INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY
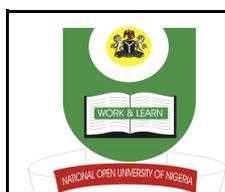

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COURSE GUIDE
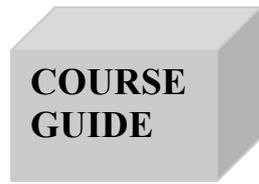
ARD202
INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY

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Introduction

Introduction to Rural Sociology is a second semester course. It is a two) credit degree course available to all students offering Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Agricultural Extension and Management (AEM).

Rural Sociology is a special field of general sociology. The practitioner is primarily a sociologist and must be trained in the same way and work with the same methods as his colleagues who specialise in other areas of sociology. If we are to follow this it is not possible to discuss the development of rural sociology without treating the development of general sociology simultaneously. Over the years, rural sociology has been persecuted by its adjective, rural; which is a folk term and which in general context indicates backwardness and an uncivilised state.

The concept of rurality has various meanings to people in different fields. The main concern of rural sociologists is with the farmers, with agricultural occupations, and with problems of farm people, their ways of making a living and other occupations affecting their life. Rural sociology is a discipline which studies the influence of physical, biological and cultural factors on the sociology of people and groups considered to be rural, social ecology or environmental sociology. The purpose underlying the study of rural sociology is to develop greater comprehension of the behaviour of rural people and rural society.

What You will Learn in this Course

The course consists of units and a course guide. This course guide tells you briefly what the course is about, what course materials you will be using and how you can work your with these materials. In addition, it advocates some general guidelines for the amount of time you are likely to spend on each unit of the course in order to complete it successfully.

It gives you guidance in respect of your Tutor-Marked Assignment which will be made available in the assignment file. There will be regular tutorial classes that are related to the course. It is advisable for you to attend these tutorial sessions. The course will prepare you for the challenges you will meet in the field of rural sociology.

Course Aims

The aim of the course is not complex. The course aims to provide you with an understanding of Rural Sociology; it also aims to provide you with solutions to problems in rural areas.

Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out, the course has a set of objectives. Each unit has specific objectives which are included at the beginning of the unit. You should read these objectives before you study the unit. You may wish to refer to them during your study to check on your progress. You should always look at the unit objectives after completion of each unit. By doing so, you would have followed the instructions in the unit.

Below are the comprehensive objectives of the course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you should have achieved the aims of the. course as a whole. In addition to the aims above, this course sets to achieve some objectives. Thus, after going through the course, you should be able to:

·   Explain the concept of Rural Sociology and its significance.
·   Identify the basic sociological terms and important events in the development of Rural Sociology.
·   Explain the concept of settlement and typical village organisations in Nigeria and related factors.
·   Identify the characteristics, typology and effect of rural infrastructural facilities.
·   Identify the major social institutions and their importance in the rural areas.
·   Explain the concept of social interaction and it types in the society.
·   Identify the significance, strategies, approaches and problems in rural development.
·   Explain the concept of communication, typology and principles of communication relevant to agriculture in rural areas.
·   Explain the concept of rural sociology and its typology.

Working through this Course

To complete this course you are required to read each study unit, read the textbooks and read other materials which may be provided by the National Open University of Nigeria.

Each unit contains self-assessment exercises and at certain points in the course you would be required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course there is a final examination. The course should take you about a total of 17 weeks to complete. Below you will find listed all the components of the course, what you have to do and how you should allocate your time to each unit in order to complete the course on time and successfully.

This course entails that you spend a lot of time to read. I would advice that you avail yourself the opportunity of attending the tutorial sessions where you have the opportunity of comparing your knowledge with that of other people.

The Course Materials

The main components of the course are:

1.   The Course Guide
2.   Study Units
3.   References/Further Readings
4.   Assignments
5.   Presentation Schedule

Study Unit

The study units in this course are as follows:

Module 1   Introduction

Unit 1   Definition and Concept of Rural Sociology
Unit 2   Definitions of Sociological Terms and the Historical Development of Rural Sociology
Unit 3   Rural and Urban Livings/Settings
Unit 4   Settlement Patterns and Village Organisations
Unit 5   Rural Infrastructure

Module 2   Major Rural Social Institutions in Nigeria

Unit 1   Marriage and the Family
Unit 2   The Rural School System
Unit 3   The Religious Institution
Unit 4   The Political Institution
Unit 5   Rural Economic Institutions

Module 3   Socialisation and Development of Rural Areas

Unit 1   Social Interactions
Unit 2   Rural Development in Nigeria
Unit 3   Rural Communities

Module 4   Agricultural Communication and Change in the Society

Unit 1   Communication in Rural Society
Unit 2   Social Change

The first unit focuses on the meaning, concept and merits of rural sociology to national development. The second unit deals with the basic sociological terms and historical development. The third and fourth units are concerned with the concept and need for a systematic integration of rural and urban settings and related factors of settlement patterns. Unit five deals with the characteristics, typology and effects of rural infrastructure.

Units six, seven, eight, nine and ten deal with the concepts, features and merits of social institutions in Nigeria. Unit eleven is concerned with meaning and kinds of social interaction. Units twelve and thirteen focus on the concept, advantages, strategies, approaches, stages of rural development and typologies and characteristics of rural communities respectively. Units fourteen and fifteen deal with concepts, principles of communication, technological transfer and traits, sources and factors affecting social change in rural Nigeria.

Each unit consists of one or two weeks' work and include an introduction, objectives, reading materials, exercises, conclusion, summary Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs), references and other resources. The unit directs you to work on exercises related to the required reading. In general, these exercises test you on the materials you have just covered or require you to apply it in some way and thereby assist you to evaluate your progress and to reinforce your comprehension of the material. Together with TMAs, these exercises will help you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course as a whole.

Presentation Schedule

Your course materials have important dates for the early and timely completion and submission of your TMAs and attending tutorials. You should remember that you are required to submit all your assignments by the stipulated time and date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

Assessment

There are three aspects to the assessment of the course. First is made up of self-assessment exercises, second consists of the tutor-marked assignments and third is the written examination/end of course examination.

You are advised to do the exercises. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information, knowledge and techniques you gathered during the course. The assignments must be submitted to your facilitator for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the presentation schedule and the assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total course work. At the end of the course you will need to sit for a final or end of course examination of about a three hour duration. This examination will count for 70% of your total course mark.

Tutor-Marked Assignment

The TMA is a continuous assessment component of your course. It accounts for 30% of the total score. You will be given four (4) TMAs to answer. Three of these must be answered before you are allowed to sit for the end of course examination. The TMAs would be given to you by your facilitator and returned after you have done the assignment. Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in he assignment file. You will be able to complete your assignment from the information and material contained in your reading, references and study units. However, it is desirable in all degree level of education to demonstrate that you have read and researched more into your references, which will give you a wider view point and may provide you with a deeper understanding of the subject.

Make sure that each assignment reaches your facilitator on or before the deadline given in the presentation schedule and assignment file. If for any reason you can not complete your work on time, contact your facilitator before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extension will not be granted after the due date unless there are exceptional circumstances.

End of Course Examination and Grading

The end of course examination for introduction to Rural Sociology will be for about 3 hours and it has a value of 70% of the total course work. The examination will consist of questions, which will reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercise and tutor-marked assignment problems you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed.

Use the time between finishing the last unit and sitting for the examination to revise the whole course. You might find it useful to review your self-test, TMAs and comments on them before the examination. The end of course examination covers information from all parts of the course.

Course Marking Scheme

Assignment	Marks
Assignments 1 - 4	Four assignments, best three marks of the four count at 10% each - 30% of course marks.
End of course examination	70% of overall course marks.
Total	100% of course materials.

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

There are 16 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials as well as the name and phone number of your facilitator, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your facilitator will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and any difficulties you might face and provide assistance to you during the course. You are expected to mail your Tutor Marked Assignment to your facilitator before the schedule date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not delay to contact your facilitator by telephone or e-mail if you need assistance.

The following might be circumstances in which you would find assistance necessary, hence you would have to contact your facilitator if:

·   You do not understand any part of the study or the assigned readings.
·   You have difficulty with the self-tests

·   You have a question or problem with an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should endeavour to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face to face contact with your course facilitator and to ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study.

To gain much benefit from course tutorials prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating actively in discussions.

Summary

Introduction to Rural Sociology is a course that intends to provide concept and is concerned with social processes and the entire system of interpersonal and group relationships involved in rural life. Upon completing this course, you will be equipped with the basic knowledge of the nature, sociological terms, settlement patterns, rural infrastructures, rural social systems, rural communities and communication technology, social interaction and change. In addition, you will be able to answer the following type of questions:
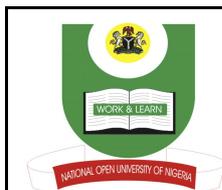
·   What does rural sociology means?
·   Of what importance is rural sociology to national development?
·   Identify two types of settlement patterns.
·   Enumerate three effects of rural infrastructure.
·   Define the term marriage.
·   Discuss three demerits of the rural school system.
·   Define the term economic institution.
·   What is communication?
·   Identify two types of rural communities.
·   What is social change?

Of course, the list of questions that you can answer is not limited to the above list. To gain the most from this course you should endeavour to apply the principles you have learnt to your understanding of rural sociology.

I wish you success in the course and I hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

**MAIN
COURSE**

Course Code   ARD202

Course Title   Introduction to Rural Sociology

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MODULE 1   INTRODUCTION

UNIT 1   DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

You have just read through the table of contents. You will now have a general understanding of what this unit is about and how it fits into this course as a whole. This unit discusses the application of sociology to agricultural and rural problems. As agriculture is predominantly a rural occupation, this unit also treats the discussion of rural sociology with emphasis on its definition, concept of rurality and sociology and finally the need and concerns of rural sociology in Nigeria. Let us look at what you should learn in this unit, as specified in the unit objectives below.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   define or explain rural sociology in many ways or different perspectives
·   explain the concept of rurality

·   explain what sociology is and
·   identify and explain the importance of rural sociology to national
         development.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Definition/Explanation of Rural Sociology

You will discover in the course of your programme that many concepts
and terms in the pure and applied sciences have slightly varying
definitions depending upon who is defining or explaining them. Rural
sociology, which is our concern here, takes place in different
environments or areas. Thus, we shall provide you a number of
definitions so that you can choose anyone you wish to use depending on
the context or environment/community of your writing/speech or you
are living.

Rural sociology is a branch of sociology which deals mainly with the
study of social and cultural factors affecting the lives of those in rural or
agrarian communities. Rural sociology as a science is the study and
measurement of recurring phenomena in order to discover the principles
by which these phenomena operate. An example of the phenomena
which rural sociology studies include rural man's reciprocal interaction
with other rural people. That is, behaviours and relationship not within
an individual but between individuals.

According to Ekong (1988), rural sociology is defined as the scientific
study of social interactions of the rural population in their group. In
other words, it is concerned with social processes and the whole system
of interpersonal and group relationships involved in rural life.

Rural Sociology is interested in the farmers' participation and their
families in the wider systems of social relationships viz: community,
mosque/church, local government, state and the nation. It is also
interested in a determining those factors which influence clientele
(farmers) decisions and actions, the effect of culture on the acceptance
and rejection of innovations (improved technologies), their reactions to
social and political changes in the society and the methods by which
they adapt to these changes.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

To evaluate your understanding of the meaning of rural sociology, try to
answer the following questions.

1.   What is rural sociology?

2.   Identify the areas of interest of rural sociology in the farmers'
        participation in the broader systems of social relationships?

3.2   The Concept of Rurality

Let us look at what rural is? The concept of rurality is a branch of
sociology upon which rural sociologists have their basis. According to
the 1963 Nigerian Census, the official designation of "rural" is a 20,000
population. Rural communites should not be considered to be
homogenous units.

Now, we are going to look at the indicators of rurality. There are three
indicators for determining the degree of rurality namely, community
size, amenities found within the community and proportion of male
heads of house holds engaged in farming as primary occupation.
Population density may be included. Another indicator is infrastructure
facilities, example is socio-cultural characteristics of the population.

Rural can be defined as a remote area of distance far away from the seat
of government; that is, the country side and the people living in villages.
In rural areas, they lack good amenities like good roads, electricity, pipe
borne water etc. All these things are found in abundance in the urban
areas, big towns or cities.

Historically, Rural, referred to areas with low population density, small
size, and relative isolation, where the major economic activity was
agricultural production, and where the people were relatively
homogenous in their values, attitude and behaviour (Beter _et al_, 1975).

3.3   The Meaning of Sociology

We may ask this question, what is sociology? Sociologists have defined
sociology in many ways. Auguste Comte (1789-1857) often referred to
as the father of sociology named the field of the study from two words -
(1) The Greek   "Logos" meaning word, speech, reasoning or
computation, and (2) Latin "socius" meaning companion. "Logus"
indicates scientific study; for example bio-means science of life,
geology- science of earth, anthropology-science of man, sociology
would therefore mean the study or theory of companions, concerned
with people's relationship and interaction with one and another.
The word sociology was coined by Auguste Comte in 1837 but between
then and now, a number of specialties have emanated form the field.
Sociology extends in scope to deal with such institutions, conditions and
constraints as family life, population, crime, community life, poverty,
deviant behaviour among others. Furthermore, there are special
sociological aspects of the economic, political, religious, educational

institutions and other activities. The study of these by sociologists has given rise to specialties like sociology of education, political sociology, agricultural sociology, economic sociology among others. However, these sub-specialties or branches provide the intellectual tools or instruments for the study of rural sociology.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. a)   What is rurality?
    b)   Identify the official design action of rurality according to the 1963 Nigerian census from sociology.

2.   Differentiate rural sociology.

3.4   Importance of Rural Sociology in Nigeria

Having now, gained some idea of what rural sociology is, let us go ahead to identify and explain more its needs or significance to any developing country like Nigeria.

·   Exposes the characteristics and problems of ruralites: It brings to light the main characteristics and problems of rural areas which enable us to interact with them.
·   Provides direct change programme: Rural Sociology provides a change programme designed to meet the needs of the rural man. The change programme should be a direct one such as Governmental Rural Development Programmes (GRDP) containing relevant information needs about rural people.
·   Provides feedback to the agricultural agencies on the progress made so far and the modifications needed in their change programmes.
·   Acts as a change agent interaction with rural people: Interaction of any change agent with rural people with sociological knowledge on leadership, power, roles, norms, culture, family organisation etc, enables him perform his job/work more effectively because of experience and understanding acquired from them.
·   Develops greater understanding: The purpose underlying the study of rural sociology is to develop greater understanding of the behaviour of rural people and rural society.
·   Equips students with tools of understanding: It equips students with tools of understanding to enable them analyse behaviour of rural people in their relationship with others in rural society. It helps an individual understand himself and his own social nature, his relation to people in the society.

·   Helps to develop a scientific attitude: Rural Sociology helps develop the scientific attitude of thinking critically and objectively with precision. This attitude is useful for future occupation.

·   Provides professional training for a future career as a rural sociologist: Rural Sociology can provide a beginning professional the required training for a future career as a rural sociologist. For example, (a) as a teacher or researcher following academic interest in the field and (b) as a consultant of change and rural analyst in rural community development.

· The teaching of Rural Sociology helps to introduce the learners or students to sociological concepts and the application of such concepts to the analysis and understanding or rural social organisation, rural economic problems and the responses of ruralites to social change.

·   It must be emphasised here that we cannot do without the rural areas because they form the most important sector of the economy since a large majority of people live there. For a country to develop, it must arise and tackle the problems in the rural areas and because agricultural productivity is indeed the cornerstone in the economic development and social progress of any developing country.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit examines what Rural Sociology is from different perspectives, the concepts of rurality and sociology and the merits of rural sociology in Nigeria. The understanding of the foregoing concepts and sociological knowledge to be gained will be of immense value to people living in rural areas.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we can see that Rural Sociology studies practical, economic and physiological principles of life, leadership, morals, power, culture etc. It brings the rural farmers nearer to the adoption of new technologies (innovations) to ease their farming systems or problems.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Discuss five roles of Rural Sociologsts in rural economic development.
2.   Identify the parameters for determining the degree of rurality.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Beter, P., Essien, R. and Steiner, K. (1975). *Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization*. New York: John Wiley and Sons P. 2 79 - 283.

E. Kong E. Ekong (1988). *An Introduction to Rural Sociology*. Ibadan: Jumak Publishers Ltd., P. 2 - 10.

The Population Census of Nigeria, 1963. Vol. 3 Preface.

UNIT 2   DEFINITIONS OF SOCIOLOGICAL TERMS AND   HISTORICAL   DEVELOPMENT   OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In Unit 1 we looked at the concepts of sociology, rurality and rural sociology and its significance. In this unit we are going to look at some basic terms used in rural sociology and its historical development. This unit will help you understand some basic terms often used in the field of sociology.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   define/describe some basic terms used in rural sociology and
·   explain the historical development of rural sociology and the important events in the development of rural sociology.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Definitions/Description of Sociological Terms

At the introductory level in many universities in Nigeria in particular and in Africa in general many students of rural sociology have not had any previous important learning experience in the area of sociology. The aim of this is to enhance a basic understanding of the terms used in the discussion of sociology by experts in the field. Some of the terms are defined and described below.

3.1.1 Sociology

This is a discipline which refers to the systematic or scientific study of human society and social behaviour. It focuses on processes and patterns of organisation and conduct which are recurrent in society. It is the scientific study of the society.

3.1.2 Rural Sociology

It is the scientific study of rural life. It is the systematic body of knowledge which has resulted from the application of the scientific method to the study of the rural society, social processes, basic social systems, society organisation, institutions and group dynamics. It is a discipline which studies the influence of physical, biological and cultural factors on the sociology of groups of persons considered to be rural or non-urban. Rural sociology might be the sociology of rural life, environmental sociology or social ecology, the sociology of rural development.

3.1.3 Agricultural Sociology

 It is the application of sociology to the agricultural profession. As the majority of those who are involved in agriculture live and work in the rural areas, agricultural sociology centres largely rely on the utilisation of rural sociological concepts. It is the scientific study of the social lives of people who are engaged in the agricultural occupation.

3.1.4 Rural

This is defined as remote area or place far away from the seat of government and having no verified nor infrastructural facilities, that is, the countryside and the people living in the villages (Mumdi 2006). It also refers to areas with low population density, small size, and relative isolation, where the major economic activity is largely agricultural production. The areas considered rural are the settlements that have between 100 and 200 households.

3.1.5 Culture

It is one of the characteristics of a society. It is a social phenomenon that is learned through the collective experiences of members of a society. Therefore, new members of a society are raised within the given culture and are thus different from members of other societies. What members of the society learn consists of the ways and means by which the groups deal with the basis and recurring facts of their existence. Culture is a social phenomenon which is learned through the collective exercise of members of a society from generation to generation through education and its special forms termed socialisation. Basic aspects of culture such as ideas, beliefs and values are abstract and are called non-material culture. However, non-material cultures are reflected in tangible or material culture such as housing, clothing and technology.

3.1.6 Norms

Norms are the customary rules and behaviours established as standards for guiding a society. They are the rules which prescribe what is socially acceptable or unacceptable in any social system. Some norms may differ from one community to another, while others prevail all over the country.

Mores are customs or inventions which people regard as important for the welfare and stability of the society. The violations of mores are viewed with more seriousness than the violations of norms.

A few examples of norms in the Nigerian society include the following:-

· It is customary in some communities that pregnant women should not go to the river in the afternoon or birth at night, or sit under the shade of tree, or see masquerade etc.
· Strangers especially in Hausaland and Igalaland cannot meet the Emirs and chiefs directly.
· In some parts of Hausaland, it is forbidden for a married woman to converse with another man other than her husband.

An understanding of these norms of the society is very crucial in the adoption of new changes by people or farmers.

3.1.7 Statuses and Roles

Status is a position in the system of social relationships. In rural communities social statuses include father, mother, rainmaker, diviner, councilor, partrilineal head, schoolteacher, course facilitator among others. Closely related to the concept of status is role. A role is a set of expectations applied to an occupant of a status and is characterised by certain obligations (functions or duties) and privileges (rights). Sociologists often utilise the term status roles to indicate that both concepts are concomitant or simultaneous. An example is, a father (the status) provides the capital educational and security needs of his child (rights or privileges). The child on the other hand is expected to show some respect to the father, carry out some tasks for him and participate in farm work (obligations). The same person can have more than one status and play more than one set of roles.

3.1.8 Values

These are standard views about what is acceptable, desirable and what should be, independent of the circumstance or specific situation. Values are generally derived from beliefs, which are convictions about the ways things are. They differ from norms, which are rules that control interrelationships. Among the rural Igala or Bassa-nge in Kogi State some cherished values include, respect for elders, hard work and respect for constituted premarital virginity among others.

3.1.9 Beliefs

These are ideas held by members of a society to be true. That is, beliefs are the acceptance of any statement or idea as true or existing, regardless of whether they are in exact conformity with the existing standard or not. Beliefs differ from one community to another, but each of them holds fast to their own as the most perfect. Examples of beliefs among some people in rural Nigeria include:

· A person sitting on a grinding stone will develop boils
· A hen that hatches just one chick will bring bad luck to the owner
· Putting food into mouth with a knife will result in a double row of
   teeth
· Beating a male child with a broom will make him impotent.

These are two kinds of beliefs:

(a)   Superstitions

These are derived from ignorance or fear of the unknown. For example, among rural people sighting a giant rat, a nocturnal animal in day light portends the death of a family member; a child fed on egg will grow up a deviant (stealing).

(b)   Taboos

These are practices or objects forbidden because of beliefs attached to them. For example, some animals such as snakes, fish, and civet cats are not eaten in different rural communities. Also,it is forbidden for any child to speak bad words against his parents.

3.1.10 Power

It comprises influence and authority and it is the ability to influence or control the action of others in a social system. For example, the village head has a lot of influence and authority in his area of jurisdiction. He is the only one mandated by the people to enforce obedience into any member of the community that goes out of social order. The village subheads have power but no authority. They can influence the actions of other community members as well as that of the over all head of the house.

3.1.10Boundary Maintenance

Is the process by which certain groups of people who are native to their registered domiciliary choose to maintain their identity within the larger group. They do this in order to preserve their cultural values and norms, so that they will not be submerged by the natives or the larger group in the community. For example, all the Sabon Gari area in the northern part of Nigeria are occupied by the Yoruba. Similarly, all the Sabo areas in Yoruba land are occupied by the Hausa. This is done so that the people can preserve their cultural heritage and prevent it from being suppressed by the larger society. Inter-marriages between these two groups are not allowed, but as a result of civilisation, the situation is now gradually changing.

3.1.11Systemic Linkage

This process can be made possible by providing common facilities for the two groups possibly on a neutral ground. Any device that can create communication link between the two groups can be utilised, e.g. a

demonstration plot, housing facilities, hospitals, a place of worship and any other important facilities that can bring the two groups together. Systemic linkage can be described as using one stone to kill two birds. The system is necessary for sociological work because of the lack of resources to provide different facilities for different groups in a community.

In carrying out this process, it is very essential for the rural sociologist to study the prevailing situation in the community. This system may not work where the relationship between the different social groups have not been very cordial. If the relationship between the groups is cordial, the system will save the resources, time, and energy of the sociologists.

3.1.12 Indigenous Knowledge

Every society or culture has its knowledge systems including knowledge that enables members to cope with daily life whether in the areas of aquaculture, health, education and economics or any other area of human endeavour. The term indigenous knowledge was first used to describe knowledge that is generated and transmitted by communities overtime, in an effort to cope with their own agro-ecological and socio-economic environments (Igbokwe, 2001; Igodan and Adekunle, 1993).

The term has been variously referred to as traditional knowledge, local knowledge, community knowledge or rural peoples' knowledge. Therefore, the new attention being given to traditional knowledge system has given rise to new areas of study viz ethno-medicine (traditional medicine), ethno-veterinary medicine, ethno-botany, ethnohusbandry among others. The implication is that in the quest for modernisation, there are certain knowledge/practices or innovations existing in developing communities/societies that can be adopted into Western systems in order to ensure sustainability.

Indigenous knowledge (I.K) is local knowledge. It is unique knowledge to a given culture or society. Some indigenous knowledge is not written down. It is held in people's heads and transmitted from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Areas of concern about indigenous knowledge are:

· Indigenous technologies
· Knowledge systems (such as taxonomies)
· Decision making systems (such as what crops to grow on certain soils)
· Organisational structures (such as farmers' groups).

3.1.13 Other Basic Concepts/Definitions

Change Agent

These are persons who attempt to facilitate changes in the behaviour of their constituents or areas.

Cosmopolites

They are individuals who are and often interact with urban communities.

Ethno Centrism

It is the tendency to value highly a person's own culture and regard it as superior to the cultures of others.

Incest Taboo

This is the prohibition of marriage or sexual intercourse between certain relatives such as mother and son, brother and sister.

Institution

It is a structural aspect of culture which satisfies some fundamental needs and functions of a society.

3.2   Historical Development of Rural Sociology in Nigeria

Before 1960, when Nigeria became independent of British rule, no attempt was made to teach Rural Sociology as a discipline in the only Nigerian university, the University of Ibadan, which was established in 1948 (Jibrow 1992). When a Department of Agricultural Economics was established, there was no separate Department of Rural Sociology established in the institution until 1991. Rural Sociology has been taught as a subject in the department since 1966. In 1968, when a department of Agricultural Extension Services was created in that university, the teaching of Rural Sociology was moved or transferred to the new department.

In 1962, the University of Ife was founded. This university established the Department of Rural Sociology and Extension Education in 1966 under Professor Robert Clark as the Head of Department. He was a member of the University of Wisconsin's team to University of Ife. The nomenclature of this university was later changed to the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology. The change was to reflect the departmental agricultural orientation. At the first stage, only one

course, "Extension in Agriculture", was taught with some topics in Rural Sociology viz: social systems, culture and adoption of farm practices. When the curriculum was reviewed in the late 1970s several courses in Rural Sociology were introduced both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

In the early 1960s Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) was established. Also, the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology was established where courses in Rural Sociology are also offered.

The most important event in the development of Rural Sociology in Nigeria was the establishment of the Nigeria Rural Sociological Association (NRSA) on 6th November 1984. The first Annual Conference of the association was held at the University of Ife, Ile-Ife. The first president of the association was Alao Joseph Adebanyo who was a professor of Rural Sociology at the University of Ife.

The second important step in the development of Rural Sociology was the founding of the *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology* by the Nigerian Rural Sociological Association at its Inaugural Conference. The members of the Editorial Board of this journal were obtained from all over the country. They included A. A. Jobowo from University of Ife, B. O. Ogunbameu from University of Maiduguri, A. U. Patel from the University of Ibadan and F. O. Mc Oliver from the University of Benin. The second Annual Conference centred on the theme of Interdisciplinary Approach to Development. Cooperation between National and Social Sciences towards Planned Social Change. This attracted many papers from many disciplines by then.

The Second Annual Conference was held between 6-10 April 1986. The conference examined the theme Utilisation of Rural Resources for Rural Development which attracted various papers from many disciplines. Over fifty papers were presented on topics ranging from Extension, Sociology, Soil Science, Nutrition to those in Geography, Agricultural Economics, History and Political Science (Jibowo, 1922). The most outstanding political achievement of this conference was the attendance by the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Rural Development, Lt. General Alani Akinrinade (Rtd). In the Minister's keynote address he presented, among other contributions, the organisation of rural people into pressure groups to bring government attention to supporting rural development programmes.

Due to the frequent visits of some executive committee members of the Nigerian Rural Sociological Association to the Director of Agriculture, and the Director of Rural Development at the Federal level, some money was donated to the Nigerian Rural Sociological Association to organise

its conferences and support its academic publications. According to Jobowo (1992), the first issue of the association's journal with the proceedings of the first conference, and the proceedings of the second conference were published. The proceedings of the third conference and a book of readings coming from some presented papers at the conference, appeared in press on 21st August, 1986. The second issue of the association's journal was also published. With the recognition given to the association during its third Annual Conference by the Federal Government of Nigeria, it was hoped that the association will continue to grow firmly and sustainably.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the significant event in the development of Rural Sociology in Nigeria.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit, has examined the basic concepts or definitions of sociological terms and the historical development of Rural Sociology in Nigeria. I hope by now, you would be able to understand some basic terms when used in sociological discussions by experts in the field.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has exposed you to the various definitions or concepts of sociology as well as its historical development. In addition it has examined some important events in the development of Rural Sociology in a developing country like Nigeria. It has also highlighted how some sociological departments were established and the Rural Sociology course/curriculum offered in some universities.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Define the following basic sociological terms.

a)   Rural Sociology
b)   Rurality
c)   Norms
d)   Cosmopolites
e)   Innovators

2.   Define beliefs and give two examples.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3   THE RURAL AND THE URBAN SETTINGS

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In Unit 2, we treated the definitions of some basic sociological terms and the historical development of Rural Sociology in a developing country like Nigeria. In this unit, we are going to look at the concepts of Rural and Urban Settings and the general factors responsible for the differences between the two areas.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain Rural and Urban areas and
·   explain the various factors that differentiate the Rural from the Urban.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concepts of Rural and Urban Livings

In Nigeria, rural areas have been defined as areas with a population less than 5,000 in 1956, less than 10,000 in 1963 and less than 20,000 today (Igbokwe 2001). It could be said that based on size, some designated rural areas that have infrastructural facilities and services similar to those in urban areas and with rapid changes in population size make the use of size often not meaningful. Many rural areas are modernising changeably or dynamically. This gives rise to the concept of the rural urban continuum. It stands that communities cannot be forced into two types of categories but should be seen to represent various modernisation stages on a linear scale. For example, while cities like Lagos and Ibadan may portray maximum of urban characteristics, some

communities are typically rural, and between the two extremes are found communities at different stages of modernisation.

Rural ——————————————→——————————————**Urban**

Fig. 3.1:   The Rural-Urban Continuum

Rural refers to areas with low population density, small size, and relative isolation, where the major economic activity is largely agricultural production. The areas considered rural are the settlements that have between 100 and 200 households (Mundi 2006). It also refers to remote areas or places far away from the seat of government and having very few or no infrastructural facilities i.e. the countryside and the people living in the villages. The major concern of rural sociologists is with farmers, with agricultural occupations, and with problems of farm people, their ways of making a living and other occupations influencing their life. On the other hand, urban people are those who live in towns with a population of 2,500 and over in the U.S.A., or 3,000 and over in Nigeria (Jibowo, 1992).

3.2   Factors Responsible for Rural-Urban Differentiation

The following factors are responsible for the general differences between rural and urban places.

1.   Size of the Place

Rural communities are usually smaller than urban communities. Size, is referred to here, particularly to areas actually inhabited rather than the total area of land available for use.

2.   Population Density and Composition

As rural areas have larger expanse of land with relatively small population, the population density (i.e the number of people per unit area of land) is rather low. This is in contrast to urban areas where a larger number of people occupy relatively small unit areas. This is evident by the fact that tall buildings are more in number in urban than in rural areas in Nigeria.

3.   Occupation

Farming, pastoral and collecting enterprises form the basis of rural economy. Some rural people are engaged in petty trading, arts, craft, weaving, pottery and primary industries; only a few tend to take these as sole occupations. Instead they tend to combine these with farming and a large number are full time farmers. In contrast, people in urban areas are

mainly engaged in manufacturing, commercial and administrative occupations.

4.   Culture Simplicity

The legends, proverbs, folklore, fashion etc. of the ruralites are based on their local experiences and their relatively poor cultural base. Similarly, their tools, utensils, furniture and other material inventions are simple, based on uninvestigated scientific ideas and relatively less efficient. In contrast, the culture of urban areas is more complex and varied. The fact that the urban area is usually heterogeneous ethnically makes it the melting pot of various cultures.

5.   Social Integration

This refers to a patterned relationship of one person with another through expressions of ideas, thought and action aimed at achieving concrete goals. Social contacts are greater in quantity, quality and variety in urban than in rural areas.

In rural area, interaction takes place at water sites, market days, religious worship areas, cultural, marriage and naming ceremonies. The quality and type of interaction among the urban dwellers is much more than that of rural dwellers. However, both the urban and rural dwellers are interdependent in the area of farm produce buying at the farm gate and traditional services.

6.   Social Stratification

This has to do with the manner in which the society ranks its members into various social classes or hierarchy on the basis of wealth, birth, status etc. The difference between the social classes in urban from the rural areas are:

· Social classes are fewer in rural area than the urban
· Social classes in rural areas are closer than in the urban area.
·   There is more rigidity in caste and class principles or close systems in rural areas than in the urban areas.

7.   Social Differentiation

This is the tendency of social interaction to generate social differences among people. This may be differences in status, ranks, and functions among others. Social differentiation is more complex in urban areas than in rural areas. Urban areas comprise of all forms of professionals with a high level of integration and interdependence via a network of specialisation and division of labour. The market woman, motor driver,

tailor and carpenter are all interdependent in a complex system of relationships in the urban area or city. The rural area is made up of many relatively independent families, communities and neighbourhoods. The rural dwellers deal with people of identifiable traits such as other farmers of the same religious groups, cultural, social and economic level.

8.   Social mobility

This is the movement of an individual from one social class or group to another. People may move vertically from a lower to higher or higher to lower class via specific achievements viz. success in economic pursuits, education, political change, or job creation. Improvements in social infrastructure are bound to be more in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Social mobility is rather slow in small areas.

9.   Social Control

The behaviour of individuals in the rural areas tends to be guided more by the internalisation of societal norms and values. Informal means such as ostracism and gossips are used or applied to effect control on violation while instant justice is determined in cases of the violation of mores.

Urban areas tend to depend more on formal institutions such as the police, traffic wardens among others for the maintenance of law and order.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the main areas of concern of rural sociologists?

4.0   CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have been able to examine the concepts of rural-urban settings. Also, the unit highlights the various factors responsible for general differences between rural and urban areas.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has exposed you to the following factors:

·   The concept of a rural-urban continuum
·   The varieties of occupations that exist in rural and urban areas
·   The urban area is larger in size and in population density
·   Moe social classes are more in urban areas than rural areas.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify six factors responsible for rural-urban differentiation and discusses three of them.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 4   DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

We are going to look at the concepts of settlement patterns and village organisation. This unit will help you understand the distribution of population within the geographical space.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   define settlement pattern and village organisation
·   explain the factors associated with the settlement pattern of any group of people
·   explain cluster settlement and its economic importance
·   explain scattered or dispersed settlement patterns and their merits and demerits and
·   give some examples of some typical village organisations in Nigeria and their implications for initiating change.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Meaning of Settlement Patterns and Village Organisation

A settlement pattern is the manner in which a population distributes itself within the geographical space it occupies. With specific relation to the rural people, the term refers to how the people locate themselves on their farms. Village organisation on the other hand, could be referred to as a settlement pattern but it involves more than the distribution of the population on the land it occupies. It includes the patterns of social interaction, ordering and the governance of the people within that settlement.

3.1.1 Settlement Patterns and their Associated Factors

The settlement pattern of any group of people can be related to some factors. These include:

·   Social conditions such as the need for defence against external aggressors, type of family organisation, arrangement of economy - particularly in the case of landlords, feudalistic etc. These conditions tend to determine whether people live in clusters or in scattered settlements.
·   The nature of physical conditions such as land, farms or topography, soil type, water availability, type of vegetable among others. These conditions determine how much land will be available to the population both for habitation and the practice of its economic pursuits.
·   The nature and organisation of the prevailing agricultural economy. That is, whether permanent or semi-permanent, nomadic type of farming is practiced. The decision of a group of people to occupy a particular land area is generally determined by the physical, natural or geographical conditions of the area whereas the pattern of settlement might be affected by a combination of the foregoing factors.

There are two main types of settlement patterns in Nigeria. These are the cluster or nucleated or compact village and the scattered or dispersed settlements.

3.2   The Cluster or Nucleated Settlements

These types of settlements are more thickly populated and highly "urban". Examples are Yoruba towns of South-Western Nigeria and the Hausa towns and villages in the North. They typically comprise clusters of located compounds each of which might be separated by mud walls or reeds fences. Cluster settlements have their origin from the people's need in the past, for self defence against quarrelsome neighbours. The entire village may be surrounded with a high mud wall like in the part of

Zaria district, or a wall and thick euphorbia hedges as in the Jos native areas.

Such settlements may contain over 20,000 people thereby generally overcrowded. The farms are located outside the settlement areas and farmers have to walk long distances to their farms. In some instances, farmers establish farm camps where they spend parts of the week and then return to their villages on weekends and on festival days.

Merits of the Clustered Settlements: These include:

·   Security from attack by either wild animals or external enemies
·   Closer social interaction due to proximity which also gives individuals some psychological security
·   There is easier transmission of information on technologies (innovations) to a large number of people within a short time
·   There is enhancement of a more efficient use of social amenities. That is, more people have access to a single social amenity in such settlements.

Demerits/Limitation of Clustered Settlements

·   The system encourages gossips and undue interference in the private life of neighbours
·   The system worsen the problems of sanitation and makes such settlements susceptible to epidemic outbreaks
·   In case of fire outbreak, more destruction of life and property is likely to occur in a clustered or nucleated settlement than in a scattered settlement area
·   Farmers have to travel long distances to get to their farms. This discourages mixed farming (raising of crops along with rearing of livestock). Nigerian farmers usually live in clustered settlements to maintain their animals within the same environment that they themselves inhabit.
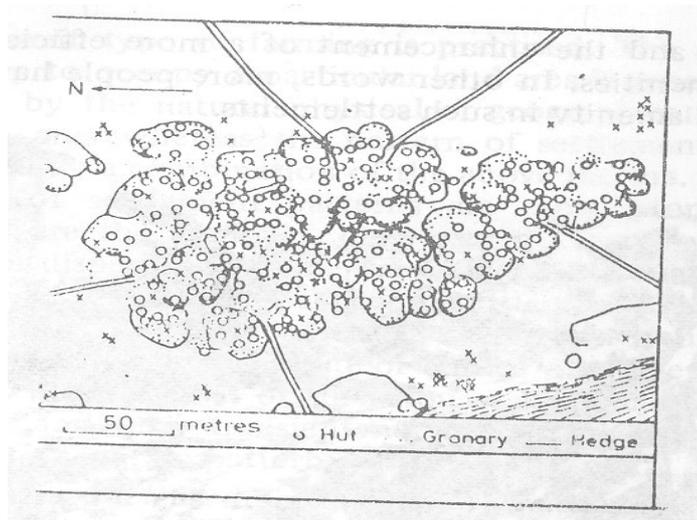
Figure 4.1: A nucleated village settlement

3.3   Scattered Settlement Patterns

This pattern is also called dispersed settlement. This is found in the Tiv, Ibo, Ibibio, Bassa-Komu and other smaller ethnic group areas in Nigeria. They consist typically of rectangular houses or round huts set in the midst of individual land holdings. In the Ibibio and Ibo areas in the South Eastern part of Nigeria, a road or footpath coming from the major road or village square often leads to a number of living quarters located far in the bush. The idea of blood relationship runs via grouping of habitations everywhere in Eastern Nigeria. A number of people from one extended family may occupy dwellings along a single branch path forming a ward and a number of such wards scatter over the whole territory owned by a particular village.

The rural Abakaliki Ibo live in scattered compounds (a cluster of huts surrounded by a fence) dispersed over the whole village territory with each compound having a considerable area of farm land around the compound. In the Tiv area of Benue and parts of Plateau States, the round thatched huts are set within trees in the open grassy landscape in a scattered fashion. Each hut contains a family and some relatives and it is maintained until the surrounding farm lands have become infertile whereby the family may move to another area.

It would be wrong to say that settlements in the Eastern parts of Nigeria are always scattered. The earlier tribal wars at one time brought about compact settlemenst either on the hilltops or in the plain among Ibibio and Ibo peoples. These scattered settlements have since disintegrated in a greater part of the area giving room to individualised scattered dwellings and other forms of settlement patterns.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Differentiate between a settlement pattern and a village organisation.

The Merits of the Scattered Settlement Pattern

· It allows the farmers to practice mixed farming where environmental factors are favourable. This is because the farmers are always around to take care of their livestock.
· Farmers are settled on their farms and hence do not have to waste money and time travelling long distances between their homes and the farms.
· It gives room for proper town planning if the area has to be rebuilt or resettled. In clustered settlement areas, whenever modernisation comes, a new town altogether has to be built (e.g in Lokoja, Zaria, Makurdi, Kano and Jos).
· It gives individual families some measure of privacy.
· It gives room for expansion - either in terms of extending the relocation or homestead.
· It encourages the use of household and farm yard manure in the farmlands surrounding the homestead which are usually utilised for raising vegetables and arable or food crops.

The Demerits/Limitations of Scattered Settlement Patterns

· Social amenities or services such as water, school, electricity, medical services, etc. cannot be supplied economically. When these are available, people have long distances to travel to avail themselves of such facilities.
· People living in isolated huts located in thick bushes tend to be relatively psychologically isolated. They are more suspicious of strangers, more superstitious and more conservative than those in compact settlements.
· As people live in relatively isolated homesteads, it is more difficult to bring them together for meetings and information on technologies (innovations) which tend to diffuse more slowly than in clustered settlements.
· People in scattered settlements are also more susceptible or prone to robberies and criminal attacks than those in clustered or nucleated settlements.
· It is usually complex for strangers to delineate the village boundaries either for service purposes or research.
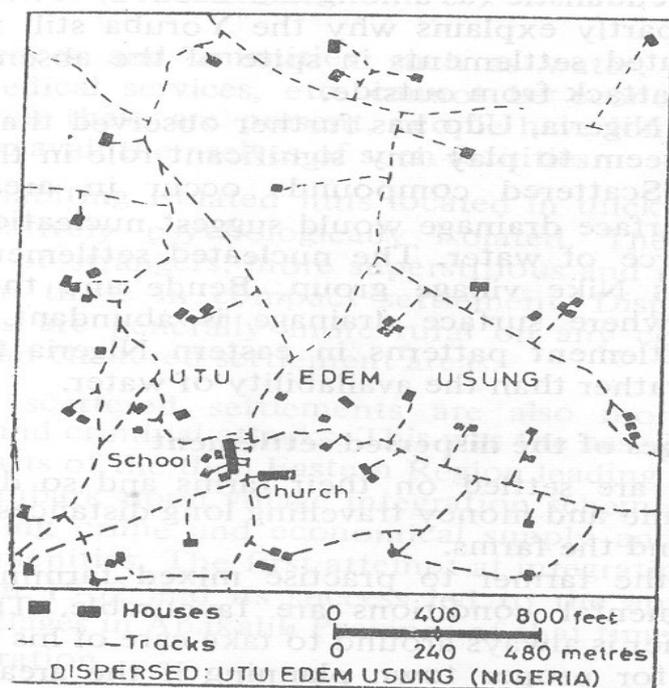
Figure 4.2: A dispersed settlement pattern

3.4 Some Typical Village Organisations in Nigeria

The structural organisation of Nigerian villages and their internal governments have social physical as well as historical backgrounds (Ekong 1988). Historically, a village may have been founded merely on its own. It may have been a branch village to another village elsewhere or it may have been established to serve as a camp. Where a settlement is a temporary camp either for migrant farmers or road side traders it may have a recognised village head. Below are brief discussions of some typical village organisations.

3.4.1 Village Organisation of the Yoruba

The Yoruba ethnic group live in the southern part of Nigeria. They consist of many sub-ethnic or dialectic groups such as the Okun, Kabba, the Egbado, the Ijebu, the Ondo, the Ife, the Ijesha, the Oyo, the Ekiti, the Akoko, the Akupe, and the Owo. Although the dialects of these sub-groups differ they speak and understand their own dialect more than those of other subgroups.

In terms of interaction among members of each of the other ethnic groups in Nigeria the Yoruba are closer than with other non-members. For example, marriage, rituals, chieftaincy can occur among members of each ethnic group, and in fact, more frequently among members of each sub ethnic or dialectic group than with non-members.

The Yoruba village is often the compact type of village. It often consists of a square and walls covered with corrugated iron sheets. Few are covered with thatched roofs. Many of the walls are plastered, while some which are owned by well-to-do farmers who are financially buoyant, particularly cocoa farmers, are plastered with cement. Only very few buildings are painted. The buildings are often arranged in an irregular fashion with little consideration given for village planning.

According to Jibowo (1992), a typical Yoruba village consists of the following structures:

1.   Industrial centres around the village for processing palm oil in particular. The cattle slaughter slab is located at the end of a fairly big village. The reason for locating the industries at the end of the village is to facilitate the disposal of the industrial wastes into the bush conveniently and avoid messing up the village with industrial wastes and odour.

2.   Residential houses as described in the preceding paragraph, where people rest after the day's work. The houses of well-off farmers have kitchens and walled backyards where cooking, processing of some agro-industrial products such as garri, cracking of palm-kernel, drying of farm products on a cement slab e.g. cassava flutter, parboiled rice take place.

3.   The centre of the village where the house of the village head could be located. The house of the village ancestor, a community shrine, a town hall or other symbiotic structures could also be located in the village centre.

4.   Village shrines which are located at the end of the village or in a nearby bush outside the village at times.

5.   Mosques (*Mosalasi*) for Muslim worship which are frequently located inside the village. A place of occasional worship called *Yidi,* is also established outside the village by many Muslims. Churches (*Soosi*) for Christian worship are often situated in conspicuous places, such as road sides within or outside the village.

6.   When the village is large, a small market place is established at the end or centre of it. Village people and those from nearby smaller villages converge at the specified market place every five or nine days to sell their farm products to buyers from bigger towns and neighbouring communities.

The Yoruba are a predominantly urban people. They often live in large towns and cities but they work on farms. Their commitment is largely to the towns and cities.

3.4.2 The Village Organisation of the Hausa and Fulani

The Hausa village (*Kauye*) is the lowest unit in a hierarchy of political arrangement of the district or Emirate. The Emirate is the highest, followed by political district and then the group. A group of villages therefore forms the district, while a group of districts forms the emirate. Every village, however, has its own identity as it has a recognized chief (*Sarki*), an appointed Muslim priest (Imam), a regular weekly or biweekly market (*Kasuwa*) and a common prayer ground at the outskirt of the town (*Masallaci Idi*). The village itself is organized in wards or *anguwa* consisting of a number of walled compounds called *gidaje*. The wards are named after peculiar physical feature or after the rank or profession of the people living there. Each ward has a ward head, *Maianguwa*, who is usually the eldest male of the leading compound in the ward and he is responsible to the *Sark*i of the village. The *Sarki* may

also have a number of retainer's baron, borade among others via whom he communicates with the common people in the community.

The *Sarki* is the executive head, although he lacks judicial power. He is responsible to the district head, the *Hakinri* for the following functions:

·   Dispatch of people who are required by the district head for services such as building of roads, bridges, construction and other district assignments.
·   Dispatch of people who are called by Moslem judges of the district to the court.
·   Collection, assessment and reimbursement of annual takes in the village.

Plate 5.2: Fulani women selling dairy products.
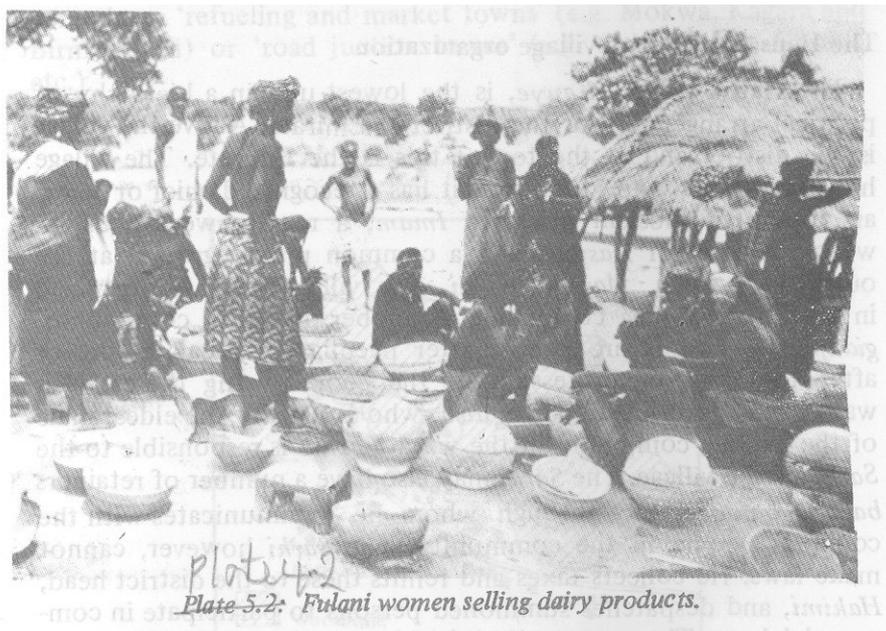
Plate 4.1: Fulani women selling diary products

3.4.3 Bassa-nge Village Organisation

The Bassa-nge people are found in the eastern zone of Kogi State of Nigeria and consist mainly of Gboloko, Ecewu, Kpata, Edogbo, Dodogbagi, Eforo in areas in the state which is located in the middle belt of Nigeria. The area is very sparsely populated and therefore offers great potentials for rural development.The people live in towns as well as hamlets known as *Efu*. Each Bassa-nge village has a chief but the ultimate authority over the entire Bassa-nge land rests with the *Etsu* Bassa-nge or chief. The village chief allocates land to the villagers and admits strangers into the community (the *Efu* town/village). Such a settlement may consist of one family group. Alternatively immigrants from other parts of the land belonging to another village can place themselves under its political protection.

There is a regular and intensive cooperation in the form of visits, feasts, meetings, marriages and other social interactions among the Bassa-nge people.

3.4.4 The lbo Village Organisation

The Ibo people live predominantly in villages. The village group is the highest authority, consisting of clusters of villages with a common meeting place known as the village centre. The village centre is surrounded by households, which in turn are surrounded by farmlands. Footpaths link the village centre with the houses and farmlands. The village is divided into wards, membership of which consists of related or the same families. Families live on both sides of a cleared path called

ama in compounds. The compounds are dispersed among the farms and gardens of the farm families. The centre of the village is always kept clean, often with a tree. This serves as a market place for the inhabitants. Igwe (2003).

The household is frequently established under economic trees such as oil palm or raffia-palm. The household can be inherited by sons or taken over by the community for communal utilisation without compensation to the owner. The farmland is owned by the kinship group.

Annual crops like yams, cassava, maize and cowpea are commonly cultivated. Banana and plantain are also grown popularly.

The Ibo village is autonomous of the neighbouring towns and cities, unlike those of other ethnic groups in Nigeria. It was not subject to any outside authority. Authority was vested in a body of elders which met in a village council headed by the head of the senior lineage. The major issues discussed were those of religion, marital harmony and maintenance of village solidarity. Influential men of wealth especially title holders and members of local *Ozo* lodge dominated the lineage headship.

The pattern of village settlement is dispersed farm stead. This is also the situation among the Tiv people.

3.4.5 Village Organisation of the Edo

The Edo people are found predominantly in Benin City and the surrounding towns and villages.

The Edo town is headed by *Onogien* who is the direct descendant of the *Oba* of Benin or *Odiowere* who is not a direct descendant but the eldest man in the village (Ezekiel 2002). The village head is responsible to the head of the nearby small town, who in turn is responsible to the *Oba* of Benin. The heads are thus responsible to the *Oba* of Benin. The following duties are being carried out on behalf of the *Oba* of Benin: organisation of community tasks, collection of taxes, cult festivals, community sacrifices and maintaining relations with, and taking instructions from the *Oba* of Benin.

Shrines constitute a common feature in Edo villages. Almost every house has its own shrine either outside or inside the house. Many of the residents prefer to bury their deceased kinsmen in the small villages and towns than to take them to Benin City. Even those who die outside the villages are frequently brought to the village for burial and other funeral ceremonies.

3.5 Implications of the Different Village Organisations in Nigeria for Initiating Technological Change

The various patterns of village organisations among the different ethnic groups in Nigeria should be taken cognisance of in designing and implementing programmes of social and economic change for technology (innovation).

1.   The change agents can reach the rural Yoruba in groups in the village via the village head. This is because they live in compact villages to which they return for rest after the day's work on the farm. The *Baale* who is the head visits the residents on matters of public interest. The elders and family heads could be called by the public crier in large family villages.

2.   To work effectively in Hausa and Fulani villages, the change agent should obtain permission from the district head who will authorise the village heads to allow the people to work effectively with the change agent. Female change agents are needed to go into the pudah to work with such female Muslim women during the day who profess the same religion as themselves.

3.   Among the Ibo, the change agent can work with individual farm families. He defines and clears his mission with the village head, who legitimises this with the heads of households.

4.   The dispersed farmsteads make it possible to work with individual farm families in Tivland. The mission also has to be cleared by the change agents with heads of groups of farmsteads.

5.   The change agents can go via the village heads in working with Edo village residents. There is no frequent need of working through the *Oba* of Benin because of functional flexibility of attachment of the villages to Benin City.

6.   Cultural attributes and language differ among the various ethnic groups. It is necessary to use the advice of a change agent who understands the languages and cultures of each group to facilitate effective working on programmes of change with the groups for technological change (Jibowo 1992).

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit teaches the concept of settlement patterns and the economic importance of cluster or nucleated and dispersed or scattered settlement patterns in Nigeria. It also highlights some forms of typical village

organisation and the implications of various village organisations in Nigeria for introducing change. I hope by now, you would be able to explain the general concepts of settlement patterns and village organisation in Nigeria.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has exposed you to the:

· Concept of cluster and scattered settlement patterns and their advantages and disadvantages
· Factors related to the settlement pattern of any group of people
· Examples of some form of typical village organisation in Nigeria.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the concepts of nucleated and dispersed settlement patterns in Nigeria.
2. Discuss two advantages and disadvantages of nucleated and dispersed settlement patterns in Nigeria.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 5   RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   Definition and Characteristics of Rural Infrastructure
        3.2   Typology of Rural Infrastructure
        3.3   Effects of Rural Infrastructure
        3.4   Provision of Rural Infrastructure
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we are going to treat the concept of Rural Infrastructure and its characteristics and types of Rural Infrastructure and their effects. The issue of infrastructure has assumed increasing importance in Nigeria in view of the need for increased production of farm produce.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   define the characteristics of rural infrastructure
·   identify the typology of rural infrastructure
·   identify the effects of rural infrastructure and
·   state the provision of rural infrastructure.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Definition and Characteristics of Rural Infrastructure

Rural infrastructure, according to Idachaba and Olayide (1980)   is defined to include the system of physical, human and institutional forms of capital which enable rural residents to better perform their production, processing and distribution activities as well as helping to improve the overall quality of life. The most basic elements of infrastructure comprise rural roads, markets in rural towns and rural water supply facilities. Rural infrastructure also includes social infrastructure, most significantly rural health and education facilities. At some higher level

development, it includes rural electrification, telecommunication facilities and access to electronic mass media.

Rural Infrastructure is a very loose concept however, sometimes conceived narrowly to include only roads and water supply as well as social infrastructure. The definition here is broad to capture the concept that the inputs necessary to develop agriculture - the major occupation of the ruralites and reduce poverty, are indeed all embracing. Agriculture can not be developed in isolation from physical infrastructure development, rural health and education or even from sound urban development policy (World Bank, 1993).

Rural Infrastructure as defined above possesses certain characteristics. These are heavy capital equipment beyond the reach of the average individual rural resident, huge initial capital expenditures, benefits accrue to all members of the society (or non-excludability in usage) and stocks of capital yielding streams of services over a number of years

3.2   Typology of Rural Infrastructure

There are four major types of rural infrastructure. These are:

1.   Rural physical infrastructure
2.   Rural social infrastructure
3.   Rural institutional infrastructure
4.   Rural farm infrastructure

Rural physical infrastructure is defined to include:

a)   Transportation systems such as feeder roads, access roads, rail roads, bridges, ferry services, boats, ports, footpaths, etc.
b)   Processing facilities such as public processing facilities, machinery, equipment, buildings, etc, and
c)   Communication systems such as rural telephone services postal agencies, etc.

Rural social infrastructure is defined to include:

a)   Health facilities such as hospitals, dispensaries, maternity health services among others.

b) Educational facilities such as primary schools, secondary schools, adult education facilities etc. and

c) Rural utilities such as rural electrification, power supplies and waters supplies. The adequate provision of these services will tend to raise the productivity of small farmers as well as stem the rising rural-urban drift.

Rural institutional infrastructure includes:

a) Rural organisations such as cooperatives, farmers' unions, etc.
b) Rural-based projects such as community projects, etc.
c) Financial institutions such as credit societies, banks, government credit institutions, post office saving banks, etc.
d) Agricultural research facilities such as research substations, experimental-out lying farms, schools of agriculture, demonstration plots, etc.
e) Agricultural extension services
f) Crop-animal protection - control-grading services.
g) Soil conservation services (Olajide and Falusi 1999)

Essentially, the institutional facilities have to be mobilised or fully financed, or promoted as the case may be by the public sector or government. It is the ineffective promotion, financial support and mobilisation of these facilities by government in various parts of Nigeria, that is also responsible for the dearth of small farmers.

Rural farm infrastructure is defined to include:

a) Storage facilities such as silos, warehouses, go-downs, farm bins, open-air storage facilities, etc.
b) Irrigation water facilities such as dams, irrigation canals and tributaries, bore-holes, drainage systems, etc.
c) Land clearing and preparation systems
d) Farm inputs supply systems such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.
e) Farm roads development/improvement facilities. It is the rural farm infrastructure that is of direct benefit to the small farmers (Olayide 1998). It is this class of infrastructure that has to be given immediate attention as a means of increasing the productivity and aggregate output of small farmers in Nigeria.

Most rural dwellers in Nigeria derive water from streams and shallow ponds.

Bicycles service as a very important means of transporting rural products to urban market

3.3   Effects of Rural Infrastructure

3.3.1 Production Effects

There are three classes of production effects of Rural infrastructure. First are the direct production effects. These include important contribution to increased production of farm and non farm goads, enhancement of productive ability of rural people through better health facilities, better decision-making by producers through education that provides access to information and functional literacy, and better farm products arising from the results of research institutions.

  Second are the indirect production effects that come from the facilitating role of rural infrastructural facilities. These include the effects of education on production-distribution management and the effects of improved facilitates on access to opportunities in decisionmaking, marketing and farm supplies or inputs.

Third is the stabilisation of agricultural production. These effects include farmer operation at near equilibrium levels of optimum production, control of erratic fluctuations in farm production through the interplay of research and extension services, stable production and distribution arising from workable farm calendar and "market outlook" information systems, and stable release of produce arising from provision of dependable storage facilities for the "marketable surpluses".

3.3.2 Income Effects

Rural infrastructure's direct production effects are translated or transformed into enhanced incomes emanating from increased output and farm produce due to adequate storage facilities. It ensures the stabilization of rural farm and non farm incomes. The provision of rural educational credit and institutional facilities combine to progressively eradicate rural poverty through access to sources of rural wealth and income generation opportunities.

3.3.3 Welfare Quality of Life Effects

Rural communities require more commodity and input programmes that significantly raise and stabilise rural incomes in addition to the need for dignity, self-respect, belongingness, social recognition and social participation to ensure continual improvement in the quality of rural life. The supplies of communication facilities such as television and redifussion, electricity, vocational schools and water in rural communities improve the quality of rural life as well as promote socio-economic integration. Adequate and timely information via efficient

communication systems helps to develop national consciousness in rural communities and therefore ensures socio-economic and social stability.

3.3.4 Employment and Resources Allocation Effects

The adequate provision of rural infrastructures creates new employment opportunities through construction or establishment operations, and direct-indirect effects on farm and non farm production. There is additional effect of the elimination/reduction of underemployment through the provision of off-peak non farm employment opportunities that facilitate all-season use of rural labour resources. Furthermore, Rural Infrastructure guarantees and continually improves the allocation of such resources as land, labour, capital and water in farm and non farm rural enterprises.

3.4   Provision of Rural Infrastructure

Considering the above listed benefits and salutary effects of Rural Infrastructure to rural productivity and socio-politico-economic welfare of our communities, the need arises for an examination of probable methods of providing adequate the facilities. These probable methods will be discussed briefly in terms of five major efforts.

1.   Governmental efforts: It is essential that governmental awareness of the importance and effects of rural infrastructure should be matched by equally important expenditures on their provision. Federal, state and local government in Nigeria will need to ensure that about ten percent of planned expenditures in the 1990s will to be allocated to rural infrastructural development to ensure rapid and successful integrated rural development in Nigeria.

2.   The class of community efforts at contributing positively and significantly to the adequate provision of rural infrastructure: In the field of environmental hygiene-wealth facilities, rural roads, processing facilities and community development projects, the role of self help mechanisms with governmental matching grants cannot be overemphasised. The village approach to the stimulation of community efforts promises the most powerful strategy and tools for adequate provision of rural infrastructures.

3.   Cooperative efforts: Here again, the village approach through cooperatives promises an effective mechanism for the supply of rural infrastructure. Multiple purpose and single-purpose cooperatives can through service associations, provide rural infrastructure at cost. Examples include rural electrification, rural water supplies, irrigation supplies, rural telephone services, rural

health clinics, rural transportation services, etc. processing and credit cooperatives organised on intra-village and inter-village basis constitute an effective mechanism for the provision of rural infrastructure (Schiller, 2002).

4.   River B as in Development Authorities (RBDAs) efforts: This body, by its enabling decree, is established to undertake specific functions in addition to the provision of rural infrastructure. Four types of Rural Infrastructure can be effectively provided by RBDAs. First is energy supplies through hydro power installed in dams and reservoirs. Second are water recreation facilities for such activities as swimming, boating and fishing. Third is water recirculation, a conservational programme designed to reduce the rate of disappearance of water or withdrawal of water in industry for coating purposes as well as reclaim municipal waste discharge, through on-site reutilisation and return flow use. Fourth is navigation through construction of canals/roads in swamp lands, boat transportation and hoover craft transportation over mash land and swamplands that cannot be canalised (Olayide et al 199).

5.   Research efforts: The research efforts in the provision of rural infrastructure can be effectively mobilised by public/governmental/public research institutes, research centres/bureaux, research consortium, research commissions, research associations, and intentional research agencies. Research into infrastructure can take many forms. These include exploratory, utilisation, cost-returns, production-design or prototype development, management and forecasting research. Since the issue of research infrastructures has been given very little or no attention in Nigeria, the needs arises for a dynamic and purposeful infrastructures research policy.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has examined in fairly general terms the issue of Rural Infrastructure. It is expected that by now you should be able to comprehend the conceptual issues of rural infrastructure.

5.0   SUMMARY

Considering the fact that rural physical, rural social, rural institutional and rural farm infrastructure are necessary pre-requisites for rapid integrated rural development, the financial aspects on their provision to date seem inadequate. The fact must be emphasised that Rural Infrastructure has beneficial production, income, employment, resource

allocation and socio-economic welfare effects on rural communities. Consequently, governmental, community, farmer-cooperative, river basin authority and research effects have to be mobilised and adequately funded to ensure adequate supplies of rural infrastructure necessary for rapid integrated rural development of our communities and their farm and non -farm enterprises.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify the three classes of production effects of rural infrastructure and briefly discuss them.
2.   Discuss how cooperative and research efforts have contributed towards the adequate provision of rural infrastructures.

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**MODULE 2   MAJOR   RURAL   SOCIAL
                INSTITUTIOINS IN NIGERIA**

Unit 1   Marriage and the Family
Unit 2   The Rural School System
Unit 3   The Religious Institution
Unit 4   The Political Institution
Unit 5   The Rural Economic Institution

UNIT 1   MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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        3.2   Features of the Rural Family
        3.3   Functions of the Family
        3.4   Stages in the Family Life of a Rural Farmer
        3.5   Forms of Marriage
                2.5.1 Factors Associated with Polygamous Marriage in
                        Nigeria
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last unit we examined the definition and characteristics of rural
infrastructure, typology, effects and provision of rural infrastructure. In
this unit we are going to look at marriage and the family.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

·   define marriage and the family
·   identify features of the rural family and
·   identify the functions of the rural family
·   identify the stages in the family life of a rural farmer
·   identify forms of marriage in Nigeria.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept of Marriage and Family

The family is usually defined as a kinship group linked by blood and marriage and occupying a common household. A household is not the same thing as the family. It refers to all persons occupying the same house. These include relatives as well as lodgers.

The family as a social group is made up of a man, his wife or wives and children living under a common roof, interacting and influencing the behaviours of each other in a more intimate manner than with others who do not belong to it.

As a social institution the family entails the formalised, regular and patterned way or process by which family life is carried out. It involves:

· A set of common procedures such as betrothal or engagement, courtship, honeymoon, wedding
· A common set of values and norms e.g incest taboo which forbids sexual intercourse with blood relations thereby necessitating marriage outside the immediate family (exogamy), love between husband and wife in a way different from that which is expected between brother and sister.

Marriage involves choice of mates. Marriage allows the social relationship in which sexual expression is expected to take place for the major purpose of procreation. But if much sexual expression within and outside marriage is for the purpose of sexual urge gratification rather than procreation, then sex plays an important role in self-fulfillment in both rural and urban areas. Marriage is sanctioned by the society. It provides the social systems within which social roles and statuses are prescribed.

3.2   Features of the Rural Family

The rural family is characterised by many features such as familism, production and consumption of goods and services, continuity, size, child bearing and rearing, socialisation, participation in family decision making, marital expectations and evaluation.

Familism could be described as the degree to which members of the family show solidarity in the process of performing the multifarious role of the family institution. It involves the following factors:

·   The extent to which personal goals are made secondary to be consistent with family goals.
·   The extent to which control is exerted over individual members so that family values are imposed on each member, who in turn accepts the values.
·   Personal security of individual members of a family which shows familism is generated by members through their deep sense of integration into the family.
·   It embodies an intergenerational family group in which many generations live under one roof near one another.
·   Existence of family property such as land, house, shares in companies, animals and farm crops. This practice discovers age's individualism among members.
·   Continuity of the family ensures that members bring in their children into the fold so that it does not discontinue when certain members die.
·   Mutual help exists among members who are assisted to set up their own farms, pay education costs, dowries, burial and other forms of expenses when the need arises.

The advantages of familism include:

· Keeping the children in greater contact so as to deepen affection for one another.
· Exercising control over members to protect the family integrity; ethnic and rural standards; apprenticeship in the family early occupation, which is frequently farming in the rural area.
· Assistance in financing early education, purchase of work equipment and marriage expenses, feeding, clothing and other personal expenses.

The disadvantages of familism include:

· Self centeredness, which makes a family to always look for the interest of its members, while it frequently closes its eyes to the consideration of other families.
· Members tend to be narrow-minded and parochial; the personalities of members are at about the same level.
· Families limit chances of allowing members in rural families to take up other occupations.
· The system of seniority frequently adopted lowers the rate of self-realisation of talented family members.
· Whenever a family member violates the norms, the family image rather than that of the individual is considered as tarnished.

3.3   Functions of the Family

The family performs many societal functions to ensure the welfare and progress of its members. The functions include:

·   Reproduction of the human species. That is grant life.
·   Care and rearing of the young offspring particularly at infancy and years of dependence.
·   Education of the children.
·   Protection from enemies, danger and psychological isolation, provision of love and affection to reduce tension and frustration.
·   Care of the aged and disabled family members.
·   Production and consumption of good and services.
·   Moral and financial support to family members in time of joy and trouble.
·   Social, psychological and material support in time of bereavement, disaster or other forms or adversities.
·   Provide socialisation. That is, the family equips the individual with the knowledge which he/she will need in order to play his/her roles in the society.

SELFASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1.   Define family and marriage.
2.   What is familism?

3.4   Stages in the Family Life of a Rural Farmer

The family life and the farm business life of a rural farmer are intricately interwoven. The success of one highly influences the viability of the other. However, some stages are distinguishable in the life a farm family.

1.   Farm apprenticeship: This stage commences as early as the child is able to walk to the farm himself. It begins about the age of three or four years and extends till the adolescent years when the young farmer is looking for a wife at the age of 15 - 20. Initially, the young child is taken to the farm and asked to watch the father as he operates the farm so as to inculcate the habit of preparing for work. At the age of five or six, the child is given farm implements with which to work. He is apportioned a small piece of land to work upon. He learns how to operate farm implements gradually. The apprentice turns to a skilled farm operator who continues to assist the father on a family farm.

2.   Operation of a farm business on a limited scale: The young
      farmer opens up his own farm on a large scale than when he was
      serving the father, but on a limited scale when compared with
      that of a full-fledged farmer. He still gets advice from the father
      on how to operate his farm at his own discretion and as a mark of
      recognition of the father's experience and to promote family
      solidarity. The enthusiasm of early independence from the family
      farm propels him to work. The encouragement obtained from the
      young wife also stimulates him to work harder. Unfortunately in
      south-western Nigeria, like in many developing societies where
      owner-operators of farms are predominant, this is also the period
      when many young farmers over socialise by attending many club
      meetings, parties, dances, funerals and marriage ceremonies
      which involve wastage of their resources which ought to have
      been wisely invested in farm business. This stage lasts till the age
      of about 30 years.

3.   The third stage is that of the owner-operator of a farm business
      on a large scale with his family. At this stage, the farmer has now
      raised his children to maturity as he was raised by his father. The
      children now assist him on the farm. He thus opens up large areas
      of land using family labour. It is the period when farmers become
      most prosperous in farming. The farmer is primarily concerned
      with maintenance operations, and opening up of some new farm
      projects. This lasts up till the age of about 45 years to 50.

4.   Owner-operator of a farm business on a small scale without the
      family: The farmer is now declining in energy. He depends on
      hired labourers to carry out much of his farm operations if he has
      a large farm. His returns from the farm start to decline because of
      greater investments in running the farm which had been
      previously supplied via family labour. Hardworking farmers
      would have built houses in the village by the end of the third
      stage. They actually would have started to build the house in the
      town, which they would complete early in the fourth stage of life.

5.   The fifth stage is that of retirement from active farming. The
      farmer has attained the age of seventy and above. Those who
      have succeeded in building their own houses in the town spend
      much of the time in town. Those who have not built their
      personal houses in the town spend much of the time in their
      village houses and visit the town as occasions demand (Jibowo
      1992). This farm has now turned into a bush with spots of tree
      crops growing here and there on the farm. The farmer that is still
      energetic manages to maintain the tree crops which remain
      productive through spot-weeding. He tries to grow some annual

crops for his subsistence and also depends on the support of prosperous children for his sustenance. He remains a partially active farmer until he dies, unless old age makes him unable to go to the farm.

The foregoing stages in the life-cycle of a typical farmer in southwestern Nigeria are similar to the situation in many other societies where family-sized farms predominate.

3.5   Forms of Marriage

It was earlier said that marriage involves choice of mates. This may be done outside one's group or blood relations in which case it is described as exogamy, or within some specified group, the case of which could be described as endogamy.

Where one man and one woman are involved, the marriage is described as monogamy. Where more than two people are involved, it is called polygamy. Polygamy can assume three forms. One is the case of one man married to two or more women. This is called polygamy. This is most common among traditional villagers and Muslims in Nigeria.

This second form of polygamy is one involving one woman and two or more men. This is known as polyandry and has been identified among very few tribes in the world. The Todas of southern India are known to accept fraternal polygamy in which one woman is married to two or more brothers. The offspring of a such union belong to the extended family directly rather than to a particular father.

The third form of polygamy is what is known as group marriage and involves several men and women in marriage relationships with one another with no sense of exclusive ownership. Murdock (2002) in his study of 250 societies found that only 43 (17%) practised monogamy as a rule while the rest (8.3%) allowed different forms of polygamy.

· **Levirate Marriage**

This is a type of marriage which involves the inheritance of a widow by the deceased husband's male relations. This form of marriage is based on a reasoning that a wife is part of the possessions of the husband which are passed down the extended family line on his demise. Levirate marriage is a secondary form of marriage and entails no elaborate ceremony.

3.5.1 Factors Associated With Polygamous Marriage in Nigeria

Polygamous marriage in Nigeria could be attributed to many factors. Significant among these are:

1.   Economic Reasons

In societies where little mechanisation is practised, most economic production is carried out manually. Therefore, the greater the number of hands available, the greater the productivity of the family. People who have large areas of farm land usually marry more than one wife so as to enhance the available free labour force.

2.   Religious Beliefs

The Moslem religion permits its adherents who are able, to take as many as four wives. The well-to-do among them have married more than one wife.

3.   The Need for Children

Sometimes a man may take a second or third wife if the first is not productive or fruitful. In the traditional Ibibio of south eastern Nigeria, a barren woman in fact, went out of her way to marry another woman for her husband. In addition, in the traditional society a man's prestige was enhanced by the number of children in his compound and so the more women he acquired, the larger his compound grew. In some cases, the need for a male child who would inherit the property of the family also encourages men to take additional wives.

4.   Social or Cultural Obligations

Some men in Nigeria have found themselves with more than one wife purely due to social or cultural reasons. A successful businessman or traditional leader may be given a girl gratis by someone who desires to pay homage, indicate respect, seek favour or just seek a closer relationship with him. Culture warrants that such a "gift" be accepted gratefully. Similarly, tradition may require that the widows of a relative be inherited by the surviving next of kin. The man may have married his own chosen wife already, thus he becomes obliged by tradition to take on the widows of his relations.

5.   Gratification of Sexual Needs

Men's sex needs are known to be more imperious than women's sex urge. Thus, men who desire socially approved sexual outlets when their wives are either pregnant or menstruating take on additional wives.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Define the following terms:

(i)   Exogamy
(ii)   Polygamy
(iii) Polyandry

4.0   CONCLUSION

The family is the basic unit of all societies. It is the basic social group, a basic social system and the most important universal social institution.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit examines the concept of marriage and family, features and functions of the rural family, stages in the life-cycle of a typical farmer, forms of marriage and factors responsible for the polygamous family system in Nigeria.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify four features of the rural family.
2.   Discuss two merits and demerits of familism in Nigeria.
3.   Discuss three factors attributed to polygamous marriages in Nigeria

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2   EDUCATION IN RURAL IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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      3.1   The Concept of Education
      3.2   Functions of Education
      3.3   Types of Education in Rural Nigeria
      3.4   Problems of the Rural School System and their Solutions
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5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another presentation from the course. In this unit we shall discuss Education in Rural Nigeria. Take a few minutes off to review the previous unit before starting this one. It will help you appreciate the close inter-relatedness of the units. The discussion will start with the definition of education as a general concept and it will go on to examine functions, types and features of education in rural Nigeria. The constraints of rural school systems and their remedies will be highlighted.

The following unit objectives show what you should accomplish at the end of this unit.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   define education
·   identify the functions of education
·   identify the types of education in rural Nigeria and
·   identify the problems of rural school systems and their solutions.
·

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept of Education

Education is the process of transmitting the socially approved cultural heritage of any society from one generation to another. It is also the process by which the new knowledge is spread among members of a society. The cultural heritage and knowledge are transferred through education. Education as an activity is the process of transmitting and acquiring the socially approved aspects of cultural heritage. The school is the social organisation in which education takes place. The process of socialization or culture learning usually starts informally in the family, churches, mosques, the community and then formally in schools. Education in the formal sense has come to mean systematic training by specialists within the formal organisation of the school.

3.2   Functions of Education

The functions of educational institutions include the following:

1. The transmission of the culture from one generation to another. This is the normal socialisation function which involves the teaching of societal values, norms, taboos, rotes, folk ways among others to the new entrant into the society (Ekong, 1988). This function can be executed within the family, by peer groups and other primary groups in a community.

2. Bringing about social change via the modification of cultural heritage and development of new knowledge skills, arts and artifacts. New knowledge is acquired through research and present experience has shown that technologically advanced nations invest more on research than developing nations.

3. Training of people for specialised adult roles. This involves learning of new skills through apprenticeship, acquisition of knowledge, tutorship or indoctrination, or by formal educational institutions. This level of education is mostly obtained outside the family and informal school settings with some expert teachers (Ekong, 1988).

4. Provision of a setting for school interaction. The school brings people from diverse background into constant interaction. This thereby fosters the formation of peer groups and associations which help in moulding the character and future of the individuals involved.

5.   Differentiation of people in the society and validation of their social status. In most contemporary society, the acquisition of

formal education and possession of some certificate ensure the entry of individual into prestigious jobs. That is, the higher the certificate, the more highly placed the individual within his profession. Therefore the proliferation of professions and skills and the graduation of diplomas help to put people into various categories. Thus, education has become a source of class formation as well as social mobility.

3.3   Types of Education in Rural Nigeria

There are various forms of formal educational facilities in rural Nigeria. These include the followings:

1.   Extension Education

This is an informal out-of-school education given to rural families by experts in agriculture, home economics, health, small-scale industries among others. This type of education is often known as extension education.

2.   Adult Education

This is semi-formal literacy education organised for adults who had no opportunity to acquire formal education at earlier age.

3.   Formal Education

This is the type of education offered at the primary and secondary levels to rural children and adolescents. At the primary level, two main types of education can be identified in Nigeria. These are the western type of education and the koranic type of education with the latter being more prevalent in the Moslem areas in Nigeria. Since Nigeria had grown up under the influence of the western world, there has been the tendency for people to undertake koranic education generally. Until quite recently, most parts of rural northern Nigeria had only koranic schools whereas western type schools have always predominated in the south.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Define education.
2.   Identify four functions of educational institution and discuss two of them.

3.4   Problems of the Rural School System and their Solutions

The rural school is of fundamental importance in the life of any nation. This is because it is the area in which basic values, attitudes and other cultural dimensions of a society are transmitted to the succeeding generations of citizens. Most of these citizens invariably move to the urban areas to constitute the cream of the society. The rural school experiences many problems when compared with their urban counter parts. Some of these include:

1.   The pupil - teacher ratio is lower in the rural than urban areas. The anxiety to send children to school is still lower in rural areas than in urban areas. In agrarian societies some reasons are responsible for this. Some parents want their children to help them on the farm; some parents do not have sufficient money to give their children even for daily feeding at school; some are not interested in formal education because they believe that it takes children out of the home after graduation; instead they prefer their children to remain with them on their farm. In many rural parts of northern Nigeria, many parents do not want their children to go to formal school, instead they prefer sending them to Islamic schools to study the Koran.

2.   The average salary of the rural teacher is lower than that of the urban teacher. This is because the average qualification and experience of the rural teacher is lower than that of the urban teacher.

3.   The average rural teacher is saddled with a heavier teaching load than his urban counterpart. This is because of frequent shortage of teachers in many subjects, particularly at the high school level. Teachers, who specialise in a field such as agricultural science, may be required to teach related science subjects such as chemistry and biology. In the elementary school, many schools in fact required the same teacher to teach all the subjects because he is considered as competent enough to handle all the subjects at that level. The outcome is over-loading of the teacher, which frequently results in inefficiency.

4.   The staff-turn over in rural school is much higher than that of urban school. Staff in rural schools frequently disturbs the school supervisors to post them to urban schools. Married female teachers in particular, prefer to stay with their husbands who frequently live in urban area. Such teachers are frequently posted to the urban area at the earliest available opportunities.

 5. The physical and teaching facilities in rural schools such as buildings, laboratories, sporting facilities, toilet and sanitary facilities are often smaller and less efficient than those in cities.

For example, lighting facilities are not in existence in many Nigerian rural schools whereas urban schools are supplied with electricity. Pipe-borne water supply is absent in many rural schools, but are present in many urban schools.

6.   Myopic, limited, traditional and outdated curricula/syllabi often feature in small schools. Much of the curriculum is not related to solving rural problem. Agriculture and livestock rearing are the most common occupations in Nigerian rural areas. Agricultral science was not taught in many rural secondary schools in Nigeria. It was not until 1976 when the Federal Military Government introduced the Operation Feed the Nation campaign, that the subject became compulsory in all secondary grammar schools in Nigeria (Jibowo 1992).

7.   Supplementary materials for teaching in rural schools are marginal or non existent. Libraries are poorly equipped or nonexistent. Social "promotion", a system of moving the students along so as to give chance for the in-coming group prevails. Such a system results in ill-educated students.

8.   The rate of failure is higher in rural schools than in urban schools. This leads to unfavourable image of the rural schools to such an extent that educated members of the society are not willing to send their children there.

9.   Schools are more broadly separated from the homes of the students in rural areas than urban areas. Some students have to trek about 1-6 kilometers or more from their homes to school. Only a few rural secondary schools provide buses for their students.

10. Students in rural schools are often more exposed to manual work than those in urban schools. They are often asked to spend some hours in the school garden, cutting school fields, sweeping the school compound, cleaning the school toilet, washing the desks and tables at the beginning of each semester or term. Such jobs are often given to hired labourers in some urban schools. Some teachers in both urban and rural schools at times ask students to work on their personal farms even after school hours. These types of activities make the students to be too tired to do their assignments or get enough rest for the following day's academic work.

3.4.1 Solution to the Rural School Problem

There are two possible approaches to providing solutions to the problems of rural schools (Jibowo 1992). First is to alter or change the structure of the rural schools from what they are at present, the other is to continue with the present arrangement but improve on them. Altering the structure involves consolidation of schools. In the United States, since 1879 when the National Education Association Report of the committee of twelve on rural schools was released, there has been a general agreement among educators and social scientists in the country that schools had problems which could be largely corrected through consolidation of schools. Consolidation is expected to bring the following merits:

·   More qualified teachers, more effective supervision and school administrations;
·   More adequate school located centrally.
·   Use of the consolidated school plant as a natural social centre for its arena;
·   A large and more heterogeneous range of contacts for rural children;
·   Increase school attendance;
·   Improved educational programme based on the social needs of rural children and aimed at improving them mentally and physically;
·   Adequate number of children in schools to facilitate healthy competition and social stimulus in school work, development of group and project work and satisfaction of extra-curricular activities;
·   Improvement in adult programmes in areas served by the consolidated schools;

The demerits/criticisms of consolidation are:

·   Students from low socio-economic background might bring in unwarranted attitudes to influence other students;
·   It brings students together in one school with disregard to community interest;
·   Putting students in buses from one community to another for long periods of the day is not in their interest. Schools which are consolidated within each community will eradicate much of the demerits.

The second possible approach to providing solution to the problems of rural schools is to continue with the present school structure, but improve on it via community efforts. The parent-teacher association may take the responsibility for providing solutions to some of the

constraints. This will be in form of cooperative relationship between the school and the community. If the parents want good quality education for their children, they should play an active role in the process of providing such education.

The third approach is the establishment of private schools to run side by side with those of government. Many groups and individuals such as missionary organisations, philanthropic organisations and private individuals could be allowed to established schools. The government should give guidelines which are to be followed by these groups and individuals for quality assurance.

A new approach to providing high quality education at the rural level is the establishment of rural schools by philanthropic organisations such as the International Lions Club and Rotary Club. Some of these organisations are so rich and endowed with so many talented members that they could go into community improvement, which is their major goal through the establishment of high quality rural schools.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Education like other social institutions is a system of social practices revolving around a valued function of the society - socialisation- in which those who participate, the pattern of interaction, the means adopted and the manifest ends are all culturally specified and sanctioned.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit gives the definition of the concept education. Various functions of education, types of education found in rural Nigeria and disadvantages of rural school systems have been highlighted. Remedies to these problems have also been discussed.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   List and discuss five constraints of rural school systems.
2   As a rural sociologist, discuss briefly two approaches to the remedies of rural school problems in Nigeria .

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Ekong E. Ekong (1988). *An Introduction to Rural Sociology.* Ibadan: Jumak Publishers Ltd. P. 227-229.

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UNIT 3   THE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we examined the concept of education and its functions, types of education and its constraints in rural school systems and finally their solutions. In this unit we are going to examine religious institutions.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain the meaning of religion;
·   identify the three major forms of religion in Nigeria; and
·   identify the universal functions of religion.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Meaning of Religion

Religion is defined as consisting of institutionalised systems of beliefs, values and symbolic practices which provide groups of men with solutions to their question of ultimate meaning - death, difficulties, suffering, etc. (Glock and Stark 1998). Milton (1996) has also defined religion as "the attempt to bring the relative, the temporary, and the painful things of life into relation with what is conceived to be permanent, absolute and cosmically optimistic". Religion is a universal human institution. It entails a set of basic beliefs and ritualistic practices. These beliefs and practices however vary from one religious organisation to another and responsible for the multiplication of religious organisations in society.

Religious practices and thoughts are often associated with descriptions such as power, invisible, mighty, all-pervasive omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, mysterious, miraculous, super-natural and everlasting being. There is a belief that God who is worshiped through religion does good things only. There is also a belief that God can do evil to those who violate his rules.

3.2   Rural Religion in Nigeria

Like in many parts of the developing world, religion is an important aspect of the social life of Nigerians in both rural and urban areas. There are three major forms of religion in Nigeria namely, Christianity, Islam (Mohammedanism) and the traditional religion. The first two have many denominations, while the third has many sub-types.

Christianity

Christianity was introduced during the period of colonialism, first into the southern part of the country. Today it has spread to many other parts of the country. However, there is a larger concentration of Christians in the south than in the northern states. Christians are commonly found in Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Lagos, Delta, Edo, Enugu, Akwa-Ibom, Oyo, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Abia, Ebonyi, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Rivers, Adamawa, Taraba and Plateau states. The other states have less proportions of Christians.

Different Christian denominations have been introduced from Europe and the United States. These are the Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, the Christ Apostolic Church and the Apostolic Faith. Several indigenous church denominations have been formed also. Some of these are the African Church, the African Methodist Church, Church of the Lord *Aladura*, the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, and the Celestial Church of Christ. Some other new Churches introduced are the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Students Christian Movement and the Four Square Gospel Church. The old denominations and the indigenous groups are more common in rural areas than the new introductions which are largely restricted to the urban areas. The rural branches of the denominations are frequently accountable to the church district and their urban parent bodies.

In small towns and cities, the church continues to attract massive following. With increase in social change of rising aspirations among urban residents, there has been corresponding increase in crime rate, armed robbery, cases of hired assassinations, motor accidents among others. People believe that by moving closer to God, they could be

spared of these sources of disaster. Others believe that by moving closer to God, their welfare and success in life could be ensured.

Islam

The rural Muslims belong to many denominations which have small buildings utilised as mosques. There special occasions are the birth day of Prophet Mohammed and the end of the annual fasting. While Christians pray in the churches on Sundays, Muslims pray in central mosques on Fridays. In addition, Christians pray in the morning and evening daily. Such occasions do not attract many Christians. On the other hand, Muslims are supposed to pray five times daily. Devoted Muslims obey this regularly. Both Christians and Muslims sometimes accompany their prayers with fasting when they have special request to make to God.

The Muslims in rural areas often go to the urban areas to celebrate special religious festivals. Among Moslem devotees, particularly the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups, the prayer period is so strictly observed that even when they have to pray during a journey they stop their vehicles by the road side and pray. The proportion of Muslims in the northern part of Nigeria is greater than that of Christians.

The Traditional Religion

This religion is observed mainly in the rural areas of Nigeria. The rural inhabitants of the various states in Nigeria still place much premium on the continued worship of traditional religions. Some of those who claim to be Christians and Muslims still have traditional gods in their rooms which had been passed to them from their ancestors to be worshipped. Among the Yoruba of south western Nigeria, many of the traditional gods are heroes and heroines who have become deified. Good examples are *Sango*, the god of thunder, *Ogun*, the god of Iron, *Iyemoja,* the goddess of water and *Ifa,* the god of divination. There are traditional gods which represent the spirits of the deceased ancestors. Examples of these are *Egungun*, the masquerade, *Oro*, the god of vibrating sounds, *Igunnu*, the lofty rotating god. The lofty rotating god actually originated from Nupe ethnic group of Niger State.

The annual festival for these gods provide occasions for pomp and pageantry among their adherents. Some even worship Yam during festivals so as to obtain a good harvest.

With increase in formal education, the influence of the traditional gods on the people has waned. This is due to the fact that many educated children of the adherents are no more willing to worship such gods.

Some that are not well committed worshippers have adopted either Christianity or Islam. Some reasons responsible for this change in traditional attitude include:

1.   The missionaries paired introduction of western education with Christianity. Christians are thus seen as embracing western education rather than believers in traditional religions. In addition, the schools attended by many youths taught them Christian religious worship or Islam. No traditional religion is taught in these schools. Many students thus graduate to imbibe the religious beliefs they are taught at school.

2.   The method of worshipping traditional gods is unhygienic as it involves the use of things like palm oil, blood of livestock, and food items which are exposed to flies and ants. Educated people are not willing to go through such processes.

3.   Many of those who worship traditional gods are old and illiterate. Many of those who are young and still worship them are illiterates. The upcoming literate generations of the society thus mostly accept either Christianity or Islam.

4.   It has become fashionable to be a Christian in the south and a Muslim in the north. On the other hand, it has become "primitive" to espouse traditional religious beliefs in the country. Young literate people are therefore willing to accept fashionable religions rather than the outmoded traditional gods.

3.3   Functions of Religion

Religion fulfils certain universal functions which include:

1.   The explanation of the unknown and irregular physical occurrences e.g flood, earthquakes, drought, lightening, etc.
2.   The justification of human existence by stating the nature and role of man in terms of super-natural design.
3.   Promotion of group solidarity as religion is a cultural possession.
4.   The celebration of human achievement. That is, most rituals are connected with some crucial periods in the society. Examples are puberty, planting of crops, harvest, etc.
5.   Strengthening of moral order and promotion of social control.
6.   Support for other social organisations and institutions, e.g schools, hospital, welfare agencies, etc.
7.   The rationalisation of individual suffering in the material world thereby making such suffering bearable (Ekong 1988).

4.0   CONCLUSION

Religion is an important aspect of the social life of Nigerians in both rural and urban areas. Virtually all the orthodox religions originated from the rural area. In fact, the world was basically rural when the religion evolved. Religion therefore, still has its strongholds more in the rural areas of the more developed societies than in the urban areas. Rural religion in Nigeria discussed above is not to infer that traditional religious practices are on the way to extinction. This is not likely to be the situation in the near future. The reason is that the rural areas still consist of strongly observed and protected traditional religious practices.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has examined the meaning of religion and rural religion in Nigeria. The universal functions which religion can fulfill were also highlighted. It is hoped that you understand the general concept of religious institutions by now.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Define the term religion.
2.   Identify and discuss three reasons why many educated children are no more willing to worship traditional gods.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Ekong, W. Ekong (1988). *An Introduction to Rural Sociology.* Ibadan: Jumak Publishers Ltd. 241-242.

Glock, Y. C. and Stark, R. (1998). *Religion and Society Tension.*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 19 - 21.

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UNIT 4   THE POLITICAL INSTITUTION

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Welcome again to another presentation from the course. In the last unit, we treated the religious institutions, where we discussed the meaning of religion, religion in Nigeria and its functions. In this unit, we are going to look at the political institution. The following unit objectives indicate what you should accomplish at the end of this unit.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain the concept of political institution
·   identify the features of the local government in rural areas
·   explain how rural people show considerable interest in political participation in their villages.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept of Political Institutions

Political institutions serve the people of a nation in form of governments in their traditional and modern forms which exist at the local, state and national levels. They serve executive, legislative and judiciary functions at each level and also relate citizens to each level of government in the performance of these functions. Each level of government also relates to the other in a systematic and coordinated fashion, frequently ensuring a division of labour. A system of political organisation is fashioned within which the philosophy and methodology of governance and selection of active participants in the political process evolve.

In more developed societies like the United States, the rural local government is frequently a continuation of the state or national government political structure. However, the native Indian tribes had their own system of rural local governance prior to the arrival of immigrants from Europe and during the early years of European settlement in that country (Gupta 2002). Today, much of such structures have been obliterated by the forces of modernisation which have swept across United States particularly during the last two centuries.

Less developed nations or countries like Nigeria still retain much of their traditional political forms at the local level,although the modern political structure exists side by side with the traditional forms. The latter which had influenced the lives of the citizens over a much longer period than the former, still controls much of the daily activities of the local people.

Unlike some African countries, Kenya did not have institution of political chiefs prior to the arrival of the British colonialists in that country. Most of the communities were ruled via a council of elders. In 1902, the colonial administration passed the village headmen ordinance, which among the other things, provided for the appointment of headmen by the colonial administrators. They were to rule on behalf of the colonialists at the local level.

Japanese rural area fiefs during feudal times were divided into districts. These were administered by magistrates who were appointed by the fief government. The districts consisted of villages *Mura*. In the urban areas were cities which consisted of wards and villages. Wards were subdivided into neighbourhoods of five to ten houses, *gonin gumi* or *junin gumi*. The district magistrates linked the fief administration with the people. They exercised legislative, executive and judicial powers.

3.2   Features of the Local Government in Rural Areas

The following features characterise the rural local government in many societies:

1.   Resistance to Change

The local government is the institution through which the local people show their political expressions, thus like other rural institutions it is highly resistant to change. The traditional rural local governing processes in many societies have remained the same over centuries. Prior to the introduction of the western systems of government in many African countries, the traditional system of government had even remained the same.

2.   Informality

Local government structures and processes are highly informal. They are governed by traditional mores, practices and relationships.

3.   A High Degree of Autonomy

The local government enjoys a high degree of autonomy irrespective of the state or national government which could be a monarchy, republic, democracy or an oligarchy. This is because comprehensive local affairs cannot be supervised by the central government which is far from the local sense. The influence of the central government becomes more effectivet in governing the area with increase in transportation and communication, although the high degree of autonomy is still common in most rural districts of the world.

4.   A High Degree of Stability

Even in terms of rapid social change brought about by the activities of the modern central governments which open up projects in rural areas, change in the traditional rural system of government is often gradual.

5.   Rule by Discretion

This is a common feature where mores predominate the ruling process. Taxation, administration of justice, maintenance of facilities such as schools, roads and bridges are informally executed. However, such traditional political institutions have been largely replaced by central governments with growing difficulties of virtually all societies.

6.   Lack of Specialised Political Leadership

Those who lead in other spheres of rural life frequently take the mantle of political leadership. In Nigeria, among the Yoruba and Bassa-nge people, seniority in terms of age, wisdom, membership of the lineage of leaders in the community and social standing, are some of the criteria for becoming the *Baale* or *Madaki* of a village ruling council. In many Latin American countries like Colombia, there is no financial gain for becoming the *Alcalde* (Jibowo 1992). This is true of many other rural local governments in other countries.

7.   Complement of Formal Local Government

The traditional rural local government frequently helps the formal government in implementing some of the programmes at the local level. For example, collection of taxes, criminals identification, prevention of

crime, security and safety of the rural dwellers are best ensured by the village governments. In some Yoruba villages, Bassa-nge, Igala among others, prevention of crime, for example, is carried out by engaging night-watchmen or vigilantes who are paid by the village residents to help keep vigil, prevent and fight crime. The number and effectiveness of the police force is so limited, in many other less developed countries, that their influence in crime prevention is virtually non-existent at the village level.

8.   Subjection to the Control of the Central Government

The rural local government takes instructions from the formal local government, which it frequently implements. The formal local government in turn receives instructions from the state government.

9.   Lack of Formal Means of Enforcing its Regulations

The traditional village government depends on mores, folkways, imposition of fine, and similar informal means of enforcing its regulations. Although its regulations are frequently obeyed because of the existing spirit of sodality among the inhabitants, disobedient members can occasionally be forced to comply. With increasing influence of formal political activities at the village level, disobedient members who are bolstered by party loyalty frequently put the council in positions of powerlessness to enforce its rulings.

10.   Definite Pattern of Governance

The rural local government has its own pattern of governance, communication and decision-making. Among the Yoruba people of Nigeria, each village is governed by a village council. This council is headed by the *Baale*, who chairs all council meetings. He holds this position for life. He is assisted in many cases, by a deputy. A village crier is instructed by him to call meetings of village heads of households on important occasions.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is a political institution?

3.3   Rural Political Participation

The farmers indicate a considerable interest in political participation in their villages. Political gatherings and campaigns are occasions for large assemblages of rural people to meet. This encourages solidarity among the rural people. In Nigeria, the campaign meetings are accompanied by

drumming, dancing and acrobatic displays to meet important political figures. Speech-making in support of a political party whose leaders are on such campaign tours is the main item on the agenda for convincing eligible voters. State and local government level leaders of political parties meet with village leaders and the electorate from time to time to discuss political issues. There are frequent occasions for speech making and merriment by farmers, farmers'-leaders, state and local government political parties. As rival political supporters sometimes clash during campaigns, and for the safety of politicians who sometimes attack one another, thugs are often hired to protect the politicians. This is because police protection is often inadequate, and because of the design of some politicians to use the thugs to cause trouble for members of the opposing political party.

The casting of ballot to elect their representatives is a common practice in many countries, apart from those in which military governments have forced themselves into political power for the greater part of the history of nationhood. Rural people vote more in relation to the number of people of voting age than the urban people.

Rural people vote more for personality rather than the party. One party is also more likely to be favoured by majority of the rural people than urban people who are more likely to divide themselves among the parties favoured. In Nigeria, party support among rural people has been on ethnic basis. The predominant party favoured in rural south-western part by the urban people has been led by the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo (1909-1987).

Radicalism and revolution have taken place among rural farmers, particularly when ownership and control of their land is threatened. Farmers have often then resorted to violent actions. The farmer holiday movement of 1932 and 1933 in the Midwestern part of the United States, which also influenced some southern states, was an example of farmers' revolt which sought to prevent dispossession of farmers. The land use Act (1978) in Nigeria recognised this potential danger by making provision for continued use by farmers, of plots of land which they were cultivating at the time of the Act. Farmers often favour constructive measures and those which improve their own welfare. They have opposed civil rights regulations and favoured price support bills for agricultural products in the United States (Jibowo 1989).

4.0   CONCLUSION

We have examined in fairly general terms the issue of political institutions. By now, you should be able to understand the conceptual issues of political institutions.

5.0   SUMMARY

We have examined the general concept of political institutions, features of the local government in rural areas and rural political participation.

60   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List and discuss eight features of the local government in rural areas

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Jibowo, G. (1992). *Essentials of Rural Sociology.* Abeokuta: Gbemi Sodipo Press Ltd. Nigeria: 142 - 147.

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Gupta, P. (2002). *Local Government in Japan.* Stanford California: Stanford University Press. 10 - 13.

UNIT 5   RURAL ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Body
       3.1   The Meaning of the Economic Institution
       3.2   The Significance of Economic Institutions to Rural
              Farmers
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

You would recall that in the last unit, we treated the political institution where the general concept of political institution and its participation in rural areas were discussed. In this unit, we will look at the rural economic institution.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain the meaning of the economic institution
·   identify the significance of economic institutions to the rural farmers.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Meaning of the Economic Institution

The economic institution in any culture is often concerned with the arrangement of relationships between people for the sustained production, distribution and consumption of goods and services within that culture or between it and another culture (Mbiti 2003). The family as we have earlier discussed, is the basic economic unit in any society. That is, it acts as the basic unit of production and consumption. As a society advances and becomes more complex, specialisation of functions often sets in to the extent that the function of production and distribution of goods becomes transferred to industrial and commercial firms. The family however, still plays the important role of providing

the labour or manpower for production and distribution within these organisations.

The basic factors of production in any economy have been identified as land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship. Karl (1992), however, holds that of all these, labour is the most crucial and that labour produces capital and entrepreneurship. In addition to labour, land is equally very important.

3.2   The Significance of economic Institutions to Rural Farmers

The economic institution is one of the most significant dimensions of rural life. The institution provides the need of the rural farmers in different ways through provision of credit, provision of land, provision of labour, purchase of equipments and supplies, and marketing of farm produce.

These needs are provided in rural communities where family farms predominate. In this situation, the initiatives of individual and family farmers are mobiliaed to look for these services for their farm development.

The foregoing economic services are often performed in rural areas through established rural organisations such as:

1.   Cooperative societies performed through cooperative efforts of the rural farmers;
2.   Government of privately established institutions serving the rural area like rural banks, government parastatal organisations such as agro-service centres where farming inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, chemicals, tractor services are made available to farmers at subsidized rates, cooperations which are established by the government to produce and market agricultural products, marketing companies and commodity boards which are to purchase agricultural commodities from producers and other large scale buyers (Akingbade 2003);
3.   The efforts of individual farmers who look for these services from other individuals and groups.

 We are now going to discuss each service in more detail.

a)   Provision of Farm Credit

Farm credit is money provided to farmers to meet the cost of executing various operations on their farm enterprises. The money is often spent on aspects such as project farm planning, acquisition of land where it

cannot be obtained, land survey, labour, procurement of farm inputs and marketing. Credit is therefore needed at all stages of agricultural production process.

Credit is provided to farmers in two ways. First is cash credit, which is money loaned to farmers. Second is credit in kind, which consists of farm inputs like improved seeds, agro-chemicals, fertilizers and herbicides, which are given to farmers to cover a part of the loan granted to farms.

Cash credit is often provided by the Banks. Agricultural Credit Cooperation and Nigeria Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Banks (NACRDB) in many States in Nigeria, give credit in both cash and kind to farmers. Collateral security is however required at times.

b)   Acquisition of Land

This is the second manifestation of the significance of the economic institution in the rural area. Acquisition of land for agricultural and other economic purposes is of paramount importance. The system of land tenure in the world falls into two major parts:

i)   State ownership and control, and

ii)   Individual ownership and control. The former has developed largely in the communist countries; the latter is predominant in other parts of the world (Njike 2000). Under the state ownership of land, allocation of this resource by groups and for various purposes is usually done by the government. Under individual ownership, land acquisition is frequently through rent, lease, borrowing or outright purchase of land.

c)   The Land Use Degree

The Ogun State of Nigeria Gazette 27 (1978) was one of the instruments which published the decree. It stated that it was in the public interest that the right of all Nigerians to the land of Nigeria be preserved by law. In addition, it was in the interest of the public that the rights of all Nigerians to use and enjoy Nigerian land and its natural fruits in enough quantity to sustain themselves and their families should be preserved. The right to allocate land to applicants and withdraw such land when necessary was vested in the Governor of each state. A land use and allocation committee was set up in each state to advice the Governor on the implementation of the decree. A land use advisory committee was

setup in each Local Government Area to advise on lands in rural areas (Jibowo 1992).

The major criticism of the decree is that it allows the rich land developers to acquire large areas of land in various parts of the country without paying much money. The provision of the decree which limits the area of land which could be acquired should be enforced and possibly reviewed to reduce the area further which each person could acquire, so that land could be available for prospective users.

d)   Supply of Labour

Rural labour supply for agricultural development in various parts of the world is through these major sources such as human labour, farm animal sources, and use of modern machines namely ploughs, harrows, harvesters mounted on tractors. The source of labour appears to be indicative of the level of development of each nation. In the underdeveloped and developing parts of the World, which include the major parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America, reliance is placed on human labour to execute many farm operations in the rural areas. Land clearing, cultivation, planting of crops, maintenance operations, harvesting and haulage are carried out manually (Baldwin 1997).

The tools used include hoes and cutlasses which demand much human labour. Basket is used for haulage of products from the farm. This involves carrying of products on shoulder or heads. Transportation involves trekking on most occasions.

e)   Acquisition of Technological Equipment and Supplies

The major essence of agricultural technology is the acquisition of equipment and supplies for the improvement of agricultural enterprises. Technology is appropriately described as the study, mastery, ultilisation and systematic application to industrial arts of the knowledge of manufacturing methods (Makanjuola,1998). Agricultural technology may then be defined as the systematic study and application of the knowledge of manufacturing methods to the development of agriculture.

Agricultural technology exists in many forms. According to Olayide (1990), agricultural technology falls into one or a combination of many forms. First is tool-embodied technology, which is symbolised by many tools and machine such as hammers, weeders, planters, stumping machines and sprayer. Second is process-embodied technology which is found as plans, formulae, blue-prints and procedures embodied in the production and processing of farm goods and services into final products. Third is process - oriented technology which assumes detailed knowledge of properties of chemicals or physical elements and

accumulated experience of sequence to follow in production. Fourth is decision - oriented technology which encompassed practical knowledge used by planners, technicians, engineers and producers in analysing bodies of information to determine the practical sequence which might be meaningfully arrived at from such information. Many of the tools and equipment used by the small and large scale farmers belong to the first form of technology as classified above.

The technology chosen by the small farmers has to meet some basic requirements if it is to be effective.

a)   **Technically Feasibility**

      It should be able to increase productivity by employing its technical elements;

b)   **Social Acceptability**

      It should be compatible with community structures norms, values and beliefs;

c)   **Economic Feasibility**

      It should be characterised by profitability, compatibility with the existing farming practices and systems, dependability and potential for risk minimisation;

d)   **Infrastructural Compatibility**

      It should be capable of accommodation by the existing level of the infrastructure;

e)   **Other Requirements**

      It should have employment enhancing and generating potential. It should make optimum use of basic production resources such as land, labour, water, capital and entrepreneurship so as to maximise output.

The farm inputs or supplies are land, labour and traditional capital investment including off-farm purchased inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, improved seeds and seedlings. Land is the most important of these inputs. Much of the arable land in Nigeria (70%) has not yet been put into cultivation. However, increased population pressure particularly in the cocoa growing area of the southern states and the groundnut growing areas of the northern states, has led to

shortening of the fallow period and consequently lowers soil fertility. The figures in Table 5.1 indicate the effect of population pressure in shortening the fallow period to about two years in Ogun State, fourteen months in Oyo State and 1 - 6 years in Ondo State. These periods are too short to allow adequate and fertility replenishment during the fallow period.

Labour is used in all phases of production.

Table 5.1: Fallow periods in Ogun, Oyo and Ondo States.

Fallow period	Ogun State			Oyo Staet			
	N(N=198)%			N(N=262)%	%	N	%
1 year	41	21	1-2	168	64	11	4
2 years	121	61				115	43
3 years	-	-	3-4	34	13	129	48
4 years	10	5		-		-	-
No response	26	13		60	23	14	5
	198	100		262	100	269	100

Source: Jibowo, A. A. and Adepetu, J. A (1995): "Fertilizer use and Soil testing Extension in South Western Nigeria". Federal Department of Agriculture, Land Resources, State Based Unit, Ibadan, Publication Series P. 38.

f)   Marketing of Farm Produce

In more developed nations, marketing of agricultural commodities is carried out largely by specialised marketing agencies. Examples are food crops, livestock and dairy. Some individual farmers or groups of farmers engage in the production and marketing aspects of agriculture. In many less developed countries, however, many farmers operate on a small scale. They frequently combine both production and marketing of their farm enterprises.

Storage and transportation of agricultural enterprises are carried out on the farm. Marketing is carried out at the wholesale and retail levels. In Nigeria storage is only for some months or short period. Some farmers use their crops as collaterals for obtaining loans from traders. Food crops are stored in pots, soil, jute bags, and rafters, hung above the fire place. Only a few farmers use the steel or concrete silos provided by the government.

Transportation of food crops in Nigeria is done mainly by head and lorries. Rail and water transportation are minimal. Water transportation is common in riverine areas of the country. Transportation costs vary according to the means used. Transportation problems such as bad roads, irregularity and excessively high charge of lorries and other transport facilities prevent smooth transportation of agricultural commodities from the farm or village to the markets.

Like in many other less developed countries, marketing efficiency is low in Nigeria. This is because of many problems such as:

i)   Low level of technical efficiency in processing;
ii)   Constant price fluctuations;
iii)   Inadequate transportation and storage,
iv)   Poor market knowledge and information, and
iiv)   Lack of standardised quality and quantity measures which prevents responsiveness of marketing system to consumer direction and lower efficiency of commodity pricing (Adeyokunnu 1990).

To improve marketing of agricultural commodities:

(i)   The government should establish storage, transportation and processing facilities at low rate for farmers or by individuals or groups of farmers themselves;
(ii)   Cooperative marketing by producers, traders and consumers should allow greater systematisation and standardisation of marketing;
(iii)   Marketing education and information should be made available to all people concerned with marketing so as to arrive at judicious marketing decisions.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit discusses the economic institution which is one of the important dimensions of rural life. By now you should be able to comprehend the general concept of the topic.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has explained the meaning of the economic institution as a concept. It has also highlighted the importance of economic institutions to rural farmers.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Define economic institution
2.   (a)   What is agricultural technology?
      (b)   Identify and briefly discuss the basic requirements of agricultural technology
      (c)   Why is marketing efficiency low in less developed countries?

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MODULE 3   SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN RURAL SOCIETY

Unit 1   Social Interactions
Unit 2   Rural Development in Nigeria
Unit 3   Rural Communities

UNIT 1   SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we treated the economic institution and its importance to rural farmers. In this unit, we will look at the various social interactions in the society.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain the concept of social interactions in the society
·   identify the different types of social interaction in the society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept of Interaction

Social interaction entails interpersonal contact, reciprocal response and inner adjustment of behaviour to the action of others (Wood Ward 1991). Social interaction which assumes a repetitive pattern becomes a social process. Park and Burgress(1981) defined the social process as those "respective forms of behaviour commonly found in social life." Commonly identified in this category are the processes of cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation, assimilation and acculturation. This may be grouped further as associative and antagonistic social processes. The associative types include co-operation, accommodation and assimilation while the antagonistic types include competition and conflict. It is however, necessary to note that in practice, these social processes are not strictly mutually exclusive but exist as reciprocal aspects of the same social experience.

When some cultures coexist in a society through mutual adaptation, they are able to do this through the process o accommodation. One culture may absorb the other through assimilation, when two cultures are blended, the process involved is acculturation. When all the components of a culture are uniformly distributed throughout a society, the process involved is homogenisation. It is thus important that a student of rural sociology should understand how these and other rural social processes are operating.

3.2   Types of Social Interactions

3.2.1 Cooperation

As a result of human limitations in respect of time, energy, expert knowledge and other resources, both individual as well as group goals can be more efficiently and less strenuously attained via combined efforts of two or more individuals. This form of social interaction in which two or more people work together as a team to achieve a common goal(s) is termed cooperation.

People cooperate for different reasons. Among these is the need to obtain personal advantage of benefit as a result of working with others which the individual would otherwise have found difficult to attain working all by himself. Cooperation can also arise due to the need to attain group goals e.g. in community development activities and village improvement unions.

Situations or circumstances may call for cooperation even among otherwise antagonistic groups or individuals, e.g. families, village groups and clans have been known to corporate. They abandon their differences temporarily in order to jointly fight a common cause. Physical hazards like flood, landslide, locust infestation or menace of wild beasts affecting contiguous villages who are otherwise at war with each other, may call for temporary cooperative action to eradicate the common annoyance.

Cooperation is thus an interaction which is oriented towards specific goal(s). This goal may be a shared goal in which case the ultimate reward is a joint reward and there is a solitary relationship between the cooperators as in the case of communal land clearing for joint cultivation. The goals may just be convenient while the rewards are purely personal in which case the relationship between the cooperators would be symbolic in nature. The relationship between the doctors and patients typify this kind of cooperation. The patient needs cure or relief from pain and disease while the doctor wants the enhancement of his personal prestige, that of the hospital organisation he works and that of his profession. These two need each other in order to realise their individual rewards.

Symbiotic cooperation exists in human interaction. Cooperation is usually classified as either formal or informal pending upon the level of spontaneity or deliberate plan involved.

Formal cooperation involves deliberate and rational interaction between persons or groups. The cooperators may not necessarily be acquired intimately but cooperate on contractual basis with the expected mutual obligations being spelt out in advance. In some instances of formal cooperation, other elements of compulsion or coercion may be involved. For example in such communal labour as village road maintenance, village members are supposed to cooperate but any one who fails to turn up for the work may be fined.

Informal cooperation is more or less spontaneous solidarity behaviour among members of such primary groups as the family and neighbourhood. It entails no formal compulsion or contract but may grow out of the need to give assistance, strengthen filial bonds or for mere companionship. Generally the cooperators in this case are known to one another on an intimate, face-to-face basis and can lay claims on each others assistance at any time. In Nigeria, among the Ibibio of the south western part, young girls may combine to do weeding on their parents' farms. Men also cooperate in supplementary labour such as house building. Rural people in Nigeria cherish cooperation and practice it in various forms.

3.2.2 Competition

Competition is that form of social interaction in which people struggle for the possession of material and non-material rewards which are in limited or scarce supply. In polygamous families, the wives compete for the affection of the husband and children often compete for the attention of their parents. In village, people compete for offices and recognition and occasionally also compete for fame through organised sports and games. In Nigeria today, the number of people requiring place in schools and universities far out numbered the existing facilities thereby leading to competition for admission. Therefore, entrance examinations, aptitude tests, interviews, and payment of non-refundable deposits are all methods of eliminating competitors to the barest minimum. Competition thus serves to allocate scarce resources. It also sharpens individual initiative and may enhance productivity.

In its ideal form, competition should be impersonal. That is, the major focus of attention should be the scarce reward rather than other competitors. When the reward is very limited in quantity however, competition tends to be keen thereby engendering hostility between competitors. This personalised form of competition is often known as rivalry.

The negative aspect of competition is that it may breed hostility and animosity on the part of the loser towards the winner. Thus rather than foster systemic linkage, competition, may lead to systemic isolation. Systems that must work together must therefore minimise competition.

People generally do not like competition. Monopoly, division of market, price fixing and "fair-trade" laws are techniques for reducing business competition. In some bureaucratic organisations, promotion on the basis of seniority rather than productivity has been utilised to limit competition. In some cases, these anti-competitive practices are supported by governmental action while in some others, they are opposed.

3.2.3 Conflict

Conflict is a form of social interaction in which the actors seek to obtain scarce rewards by eliminating or weakening other contenders (Ekong 1988). This may take the form of a fist fight, threats, legistilation or total annihilation.

In Nigerian village communities conflict may arise where there is difference of opinion between group leaders or in situations where one group tends to be exploiting the other. Conflict between personalities

may lead to group quarrel and the division of the village into several fractions. Challenge to the security of the village may also engender conflict, for example land dispute. This often triggers off a strong group defence reaction resulting in the reappearance of old alignments with each group trying to obtain dominant position over the other.

Relationship to a single act by an individual if followed with a rebuttal may soon grow into group conflict e.g quarrels between children often bring the mothers into conflict.

In community work, proposed changes or innovation may be viewed apprehensively and as a challenge to the status quo thereby engendering conflict. Similarly, the use of pressure group by a certain part of the community to gain an advantage over the rest may result in conflict. The change agency may be regarded by the disadvantaged section or part of the community in such a case as biased.

Individual conflicts may entail intensive feeling of animosity towards each other. Conflicting individuals may refuse to greet each other or do anything together. However in group conflict, there may not be ill-feelings against any particular individual. The interest of the group as a whole rather than individual relationship determines conflict alignment.

Conflict has both negative and positive effects. Its negative effects include the disruption of social unity; generation of bitterness which may lead to destruction and bloodshed, generation of inter-group tension; disruption of normal channels of cooperation and the diversion of members' attention from group goals.

Until there is an overt conflict, people may not know that certain wrongs or nagging issues exist. Therefore, conflict leads to a clear definition of issues. Once such issues have been identified they can then be amicably resolved. During conflict, group cohesion and solidarity increase and this positive effect can be directed for a more efficient attainment of group goals. In addition, conflict keeps the group alert to members' interest and such awareness helps to prevent future conflicts.

3.2.3.1 Conflict Resolution

Persons and groups who must work together must minimise conflict between them. There is no specific formula for resolving conflict but there are certain general procedures and approaches which might be used either by themselves or in combination. Generally, the first aim in conflict resolution is to minimise the feeling of difference and calm down the contending parties thereby creating a conducive atmosphere for the parties to coexist or work together until a more permanent

solution could be found for their difference. This temporary working agreement between parties in conflict is the process of accommodation. It enables two strangers or parties to live together and form a family. Accommodation may take different forms depending upon the circumstances and the qualities of the group involved. Gupta (1989) identified eight major forms. These include the truce, displacement, institutionalised release of hostility, compromise, super ordination, segregation, third party roles in compromise and toleration.

1.   Truce

This is a term used to describe a temporary cessation of hostilities without the issues being settled so as to give the conflicting parties time to either re-group, attend to certain religious rites or observance or for solution to the conflict to be ironed out. Therefore, a truce may be declared for a specific number of days or for an indefinite period. For example, during the Nigerian Civil War, a truce period was often kept whenever a major peace conference was to be held.

2.   Displacement

This is a process of ending one conflict by replacing it with another - usually via a process of scapegoating. For example, a woman may pick a quarrel with her husband or man friend for infidelity or unfaithfulness only to later make up by blaming a third party for peddling unfounded stories which led to the misunderstanding in the first place. By so doing they transfer the hostility between them to a third party, who now is the scapegoat. Scapegoating results in immediate redirection of hostilities and may lead to a more lasting resolution of the conflict if the contending parties are firmly convinced of the culpability of the scapegoat.

3.   Institutionalised Release of Hostilities

This is a process whereby parties in conflict are given the opportunity to release their hostilities either on each other or on other objects. Usually, the process is either formally arranged and or guided by certain expressed or implicitly understood norms. Among many ethnic groups in Nigeria, wrestling matches are organised both for entertainment and as occasions for formal release of hostilities. Disputants in some cases may engage in the use of abusive language on each other. However, in all instances, the disputants are bound by societal norms. Similarly in wrestling and boxing, the rules of the game must be observed.

4.   Compromise

When domination or complete defeat is unlikely to be attained by either of the parties in conflict, they may want to accept less than the full goals they had originally aimed at in order to end the conflict. This is the case of compromise. Compromise often occurs between equally powerful, antagonists. When one party is more powerful but continued conflict seems disadvantageous, compromise can still be reached but with the more powerful party conceding less to the weaker party.

5.   Super-ordination

This involves the ending of conflict through the total defeat and submission of one group by another. Institutionalised methods of releasing hostilities may lead to super ordination as one party may be declared the champion. However, super ordination may or may not on its own, involve fighting according to rules (i.e. it is not institutionalised). When people are given the chance to release their hostilities, the immediate objective may not be that of establishing speaking order among them but that of giving vent to their annoyance.

6.   Segregation

In situations, where parties in dispute stubbornly refuse to yield to any conciliatory moves by third parties, they may be segregated or placed far apart from each other either to allow tempers cool down or place a permanent distance between them in order to maintain peace in a social system. In the past, segregation in most traditional Nigeria communities used to take the form of banishment or exile, or selling of the unyielding party to slavery.

7.   Third Party Roles in Compromise

In rural areas generally, whenever there is quarrel, other members of the family compound and neighbours would intervene to bring peace between the disputants. The third party may be an individual, usually an elderly person than either of the disputants or a group of people, who have some influence over them. In marital disputes for instance, extended family members on either side may play the third party.

8.   Toleration

In this case, the contending parties agree to disagree knowing that neither of them can or should win. People accept each other's right to differ because certain values may be too much cherished to be compromised or victory may be too costly to bear. Most social systems

maintain their identities because of the willingness of people to tolerate each other.

3.2.4 Accommodation

This is the adjustment by a person or group to a conflict or threat, resulting in the recognition and acceptance of the relations which define the status of a person or persons in the groups or a larger social organisation. Subordination and super-ordination accompany accommodation when people mix up or mingle. In the rural family, the father is the superior. He normally controls the actions of others. In his absence, the mother steps into his shoes. In her absence, the eldest child takes over the mantle of family leadership. When the culturally acknowledged leader speaks, others accept his authority, listen and obey his instruction. The existing pattern of accommodation has enabled each person to accept his status in the group.

The share-cropping system is that in which a farm is given temporarily for a share cropper to maintain on behalf of the farm owner. Each has accepted his position in the process of accommodation involved. This process is still practised in many rural areas of the world. It was widely practised in the United States rural areas immediately after the civil war, but has been abandoned since the world war after widespread mechanisation began (Jibowo 192).

Another form of accommodation between the labourers and the farm owners was to receive cash wages from the farm owners for labours carried out on the field. This form of accommodation is widely in use in many developing countries. In Nigeria, hired labourers are frequently paid agreed-upon wages on daily basis. Such a rate differs slightly from one community to another depending on economic situation of each place. In general, the nearer a rural area is to a large city, the higher the labour wage rate. Also, the nearer a rural community is to an industrial community, the higher the rate of hiring labourers.

3.2.5 Assimilation

This is the process by which people of diverse cultural and racial origins achieve enough social solidarity in the same geographical territory to maintain a nation. An immigrant has been assimilated when he has acquired enough cultural traits with others. Assimilation involves a socio-political connotation as well. A person may acquire all the cultural traits of the new society, but may not be accepted or assimilated for socio-political reasons. According to Smith and Sopf (1990), some black people have acquired all the while people's culture in the United States, yet they have not been assimilated into the society. Similarly, the share-

cropping system in the southern United States about 3-4 decades ago assimilated the white share croppers into the share-cropping culture. The social class, expectations, labour and other features which characterised the black share-croppers also characterise the white share-croppers.

In Nigeria, many people of the Ibo origin from states such as Imo and Anambra have been assimilated into the Yoruba subculture. They were born in Lagos, spent most of their lives there, except that they occasionally visit their home towns for Easter and Christmas celebrations. They went to school and picked up employment among the Yoruba people in Lagos. When they speak Yoruba, wear Yoruba dress and interact with Yoruba people, it is not easy to know that they are of Ibo parentage. Some of them have also been assimilated into the Hausa subcultures. These were the children of those who went to the north to trade. The rate of assimilation of Ibo into Hausa culture was reduced by the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-1970 and religious crises of the 1990s, which made many Ibo people to leave the north for their homes. Assimilation of Yoruba into Ibo and Hausa subcultures as well as Hausa into Ibo and Ibo subcultures is also going on, but at a slow pace.

3.2.6 Acculturation

This is the acquisition of new cultural traits by individuals or groups and the use of these in their new patterns of living. Acculturation has no biological connotation involved in it. However to some sociologists, assimilation involves some biological mixing of people with the new culture. Introduction and diffusion of new agricultural innovations (technologies) is a form of acculturation in many societies because it involves blending the culture of the country from where the technology was developed with that of the recipient society, in relation to the specific farm practice. An example is the introduction of the hybrid maize into Nigeria through the Institute of International Tropical Agriculture (IITA). IITA is expected to have a widespread impact on the maize production culture in Nigeria. The techniques of producing this maize is expected to influence the cutlass-hoe system of maize production by many farmers in Nigeria.

Acculturation also refers to changes in culture arising from constant contact with other cultures. In Nigeria today, European modes of dressing and a number of other forms of foreign culture have greatly changed the indigenous culture due to constant contact.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define the following terms:

(i)   Homogenisation
(ii)   Assimilation
(iii)   Acculturation
(iv)   Accommodation

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has introduced you to the various types of social interactions. You should have learnt how these and other processes are operating.

5.0   SUMMARY

The main points in this unit are:

1.   The concept of social interactions in the society.
2.   Various kinds of social interactions such as

a)   Cooperation

A kind of social interaction where two or more people work together as a team to achieve a common goal.

b)   Competition

An interaction in which people struggle for the possession of material and non-material rewards which are in limited supply.

c)   Conflict

A form of social interaction in which the actors endeavour to obtain scarce rewards by reducing other contenders.

d)   Accommodation

A process in which same culture exists in a society via mutual adaptation.

e)   Assimilation

A process by which people of broad cultures and social origins achieve sufficient social solidarity to maintain a country.

f)   Acculturation

A process which involves the blending of two cultures.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

a)   Define the term "conflict".
b)   Identify and discuss five approaches to conflict resolution.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2   RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   The Meaning of Rural Development
        3.2   Goals of Rural Development
        3.3   Strategies for Rural Development
        3.4   Approaches to Rural Development
        3.5   Stages of Rural Development
        3.6   Predicaments of Rural Development
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

You would recall that in the last unit, we treated Social Interactions in Rural Society. In this unit we are going to look at the concept and issues of Rural Development in Nigeria.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain the meaning of Rural Development
·   understand the significance of Rural Development
·   identify the strategies and approaches to Rural Development
·   explain the stages of Rural Development
·   identify the problems of Rural Development.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Meaning of Rural Development

Rural Development is the transformation of the rural community into socially, economically, politically, educationally, orderly and materially desirable conditions, with the aim of improving the quality of life of the rural population. The workshop on Rural Development in Africa and the workshop group on integrated approach to Rural Development (1996) defined Rural Development in terms of uniform distribution of national resources. It conceived of Rural Development as a comprehensive way

of social transformation which recognises that national development must involve all parts of the population. Furthermore, it was defined as a socio-economic process which seeks to bring about a more equitable distribution of resources and incomes within a society. It involves the integration of the rural poor, which constitutes the large majority of the population of most developing countries, into the national economy.

In many developing countries, agriculture constitutes the occupation of a large majority of rural people. Therefore, agricultural development is an important aspect of Rural Development. Many industries also use agricultural raw materials. For example, the textile industries use cotton; canning industries use fruits and vegetables; beverage industries use cocoa, coffee and tea; vegetable oil industries use vegetables; animal products industries use diary, cheese, butter, broiler, sugar industries utilise sugarcane. Rural industrialisation is thus a significant aspect of rural development.

3.2   Goals of Rural Development

Rural Development aims at attaining some goals or objectives in the rural community. Some of these are:

1. Improved distribution between the rural and urban areas to bridge or narrow the differences between the two parts of the society.
2. Provision of welfare needs in forms of housing, health and infrastructural facilities such as clean and regular water, motorable roads and supply of electricity.
3. Full and productive employment in rural area/community. This is to change the situation in which many rural people are under-employed and operate only at the subsistence level, so that they can apply their full productive capacities and generate commensurate benefit from their efforts.
4. Increased productivity via sensitisation of the rural people to their potentials for development, and acquiring education and training needed to translate the potentials into productive efforts.
5. Increased food production. This is the primary agricultural development dimension of rural development. It is expected to lead to a state of improved quality and quantity of food available to the citizens.
6. Wide diffusion of literacy so as to allow rural people participate intelligently in the political, economic and social activities of their society.

The foregoing goals can be achieved through coordinated planning and implementation of rural development programmes at the local, state and

national levels. National integrated philosophies, policies and procedures for rural development will help facilitate the efforts.

3.3   Strategies for Rural Development

A rural development strategy is a systematic, comprehensive and reliable tool aimed at bringing about desirable rural transformation. A strategy for rural development is expected to produce results; therefore it is tested and found effective under certain circumstances before being introduced under similar circumstances in another setting. Its expected effectiveness could be due to the fact that it is developed from tested variables. It could also be because it is developed on the basis of experience which had worked.

The strategies which have been adopted for rural development by many developing countries, according to Williams (1998) include:

1.   Community development
2.   Agricultural extension, and
3.   Integrated rural development.

Community Development

Community development aims at using the rural people to develop themselves through self-initiative and motivation, with minimum assistance from government. It aims at social development such as prevention and control of juvenile delinquency, and community development through self-help projects, health and nutritional improvement projects and similar projects. It involves community members in planning and implementing programmes for their own development. It stimulates or encourages government and other development agencies to provide technical advice and materials in planning and implementing the projects.

The multi-purpose community development agent who is trained in many aspects of community life such as health, agriculture, education, cooperatives, is stationed at the local level where he works with local people. To achieve this, the community development worker needs to make use of the services of specialised agencies of government in the rural areas. This is because it is not easy for an agent to be skilled in different areas calling for development attention in the rural sector.

The problems in utilising this approach include these:

a)   There is often no formal coordination between the agencies working at the local level, thus the community development

agent has no power to enforce cooperation by other development agencies;

b)   It is not very easy for one person to be effectively trained in all sectors of rural development; hence the community development agent may become ineffective.

Education which is the cornerstone of all forms of development should be provided. Therefore, it is advisable that rural people are educated on how to develop themselves. Even when infrastructural facilities are provided, the rural people should still be educated on how to maintain them and even introduce others to them.

Agricultural Extension

Agricultural extention aims at helping rural farmers to bring about agricultural development. It achieves this by facilitating education of farmers to improve their skills, knowledge and attitude as related to agricultural development. It passes the results of research on how to solve the problems of agriculture to farmers and encourages the application of these as well as other improved technical knowledge in agriculture by farmers. It takes the problems of farmers to the research institutions for solutions. It uses demonstration farms, farm visit, audio-visual aids and methods in teaching farmers. Agricultural extension concentrates on agricultural development and encourages related development agencies to extend their services to the rural areas; community development tries to provide some of the services. The trainings received by the village level agricultural extension worker and community development agents are thus aimed at equipping them to perform their various roles.

Ineffectiveness in promoting agricultural development is a glaring deficiency of the agricultural extension strategy. The main reasons for this include.

a)   Inadequate number of extension agents who are to teach farmers improved farm practices;
b)   Inadequate credit facilities to buy farm inputs;
c)   Lack of proper use of local leaders to assist extension agents in teaching farmers;
d)   Lack of adequate planning of extension programmes;
e)   Inadequate motivation of extension agents. If these and similar problems are vastly solved, extension should become an effective instrument for agricultural development.

Integrated Rural Development

Integrated rural development strategy combines the development of the various areas of the rural society including educational, agricultural, health nutrition, rural electrification, rural water supply and cooperative simultaneously. The strategy also aims at improved employment, access to production resources, access to social services, and management of development resources. The distinguishing feature of this strategy, is that the various development sectors are considered jointly together rather than in isolation in order to see their relationship clearly.

The utilisation of this strategy involves increased mobilisation and motivation of rural people to participate actively in decision-making process concerning their progress and in the development activities. There should also be established institutional relationships which will facilitate the development of the sectors. Rural development councils should be set up at the national, state and local government levels to educate people, clarify difficulties and mobilise moral and financial support for rural development. Government has set up a directorate of foods, roads and infrastructure which is charged with the responsibilities for specially facilitating food production, road construction and provision of other rural infrastructural facilities such as electricity and pipe-borne water supply to the rural area.

Many agencies and institutions employ the integrated-strategy for rural development. Some church denominations have agricultural and related rural development projects in Nigeria. Universities have also embarked on integrated rural development on experimental basis. The Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology of Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, embarked on integrated rural development project since 1972 in the forest zone of Nigeria. This is the Isoya Rural Development Project (Williams 1998).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss five objectives of rural development.

3.4   Approaches to Rural Development

Approaches to rural development are the geographical and the subject-matter of rural development. Three approaches could be identified namely:

1.   The sectorial approach
2.   The holistic approach and
3.   The regional approach

The Sectoral Approach

In the sectorial approach, rural development efforts are geared towards developing the different sectors of the rural society. Efforts are made to identify the significant sectors such as the agricultural, health, education and infrastructural sectors of the rural society. Development efforts are then focused on one sector. This tradition had tended to favour the development of agricultural sector, which had been regarded as the most important sector of the rural society in developing countries, because majority of the rural population of these countries are engaged in it. Experience with this approach had led to some problems such as:

a)   There had been strong criticism of this approach by the professionals from the other non-agricultural sectors.
b)   The agricultural sector has not been substantially developed partly because of its relationship with other sectors which have not been assisted or supportive.

The Holistic Approach

This approach attempts to develop all the sectors in a given area simultaneously. The agricultural, health, education, and infrastructural sectors are developed at the same time. The problems with this approach are:

(a) Inadequate coordination of the development activities in the various sectors;
(b) Inadequate number of specialised and technical manpower to implement the prgrammes, and
(c)   Inadequate financial resources to implement development programmes

Regional Approach

In the regional approach to rural development, a society is soned into development regions which are most suited for establishing certain development projects.

In Nigeria, for example, while production of potato might be developed in the dried savanna parts of the country, cocoa, kola nut and oil palm production are naturally encouraged in the rain forest areas of the country. Infrastructural facilities are developed all over the country.

The major demerits of this approach is that it ignores the fact that scientific rural development aims at bringing development facilities to rural areas where thy do not exist originally, apart from developing the

potentials where they naturally existed. Example of this is that water could be channeled into the desert for crop, livestock and human consumption. Also, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, improved seeds and other scientific inputs are similarly introduced to boost production. This results in establishment of human settlement, institutions, organisation and industrial establishments. Another constraint is that some regions might be ignored while others are developed or favoured on the ground of political advantage (Jibowo 1992).

3.5   Stages of Rural Development

The change agent should first of all clarify the concept of rural development to be embarked upon. This must be compatible with the needs and aspirations of the community to be helped. An adequate concept of rural development in a democratic and developing society like Nigeria should aim at permanent development of the skill, knowledge, attitude, sensitivity, consciousness required to improve the target system educationally, socially, economically and psychologically along with the physical and biological features of their environment. According to (Jibowo 1992), when this concept is clarified the worker can then embark on five stages of rural development namely:

1.   Enquiry
2.   Planning
3.   Implementation
4.   Adjustment, and
5.   Evaluation.

Enquiry

At the stage of enquiry, emphasis should be on how to obtain reliable and valid information about the community where the programme is to be implemented and the neighbouring communities. The resources available within and outside the community in terms of number and quality of personnel, local and external financial aid available have to be determined. The characteristics of the community and its surroundings, their needs and aspirations among other information should be determined. The information can be collected through personal observation, survey, history and records of local events.

Planning

The planning stage should depend widely on the information collected at the enquiry stage in formulating rural development objectives and methods of implementing them. You should evaluate the results which the programme might generate. The planning stage should involve the

administrators of the programme, the change agents, farmers-representatives and related officials of the agency. The planned project is kept as a flexible and modifiable document to allow changes for improvement. Too much emphasis on agricultural development is avoided unless the programme is conceived mainly as agricultural development project. Industrial development and non-agricultural vocations, saving and investments, cleanliness, environmental sanitation and beautification might be added. Adjustment programme should be included in the plan.

Implementation

At this stage the plan is followed with concrete action. Infrastructural development should be given priority at this stage. Where a substantial amount of infrastructural facilities and natural resources existed before the statement of the programme, success would be better assumed. Rural development is a complex assignment which requires full-time staff. The role of any part-time staff should be supplementary to the major role needed to realise the objectives of the programme.

Adjustment

For effectiveness, the change agent has to understand the community and its resources and start within the framework of the existing social structure. Even when the programme implementation is in progress, collection of information on the progress of the programme continues. The timing of the project along with other areas of the plan and calendar of work have to be followed. When modifications or adjustments are made, they have to be communicated to all people concerned with the project. Change could be traumatic. It is thus necessary to implement the programme designed to assist the target population adjust to the development exercise.

Evaluation

This should in fact be a continuous exercise. The programme should be at least evaluated about half way in its implementation to make necessary in-process modification and at the end to determine accomplishments and provide information from which the programme could benefit in future.

3.6   Predicaments of Rural Development

In spite of the efforts which various institutions have made in trying to develop the rural area, there is the general dissatisfaction that the rural area is still generally backward in many societies, especially the less developed countries. This state of limited development could be associated to many constraints which have confronted rural development planning and implementation.

The following problems in the rural development planning by African governments were stated in the report of an international workshop on designing rural development strategies (1995).

1.   Poor statistical base for effective planning
2.   Wrong view of small farmers who are considered as irrational and incapable of making progress on their own initiatives, although small farmers produce most of the food consumed in Africa.
3.   Lack of commitment to rural development as indicated by expert-oriented planning at the expense of local food production for local consumption.
4.   Top-down planning in which few top administrators make decision on rural development programme planning and disseminate this down for implementation.
5.   Planning without implementation and implementation without planning of programmes.
6.   Lack of plan monitoring and evaluation, thus there is no systematic way of determining programme accomplishments, facilitating effectiveness and efficiency.
       In addition to the foregoing design problems, other rural development problems are stated below:
7.   Rural development programmes on one hand traditionally concentrated on agricultural development to the neglect of the other sectors and projects, a situation which has resulted in the problem of over-loading and consequent ineffectiveness and inefficiency.
8.   Rural development projects being carried out by educational and research institutions suffer from lack of full attention of the researchers and educators to rural development. This is because their primary concern in the community is much.
9.   Many rural development projects also suffer from shortage of resources and infrastructure. When plans are made for delivery of these, hardly are the plans adhered to. Resources such as land, labour, personnel, buildings, equipment and financial capital are scarcely obtained as anticipated.

10.   Inadequate understanding of the rural community such as its structure of influence, communication and decision-making, patterns, existence of functions, norms and values by the change agent. This is because they rarely live with the rural people. However, adequate understanding is an important foundation for collective work in rural communities.

11.   Lack of follow-up. Many rural development programmes have collapsed shortly after the withdrawal of the change agent system. This is due to lack of systematically implemented follow-up after the expiration of the initial period planned for the programme.

The main aim of rural development workers is to provide and implement solutions to the above related problems. It is then that the state of dissatisfaction can change to relative satisfaction with advances in rural development.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has revealed to us the various issues of rural development in the country. You must have learnt from them how they are functioning in the rural society.

5.0   SUMMARY

You should have learnt from this unit the meaning, objectives, strategies and approaches to rural development. Stages of rural development as well as its problems were also highlighted. It is hoped that by now, you would be able to understand the general concept and issues in rural development.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify three approaches to rural development and discuss them.
2.   List five stages of rural development and clearly explain three of them with examples.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Common Wealth Secretariat (1996). "Proceedings of the Workshop on Rural Development in African". University of Ibadan: Nigeria.

Jibowo, S. K. T. (1998). *Rural Development in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press.

UNIT 3   THE RURAL COMMUNITIES

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we studied rural development in Nigeria. In this unit, we are going to study rural communities. The following unit objectives indicate what you should accomplish at the end of this unit.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

·   explain what a community is
·   describe the community life process
·   identify the characteristics of a community.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept of a Community

A community is an aggregation of families habitually living together within a definite geographical location, more or less rooted on the soil they occupy, living in a state of mutual interdependence, supporting some basic social institutions and having some measures of political autonomy in relation to other communities. The term "community" has been used equally to denote something both psychological and geographical. Psychologically, it implies shared interests, characteristics or association as in the expression "Community of interests", "the business community", "the academic community" or "a farming community". Geographically, it denotes a specific area where people cluster. However, the sociological definition of a community combines the two meanings and denotes a people within a common locality having

shared interests and behavioural patterns. Such shared interests and behavioural patterns show mainly in the areas of:

1.   Production, distribution and consumption of good
2.   Socialisation
3.   Social control
4.   Social participation and
5.   Mutual support (Warren 1996).

The community is particularly characterised by the organisation of these functions on a locality basis. A locality group, the community is made up of families living together within a definite location and interacting on a face-to-face basis. However, in large communities, all members may not know each other to interact on a face-to-face and effective manner, but members interact in the use of common institutions and facilities, and maintain a consciousness of oneness through the sharing of common values, norms, traditions, prejudices and sentiments.

Farm people live in village communities; some of these are small while others are large. In either case, they interact and affect each other's behaviour in a manner which is different from the way they affect those who do not belong to these communities.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is a community?

3.2   Community Life Process

This is the process in the life of a community, by which the people plan and act together for the satisfaction of their felt needs. Its primary purpose is to bring about change for better living, through the willing cooperation of the people.

Its aims are:

1. To educate and motivate people for self-help;
2. To develop responsible local leadership;
3. To inculcate a sense of citizenship and a spirit of civic consciousness;
4. To initiate self-generative, self-sustaining and enduring process of growth;
5. To introduce and strengthen democracy at the grassroots level;
6. To enable people to establish and maintain cooperative relationships;
7. To bring about gradual and self-chosen changes in the life of a community.

Its significant components are:

1. Agriculture;
2. Irrigation;
3. Education-including literacy;
4. Rural industries;
5. Health programmes;
6. Housing programmes;
7. Social welfare programmes;
8. Youth programmes;
9. Women's programmes;
10. Cooperative;
11. Training of village leaders and
12. Employment programmes.

3.3   Characteristics of a Community

1. **Shared Bonds of Fellowship**

This is a feature that distinguishes some people from others. It may be typified by the demand of obligations from citizens and the conferment of benefits upon them.

2. Set Standards or Patterns of Behaviour

This refers to the psycho-social situation that arises when people perform mutual actions and reactions upon one another. Such interaction is incessant, and no citizen can wholly cut himself off from such social relations.

3. A Common Culture

This is the aggregate of the social, ethnical, intellectual, artistic, governmental and industrial attainments of a community, and by which it can be distinguished from any other community.

4.   Shared Territory

A community occupies a territorial area, within which its members live and develop the ways of life that give the community the different features that tend to make its identity easily recognisable.

5.   Shared Beliefs

Shared beliefs are nurtured and cherished by the people in the development of their common ideals, objectives, attitudes and values.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has introduced you to the concept of a community and the process in the life a community by which people plan and act together. It has also exposed you to the various characteristics of a community.

5.0   SUMMARY

You are expected to have learnt from this unit, the meaning of a community, the life process of a community and community traits or characteristics. It is expected that you would be able to comprehend some issues in rural communities.

6.0TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify six major components of the community life process.
2.   List five characteristics of a community and clearly explain three of them with examples.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Warren, S. P. (1996). "Toward a Reformulation of Community Theory".
        Human Organisation 15 (3): 9-12.

**MODULE 4   AGRICULTURAL   COMMUNICATION
                        AND CHANGE IN THE SOCIETY**

Unit 1   Communication in Rural Society
Unit 2   Social Change

UNIT 1   COMMUNICATION IN RURAL SOCIETY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   What Communication Means
        3.2   Types of Communication
        3.3   Principles of Communication Pertinent to Agriculture in
                Rural Areas
        3.4   Communication and Technological Transfer
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last unit we discussed community concepts and the community
life process as well as the characteristics of a community. In this unit we
are going to study communication in rural society.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

·   explain the meaning of communication
·   identify and explain types of communication
·   state the basic principles of communication relevant to
        agriculture
·   explain the concept of communication and technological transfer.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   What Communication Means

Several individuals accept communication as a process by which information is passed from a source to a receiver, through a channel. However, over the years, scholars have come to appreciate the fact that communication is more than;

$$\text{Sender X sends information} \xrightarrow{\text{through a channel to}} \text{Receiver Y.}$$

Communication thus, is conceptualised as a process of information flow by which ideas are transferred from a source to a receiver with the intent to change his/her knowledge, attitude and/or skill.

Communication is a process by which messages are transferred from a source to a receiver with a view to modifying the behaviour of the receiver. It is essentially the inter-change of meanings among people. Little (1990) defines communication as a process by which information is passed between individuals or organisations by means of previously agreed symbols.

Communication process is considered another essential element in the extension education process which all the extension agents or communicators should be aware of and knowledgeable in. This is because successful communication is the process by which ideas, facts, feelings or impressions are exchanged so that each gains common understanding of the meaning, and intent of message.

Communication is a conscious attempt to share information and ideas with others. To a large extent, therefore, the success of a communicator is determined by his ability to communicate good ideas to others.

3.2   Types of Communication

Communication can be broadly categorised into two, namely vertical and horizontal communications.

Vertical communication is the flow of information between a hierarchically perceived source and a receiver. That is, between a source and receiver that are considered to belong to different tiers in a top-bottom or bottom-top communication situation. For example, between a researcher and an extensioner; extensioner and farmer; researcher and farmer; a trainer and learner etc. However, it is generally conceived to be low in effectiveness. It usually attains a more important level of

change in the knowledge, attitude and skill of the pairs, given that the gap in the differentiating variables between the pair is wide and there is much to learn by both parties.

Horizontal communication on the other hand, refers to information flow between a source and receiver pair perceived to belong to the same tier in a hierarchy. In this case, a pair shares the same characteristics such as farmers, researchers, extensioners, learners, trainers, housewives among others. Horizontal communication is generally more effective, but results in less significant change in the knowledge, skill and attitude of the pair. This is true, because they speak the same language, have the same meaning, work in the same context and have the same standard for encoding and also decoding messages.

It is note worthy that where large-scale farmers interact with small scale ones, experienced researchers with younger ones, elderly housewives with newly married ones, the distinction between vertical or horizontal communication becomes less distinct and can only depend on the individuals concerned.

Communication can also be classified in another way based on the number of people involved. Therefore, such classifications are: intrapersonal communication, mass communication and interpersonal communication.

Intrapersonal communication exists when only one person is involved, feeding himself/herself information and responding within himself/herself (Soliloquising). This is done especially when an important decision is to be made such as to adopt or not to adopt an innovation (technology), to expand or limit the scope of one's business or to progress with or discontinue a course of action. This is a very significant form of communication which may lead to decision stage (Kolawole 1997).

Interpersonal communication refers to the flow of information between two or more people usually in a face-to-face manner, or by telephone, letter, telex, telegram etc. The interaction between an extension agent and a group of farmers, or at a training session or at a conference/seminar may also fall into this category. This is the most useful and must common form of communication.

Mass communication is conceptualised as the flow of information between a source (a person, a group of person) and a very large number of receivers, usually referred to as the mass audience. This may be in a village to village campaign, on radio, television or via the print media.

Finally, there is extra-personal communication which refers to communication between a person and others who may not be physically seen or present. It occurs usually by dreams, telepathy, or by inspiration. When properly connected, this source of natural knowledge system may awaken more minds to the requirements of agricultural and rural development with little effort from governmental and non-governmental agencies.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define the term communication.

3.3   Principles of Communication Pertinent to Agriculture in Rural Areas

The principles of communication relevant to agriculture in rural areas include:

1. People need to be informed. Information is a necessary input for the proper development of agriculture. Practitioners of agriculture need to know what is taking place within their own systems as well as other systems. Besides, no person is an island of knowledge, thus every individual requires some forms of information to perform his/her functions better.

2. Communication should start with the target audience expressing their needs and wishes: The main aim of communication is to achieve a desire change in the target audience. Unless the needs and wishes of the audience are known, it becomes very difficult to achieve any desire change. It is the responsibility of the initiator of communication (Source) thus, to find out the felt needs, actual needs and the aspirations of the target audience before starting the process of communication.

3. The content of the message should be suited to the needs of the target audience and not the initiator or source: There is usually a temptation to design message content to satisfy the initiator or source of the communication process. However, in order to achieve effective communication and make significant contribution to agricultural development, the message content of communication must be suitable to farmers, farm situation and socio-cultural environment as well as meeting their aspiration and needs.

4. Target audiences are usually homogenous; hence their required message contents or information and motivation requirements should be expected to vary.

5. A combination of channels should be utilised to import ideas, knowledge and information. Different channels appeal to different senses. Human senses often reinforce each other in the acquisition, ideas, knowledge and information. Therefore, when two or more channels are used to impart knowledge, idea or information, the target audience has a greater opportunity to understand the message; hence the source has a greater chance of achieving the stated objectives.

3.4   Communication and Technological Transfer

The technology transfer system is conventionally conceived of as containing three main sub systems. These are: technology generation (research), technology dissemination (extension) and technology utilisation (farmers). The process of information flow in this system is illustrated in figure 4:1 below.

Adoption and transfer of technology will hardly take place unless the farmer (receiver) attaches the correct and intended meaning to the technology (message) and also depend favourably as intended by the extension agent (source). Even a situation where the correct meaning is decoded by the receiver, adoption is not guaranteed unless all the other complementary elements i.e. inputs, infrastructure, support services, storage/marketing facilities for agricultural and rural development are provided.

Extension communication does not only tell us how the extension agent can assist the farmer to decode the intended meaning for those extension messages given or offered but also to create situations (scenario) conducive to the adoption and actual utilisation of science-based agricultural knowledge, information and skill.

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has exposed you to some issues in communication in rural society. You must have learnt how these issues are operating in the society.

5.0   SUMMARY

You should have learnt the concept of communication and its types, the principles of communication as well as communication and technology transfer. You are expected to understand these issues.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify and discuss vividly three main principles of communication relevant to agriculture.
2.   Define the term "technology transfer".

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Little, P. (1990). *Communication in Business* (2nd ed). London: Longman Group Ltd.18 - 22.

Kolawole, A. (1997). *Communication in Agriculture.* Abeokuta: Green Links International, Nigeria: 2-6.

UNIT 2   RURAL SOCIAL CHANGE IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

You would recall that in the last unit we treated communication in rural society. In this unit, we are going to study rural social change. The following unit objectives show what you should accomplish at the end of this unit.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able:

·   explain the concept of rural social change
·   identify and explain types of rural social change
·   identify the characteristics and sources of rural social change
·   explain the factors influencing the rate of change in the society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Definition of Rural Social Change

We often hear older people say "the world is not what it used to be any longer". This statement may mean that values or physical structures have changed or that there have been so many innovations in the society that keeping abreast with them is becoming a frustrating experience. The foregoing statement however sums up the meaning of the term. "social change". Rogers (1989) defined social change more specifically as "the process by which alterations occur in the structure and function of a social system". The social system in this definition may be a social

group, a community, a city, a region or a nation. Any change that occurs either in ideas, norms, values, roles and social habits of a people or in the composition or organisation of their society can be referred to as social change. Moore (1983) defined social change as "the significant alteration of social structures (i.e of patterns of social action and interaction), including consequences and manifestation of such structures embodied in norms (rules of conduct), values, and cultural products and symbols".

One basic feature in the life of all living and non-living things is change. When it takes lace in the lives of interacting human beings, it is termed social change. When it is viewed within the rural setting, it is termed rural social change. The fact is that changes take place in the rural, sub-urban and urban areas. Change could be in all attributes of a societal unit such as in number, quality and importance. It could be introduced from internal or external sources to the society or both. It could be planned, when it is more effective and predictable, or unplanned.

3.2   Typology of Rural Social Change

Many types of social change are noticeable in the lives of the rural population in Nigeria. With the rise in aspiration and outlook brought about through colonialism, improved transportation and communication systems which led to increase in contact with the advanced industrial world, great social changes are taking place in the less developed societies. The various types of such changes are:

1.   Economic Change

Rural areas of the developing world had undergone some degree of economic change particularly during the post-independence era. In Nigeria for example, with the increase exploitation of petroleum resources, salaries of workers have increased in government establishments over the past three decades. A greater number of roads have been constructed to link rural with urban areas. Some dual carriage expressways have been constructed in the economically most active parts of the country to link goods from the rural areas and major cities to the sea for export. It is obvious that changes in the processing, storage and distribution of economic goods have been rather slow. Processing of agricultural commodities is virtually non-existent. Storage of agricultural products such as maize, cowpea and rice is still largely in bags, grounds, bare flour and ceilings of buildings. A recent practice of storing in cribs is only fairly satisfactory. The use of silo for grain storage or refrigeration for preserving fresh fruits, fish and vegetables is not a common feature.

2.   Political Change

This deals with the change on the distributions and operating mechanisms of social and political power within the social system. For example, some of our traditional societies had a monolithic power structure with recognised chieftains-*Emirs* and *Obas*-whereas some had no paramount chiefs ruling over the entire group but rather governed themselves on the basis of lineages. With the arrival of the British, chiefs were created where none ever existed; later on with independence, provinces, regions, districts, local government areas among others were introduced which completely changed the pre-existing political boundaries and structures. The laws of the land became a centralised issue and law enforcement and maintenance of peace and order were removed from the immediate jurisdiction of the traditional leaders. Therefore erstwhile powerful traditional rulers have now been reduced in power status to mere titular heads.

Western concept of democracy has also been introduced into the political system thereby making citizens of today more aware of their rights and to challenge and eschew any form of authoritarianism. These are all, political changes.

3.   Technological Change

Technology entails ways of applying scientific and other organised knowledge to practical task. Technological change therefore is a continuous process of change within technical material and physical practices in a culture.

Technological changes are evident in our society in the areas of:

a) Transportation, where river crafts have been modernised for greater speed and comfort, head portage and use of animals have been replaced with lorries, trucks, railway trains etc, narrow foot paths have been replaced by wide mechanised thoroughfares;
b) Communication, where oral transmission of messages by personal contact or through messengers has been replaced by the postal system, newspapers, wireless and electronic media;
c) Health, where traditional healing based on superstitions beliefs in supernatural forces has been largely replaced by scientific medicine and hospital care;
d) Education, where socialisation by imitation and direct teaching of basic skills has been enriched by formal instructions in schools using books containing scientific knowledge and other scientifically designed audio-visual equipment;

e) Economy, where traditional farming has been transformed through the introduction of cash crops, improved breeds of crops and livestock, agricultural chemicals, improved processing and storage techniques;

f) Leisure, where specific scientific knowledge has been applied in the enrichment of the quality and variety of leisure and recreational facilities now abounding in our society. The cinema, television, various games and sports, etc. are direct results of technological change;

g) Housing, where traditional houses constructed with mud, sticks and leaves are gradually giving way to permanent structures constructed out of cement blocks, iron, glass and other products of modern technology. These are just a few areas where a great deal of change has taken place as a result of technology.

4.   Cultural Change

Culture consists of material and non-material aspects. Cultural change is thus interactions in the non-materials and artifacts of the society. The material aspects of cultural change are mainly technical. Examples are use of aluminum cooking pots instead of clay pots, use of metal eating plates and utensils instead of clay plates and wooden utensils, use of clucks and wrist watches to observe time instead of observing the position of the sun and relying on cock crow.

The change in non-material aspects of culture are also numerous. If the institution of the rural family is considered as social system in terms of its elements and processes, the cultural changes which had taken place can be elucidated with some examples. The norm of not calling elders by their name still persists as a reflection of the value of respect for age which is universally resistant to change. Premarital virginity has declined as a value with increased contact of rural females with more people beyond their communities. Sanctions, are exercised largely by the police and the courts when these are beyond the control of the family and the community elders. The change from the traditional way of worship which entailed the recognition of several gods (Polytheism) to Christianity and Islamism which emphasise one god (monotheism) is a good example of cultural change.

5.   Behavioural Change

This may also be regarded as part of cultural change but it specifically embraces changes arising from the influence of education on the attitude and overt reactions of people. Behavioural change includes favourable change in the knowledge, skill, and attitude of people as a result of their exposures to educational experiences. Residents of rural areas are often

exposed to information which had led to acquisition of better knowledge, skill and attitude in the economic, and social spheres. Agriculture is the major occupation of rural people. Improvements in knowledge of crop and livestock pest and disease control measures, higher yielding crop varieties, better spacing of crops, weeding, cultivation, harvesting storage and marketing operations had taken place. The skill to practice such knowledge is also taught largely by extension workers via the method demonstration technique, various attitudes such as clearing of livestock pens without getting scared by the odour of droppings, handling young animals such as piglets without developing the goose skin, waking up early in the morning to take care of livestock, are also learned.

3.3   Characteristics of Social Change

A basic characteristic of every society is change in nature. Societies are in a continued state of change. We have to always be conscious of the time frame and identify the time span and take an analytical assessment of what people have written before arriving at a conclusion. Social change has the following characteristics:

1. Space and Time Characteristics

In analysing any change process, the researcher must specify both the geographical location and the period of time. If it is not done, level of generalisation becomes very high.

2. Resistance to Change

In any change process, there will be some forces which will be resistant to change. These forces tend to promote status quo even though there may be very strong forces working towards change. Forces like industrialisation, urbanisation or scientific innovation will promote change. But processes like socialisation and social control will attempt to maintain the same status quo. In any change that you want to introduce, there must be resistance.

3. Differential Rate of Change

It is important to understand that not all societies or all parts within a given society change at the same speed. Urban areas may change faster than rural areas; educational characteristics may change faster than religious characteristics. We have to realise that societies change at different rates.

4. Change is Inevitable

It is normal, necessary and expected. Since people have different ideas, there are bound to be changes.

5. Unchanging Elements in a Changing Society

We do have certain bias, beliefs (religions) that we do hold on to, something that can give a certain kind of meaning. We hold on to them as a kind of security. There are certain things that people hold onto even though the society keeps on changing. The importance is that when there is a change and the rural people still hold on to their beliefs and values, you have to realise that there are some elements of importance to it and allow them to hold on to it.

6. Subjective Nature of Progress

Change itself can be evaluated objectively, but progress requires a subjective evaluation as to what is an improvement. What you may see as progress may not be progress at all to others. Improvement must not be from the agricultural agents' perspective alone but from the ruralites' perspective too.

7. Planned and Unplanned Changes

Many of the changes societies go through are unplanned but as the societies become more complex with different challenges they meet, the need for planning becomes more acute. Therefore, it is no longer acceptable to simply wait for what will happen or to hope for the best, but we must actively seek for solution to our increasing complex problem.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   What is social change?
2.   List five types of social change and discuss two of them with good examples.

3.4   Sources of Change in the Society

Social changes are brought about mainly through invention, diffusion and discovery.

Invention

This involves the recombination of existing cultural traits to fashion new things and the rate at which this takes place is directly related to the existing cultural base;

Discovery

It is the sharing with others of a perception of a fact, object or relationship which has always existed but was not known. Therefore, discovery can enhance the cultural base in a society and thus the rate of invention.

Diffusion

It involves the spread of cultural traits from one group to another. Cultural diffusion takes place both at the material and non-material levels and this process has been enhanced today by:

a)   Increased and more efficient communication facilities
b)   The speed at which people can now travel from one part of the world to another and
c)   The existence of specially trained personnel for the diffusion of innovations.

Other sources of social change in the Nigerian society include:

Religious Institutions

These have brought changes mostly in the world view of individuals through formal preaching, indoctrination and the use of metaphors to convert people from one way of life to another, and by the opening and support of formal educational institutions where a great number of Nigerians have submitted to instructions in many aspects of life which together has remolded the benefiting population.

Government Polices

A number of changes have been brought about in the Nigerian society generally, via governmental policies. Perhaps, at no particular point in time could this be more dramatic and impressionable than during the

thirteen years of military rule (1966-1979) when hardly a week passed by without the promulgation of a decree which required major social changes to be effected.

Application of Science and Technology

Technology implies the application of scientific knowledge to the solution of specific task. The patterns of daily life in most rural settlements have changed considerably today as a result of rural electrification and water supply schemes. A variety of alien food and cash crops have been accommodated within the traditional farming systems and we now raise and enjoy exotic breeds of livestock all as a result of research and improved technology.

Natural Physical Forces

These include natural forces like wind, flood, drought, erosion, insect and pest infestation and all such elements of the physical and biological environments. Erosion and floods have necessitated the relocation of villages while excessive droughts have caused the migration of the whole population within a region. These physical forces generally inflict disaster (which is a change in its own right) which then calls for the application of other mechanisms to bring about solution.

Urbanisation

The growth of urbanisation or cities has meant the attraction of youths and school leavers to urban areas. Within the cities themselves, increase in population, rise of industries, increase in retail and wholesale trades, etc. have called for great adjustments on the part of urban dwellers.

3.5   Factors Influencing the Rate of Change

The rate at which a society changes and the magnitude of change at any particular time differs from society to society depending upon a number of factors viz:

Physical Environmental Factors

These include climatic changes, winds, soil erosion, floods, landslides and earthquakes, etc. which may drastically change the way of life of a people or cruse great reduction in their population.

Migration and Population Changes

The movement of people from one place to another brings them in contact with new cultural traits prevalent in other areas. Therefore social and cultural changes are greater in societies where there is constant emigration and immigration. Small rural societies which are more or less closed to strangers generally change more slowly.

The Culture and Structure of Society

When specific cultural traits become tightly inter-woven with others in a mutually interdependent manner, change in that direction becomes almost impossible For example, to the cow Fulani, the cattle is not only an economic asset but a cultural object. His prestige or respect in the society depends upon the size of his herd and he obtains a wife with the exchange of cattle as the bride price. Asking him to reduce the size of his herd for any reason at all would become a direct challenge to his social status and he would strongly oppose such a change.

Similarly, societies in which tradition and custom dictate responses to present issues, very old people are given leadership positions and status mainly ascribed, and tend to change much more slowly than one in which individualism is accepted, and status is achieved and stratification is low and flexible.

Prevailing Attitudes and Values

A society that changes rapidly is one in which its members are critical and skeptical of aspects of its traditional culture and are ready to accommodate and experiment with new ideas. Therefore a society which censors the art, music, ideas or technology originating externally and suppresses all those that do not conform to its internal norms and values will change more slowly than one which is liberal.

The Emergence of Great Men

Occasionally, great men appear in some societies-i.e. men with a mission and vision, strong willed men. The emergence of such men may cause a great deal of change within the society. In contemporary Africa, military leaders have emerged from time to time sweeping changes in their different countries. Where such men have arisen (e.g Nigeria, Ghana, Libya, Benin Republic and Togo) more social and cultural changes have taken place than other places (e.g Malawi and Gambia), where there have been relative stability under the same leadership (Ekong 1988).

Perceived Needs

The types of changes which a society emphasises are determined by the need it perceives. If Nigeria perceives food storage as a problem, it will emphasise changes in the agricultural production system (as in the case of ADP, OFN, NAFPP, etc), if its perceived need is in the area of science and technology, it will tend to concentrate its power and investment in that direction (e.g. Crash Training Programme for Intermediate Technical Manpower Launched in 1977 during General Obasanjo's First Regime among others).

Relative Isolation and Contact

Societies which have close contact with other societies change more rapidly than those that are isolated. For example, slave trade and missionary activities brought Calabar in contact with the outside world as early as the 18th century but the Ibibio hinterland which is about 35 kilometers away from Calabar town remained isolated and unaffected by European civilisation until about the 19th century. Areas of inter-cultural contact are thus centres of change whereas isolated areas are generally centres of stability and conservatism.

Cultural Base

This refers to the accumulated knowledge, techniques and trait in a culture. As knowledge techniques and traits accumulate, an increasing number of inventions become possible within the society. In some cases important socio-cultural changes have had to wait until the supporting gaps in knowledge and technique are filled. For example, the cure for sickle cell anemia, cancer and other terminal diseases which would greatly influence the longevity of millions of people are still waiting research and new knowledge. Discoveries and inventions in one field usually cross fertilize other fields. For example, the various inventions and discoveries arising as by-products of the space programme in the U.S.A. have enriched advances in agriculture, medicine and other technical areas (Harton and Hunt 1989).

4.0   CONCLUSION

This unit has examined rural social change. It has exposed you to some topics in social change which were discussed. From these discussions you would be able to understand some issues in Nigeria rural social change.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has treated the definition of social change as a concept in rural society, its types, characteristics, sources and factors affecting the rate of change. The knowledge gained from these should enable you comprehend various issues in social change.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify five characteristics of social change which are dynamic in nature.
2.   Discuss:

(i)   Invention
(ii)   Diffusion
(iii)   Government policies and
(iv)   Application of science and technology a as source of social change in the society.

3.   List eight factors affecting the rate of change in the rural society and discuss any of them you consider most important.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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