practices of mercy and religious norms and values guide people's behaviour. Certain of the moral tenets are explained as having a supernatural origin. Religion therefore adds something to morality and strengthens it by connecting it with the world lying beyond the senses. Ancestorship which is valued in almost all traditional societies is based on moral behaviour.

Etiquette

It is concerned with the proper form for doing something. It serves as an external manifestation of good intentions towards others like greetings, well wishing and any way of showing politeness. Those who frown always are accused of bewitching others in most traditional societies.

Rural Social Organisations

The social structure is designed to make the community lively and to provide security, honour, respect and order among rural people. The following are some of the social organisations in rural societies.

The Family Unit

Family ties are strong. Some families are polygamous, while others are monogamous. A family without children is full of regrets. The children receive names from their fathers, mothers and grandparents according to local customs. The family acts as the first agent of socialization for the new born child hence it is said that charity begins at home. The children are educated according to local customs and learn the professions of their parents or guardians like farming, palm-wine tapping, fishing, etc.

The family inculcates moral values in the children because no one will like his son or daughter to bring disgrace to the family since the ruralities are conscious of their family names. Meadawer and Pyke (1971:239) defined family as the basic unit of society

and natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members, particularly children and youth. The family therefore, plays a crucial role in the up bringing of the children both socially and religiously. The father is the head of the family and represents the family in inter-family meetings and makes laws to govern his household. In many rural societies the difference between nuclear and extended families is not observed.

A family in most traditional societies does not refer only to husband, wife and children but to a wider group of relations to which the term extended family has been given by foreigners who find it difficult to understand what the ruralites refer to as their family. The older members of the extended family provide protection, supply economic values, prestige and esteem. Then it is not unexpected that the younger members provide loyalty, obedience, free labour and support. The extended family is a large domestic cluster consisting of several persons, namely, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews and cousins.

Kindred Family

The kindred family is made up of extended families, that is patrilineal relatives who live together in close association. The major decisions in the kindred family are decided by the elders of each extended family who hold the Ofo (Cultic stick) of their respective families.

Social solidarity is enhanced by many ceremonies although most of the ceremonies are centred around the periodic feeding of the ancestors, whose well-being are sought through such rites.

The kindred family plays important roles in marriage ceremonies and is of very much help during misfortunes like drought and severe illnesses. It is also very useful in the settlement of dispute referred to it by the extended families.

The Village Group

The village is composed of kindred families which in turn is divided into extended families. It is the people's castle, where the social polity is not only strengthened and protected, but the blood-tie which is the unifying factor, is seen as a common link of all within this social unit.

The village group provides social security against sudden death, crop failure, natural disasters and group feuds and incursions. It also serves as a useful instrument of socialization. The feeling that every individual should be his brother's keeper is well entrenched in the village group.

The elders who hold the 'ofo' of their respective extended families sit to decide cases sent in by the extended families or cases involving villages. They organize and monitor social activities in their respective villages. They make and implement policies for the good of the whole villages. Then, there was no policeman but the people's conscience served that purpose.

Age Grade

Age grading is the process of grouping people into status groups on the basis of age. The age grading is marked off by rites of initiation. The most important functions of the older age grades is to formulate policies. They also perform important function of settling disputes. The younger age grades implement policies and perform social control roles. Ogbalu (1968:20).

It seems that their association with institutions of government is to give weight and respectability as well as awe to the laws and pronouncements by men. The laws, decisions and judgement as it were are through their agency imbued with divine power. Age sets therefore, constitutes a strategic starting point in the life of the youths since all skills and values learnt are manifested in the daily interaction process of the people.

They are instruments of social change and help in a number of community development projects. Among the Dogon, Kabre

and Lobi Voltaic peoples, age sets function mainly to assist fellow members in the performance of bride service obligations. In many rural societies also age sets help members in marriage protocols and in other forms.

Daughters Of The Community

These are the daughters of the village married or unmarried. They play very important roles because some of them initiate development projects in their communities. They act as investigators during marriage proposals. They help in the settlement of cases mostly between husbands and wives since most of them are married and have experienced married life. The impartial ones are respected by their brothers' wives in their respective families.

They help in the upkeep of their aged parents and also punish those who fail to take care of their aged parents or anyone who is not living up to societal expectations. They are also very important during burials and traditional festivals and organize themselves into regular meetings to see to the welfare of their communities of origin.

Married Women

Social organization among women in most traditional societies centres around married women of every kindred family or village. They are useful during traditional feasts. There are feasts that women host and there are others that men host.

They settle disputes arising between husbands and wives or co-wives. Those who disregard their parents in-laws are cautioned. They are very important as agents of social control in rural societies because they have ways of punishing offenders like the sweeping of village square or village shrine. Those who fail to comply are ostracised until their decision is respected.

They function most during ceremonies because they sweep and keep the venue clean. They cook and distribute food during the ceremonies. The well behaved ones are requested to arrange their sisters for marriage because traditional people believe that if

a road is good you pass through it twice. They are very important as agents of socialization because in most cases, mothers stay closer to their children than their fathers.

CHAPTER THREE

Social Differentiation And Participation In Rural Societies

Social differentiation refers to dividing every human society into distinctive social roles and functions based upon both inherited and acquired differences, while social cohesion and solidarity are maintained in the rural societies by definite pattern of participation. Hence, women respect men and non-titled men respect and admire titled men.

Social Stratification In rural Societies

When a society displays a graded series of ranks, we say that it is stratified where occupants are treated as superior, equal or inferior to one another.

OSU (Children of deities)

The Osu are descendants of ritual practices or children of deities. They are beautiful people but under the chains of prejudice and ostracism. They remain Osu - an untouchable class - denied the privileges of the so called freeborn in Igboland and some other places. They live in an isolated world because during marriage or any traditional title taking, the pages of history are opened and such people could not marry the men and women of their choice.

There are two ways of becoming an Osu. Voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary osu are those who became outcaste as a result of any of the following: Victimization: At times problems of oppression could make one give up himself to be owned by a deity. Traditional people value land and economic trees so much that some selfish extended family members might conspire to kill an only son or sell him off to slave traders in order to get hold of his inherited assets. The mother's own case is no problem because with the elimination of her son she will be advised to go back to her family in her own interest. The woman

and her son on noticing the intended conspiracy could then go to any of the deities in their own area and offer herself and her son to be owned by the deity. She then mentions things that are impossible to come by as a remedy should her son be killed like one thousand baskets filled with ants, one million lizards, etc.

Poverty and Debt

Some people are so poor that they often live by borrowing money or mortgaging land and economic trees like Unoka in *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe. At times, some money lenders are hot tempered and want to deal ruthlessly with the people they had lent money. Money lenders are often rough and therefore borrowers are afraid of them. Knowing what they are up to, out of fear, a debtor could go and surrender himself to a deity for protection. The traditional people know and fear the consequences of tempering with anything that belongs to deities. Under this arrangement, the debtor is now free from his creditors.

Laziness

Rural life style has no room for lazy people. This is because the rural people are jack-of-all-trades. A typical rural man on waking up in the morning goes to check his traps if he is interested in hunting. Afterwards, he taps his morning palm-wine, move into distance farm before returning home to tap his afternoon wine, from there he moves into compound farms and end the day by tapping the evening palm-wine. That is why laziness is not encouraged by many ruralites. The rural people consider it better to sell off the lazy one to slave traders. Lazy people are not without brains. They prefer to be owned by deities which they surrender to by themselves instead of being sold off probably for ritual killing.

The involuntary outcaste include the following:

Mass Consensus

At times in traditional societies, deities demand for people to be owned and the villagers fearing the consequences of not complying with this demand conspire and offer the deity a human being to be owned. Some people are unlucky and are used for this purpose.

Ignorance

Under this group people become outcastes without being aware of it. For instance, if a freeborn kills an outcaste by mistake or intentionally he must surrender himself to the deity as a replacement. There are also others who become outcaste by infection or contact. For instance, if a freeborn woman leaves her child and goes to the stream and the child left behind cries out and an outcaste takes care of the child before the arrival of the mother, he now becomes an outcaste by infection or contact.

Slavery

A slave is an economic property of another, a thing not a person. Slaves have no legal rights, even the right to live. Before a slave can marry, he must have the consent of the master who has the right to dissolve the marriage at will. It is practicable and possible with the influence of money. Slavery came into existence much earlier than the practice of the Osu caste system and on very rare occasions, people do opt to serve as slaves. The master has the right to use his slave for any purpose he deems fit. There are two ways of becoming a slave.

By Birth:

It is possible that somebody is born into slavery. For instance, if a slave man marries a wife, their children become slaves. Although if a slave girl marries a freeman, which is not possible in many traditional societies, their children are not slaves but freeborn.

By Capture:

People could become slaves if they are captured in inter-tribal wars or by mere conspiracy. Hence, persons who were freemen before now become slaves. That is how many Africans are now in Europe and America, though as freed slaves.

Pawning

Pawning is the mortgaging of human beings particularly male tanners, for the acquisition of one's needs in cash or kind. This is what banks call collateral and people prefer boys to girls because mortgaging girls has a lot of implications on the part of the lender because if the girl is abused by either the lender or his relations the family of the girl will claim damages which in most cases are higher than the borrowed amount.

Some parents pawn their sons or daughters in order to raise money to meet their financial obligations like in case of severe illness or for ritual ceremonies to ward off evil spirits. Pawning usually occurs as a by-product of an agreement between a borrower and a lender. It denotes one serving another periodically in lieu of the interest on money lent. It is one being in service for interest. The problem is that the money may not be refunded and the pawned can not be set free. That is why the league of nations regarded it as a system of slavery rather than a legitimate system of labour.

Gender Oppression

The main gender difference between women and men is that women as a group have lower status than men. Everywhere, women as a group, have fewer advantages and work longer hours than men. Women go to the farm with their husbands and when they come back they still take care of their children and also cook the family meal. Moreover, women's work and opinion are undervalued.

From the time they are born, rural people treat girls and

boys differently. When babies are born, many rural people will ask the question whether the child is a baby boy or girl. Depending on the answer they get they now treat the babies differently. This is because the socialization of the babies is for them to be like other boys and girls.

Through socialization, girls and boys are brought up to accept the social system in which they live which in most cases result in gender oppression. Gender oppression refers to a whole social system in which one sex has been placed in an inferior position or subordinate to the other. The rural world is men's world and the men make cultures and traditions to suit their own interests. For instance, if you feed your wife or wives very well, then you have a right to have relations with other women outside the marriage which right the women do not have in most cases. Those who intend to offer sacrifice or make any charms, advised to stay away from women the previous day. They believe that women are not clean and are capable of spoiling the sacrifice. They build mud houses for their wives behind their own houses and derive joy in showing superiority over women. In most rural societies all over the world, women are seen as inferior to men and have less power to make decisions affecting not even themselves. Their husbands determine what is good for them.

Age-Set Stratification

In age-set societies the changes in status involved in getting older are institutionalised to such a degree that they often constitute the very basis of political organization. Those who are initiated together say 10 to 15 make up an age-set and each age-set undergo series of age grades. Each set has different political roles. They have the warrior, and just below them are those just initiated. Those warriors who retire form another set of elders. People of the same age cohort are grouped together and assigned social roles in societies. Occupants of positions are vested with certain rights, privileges and obligations. Among the rights and

privileges of the aged is the right to be respected and obeyed. During festivities whether communal, family, or personal, the aged are entitled to certain tributes from the celebrants. The social obligation of the aged is multi-dimensional. It encompasses religion, education, politics, recreation, rural economic and prophetic issues. He is the seat of wisdom that must illuminate the minds of the young. He is also to be a counsellor in time of crises and at normal times as well. Nobody is fixed permanently in a low position but must eventually move to the highest position like others before him by staying alive.

The Pygmies do not practice slavery and have no stratification into social classes. They are egalitarian and democratic with only informal leadership.

Social Participation in Rural Societies

Masquerade:

Masquerade is a ritual and social symbol, a phenomenon which stands for the collective conscience of the traditional community. Ifesieh (1987:32) noted that:

Masquerading is an important factor to be reckoned with as an agent of social and religious control. Masquerade takes its root from life after death. In short, it represents a dead person or representative from the spirit world, hence Mmuo, means spirit and it is called Mmanwu spirit or Iba n'otu Mmanuw (to be initiated into the masquerade society). Because they are spirits, they are thought to be able to be everywhere at any time, and to know what we do even in secret.

Masquerade is a symbol which assumes a tremendous psychological dimension in the culture of the people. Onyeneke (1984:12) noted that masquerade is a display of a sensory manifestation which is assumed to make present or active the presence of some other mystic being, while the identity of the sensory phenomenon is concealed.

Types of Masquerades

Some masquerades represent the spirit of youthful men, some represent women, while others represent the spirit of elderly men. The ones that represent the women folk are dressed in fitting multi - coloured dresses. Their face masks have delicate feminine features and their dance steps demonstrate the dignity and modesty expected of maidens in the community.

Those that represent the spirit of elders symbolise the strength, roughness and awesome looks, and are sometimes filled with a set of large threatening teeth. Metuh (1985:17) observed that:

There is a greater variety among the Mmo spirit which represent the elder. They are called oke mmo (great spirits). The Ichi marks on their masks show their elder status and their high rank as title-men. While their fearsome looks and the charms hanging all over their body show them as possessors of mystical powers.

Initiation:

In many rural societies, any male child up to six years old could be initiated but before the person could be taken into the masquerade house or the secret revealed to him, he must have at least reached up to ten years. After bargaining for a date the person's kindred initiated members who are supposed to initiate the novice are informed although any initiated member could attend the initiation ceremony. The items of sacrifice are taken before the ancestral cult where the Okpala (first born son) of that very compound receives them from the sacrificee who tells the sacrificer why the items were brought.

The initiation takes place at night and it is normally a very frightful ordeal that the initiated has to go through. After eating and drinking the masquerade that is to initiate the novice will demand for him to be brought out and it is to be noted that among the Igbos it is this masquerade that is given the head of the

sacrificed animal. The relations of the novice will bring him out if he was not brave enough to stay around. The masquerade that is to initiate him will order him to lie down. The initiation involves some ordeals and tests in manly endurance, expected of a villager who has through puberty rites passed from boyhood to adulthood. The naked novice is made to undergo ordeals symbolizing a visit to the spirit world and proving his powers of endurance. The newly initiated member is told the punishments those who revealed masquerade secrets in the past received. Henceforth, the person starts interacting with others during masquerade festivals or whenever masquerades feature, provided that the person is up to ten years old then and can keep secrets.

Functions of Masquerades:

Masquerades appear during traditional festivals, and in almost all rural societies there are masquerade festivals. Masquerades appear on two main occasions according to Eneasato (1982:15) namely, ritual and non-ritualistic occasions. Ritual occasions, include festivals in honour of the ancestors. They also include funeral ceremonies in honour of dead members of the masquerade society. During non-ritualistic occasions, masquerade feature as a form of popular entertainment like in masquerade festivals.

Masquerades play important roles in all traditional religions of Africa. According to Ifesieh (1987:32):

They serve as religious functionaries (qualified/initiated persons); they maintain peace and order in the society, especially in those things that would cause abomination; they serve as a go between for the world of men and that of the spirits. The Igbo wish to avert the wrath of the spirits whenever they visited the spirit world in the form of masquerades. This has to be seen as an honour and should therefore not be taken light of.

Ozo Title Membership

Title taking has been a component part of many rural societies, according to Green (1949:215) and act as a form of mutual insurance. It has high prestige which the title holders wield as a result of their wealth and the supposed supernatural bearing of the title.

Ozo title institution is for the wealthy and good mannered. Therefore, the poor and socially disadvantaged people like slaves and outcasts are excluded. The Ozo institution is a class system as Egudu (1977:88) rightly pointed out. The society is stratified on the basis of who is a title holder and who is not. The Ozo institution follows closely the principles of divine right theory in that when one takes it, he automatically becomes a member of the aristocracy who rules the land and control the judicial system.

None titled men respect and admire titled men who control their world. Isichei (1976:67) noted that:

Although the Igbo maintain a democratic society, not all the men have equal say in the community affairs. It was observed that acquisition of titles enhanced a person's political powers. They try all serious cases including murders land disputes and so on, they were the highest judges of the land. After their decision no more appeal.

The Ozo title institution is an association of men who are sufficiently wealthy, Nzimiro (1972:54). The title elevates the holder to a superior social, ritual and political status and also serves as a means of test for aspiration to the "indichie" title which only the ozo titled person can attain to. In a gathering of a people, a none titled person can not speak without permission from titled men. The ability of the ozo titled men to dispense justice without bias and the uprightness of the ozo man has raised him to a high esteem in the eyes of the people.

An ozo title holder is immuned from assault and cannot be humiliated because according to Nze (1980:213) it is a symbol of justice and indication of 'holiness' and the much coveted title cherished by everybody where they exist. The title is a man's last social achievement that confers the individuals with the highest social honour.

Ozo titled men represent the ideal personality and something worthy of emulation by the poor and socially disadvantaged groups. On the basis of this they are honoured and have special seats provided for them in any public gathering of the people. Because of this high social standing he responds by avoiding anything that can reduce his esteemed personality.

The ozo title institution can serve the members as money spinning venture and is very useful during old age. This is because they get regular revenue from new entrants. The meat, yams and money collected from new members are shared among old members for sustenance.

Members of the ozo institution are not selfish. They therefore contribute a lot to the development projects in their societies. For instance, they could utilize their collective resources towards accomplishment of certain projects like community hall, market, or in any other way which they deem necessary.

The ozo title institution is only used here as a case study, hence whatever applies to the ozo title institution applies in a similar way to other traditional titles. All titles are expensive to come by although some are more expensive than others. All titles give the holders superior social, ritual and political status and they attract honour and respect from none titled men. Like the ozo title institution, other title institutions engage also in community development and welfare programmes. Where the ozo title institution is not in existence, there must be other titles. The traditional people are hardly without title taking.

Traditional Priesthood Institution

In the activities connected with the worship of the divinities in Africa, there is a very highly developed tradition of priesthood. It is the duty of the priest, who has received special training, to serve as an intermediary between the divinity and the devotees and he is often called upon to perform ritual ceremonies. Idowu (1962:173) noted:

Thus came into being the priest whose primary function among the Yoruba is one of a mediator. He is a person 'in touch' both ways between the object of worship and man, he knows them both, hears them, and speaks on behalf of one to the other. It is his duty to offer up man's worship and to bless man in the name of his object of worship.

In certain societies, the office is hereditary while others receive "call" before embarking on training. In some societies, it is open to men and women and where only men embark on training, the wife of the priest or the first wife for those who have more than one, play important roles. The vocation must be authenticated by the deity the priest will serve. In most traditional societies, something very unusual will happen to the person like temporary madness, entering into the bush for some days or any other abnormal behaviour which will now make his or her relations to go to a diviner to find out reasons for the abnormal behaviour. The traditional people believe that as soon as the person accepts and embarks on the training the abnormal behaviour will disappear. Even where it is hereditary, the diviners will still have to identify whom out of the whole number of children.

The main objective of priests is to influence the gods and to receive favours on behalf of men. Their authority over the people is based on the fact that they can explain causes of events in human life which people look for when misfortune occurs.

The training embarked upon is to make a complete break with the family. The training includes art of divination, instructions in the law, taboos, idiosyncracies of the god as well

as general priestly duties. As spiritual leaders of their communities, a certain standard of moral and social behaviour is expected of priests. Training for priests vary from one society to the other but the basic tenets of priesthood remain the same everywhere. Generally, both priests and traditional people abstain from sexual intercourse on the days preceding ritual ceremonies. In some societies, they are barred from sweet things which has tendency to arouse sexual desire. In some societies they are barred from excessive alcoholism because no priest or priestess can execute functions properly under the influence of excessive alcohol. Pork is barred in most places because it is a dirty animal and defiles whomever eats it. The Akonnedi Shrine in Ghana will be used as a case study for the training of priestesses.

Training The Priestess At Akonnedi Shrine

The person has to go into apprenticeship under a senior priestess lasting for at least three years. According to idowu (1962) the trainee makes a complete break with her former life style and prepares herself for her new vocation. Here, only women are trained to become priestesses. The people are "called" by the deity or any of her associated deities. The 'call' which manifest itself by possessing the novice in form of illness or even temporary madness which would necessitate going to Akonnedi shrine where the particular deity will then identify itself and make its intentions known. Refusal to the 'call' is not allowed and could result in insanity or even death.

As soon as the novice is received into the shrine to begin her formal training, the following steps are taken. She is given a ritual bath by a senior priestess for seven days. Her hair is cut and nails clipped but she is forbidden from cutting her armpit hairs and pubic hairs. For her to remain ritually clean, she is given the following guidelines to guide her daily life.

1. She should be obedient to her elders.
2. She should absent herself during her menstrual periods.
3. She is forbidden from drinking alcohol.
4. She is banned from eating sweet things.
5. She is not allowed to eat kola nuts.

Should she fail in any of the above, she must undergo purification rites or even asked to start the training all over again. Taboo concerning menstrual period is from the belief that menstrual blood is impure and obedience is the cardinal virtue in the priesthood.

The trainee priestess is introduced into the art of divination and she is given a divining pot. Medicine is rubbed in both her eyes and ears so that she can see and hear her deity on looking into the pot. The bell is believed to demand that the deity should "appear" in the pot for communication. The ability to interpret what is seen and heard is central to the training exercise and it is on the basis of this that the trainee will mostly be assessed.

If a senior priestess who had assessed her feels that she has understood the art of divination properly, she will then be allowed to present herself for examination by a panel made up of Okomfohene and the senior priestesses. If she satisfies the panelists, a date is then set aside for her graduation called Akemiya but if her people are poor and can not sponsor the graduation ceremony, she is retained to work in the shrine for sometimes after training to enable her graduate as the money she saved during this period will be used for the ceremony.

The graduation ceremony is usually done on Fridays, then the senior priestesses at the shrine string the beads for the new priestess. Libation is poured and afterwards her hair is cut. Finally, she is taken to Siasa well where they bath and dress her up. They go outside the shrine on Saturdays and Sundays but stay around within the week.

The trainee priestess on graduation, together with other priests and priestesses address the needs of their communities by pouring libations, healing the sick and afflicted, treating the barren

and generally offering prayers for the well being of the people.

It should be noted that traditional priests are not the only officials in the religious arena in rural societies. There are still others like rain makers, diviners, medicine men, etc. All of them have useful functions in traditional societies and belong to the cream of such societies, therefore, they enjoy similar respect and high standing like the traditional priests, hence I use priesthood as a case study of this group of people.

Land-Tenure Systems And Problems

There is hardly any piece of land that is no man's land. Across the whole world, land belong to the government, community, village, kindred family, extended family or even nuclear family. According to Akinsanmi (1976), this implies that anyone who wants to use land other than his own has to negotiate with the owner of the right to do that. The concept of land tenure therefore refers to the conditions under which such land is held. That is land distribution and method of assigning rights to land.

Types of Land Tenure Systems

Land tenure systems include the primitive systems, freehold title, leasehold, communal lands, inheritance.

Primitive Systems

Under this system, land is so plentiful with little or no value attached to it, bringing it to the same rank as air and water therefore, it is not seen as a negotiable possession. It should be noted that such lands are allocated to tribal members by tribal chiefs or tribal authorities for the purposes of grazing by nomads and at times for shifting cultivation for the production of food crops. All unacculturated pygmies live in nomadic bands which number from twenty to as many as a hundred individuals and wander over recognized hunting territories owned collectively by the group. They do not practice agriculture except under Negro

influence. The band is basically egalitarian and democratic, with an older and experienced man as its informal leader. In consultation with the other men he decides when and where to hunt and move camp.

Freehold Title

This is real property in the sense that the owner has absolute possession over the land and therefore can pass it down to his heirs after living his own life. Freeholds on land could be by gift in land owning communities. That is areas where the demand for land is not much. People at times purchase land in areas where the customs allow for it. At times, people use land to borrow money and the person who borrowed the money may not be able to pay back the amount borrowed over the years. The land will then revert to the family of the lender. Traditional people in most times do not answer directly when the matter concerns land. They will only say that they saw for instance, John's grand father farm the land and after him, his father and now himself. People will not bother themselves with the original owner because the world is not their home, but rather a temporary place.

Leasehold

Here, land is held for a fixed, known length of time on specific agreement and conditions. However, during the period of the leasehold something is given to remind both parties that the person holding the land is not forever. When the agreed time is over, the leasehold could be renewed. The most important aspect of leasehold is that it does permit control of land by the communities.

Communal Lands

Under communal land ownership system, the land belongs to the community which may be an extended family, a village or

town, but the most important thing here is that nobody has the right to use the land against the wishes of the rulers of the community. While in some communities part of the land is owned by the community and the other part by individuals. In this situation nearby farms usually belong to individuals while distant farms belong to the whole community. Any member of the community has a right to use the land but for a short period of time and attempts to make it permanent like building houses or planting economic trees are discouraged in public lands.

Inheritance

The most common method of acquiring land is by inheritance according to Anyanwu and Anyanwu (1975:11). When a man dies, his holdings are shared by his sons and daughters depending on the community in question after the first son has claimed the compound land. Usually, each piece of land is fragmented so that each of the sons shares fully in the advantage of the differences in the fertility and situation. This gives rise to one of the most serious disadvantages of individual ownership of land - indefinite fragmentation of land.

Problems Of Land Tenure Through Inheritance

1. Excessive land fragmentation leaves a farmer with several small parcels of land scattered here and there that it becomes difficult and uneconomic to work on.
2. Land allocation is a delicate issue in the sense that in many rural societies, when a man dies, the problems of sharing his property will arise and in most cases the deceased has more than one wife and it generates enmity among family members. This is because rural people view land as the most precious possession.

3. At times when an individual inherits land outside his family, it is difficult to assess how free he is in the use of the land. The children of the late ~~father~~ might challenge the action of their late father.

4. Landowners insist that it is immoral to sell land because when the land is sold, future generations will not have access to such lands. Therefore, many traditionalists insist, that they will not sell their land even when there are obvious needs to do so for survival. Moreover, some communities discourage the sale of land.

5. When a farmer is in a financial problem, instead of selling his land, he prefers to pledge (mortgage) it. Farmers prefer this method because they know that a pledge is always redeemable even if it takes generations to do so. His children or even great grand children will see redeeming the land as a challenge.

Systems Of Farming

Some of the main systems in use in various parts of Africa include, according to Anyanwu and Anyanwu (1975):

- Shifting cultivation
- Continuous cropping
- Crop rotation
- Monocropping
- Mixed cropping
- Mixed farming
- Nomadic herding
- Pastoral farming

Shifting Cultivation or Land Rotation

A piece of land is cultivated for a number of years and when the crop yields are low as a result of the exhaustion of soil

nutrients, the farmer moves to another area to farm. However, he will come back to the one vacated after some years. The advantage in leaving the land fallow is to allow trees to grow and their leaves fall on the ground for years. The soil nutrients are then replenished.

Continuous Cropping

This involves putting a piece of land under cultivation from year to year and is mainly done in densely populated areas where land is scarce. The crops planted could be annual or perennial. At times, crop rotation method is applied because of the scarcity of land. The crop rotation method works but it is for short time purposes as prolonged application leads to soil exhaustion and low productivity.

Crop Rotation

Crop rotation is a method of farming where the same piece of land is farmed every year but organized in such a way that crops follow in a definite order as to restore nutrients removed from the soil. For instance, maize and yam could be followed by tomatoes and legumes, those that add nutrients, while the first two remove nutrients.

Monocropping

This is the method of planting only one type of annual crop and which must be harvested before the planting of another crop on the same piece of land. It is not a very good method of farming however, it depends on the types of crops that are being rotated.

Mixed Cropping

This is the cultivation of several crops on a piece of land at the same time. This is the most common method of farming in most rural societies. Many rural people prefer to plant a number

of crops in a single farm, taking into cognizance the maturity time of each crop. For instance, a farmer can plant yam, maize, okro and pepper and even pumpkin in the same farm but do the harvesting progressively as they mature.

Mixed Farming

The practice of animal production and crop production at the same time is referred to as mixed farming. This mixed farming has a lot of advantages. Items for feeding the animals could be collected from the farm while on the other hand, animal droppings could be used to fertilize the farm. The farm will produce mainly carbohydrates while the animals provide the protein. That is moving towards balanced diet.

Nomadic Herding

Practised mostly in vast dry regions where rainfall is insufficient to produce crops but just enough to produce natural savannah grass land. Under this prevailing conditions, the farmers adopt a non-settled farming system in which the farmer keeps grazing animals only. This nomadic herding of cattle, sheep, etc, is a primitive form of animal husbandry - moving from place to place to look for grasses for their animals.

Pastoral Farming

Unlike the nomadic herding, this is a settled form of livestock farming, where the major or perhaps the sole source of farm income is the keeping of livestock. This practice is more common in North and South America where they have farm (ranches) and other areas of low rainfall.

It is difficult to say that a particular society adopts this system of farming or the other because in most cases people practice more than one system at the same time.

Soil Manure

Anything that is added to the soil to improve its fertility is called manure.

Kinds of Manure

They are as follows: compost manure, farm-yard manure and green manure.

Compost Manure

It is made up of the remains of plants stored in heaps to decay and form manure. The effectiveness of a compost material depends on the preparation and handling. It is done in two ways either in heaps or in pits. It is mainly got by sweeping the compound. It differs from farm yard manure in that it does not contain animal droppings.

Farm-yard Manure

Here, animal droppings are blended with plant materials. The animal bedding is made with peat or straw which the animal matches on. It can be removed once or twice a year arrangement to contain in animal droppings, the droppings are removed on a daily basis and collected in heaps where it is mixed with other manure got from sweeping of the compound. From time to time, the manure is turned and if properly handled farm-yard manure is about the best manure.

Green Manure and Cover Crops

Plants grown purposely to protect the soil from erosion, the impact of rain drops and leaching are called cover crops, while green manure crops are grown solely to improve the soil. Examples include a mixture of grasses and legumes.

Human droppings

In almost all rural societies, the rural people do not have

any organized toilet disposals. Therefore, they ease themselves in nearby farms, while conscious or unconscious of the fact that they are enriching their farms. The fact that some people plant vegetables in these areas, show that they recognize the fertility of the soil there.

CHAPTER FOUR

Rural Social Institutions

An institution can only develop when the folkways and mores surrounding an important activity become organized into quite a formal binding system of belief and behaviour. Bierstedt (1970:30) defined social institution as a definite, formal and regular way of doing something. It is the sum total of all patterns, processes, and material instruments built up around any major social interest.

The Family And Marriage Institutions

Some kind of family organization exists in all human societies, although its actual form may vary from one society to another. According to Wilkins (1976:137), the family is the smallest and most personal of all social groups, it is also one of the most important, since the regulation of sexual and parental functions, which have their roots in the biological nature of human beings, is a prerequisite of social order.

Human babies are completely helpless when they are born, and for a long time they are dependent on others for nurture and care. This is why exactly the issue of begetting children cannot be allowed to happen in a haphazard and irresponsible manner, and its regulation through the institutions of marriage and family is of such importance. The primary function of the family after all, is rearing and caring for children.

Nuclear Family

The nuclear family consists of a married couple and their children. This is the basic building block of most kinship system. Among the Pygmies each nuclear family constitutes an independent household.

Extended Family

The extended family includes grand parents, parents and grand children, including all the brothers and sisters of the second generation along with their spouses and offspring and in-laws from several of these marriages. They live in a single household or adjacent households and function together as an integrated economic unit. They own land and economic trees together.

The family And Individual Needs

There are many ways that the family solves the individual needs. The following are some of the ways:

Reproduction and Physical Maintenance

When we were born into families, we were born helpless but our families provided nurture and protection, by feeding, clothing and housing us. The family continues to shoulder these responsibilities until we are able to take care of ourselves.

Socialization

Socialization is the process by which beings who are biologically human become socially human. Otite and Ogionwo (1985:225) noted that, parents bring up their children on the assumption that they are anticipating the future of these children. They socialize their children to fit into a particular type of social system. The effectiveness of a particular socialization pattern is always relative to the extent to which future conditions can be accurately anticipated.

Social Control

We learn the socially approved ways for realizing our personal interests through social control. The new born baby suckling the mother's breast stops and looks at the reaction of the mother when it bites the mother's breast. The reaction of the mother will determine what the child will do next time. It is said

that charity begins at home. In many rural societies, they believe that punishment of offending children helps to shape their future morally. Through social control a child can be made humble or even for responsible participation in society at large.

Status Placement

Children inherit status position of their parents initially and internalize their characteristics. In many rural societies, the children of influential families are respected more than their peers. But this development is temporary because after some years, personal achievement will count as the case, in Okonkwo in *Things Fall apart* by Chinue Achebe. When somebody's father is a traditional ruler the person will be known as a prince and enjoys privileges but where the chieftaincy is not hereditary but rotational or by personal merit, the chieftaincy could move to another family. The son of a university professor can end up a secondary school teacher.

Marriage

Marriage may be defined as a relationship between two or more consenting adults through which children may or may not arise provided this relationship is recognized by society and this gives social recognition to the children of the marriage. Marriage is known to have some common qualities, it varies from one culture or group to another and everywhere new relationships are formed through marriage Aylward (1973:181) defined marriage as: a special and intimate union between man and woman as such in which mating is an essential expression, in some sense sacred, which establishes enforceable rights between the partners which results in a special status for the children, and generates relationships of consanguinity and affinity, and which implies that other forms of mating or intimacy are deviant.

For many traditional people the aim of marriage is procreation and without it, marriage is incomplete. In begetting offspring the ruralities therefore, avert the threat of extinction of one's lineage which is considered a calamity in all rural societies. Basden (1966:68) noted that unmarried persons of either sex, except in special cases are objects of derision and to be childless is the greatest calamity that can befall a woman.

Types of Marriage

There are basically two types of marriage, namely monogamy and polygamy.

Monogamy

This is a social unit of one man, his wife and their children. This type of marriage is common in most rural societies.

Polygamy

This is a general term consisting of polygyny and polyandry. Polyandry is where a woman has more than one husband at the same time. It is not popular but found in Tibet and some Indian tribes. While polygyny is where one man has more than one wife at the same time. It is very common in rural societies because they believe that they need more hands in their farm work or for any other reason.

Forms of Marriage

There are other forms of marriages in the rural areas like the sororate marriage, widow inheritance, levirate marriage and ghost marriage.

Sororate marriage

In most rural societies, they believe that a woman who has no blood relationship with a dead woman cannot regard her children as her own children. That is why in most places when a

woman dies, the husband will go to his in-laws to demand that a sister of his late wife be given to him in marriage. In most cases the in-laws do not refuse because the children that are going to be taken care of are also their children.

Widow inheritance

This is a situation where a man dies after some years of marriage and often having raised children. After his death any close relation of his can go back to the parents of the woman and give them a token bride wealth symbolizing the exchange. The children born henceforth belong to the new husband while the previous children still belong to the dead man.

Levirate Marriage

In a simple form, it is labouring for a late brother in the sense that the late brother's children and wife are still for him. The foster father is the biological father while the late brother is the social father. In most rural societies, the social father is more important than the biological father even sociologically speaking. In rural societies a child is known by his father's name whether the father is dead or living. This form of marriage is found in some part of Arabia, Sudan and North Africa.

Ghost Marriage

This is a situation where, may be, an only son dies and the parents or relations are bent on not allowing his lineage to close even though he is deceased. They now marry a wife on his behalf. The wife and offspring of the marriage belong to him even though the wife and children only hear stories about his life. This is practised in almost all rural societies in Africa.

Prerequisites of Marriage

The prerequisites of marriage in almost all rural societies include approval and involvement of the both families, bride price

payment and religious factor.

Approval and involvement of both Families

As marriage is understood to be a union of families, the decision to marry is not left entirely to the two people involved. The families involved conduct investigations into each other's history and satisfy themselves that there is nothing to stand in the way of the intended union. Ifesieh (1987:37) noted that:

Founding a family in many rural societies is normally a big collective action by all the relations and well-wishers of the man looking for a girl to marry. The parents normally wish to find the girl of their own choice for their son to marry but at times young people concerned are allowed to make their own choice provided it is not contrary to any traditional rules, especially, for a free born to get betrothed or married to osu - a cultic slave.

In former times, virginity was insisted upon but nowadays due to social changes, it is an ideal rather than a social requirements. Parents who take good care of their daughters in terms of moral guidance against premarital sexual relationship are rewarded. The son-in-law usually go to his mother-in-law and congratulate her for a work well done with anything that he can afford in the company of a few relations and such wives are highly regarded in rural societies.

Blood relations are not allowed to marry one another in most rural societies. Even where it is allowed, there must be some ritual ceremony of 'separation'. Otite and Ogionwo (1985:78), noted that:

In some rural societies, as among the Ashanti in Ghana, marriage between cousins is allowed unlike the Urhobo in Nigeria. Yet, in other societies, where kinship is remote, although traced, some ritual purification and propitiation are undergone before such spouses can marry.

In the interim, the girl in question visits the relations and

family of the intended husband, these visits enable them to look into her character. If found unworthy or lazy, this could be a point in the cancellation of the marriage. On the other hand, the girl looks at the strength and behaviour of the intended husband, if she is not satisfied, she could stop the marriage too. In most rural societies they use palm wine, kola nuts and food items for marriage ceremonies, along with singing and dancing.

Bride-Wealth

Paying the bride-wealth validates the marriage in the customary sense. Among the Camerounian Highlanders, marriage normally entails the payment of a substantial bride-price, but the Nsaw and Tikar require token gifts, while the Nsongli and Bamilele practice sister exchange. Among the Pygmies, a man obtains a wife by making substantial gifts to her relatives. However, it could amount to genuine bride price but among Mbuti they practice sister exchange which some scholars assume to have been the original Pygmy practice. Among the Bush Men they do not pay bride - price but do give gifts of meat to demonstrate that they are good hunters. However, the man renders post-marital bride-service at times with members of his age grade. In most rural societies, once the girl's parents accept the bride-wealth all children born out of the marriage belongs to the husband. If the marriage fails, the bride-wealth is returned to make the separation official.

Religious Factor

In many rural societies, the ancestors are invoked through libations and prayers to participate in the marriage ceremonies. At times diviners are consulted and they recommend what steps to take to remedy some hindrances, like a case where two distant cousins want to marry each other diviners recommend items for ritual of separation before the marriage can take place. At times diviners could also recommend or out of one's initiative promise

or offer sacrifice to any of the created deities for help or in fulfilment of a promise.

The rural people believe that the ancestors after first and second burials continue to live in the spiritual level pending when they will reincarnate. It is therefore, not surprising to see parents going to diviners to enquire from them which ancestral spirit reincarnated in a new born child.

Installation of 'Chi' (Cultus Symbol) For The Newly Married Wife Among Igbo: People.

Chi is the destiny - spirit believed to be an emanation of the creator. About Chi Meek (1937:57) noted that one of the most striking doctrines of the Igbo is that every human being has association with his personality, a genius, or spirit-double known as Chi. Chi is associated with a child from the moment of its conception. The people strongly believe that at conception, God assigns a Chi to each person, and places before the Chi several parcels of fortunes.

When a child is born, an earthen pot is bought by its parents and sacrifices are made to either the mother's Chi or the father's depending on the sex of the child. During the ritual, the earthen pot is taken round the neck of the child and it is kept. The child benefits from the sacrifices made by either of the parents to his or her chi. When the boys grow up they separate their own chi from those of their fathers while the girls take theirs while leaving for their husband's homes. Hence, Ifesieh noted that:

Another rite of separation and incorporation are performed by which the girl's family formally incorporates their daughter into her new family and prays for her success in children, health, wealth and long life.

The newly married wife's lineage transplants her fertility to their brother-in-laws lineage and when the spirits of both lineages have eaten together a good relationship is expected. When the girl is ready to move and settle in her new husband's place, the mother

gives to her daughter Chi cultic symbol. This consists of two small clay pots and four small wooden pieces in a wooden plate.

After begetting one or two issues, the couple will voluntarily complete the ritual or they may witness some misfortunes which will lead to divination which may reveal to them the cause of the misfortune. When the couple is ready, the father of the girl will be informed. He then cuts off some branches of 'Ogbu', 'Oha' and 'Ogiris' from her mother's Agwu while going. The sacrificer provides the money that is to be paid to the medicine man, tubers of yam, clay pots, cups and 'ofo' sticks.

On the agreed date, both the parents of the girl and the medicine man will arrive. The first born son as the mouth piece of the ancestors will show the sacrificer a location behind the husband's house after presenting wine and kola nuts to the ancestors and beg them to make the journey of the sacrificer successful. Metu (1985:98) noted that:

The shrine is set up with some relics (sand or branch), taken from her mother's shrine, and consists of a tree, an earthen mound-over which is built a thatched roof. In the shrine is kept a wooden bowl 'okwa chi' to give offerings to her 'chi'

The medicine man then wraps some medicine and hangs it there. He begs Chukwu, the ancestors of that compound and ancestors of his own compound together with his Agwu to help him in making his mission a success as they have been doing.

He then takes the hen and a deep cut is made on its neck and blood is allowed to pour on the new altar. Afterwards, some feathers are taken to put on the altar, while he continues to renounce the invocation. After cooking, he makes his final prayer while putting some morsels of food and meat on the new altar and on the eight knotted fresh palm fronds. After this installation, offerings are made whenever the owner feels inclined. This religious custom is to ensure that the girl in going over to the

family of her new husband retains some part of the spirit ancestry of her mother's lineage.

In most rural societies, when a daughter is given away in marriage, if she becomes 'fruitful' as expected, any issue be it a boy or a girl is received at her parent's family with ritual of presenting the new baby to their ancestors. The child is kept away, until the ancestors are informed through the **Okpala** (first born son) who is their mouthpiece after pouring libation and offering of food to them. Then the child is brought before the ancestors and all present can then partake in the ritual meal.

Religious Institutions

Religion could be defined subjectively as the awareness of man's reliance on a superior Being and consequently the inclination in man to worship Him. It is the outward expression of faith therefore, Karl Marx's definition of religion as the opium of the masses is not acceptable to many ruralites. Emile Durkheim said that 'god is society personified. For him, whatever a group held as highest norms and values are attributed as the characteristics of their god.

Religion represents our forefathers' effort to explain the universe and the place of man in their own way, and they did this through myths and supernatural stories. Generally, they believe that there is an ever present yet unseen power, force and dynamism that maintain religio-socio equilibrium. Religion among the rural people is made up of a set of beliefs and practices which are consequences of these beliefs. There are belief in the Supreme Being, created deities, ancestral cults, witchcraft, sorcery and medicine as we shall see below.

Belief in the supreme Being

Africans have names for God which are different from names given to other divinities. These names reflect the attributes given to Him. Mande in Sierra Leone call him **Leve** - Supreme

creator. The Akan in Ghana call him **Onyame** - The supreme Being. The Bini in Nigeria call him **Osamobua** - Creator of the world, sky and earth and of life and death.

Africans respect God's invisibility by not making images or physical representations of him they rarely dedicate temples and shrines to Him for the mere fact that they believe that He is everywhere and can be called upon anytime. They do not have this impression about other deities which they believe were created for specific reasons. The Akan of Ghana say that if you want to speak to God speak to the wind.

God pays heed to the needs and petitions of men. There is indirect approach such as when people approach God through a spirit or offer sacrifices to a divinity in the belief that God will ultimately receive them. Others move straight and make direct representations to God through prayers and sacrifices. The Yoruba, for instance, make a circle of ashes on the ground put water and kola in it and then kneel down and pray for God's blessing. While the Igbo family head in a morning prayer will wash his hands and break Kola nuts and lay them on the ground and call on God to watch over him and his family that day. It is rare to find among Africans priests and priestesses dedicated to the worship of the Supreme Being. The Akan of Ghana use the expression, "if God wills or if God permits", to show the supremacy of God in all matters.

These ideas about God are deeply entrenched in all facets of African life and are basic to African beliefs.

There are occasional libation made before a journey or an undertaking for God's protection and guidance. Ifesieh (1985:39) noted that;

In prayers, we cry to God for help when things are not well with us, when problems threaten not only our person and our families but, too, our very existence which God, **Chukwu**, has given us. At this stage the creator, is the only and the highest saving power we cry to. This shows

that the people recognize the Supremacy of the Supreme Being in all matters.

There are names in the traditional religions of Africa which mean the Supreme Being like Chukwuma in Igbo religion which means "God knows."

Belief In The Created Deities

Created deities are generally believed to be created by the Supreme Being to perform intermediary functions between man and the Supreme Being. As creatures, they share the limitations of other creatures and they are for specific functions. They are rather seen as messengers of God and could be good or evil. The ultimate receiver of all sacrifices is the Supreme Being and the rural people are all aware of this fact.

Shrines are places where these created deities are worshipped. They are equally places where sacred objects are kept and offering made. It should be noted that sacred places, trees, totemic animals, pots and other objects have been used as shrines. They are symbols of culture. While some are man-made, others are taken over in their natural form because of the religious feeling they inspire.

Separate days are set apart for the worship of the created deities like in Igbo area Eke and Afor are used. Those that are to be involved in the sacrifice must have observed 'holiness' at least the previous night such as not having relations with a woman. The commonest ingredients of worship are, kolanuts, palm-wine, tubers of yam, goats, fowls, cow, ram, etc. Created deities came into prominence during the life crisis rituals.

The created deities serve as ways of inculcating moral values because certain offences are regarded as abomination to the gods such as murder, incest, birth of twins in the former times, adultery, stealing of farm products. One could take oneself to the shrine, seeking justification of whatever is done to one or to any member of one's family or even to one's property.

Any rural person could go to any of the created deities in the town to offer sacrifices when he or she wishes, but there are occasions when they demand sacrifices and the traditional people concerned are obliged to conform to the demand. The visit of a vulture or vultures to a family when no animal is slaughtered, the animal sacred to any shrine in the town, any strange animal to a man's compound, the visit of many animals at a time, etc. Would then require going to a diviner or diviners to find out the message of such a visit. The diviner will interpret the visit of the animal or animals as the case may be and if any sacrifice is demanded, the person will be told and which god that demands it. In time of sickness, people visit the diviners who may recommend sacrifice to any of their gods. At times when a person dies, the rural people go to find out the cause of the death. If it is a bad death, sacrifices must be performed to ward off doom. This seems to mean that the rural people live in fear and are always waiting for messages from one god or the other. Below are types of deities in Africa and their role in the religious life of the people: Spirit of the earth, spirits of water, evil deities, spirit of thunder, etc.

Spirit Of The Earth

The earth is regarded as a spirit in all rural societies in Africa. In most cases, it takes the second position after the Supreme Being and is the second deity to receive libation. Whenever the validity of a statement is in doubt, the person is challenged to touch the tip of his tongue with some soil or to remove his shoes or slippers and march on the soil bare footed to prove that he is telling the truth. The Akan of Ghana have no shrine dedicated to it unlike the Igbo of Nigeria who dedicate shrines to it, called Ani. The new yam festival is held in her honour. The Mende of Sierra Leone recognise the Mother Earth as a deity. They do not worship her but have taboos to protect her sanctity from being violated

Spirits Of Water

In Ghana, the Akan call the god of sea Bosompo worshipped on Tuesday which means that they do not fish on that day. It is only invoked when protection is sought for those who have to cross water. Fishermen give annual sacrifices for abundant 'catch' and safe passage. Among the Mende, they regard the spirits of rivers as being basically hostile to man although they may be favourably disposed towards certain individuals in society. Lucas (1966:30) describes the one held at Victoria Beach, Lagos as follows:

The male worshippers were clad in black or blue-black dresses, black being the colour of the deity dress. The female worshippers were clad in white, the colour of the dress of Olokunsu the wife of Olokun. There was a series of prostrations and genuflections followed by a simple meal. Afterwards the remainder of the food was thrown into the sea as a sacrifice to the deity.

Evil Deities

Some created deities are specifically evil. They are feared but at the same time worshipped to ward off their malevolence. Their aid is important against enemies. The Yoruba call it Eshu and erect shrines for it outside the town believing that it derives joy in causing mischief but favour those who adore and worship it. The Akan have evil spirit called Sasabonsam who assumes the identity of a forest monster. At times the Yoruba name their children after Eshu like Eshuibiyi, meaning "Eshu gave birth to this one." Idowu (1962:6) observed that the symbol of Eshu can be a piece of laterite or rock.

This is usually stuck in the ground or on mound of earth. It can be a graven image of clay or wood. This may be with or without a knife in one hand and a club in the other. It can be an earthen ware pot turned upside down, with a whole in its middle or it can be a piece of

hard rock in an earthenware dish. This has oil poured regularly upon it.

Belief in the Ancestral Cults

The head of the family or group is held to be the representative and mouth piece of the ancestors who derive their power from the Supreme Being. In the family, the father is the priest. It is he who 'gives food' to the ancestors for the good of the whole family. The ancestors are often held in high esteem and it is believed that they intervene between man and the Supreme Being, helping to get prayers and petitions answered quickly.

The ancestral belief act as a form of social control because those who died bad death cannot reincarnate. Parrinder (1974:58) observed that the ancestors are believed to have survived death and live in the spiritual world, but still taking lively interest in the affairs of their families. A family, for traditional people is made up of not only the living members but also the departed and unborn ones.

Belief in ancestral spirits and reincarnation shapes the behaviour of individuals within the community. Ifesieh (1985:16) noted that:

The ancestors are those honoured, great, gentle and faithful - influential - parental guardians who were once genuinely respected and who by virtue of their children became fathers of clans, villages, etc. But have undergone a physical change (death) in their good, matured and ripe ages; but then are still 'living' and are still 'member' of their respective families, whose pillars, they were and 'are' and have left behind their children, especially sons, who have the natural and the traditional duty of according them honourable burial (a passport to the land of the dead), and who should continue the family lineage, but at the same time are imitating

those noble qualities which earned those 'living-dead' ancestorhood.

There is no doubt that the ancestors play an important role in the traditional religion, but the use of the term 'ancestor worship' represents an over-simplification as Kofi (1976:4) rightly observed: The rites performed in connection with the ancestors such as libation and offering of food to the ancestral spirits, are religious acts, but they are not necessarily an expression of worship. They express the esteem and feeling of hospitality the practitioners have for their ancestors a festation of the firm belief in the unbroken relationship that exists between the living and the dead.

Ceremonies involving the ancestors form an important part of African traditional religion. Parrinder (1974:60) noted that most of the festivals are centred around the periodic feeding of the ancestors, whose well being are sought through such rites. All present participate in the meal and by so doing enter into harmonious relationship now symbolically established through sacrificial meal with the living dead. Such placatory acts give the people a sense of security from the anger of the ancestors and of hopefulness that they will play their mediatory role well. However, those who neglect the ancestors are often punished by the offended ancestor or ancestors. The Priests/Priestesses, medicine men and diviners work hand in hand although some people combine two or even the three roles. They are very important in the traditional religion of a people.

Witchcraft

Witchcraft serves two major purposes; namely explanatory function and maintaining good social relationship. Among the Igbo, grudging against someone or to keep annoyance against anyone will mean, bewitching the person. Also among the Azande of Central Africa, people are encouraged to have good relationship

with one another to avoid bewitching the person.

Witchcraft is part of everyday life, yet it is some thing people are afraid of. Evans-Richard (1937) noted that among the Azande of Central Africa, if people eat banana and it resulted in stomach upset - it is witchcraft. In Azande, they have granary. If it collapses people will regard it as witchcraft but termite had eaten up the granary pillar. Even if the Azande knew the cause, they will still ask - why is it that it is at this time, on this very occasion that the termite eats up the pillar. The Azande understand the principle of causation but still want to know why.

Witchcraft participates in all misfortunes. The Azande would expect to come across it at any time of the day. Witchcraft is done unconsciously. If you feel annoyed with someone you may be bewitching him without knowing it. The only way of stopping witchcraft is by consulting the oracle to find out the culprit, the bewitched will boldly go to him and say "You bewitched me," and the suspect will say, "I am sorry I did not know that". Thereafter, the suspected witch will take water in his mouth and blow it to the ground and say, "I have no grudge animosity against you any more".

What Evans-Richard is saying is that witchcraft makes sense in the whole structure of the Azande society. It is not a pre-logical thinking but relevant in the whole structure of thought.

While in other parts of Africa like in Nigeria, witchcraft is conscious and also an evil. But all witchcraft must originate from anger, grudges, and jealousy etc. If you go about frowning your face all the time, people will think that you are a witch. Old women with or without children are often suspected of bewitching people especially wicked ones or those who have other deviant behavioural patterns. Old men who live to see many of their children and grand children dead are also suspected of bewitching them.

Centralised Political System

Generally they are of two forms, namely Chiefdom and State. Chiefdom is an organized group of local communities which possess an institutional head called chief who is placed in authority through ascription (different from achievement).

State: Glasswell defined state as a group of people in a defined territory organised in such a way that a designated few of their number are expected to control others directly or indirectly by means of appeal to real or imputed group values or by force.

Old Oyo was believed to have been founded by *Oranyan* himself son of *Oduduwa*. Otite and Ogionwo (1985:132) noted that:

The people of Old Oyo included royal, the ~~free-born~~ citizens, the eunuchs and the slaves. There were also the King's wives and palace officials. They played various roles in the social and political organisation of Old Oyo.

In matters of government, the Alafin or King was the titular Head of State. He was appointed and controlled by the Oyomesi or council of state. The Ogboni cult played a limited part in the government of Old Oyo. It could mediate between the Alafin and Oyomesi in some crisis...

The Alafin delegated his administrative and religious roles to three important officials of service origin. These were the Eunuchs of the Left, Right, and Centre... The Basorun, was very powerful, being the chief king maker, who could also command the Alafin to commit suicide...

Each member of the Oyomesi governed his own section of the town from which he also recruited people for the army when required...

Individual members of the Oyomesi has specific roles to play in relation to the total polity. There were also titled priests charged with the worship of several gods...

The Ogboni forbade and punished any shedding of blood... Alafin had a woman representative in Ogboni... Also decisions taken at Ogboni meetings were unanimous and binding and were not subject to discussions and rejection in the open political arena...

Other important state functionaries included the Efun Efa (Eunuch of the Right Hand) who performed the Alafin's religious duties, including looking after Sango shrine, and officiating at State religious festivals. The Ona Efa (Eunuch of the Centre) represented the Alafin in the judicial sphere, adjudicating in serious crimes and passing death sentence for treason and adultery with the King's wives. The Osi Efa (Eunuch of the left) represented the Alafin in the executive sphere, impersonating the King in battle and on public occasions; and he supervised the collection of the King's revenue. In this way, the whole of Oyo Kingdom was organised and held together until it succumbed.

Economic Institutions

Economics is the systematic study of wealth, of the way in which it is accumulated and the way it is distributed Owo (1994:41) defined Economic institutions as concerned with how members of a society earn a living and the degree to which they control their material environment.

Types Of Economic Organisation

Under this topic we will be looking at the following types: food gatherers, pastoralists and agriculturalists.

Food gatherers

By their nature of life they do not have a permanent abode, instead they move with the seasons. They neither domesticate

animals nor plant crops, rather they move from place to place in search of food. However, this movement is not without direction, their leader mainly the oldest among them after consultation with elders determine their movement. With this life-style it is not unexpected that they will have temporary structure as places of residence

Otite and Ogionwo (1985:181) examples of food gatherers are the Semary of Malayan forests; the Kwakiutl of British Columbia; the Khoi Africans of the Kalahari Desert and the Pygmies of the Congo and Ituri forests. Within their traditional territories, they gathered roots, leaves, and fruits and hunted and fished. The Khoi Africans may prove to be an exception in the sense that during the rainy season they scatter over relatively distant areas, whereas in the dry season they come together in areas where there is water.

Pastoral People

Their social organization takes account of the need to feed their livestock and to give them water. They depend on herds and also on sheep and goats. Some of them also engaged in agriculture, food gathering and hunting. Otite and Ogionwo (1985:183) noted that The Masai of East Africa; the Fulani of West Africa, the Northern Tungus of Siberia; the Kazak of Central Asia and the Ruwala of Northern Arabia are all examples of a pastoral social organisation.

Among the Fulani of Nigeria, like in most pastoral societies, men do most of the grazing while women and children milk the cattle and do some other little domestic works. Like will be expected, they pay bride-wealth in cattle and other animals. Some pastoralists who do not practice agriculture exchange animal products with their agricultural neighbours.

Agriculturalists

With the exception of food gatherers and pastoralists the

rest of the rural people seem to be agriculturalists. They have more permanent places of abode. Division of labour is based mainly on age and sex. They keep some domestic animals and birds, hunt and may be fish depending on the location but must return to relatively permanent residential areas.

The rural people generally shun idleness hence the drive to work. They are predominantly subsistence agriculturalists, primitive farmers using such tools as hoes and matchets. Each family depends on itself for farmwork though relatives are occasionally invited to help. Moreover, there are some freelance workers who charge money and food for working on other people's farms. Another common way of procuring labour is group-working by a number of people either men or women, boys or girls working for each other in rotation. There are still others who practice animal husbandry. Many rural farmers rear animals in addition to their farmwork.

Economic Arrangement of chiefdom

Chiefdoms are very often characterised by sedimentary agriculture and also mixed pastoralism and sometimes organised hunting. Chiefdoms are also marked by craft villages or households. The surplus from these economic activities are often approximated by the ruling class. The chiefdom at times control production and distribution of essential resources.

Economic Arrangement of States

According to Fortes and Evans - Pritchard (1940) In these states agriculture became the mainstay of the economy. Later, large number of people were released from food production for specialized work of different types such as pottery, weaving, basket making, broom making, leather work, boat-making, fishing, trade and religious activities. These states were therefore characterized by division of labour leading to several inventions, year round habitation came to be socially constructed, superior cutting tools

were made towards a modern state.

Subsistence Economy among Agriculturalists

The following will be discussed: Farm crops, Economic tree, hunting/fishing, trading, land and animal husbandry.

Farm Crops

In many parts of Igboland, the principal crops include yam, cassava, coca yam, maize, tomatoes, okro, onions, pepper, groundnuts and bambara, etc. The production of these crops is mainly for consumption except in rare instances when they are sold to meet pressing financial needs. Arinze (1990:7) noted that an almost complete dependence on primitive tools greatly reduces the output of the Igbo farmer, so that each family plants practically just what it needs for its support, with a little extra to sell for the purchase of clothes, fish, meat and similar general expenses.

It may also prove helpful to single out for brief mention all the staple food in at least several of the societies of the African continent. According to Dalziel (1937:14),

Sorghum and Pearl millet, in a very large number of societies in Negro Africa and adjacent regions.
Maize, in many societies in the tropical forest zone and southern Africa and occasional ones in East Africa and Sudan.
Wheat and Barley, in many parts of Northern Africa.

Manioc, in many societies in the Belgian Congo, French Equatorial Africa and adjacent regions.

Yams and Taro, on the Guinea Coast and in a number of societies in the Southern Sudan, Cameroun, and the Congo Basin.

Bananas, in many societies in Uganda and the tropical - forest zone.

Rice, in Madagascar, an occasional society in East

Africa, and all of coastal West Africa from Senegal to Ivory Coast.

Eleusine, in a considerable number of societies in East Africa.

Date palm, in the Oases of the Sahara Desert.

Fonio, in a number of societies in the Western Sudan.

Ensete, in Southern Ethiopia.

Fig and Olive, in a few societies along the Mediterranean.

Legumes, sweet potatoes, and teff, in occasional isolated societies.

Economic Trees

These are mainly palm trees, cocoa, kola nut, cashew, pea, mango, etc.

Palm Tree: This is very useful from its roots to its leaves. It gives oil, kernel, timber, fronds for the covering of mud walls or the making of fences tender shoots which serve as candles, when dried and soaked in oil and most important of all, palm wine. Palm wine serves not only to quench the thirst but also to offer libations to the spirits and the ancestors. Also for marriages, burials, and other occasions. Palm - oil and palm kernel are still among the chief exports of Nigeria.

Anyanwu and Anyanwu (1975:137) noted that palm tree has two types of oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil. These oils have quite distinct properties and are used for different purposes, Palm oil is mainly used for the manufacture of soap, but also in the production of margarine, lubricating oils and candles and in the tin plate and sheet steel industries. Palm kernel oil is also used for soap and margarine manufacture, and the cake left after extracting the oil is a good livestock feed. Besides the importance of oil palm as a commercial oil tree, it serves many other purposes

locally in providing food, drinks, building materials and brooms. The bunch refuse is used for mulching and manuring.

Cocoa:

It is strictly a tropical crop, restricted in cultivation to lowland areas, where rainfall is at least 73cm. Anyanwu and Anyanwu 1975:(139) stated that cocoa contains theobromine which is used in the manufacture of drugs. Cocoa is used also for the manufacture of drinks and biscuits and for local usage, the shell is used as animal feed, some times as manure and often for fuel.

Hunting/Fishing

There are some men who are particularly noted for hunting. They have properly trained dogs which they use in their hunting operation. They kill wild animals some of which they eat and others they sell to get money for solving some pressing financial problems.

Among the Nuclear Mande, hunting is less productive than fishing, which constitutes the principal subsistence activity of the Bozo and is common elsewhere along the river. Most African peoples practice fishing as a subsidiary economic pursuit wherever geographical conditions permit. However, the Cushites of North Eastern Africa impose taboo on the eating of fish.

Trade

Many rural people practised trade by barter ever before the introduction of money economy. Adalemo (1974:21) observed that the increasing demand for the products of the farmers in the growing urban areas explain plausibly the development of indigenous marketing system.

For trading to be effective there are usually a market place and market principle however, trade is possible without a value set on commodities or a market place as Otito and Ogionwo (1985:194) explained the silent trading 'between the Pygmies and

Negroes of the lower Congo and Southern Gabon in Africa. The Pygmies live close to their settled negroe agriculturalist with whom they exchange their game for agricultural products. The settled villagers who need game, deposit some agricultural crops at a rendezvous from which the Pygmies remove them, leaving behind some suitable quantity of their game. On the other hand, the Pygmies gather fruits from the banana plantation belonging to the villagers and hang a suitable amount of game in place of the banana.

In nearly all societies the market also serves non economic purposes. They are often places of social interaction. Many rural people long to see friends and relations on market days, while on the negative aspect, some rural men who are womanisers look for women to entice on market days and at times market increases the level of crime because of the display of commodities there which entice the weak minded.

Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry revolve in Africa around pigs, goats, sheep, cattle, and camels. The pig has reduced in importance mostly in North Africa where it was once highly regarded because of the notion of unclineliness. The dog is the most widespread followed by goat. Arabs rear camel in arid regions however, none Arabs occasionally rear camel.

Animal husbandry is of little effect in subsistence of people in tropical-forest zone where it makes a subsidiary supplement to the efforts in tillage. But plays very important roles elsewhere in Africa.

Land

Land also includes rivers and mineral deposits. The farmer does his work in the open in close association with the sun, open air, the soil and living and growing things. He believes in land as the abode of gods, ancestors and shrines. He communes with

plants and animals almost as if they were animate and human. On the basis of all these, the ruralites view land as the most precious possession.

Traditional Educational Institutions

Human beings have very little instinct and most of their actions are learnt. Education is therefore one of the means by which young persons are socialized so as to participate in the community as they grow up. Under informal education the relationship between the teacher and the student is that of primary group relationship. Otite (1994:127) noted that this educational process is a life-long one which occurs as one interact with the physical and social environments. For example, although farmers may not know the scientific names of crop pests or poor soil conditions, they do know a great deal about what causes them and how to handle such problems. This is a result of learning in their day-to-day activities. Unfortunately, since most rural people have similar ideas, opinions and skills, they are, consequently, not too exposed to new information and ideas. Hence, the rural social environment for informal education is less stimulating.

Traditional education which is learning about the ways of life of a people according to Adesina (1998) concerns itself with the teaching and learning processes of the natives. Its curriculum, methodology, organisation and administration are entirely patterned to reflect the beliefs, customs and experiences of the society in which the child lives. The objectives of traditional education are political, social, and economic. Politically, traditional education stresses good citizenship. It emphasizes the duties of the individual to its immediate community, and the principalities within that community. It defines the age at which the individual is to be considered an adult and the expectations and responsibilities of adulthood. The overall political emphasis is 'good character' and a demonstrable sense of responsibility. Socially, traditional education teaches certain basic etiquette of the

community including religious and cultural tenets. The society in which such education was practised was not as complex as it is today. The communities were in smaller population which made interpersonal relationship easier. Nevertheless there was still close social and economic intercourse among units of households, or wards and communities irrespective of the political artificial boundaries that were drawn up as a result of the partition of Africa. Indeed the boundaries that later emerged in certain areas are now seen as barriers to long standing social, political and economic relationships that have taken centuries to develop and foster.

Another significant feature of traditional education is its emphasis on vocation. Boys and girls before reaching the age of puberty are constantly asked, what 'vocation' they intend to pursue. In certain cases these are family vocations and the youngsters are already 'born' into a vocation or profession for example, farming, blacksmithing, drumming, carving, dyeing, weaving or wood technology.

Generally, the education of women is centred on domestic affairs, the responsibilities of a mother to her child and of a wife to her husband. In the end, traditional education strives to prepare the individual as a functional and useful member of society or community in which he lives.

Perhaps the fundamental difference between traditional and western education according to Adesina (1988) is the formal nature of the latter. In traditional education, neither the staffing system nor the assessment of learning experience is formalized. An elder in the community may as well perform the functions of a moral educator, priest, judge or professional craftsman. Assessment is based on observed performance over a period of time and the extent to which the 'apprentice' has demonstrated a clear mastery of the expected skills to justify his or her 'freedom'. Remuneration is usually in kind but most of all in the joy and satisfaction of producing top rated professionals and the high

reputation and recognition that go with it.

To some extent, western education is 'modernizing' the content and methodology of traditional education but has not succeeded to eclipse it altogether.

CHAPTER FIVE

Social Change and Adaptation to Change in Rural Societies

A change in the animal, plant and physical environment will affect a change in the human society. Therefore, when physical environment changes, human beings are forced to change to survive the situation. Change has always occurred and it is irresistible. The magnitude of change is the only difference. It is slow in primitive societies but rapid in modern societies hence change is society and society is change.

Social change refers to the changes in the social structure and relationships of a given society. Social change and cultural changes have been distinguished by many writers. Culture can be said to be the totality of a way of life of a given society. Examples of material culture include hoe and artifacts and examples of none materials culture include norms, values, language, customs and morals. Social change can also be defined as the modification in the mode of interaction of members of a given society. Ryne defined cultural change as consisting of modification of the body of knowledge of the people, their tools and their idealised patterns in their behaviour. Cultural change can lead to social change. For instance, European culture had affected some African cultures leading to social change.

Africans are not individualists and individualism is an aspect of capitalism. Africans are communal in nature, that is, group production but when capitalism penetrated African society, individualism appeared. That is when one man would like to appropriate other people's labour. It also brought change in social relationship and behavioural pattern.

Social lag, according to Ogborn and Kolb (1940) is the disequilibrium between new technology and old social organization. That is, when an invention is accepted it disturbs the social relationship which was in existence before the invention was made. For instance, when oil mill was introduced in Ogborn's

native area of Cross Rivers of Nigeria and accepted there was disequilibrium because before then a husband cut the palm fruits and the wife extracted the oil from the palm fruits. In other words, there was division of labour and both gained because the money realized from selling the palm oil went to the husband, while the palm kernels and some other materials belonged to the wife. However, with the introduction of oil mill the husband cuts the palm fruits and sells directly to the owners of the oil mill. The family can only come to equilibrium again when an alternative arrangement is made for the wife.

Cultural lag is the interval between a change in material culture and the time the change occurs in the non-material culture. When lags a pile up they may lead to revolution. For instance, when it was discovered that the introduction of machines in factories created unemployment, benefits were introduced as compensation for the population thrown out of employment. But then the issue of unemployment benefit was only a recent development.

When social change occurs a problem always arises no matter how good or bad the change is. We can now control diseases like malaria and small pox. We have consequently reduced the number of human deaths but created over-population and scarcity of food. We are now faced with acute population problem. The federal government of Nigeria has made it compulsory for all families to have not more than four children as an indication of the population problems.

Another change is hotel as an innovation. The manifest functions of hotel are to provide accommodation and feeding for travellers. The latent functions include employment for the local people like stewards, cooks, cleaners, watchmen, labourers, access road, electricity, water supply, sale of vegetables and other products to the hoteliers. While the dysfunctions include harbouring of criminals and prostitution business.

Innovation as the Basis of Social Change

Innovation means anything that is newly introduced and if it is accepted, leads to social change. Innovation, according to Homer-Bernett, is in three forms, namely: Discovery, Invention and Diffusion.

Discovery

It is anything whose existence has never been known and then either by accident or so, somebody finds it out. Discovery centres on exploitation and not bringing into existence. Discovery could either be by accident or by design. It is by design when geologists go out in search of mineral deposits. It is by accident when the action is unintended like the case of Christopher Columbus and Crew while finding the sea route to India, landed in America or somebody digging a pit toilet and finds 'strange' deposits.

Invention

Invention refers to something new and this new thing is usually produced out of the existing stock of knowledge of people. Motor car is an invention because instruments were joined together to produce it. It could be mechanical like the manufacture of motor car. It could be a social invention like P.A.Y.E. (Pay as you earn).

Diffusion

Diffusion, is simply the importing of some cultural factors (traits) by one country from another. Therefore, it could be an invention in one country and diffusion in another. Diffusion can be either direct or indirect. When there is a physical contact between one country and another, it is direct diffusion but when the physical contact is lacking and contact is by only books, television and radio etc. it is indirect diffusion.

'Necessity is not the mother of Invention'

There is a saying that necessity is the mother of invention. Sociologists disagree with this saying. Necessity alone can not lead to invention because the cultural bases must be there and complete. Cultural bases are those elements that will be needed to make an invention. Today, nearly, everybody would like the AIDS disease cured. If necessity alone is the mother of invention it would have been possible but not until the cultural bases are complete. Exponential theorem states that as the cultural bases increase so also the number of inventions the formula is
$$\text{Invention} = \frac{n(n-1)}{2}$$

Innovation and Social Change

An inventor must be a person who rejects the values of his society. Invention or diffusion does not produce change by themselves but can only produce change if they are put into use. If an innovation is in advance of its time, people will not accept it. The preachings of Karl Marx were rejected in his time but years after his death, it is now used as a revolutionary preaching across the world hence social changes have also occurred across the world because of this preaching. There must be people who are dis-satisfied with the present and want to change to something new. Where the people are unwilling, invention is discouraged.

Resistance to Innovation

Some people resist innovation and by so doing they resist social change for the following reasons:

Culture

Among traditional people, marrying many wives is encouraged but christianity teaches one man one wife. Those who have many wives could not become good christians therefore, one's culture is a factor in resisting social change. Those who had many wives were not allowed to take holy communion.

Fear of the Unknown

People are generally reluctant to try something new for fear that it might disappoint them. Therefore, the people insist on what they are used to. For instance, if a new soap is manufactured, many people will prefer the old one like lux which has always been there as against Ignatius soap which is relatively new for fear of some adverse effects.

Moral Sentiment

Here, resistance is based on fear of jeopardising their moral sentiments. For instance, when Adam and Eve offended God and were sent out of the Garden of Eden, one of the punishments for Eve was that she must suffer before giving birth to a child. Some Catholics uphold this in their preaching that no drug or injection should be given to a woman under labour because of this divine determination. St. Paul said that celibacy is optional; that the fact that he was not married did not mean that he was better than any other person, but Catholic Fathers believe that their prestige is enhanced by not marrying.

Vested Interest

The interest could be individual, group, political or economic. When an innovation undermines or threatens the vested interest of a powerful group in society, that innovation may not be accepted. Like the problems of democracy in Africa, the military prefer themselves as rulers.

Ignorance

If the individual has no adequate exposure about his environment, then out of lack of exposure he lives in ignorance, rejecting certain things when he would have accepted them. Like the case of applying fertilizer in many rural societies. Some believe that fertilizer will kill their soil nutrients.

Economic Reasons

People resist innovation because of the incidence of cost on them. People might want a project carried out but when contribution of money is involved, they decline. One might be interested in an innovation but financial problems may not permit him to engage in it.

Vested Status Interest

Some times, it is the social status of the person that determines whether he will accept an innovation or not. A medicine man or diviner will not be in a haste to join christianity because of his social status under the traditional religion.

The Influence of Christianity and Islam

It was the village catechists who were responsible for the dissemination of missionary propaganda and whom the converts looked upon for moral and spiritual direction and examples. There were door-to-door evangelism. The missionaries invoked considerable open air preaching in village and market squares. Soon, people without distinguishing the doctrinal differences between catholic and Anglican gathered in mission stations. They built christian villages and the inmates were supervised by the native agents with occasional visits by the missionaries themselves.

Those who became christians by cleaving to the new order introduced by the missionaries rejected working out their own salvation within the traditional religious Milliew Mbiti (1969:237) noted that:

Missionaries, effort has been directed towards drawing converts away from traditional life towards what missionaries thought was the proper, civilized and christian expression of the new faith.

Ilogu (1974:63) observed that missionaries concentrated in stopping the barbaric aspects of the traditional life like twin killing, human sacrifice and ritual murder and other atrocities

committed by the traditional people. It also challenged Igbo belief as well as social control methods like divination and consultation of oracles. It also challenged the place and authority of dead ancestors recognized in the cult of ancestors.

Some converts had total neglect of the traditional religion as was preached to them by the missionaries, the role of the *Okpala* (first born son) was also questioned. Metuh (1985:164) observed that this has affected the *Okpala's* role in two ways - some christian converts now question the religious authority and role of the *Okpala* as the mouth-piece of the ancestors. In some families the office of *Okpala* itself has "fallen" on christians some of whom have turned it down.

The knowledge and honesty of the diviners have been questioned by christians claiming that they have secret agents who listen to village gossip and watch suspected people. The same said christians have doubted the credibility of medicine men and their role in the community as physicians/psychotherapists, protectors against forces of evil, healers of spiritual problems and providers of means of achieving one's aspirations in the community. The priesthood still exist but their roles and status have declined because of the influence of christianity. Metuh (1985:164) opined that whereas the priesthood and spirit cult are closely bound up with the traditional social structure which has been seriously affected by the impact of modernization, the diviners and medicine men's roles and status are linked with the Igbo world-view which has hardly been affected by it.

The traditional people believe that all children are reincarnates of beings who have already passed through life or even some still living. The christians have a different view about this and see them as new creations. The christian church believes that each person is an entirely new creation. When he dies, his physical life is ended but he continues to live spiritually. Hence, christians do not go to diviners to find out whose spirit reincarnated in a new child.

The initiation rites contain in them, the ideals of manhood or womanhood which the community wishes to instil in the people undergoing the rites. The experience help in bringing about physical, emotional and psychological changes in them. Initiation into age grade, masquerade society, priesthood, traditional medicine practice and divination were the most common ones. Instead of the traditional initiation rites, children of the converts opted for initiation into the fold of christians through baptism by an ordained priest or pastor. Even indigenous names were initially declared anti-christian and therefore were rejected in baptism. However, the trend has changed now because indigenous names are being accepted.

A young man who wanted to marry went to a diviner to find out from which village his guardian spirit permitted him to marry. The diviner also prescribed the rituals that were to be carried out in terms of distant relations insisting on marrying themselves. The *Chi* (cultus symbol) of the new wife's lineage was transferred to her new husband's house ritually. When the missionaries arrived with christianity, this marriage system was condemned and christian marriage as ordained by God was advocated. Converted village members 'separated themselves' from the rest of the community up to the extent that members of the Catholic church could not marry from the Anglican church. The marriage of "brothers" and "sisters" was introduced too and afterwards the marriage would be blessed in a church wedding. The marriage rituals were thus avoided. The church placed the highest value on christian marriage and christian home life.

District standing orders (1975:8) For the Methodist church, marriage is more than a legal and social contract. It is, an honourable estate, ordained by God unto the fulfilling and perfecting of the love of man and woman, in mutual honour and forbearance, and in the hallowing of the home that children might be brought up in the knowledge and love of God, and to the praise of his Holy Name. The marriage shall be blessed in a christian

service according to the form approved by synod.

To the traditional people, death is only a transition from this earthly life to life in the land of the spirits pending reincarnation into this world to continue the cycle again. It is believed that proper burial rites will help the dead to reincarnate and continuity of life is maintained hence the apparent broken link in the communal life of the lineage occasioned by death is restored.

Isichei (1976:26) The belief that the world of the dead mirrors the world we know encouraged the sacrifice of slaves at funerals, to provide a retinue for the dead man in the life to come. The intention was good to aid and honour for instance, a beloved father. The result was the institution of great cruelty.

The christians believe that each person is entirely a new creation and that when person dies, the physical life is ended but the person lives spiritually. Thus, the purpose of christian burial rites and memorial services are not to enable the soul reincarnate. The church prays God to continue to shower the dew of His blessings upon him who is already in the company of the saints.

On the basis of this christian understanding of life after death, many christians felt that the death rituals in the traditional religion were superstitious and even failed to contribute when somebody "departs" in their respective villages. They only bury their relations and parents according to the christian way of doing it. Thus, parents were unable to transmit any part of the social heritage to their children because nearly all of them have been forbidden by the church.

The missionaries realized that religion and socio-political and economic structures were so intertwined that the culture must be reformed or wiped out before the gospel could flourish. The missionaries set about creating self-perpetuating congregations whose members could read and as well preach the gospel Ajayi (1969:126). The way to achieve this was through an imagination and energetic educational programmes. The object of missionary

education according to Ifemesia (1972:6) was religious instruction, especially since the young were believed not to be so rooted in the ancestral ideas and practices as their fathers. The missionaries opened schools almost side by side with churches which were solely aimed at getting the children and 'brain washing' them into the western world-view and christian ethics.

It was the quest for literacy that made families send their children to school even after some of them had sworn to live and die by the traditional religion. But the literacy and the school merely served to open the flood-gates of many far-reaching social changes. Many educated elites have condemned the traditional religion and culture of their people.

Not only has the school been the effective medium for the propagation of the new religion, but it has also created within the pupils an attitude which engendered lack of interest in and even contempt for the traditional way of life. According to Parrat (1969:116), the provision of schools by the christian missions thus had a two way effect: as education produced a negative, even hostile, attitude towards the indigenous religion, so it also, positively, presented christianity as the faith most fitted to fill the spiritual vacuum for the educated elite.

Rural People and their Adaptation to Christianity

Christianity has only succeeded in divided loyalty if not syncretism for some people. Mbiti (1969:2) observed that to be human is to belong to the whole community, and to do so involves participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of that community. The religious beliefs are deeply rooted in the minds of rural people that they find it difficult to separate from them. Metuh (1969:2) in his own contribution noted that, the rapid process of conversion, urbanization and westernization has left the Igbo christian and elite with much the same world-view as his brothers in rural areas who frequent the shrine spirit cults. They may have changed their life styles but not their ideas about the

forces behind the invisible and how to control them. Besides, most European-based mission churches have not developed any rites for handling misfortunes which the Igbo attribute to evil mystical forces. This is also true for many rural societies.

The persistence of traditional religion would be attributed to the fact that it provides abiding and satisfying spiritual values especially in the crucial moments of life be it at birth, puberty, marriage or even death as well as in matters relating to human welfare and destiny which christianity may not be able to provide. Busia writing about Ghanian Society noted that:

... as one watches the daily lives and activities of the people, and takes account of the rites connected with birth, death, widowhood, harvest, one learns that a great deal of the normal communal activities of the converts lie outside their christian activities, and that for all their influences the christian churches are still alien institutions intruding upon, but not integrated with the social institutions.

The life crisis rituals in most rural societies have everlasting future for some people because despite the changes that have taken place in terms of modification the idea of reincarnation and ancestor-hood are still deeply rooted in the minds of most rural people. Hence, Okeke (1981:438) in his Doctorate Dissertation stated that:

When Igbo christians were questioned whether they hope to be reincarnated, some answered in the affirmative. Their return to God at death is apparently as short visit to give account of their previous existence. The ultimate goal is return to this earth and a life in the ancestral similar to that of Igbo community life on earth. Reincarnation and the joining of the ancestors are always seen together. Joining the ancestors is a reward for a good life on earth and reincarnation is a manifestation of the approval by the ancestors at the way one has lived one's previous existence.

Although there is no official christian teaching in Igbo-land which supports belief in reincarnation, the behaviour of some Igbo christians show a strong attachment to the ancestor ideas and its correlative, that of reincarnation. Under this conviction they perform the life crisis rituals while still being christians. That is why at times some church members are reported for honouring the traditional religion, although those who are seen. What happens to those that are not seen by men?

The Influence of Islam

By the end of the 15th century, the first effect of Islam in Nigeria was political the result was a centralized governmental system, class hierarchy and resistance to other external factors. However, over the years the greatest influence in Nigeria turned to education. According to Adesina (1988) northern Nigeria cities like Sokoto, Kano and Katsina became well-known centres for Islamic education. The Koranic schools became widespread and Muslim parents usually preferred education under the Islamic system to traditional education. The focus of Islamic education is the Koran. Islamic education is primarily designed not only to promote Islam as a way of life, but also to produce people learned in Islamic Law and civilization to serve both Islamic and non-Islamic states as teachers, lawyers, judges and administrators.

Thus, it is important to stress the religious and the secular aspects of Islamic education. The religious dimension places emphasis on the study of the Koran as the source and basis of knowledge. It encourages not only the study of sectorial moral and spiritual disciplines of the Islamic faith but also its spread among adherents and non-adherents of the religion. On the secular side, Islamic education promotes the advancement of knowledge and science. Thus, well-known Islamic centres of learning are also renowned for their commerce, political science, medicine and engineering.

Agriculture and its Changing Pattern

Agriculture is a key sector in the economy of under developed countries, and therefore, cannot be left in the hands of peasants themselves according to Akinsanmi (1976:12). Agricultural activities are therefore being controlled or directed in one way or the other by governments through their ministries of agriculture. They draw up policies and programmes; they make regulations for those concerned with agricultural development; they grant credit facilities and subsidies, finance research, establish farm settlements and supply vaccines and quarantine services.

Extension Services

By their training, extension workers are trained to teach farmers the latest techniques in farm work. They do this by organising them into groups and through film shows, radio talks. They organize young farmers' clubs in the rural areas and schools. They visit farmers from time to time and at times have demonstration farms.

Credit Facilities

Borrowing money in any form is not easy. Farmers who want credit facilities from the government or any government-sponsored agency are required to have sureties and also collateral. The viability of the project or intended project must not be in doubt. The credit officer after seeing the plan or the project gives credit in form of cash or kind but visit is made from time to time on the farmer to assess the progress of work. Example in Nigeria include graduate farming schemes and small scale industrial projects.

It is not the provision of credit per se, but the way in which credit is tailored to suit the requirements of the poor. According to Idriss (1992:42) in Honduras women have been formed into groups and provided with credit for agricultural production. The group approach has also proved successful in Nepal in the

Production Credit for Rural Women project where disadvantaged rural women have received credit for both individual and group activities. This project is aimed exclusively at improving the economic conditions and social status of 16,000 poor rural women by providing credit for income-generating activities, training and community development work.

Regulation

Agricultural regulations made by governments vary from place to place. At times, it could be for the conservation of forest. It could aim at control of disease or the keeping of domesticated animals. It is an offence to set fire on savannah lands because it destroys economic trees, animals or even cause soil erosion. Chemicals are not allowed to be used in the killing of fish.

Agricultural Education

Education is one of the means by which today's young persons are socialized so as to participate in the community as they grow up. Formal education takes place when people who are specially trained are employed to impart knowledge. With education on a general note, the farmer will be better equipped to grasp with the changing world in which he lives. It will also help him in organizing and planning and above all to grasp vividly the contributions of extension workers who visit them.

The various governments in Africa and beyond establish colleges of agriculture, research institutes where agriculture is taught as a scientific discipline. In the promotion of technology transfer to peasant communities in the Highlands Projects in Peru, Idriss (1992:32) noted that following an extension market approach, farmers are being supported with financial assistance to contract extension support from the suppliers (Government NGOs individuals and universities) which the farmers themselves consider to be most effective. To strengthen supply, the project train extension workers in subjects identified by communities as being

of prime concern, while making demand more sophisticated through the training of high school students returning to their communities.

Research

Organised research is the source of new knowledge Akinsanmi (1976). From research activities over the years, new and improved varieties of crops such as maize, rice, cocoa, rubber, grasses, and legumes have been developed. Better and more economic ways of cultivation have been introduced, and better yields and qualities of animals evolved by selection and cross breeding.

Vaccines

An important means by which the government can assist the farmers according to Akinsanmi (1976) is to improve the quality of their animals by helping them keep the animals in good health. Any interference with the body processes can prevent an animal from giving its highest performance, whether in terms of milk production, live weight, grain, wool or egg production. Animal ill-health can be caused by parasites, bacteria, viruses, fungi and poison. Vaccines are weakened germs which stimulate the body to develop immunity.

Agricultural Machineries

A lot of tools and machineries have been introduced into many rural societies. The tools include spade, fork, garden trowel, diggers, wheelbarrow, head-pan, cutlass and hoes. Ridgers are often hired to make ridges, also ploughs which are primary soil cultivation implements. Disc harrows work on the same principle as disc plough. According to Akinsanmi (1976:83), all disc implements bite into the soil and turn the soil over, to a great or lesser extent according to the amount of angling of the disc. Also, in an organized palm plantation, tractors can be used to cut down

palm fruits from the palm trees by elevating the stand as high as the palm tree before cutting.

Rural People and their Adaptation to the Changing Agricultural Pattern

Despite this changing agricultural pattern, many rural people still use primitive tools for their farming. Many of them in their remote villages and hamlets hardly enjoy government presence and where they do at all, it is out of the reach of the ordinary farmer. The result is that many traditional festivals are still being celebrated by the farmers. For instance, there is the new yam festival which is a sacrifice to 'Njoku' (the god of yam).

The Government as Agent of Social Change

The progress of industrial revolution in Europe led to a frantic search for interior African chiefs with whom to sign treaties of friendship and trades. The scramble for Africa led to the Berlin Conference of 1884 where the different European nations present divided African nations among themselves into spheres of influence. Their emphasis was on producing agricultural and mineral raw materials for home industries. With this development, colonial cities emerged.

In Nigeria for instance, according to Obeta (1996:66), prior to 1851, the various communities, within what is now known as Nigeria, were governed by indigenous conventions and principles. However, the conquering of Lagos in 1851 and its consequent establishment as a colony in 1861 marked the real entry of foreign influence into the local administrative system of Lagos, just as it did when the Southern and Northern protectorates were established. The first stage of constitutional development in Nigeria, however, dates back to 1914, following the amalgamation of Southern and Northern protectorates and the introduction of one central government for Nigeria under Sir Hugh Clifford who wrote and introduced Nigeria's first written constitution.

The system of electioneering campaign, voting pattern, picking of candidates and rigging were not conversant with traditional practices. There was a flow of command from federal to state and from local government to local chiefs or warrant chiefs as the case might be. Political parties emerged in the cities and their ideologies were diffused into the rural areas. The presidential system of government and the parliamentary system are all foreign to most of the third world countries where they are being practised today. Many of the third world countries have witnessed military interference in politics using power as they like to silence the majority. The symbol of authority and its level have changed to modern systems of governance. The problem here is that under this arrangement the rural people are away from the decision making arena but they are compelled to obey whatever decision they reached.

Social Control

It is always necessary to have some form of control over the actions of members in order to maintain some form of social order and conformity. According to Otite (1994:123), to maintain social order in urban areas, formal social controls, such as written laws with specified punishments for violation and specialized organizations such as the police, courts and prisons for enforcement, have become necessary.

Adjudication and forms of dispute settlements are based primarily on modern legal system. The modern legal system has codification, court system with magistrates, lawyers and bailiffs who administer justice according to the statutory laws of the country. The legislative arm of the government makes bills which are signed into law by the executive arm of government and interpreted by the judiciary arm of the government. Civil and criminal offences are subjected to modern legal systems and interpretation of rights and obligations, based on modern legal systems.

Education

Like we have noted, long before the introduction of western education in Africa, they had their own ways of education. The term Western education, according to Adesina (1988), connotes the formal instruction based on a specific curriculum as is the practice in 'Western' educational system, European countries. Under the 'Western' educational system, instruction is organized and based on certain core subjects spread over the areas of humanities, social sciences and the sciences. The primary goal is to prepare the youth for the demands of the modern society in its social, political and economic dimensions.

Education was recognized as the key to the type of development which the authorities expected to take place in the rural areas. According to Olisa and Obiukwu (1992:6), part of the objective was to eliminate the defects of both the traditional and the colonial education systems which, as is well-known, had not rendered the individual sufficiently self-reliant, inquisitive and loyal to the emerging Nigerian nation. The school curriculum was to be broadened to include all subjects which could enhance the academic, moral and functional capability of the individual.

Rural development requires educational programmes into four main areas according to Combs (1974)

- (1) general or basic education (functional literacy and simple mathematical skills);
- (2) family improvement education (i.e. child care, better nutrition, health care);
- (3) community improvement education (benefits of farmer's co-operatives, self-help programmes, etc); and
- (4) occupational education (improved agricultural inputs and techniques for farmers, repairing new implements for blacksmiths, and so on).

The impact of western education in the ways of life of rural people shall be discussed using the functionalists perspective of social change. The functionalists believe that society is a stable system of co-operating groups and there is always tendency towards equilibrium. The parts of the system are believed to be mutually interdependent. For the functionalists, according to Owo (1998:10), social inequality arises as a necessary consensus within a society on its most important values. Functionalists analysis for Robert Morton, one of the founding fathers of functionalism, according to Mulkey (1971:102), should be the study of how social items have diverse consequences - functional and dysfunctional, manifest and latent - for, individuals, for sub groups, and for the more inclusive social structure and culture.

The manifest functions, latent functions and dysfunctions of western education are as follows:

Manifest functions of education -

1. To provide the children with basic skills to enable them perform well in their chosen endeavours. The basic skills in our modern time can only be got from secondary school education.
2. It provides people the ability to specialize in different skills. For instance, today we are studying hard to become Sociologists 'social engineers', some of our brothers are studying political science, Agricultural science, Medicine, etc.
3. School not only teaches knowledge but also values and attributes. The functionalists say that hardwork, ~~innate~~ talent like today we live in a world of football and selection by merit are some of the reasons why some are better than others. The second one is that while passing through the school, we also allow the school to pass through us. This involves mostly modification of behaviours that are

not expected from educated persons. For instance, the way university lecturers conduct themselves is different from the way motor park touts conduct themselves.

Latent Functions of Education

1. Schools serve as agent of social control. At school, children are taught that obedience is the first law in heaven. How to respect constituted authority and those who go contrary to the school rules and regulations are punished accordingly.
2. School tend to perpetuate class division in society. Those who attend good schools mostly in the urban areas have more regard than those who attend local schools.
3. Schools now serve as places of courtship where students after graduating or even before graduating marry one another. Therefore, friendship and companionship among people of the opposite sex is encouraged unlike in the traditional society where men and women move separately.

Dysfunctions of Education

1. Education has even weakened the authority of parents over whom their sons and daughters should marry. At times, an educated person comes home with his lover and introduces her to his parents simply, "daddy see Lizzy, my wife." But as marriage is understood to be a union of families, the decision to marry is not left entirely to the two people involved. The families involved conduct investigations into each other's history and satisfy

themselves that there is nothing to stand in the way of the intended union. Diviners are often consulted on this very issue.

2. There is an increase in pre-marital relationship. At times, students have to leave their homes to elsewhere for the sake of obtaining education. For instance, the relationship between motor drivers and female secondary school students is a case in point. Also, in the tertiary institutions, 'October rush' is in the diary of many students.
3. There is also the development of critical ability directed against society. For instance, some of our brothers who fail to achieve their selfish ambitions travel abroad and clamour for economic sanctions against their fatherland. Some people use their intellect to cause trouble in society. Some people pretend that they are fighting for a better society.

Rural People and their Adaption to Western Education

Initially, it seemed that the western education will wipe out the traditional educational systems. To some extent, it modernized the content and methodology but has not eclipsed it altogether. Even the zeal and enthusiasm of western education over the years began to decline.

Commission Reports on U.P.E. Scheme testify to fact. According to Adesina (1988:74), reports on the free primary education schemes in Western and Eastern Nigeria have been very critical. The Banjo Commission which was set up in December 1960 to review the educational system in Western Nigeria observed that it was very doubtful whether they (the pupils), had acquired permanent literacy in the English language. They pick up little or no manual or technical skills and most of the men and women who

work for the scheme are of the opinion that the average primary school child is no longer as good as his pre-expansion counterpart.

Finally, the fact that after receiving western education mostly at the lower level, the recipients are not offered employment make some people not to loose interest in the traditional education. At times, those who receive western education but could not get employment practice the vocation or profession learnt from the traditional educational system because most people in the rural areas give helping hands to their parents after school hours or even during holidays. It is, therefore, not surprising to see rural people with standard six certificate as farmers, or in any other vocation. Retired workers who come back to the village are 'forced' by prevailing circumstances to be re-educated in the traditional way after retirement in order to fit in well.

The Influence of Science and Technology

Science means knowledge arranged in an orderly manner, especially knowledge obtained by observation and testing of facts, while technology is the systematic application of knowledge to practical tasks. Scientists insist that our generation is ahead of the religious age.

Today, people are becoming accustomed to the application of scientific methods in solving some human problems. Many hitherto inexplicable diseases can now be treated after diagnosing it in a laboratory, taking x-ray and ultra-sound tests, these procedures will enable the consulting doctor to give adequate prescriptions. This advantage derived from scientific and technological innovations which consequently led to the neglect of the rituals formerly involved after due consultations with diviners. Because of this, most of the things attributed to the realm of mystery, are no longer seen as mysterious. For instance, thunder is now explained as the meeting of hot and cold air and not by any offended ancestor or god.

The early missionaries brought clinics and hospitals and the rural people were told that diseases were cured by their doctors with drugs and not by any ritual ceremony. Patients who went to the hospitals were baptized and their traditional names were rejected in baptism therefore, for instance, an old woman known all her life as "Ngbe eke" (born on eke local market day) will be called Mary-Rose by the missionaries. At times, she forgets that the name Mary-Rose belongs to her unless when reminded. Pregnant mothers were given gifts to promise their unborn babies to the mission. Many were ashamed of coming out and had to stay back.

Today, hospitals take care of infertility among couples. There is blood test before and after marriage to avoid producing children that have $\frac{1}{2}$ cell. This has affected marriage rituals greatly. Science equally has its own explanation of the origin of man which has no relationship with the Supernatural Being. It sees religion as an abstract concept which does not exist in reality. This point explains why many science-oriented people lack interest in religion but it is at their own risk.

Science sees death from the European point of view. For scientists, there is no good or bad death. Hence, for them first and second burial rites become unnecessary. Scientists advocate simple burial rites for all 'departed ones'. Secondly, scientists do not believe in reincarnation. Hence, going to diviners to find out the ancestral spirit that reincarnate in a new born baby becomes unnecessary.

When a new technology is introduced and adopted in society, it leads to the disorganization of the existing social relationships. In India today, the caste system is broken down because of innovation of machines and others. For instance, one can only pilot an aeroplane when the person is tested and experts attest to his competence and not by any racial criterium. Even in the United States of America where caste system is perpetuated, technology has come to disintegrate the caste system. Thus,

Negroes can now compete with the whites in all ramifications.

In agriculture, better species of plants and animals have been introduced because of the influence of science and technology. Most of traditional plants give rise to small fruits such as oranges, peas etc. Most traditional animals are dwarfish in nature. Examples include local chickens when compared with broiler.

Rural People and their Adaptation to Science and Technology

The religious beliefs are deeply rooted in the minds of rural people that science and technology have only succeeded in divided loyalty if not syncretism for some people. Ilogu (1974:17) noted that young people can spend the greater part of the year accompanying their fathers to one kind of celebration or the other, without noticing much monotony. Communalism is the essence of the gods. Hence, all his life activities are geared towards these gods, be it in the economic activities of planting food crops, or in the upbringing of his children, or in the mere individual incidents of being born, being married and being buried.

While emphasizing the relationship between an African and his religion, Mbiti (1969:2) opined that wherever the African is, there is his religion. He carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting a new crop. He takes it with him to beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room at school or in the university. If he is a politician, he takes it to the house of representatives.

This shows that the traditional world-view has not changed despite the influence of science and technology. This is because science and technology in most cases were limited to the adoption of western lifestyles without the western secularist convictions. Hence, when things are normal many people can afford to stay away from the traditional religion but when problems come and there is no solution in sight, many African resort to the religion of

their fathers.

Rural-urban Migration

The rise of modern industrial cities in Africa may be said to have been with the active penetration of the continent by Europeans during the last quarter of the 19th century. Before then, European traders preferred to stay and trade along the coastal areas. When the industrial revolution was attained in Europe, it became necessary to look for areas to get raw materials and also dispose finished products. That was why they discouraged manufacturing in their places of exploitation. Tribal chiefs became the darlings of European traders with whom to sign treaties. The problems emanating from these treaties led to the Berlin Conference of 1884 where the different European nations in attendance divided Africa into spheres of influence. The railway was the most important agent of change. The Berlin Conference of 1884 insisted on effective occupation of a territory and at times colonial masters used railways, post offices, insurance houses etc. to prove their presence.

The development of industries and markets, centralization of administration and travel facilities in roads and railways, have led to the growth of towns. Awolalu (1979:282) noted that people are now far removed from the security of the village and many traditional rites are now left unperformed. Town life has brought great moral laxity and the neglect of traditional morality. According to Idowu (1973:207), the invention of television and cinema has given death blow to the moonlight games where children learn some of the traditions through folklores, myths, proverbs and songs. Thus, traditionalists who migrated to urban areas tend to loose contact with shrine cults and in most cases, adopt christianity. Therefore, traditional priests are constantly loosing large numbers of devotees because of urbanization.

Causes of Rural-urban Migration

There are many causes of migration because people migrate on personal reasons. The following are some of the more general causes. Migration is only of sociological importance when it involves movements between social and cultural groups. The settled trader or urbanised coal miner are migrants while a circulating trader is not a migrant.

Lack of Basic Infrastructure

The youths want better social amenities which are mostly found in urban areas such as: good roads, pipe borne water, electricity, decent houses and recreational facilities like television and cinema. The youth some of whom were educated in the urban areas can no longer be satisfied with the rural environment. According to Mayer (1962), the best known example in approaching this would be Mayer's school migrant, who has to a large extent return to the tribal homeland, not through economic necessity, but through the enforcement of apartheid legislation then.

Employment Opportunities

In the rural areas, economic opportunities are limited. In fact, there are mainly agricultural opportunities like farming, palm-wine tapping, hunting, rearing of animals which are seen as jobs for people who cannot read and write. This was one of the reasons why government included farming and handicraft in the school curriculum and technical schools were also established. They wanted clerical jobs in the urban areas. Some went for the purposes of establishing their own vocation or profession or even to trade. Some also moved into urban areas because of the difficulties involved in agricultural production. This group prefer to be gardeners, cooks and stewards, etc. in the urban areas.

Superstitious Beliefs

People could move to the cities because of some superstitious beliefs going on in an area together with cultural beliefs and village taboos. Some people are labelled as outcasts, slaves or pawned and those who come from areas where almost everybody in the village have died. They come to believe that sooner or later the whole village will face extinction unless expensive rituals are performed. For instance, in Western Nigeria, the end of the 19th century wars and the abolition of domestic slavery helped create a substantial pool of labour. Some people were not comfortable with these social situations and therefore moved away.

Levies

In some rural communities, there are excessive demands from the people by tribal rulers. It could be levy for building some important projects like schools or churches or even villages assembly halls. It could also be for burial or for any other traditional rites. Those who fail to contribute loose some of their properties to them or in extreme cases, ostracized in the community. It is even worst still for those who become christians and refuse to pay their levies because of their new religious faith. At times, such people move into urban areas.

Types of Migration

The following are the types of migration as witnessed in Africa: Precolonial trade migration, colonial trade migration, colonial labour migration, agricultural migration and modern sector migration.

Precolonial Trade Migration

Within West Africa before colonial period, a considerable amount of long-distance trade was carried on much of it in the hands of a limited number of ethnic groups. Eades (1979) noted

that besides, the itinerant trading caravans, this process of ethnic specialization also led to the foundation of migrant settlements as stopping post in the trades in the major commodities. The classic examples of this type of trade according to Levtzion (1968), are the *mande* traders involved in the gold trade with what is now Southern Ghana, and the northern Termini for the trans-saharan, and the trade in kola and other commodities between Gonja and Hausa land.

Colonial Trade Migration

The start of the colonial period saw for a time the continuation of pre-colonial patterns of trade, but by 1914, drastic changes had taken place. According to Eades (1979), whereas previous trade routes were moving towards north, the new trend was exchange of primary agricultural commodities and the import of manufactured goods from Europe, both trades coming to be dominated by large European concerns. New patterns of trade migration developed, according to Bonacich (1973), involving the formation of what is called middle man minorities. Indigenous and Levantine entrepreneurs acting as middlemen between the producers or consumers and the expatriate firms. One of the most spectacular examples of this is the growth of Lebanese involvement in the economic life of West Africa, despite restrictions from colonial regimes, and increasing attempts to control their activities in the post-independence period. Eades (1979).

However, the colonial period also saw the emergence of the Yoruba and Igbo as migrant entrepreneurs on a large scale, together with a number of other more localized examples.

Colonial Labour Migration

Though labour migration probably did not occur in West Africa on the same scale as in Southern Africa because of the different patterns of colonization and economic exploitation, it has nevertheless been a substantial factor at various periods. In the

early years of the century and even before, according to Oyemakinde (1974), large numbers of local people were drafted by the British and French into the army and to supply the labour for public works. Early major examples of this were the railway construction works. One important result of colonial labour migration however was that it stimulated other forms of migrations, especially trade migration, and the earnings from labouring were often invested in other forms of economic activity. Thus, according to Eades (1979), many of the early Yoruba traders in Ghana invested their savings in Yoruba cloths which they were able to start trade with. The main sources of these savings were local government labour, urban sector employment in Lagos or Ibadan, and working in the cocoa farms to the south.

Agricultural Migration

This has taken two forms in West Africa. According to Eades (1979), on the one hand, there is the movement of farm labourers working for wages on the farms of other farmers, and secondly there is the movement of tenant farmers to take over unoccupied land. The two categories shade into each other, as the tenant farmer might labour for others in the period before his cocoa trees mature, and the agricultural labourer might in time become a farmer in his own right. According to Berry (1975), the development of the cocoa industry depended on the activities of migrant farmers in both Ghana and Nigeria. Urhobo and other migrant labourers have long been important in the palm oil industry in Western Nigeria and have moved into other sectors of the rural economy; Adegbola (1972). Cocoa labour in the Yoruba areas is now according to Skinner (1974), largely drawn from the Middle Belt of Nigeria but the largest movement of cocoa labour in West Africa is that of Voltaians to the cocoa fields of Ghana and the Ivory Coast. For many individuals according to Thomas (1973), this seasonal labour migration is carried on for a number of years, while others have settled in the cocoa areas and moved

into other areas. One reason for the difficulties of the Ghana mining industry in attracting labour was the higher rates of pay and better working conditions to be found in the cocoa areas.

Modern Sector Migration

For what of a better term, this is the modern type of migration in many parts of West Africa at the present time, and includes the migration of the educated into industrial and clerical occupations in the urban sector. This is a phenomenon which goes back to a limited extent to the start of the colonial period, but is one which has increased in volume and importance considerably since the widening of the educational base since the second world war. Urban employment opportunities have typically expanded more slowly than the educational system, and the problem of the unemployed migrants have caused considerable concern in the literature, Eades (1979).

These types of migration should perhaps be seen as in genetic relationship to each other. The profits from trade migration or labour migration are often invested in small-scale entrepreneurial activity, either at home or in the migrant situation, and education is another major form of investment. The result is increased modern sector migration, and over time with the structural changes taking place in the West Africa economy, it is the migration in the modern sector that is likely to predominate more and more (Ibid).

The Implications of Rural-Urban Migration

Migration patterns in Africa have led to a massive transfer of resources to the coastal areas away from the interior. It is not unexpected that this loss of manpower has prevented the development of rural areas.

Immediately after independence, the federal government of Nigeria realised that agriculture was a very important area to be developed. According to Olisa and Obiokun (1976), agriculture

was considered as one of the key areas to be developed effectively with a view to transforming rural areas. The basic plan was to increase the food supply proportionately to increase in population to achieve integrated rural development involving the provision of high quality infrastructure, the establishment of agro-based industries and aid to farms in respect of fertilizer and poultry feeds. However, in most rural societies, the labour of the youth is not evident because they have migrated away. What you see in many rural societies are old men and women and their children who cannot do much in agricultural production.

Majority of the youths in the rural areas are not educated and as such when they move into the cities they cannot fit into many job openings because they are not skilled workers and even when they get employment, they are paid little sum, therefore, they are lesser off in terms of real income which leads to urban poverty which as we know is the worst type of poverty.

The influx of immigrants into urban areas result in overcrowding at times, leading to slum dwelling for the poorest among the poor in urban areas. Those who move into the cities and fail to make it, fall back on crime, violence and prostitution, etc. Which rock the stability of the cities and create a type of anomie as witnessed in most urban 'jungles' etc.

The urban situation is riddled with various groups of people with their various practices and background which creates pockets of sub-culture within the main culture. For instance, some women who come from decent rural societies could be introduced into adultery by other women who come from morally backward areas although in sociology, we believe that social change leads to social problem, it could have been the negative aspect of social change.

Even though there are some basic amenities in the cities but because of the influx of migrants the existing social amenities are over used at times leading to irregular supply of essential social service like water and power supplies, etc.

Admittedly, the loss of manpower from the interior has

prevented the development of rural areas. However, there are some positive gains from rural-urban migration for the rural areas. Adegbola (1972):20) showed that returned migrants who had travelled outside their homes had made substantial contributions to the local economy in the form of agricultural innovations. The provision of amenities in the area were through their town unions, and small scale enterprises. Returned migrants engaged in farming work longer hours than those who had not migrated in most cases, and that brought about changes in the land tenure systems. The activities of migrants of this type create wealth not only for themselves, but for those among whom they settle.

Problems of Integration and Assimilation of Migrants in Urban Areas

The best summary of the literature on assimilation on a worldwide according to Eades (1979) is that of price. He compares a number of different models including 'melting point' theories, Chain migration, and the sequences of stages of assimilation suggested by Gordon. In Africa, much of the literature involves a series of models which usually have two dimensions, the question of whether or not the migrant retains links with his place of origin, and whether or not the migrant retains his cultural identity.

(a) *Where migrants retain both their links with home and their cultural identity.* This is the case, for instance among the Yoruba in Ghana and other parts of West Africa, who in general marry girls from their home towns, and who participate expensively in home town unions. This is because they are mainly first generation migrant and still remember their childhood experiences and had internalized the norms and values of their own people before moving into urban areas. However, it is possible that over time, the second and third generation migrants have their cultural identity diluted because unlike their parents, they did not internalize the norms and values of their own people at home. They are rather mere 'visitors' at home.

(b) *The case where the migrant retains his cultural identity but not links with home.* This appears to be the case with Abner Cohen's Hausa's migrants in Ibadan, Nigeria, and is often denoted by the term 'retribolisation.' This is the process by which migrants stress particular aspects of their cultural identity which provide symbols of their social distinctiveness, and which provide the strategy in maintaining control over particular areas of commerce. In the Ibadan case, according to Cohen (1969) migrants are absorbed into the migrant community through the ideology of Islam, and the absence of unilineal descent groups in their area of origin does not provide the impetus for them to return home. However, it should be noted that unilineal descent is only a contributory factor but not sufficient variable in the process of maintaining ties with home.

(c) *The case in which the migrant both loses ties with home and his cultural identity.* This would appear to be the type closest to the 'detrribalisation' model propounded in the early literature on African migration and urbanism, and much criticised since Woston (1970). The growth in the extent of modern education and modern sector migration and the stratification of the urban population along class rather than ethnic lines, could be expected to become more common, as it is in the urban industrialised cities elsewhere in the world. Modern sector education has brought the idea of 'Westernized' Africans who have adopted western life-styles, however without western secularist convictions which make many of them go back to their culture in times of troubles. The social stratification in the rural areas where some people are looked down upon as slaves, outcasts, pawned or any other social disadvantaged group may make one loose interest in such culture which has placed him in a disadvantaged position.

(d) *The case where the migrant loses his cultural identity but maintains link with home.* Perhaps, the best known example in approaching this would be Mayer's 'school' migrant, who has to

a large extent rejected traditional modes of behaviour, but who is forced to return to the tribal homeland, not through economic necessity, but through enforcement of apartheid legislation then. Mayer (1961). The point that emerges here is that cultural assimilation and links with home are largely independent variables, and that the dimensions of the two have to be explored further if a meaningful theory of assimilation in the African context is to be arrived at. Exogenous factors might suddenly cause a resurgence of interest in the culture of the place of origin which might otherwise have not been predicted. Eades (1979). Like the non-indigen policy of Enugu State government of Nigeria, where workers from other states of Nigeria, were forced out of the state service, many workers thrown out of employment declared their state of origin and ran home for possible re-instatement. Another example was when the Ghanaian government declared 'war' on illegal immigrants and sent them back home living only people of Upper Volta. This policy of the Ghanaian government made a lot of people to suddenly declare that they are citizens of Upper Volta.

The Nature of Rural-urban Differentials

The differences in personality and culture are not inborn but the result of socialization. This socialization process takes place in three different dimensions namely geographic as well as social and cultural environments. Socialization is the process by which the human organism is made into a person therefore making him a useful member of his society. According to Owo (1996:78), it is not restricted to the learning experiences of the child but denotes a life-long process. The folkways, the mores, and other cultural requirements, such as ideals, ideologies, attitudes, and values are learned by the individual as he becomes socialised.

There was some controversy among rural sociologists as to whether rural-urban differences occur in dichotomous dimension or along a continuum. Some rural sociologists like Loomis and Beegle (1950:21) opined that the difference between the two

populations are in direct opposite to one another and categoric in nature. The continuum theorists insisted that rural-urban differences occur in relative degrees in a range extending between the two polar regions. This group, according to Smith (1953:17), maintained that rural and urban characteristics do not exist in a vacuum. The major characteristics of one shade or blend into those of the other as the observer moves from the core areas of either. This last option is what many rural sociologists of today use.

(a) **The Influence of The Geographic Environment**

This is simply the way in which the physical environment affects rural life, hence accounting for rural urban differences. It includes the physical setting, the capriciousness of nature, close communion with nature and relative isolation.

The Physical Setting:

Physical setting also accounts for rural-urban differences, even though both groups within a given locality are subjected to the same general environment according to Bertrand (1960:25). The differentials come about because the rural person usually faces nature in its unmodified extremes and must wrest his living directly from it. In so doing he develops customs, practices and personality trait compatible with his struggle with nature. For instance, those around riverine areas have the god of water, those in the hinterland have 'Njoku' god of yam which explains the genesis of new yaw festival among some rural people. While the urbanite on the other hand, seldom comes face to face with the extremes of his physical environment, he generally works indoors instead of outdoors, and when he works outdoors, he has many ways to protect himself.

The Capriciousness of Nature

Agriculture is the mainstay of the rural economy. The rural

farmer from experience knows that sometimes it will rain when he needs sunshine, whereas at other times the sun will shine day in and day out until it scourges his crops. This makes the rural farmer have a built-in element of uncertainty in his endeavour because of the vicissitudes of the weather of which he is dependent. At times, fire through bush burning, erosion or even locust can wipe out his farm upon which he is dependent for his livelihood Bertrand (1960).

These things make the ruralite a more practical man than his urban counterpart, more religious and even more superstitious than the urbanite. This is why he develops the idea of the god of yam *Njoku*; the god of hunting; the god of fertility and the god of water. For instance, it is believed that *Njoku* the god of yam could be appeased in case of poor harvest to avoid such occurrence in the future.

Close Communion with Nature

The ruralite's close communion with nature develops in him a feeling for open spaces away from crowds. According to Bertrand (1957:27), he also comes to commune with plants and animals almost as if they were animate and human. He takes pleasure in walking through his rows of corn or his herd of cattle and speaks of them with pride and feeling. His close contact with soil makes him see land as the most precious possession.

Relative Isolation

One of the most obvious features of rural life is the low density of the population. Smith (1953) observed that this semi-isolation of the country dweller tends to affect his personality and culture in ways that are traceable to his lack of frequent outside social contacts. The ruralite, for example, on waking up in the morning goes to check his traps in the nearby bush before going for early morning palm wine tapping. After the palm wine tapping, he now moves into a distant farm. In the afternoon, he comes back

for the afternoon tapping before moving into a nearby farm. He ends the day by accomplishing the evening tapping. The ruralites do not have much time for social contacts, except mostly primary-group contacts.

Many rural communities are still without good roads and this has affected their interaction with people of the outside world. Even if there is good roads, rural people do not bother about frequent travels. At times, because of the low density of the population, many social amenities are lacking. The rural person is more self-reliant than his urban neighbour but more parochial in outlook.

(b) *The Influence of the Social Environment*

There is an adage that says, "Tell me your friends and I will tell you whom you are." It should be noted here that the basic of difference is the primary and secondary group relationships.

The Predominance of Primary-group Contacts

This results in less incidence of loneliness and frustration and even integral personality. According to Bertrand (1960:28), the person who is active in secondary groups will probably be less narrow and localized in his outlook on life. It is significant to note that this is one of the major differences between rural and urban societies.

In the rural areas the family is the most important agent of socialization and dominate the lives of its members. The village or community is the next after the family and you find out that the ruralite neighbours have the same occupation and live almost the same kind of life. This is not the case in the urban areas. The ruralities are mostly conservatives and always adhere to tradition as opposed to the broad-mindedness of the urbanites. In the cities, we have secondly group contacts held together by functional interdependence. Therefore, social contacts are impersonal, segmental and formal.

Social Differentiation

The city is heterogeneous in nature as opposed to homogeneous nature of rural societies. Smith (1953:26) noted that the difference in number and complexity of groups, is closely associated with the differing origins of the rural and urban populations. The city contains people with pockets of sub-culture, or even with different cultures as a result of differences in places of origin. According to Bertrand (1960:29), in the urban setting, social solidarity is of the organic type, with integration based on specialization and a division of labour, whereas in the rural setting, solidarity is of the mechanistic type, with homogeneity the key to integration.

Social Stratification

Class and caste have the same principle in both rural and urban societies. On a general note, there are fewer strata or classes in the rural areas. This is because in the rural areas, nearly everybody is a farmer or in a farm-related occupation. This means that only few people are in position of power. The caste principle is more rigid in rural areas than in urban areas. This is because in the rural areas, the genealogy of every member is almost known. Westernization and christianity have only succeeded in silencing the caste ideology, but it is most prominent during the period of selection for traditional marriage. In some rural societies you have slavery and pawning as forms of social stratification.

The stratification system of urban areas according to Otite (1994:124), is much more complex because of the wide range of specialized occupations, the complex nature of the distribution of power, the large gap between the very rich and the very poor with varying degrees between, the educational range from no formal education to university degrees, and so on. In short, the urban areas are much more heterogeneous. A phenomenon which calls for a more complex and clearly delineated system of stratification.

Social Mobility

Social mobility is simply the circulation of people within a given strata or from one social strata to another. According to Maclver and Page (1949:323), the great difference in socialization was brought about by these different degrees of social mobility. They state that with greater uncertainty, this in turn makes the city a place where the individual's career is less foreordained than in the rural areas. They also noted that the maximization of opportunity for change is reflected in the degree to which urbanites patronize various forms of gambling, including the risking of secure positions and incomes for new ventures. In his own contribution, Tumin (1948:41) noted that although this type of mobility is by no means absent in rural society, it exists on a much smaller scale than in urban society. The fact that there are fewer social classes and fewer occupations accounts in great part for this phenomenon.

The Influence of the Cultural Environment

Social influences could be a function of the cultural influences. Man is a nomadic being hence he is being influenced by his social environment. Personality could differ even among ruralites or urbanites because no two persons undergo the same experience. Moreover, experience differs more in complex societies.

Simplicity of Cultural Expressions

It simply means that cultural expressions in the rural areas are simpler in form than those in the urban areas. According to Bertrand (1960), the folklores, folk expressions, folk songs, folk dances and other types of expressions are much less complicated than the parallel urban expressions of culture. When folk culture finds its way to urban centres, it is dressed in 'city clothes' and loses its original forthrightness and simplicity. In his own contribution, Otite (1994:121) noted that generally, rural people

are less willing to give up their traditional norms, values, and beliefs. Hence, they are likely to change these elements more slowly. The rural farmer is also likely to hold on longer to the traditional ways of doing things since his exposure to innovations is less frequent and less intense than the exposure of the urban dweller. There are some pockets of sub-culture in the urban areas and migrants with different places of origin. This lowers the standard of morality acceptable to most rural people, because of their internalized norms and values.

Social Control

In the urban areas, social order is achieved through formal means, while in the rural areas it is done essentially through informal means. According to Bertrand (1960), neighbourhood gossip and other devices come into play when a member of a rural society violates a code. In rural areas, those who offended are much more likely to do the punishing than in urban areas. The rural culture dominates the law-enforcement institutions to the extent that they are characterized by autonomy and familistic procedures.

In the urban areas, according to Otite (1994), people have a feeling of anonymity; that is, they feel that no one will find out that a particular individual is the offender. Because of this, informal social controls are likely to be less effective. To maintain social order in urban areas, formal social controls, such as written laws with specified punishments for violation and specialized organizations such as the police, courts and prisons for enforcement, have become necessary. Certainly, serious criminal acts do occur in the rural areas, but the point being made here is that such acts are less common in the rural areas, largely because of the reasons stated above.

Variety of Knowledge and Skills Required

A successful rural farmer must be Jack-of-all trades to be

able to survive. According to Bertrand (1960), not only must he understand the operations and care of farm tools, but he must have some knowledge of the requirements of soil, plants, and animals and the prevention of plant and animal diseases, and he must be something of an expert in farm management and marketing. These requirements make the farmer closely acquainted with many aspects of material culture. In contrast, the city person, although he may have a deep understanding of the one particular part of culture in which he specializes, has little opportunity to understand all the aspects of a complex business such as farming.

Levels and Standards of Living

Rural people enjoy a lower level of living than their urban counterparts on the average. The second point is as witnessed in the different emphasis on cultural items as a result of different needs or values. For instance, the clothes the ruralite wears are designed for the work he does like farming, hunting and palm-wine tapping, unlike the clothes designed for the urbanites who are in professions like banking, law, teaching etc. The absence or presence of certain items, such as television sets, fridges, etc determines both the level of living and the degree of participation in the culture. Admittedly, the rural people participate but definitely at a much lower level than their urban counterparts.

Social Change in the Stratification Systems in Rural Societies and their Adaptation to Change

The conflict theorists believe that society is merely bound together through the power of the dominant groups. According to Owo (1994:12), they maintain that social inequality arises because of the operation of coercive institutions which use force, fraud, inheritance, etc. to obtain and maintain rights and privileges. The only way egalitarianism can be achieved is through the dominated group's revolting against the dominant group.

Conflict can have social functions of promoting growth and

change and thus preventing vicious ossification of existing systems. According to Coser (1957:20), conflicts within and between groups in a society can prevent accommodations and habitual relations from progressively impoverishing creativity. The clash of values and interests, the tension between what is and what some groups feel ought to be, the conflict between vested interest and new strata and groups demanding their share of power, wealth and status have been productive of vitality. The conflict theorists believe that conflict is inevitable because it gives rise to new norms and institutions.

The early missionaries who came to Africa preached against caste system, slavery, pawning and gender oppression, etc. The colonial governments across Africa made laws abolishing these inhumanities. Ever since, calling a fellow man a slave is a punishable offence the same as with any other dehumanizing name.

Because of the activities of the church and government in this direction, some people who live in the urban areas refuse to follow the tradition, especially when it is de-humanizing like in the case of slaves and castes, etc. Some freeborn even opt to marry the people of their choice but freeborn girls who marry socially disadvantaged males loose a lot in the sense that their offspring are not freeborn, but it is better when a freeborn man marries a socially disadvantaged woman because the offspring of the marriage are freeborn as most rural societies are patrilineal.

Many rural people have questioned these discriminating customs and traditions, including the socially disadvantaged themselves. There have been some positive moves towards solving these problems. Many rural societies had made efforts towards eradicating these inhuman treatments, but unfortunately most of their efforts did not produce the expected results. Western civilization and christianity preach that all human beings are born equal and should not be dehumanized in any form. "Born again Christians" are not expected to bother themselves whether the proposed partner is a freeborn or not because God created

everybody and the guiding principle is the Holy Spirit that gives revelation on whom to marry. Also westernized Africans do not bother themselves about this traditional practice. The traditional image of the woman has been that of a wife and mother and her sacred duty was to serve her husband. However, today many rural women are becoming increasingly independent. According to Otite (1985), women today assume important economic responsibility in the home, such as providing the extra income needed in the home. In some cases, women provide money for the education of their children where their husbands are unable to afford it. In addition, the enhanced educational and occupational position of women have caused changes in other spheres of social life, such as the care of the young and the selection of spouse. It is said that he who pays the piper dictates the tone of the music, hence this enhanced status of women has affected the authority of men in their homes.

Adaptation to Change

Christianity and other 'foreign' religions have not succeeded in 'wiping' out the notion of the socially disadvantaged groups. They have only succeeded in silencing it but whenever rural people want to marry or aspire to any traditional offices, the pages of history are opened since everybody's geneology is known. The rural people want the 'separation' maintained, that is freeborn marrying their sorts while the socially disadvantaged group marry among their own group. The same thing happens in installation into traditional offices or even representation in the local government council, house of assembly or even any of the federal houses. Despite the individual achievements of women, women as a group are looked down upon. Many rural men prefer to control their wives, whenever some women insist on women liberation, the traditional man picks a second wife. Many rural men know that once you have two wives, the power of the 'stubborn' wife will

reduce. This is why in most cases, where a man and his wife enters into a prolonged quarrel which mostly border on who controls the other, many rural people prefer the option of choosing a second wife and "abandoning" the first one.

CHAPTER SIX

Rural Development

The Practice Of Rural Development

For the purpose of this book, development is defined as a continuous self-generating progress of socio-economic and political improvement in which the generality of the people are meaningful participants and shares in the cost and benefits of development. According to Ahmadu Suleman (1983), indicators of development are as follows:

1. Ability to feed, clothe and shelter oneself, resulting from more income earned from one's occupation;
2. Ability to live much longer life as a result of provision of improved medical facilities;
3. Ability to read, write and understand forces surrounding one through provision of formal and informal education;
4. Provision of infrastructural facilities like roads, water, electricity, telecommunication and improvement in other factors of development;
5. Ability to participate meaningfully in political activities and in policy making at government levels.

When these things take place in a given environment, we say that there is development.

Mabogunje (1980) view rural development as essentially a human process which he defines as concerned with the

improvement of the living standards of the low income population living in the rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through transforming the social-spatial structures of their productive activities. Olisa and Obiuku (1992), defined rural development as the improvement as well as the transformation of the social, mental, economic, institutional and environmental conditions of the low income rural dwellers through the mobilization and rational utilization of their human, natural and institutional resources, so as to enhance their capacities to cope with their daily tasks of life and the demands of modern times. The operationalization of the concept involves the perception of the rural environment as a system of components, attributes and linkages. It also involves a host of multi-sectoral activities such as the improvement in agriculture, the promotion of rural industrial activities, as well as the establishment of appropriate decentralized structures (political, economic and social) in order to allow for mass participation in the development process.

In his own contribution, Akinbode (1983) noted that rural development is directed to the modernization of the rural areas. It involves a broad spectrum of issues among which are problems of agricultural modernization, rural industrialization, job creation, transport development and provision of adequate housing and shelter for rural inhabitants. It also involves education, health, recreational services, regional economic development and the composite problem of overall transformation of the rural milieu in order to enhance the quality of rural life.

There is no single definition of rural development as we have seen and this partly explains the different approaches to rural development in many countries of Africa and elsewhere as we are going to see below.

Nigeria

The ideology and practice of rural development in Nigeria have undergone several modifications. For instance, immediately

after independence, education was recognised as the type of development which the authorities wanted to take place in the rural areas. The sole aim was to correct the defects of both missionary and traditional education to make the individual self-reliant. Even though adult education was omitted as a planning error, the government tried to improve agricultural production by giving aids to rural farmers mostly in the eastern parts of the country. However, the government encouraged people to imbibe the spirit of community development. There were many self-help projects while the government supplemented the efforts of the people. This practice became very useful in many parts of the country see Olisa and Obiuku (1992).

However, the current objective of rural development in Nigeria according to Muogbalu (1992), include among others;

- (a) The creation of jobs for rural employment;
- (b) The diversification of trades in the country side and assistance towards improving methods of farming;
- (c) The raising of per capital income and standard of living, and therefore, of regional and national income;
- (d) The slowing down of the exodus of rural workers to the towns;
- (e) The elimination of regional imbalances;
- (f) The reduction of wealth and income inequalities between urban and rural areas; and
- (g) The establishment of a measure of social justice.

programmes in the areas of roads, health, housing, water, industrial and agricultural development, rural sanitation, national market programme, rural electrification and an addition of 30,000 km of rural roads to the 1986 target of 60,000 km.

DFRRI was set up to correct the general gross inadequacy of rural infrastructure in Nigeria and also to balance regional disparities in the distribution of rural infrastructure.

In Nigeria, DFRRI has done a lot especially in the area of rural road constructions. Despite the successes of DFRRI, it does have some pitfalls. For instance, lack of knowledgeable and skilled manpower necessitated its use of members of the National Youth Service Corps who are as well inexperienced. The rural people were not involved in the decision making hence their priorities were not known. Therefore, they had little or no commitment to the project implementation.

Tanzania

The Tanzanian approach to rural development was introduced by Julius Nyerere in September 1967, when the Ujama of 1962 paper was turned into a national policy. According to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994:33), the Ujama strategy of rural development is the most original on the African continent today and represents a concerted effort at rural reorganization for accelerated development. The greatest merit of the model lies in the bold attack on rural poverty and rural animation as well as their grass roots approach to development so that rural development can be viewed more as the concern of the masses of peasants and workers and not that of a few technocrats. Thus, the peasants are not only involved in the planning and execution of projects but they are also seen as the agents of socio-economic change.

Villagers who hitherto lived in scattered areas were brought

together into villages to be provided with social amenities and also to bridge the gap between the urban dweller and his village counterpart. According to Olisa and Obiuku (1992), the first strategy towards rural development is referred to as villagisation, that is, persuading people who had lived in scattered homes to move from such homes into a single village and live together as community, jointly enjoying the common facilities in education, medical care and water supplies, all provided by the people with the support of the government. Next, the people were cajoled to start small plots which would be jointly farmed and the proceeds shared jointly. Finally, once the people had developed confidence in communal farming, the local people and TANU officials persuaded division of work.

The government did not stop there. It abolished school fees, established adult classes and invested in rural areas. The rural social infrastructure was enhanced. According to Onokrohoraye and Okafor (1994), the most significant programmes of rural development in Tanzania relate to health, water supply and education. Plans were made for rural hospitals, dispensaries and health centres which also serve as schools. Health standards have improved substantially since 1967 and in many areas, rural people willingly construct dispensaries, health centres and even regional hospitals with minimum governmental contribution. However, shortage of paramedical staff remains a problem as in the other areas.

Zambia

Both the speeches and writings of Kenneth Kaunda and the declarations of the United National Independence Party were influential in rural development in Zambia. Their ideology is based on humanism and society is regarded as an extended family. Usually, every extended family takes care of the welfare of its members. Every societal member is valued irrespective of talent and ability. According to Pothon (1979), it is not the intention of

the state to carry technology to extreme lengths to avoid disorder witnessed in the modernization of western countries.

The specifics of the ideology have been listed by Patrick Ollawa as quoted by Olisa and Obiuku (1992), and these may be summarized as follows:

- (a) The establishment of a socialist state and a man-centred society.
- (b) Increased localization and social control of economic power including state ownership of economic enterprises.
- (c) Active participation of the state, co-operatives and the masses in agricultural production.
- (d) Encouragement of village regrouping where the rural masses will participate actively in developing their areas.
- (e) The pursuit of a policy of self-reliance and self-help.
- (f) Devising the means to obviate the emergence of capitalist tendencies among leaders and to reduce inequalities in income.
- (g) Restructuring the educational system to reflect the needs and requirements of society.
- (h) Making the Party (UNIP) the focal instrument for achieving the needed reforms.

The local government reform of 1969 decentralized the administration of rural areas into committees whose duties include, (Ibid)

- (1) to help maintain law and order, promote communal services and community interests,
- (2) to serve as communication links between the local areas and the national government,
- (3) to engage in mass mobilization, promote economic development and self-reliance,
- (4) to promote education and health care of the masses, disseminate information on rural policies, personal hygiene, local welfare services,
- (5) In 1975, a Rural Reconstruction programme was established with the objective of providing training for young school leavers with a view to helping reassimilate them in the rural sector.

However, the government policy on agriculture did not favour small farmers as envisaged. Its socio-economic developments met with little success.

The Role Of Women In Rural Development

In the past, African women tended to be conditioned by tradition and the philosophy of the African Traditional religion. The high degree of illiteracy among women further worsened the problem. Hence, women were thought of as only good in childbearing and rearing, cooking and feeding the entire family, giving only helping hands in agriculture and petty business. Thus, their world was unfairly moderated by the men who lorded it over them.

According to an International Labour Organization(ILO) report, (1977 report III) development involves the participation of all the people, men and women, old and young, either directly through their daily work or indirectly through their economic and social groups. This shows that for any meaningful development to take place, both the hands of men and women must be on deck. At present, the contribution of women to the rural economy is seriously underestimated - the "invisible women" syndrome. According to Idriss (1992), official statistics rarely make any effort to measure it, even though it is more than clear that not just unpaid household work but the farm and trading activities of women make a vital and significant contribution to the well-being of poor rural households. All the evidence suggests that the poorer the household, the more hours women work and the greater their investment in both economic production and family welfare. From a situation of multiple disadvantages often as single parents, women can move to one in which they contribute and benefit three - fold - in the home, in society at large and, not least, in the development of the next generation.

Ogunjimi (1984:16), noted that the traditional woman is jack-of-all-trades in the home - the cook, the washerwoman, the cleaner and the child incubator. While, according to Emuakpor (1981:12), in the rural Nigerian setting, women bear the major share of traditional burdens of work in agriculture, animal husbandry, food processing, water and fuel shortage in addition to home and family tasks. Obviously, the traditional women works for longer hours than her male counterpart.

Agriculture

Women form the bulk of peasant farmers in the rural areas who feed the local communities and the teeming population of the cities. According to Okeyo (1979), agricultural work done by women includes preplanting activities, such as land preparation, digging and ploughing, followed by planting the seeds, cutting,

hoeing and weeding. Women account for between 60 to 80 per cent of agricultural labour force in rural areas.

For instance, in The Gambia, under IFAD-financed Jahaly and Pacharr Projects according to Idriss (1992), it was found that women who had traditionally cultivated swampland were losing access to men once the land was improved. Through dialogue with the project authority and the villagers, the composition of the land allocation committee initially dominated by men was changed ensuring that women in equal numbers with men became members of these committees to protect their land rights in the project area.

In Honduras, women have been formed into groups and provided with credit for agricultural production. The group approach has also proved successful in Nepal in the production credit for Rural Women Project where disadvantaged rural women have received credit for both individual and group activities. This project is aimed exclusively at improving the economic conditions and social status of 16,000 poor rural women by providing credit for income generating activities, training and community development work, Idriss (1992).

According to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994), in the case of women the combination of farm and household responsibilities may amount to as many as 15 hours or more. Rural women do not have the luxury of coming home from work and putting their feet up to rest. Straight from the farm, there are children and household chores to attend to. Only at bedtime is there opportunity to rest.

Animal Husbandry

Women often gather leaves and other items that animals feed on. Their work also includes grazing sheep and goats and in some places, even cattle which means walking over long distances in search of pasture or water. In the case of cattle, women milk them and do other preservation processing that might be required in both agriculture and animal husbandry. In some areas, women

come about their animals either by buying them or could be given a female animal by somebody to keep so that if the animal reproduces they could share them proportionally.

In China, under the Sichuan Livestock Development Project, according to Idriss (1992), experience has shown that women can be reached by support service in numbers proportional to their involvement in livestock production, if proper attention is given to gender issues at the designing stage. Of trainees in livestock production, 80 percent are women. In the planning and design stages of this project, surveys were conducted on women's involvement in livestock production. Their interest in the project, possible increases in labour demand, interest in receiving training, etc., were all mapped out.

Distributive Trade

In a number of African countries, notably Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Benin, the role of market women has been well documented. In these places, they account for up to 80 per cent of trade in foodstuffs and the provision of rural areas with essential commodities. Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994).

Women are mostly responsible for effective distribution and supplies of goods, particularly food items and services to and from the cities. Thus, women play indispensable roles in the commercial life of nations. Even where women are secluded, they manage to process foodstuffs and other items for their little children to sell for them. Women also dominate such industries as pottery, cloth weaving and catering services in most rural areas.

Health Services

Women play very important roles in the environmental sanitation of the rural societies by keeping homes, village squares, village shrines, market places, churches, and other social centres clean - therefore playing indispensable role in enhancing the public health of the rural societies.

Many of the nurses, midwives and other para-medical staff in the dispensaries, health centres and hospitals in most rural areas are women. Staying around a sick relation in the rural hospitals, treating of wounds in the family are mostly done by women. They show sympathy and care to destitutes.

Political Activities

Omolulu (1969), noted that Madam Tinubu saw to it that the colonialists did not have unnecessarily domineering influence over the weak Oba Dosumu of Lagos. Late Madam Funlayo Ransom Kuti also expressed great interest in the political development of Nigeria and agitated against the payment of tax by women in Abeokuta.

Many women are now elected into legislative houses in the local government, state and federal houses of representative. Some women are local government chairpersons, commissioners, advisers, etc.

Social Organizations

According to Margaret Peil, women are empowered through their own organizations to decide on the issues that affect their lives and the wider society. For instance, Kenya's Green Belt Movement is a community-based project created and directed by women. It is a grassroot struggle against desertification, deforestation, soil loss and fuel wood scarcity. The movement encourages tree planting and soil and water conservation.

One organization that needs our special attention is Family Support Programme for rural dwellers in Nigeria.

A brain child of Mrs. Maryam Abacha, which evolved in September 1994, as one of the vehicles for promoting rural development in general, but particularly for the elevation of the social status of women in the rural areas.

The Family Support Programme strategies, according to CBN, are as follows:

- (1) Raising the consciousness of women about their rights and responsibilities in the area of economic, social and political development.
- (2) Mobilising women for a better understanding and resolution of their problems through collective action.
- (3) Educating women on simple hygiene, improved nutrition, family planning, child care, care of husband.
- (4) Mobilising women to seek leadership roles in all spheres of national life and to improve their educational status through literacy programmes.
- (5) Enlightening women, on opportunities and facilities available to them in their local government areas.
- (6) Skills and their development, credit facilities and establishment of cottage industries.
- (7) Providing opportunities for technological development and recreational facilities.

The FSP made some progress according to an up-dated report on it by its Imo State chapter (1996). The kind of assistance given to the co-operatives consist in helping them to acquire larger farmlands. In Akwa Ibom, 300 hectares of land were provided for the FSP demonstration farms. All local government councils in Kaduna State leased land to women co-operatives. In Bauchi State, the women acquired 44 hectares of land for cultivation of wheat.

Another form of assistance given by FSP is to help the women co-operatives obtain bank loans. For instance, in Katsina

State, the FSP helped 50 registered women farmers co-operative societies in the state to secure ₦189,000.00 from United Bank for Africa. Family support programme also help women cooperatives to acquire machines for processing.

The FSP equally establishes women centres for cottage industries such as pomade and soap making centres, learning of professional skills and adult literacy. The Kano State FSP has 10 women multi-purpose centres, the Sokoto FSP has 37 of such, while the Ondo State FSP has 22 of them. FSP involves also cultural issues like the widowhood question as well as in charitable assistance to the socially disadvantaged.

The Underdevelopment Of Rural Societies

The massive persistence of poverty, particularly in rural areas, according to Idriss (1992), represents a problem for the popular acceptance of continued economic adjustment; and it represents a problem for growth itself. The problem lies not only in the unintended consequences of the prevailing development paradigm, but in the viability of the paradigm itself. For instance, a substantial part of assets can be created by the poor who have been so marginal to past development efforts. The poverty of people are not as easily separable from the poverty of nations as was often thought in the past.

Most of the forces creating poverty are essentially social. They reflect systems of resource allocations that are made by societies and as such can be reversed. Pricing policies, credit systems, and social and productive services which neglect the poor, as well as gender discrimination, are not natural, universal and inevitable facts and neither is the poverty they give rise to.

No government in Africa has sincerely taken the issue of rural development serious. Even today, a lot of rural societies seem to be forgotten. There is hardly any hospital with adequate equipment and staff. There is lack of pipe borne water and electricity even in many places where they are provided by the

ruralites themselves through communal efforts. Many of the rural societies find it difficult to communicate with urban areas because of lack of facilities. Transportation also poses its own problems and hinders the movement of goods to urban areas.

Credit

It is generally recognized that production improvement needs a change in means of production new tools, improved seeds, fertilizers, etc. According to Idriss (1992), credit has been concentrated among richer farmers with collateral, and with demand for larger loans. In order to improve their productivity, the poor have been forced to seek credit from informal sources. For instance, from money lenders at cut-throat rates. Bankers argue that giving direct loans to rural farmers who are scattered and without collateral militates against banking profit making motive.

Commercial Services

At times, even national governments have selfish attitude towards the people in the rural areas. The essence of marketing boards in most countries is to collect cash crops from poor rural farmers to be exported to foreign countries. The surplus profit is used for the maintenance of urban dwellers. The poor people who were paid very little are not remembered after all. They are left at the hands of middlemen who determine what to pay them for their crops and also have the privilege of determining how much to sell to them manufactured items from urban areas.

According to Idriss (1992), the alternative has been to resort to private intermediaries offering goods and buying products, at prices very different from those enjoyed by larger producers. In effect, the wealthy and the poor have confronted different sets of prices with the poor paying more for what they buy, and receiving less for what they sell. Hence, the poor are disadvantaged to the extent that they cannot even enjoy the fruits

of their own labour.

It should be noted that access to capital and more secure income changes perception of the need for labour. As long as the production system of the poor remains underdeveloped, population growth remains high, restricting even the future possibility of development. This is because rural farmers, as a result of prevailing conditions still rely on large family for their agricultural productions.

Natural Resource Management and the Environment

Many of the rural poor, but by no means all, live in areas of extreme environmental fragility. According to Idriss (1992), this is a circumstance often prompted by a high level of control by the rich over more stable and productive resource areas. Here the poor are extraordinarily exposed to the dangers of erosion, whittling away of an already meagre productive base. The threat is not entirely due to nature, rather, poverty accelerates erosion. Without capital, the poor are frequently unable to invest in even traditional methods of soil and water conservation. And without sufficient land, they are forced to shorten fallow periods, putting further strains on the resource base.

Land reforms involve loopholes accounting for the fact that land regularization programmes have sometimes unintentionally became avenues for legalizing the eviction of the poor and the actual loss of their traditional rights. Large scale irrigation schemes expose existing small farmers occupying the area to expulsion. When allocating land over the irrigated areas, poor farmers are not often given a chance. Water conservation which would have been beneficial to the poor are not taken seriously by the authorities.

Research

Agricultural extension services and agricultural research are substantially governed by the interests of academics. It is

established fact that many of those who work in agricultural research or in extension departments are bent on making careers in the academic world. The results of their research are published in professional journals. They attend conferences and use a language which even agricultural field officers find difficult to understand. With a few notable exceptions, many of them are not interested in the fate of rural farmers. Wherever ministries of agriculture give these academics a free hand, the position of the large and middle-sized farmers are strengthened. And that means the positions of the small farmers automatically worsens. Mitchell (1975).

Researches are concentrated on large-scale production in area of relatively high resource endowment. In contrast to this, research relevant to small-scale producers in marginal soil and rainfed areas has been shockingly deficient. These are the areas that will benefit majority of the rural farmers.

Contradictory Government Policies

Out of lots of money which have been invested in rural development mostly in the third world countries, very little of it has reached the poor. The poor have been left to their own devices, while the privileged have received a wide range of assistance which have even allowed them to expand their farmland by buying parcels of land belonging to their poor neighbours. According to Idriss (1992), the failure of the poor to benefit from agricultural sector investments has not reflected an economic failure among the poor themselves. Rather, it has involved policy and institutional failures.

According to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994), prior to the local Government Reform of 1976 and the modifications in 1986, the political structure of local administration was ill-defined. Although these two reforms have articulated the political importance of local administration. Several bottlenecks are still present which prevent the local government from joining the

mainstream of rural development campaign in Nigeria.

Many rural communities in Nigeria, particularly those that are under-privileged as a result of location or ethnicity, seldom have any organization that can defend their interest and present them in planning and policy-making bodies, or make it possible for them to participate in the development efforts. In view of this, therefore, rural development plans end up being made for the people and not with the people who are the ultimate beneficiaries. These problems are further worsened by corruption by which political office holders and bureaucrats strive to get what they want by any means.

Exploitative Intermediaries

The poor tend to be at the centre of a number of determinants of poverty. According to Idriss (1992), few resources, population pressure, degradation of the environment, indifferent or predatory institutions, and contradictory government policies are the problems. The interaction of these factors is stronger for some groups than others. They interact very harshly on people inhabiting the most marginal and remote places - the Indians of the Andes, the Nomadic pastoralists of Africa and the tribal peoples of Southeast Asia. They also come together strongly, and across regional boundaries, in the case of women.

Primitive Farming Methods

Despite modernization and technological changes, many rural farmers still use primitive tools such as hoes and cutlasses, etc. According to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994), farming implements have remained the traditional hoe and cutlass and majority of the farmers still operate at the subsistence level. Similarly, the skills of the rural craftsmen are essentially those handed down from father to son. They use poor materials and rudimentary equipment. And any unforeseen event such as a crop failure leaves them destitute. Moreover, the labour of farm

household is not fully utilized except during certain peak periods. This leads to under-utilization of human resources in the rural areas.

Poor Infrastructural Problems

Many rural areas lack good infrastructural facilities and social services. Since these are the arteries and channels of rural development, it has been difficult to get to some of the rural areas or convince them that they are part and parcel of the government of the day. Undeniably, most rural communities lack many basic facilities. Much of this can be ascribed to the neglect of rural areas by government departments charged with the assignment of providing such basic needs. There is almost lavish and ritualistic supply of infrastructures to urban centres and an utter neglect of the rural areas. The consequence of this neglect for rural development is both direct and indirect. Poor infrastructure affects rural productivity and therefore retards progress. Less directly, the absence of rural infrastructure is a push factor of migration leading to rural depopulation which is definitely a cog in the wheel of rural development (Onokerhoraye and Okafor 1994).

Strategies For Improving Rural Societies

The manner in which the poor are to be integrated into the overall growth process is very specific. According to Idriss (1992), it is concerned not so much with what the poor could offer to the growth process as with what they would receive from that process. For all its merits, the Basic Needs Strategy, and the "social net" approach which followed it, basically emphasized the consumption needs of the poor and not their surplus producing possibilities. On the contrary, a persistent theme in the economics of the poor is the need for some sort of transfer of resources to them from more productive and dynamic sectors of accumulation.

We should therefore seek to forge a closer connection between the issues of poverty and sustainable growth. This

perspective is not that growth achieved by the privileged will pull the poor out of poverty, but that the mobilization and enhancement of the resources and activities of the poor themselves can uphold their dignity and free them from the shackles of misery, while at the same time making a vital contribution to overall sustainable growth.

Poverty is a production problem and poverty alleviation is simply an investment. The rural people are mostly poor farmers, fishermen, herders and poor craftsmen, etc. They are poor producers and since their income is based on their products, they are poor people. Therefore, poverty alleviation involves creating conditions under which they will receive more income from their work.

Co-operative Societies

On individual basis, the rural poor cannot be reached, but as members of associations and groups they create their own channels for institutional access. Therefore, they can shoulder the cost of services through organizing local distribution and administration themselves.

The current trend in the organization of co-operatives in the rural areas according to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994), of many less developed countries has been towards the establishment of multi-purpose movements embracing marketing, thrift, credit and supply of agricultural inputs. This multi-purpose organization may serve as a useful institution for rural development. Co-operatives of this nature require effective organization, leadership and entrepreneurial capability which takes a long time to acquire. They are, however, necessary for the success of co-operation. What is required is government support and assistance so that co-operatives can mobilize indigenous capital for improved agricultural and community development.

Credit

What matters is not the provision of credit per se, but the way in which credit is tailored to suit the requirements of the rural people. In traditional societies, credit institutions include private money lenders, merchants, friends and relatives. Credit is used to inject required capital into agriculture for higher productivity and therefore better life for the rural person.

Rural producers require loans for a variety of activities according to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994). These include the purchase of seed, fertilizers, livestock, and items of farm equipment, for marketing and payment of wages between planting and harvesting; for the construction of buildings and the acquisition or extension farms, and for craftsmen and for non-agricultural producers for activities such as establishing rural industries and retail businesses.

The success of an agricultural credit system depends largely upon a positive attitude of the government towards agricultural and rural development as well as on a sound rural credit policy. Some of the essential conditions for a successful agricultural credit programme include prior existence of adequate financial and administrative capacity of the government and an understanding of the social structure at village level.

The poor are "bankable." According to Idriss (1992), a typical IFAD group approach has been that of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. The Scheme is based on the voluntary formation of small groups of about five members to provide mutual, morally-binding group guarantees in lieu of the collateral required by conventional banks. At first, only two members of the group are allowed to apply for a loan. Depending on their performance in repayment, the next two members can apply, and subsequently, the fifth. Women are given equal access to the scheme's funds and today they constitute 90 percent of all borrowers. Intensive discipline, supervision and servicing characterize the operations of the Grameen Bank, which are carried out by "bankers on bicycles"

in branch units with considerable delegated authority.

The rigorous selection of borrowers and their project by these bank workers, the powerful peer pressure exerted on individuals by their groups, and the repayment scheme based on 50 weekly instalments contribute to viability. Savings have also been encouraged. Under the scheme, there is provision for 5 percent of loan's interest to be credited to a group fund, and a quarter of the interest paid is credited and used in an emergency fund against default; in addition, members save one *taka* every week which is credited to the savings fund. The borrower's save in all, is about 25 percent of the income generated. By 1992, one million members had been served by 850 branches in 21,000 villages. It was thought that the poor would not be able to repay; in fact, repayment rates have reached 97 percent as at 1992 (Idriss 1992).

Rural Infrastructure

Rural people need food, electricity, health care, decent housing, education, employment, entertainment, means of communication, facilities for social interactions, etc. Rural electrification and improved sanitation according to La - Anyane (1976), are also quite basic institutions in rural development; the latter is a measure of improved living standards and the former will arrest immigration of the youth, since the events in the towns can be brought to them in the rural areas. They can use electrical appliances and processing plants can be operated. There could also be better storage, heating and cooling and more attractive conditions of farming.

There should be an institutional framework for the planning and implementation of rural development programmes according to Olisa and Obiuku (1992). The Directorate of Foods, Roads, and Rural Infrastructures should be institutionalized and made to have its presence permanently established in the local government areas so that it will provide a permanent institution that will be responsible for monitoring, supervising, controlling and

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coordinating what happens at the grassroots with what happens at the top.

Diversification of Agriculture

Agriculture is the mainstay of the rural economy. Therefore, any attempt to improve the quality of life of the rural people has to be rooted in agricultural development. Agricultural development will ensure that rural dwellers utilize the maximum benefits from their agricultural production, thereby raising the food supply of the nation as well as minimizing the rural-urban drift which denies the rural societies of human and agricultural labour.

Diversification of agriculture involves improving the quality of agricultural products as well as ensuring the industrial use of these agricultural products in such a way that they are beneficial to the rural people. Agricultural development need to be improved side by side with agro-allied industries which involves setting rural industries that will be oriented towards the extraction and use of agricultural products. They may be palm oil milling industries, cashew, vegetable oil, starch, palm kernel industries. The government should assist the rural farmers to get modern farm implements.

Community Development and Self-Help

According to Dunham (1970:172), community development is not concerned with any one aspect of life such as agriculture, business, health, or education. It is concerned with total community life and needs. Ideally, it involves all the members of the community, and requires their fullest participation in first decision making, and then implementing decisions. People work together to shape their own future. In other words, community development entails that the people themselves exert their own efforts, joining with government authorities to improve their economic, social and cultural conditions (Williams 1978:16). However, if the initiative is not forthcoming from members of the

community concerned, then the government can stimulate their interest through various strategies, including enlightenment campaigns, the initiation of projects and financial aid for specific projects.

The contribution of the community development approach to rural development depends largely on the existence of committed local leaders in the rural areas concerned as well as the extent to which government encourages local planning and participation. According to Onokerhoraye and Okafor (1994), experience in various countries indicate that many rural development projects are being executed by various communities on their initiatives or with the support of central or local governments. In the field of education, many communities are involved in the building of classrooms for primary and secondary schools. In the field of agriculture, there are community and group farms, communal poultry and livestock, agro-based industries, farmers' co-operatives, food crop and cash-crop projects - all of which form useful components of the rural development plan of different localities. Finally, communities play an important role in the provision of infrastructural and social services, such as rural roads, bridges, markets, civic centres, recreational facilities. All these activities should be important components of the overall rural development programmes of any government.

Agricultural Extension

It involves bringing about improvement to agriculture in particular and rural areas in general through carefully planned and organized programmes. In the National Agricultural Extension and Research Project in Zimbabwe, according to Idriss (1992), IFAD strengthened the national research system and helped it change its focus from large-scale estate farmers. Part of this reorientation involved support for farming system research of particular relevance to small farmers, especially when linked with local technology testing. Particularly strong linkages between small

farmers and extension workers were developed in the Minya Agricultural Development Project in Egypt and the National Extension Project in Kenya.

The Minya project encouraged research scientists and extension specialists to visit resource-poor farmers for two to three days each month. Regular field days were also organized for farmers to visit research stations. Contact with poor farmers was sought through a ratio of one village extension worker per 200 farmers, of which 20 were chosen in consultation with village members as "contact farmers" to be visited once every two weeks. The function of these contact farmers is to pass on messages, whether from lab-to-land or from land-to-lab, and strengthen the links between the two. A measure of this system's effectiveness is shown by a rapid increase in the practice of inter-cropping maize and soya beans - a new technique which has swept through the project area with excellent results. (Ibid).

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INDEX

- Abacha, Maryam (Mrs), 131
 Abiokute, 131
 Accused, 17 Trial of, 17
 acquitted, 17 arrest of, 17
 Achebe, Chinua, 25
 Acquired Immune Deficiency
 Syndrome (AIDS), 78
 Adam and Eve, 79
 ADP see Agricultural Development
 Projects,
 Adaptation, change and, 117
 Adult education, 121
 Adultery, 17, 18, 105
 Africa, 12, 79, 88, 90, 92, 99,
 101, 104, 104, 106, 116, 120, 131,
 democracy in, 79 Indigenous
 social structure, iv migration,
 107 Scramble for 90 urbanisation,
 107
 Africa, South, 102
 Africa, traditional religion, 127
 Africa, (West) 101, 102, 103, 104, 106
 Economy, 104, Lebanese and, 102
 African bushmen, 15
 African chiefs, 90
 African sahel 12 Nomadic population,
 12 Draught in, 12
 African Sociologist, 6
 Age grade, 12, 28, 82 Political roles,
 28 Stratification, 28-29
 Age sets see Age grades
 The Aged (Social Obligation), 29
 Agricultural development, 142
 Agriculture, 10, 98, 104, 109, 128,
 129,
 141, arable, 12 changing patterns
 and, 89,
 90 Diversification, 141 Education,
 88
 Extension, 143, 141, Machineries,
 89
 Migration, 103 regulations, 88
 tools, 89
 Agricultural development projects
 (ADPs), 122
 Agriculturalists, 66-67 Subsistence
 economy and, 68
 Agro-allied industries, 142
 Agwu, 53
 AIDS see Acquired Immune Deficiency
 Syndrome
 Akemiya, 36
 Akonnedi shrine (Ghana) 35-36
 Priestess of, 35
 Alafin (Oyo), 64
 Alien economic structure, iv
 American, 2, 3 Sociologists, 6
 Universities, 6
 Ancestorhood, 85
 Ancestors, 59, 60, 71
 Ancestorship, 19
 Ancestral belief, social control and, 59
 Anglican (church), 80, 82
 Ani, 57
 Animal Husbandry, 47, 71, 129
 Apartheid, legislation, 100
 Asia, 12 Rural population in, 12
 Assimilation, 106, 108
 Babangida, Ibrahim (General), 123
 "Bankers on bicycles", 140
 Basic needs, strategy of, 138
 Baptism, 82
 Banjo Commission, 95

Bangladesh, 140
 Beliefs, 84 cultural, 101
 Benin, 130
 Berlin Conference of 1884, 90, 99
 Bewitching, 19
 Blood-tie, 21
 "Born again christians", 116
Bosompo (god of the sea), 58
 Bride-wealth, 51
 Britain, 3
 "Brother's keeper"
 Budget speech, of 1987, 123
 Bureaucracy, 6
 Burial rites, christian, 83
 Burials, 22
 Busia, 85
 Capitalism, 5, 75
 Capitalist countries, 5
 Capitalist societies, 5
 Caribbean, 12 rural population in, 12
 Caste system, 116, Ideology of, 112
 Catholic (church), 80, 82
 Catholic Fathers, 79
 Catholics, 79
 CBN see Central Bank of Nigeria
 Central Bank of Nigeria, 131
 Chain migration, 106
Chi (cultus symbol) 52-54, 82
 conception and, 52, marriage and, 52
 Chicago University, 6
 Chieftdom, 64 Economic arrangement, 67
 China, 130
 Chinese revolution, 5
 Christian missions, 84
 Christians, 101
 Christianity, 78, 80, 81, 84, 99, 112, 116, 117, Ethics, 84

Christopher Columbus, 77
 Clifford, (Sir) Hugh, 90
 Closed class societies, 5
 Cocoa, 70 Farms, 70, fields, 103
 Labour, 103 use of, 70
 Cohen, Abner (author) Hausa migrants in Ibadan, 104
 Collective behaviour, 9
 Colonial rule, 101, 102 administration of, 122
 Colonization, 102
 Colony (of Lagos), 90
 Communism, 5
 Community development, 88, 121 Self help and, 142, 143
 Compost manure, 43
 Comte, Auguste, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7
 Conflict theorists, 115, 116
 Continuous cropping, 41
 Co-operative societies, 139, 141 credits, 140-141
 Councillors (customary law), 17
 Courts (for social control), 91
 Created deities, 52, 54, 57, 58 Belief in, 56
 Crop rotation, 41
 Cuban revolution, 5
 Cultural expressions, 113
 Cultural influence, 113
 Cultural lag, 76
 Culture, 75, 78
 Custom, 18
 Customary laws, 17
 Dagari, 18
 Darwin's principle of natural selection, 7
 Death, 83, 85
 Deities, 24, 26 children of, 24

Demography, 10
 Destiny-spirit, 52
 Development, definition of, 119, sustainability, v
 DFRRRI see Directorate of Food Roads and rural Infrastructure (DFRRRI), 123, 124, 141
 Distributive Trade, 130
 Divination, 36, 81
 Diviners, 37
 Divining pot, 36
 Divinities, worship of, 34
 Dogon, 21
 Dosumu (Oba of Lagos), 131
 Durkheim, Emile, 1, 4, 7
 The Earth, spirit of, 57
 Earthen pot, 53, rituals of, 52
 Eastern Europe, 11
 Economic Institutions, 9, 65 definition of, 65
 Economic organisation, 65, types of 65-67
 Economic trees, 69-67
 Economic, definition of, 65
 Education, formal, 88, 92, 93 95, 96 Islamic, 86
 Latent functions, 93, 94, manifest functions, 93,
 Missionary, 121 Modern sector, 107
 Education, traditional, 72-74 definition of, 72
 objectives 72-73, vocation and, 73
 Educational Institution (traditional), 72-74
 Electioneering Campaign (Nigeria), 91
 Employment, urban, 104
 Enugu State (Nigeria), 108 non-indigen

policy, 108
Eshu, 58
Eshuibi, 58
 Ethnic groups, 101
 Ethnic groups, 101
 Ethnocentrism, 6
 Etiquette, 119
 European traders, 99
 Evangelism, 80
 Extended family, 20, 21, 46
 Extension services, 87
 Extension workers, 88
 Evil deities, 57, 58
 Evil spirit see Evil deities
 Family, 19, 20 continuation of, 59, monogamous, 19, 48, nuclear, 20, 45
 Family Institutions, 45 Function of, 45
 Individual needs and, 46 Physical maintenance and, 46 status placement and, 47
 Family Support Programme, Kano State, 133,
 Ondo State, 133, Sokoto State, 133
 Family Support Programme (Strategies), 131, 132, 133
 Farm Crops, 68-69
 Farm-based population, v
 Farming Systems 40-44
 Farm-yard manure, 43
 Federal Government of Nigeria, 76, 104
 Festivals, 84
 Feudal masters, 2
 Fishing, 70
 Folkways, 15, 108
 Food gatherers, 65-66
 Founding fathers of Sociology, 7

rreborn, 24, 26, 111, 117
 Free-education, 5
 French, 2, 103 Revolution, 2
 FSP see Family Support Programme
 Fungi, 89
 Funtua (Kaduna State), 122

 Gambia, 129
 Garden of Eden, 79
 Gender oppression, 27-28 definition of, 28
 Geography, 10
 Geologists, 77
 Ghana, 103, 104, 130, Mining industry, 104 Government, 108, Southern 102
 Ghanian Society, 85
 Ghost marriage, 49
 God, 18, 19, 54-57, 59, 82, 83, 85, 116, Belief in, 54-57
 god of hunting, 110
 god of fertility, 110
 god of yam, 109, 109, 110 see also "Njoku"
 god of water, 109, 110
 gold trade, 102
 Gombe (Bauchi State), 122
 Gonja, 102
 Gossip, 15
 Government, 91 Executive arm, 91 Social change and, 90 Judiciary, 91 Legislative arm, 91
 Grameen Bank (Bangladesh) 140
 Green Belt Movement (Kenya), 131
 Green manure, 45
 Green Revolution (Nigeria), 122
 Groups, 1 Primary, 1 Secondary, 1
 Gwari (Bokoto State), 122
 Harvard (University), 6
 Hausa land, 102
 Health Sciences, 12, 130
 Holy Communion, 78
 Holy Spirit
 Homer-Berneth, 77
 Honduras, 87, 129
 Hottentots, 17
 Human behaviour, 9
 Human development, 4 stages of, 4
 Human droppings, 43-44
 Human sacrifice, 80
 Humanism, 125
 Humanities, 92
 Hunting, 70

 Ibadan (Nigeria), 103, 107
 IFAD - Financed Jahaly and Pacharr Projects, 129, 140, 143 see also International Fund for Agricultural Development
 Igbo, 85, 102, belief, 81 Christians, 84, 85, 86, world view, 81
 Illegal immigrants (Ghana), 108
 Incest, 17
 India, 97 Sea route to, 77
 Industrial revolution, 2, 3
 Industrial Society, 4
 Industrialization, 11
 Initiation rites, 82
 Innovation, 77, 79, 80 Social change and, 98
 Intertribal wars, 27
 Islam, 107 Nigeria and, 86
 Islamic faith, 86
 Islamic law, 86
 International Labour Organization (ILO), 128

International Social Institutions, 2
 "Invisible women" syndrome, 128
 Itinerant trading caravans, 102
 Ivory Coast, 103

 Kano (Nigeria) 86, 133
 Katsina (Nigeria), 86, 132
 Kaunda, Kenneth, 125
 Koran (Holy Book), 86

 Lagos (Nigeria), 90, 103
 Land, 39, 40, 70 Composition of, 71, fragmentation of, 39
 Inheritance of, 39 pledging of, 40
 Land tenure, 37-40 concept of, 37 types of, 37 problems of, 39
 Latin America, 12 Rural Population in, 12
 Law and order, 16
 Law enforcement Institutions, 114
 League of Nations see United Nations
 Legal Sociology (Sociology of law), 10
 Leve (Supreme creator) 54-55
 Levirate marriage, 49
 Libation, 36
 Life after death, 83
 Literacy, 84
 Lobi voltaic, 21
 Local Government (Nigeria), 91 reforms of (1976) 136
 Long distance trade, 101

 Mandé traders, 102
 Marriage, 20, 47-51, 85, 94 aims of, 48, ceremonies, 20
 definitions of, 47, forms of, 48 prerequisites of, 49 proposals, 49 protocols, 22
 religious factors and, 51 rituals, 82
 Sororate, 48-49 types of, 48
 Marriage Institutions, 45 see also Family Institutions
 Market days, social aspects, 71
 Masquerades, 29-31 Culture and, 29 definition of, 29 Festivals of, 31 functions of, 31
 Initiation of, 30-31 Societies, 82
 Marx, Karl, 5, 78
 Mayer's School migrant 100, 107
 Medicine man (diviner), 37, 80, 81
 "Melting point" theories, 106
 Methodist Church, 82
 Middle Belt of Nigeria, 103
 Migration see Rural - Urban Migration
 Migration studies, 10
 Minya Agricultural development Project (Egypt), 144
 Missionary (Missionaries), 80, 81, 82, 83., 84, 97, 116
 Mixed Cropping, 41-42
 Mixed Farming, 42
 Mmanwu (spirit)
 Mmuo, (spirit), 29, 30
 Monocropping, 41
 Moonlight games
 Morality, 18, 19
 Mores, 15, 16, 108
 Morton, Robert, 93
 Mother Earth, 57
 Motorpark tous, 94
 Multi-purpose movements (Organization), 139
 Muslim parents, 86
 Myths, 54

 National Agricultural Extension (Zimbabwe), 143

National Extension Project (Kenya), 144
 National Youth Service Corps (Nigeria), 124
 Naturalistic occurrences, 1
 Near East, 12 Rural population in, 12
 Negroes, 98
 Nepal, 87, 129, Rural women project, 129
 "Ngbe eke", 97
 N G Os see Non-governmental Organizations
 Nigeria, 86, 87, 90, 95, 103, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 130, 131, 137 political development, 131
 Southern Protectorate, 90 West, 101, 103
 Nigerians first written constitution, 90
 'Njoku' (god of yam), 109, 110 Non-Government Organizations (NGO's), 88
 Nomadic bands, 37
 Nomadic herding, 42
 Nomadic population, 12
 North Africa, 12 Rural population in, 12
 North America, 2
 Northern Protectorate (Nigeria), 90
 Nyerere, Julius, 124
 "October rush", 95
 "Ofo" sticks, 18, 20, 21, 53
 "Ogboni" cult (Oye), 64, 65
 "Ogbu" (tree), 53
 "Ogiri" (tree), 53
 "Oha" (tree), 53
 Okonjohene, 86
 "Okpala" (first born son), 30, 81
 "Okwa chi", 51
 Ollawa, Patrick, 126
 Onyame (the Supreme Being), 55
 Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), 122
 Osamobu (creator of the world), 55
 Ostracism, 15, 24
 Osu (caste system), 24, 50 initiation of, 24-26
 Outcasts, 25, 26, 32, 101, 107
 Owerri (Nigeria), 123
 Oyomesi (Council of State), 64
 Ozo title, 32-33, membership qualification, 32 revenue and, 33
 Palm, 76, 89, 90, 103, Fruits, 76
 Kernel, 76 kernel oil (use of) 69 oil, 69, 76, oil industry, 76, 103, plantations, 89, trees, 69-70, 90
 Palm wine, 69 libation and, 69
 Pastoral farming, 42
 Pastoral people, 66
 Pastoral societies, 66
 Paul (Apostle) Saint, 79
 Pawning, 27
 P.A.Y.E. (Pay As You Earn), 77
 Peil, Margaret, 131
 Peru (Highland projects), 88
 Physician/Psychotherapists, 81
 Police, 91
 Political Institutions, 9, 62
 Political organizations, 6
 Political parties, 6, 91
 Political systems, centralized systems 64
 Politics, military interference in, 91
 Polyandry, 48
 Polygamy, 19, 48

Polygyny, 48
 Population, 12, 76, Developing countries, 12 problems, 76
 Poverty, 25, 139 dynamics of, 13 Rural areas and, 12
 117 people, 80, 84, 95, 11, 112 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 142,
 Social Structure, 10 Sociologists, 12, 13,
 108-109, Structure, iv women, 88,
 117
 Trade-Precolonial, 101-102 migration, 101 patterns, 102
 Premarital relationship, 50, 95
 Priesthood Institution (traditional), 34-37, 81, 85
 duties of, 34 initiation into 34
 objectives of, 34 training of; 34-35
 Priest (African), 55
 Primitive farming methods, 137, 138
 Prostitution, 8, 76, 105
 Psychology, 9, 10, Relationship with Sociology, 9-10
 Puberty, 16, 85
 Pygmies, 29
 Railway construction, 103
 rain makers, 37
 ransom-Kuti, Fumilayo (Madam), 131
 Religion, 10, 18-19 definition 54
 Institutions, 54-57,
 norms and values, 19
 Research Institutes, 88
 "Retribolisation", 107
 Revolution, anti-colonial, 2
 Rituals, 31, 84 ceremonies, 27 Murder, 80
 Rural - dwellers (Nigeria), 131
 Economy, 103, 109, Farmers, 110, 114, 121, 134,
 136, 137 Industries, 140
 Infrastructure, 141
 Inhabitants, 120 Life, 110 Men,
 117 people, 80, 84,
 95, 11, 112 114, 115, 116, 117,
 118, 142,
 Social Structure, 10 Sociologists,
 12, 13,
 108-109, Structure, iv women, 88,
 117
 Rural areas, 3, 91, 92, 100, 105-7,
 111, 113-4, 120-1,
 123, 125, 138, 141, 143,
 Employment opportunities 100
 Youths in, 105
 Rural Communities, 11, 101-111, 138,
 Nigeria, 137
 Rural Cooperatives, 122
 Rural Development, v, 92, 119-120,
 133 138-141, 145
 definition of, 120 Nigeria, 120,
 121, 123, 124
 Tanzania, 124, 125, Zambia, 125,
 126, 127.
 Rural Societies, 85, 105, 112, 116,
 133, 134,
 Credits in 134 Commercial
 Services, 134-135,
 Improvement Strategies, 138, 139
 Rural-Urban differences, 108, 109,
 nature of, 108
 Rural-Urban Migration, 99-100, 106,
 123, Causes of, 100,
 Implication of, 104-106 Modern
 Sectors, 104
 Problems of, 106-108 types of,
 101-104
 Sacred objects, 56
 Sacrifice, 28, 57 women and, 28
 Sango shrine, 65
 Sasabonsam, 58

Science, 6-7, 92, 96-7 definition of, 7
 Scientific methods, 96
 Scientists, 97
 Shifting cultivation, 40-41
 Shrines, 56, 71
 Siasa well, 36
 Sichuan Livestock Development Project (China), 130
 Sierra Leone, 130
 Slavery, 26, 27, 116 definition of, 26
 right of, 26 Initiation into, 26
 Slaves, 32, 101, 107, 116
 Social amenities, 100
 Social change, 75, 76, 78
 Social cohesion, 24
 Social Control, 9, 15, 46-47, 91, 94, 114
 Agents of, 22 Informal, 15, Mechanism, 10 Methods, 81
 Social differentiation, definition of, 24
 Social equilibrium, v
 Social heritage, 18
 Social History, 10
 Social Institutions, 9-10, 45 definition, 45
 Social integration, 7-8, 14
 Social Laws, 3, 4
 Social mobility, 113
 "Social net approach", 138
 Social order, 2, 114 Conformity and, 91
 Social Organizations, 31 Pastoral, 66
 Social participation, 29
 Social reform, 3
 Social Security, 21
 Social Solidarity, 4, 112
 Social Status, 80, 88
 social Stratification, 112, definition of, 24
 Social Structure, iv, v, 2, 19
 Socialization, 14, 19, 21, 23, 28, 108, 111, 113
 definition of, 46
 Sociology, 1-13 Cumulative, 8, definition of, 1
 Empirical, 7 Foundation of, 6
 Origin of, 2
 Pioneers of, 3 Principles of 4
 Relationship with - Economics, Political Science, Psychology, 9
 Societies, 4 types of, 4 Uncentralised, 63
 Sociology (definition of), 1
 Sodomy, 17
 Soil manure, 43 kinds of, 43
 Sokoto (Nigeria), 86
 Somba, 18
 Spencer, Herbert, 1, 4, 7
 Sorcery, 54
 The State, definition of, 64 Economic arrangement, 67-68
 Suicide, 4, 7, 8
 Supernatural, 8, 19, 97 Being, 97
 Origin, 19
 Superstitions beliefs, 101
 Supreme Being see God
 Taboo, 16, 101
 "taka", 141
 Tanzania, 124, TANU (party) 125, Ujama villages, 124
 Thunder, spirit of, 57
 Tinubu (Madam), 131
 Totemic animals, 56
 Trade migration, 101-102, Colonial, 102 Precolonial, 101
 Tribal Chiefs, 37
 Tribal Council, 17
 Trade, 70-71

Traditional - beliefs, 114 education, 95, 96, 121
 festivals, 22, 90 Norms, 114,
 Priests, 99
 rites, 101 religion, 80-81, 85
 Society, 4
 values, 114 World view, 98
 Traditional marriage see Wedding,
 traditional
 Trans-Saharan (trade), 102
 Twin Killing, 80
 Unemployment, 76
 UNIP see United National
 Independence Party
 United Bank for Africa, 133
 United National Independence Party (Zambia), 125, 126
 United States (USA), 3, 6, 11, 17
 United State Agency for International Development (USAID), 123
 Universal Primary Education (Nigeria), 95
 U.P.E. see Universal Primary Education (Nigeria)
 Upper Volta, 108
 Urban - areas, 100, 101, 106, 111, 112, 113, 114, 134
 Employment opportunities 100
 Urban dwellers, 114, 120
 Urban environment, (Heterogeneity), 3
 Urbanization, 2, 3, 11, 99
 Urhobo (Nigeria), 103
 Vaccines, 89
 Village Catechists, 80
 Violence, 105
 Virginity, 50
 voltaic people, 18, 21, 103
 Warrant Chiefs, 62
 Water, Spirit of, 57-58
 Weber, Max, 5
 Wedding, Church, 52 traditional, 112
 Western education see Education, formal
 Western life-styles, 107
 'Westernized' Africans, 107, 117
 Widow inheritance, 49
 Witchcraft, 54, 60-61
 Women, Africa, 127 agriculture, 128, 129
 animal husbandry, 129, 130,
 distributive trade, 130 health services, 130, 131
 political activities, 131
 Rural development, 127, 128
 Social Organizations, 131, 132-133
 Women farmers co-operative societies, 133
 World war II, 104
 Yoruba, 102, 106 Cloths, 103 traders, 103
 Zambia, 125
 Zaria (Nigeria), 123
 Zimbabwe, 143 research projects, 143

