NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

COURSE CODE: CSS 132:

COURSE TITLE:
Ethnography of Nigeria

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Ethnography of Nigeria

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NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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Course Guide

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1.0   Introduction

Ethnography of Nigeria is a one semester 1 credit unit course. The number of units of writing is eleven (11). The course is designed for 100 level students of National Open University (NOU), studying Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Criminology and Security Studies. It is also available as an elective course for students pursuing other programmes in other related schools.

The units deal with issues of common interest and concerns in the study of ethnography. The materials discussed are essentially derived from the available literature on ethnography of Nigeria. It is also developed to suit students' interests because of its Nigerian contents.

The central objective is to cover as much as possible the social and cultural patterns of the peoples of Nigeria, in such a way that students are encouraged to appreciate and understand the cultural, social and political circumstances of Nigeria and problems of her ethnic diversity.
In this course, you will be exposed to the highly diversified field of anthropology, more especially in the use of ethnography in the study of culture, patterns of social relations and social life of communities in Nigeria.

As students of Sociology, you are expected to be informed and at the same time be critical so that what you are prepared to face and deal with is the knowledge of people and about people of Nigeria.

At the end of the course, the awareness of yourself, your neighbours and your immediate environment would have been deepened. It is also to sensitize your consciousness about other Nigerians, especially their customs, socio-political organisations and religion as they function within a larger Nigerian society.

In summary, the course guide will tell you about what the course is all about, the course materials to be used and how best you can use them. The guide contains subject matter units, tutor-marked assignments (TMAS) and self-assessment exercises (SAEs).

1.1   Aim of Course

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the study of Ethnography of Nigeria. Its emphasis is on the culture and social life of various communities. In other words, it is all about the survey of the diverse peoples of Nigeria.

In the course, we are going to do the following things:

(a)   Learn and understand the nature of Nigeria's diverse peoples and cultures, and linguistic distributions.
(b)   Examine the types of interrelationships among and between peoples, their social, economic and
political organisations and;
(c)   Identify the similarities and differences in their cultural settings.

1.2   Course Objectives

You may probably want to ask the question - what makes Ethnography of Nigeria a special and interesting material of study for students studying Sociology and other related disciplines?

It is sufficient to give some reasons or observations why Ethnography of Nigeria is interesting, and indeed intriguing.

(a)   The cultural patterns among the multi-ethnic groups or if you like, ethnic pluralistic Nigeria; provide the basis for you to know a little about yourself and your people in order to understand their differences and similarities.
(b)   Gives you a deep awareness of yourself, your immediate neighbours and your environments with a view to broadening your consciousness of others, especially their customs, human relations, politics, economics and religion as they function within a larger Nigerian society.
(c)   Through the description of the various ethnic/tribal groups, you will be able to appreciate the general truths about human behaviour, and particularly the problem of cultural diversity, which you probably face or would be facing wherever you reside. This is particularly important to those who grew up outside the domain of their ethnic/tribal areas and perhaps face the threat of self-identity.

This course is therefore all about providing you with the opportunity to confirm your root, and most importantly, making you aware that life does not begin or end in areas where you were born. Given Nigeria's socio-cultural characteristics, it may not be difficult for you to see why you would want to take a course in Ethnography of Nigeria. A great deal

of indepth socio-cultural information is expected to be made available to you by the end of the course.

The overall direction of the course is broken into specific objectives. These objectives are summarized below in the form of what you are expected to know and do on the successful completion of the course.

Summary
- Understanding what the study of Ethnography is all about
- Understanding the relationship of Ethnography with the broader discipline of Anthropology
- Learning more about yourself and your immediate neighbours so as to broaden your consciousness about the cultural diversity among the various ethnic groups
- Appreciating the truths about human behaviour and the problem of social order

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Course Overview

Module (Units)	Titles of Units	Weekly activity (Maxi Hrs.)	Weekly activity (Min. Hrs.)
1.	Introduction to Ethnography	2	$1^1/_2$
2.	Socio-cultural Values and Concepts	3	-
3.	The Physical and Cultural Contacts	$1^1/_2$	1
4.	Profile of Peoples of Nigeria	3	2
5.	Linguistic Diversity	$1^1/_2$	$1^1/_2$
6.	Social Structure and Organiation	3	2
7.	Intergroup Relations	3	2
8.	The Peoples of the North	2	2
9.	Political Institution: East of the Niger	2	3
10.	The Pastoral People	3	2
11.	Marriage Institution	2	$1^1/_2$
	Total	**26**	**18**

Unit 1

Introduction to Ethnography of Nigeria

1.0   Introduction

Our primary concern in this section is to pose the question of Ethnography, and especially, its relevance in the study of Nigeria's diverse cultural heritage.

In order to answer the above question, it becomes necessary to break our discussion into units, and under each unit, provide the answers that will give you adequate knowledge and understanding of what Ethnography of Nigeria is all about.

1.1   Objective

The objective of this unit is to discuss what the study of Ethnography is all about. We are going to elaborate on the definition of Ethnography and its relevance in the study of peoples of Nigeria, especially their cultural similarities and dissimilarities. Particular attention is given to the relationship of Ethnography to other anthropological disciplines, such as Cultural and Social Anthropology. We will end the discussion by asking the question "what does it mean doing Ethnography?"

1.2   Defining Ethnography

If this is your first introduction to this course, you may perhaps ask the question — what is Ethnography and what is its subject matter? According to John Beattie in *Other Cultures* (1964:18-19); the term 'Ethnography', refers simply to a descriptive account of human societies, usually of those simpler, small-scale societies which anthropologists have mostly studied. In this sense therefore, Ethnography may be said to be the raw material used by social anthropologists in the study of "man, his culture and environment".

Beattie goes further to elaborate thus: first-hand accounts of the culture and social life of human communities, from whatever point of view they are regarded, are what we call Ethnography. Going by this basic definition, Ethnography can be said to refer to the process of collecting data by direct enquiries and observations. You can see now why and how it is regarded as raw material of social anthropology.

You may perhaps ask another question—what is Anthropology and what is it all about? The answer can be framed as follows: Anthropology means "talking about man". It follows horn this premise that

Anthropology is about the study of "mankind". And you can describe its subject matter as the science that studies man and his society Its primary concern is all varieties of man, beginning with the emergence of a man on earth and tracing his development from the cradle to the present. We will be on the right track if we describe Anthropology as the most comprehensive of the social sciences. Let me make some points clearer to you. We are not going to treat the subject matter of Anthropology in detail. Our concern is to make clear to you the relationship between Ethnography on the one hand and anthropological sub-disciplines on the other. You will understand such relationships as we go along.

However, it is important to point out some distinguishing features of Anthropology as compared to the study of other social sciences: Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, Mass Communication and others. These features are the following: the comparative approach, system approach, holistic approach, and strong emphasis on case studies. It may not be useful for you now at this introductory level to discuss the use of those approaches in the study of man and his society. I simply made mention of them so that you take notice. Let me go back on track.

I have already indicated to you that Anthropology is all about man. If this is the case, its subject matter can be classified into two sub-disciplines: (a) Physical Anthropology which studies human fossils, evolution and variation; and (b) Social and Cultural Anthropology, i.e., the study of human social life — the origin, history, dynamics of society and its cultures. You may be surprised to know that this is also the primary concern of Ethnography. I want you also to know that Social Anthropology is a branch of Sociology, in the sense that its subject matter is centrally a study of relationship between different kinds of peoples. Its nearest neighbours in other social sciences are Economics, Psychology, Political Science and Linguistics.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE)
Briefly summarise the subject matter of Ethnography.

1.3   Ethnography, Ethnology and Social Anthropology

We will now introduce another item of discussion by talking about the relationship of Ethnography with Ethnology and Social Anthropology.

From written sources, Ethnology is a designated blanket term for all the anthropological studies, including Physical Anthropological studies and pre-history (Beattie, 1964). In the twentieth century, Ethnology has come to mean the comparative studies of documented and contemporary cultures, and has largely excluded other sub-disciplines of General

Anthropology-Bioanthropology, Archaeology and Linguistics.

Ethnography in contrast is used to describe the study of the culture for a single tribe, ethnic group or society. But because almost all ethnographers make comparisons, at least with neighbouring peoples, the distinction between Ethnography and Ethnology is sometimes blurred. In fact, if the distinction is identified at all, it may be compared to that between Geography and Geology.

The term Social Anthropology can also be distinguished from Ethnology for the simple reason that the ethnologists are interested primarily in the past history of peoples or communities without written records (that makes Ethnology to be closely allied to Archaeology). Also, the ethnologists classify people in terms of cultural characteristics. Let me illustrate this point with an example. Imagine that we want to investigate into the origin of particular bead ornaments used by Edo speaking people of Southwest Nigeria. Such investigation is ethnological. If the inquiries are directed to the cultural use and social significance of the ornamental beads, it becomes a social anthropological investigation. Let me quickly indicate that social anthropologists also work as ethnologists, particularly if the items of culture under study throw light on the use and social significance of the items of culture. You should also note that notwithstanding the relationship between the two, it is generally agreed that Social Anthropology and Ethnology are regarded as distinct sub-disciplines in General Anthropology.

Having explained the relationship between Ethnology as a subdiscipline in General Anthropology, you may still probably ask the question — what is the relationship between Ethnography and Ethnology? You may have probably observed that Ethnography and Ethnology are derivatives of the broader discipline of science of man (Anthropology). For instance, the anthropologist as a rule undertakes the study of their interests as full participant observer. The technique allows him to spend a long time in the midst of those he studies, learn their language(s), and participate in their routine daily activities. Precisely, it is this art of participation recording and evaluating the observed materials collected that Ethnography is all about. Obviously, the ethnographer is still the same anthropologist who records and describes the cultural behaviour of his chosen society of study. You can now see that the ethnographer himself is his own most valuable instructor. You must also note that when a research work of a particular society is concerned with the technical details of how field data are recorded, verified and analysed, the data got from the process is referred to as ethnographic material.
Ethnology in its own right, refers to the comparative studies of past and contemporary cultures. For example, while Ethnography involves all the research procedures —from the formulation to the problem objectives,

to data analysis; the ethnologist makes use of the results of ethnographic materials in order to make comparisons between or among cultural patterns. Such comparisons allow him (the ethnologist) to address the problem of similarities and dissimilarities found in human cultures.

However, in recent years, the relationship between Ethnology and Ethnography has narrowed considerably to the extent that both disciplines address similarcultural problems in explaining the differences and similarities, through the use of cross-cultural methodological approach.

Self-Assessment Exercise

State what you know about the relationship of Ethnography to other anthropological sciences.

1.4   Development of Ethnographical Study

In our preceding discussion, you should have observed that we laid emphasis on the nature of relationship and distinction between Social Anthropology and Ethnography on the one hand, and Ethnology and Ethnography on the other.

Our emphasis is anchored on the fact that Ethnography is the raw material of Social Anthropology. It provides first-hand accounts of the culture and social life of human communities. The facts from these am the basis upon which the theoretical interest of anthropologists are determined. A follow-up question to this is, how did the idea of collecting items of culture start? In other words, what is the history of the development of Ethnography as a sub-discipline of Anthropology?

The history of collection of 'items of culture' started with the European voyages of discovery and exploration in the 15th century B.C. It all started with the documentation of cultural observation by Herodotus (484-45 B.C). He was known to be a traveller. He visited many parts of the world and described the lifestyles of the people he met, including their physical characteristics, languages, customs, instructions (law, politics), military and belief systems. Herodotus strongly believed in the Greek way of life and felt it was much superior to all others. He, however, acknowledged the fact that other peoples felt the same about their ways of life, and consider it the best, and tend to judge other groups' life styles negatively in terms of their own value system.

Another person who made contribution to ethnographic documentation was Marco Polo (1254-1324), and other European travellers in the 13th century A.D. In the case of Marco Polo, he showed considerable interest

in foreign peoples and their customs. The descriptive accounts and analysis made by Polo is still today regarded as the foundation for Ethnographic study. Also, the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 led to the uncontrolled influx of people to Western Europe. These refugees carried along with them writings on the custom, religion and worldview of people in Byzantium.

The 16th century AD in Europe saw the beginning of interest by Europeans in foreign peoples and their exotic cultures. This period also coincided with both trade and territorial expansion to other parts of the world. Kings and Emperors sent out explorers. These explorers on their return gave accounts of the physical appearances, variations in human nature and the social life of the people they came in contact with on their voyages. The ethnographic accounts from these voyagers were used by scholars and social philosophers (John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and others) to compare human societies all over the world.

The turning point in the collection of ethnographic materials by Europeans and other travellers started in the 19th century. This period saw the intensification of missionary activities in Africa, Asia and the Americas. This resulted in large-scale contacts with people of various nationalities, customs and social organisations. Some of these missionaries were recruited as agents of colonialism, supplying vital information about local population, and advising on how to govern and pacify local peoples. Other missionaries demonstrated good intention and interest regarding the spiritual well-being of the people they came in contact with.

The institutionalisation of collection of ethnographic materials after the Second World War stimulated the publication of ethnographic materials by professional anthropologists and anthropological societies. 'these monographs were devoted largely to cultural classification of exotic cultures of Africans, Asians and the Americans. Thus, Ethnography after the Second World War can be said to be dominated by object-oriented interests, standardisation of format for observation and recording, extensive use of natives as interpreters. By 1930, ethnographic fieldwork had become an established activity. It was not until the 1950s that Ethnography began to attract scientific methodological approach and theoretical attention. This development saw a remarkable increase in the numbers of professional ethnographers sourcing for financial supports and opportunities to carry out fieldwork.

The study of Anthropology as a sociological discipline started in Nigeria in the 1950s, particularly at the University of Ibadan and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In fact, it is safe to claim that a considerable number of

Nigerian academics were trained as social anthropologists.

After the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, it was a policy of the British colonial office in London to appoint an anthropologist as colonial officer. A good example was the appointment of Mr. C. Meek (an anthropologist) as census commissioner in the northern provinces. He was also assigned to collect ethnographic data on behalf of Her majesty's government. Also, a good number among the colonial administrators and missionaries were involved in the collection of ethnographic materials. The materials obtained by these officials were used to form the colonial policy on Nigeria, up till the time Nigeria got her independence in 1960.

The involvement of colonial administrators in the collection of ethnographic materials has contributed negatively to the growth of Anthropology and indeed, the low status of anthropological studies after independence. Those Nigerians who were trained as anthropologists were regarded and treated as colonial agents and sometimes branded as saboteurs.

In recent times, things have changed. Most Nigerian universities now offer courses in General Anthropology, usually as a joint department of Sociology and Anthropology. The only university with the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology is University of Ibadan. At present, there are few trained anthropologists and a majority of them work as lecturers in departments of Sociology and Anthropology and at research institutes and centres.

It is gratifying that the hostile reception to anthropological studies is beginning to slowdown. At least now, anthropological works by Nigerians on human and cultural evolution are growing by the day. That perhaps has brought about a new beginning and a new status for Nigerian anthropologists

1.5   Doing Ethnography

The question you may probably ask is: "what does it mean to you doing Ethnography?".

By now you are probably aware that when we talk of Ethnography, we are also talking about the ethnology of people, their cultural traits, myths of origin, social organisations and cultural differences and similarities.

Lets us digress a little bit on those things we have mentioned about Ethnography and Ethnology and illustrate with examples from Southwest of Nigeria. Take the Yoruba for example. The moment you

locate them on the map of Nigeria, investigate their cultural and socio-political organisation, record and document the findings of your investigations; what you are doing is a study of Yoruba ethnography. On the other hand, if you wish to find out why the Yoruba are acknowledged to share so many cultural traits and linguistic affinity with the Igala people in Kogi state, the moment you use the ethnographic materials collected from the two groups in order to make comparisons, what you are doing is combining the work of an ethnographer and ethnologist.

It may also interest you to know that contrary to what the perceived cultural affinities may suggest, it is not impossible that the cultural similarities could be accidental or may not. It is also not impossible that each group developed its socio-cultural traits independent of the other.

The similarities in cultural traits between the Yoruba and Igala have some historical connections. It is said that in some distant past, the Igala people were presumed to have migrated to their present location in Kogi State from Oyo (Yorubaland). The migration was believed to have occurred in the 6th century AD, that was during the pre-Oduduwa—Yoruba multi-centre migration (Boston - *The Igala Kingdom,* 1968). What to emphasise here is that the authenticity of the claim, whether true or not, will be determined by findings of ethnologists and archaeologists. This further brings to your attention the relationships of subdisciplines in General Anthropology.

Conclusion

So far, we have been able to define and discuss the subject matter of Ethnography within the larger discipline of Anthropology. We have also identified the distinction and relationships between Ethnology and Ethnography in the study of culture, cultural traits and other attributes of human social organisation.

We use examples from the Southwest and other cultural areas of Nigeria so as to bring home to you what doing Ethnography is all about. I believe that these things must be known to you before we move on to the mainstream of Ethnographic materials, in which you will be introduced to the peoples of Nigeria.

Summary

The focus of this unit is to orient students to the highly diversified field

of Anthropology, especially the use of ethnographic materials in the study of culture and social life of communities in Nigeria.

Another facet of discussion explains why studying ethnography of Nigeria, for example, is interesting and quite intriguing, perhaps due to the nature and character of cultural patterns of Nigerians. This is to make you appreciate our collective circumstances. The unit also provides a general overview of Ethnography by emphasizing the basic relationship in the use of ethnographic and ethnologic materials as the basis to account for similarities and differences in cultural patterns of Nigeria's ethnic groups.

The unit ends by discussing 'Doing Ethnography' with examples on cultural similarities between the Igala of Kogi State and Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria.

References

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Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA)

Exercise
Define Ethnography. What do you consider to be the most significant way in which a course on Ethnography benefits a student of Sociology?

Unit 2

Socio-Cultural Views and Concepts

2.0 Objective - Concepts and Views

The objective of this unit is to improve your understanding of the various socio-cultural views and definitions of concepts used in Social Anthropology, Ethnography and Ethnology. Your understanding and use of the various concepts will help you to know how individuals and groups function in the society in order to maintain order and stability. It may be impossible to discuss all the concepts. What we shall do is to select key concepts and define them. Those to be selected are the ones commonly used in Anthropology, Linguistics, Ethnography Ethnology and Sociology.

2.1 Introduction

Culture

As you have now realised, culture is the concept underlining the anthropological approach to human behaviour. In fact, the meaning of culture establishes the scope and method of anthropological studies of man - his behaviour, thoughts and world view.

The major element in the definitions of culture is: it is learned by man as a member of a society. There is also the agreement by anthropologists that cultures develop as a response to human needs, biological and social. In one way or the other, all cultures are attached and related to human needs. It means that the term culture, covers a broad spectrum of experience, referring to all the learned behaviour man absorbs to become a member of society It is therefore universal, but differs tremendously in the way and manner they express man's response to life.

Malinowski provides another understanding of culture by saying that culture is partly human, partly spiritual and partly materialistic. It is in reference to the ways of thinking, feeling and doing things that human beings have commonly developed culture as they deal with their environments. We can safely say that there is a human culture i.e. a way of life man has developed in response to the physical and social environments.

Culture can also be defined as the configuration of learned and shared patterns of behaviour and understanding arising out of communication among social groups and helps individuals to adapt to his environment, his biological nature and group life. Therefore, culture scientifically described, is a concept that denotes the total way of life of a specific society or group. This way of life includes such things as: customs, traditions, dresses, language, work and leisure, music and arts, relationship networks and attitude to life.

We also use the term culture, colloquially In this context, it denotes the degree of finesse of an aspect of a person's behaviour, degree and level of a person's tastes and refinements in music, arts, social interaction, to mention a few. When culture is used in the context described, it is synonymous with civilization. It is also common to listen to people referring to or calling a person a "bushman". What is being said of him in this context is that the person is uncultured, due to his raw attitudes to values and accepted norms of the society, and lacks the knowledge of proper code of conduct in particular situations.

The fact that cultures vary from place to place have made anthropologists to develop scientific explanations for these variations. One such explanation is that culture is influenced and shaped by environmental conditions. This theoretical approach is generally referred to as environmental determinism. It is argued that the physical setting of a people determines the formation of their culture. The physical environment is considered to influence or determine the pattern of life and level of economic development. It is also assumed that man is helpless in altering the dictates of nature. In this context, a people's mode of dress, language, technology, traditions and belief system are all products of ecological adaptation.

Self-Assessment Exercise
What is the main argument that culture is learned by man as a member of society?

The main argument here is that the growth of culture is closely dependent on the capacity and ability of man to control his environment. The specific ways of adaptation to environment is believed to determine social organisation, and social organisation in turn affects norms and values, forms of government, religious beliefs and arts.

Many other anthropologists have contributed to the debates on the appropriate definitions of culture.

For example, Kluckholn and Kroeber meticulously examined over a hundred (100) definitions but found none wholly acceptable. However, one of the widely quoted definitions is the one provided by Goodenough (1957) that: "a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe, in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for anyone of themselves".

Whatever the case, the common ground used in defining culture is that – it is learned and the learning process is related to social groups or

societies, and is strongly influenced by the immediate environments.

2.2   Ideal and Real Culture

A culture consists of two major patterns: the *ideal* and *real* culture.
Ideal pattern describes what people in a society would do or say in a defined situation if they conformed totally to the ideals accepted in the culture. In a given society, an observer must be able to distinguish "culture ideals" from the actual beliefs and values that guide everyday life of the people. Let us think of an example: if you ask someone to describe his culture, you may likely receive an answer that reflects the ideal pattern rather than actuality. Another example: what we can use to distinguish ideal from real is the issue of religious tolerance among Nigerians. In Nigeria, we are always told that the ideal pattern of religious tolerance is a pillar of Christianity and Islam. But you will always notice that this tolerance is frequently abused and violated by both the Christians and Muslims. This behaviour by Nigerians has created a gap between the ideal and real cultural behaviour of Nigerians.

In order for you to understand and observe the cultural gap between the real and ideal, Twill illustrate by using the examples taken from Oke — on marriage and virginity in Nigeria *(An Introduction to Social Anthropology* 1984:21). The point made by Oke runs thus: In Nigeria, a man who goes through a form of marriage under Marriage Act with two different persons on two different occasions, with the first wife still living and not divorced from him, commits the offence of bigamy — the punishment is seven years in jail. Marriage under this act is monogamous: one man, one wife. Marriage under customary law is potentially polygamous, i.e. you can marry as many wives as you can afford. The elite or western-oriented members of society often go for marriage under the act where it is often difficult to get a divorce. In this context, actual behaviour does not conform to the ideal pattern of one man one wife. This is a bigamous case, if prosecuted, the offender can be sent to jail.

What I want you to take note of in the description of Oke is that the ideals of the act serve as targets towards which the elites must strive, and especially as criteria for evaluating successful marriage in our society, as well as, our conduct towards it. But because of non-conformity to the act, a strain towards consistency between the real and ideal has created a dynamic tension to the marriage culture and society.

2.3   Culture Area

The term culture area, emanates from the concept of culture. It simply denotes a geographical area occupied by ethnic/tribal groups or peoples

whose life styles exhibit a significant degree of similarity with others, as well as a significant degree of dissimilarity with the cultures of others.

The demarcation of culture area is done by categorisation of cultures based on the following observable traits such as: physical environment, religion, language, and saying that those that are similar and closely related belong to one outline area. We shall use later the culture area concept to demarcate Nigeria's large ethnic/tribal groups into culture areas.

2.4   Ethnic Group

This is a concept which describes an ethnic group as people sharing the same historical experience, having the same cultural, experience, speaking the same language, and sharing the same belief about the future together It then follows from this premise that an ethnic group must have as its members people who share a conviction that they have common ideology and common fate. For an ethnic group to be recognised, it must propound a cultural symbol, expressing its cohesiveness. Think of the Yoruba symbol of Oduduwa in this context, for example.

One of the major factors that distinguishes ethnic groups from one another is this cultural symbolism, expressed in myth of common origin and kinship blood ties.

There are four ways you can use to identify ethnic group — culture, language, common tradition, political organisation and territory. This means that members of ethnic groups must share the same culture, speak a common language, have common customs and history and occupy the same territory. The four attributes cannot be acquired by an individual: he is born with them.

2.5   Tribe

This is the term used in Socio-Cultural Anthropology to describe human social organisation based on small groupings, defined by traditions of common descent.

The group must have temporary or permanent political integration above family level and shared language.

The term tribal has been used to distinguish countrymen from town dwellers of a population in South African **Bantu** who go to work in urban employment, but try hard while they are there to keep to their own

cultures (Philip Mayer, 1961).

In essence, from our discussion on ethnic group, tribe has the same connotation as ethnic group. Up till the 20th century, tribe was more frequently used The term fell out of favour among anthropologists due to the following facts: (a) the use of the term does not have a precise definition, (b) it portrays negative connotation to native population still under colonial rules all over the world in the context it is being used. In other words, it is pejorative to the extent that it was used to describe societies in the colonised region. It was for this reason that many anthropologists in Africa dropped the use of tribe substituting it with ethnic group. Here, everyone has a claim to land by virtue of his membership, and all members are equal in status.

2.6   Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

The belief that one's own culture is the only true and good one, as well as the tendency to judge other cultures by ones cultural standards is what is called ethnocentrism. The assumption is that the way we do things is normal and humane; but any other way of doing things is abnormal or immoral.

Ethnocentrism can be used to serve several important functions for individuals, groups and societies. For instance, it is sometimes used for social solidarity purposes, and also to reinforce the tendency to conform in defence of one's society. On the other hand, ethnocentrism can be used dysfunctionally when beliefs in group superiority lead to hostility, misunderstanding and conflict. Nigeria's multi-pluralism promotes the dysfunctional tendency of ethnocentrism. For example, there are many statements made by our political leaders that have generated and heightened tensions through ethnocentrism. Also, most conflicts in Nigeria can be traced to ethnic intolerance which sometimes is hidden under religious cloak. An ethnocentric leader may be unable to recognise and solve social problems in his group, not to mention solving problems in other cultures.

In summary, ethnocentrism prevents people from understanding human nature and precludes critical appraisal of one's own customs, relative to those of other peoples.

This brings us to cultural relativism as a concept. The anthropological view, that a society's customs and ideas should be viewed in the context of that society's culture underlies the concept of cultural relativism. Put differently, cultural relativism involves an effort to understand the world as seen by members of other societies. This attempt to understand the world as seen by members of other groups is what relativism is all

about. To put it in a simple form, our value judgements based on our narrow cultural lens can be replaced by an appreciation of the values of other cultures. When this is done, you will develop an understanding and appreciation of the values of other cultures and that brings harmony and peaceful coexistence.

Cultural Pluralism (CP) — is defined as a social arrangements in which different ethnic/tribal groups live together with each other in harmony, and still maintain their cultures, values, and also accept to tolerate one another's ways of life as suitable for the society in which they live.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What do you think underlies the concepts of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism?

In cultural plural societies, the majority groups do not relegate the minority groups to a master/servant status through subordination. The rule underlying plural society is cultural tolerance to her peoples' customs and life styles. Nigeria can be cited as one of the world's plural societies.

2.7 Language

The *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* defines Language as "human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, feelings and desires by means of a system of sounds and sound symbols". This is the conventional meaning. In literal terms, we are referring to the spoken and written methods of communication between people and such spoken or written symbols need to be unique and distinct from other spoken and written symbols in order to be called a language.

There are other forms of language — body talk (in Social Psychology), computer language, language of bias and prejudice etc. We are here referring to other systems of communication that can be understood and interpreted without written or spoken sounds and symbols. Facial expressions, handshakes, prostrating and nodding of the head are all examples of such communication.

2.8 Kinship

This term refers to a large network of people who are putatively related to each other by common ancestry (blood relation), by marriage (affinity) or by adoption. The system of kinship facilitates the organisation and identification of relationships within families, lineage

and class. Kinship terminologies can be categorised under *classificatory* and *descriptive.*

28.1   Classificatory: This refers to names which apply to lineal relative (e.g. father mother, son, grandson). The term can also be used for collateral relatives, in which case father's brother is called father, and his sons are called brothers.

28.2   Descriptive: This relates to a mode of addressing or grouping of kins by depicting their relationship. For example, the use of stepfather, half-brother is not used for other relatives.

It is necessary to indicate that both classificatory and descriptive terminologies depict the type of relationship between two or more individuals.

2.9   Society

This term refers to a group of people who live together over an extended period of time, occupy a known territory and organise themselves into a social unit distinct from other groups. In other words, society can be described as a system of interrelationship or social group connecting individuals who share a common culture and maintain a system of social interaction and a defined internal organisation. Society as a concept gives existence to culture, norms and values (customs).

2.10   Dialect

A dialect is simply a variant, a sub-division or an altered version of a language. A dialect cannot stand in isolation from its root-language. However, when the alteration of a language becomes such that the original speech-form is lost or becomes obscured, what is supposed to be a new dialect becomes a new language. In that context, them ceases to exist any mutual intelligibility between the original language and the dialect-variant. In other words, speakers of the original can no longer communicate with speakers of the altered form.

This situation is common in language profiles in Nigeria. In fact, this is how new languages keep developing out of old ones. We can even be right to suggest that there exist more languages than ethnic/ tribal groups in Nigeria. We shall say more on this when dealing with the language profiles.

2.11   Family

Most anthropologists, sociologists and ethnologists regard the family as

the cornerstone of society because it forms the basic unit of social organisation. It is even difficult to think of how human society could exist without it. Thus, the family as a social institution is universal and an inevitable part of human society.

Although there are a variety of family types in the world, and it is not easy to say what they have in common. A family can still be defined as "an adult male and female living together with or without offspring, in a more or less permanent relationship". Therefore, a family is a relatively small group directly linked by kin relationships in which the adult or adults take responsibility for the care of children.

2.12 Extended Family: When relatives other than the married couple and their children live in the same residence, or close together in an intimate relationship, this is what we call an extended family. An extended family may include grandparents, brothers and sisters, their spouses and other kin members such as aunts and nephews. Extended family can be extended horizontally (made up of kins who belong to the same generation) or vertically (kins who belong to previous or later generations).

2.13 Descent rules: These are rules pertaining to duties, rights and privileges with respect to many different aspects of social life assigned to individuals by reckoning their descent relationships. There are two classes of descent rules, the *cognatic* and *unilineal.*

(a) *Cognatic:* Cognatic rules are those in which both male and female parentage are used to establish duties, rights and privileges in kinship. The reckoning is established evenly and symmetrically along maternal and paternal lines in ascending and descending generation through individuals of both sexes.

(b) *Unilineal:* The unilineal rules accomplish the same results as described for cognatic, except that relationships are restricted parentally either exclusively to males or exclusively to females. On this basis, there are therefore, two varieties of unilineal descent rules: Patrilineality and matrilineality.

    (i) *Patrilineal —This* is when descent is reckoned patrilineally in which ego (self) follows the ascending and descending genealogical lines through males only.

    (ii) *Matrilineal —This* is when descent is reckoned matrilineally in which ego (self) follows the ascending and descending lines through the females only.

One of the most important logical consequences of unilineal descent rules is that it segregates the children of siblings of the opposite sex into distinct categories. Another variety of descent rules is called 'double descent' in which ego (self) simultaneously reckons descent matrilineally, through mother and patrilineally, through father. Each of the descent rules described above, provides members of kinship groups

the logical basis for aligning individuals into abstract or ideal kinship categories. It also influences the way people think and behave in both domestic and extra-domestic situations.

Note:
The concepts discussed in this unit have been painstakingly selected for your use as a student of Sociology. They will be useful as you proceed with your course. In fact, sociological and social anthropological analyses are constructed around these concepts discussed in this unit.

Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA)
Exercise
(i) Explain the term culture
(ii) Examine the theory of environmental determinism with regard to any ethnic group in Nigeria.

Unit 3

The Physical and Cultural Contacts

3.0   Objective

The objective of this unit is to identify the location of the entity called Nigeria; and her peculiar characteristics. We shall also identify the type of relationship between her physical features and socio-cultural attributes of ethnic distribution, economic and social contacts, and other cultural linkages.

On a broader note is the question, to which extent can the ethnographic materials help in identifying the differences and similarities that exist, and perhaps would continue to exist between and among the people of Nigeria?

3.1   Introduction

This unit starts by focusing on the physical and cultural contacts among the various ethnic groups of Nigeria. In order to proceed, let us refresh our memories about the geography of Nigeria, particularly her physical features. It is not impossible that some of the facts about Nigeria are not new to you. I certainly believe you have gone through them in your primary and secondary school days. Even if they have faded away, that is indicative that you are unlikely to remember those specific and general features and attributes of Nigeria. In any case, you are free to pick up any book on geography of Nigeria and refresh your memory. (See provided maps)

The territory called Nigeria lies between latitudes 4°20'North and 14°; longitudes and latitudes 3°20' and 14°30' East. It occupies an area of 923,768.44 square kilometres, with a population of over one hundred million (100,000,000) people. The principal rivers create a cultural divide in Nigeria, as we shall see later.

Nigeria is bounded in the north by the Republic of Niger, in the west by Benin Republic, in the east by Cameroon and the southern flank by the Gulf of Guinea. Nigeria's coastline stretches across a space of over 700 kilometres, while the coastal to the northern limits cover a distance of about 1,040 kilometres.

The landscape can be described as plain and open space, in the sense that there are no major physiographic barriers that could hinder movements of peoples across the various ethnic territories. In other words, in situations where rivers and other natural barriers isolate or

restrict communication flow, the case of Nigeria looks different. It is for this singular reason that the history of the peopling of Nigeria is replete with many waves of human movements. The waves of human movements can be confirmed through the various legends of Nigerian people that seek to explain the processes by which their ancestors came to areas which they now occupy. This fact will be made clearer to you when we discuss the various links among the people, which came to be known as Nigerians.

It is a well-known historical fact that there have been migrations across the Sahara desert towards Northern Nigeria. The ethno-hi story of Hausa people suggests the admixture of the indigenous Hausa people from Niger and Chad Republics respectively. Similarly, during the pre-colonial period, it was observed that there were restricted movements of population across the Cameroon and the Adamawa mountain ranges. The Oron and the Efik in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States were migrants from the Cameroon mountain sides, and were able to ward off the limitations created by ranges by moving through the Atlantic ocean to Cross River basin where they finally settled.

While the mountain ranges on the eastern flank restricted movements of people across ethnic boundaries, the people along the western borderline developed access to the territories of their immediate neighbours. The Egba, Yoruba and the people of Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) are next-door neighbours and as such the contacts facilitated movement of goods and services. This encourages easy spread of people within this region and promoted cross-cultural links that have survived till today.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Give reasons to support the fact that the boundaries dividing different ethnic groups in Nigeria are politically defined artificial lines.

The social and cultural links, especially in the northwest, northeast, central and eastern part of Nigeria have made scholars to establish the fact that the political boundaries in Nigeria are merely artificial lines. And that most importantly, the ethnic groups in the various pans of Nigeria, still regard one another as kith and kin.

3.1.2 Occupation

Inasmuch as arable land is scarce for cultivation purposes, the people in swampy areas will have to depend on their neighbours in the upland areas for the needed agricultural products. The point I want to stress is that in the absence of established cultural links between the riverine and the upland peoples, economic exchanges will be impossible.

Rainfall is another element that determines the level of agricultural activities among the various ethnic groups. Rain incidence and length also determine what crops to grow and where. The southern part is under the influence of the rain bearing monsoon winds for most of the year. Therefore people in this region cultivate crops such as yam, cassava, cocoyam etc.

By contrast, people in the drier savannah in the far north under the influence of dry northeast trade winds from Sahara desert cultivate essentially the grains - millet, maize, and sorghum. In the case of the middle belt, which is regarded as transitional between far north and south climatic condition, there is admixture of food crops from the south and north. The crops from the two regions are cultivated side by side.

What I have been explaining can be repeated briefly. The crop grown in each climatic zone depends on the geographic location. Two broad zones are identified: tropical rain forest in the South/Middle Belt and the savannah or sahel in the North. In the tropical rain forest, staple crops predominate along with other crops. Tree cash crops are also cultivated; the important ones include cocoa, kolanut and palm trees. Similarly, the farmers in the savannah/sahel region are specialised in the production of cereals (different varieties): rice, sorghum, millet, guinea corn and cash crops.

3.1.3 Cultural Links

The cross-cultural links among various ethnic groups predate the colonial political boundaries. The Nigerian peoples continued to have more to do with their kith and kin across all international borders than with some of their neighbours with whom they have less physical and cultural contacts before the advent of colonialism. To bring home this point, let us take the case of the Jukun in the present day Taraba State. The Jukun are next-door neighbours to the Fulani of Adamawa State. But culturally and linguistically, the Adamawa Fulani relate and identify more intimately with their kith and kin from Niger and Benin Republics than with their immediate neighbours, the Jukun and Tiv.

Another important area in which the topography of Nigeria has helped us to make ethnographic assessment is the extent to which the natural endowments determine the economic activities of a given region or cultural area. The natural endowment has had tremendous influence on the creation of culture area specialisation. A good example can be drawn from Delta area where the topography is swampy and with numerous creeks and waterways. Naturally, the economic activities are centred on fishing and salt making from the seawater. In this respect, fishing and salt making become specialised. The sahel area is also well-known for

animal production. As you will now see, agricultural products can be described as the bedrock upon which the economic, social and cultural contacts among the ethnic groups were built.

The advantages of these socio-cultural and economic contacts are not restricted only to the circulation and distribution of agricultural products. More than anything else, long distance trade between the tropical forest and savannah/sahel further promoted inter-group relations on a larger scale. Through this avenue, people shared, exchanged and borrowed ideas from cultural, economic, political and religious institutions. The fact is that traders from different groups served as carriers of cultures through trading activities, intermingling of peoples and exchange of ideas in all the different geographical zones.

3.2   British Colonial Influence

The period from the late 18th century to the early 20th century was, for the various ethnic groups who occupied the territory to be called Nigeria, a period filled with historical events. According to historians, from the late 18th century up to the 1850s, there was no evidence to suggest that the area now called Nigeria would become a colony of Britain.

The British interest in Nigeria started in 1849 when John Beecroft was posted to the Niger Delta as a consul for the Bight of Benin. His mission was to consolidate British interest which started as early as 1836. While he was mandated to intensify the campaign against the slave trade, he was also to protect the interest of British merchants. He later shifted his interest to the then dynasty struggles between Kosoko and Akintoye for the throne of Lagos in which Kosoko won. It was claimed that the bombardment of Lagos in 1851 was on a pretext that Kosoko was a notorious slave trader. But the major reason was that Kosoko was seen as the stumbling block to the British penetration of the Yoruba hinterland and opening up of its immense trade to British merchants.

Another example of the area in which the British took advantage was in the Delta, an area in almost perpetual conflict. John Beecroft was also very active there in interfering in local politics. It was claimed that the Itsekiri-Ijo rivalry for the Urhobo palmoil was one of the main sources for this. However, by the year 1865, the British parliamentary committee had suggested that Britain should wind up its political holdings in West Africa, re-emphasising that the West African Coast was a source of trouble and expense.

To sum up, the colonisation of Lagos, the fight against slave trade and the interventions in local conflicts and politics are some of the glaring

factors that made Britain to be neck and head involved in the initial Nigerian project. The next British interest in the Nigerian project was the occupation and pacification of Northern Nigeria from 1877 to 1903. During this period, the major personalities in the pacification of Northern Nigeria were Lord Lugard, Sir George Goldie, and Joseph Chamberlaine. The occupation of Northern Nigeria came as a result of the following: trade and empire building, the fear entertained by the British as a result of interest from other European powers (e.g. France) in occupying Nigeria, and lastly, the disunity among Nigerian ethnic groups.

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Self-Assessment Exercise

In what ways can you describe the fact that trade accelerated social and cultural contacts among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria?

The Niger-Benue was a special attraction for European firms. It was assumed by the British that the Niger-Benue axis held the key to the immense trade penetration of the central Sudan. As a result, between 1860 and 1897, many British firms had established trading posts there, thus making the Niger-Benue trade activities competitive.
However, between 1885-1906, Nigeria people started to react against the British occupation of their territories. The occupation was made possible by many factors. First, in the Delta area, lack of unity caused by rivalries

and the commercial decline of the area, gave the British the opportunity to take over powers from the local rulers. The fall of Delta, finally opened the entire area to the British.

Similarly, attempts to enter Benin by the British was forestalled by the Oba of Benin, who wanted foreigners to stay away from his domains. This led to open confrontation which resulted in the death of seven British officials and this precipitated the British expedition of 1897. Similarly, the Aro middlemen activities on trade in Eastern Nigeria was viewed by the British as obstacles; and thus, the Aro had to be conquered and brought under dominion between 1901 and 1902.

The Royal Niger Company played a significant role in the British occupation of Northern Nigeria. In 1887, the company declared Northern Nigeria a protectorate area of the British. As a result, treaties were signed with the Emir of Gwandu and Sultan of Sokoto, but the control of the area did not manifest until 1900 when the British flag was hoisted in Lokoja. The pacification of Sokoto caliphate was complex and bloody. The caliphate was finally conquered by the combined forces of the Royal Niger Company and the West African Frontier force, but not without resistance to British occupation.

The caliphate did not fall completely to the British until the death of Atahiru who had escaped in 1903 towards Sudan. He was later pursued and engaged in battle in 1906, when he was killed.

Thus, the death of Atahiru marked the end of the Sokoto caliphate. What remained for the British to do was to mop up and formally establish British authority in 1906. Nine years later, in 1914, the amalgamation of the North and South created a new entity called Nigeria. This is why the 19th century became a significant period in the history of Nigeria and the beginning of great social, political, cultural and economic changes.

Summary

What we have tried to do in this unit, is to start by showing the geographical features of Nigeria and how these features have also encouraged social contacts among the various ethnic groups. We discussed the conditions that encouraged human movements across the zones. Of significance are the migration across the borders of the North and Sahara desert and restriction of movements along the Cameroon and Adamawa ranges.
It suffices to point out that the social and cultural links through blood ties and cultural activities across Nigeria have made scholars to establish the fact that the political boundaries in Nigeria are merely artificial and that a significant number of ethnic groups still regard themselves as kith

and kin.

Another point of departure in this unit is the tremendous impact of natural endowments in the creation of culture area trade specialisation. More than anything else, long distance trade between the Forest and Savannah zones further promoted inter-group relations on a longer scale. The facts of the cases are that traders from different groups served as carriers of culture through trading activities, intermingling and exchange of ideas before the advent of British colonial experience.

Conclusion

The physical features of Nigeria, particularly the open terrain landscape have greatly influenced the admixture of people. This single factor can be used to explain the diffusion of material cultures, which have over the years greatly influenced the existing social, economic and political contacts before the advent of European incursions.

Tutor-marked Assignment

In what ways would you say that European colonialists and Arab incursion into Nigeria affected:

(a)   Social contact among Nigerians.
(b)   Religious beliefs.

Reference

Obaro Ikime. *Groundwork of Nigerian History.* Ibadan: Heinemann, 1980.

Unit 4

Profile of Peoples of Nigeria

4.0   Objective

The objective of this unit is to look at the geographical distribution of some of the major ethnic groups. You are by now conscious of the fact that there are about 350 or more ethnic groups scattered all over Nigeria, (see Table 1 on p.19 and 20 for details). With this, it is rather impossible within the scope of our discussion to survey all of them or treat each ethnic group separately. What we shall do is to discuss some ethnic groups with a view to extrapolate from their ethnographic materials in terms of who they are, their social structure, social organisation and other cultural patterns.

4.1   Introduction

It will be natural as Nigerians to ask the question: who are the peoples of Nigeria? Perhaps also, maybe we should answer the question in the following order:

(a)   Nigeria has about 350 ethnic groups, over 400 different languages and 1000 dialects.

(b)   Nigeria is known and accepted as the most populous country in Africa with over 100 million people.

(c)   There is sufficient evidence to support antiquity of human habitation.

(d)   The earliest human habitation is represented by artifacts excavated in the village of Nok which were radiocarbon dated to 1900 BC.

Besides these earlier findings by archaeologists, others are found at Mejiro in Oyo State, Iwo Eleru Ondo State and the Rock Shelters at Rop, Plateau State. All that these suggest is that there were material support to show the antiquity of human habitation in Nigeria.

It is also necessary to indicate that there is no sufficient evidence to show the nature, ethro-linguistic, culture and racial configuration (composition of the peoples of Nigeria in pre-historic times). Vv hat we do know so far is that the ethnic groups had started to evolve by 600 AD. That means that many ethnic groups could have probably occupied their present habitations over 1500 years ago.

Around that time, it has been suggested that the Hausa and Kanuri peoples had had established traditions of commerce and political relations with the peoples from the Sahara region of Africa. Also.

around the same time, the southern parts had established contacts with earliest European visitors, who started arriving from the late 15th century. Some of the major ethnic groups who had established contacts included the following: Ijebu (Yoruba), Benin (Edo), Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijo (Hair, P — Ethno-linguistic Continuity in the Guinea Coast', *Journal of African History* (JAH), Vol.viii, No 2, 1967).

In any case, between the earlier human settlements and now, there were sufficient evidence that immigration and natural increase in population has raised the population to over 100 million people. The 100 million people is said to comprise over 300 distinct ethnic groups, speaking over 400 languages and probably over 1000 dialects. These facts make Nigeria an interesting ethnographic entity.

Table 1:   Names and Locations of Nigeria's Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group	Location (by State)	Ethnic Group	Location (by State)
Affade	Borno	Kaje	Kaduna
Afizere	Plateau	Keleri	Plateau
Afo	Nassarawa	Kamberi	Kwara, Niger
Agatu	Nassarawa	Kamuku	Niger, Kaduna
Anagatu	Plateau	Kanakuru	Borrio, Adamawa
Andoni	Rivers	Kanembu	Borno
Angas	Plateau	Kaninkwon	Kaduna
Ankwei	Plateau	Kanuri	Borno, Yobe
Auyokawa	Jigawa	Karekare	Gombe, Yobe
Ayu	Kaduna	Karab	Kaduna
Bachama	Adamawa	Kilba	Adamawa
Barawa	Bauchi	Kirifawa	Bauchi
Bassa	Kaduna	Koro	Kaduna
Batta	Adamawa	Kudawa	Bauchi
Birom	Plateau	Kurama	Kaduna
Boki	Cross River	Kwolla	Plateau
Bolewa	Yobe	Libo	Adamawa
Borgawa	Kwara, Niger	Longuda	Adamawa
Buji	Plateau	Mada	Kaduna
Bura	Borno	Mandara	Borno
Butawa	Gombe	Margi	Adamawa, Borno
Bwol	Plateau	Matakam	Adamawa
Cham	Gombe	Mbembe	Cross River
Chamba	Adamawa	Mbot	Adamawa
Chibok	Borno	Mober	Borno
Chip	Plateau	Montol	Plateau
Dadiya	Gombe	Morwa	Kaduna
Daka	Taraba	Mumuve	Adamawa
Dakakeri	Niger, Kebbi	Ngamo	Gombe, Yobe
Dukawa	Kebbi	Ngizim	Yobe
Ebiurra	Kogi	Ninzam	Kaduna
Edo	Edo	Nunku	Kaduna
Efik	Cross River	Nupe	Niger
Ekoi	Cross River	Ododop	Cross River
Eggon	Nasarawa	Ogoni	Rivers
Etsako	Edo	Okobo	Akwa Ibom
Fali	Adamawa	Olulumo	Cross River
Fulani	Dispersed across the Northern & Central states	Pat	Plateau

Gade	Nasarawa, Niger	Pero	Gombe
Gamergu	Borno	Reshe	Kwara, Kebbi
Gengle	Adamawa	Ron	Nasarawa, Plateau
Gerawa	Bauchi	Rukuba	Plateau
Gerka	Plateau	Sayawa	Bauchi
Gerumawa	Bauchi	Shrawa	Kano
Gudo	Adamawa	Sukur	Adamawa
Gure	Kaduna	Sura	Plateau
Gwandara	Nasarawa	Tula	Gombe
Gwari	Kaduna,Niger,Nassarawa	Tangale	Gombe
Hausa	Sokoto,Kebbi, Zamfara. Katsina,Kaduna	Teme	Adamawa
Haolma	Adamawa	Tera	Gombe
Hona	Adamawa	Tiv	Benue
Ibibio	Akwa Ibom	Tur	Adamawa
Idoma	Benue	Ukelle	Cross River
Igala	Kogi	Ukwani	Delta
Igbo	Anambra, Abia,Ebonyi, Imo,Enugu,Delta, Rivers	Urhobo	Delta
Ijaw	Ondo,Delta,Bayelsa,Rivers	Vere	Adamawa
Irigwe	Plateau	Waja	Gombe,Adamawa
Ishan	Edo	Waka	Adamawa
Iyala	Cross River	Warjawa	Kano
Jaba	Kaduna	Yako	Cross River
Jera	Plateau	Yendang	Adamawa
Jukun	Taraba	Yergam	Plateau
Kadara	Kaduna, Niger	Yoruba	Lagos,Ogun,Oyo,Osun, Ondo, Ekiti,Kwara,Kogi
Kagoro	Kaduna	Zinna	Taraba

Self-Assessment Exercise

How many ethnic groups are in Nigeria? Name the ethnic groups in your state of origin?

Among the people of Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are the major ethnic groups, and in fact their numerical strength provides the avenue for political dominance. However, the largest concentration of people of Nigeria is found in the Middle Belt zone, where over 200 small ethnic nationalities occupy. Due to the fact that the various ethnic groups in this zone have not been able to evolve into an integrated whole, their numerical strength has not been used advantageously over the three larger ethnic groups.

There is also the factor of isolation of this zone. Available evidence suggests that, until the spread of Islam and imposition of colonial rule in the 19th century, this region (Middle Belt) established little or no contact with other major ethnic groups. Such limited isolation in terms of cultural admixture may have perhaps explained why the Middle Belt was not a major source for trans-Atlantic and trans-Saharan slave trades.

4.2   The Peoples

Ikime (1980) in *Groundwork of Nigerian History* asserts that the people of Nigeria can be classified into two major groups, depending on their geographical locations. According to him, the first group can be classified as the forest people, and the second, grassland people. Other authors in Nigeria have also classified them by dividing Nigeria into four zones, namely, the Northern, Central, Western and Eastern zones respectively (Oduwobi et al, 1997). See also Omorodion, (1997) *Ethnography of Nigeria.*

In any case, whatever the classifications in use, there is not much distinction to be made as to the facts presented from the survey of peoples of Nigeria (See provided map).

For this course, we shall use Ikime (1980) and where possible, refer to the four zones division. Following Ikime's postulation, the forest peoples are those found in the forest area and the coastal creeks along the Bight of Benin. This is the group we are going to discuss first.

The question we should now ask ourselves is — who are the peoples of the forest?

4.3   The Forest Peoples

The following groups are classified as peoples of the forest: (1) the Yoruba and Edo speakers of the West and Southwest; (2) the Igbo, Ibibio and Efik peoples of the East and Southeast. The list is more than this, I only mention the few ones with large population.

It is important to note the fact that a large number of the forest ethnic groups belong either to the same linguistic family or sub-families. It is also necessary for you to note that the peoples of the forest share common resource endowments; other than that, most of them share nothing in common in terms of social and political organisation. This is to say that there are areas of dissimilarities in the social and cultural organisation among the peoples of the forest. Perhaps the only exceptions in this region are those located in the West and Southwest: the Yoruba and Edo speaking peoples. This group of forest dwellers can be said to have similar socio-political and cultural organisation. Both groups are known to have a successful tradition of kingdom and empire building.

The Igbo, Ibibio, and the Efik peoples in the East and Southeast are known to have loose social organisation and fragmented political structure, with no clear identifiable leaderships. The political system

these groups operate is what anthropologists called stateless society.

Among these groups, there is no strong evidence to suggest the economic and social contacts with the peoples of the savannah regions. However, studies by experts are indicative of wide contacts between the Igbo and their immediate neighbours in the Middle Belt and the Southeast region.

The other important aspects to indicate is that, for a long time, the Yoruba and the Edo speaking peoples had had economic, social and cultural contacts with those in the Savannah region (Hausa and Fulani) with whom they also share similar political structure.

On religious matters, studies have shown widely shared practice among the forest peoples. The shared practice is reflected in the 'diffused monotheism', centered on a belief in a supreme deity. This deity is worshipped through a multiplicity of divinities and ritual sacrifices (Idowu, 1973– *Olodumare African Traditional Religion: A definition)*. For example, the *Ifa* of the Yoruba and its derivation, such as *Afa* among the Igbo, *Fa* among the Aja, *Ilia* of Edo/Benin, *Eva* among the Isoko and *Eba* among the Nupe. All these religious beliefs suggest the extensiveness of the communication networks among the forest peoples in the past.

The introduction of Islam through the Kanem-Borno and Hausa in the 10th and 12th centuries began a process of religious changes among the numerous indigenous culture areas of Nigeria. A significant number of people were converted into Islam. It is necessary to indicate strongly that the main routes through which the cultural diffusion took place were rapid migrations and trade. There was also Europeans trading pact with the forest peoples along the Atlantic Coast.

4.4   The Grassland Peoples

The grassland region of Nigeria (also called Savannah zone) can be divided into two: the northern and central zones, (if you like you can refer to the two as far north and middle belt respectively).

The predominant groups in this zone are the Kanuri, Hausa, and lately the Fulani. There are other minority groups sandwiched in between the major groups.

During the pre-colonial period, the Kanuri people were known to be governed within a single stateKanem-Borno. At different times of its history, the Kanem state covered the eastern and western sections of Lake Chad basin. There was consensus among historians that Borno

empire was established in the 9th century, and that makes the empire to be one of the earliest kingdoms in Nigeria.

The Kanuri king is normally addressed as *Mai.* One significant contribution of Borno on the kingdoms cultural aspect is the fact that it was the first area of Nigeria to record or proselytise Islam religion. To the west of Borno, live the Hausa peoples. They were known to have been established before 1800 and with some independent states.

The myth of their origin suggests that Hausa states were founded by the descendants of one Bayajidda.

The myth claims that he fled from persecution in his homeland in Baghdad (in the Middle East). It was said that he first sojourned in Borno and from there moved to Daura in Hausaland.

The ethnographic source of Hausa states is quite interesting and worth discussion as narrated by Hausa historians. It runs thus:

> Bayajidda on arrival in Daura killed a snake that had been terrorizing people, depriving the inhabitants of the use of the town's well. It was said that the Queen of Daura later married Bayajidda in gratitude for his efforts in eliminating the snake. The union between Bayajidcla and the Queen produced a son called Bawo. Bawo in turn, gave birth to six sons. These were the sons who established the states of Daura, Katsina, Kano, Rano, Zazzau and Gobir.

> It is also claimed that another son of Bayajidda (the seventh son) through a previous marriage to the daughter of the king of Kanem, established Hadejia, making Hausa states to be seven (Hausa Bakwai). There were other seven states established by the seven children of Bayajidda through concubines. These seven states are referred to as Hausa Banza (Bastard states) and they include Zamfara, Kebbi, Gwari, Yauri, Nupe, Jukun and Yoruba (i.e. old Oyo kingdom).

> Murray Last in his book — *The Early Kingdoms,* through linguistic and anthropological data argued that the incorporation of Hausaland into trans-Saharan trade network between 1100— 1400 A.D. stimulated a complex series of intergroup fusions which eventually gave rise to centralised politics. Such cultural and economic fusions, he concluded, is represented by the notion of marriage in the Bayajidda myth, namely that kingdoms are founded in alliance. The seven Hausa Banza (Bastard) are probably to be interpreted as constituting a mirror image of the Hausa Bakwai, thereby reflecting the influence of large neighbouring societies in Hausa history.

> In the case of the latecomers to the region, the Fulani (Fulbe) are

known to have spread across the entire West African Savannah region. They were supposed to have entered Hausaland between 12th-13th century from their homeland in Senegal valley. Although they can be found all over Nigeria, their population is concentrated in Sokoto, Bauchi, Gombe and Adamawa States. There are two major groups of Fulani: the migratory pastoralists and sedentary pastoralists. The sedentary groups are in most cases referred to as town Fulani and are Muslims. The other group is referred to as cattle Fulani. Most people regard them as animists.

A significant number among the sedentary who are Muslims played major roles in the proselytisation of Islam religion. They also served as tutors, advisers and administrators. It was suchlike capacity that produced Uthman Dan Fodio's Jihad revolution in 1804.

Other grassland peoples are those in the Middle Belt or Central zone. This zone embraces these states: Kwara, Niger, Kogi, Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, Adamawa and Taraba. As I have already indicated, there are over 200 ethnic groups in this zone.

The major groups that are easily identifiable, especially around Niger-Benue confluence area are the following: Igal a, Bassa and Bassa-nge. The Bassa and Bassa-nge are found today in four different states — Kogi, Niger, Kaduna and Nasarawa. Ethnographic materials on them show that they are the same people, dispersed across the Niger-Benue confluence. For example, take the case of Bassa-nge and Nupe people and their languages. The two languages am supposed to be different, but it was discovered by linguists that in reality, one is a dialect of the other. Due to this linguistic affinity, a Bassa-nge man considers the Nupe man as his kinsman, rather than an Igala man who shares the same territory with him. Similarly, a Bassa man believes he is a native of Niger, Kaduna and Nasarawa and related to Gwari people. He considers people from these states his kinsmen because he understands Gwari; Nupe and Gwari are variants of Bassa language spoken in the states mentioned above.

The other ethnic group along Niger-Benue confluence is the Idoma. It also comprises other linguistic variants of Idoma such as Igade and Agatu. The others are: Alaga, Tiv, Ebira, Kakande, Gwari, Nupe and Northern Yoruba people.

Further Northeast and West of the confluence are found Jukun, Bata, Chamba, Tangale and Waja, Berom, Ngas, Jarawa, Taroh, Mbula, Mumuye and Bachama people, to mention a few.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What do you think is responsible for the concentration of ethnic groups in the Middle Belt of Nigeria?

By now you should have realised that the Middle Belt contains the largest concentration of different ethnic groups in Nigeria. The ethnography and history of these peoples show that they probably have been living in this area long before the 17th century in small non-centralised communities, unlike the Yoruba and Hausa. Little is known of their earliest history. Nevertheless, their respective traditions indicate an immigrant founder dynasty concerning the establishment of kingdoms. A good case is the Igala people.

See Table 1: Names and locations of Nigeria's ethnic groups.

4.5   Other Groups

Besides the Igbo, in the east of River Niger are other notable peoples, such as the Ijo, Efik and Ibibio. These groups occupy the Niger Delta area in a belt, stretching from Ondo State On Yorubaland) to Bayelsa and Rivers.

The Ijo specifically are known to have developed small states of which the most prominent ones are Ibani (Bonny) Elem Kolabari (Calabar), Nembe (Brass) and Okrika.

According to historical sources, Ijo small states were established in the 16th century as a response to the Atlantic trade. During the Atlantic trade, villages that were able to control the commerce brought by Europeans, became the nucleus of the new states. This transformed some of the chiefs, especially the Amayanabo into political officials.

Self-Assessment Exercise
The middle belt of Nigeria is peopled by many ethnic groups. Select any two of your choice and briefly discuss:
(a)   the cultural contact with their immediate neighbours,
(b)   intergroup relation.

Summary
You should have noted by now that in this unit, we have been able to survey some peoples of Nigeria based on the two classifications we adopted—forest and savannah peoples.

The ethnic survey represents a small fraction among the over 400 groups in Nigeria. This is done specifically to bring home to you the peculiar

characteristics of the respective groups we have talked about. What we talked about include the various commercial and political contacts, social and cultural effects among and between the various peoples that constitute Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on what have been discussed in the text and the fragments of information used, it is quite obvious that different parts of Nigeria were colonised and inhabited from the earlier times. The physical features of Nigeria lend support to the fact that there were little physical bathers which could have permanently isolated cultural and social intermingling of peoples.

What is significant is that the emergence of the various peoples identified can be said to be as a result of a long process of cultural merging and differentiation. There is evidence to suggest that Nigeria was peopled by independent inhabitants in scattered settlements. As populations expanded, coupled with the influx of migrants from the Sahara region, the demographic processes of separation of the peoples began.

These processes culminated into the over 300 ethnic groups that dotted Nigeria's landmass.

Tutor-marked Assignment
Exercise

Select from Table land Maps land 2, any ethnic group of your choice. Discuss how history and politics have shaped the political institution of the peoples.

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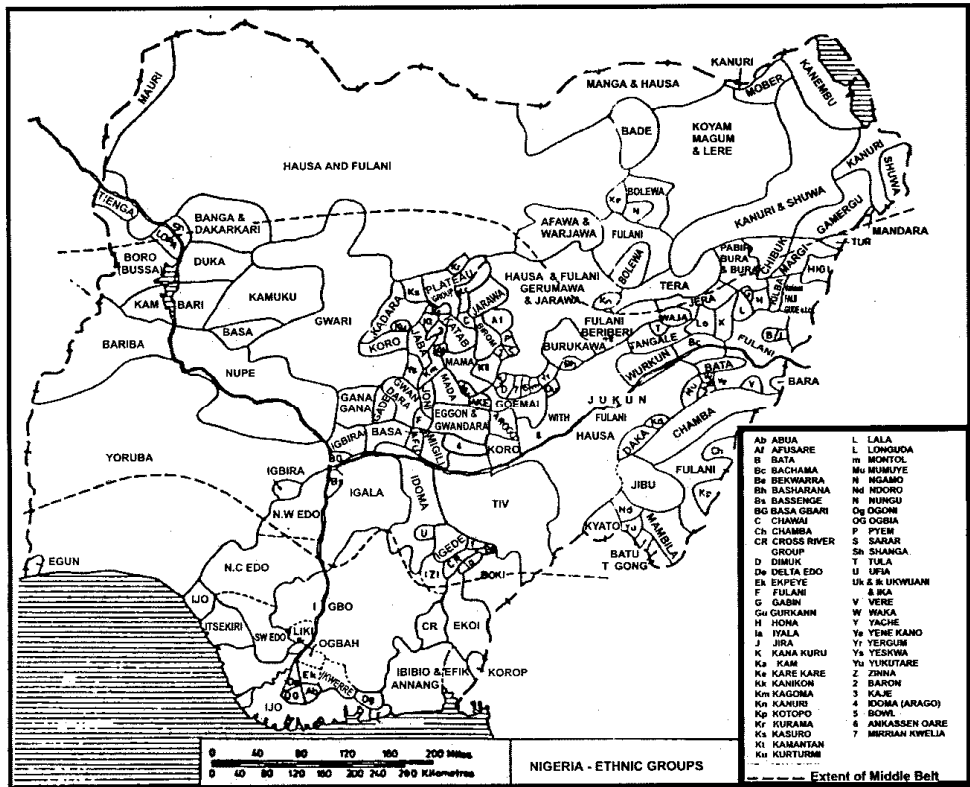Ikime O. *Groundwork of Nigerian History.* Ibadan: Heinemann, 1980.

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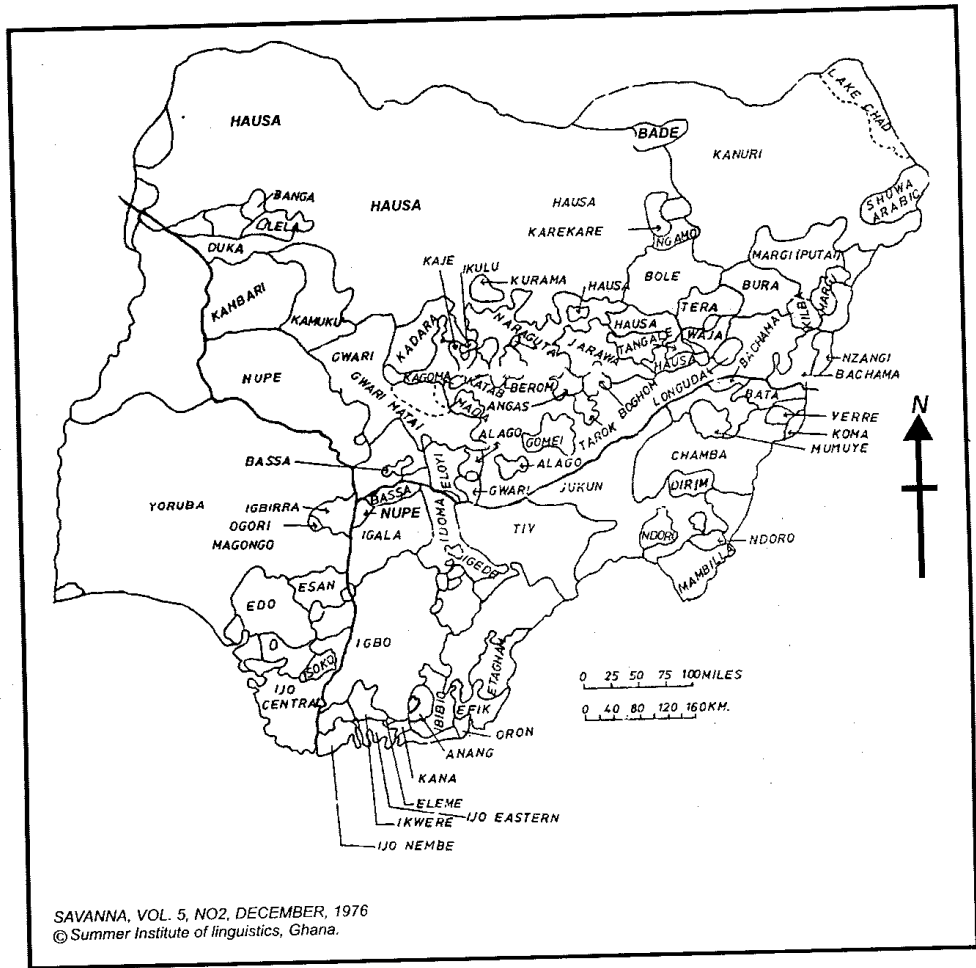
MAP 1: A Provisional Language Map of Nigeria.

MAP 2: Map Showing Nigeria's Ethnic Groups.

Unit 5

Linguistic Diversity

5.0   Objective

Our objective is to discuss linguistic diversity in Nigeria. The purpose is not to deal with each linguistic entity, considering the fact that there are more than 400 spoken languages and 1000 dialects in Nigeria (Barbour et al 1983 —*Nigeria in Maps).* Based on the large number of tongues spoken, Nigeria represents one of the "Babel" of tongues in Africa — over 400 languages out of 800 recorded for Africa.(See provided Maps).

5.1   Diversity

Introduction

Looking at the ethnic composition of Nigeria, it is reasonable to suggest that the diversity of tongues appears to be a consequence of different waves of migration and settlements. All these occurred at different periods in the last 2 million years.

The evolution of languages in Nigeria is based on the African evidence, which shows that there are five distinct language families of major importance. The five languages occupy 98% of the total pre-contact areas and inhabited by differentiated population. The distinct languages can be classified thus: Niger-Congo, Afro-Asiatic, Macro-Sudanic, Central Saharan and the Click families in South Africa.

Incidentally and based on the above classification, the various languages spoken in Nigeria belong to three broad families, out of the five listed above. These are: Niger-Congo, Afro-Asiatic and Central Sudan (other authors prefer to use Nilo-Saharan family).

The Niger-Congo family to which Nigeria belongs, contains seven hundred languages spread across West, Central and Southern Africa. The family incorporates all the larger ethnic groups in the forest zone. It is also sub-divided into clusters of closely related languages. For example, Yoruba, Edo, Igbo, Igala, Idoma and Nupe and a host of other languages in the middle belt form a cluster of Kwa, a sub-group of Niger-Congo family. This is perhaps indicative of the fact that the ancestors of Kwa speakers separated from the same parent stock. Using linguistic and ethnographic data, Bradburg (1964) suggests that the peopling of the forest zone is a process of slow separation of the various peoples from the same parent stock. This process could have started more than a thousand years ago, if we go by linguistic evidence

provided by Greenberg (1966) and Bradbury (1984). See also Gandonn (1978) and Hoffman (1974) for further readings on Nigerian languages.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Give reasons why the ethnic and language maps of Nigeria may not necessarily be the same.

The other two linguistic families - Central Saharan or Nilo-Saharan and Afro-Asiatic cover North Africa, Horn of Africa, East Africa and an extensive part of Lake Chad region.

The Chad basin area contains as many as a hundred languages found mostly in Northern Nigeria and the Cameroon. The best-known languages of Afro-Asiatic (Chad is a sub-family) are Hausa and Kanuri languages. It is suggestive that both the Kanuri and Hausa may presumably belong to the same parent stock, as the other related Afro-Asiatic linguistic groups.

The peoples east of Niger-Benue basin speak languages which belong to Niger-Congo sub-families. Also, recent linguistic studies show that the peoples along the cross-river basin are linguistically closer to the central group of Niger-Congo family (the Bantu) than other Nigerians to their immediate West. The Ijo, Ogoni, Andoni, Odual and other smaller groups belong to Benue-Congo speakers.

Broadly speaking, the vast majority of Nigerian languages belong to four groups; the Kwa, Benue-Kongo and Adama (Tiv, Batu, Jarawa and Mambi la) of the Niger-Congo and the Chadic of Afro-Asiatic family.

There are other six major language groups represented in Nigeria. These are: the West Atlantic (Fulani), Mande and Gur (Niger-Congo family), the Songhai and Saharan groups of the Nilo-Saharan and the Semitic group of the Afro-Asiatic family.

You must have noted now that the present linguistic diversity in Nigeria cannot be reduced to a single source. This is due to the complex history of settlement in Nigeria, and indeed Africa over a long period of years. This assumption can be deduced from the four language classifications we have indicated above. Of all the languages in Nigeria, the most widespread are the Kwa sub-family and the Adamawa sub-group.

Therefore, the languages of Nigeria do indicate a common characteristic in the sense that there are central pools in which all the characteristics inherent in the diversities can be discerned. These core families are: Afro-Asiatic, (Northern Savannah), Adamawa group (North Kanem

complex), Niger-Benue (Middle belt) and Kwa (Southern Nigeria).

Self-Assessment Exercise

Name the major language families represented in Nigeria.

So far we have been able to identify the language families of Africa and also their sub-families. I must emphasise the fact that the linguistic/ethnic distributions in Nigeria do not necessarily correspond and neither can they be used interchangeably. Take the Hausa group for example; its language is spoken as a first language by a number of ethnic groups, especially those located in the grassland region. In fact, before the intensive contact with the Arabs and Europeans, Hausa as a language had spread over a wide area of Nigeria and West Africa sub-region through trade.

5.2   Foreign Contact

It is necessary to look at the effect of foreign contact on Nigeria's indigenous languages and cultures. It is a fact that the languages of Nigeria offer a complexity of origin, so also are the cultural aspects. One area of impact is the influence of Islam, which has shaped and continues to shape some of the cultural patterns. This is reflected in the numerous borrowed words and terms of Arabic origin. Even among non-adherents, some words and terms in Arabic are used in every day communication.

Another source of influence is the European incursion into Nigeria. Such has transformed many aspects of Nigerian material and non- material cultures. Therefore, the effects of Arabic and European cultures on both the language and cultures are colossal and profound.

These contacts have resulted in adaptation and borrowing. We must make a particular reference, and that is the English language, which presently is used as the lingua franca among the educated class from different ethnic backgrounds. It is the only vehicle for educational advancement.

It is also necessary to emphasise the fact that the proportion of people who live in Nigeria is similar to the proportion of languages and dialects spoken. The high language density also reflects the high population density when viewed from the demographic distribution of ethnic nationalities. This is especially true in the middle belt. All these factors put together have helped in the promotion of cross-cultural links and contacts which have survived till today.

Tutor-marked Assignment

Exercise

What ethnographic facts can you learn from a careful study of Nigeria's language map?

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Unit 6

Social Structure and Organisation

6.0   Objective

The objective in this unit is to introduce you to some terms or concepts used in understanding how a society functions through its structure and social organisation. Our focus will be to see how these terms can be used in studying the socio-economic and political organisation of Nigeria's ethnic groups.

6.1   Introduction

When the word structure is used in sociological/anthropological analysis, what is referred to are those formal, enduring aspects that bring orderliness into society The primary idea of structure can be said to be how parts or components are arranged in an orderly manner to constitute a kind of systematic unity. For example, it is possible to structure a set of complex social relations jurally, economically, politically, religiously, and educationally, and soon. The structure can be analysed by using empirical data to construct the forms of social institutions in a society, be it political, economic, legal and kinship. When we do this, what we are doing is to build a model from the social institution system state.

So by definition, social structure refers to the enduring aspects of social institutions which are most important in understanding how a given society functions. It is therefore convenient to study social structure or if you like, social process, in a concrete way in any given ethnic group or community. By way of illustration, let us define a community as a body or group of people sharing common activities and bonds by multiple relationships in such a way that the aims and objectives of any individual can be achieved only by participation in activities with others. These activities can be defined as a network of relationships. By this definition, the network of relationships in the life of the community or ethnic group must have a structure and its organisational forms.

There are areas through which the structure and organisation of a group (community) can be understood:

(a)   the order in which the personnel components of the community are arranged or grouped;

(b)   .the systems of beliefs and procedures through which activities are guided and controlled;

(c)   the system of regulating religious behaviour, norms and values

(social control) and;

(d)   the environmental adaptive process and the material goods (technology) and language form (communication).

6.2   Social Institution

Social institutions am organised systems of social relations which embody certain commonly shared values and procedures to meet certain basic needs of society or community Simply put, social institution represents an organised way of doing things. We all know that human societies have certain social needs and problems; and it is around these needs and problems that social institutions are organised or arranged.

There are a number of social institutions in societies. The major and most universally spread is the family. The family takes care of reproduction of offspring, education, and socialisation of youths. The religious institution controls man's ways of dealing with the ultimate. The economic institution is responsible for production and reproduction of goods and services. The political institution is concerned with governance.

Social institutions are put in place in society when sets of social organisational relationships become generally accepted and observed over a long period of time. These become the customs or ways of life of people. These sets of organisational relationships among groups, shape and structure their daily activities in such ways and manners that they help to achieve societal goals. It is also necessary to emphasise the fact that institutions are structurally interdependent. They form an integral part of the larger society. For these reasons, institutions literally define all other encompassing social organisations called society.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Name all the social institutions that are used in analysing the social structure in a society.

Social Organisation

The social organisation in a society or community can be described as the pattern of group relations. It represents the social fabric of human activities to the extent that it emphasises harmony, interdependence and cohesion. Social organisation generally can be defined as the organisation of a society into subgroups, particularly those that are based on age-grades, sex, kinship, occupation, residence, property, privilege, right, obligations, authority and status. These sub-groups in society coordinate social norms, sanctions and rewards. They are therefore

socially vital for various social group relations and common activities.

You can now see that from our definitions, the terms; social structure, social institutions and social organisation, are very important in the study of society's institutions and how its organisation is structured and functions.

A close examination of the three terms reveal that whether we are studying customs, marriages, burial or religious systems, one will find out that these institutions shape the day-to-day activities of people and their intergroup relations.

What we have done so far is to define the three most important concepts that are commonly used in the study of how societies function and maintain cohesion and regulate social order. What we shall do now is to use the ethnographic materials to demonstrate what these terms mean in the study of peoples of Nigeria (their customs norms and values) and established social relations.

Since almost all of us grew up in a family, the family is therefore the social group we are most familiar with. It is a fact that all the communities in Nigeria, like other African societies, are organised into kinship and lineage systems. It is therefore important to understand the meaning and use of social structure, social institutions and social organisation so as to improve your understanding of the roles these terms or concepts play in the maintenance of social order cohesion and acculturation. These are processes which by definition are the partially conscious and partially unconscious learning experiences, whereby the older generation imbibes or compels children to adopt cultural ways of thinking and behaving.

The example we shall use will be based on ethnographic materials taken from Nwanna Nzewunwa on pre-colonial Nigeria, east of the *Niger— Nigerian History and Culture* (1985:23-24). In this publication, Nwanna provides ethnographic materials on the kinship organisation, group formation and political institution among the peoples, east of the Niger.

6.2   People East of the Niger

The Family
We are going to describe here the family and social structure of peoples, east of Niger, comprising the Igbo and Efik-Ibibio speakers.

According to Nwanna (1985), the nuclear family is the lowest unit of organisation within the lineage system. A nuclear family is made up of a man, his wife/wives, children and slaves, while among the Efik/Ibibio

groups, a man lives with his nuclear family within a defined compound. The Igbo prefer a system whereby several men (sons of the same father) live together in one compound sharing one gate.

A compound is made up of a family group, which consists of men, their wives and children, sons' wives and their children. Depending on the number of compounds involved, the group can be referred to either as extended or lineage family. The last unit is the village group or town which is made up of a collection of related villages.

Among the peoples east of Niger the following social units can be identified: Efik-Ibibio — *Oduk* (village group) *Obio* (village) and *Ekpuk* extended family, *Ufok* (family group) and *Idipete* (nuclear family).
The Igbo speakers; *Mba* (village group), Mbam (village); *Onumara* (lineage/extended family); *Umunna* (family group); and *Umunne* (nuclear family).

The Efik-Ibibio and Igbo are predominantly patrilineal. The lineage is land-owning, and land allocation and settlement follow the patrilineal ideology in terms of rights, duties and privileges. It is headed by the most senior male.

The marriage system among the peoples east of Niger shows the following tendencies. Among the Ijo, lineage organisation follows two systems by which a "low bride wealth" makes offspring to be of matrilineal descent. Similarly, a "high bride wealth" makes offspring patrilineal with accompanying inheritance privileges. Among the Igbo of Ohafi a, a matrilineal descent operates. However, in the case of Afikpo people the double descent operates. That is to say, descent can be reckoned patrilineally or matrilineally at the same time or can be either of the two systems.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Use ethnographic materials from your ethnic group to illustrate the concept of kinship organisation.

The judicial privileges and duties in terms of political, religious and inheritance processes among the Afikpo are determined by the descent groupings. The organisational structure is hierarchical, flowing from the village level to the nuclear family level. This system permits the maintenance of social order within groups. For instance, in the selection of a lineage head, the head of each family unit is chosen from among the family units whose known ancestors are believed to be one of those who founded the settlement. Being a member of those who founded the settlement confers on a member the privilege of first among equals, and

also a religious leadership status.

Traditional Social Stratification

The social stratification among the peoples, east of the Niger is based on unit of organisation. Such an arrangement ensures the smooth functioning of responsibilities in political and social matters. For instance, among the Annang, a village is normally stratified along sex line dichotomy (male/female). Earh line is further divided into age grades — elders, middle aged, youths and children. The age grades, apart from performing social functions, also serve as a forum through which age grade members progress in the political, military, economic and social hierarchies. As a matter of fact, the Ijo age grade system is normally used as a launch pad into politics in the family unit.

On the other hand, among the Igbo, inequality can be recognised in age, status, wealth, religion, birth and descent groupings. This group recognises individual achievements more in social, political and economic relations, than hereditary which is bestowed on individuals. Similarly, social status is viewed from one's origin and upbringing, depending on the level of hereditary status. For instance, freeborn or slave *(Osu),* cult slave *(Osu),* a legitimate child or one born out of wedlock, native or stranger.

In like manner, Delta society distinguishes levels of social stratifications in terms of royalty, freeborn and slaves within the community, and those slaves brought from outside and could be sold at any opportune time.

The Igbo in the northern part of the delta region recognise titled men as being very high in the social hierarchy. Whereas among the Southern Igbo, titles are in the form of *Ma,* which accepts only one member from one family group on account of his age. This principle is similar to the Efik and Ibibio political set up, called the Ubong order.

6.3   Other Groups

Besides the Igbo, east of the Niger river are other notable peoples, such as the Ijo, Efik and Ibibio. They occupy the Niger Delta area in a belt stretching from Ondo State (in the West) to Bayelsa and River states respectively.

The Ijo specifically are known to have developed small states of which the most prominent ones are: Ibani (Bonny), Elem Kalabari (Calabar), Nember (Brass) and Okrika.

According to historical sources, the Ijo states were established in the 16th century as a response to the Atlantic trade. During the Atlantic trade, villages that were able to control the commerce brought by Europeans became the nuclei of the new states. This development transformed some of the chiefs, especially *Amayanabo* into political officials.

The social and political organisation of the Ijo is essentially based on the village structure. For instance, like the Binis political structure, Ijo villages are divided into wards and these wards in turn are divided into households. Also, like their neighbour, Igbo, the main political authority in the village is the assembly of adult males headed by the head of lineage who established the village. He is called the Amayanabo. His function as the Amayanabo is essentially ritual.

Summary

In this section, our focus is on how a society functions through its structure and social organisation. We also define the structure of a society as those formal enduring aspects that bring orderliness into society.

The formal enduring aspect being referred to is the institutional framework — political, economic, religion and education. The understanding of social structure and its institutional framework is also defined in order to enrich your knowledge and understanding-of ways of life of communities.

Specifically, we made mention of four areas through which the structure and organisation of a group of communities can be understood. We listed them as: the personnel arrangement or component system of beliefs, norms and values, and material goods (technology). The family as an institution and other enduring institution were used to familiarise you with the ways social structures as a concept operate. We also provided ethnographic reference to buttress discussion on social structure from some ethnic groups.

Conclusion

It is convenient to study social processes in a community in a concrete way through analysis of its institutional set up. There are a number of formal enduring institutions that guide day to day activities of people in a community. One of the major formal enduring aspects of societies and which is universally accepted is the family. For example, the family as a universal institution is responsible for production and reproduction of offsprings and socialisation of the youths. Simi lady, religion controls

man's ways in dealing with the ultimate. The political institution is concerned with governance. For these institutional frameworks to operate effectively, the social organisation, customs, norms and values of a society are generally accepted and observed. For these reasons, formal institutions are structurally organised in an interdependent manner and therefore defines all other encompassing social organisation, called society.

Note:

Units 8,9 and 10 referred to in the discussion on social structure and social organisation are for your convenience and to drive home the conceptual framework we used in understanding how society functions. The summary and conclusion reached therefore apply to these units.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE)

Use ethnographic materials from your ethnic group to describe the concept social structure.

Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA)
Exercise:

What is social organisation? Describe how the pattern of social organisation operates among the Edo speaking people of Nigeria.

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Note:

The references list is also for Units 8 and 9.

Unit 7

Intergroup Relations

7.0   Objective

Our objective in this unit is to discuss types of group relations among some Nigerian ethnic communities. Our focus will be on the general and inter communal levels. In other words, the focus will be to determine some of the similarities and differences in intergroup relations.

7.1   Introduction

We define intergroup relations as forms of interactions between two or more distinct cultural linguistic groups. This could be through trade, migrations and marriages. What should be noted is that the consequences of intergroup relations have been the spread of cultural traits such as religious ceremonies, royalty titles, use of currencies, dresses and other forms of social, political and economic institutions among the interacting communities.

As already indicated in Unit 2, mention was made of those ethnic groups who for centuries occupied culture area territories. It is in this perspective that we select the groups that are congruous with each other, at least for easy referencing. We will therefore select the following groups — Yoruba and Edo (Southwest) Igbo and Ibibio (East). These group represent the peoples of the forest.

Similarly, the grassland will be represented by peoples located in the far north and middle belt. Also where appropriate, we shall make mention in a generalised way of other ethnic groups.

7.2   The Yoruba of Southwest

The Yoruba represents one of the largest ethnic groups. One peculiar thing about them is that they are distributed all over the world. This is due mainly to the effect of slave trade during the 18th century. They are also found in several African countries, especially those countries located along the West African Coast.

Probably due to the coastal location of their territories, they are the greatest victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade; and as a result, they account for the largest numbers of Africans in the diasporas America, Canada and West Indies).

One advantage enjoyed by being located along the coast is that they are the principal beneficiaries of colonial education and economy.

Moreover, a substantial number of the blacks in the United Kingdom, Canada, United States of America, Brazil and the Caribbean Islands are descendants of slaves exported from Yorubaland. Besides the western part where they reside, they are also in Kwara, Edo and Kogi States.

There are many features that are identifiable with the Yoruba. We shall briefly annotate some of the prominent features.

Establishment of Kingdoms
The ancient Yoruba Kingdoms represent a constellation of independent monarchies. These kingdoms are products of the dispersal of the Yoruba from their ancestral home in Ile-Ife and it is strongly connected with the mythical legend of Oduduwa.

Notwithstanding the independence of these kingdoms, there are strong indications of allegiance by these monarchies to Alaafin of Oyo. He is recognised as the political leader. On the other hand, the Ooni of Ife, who occupied the seat of Yoruba legendary ancestor, Oduduwa, is recognised as the spiritual ruler of the Yoruba.

Urban Culture

The Yoruba as a group are known to be predominantly farmers. Notwithstanding being farmers, (Ikime, — *Groundwork of Nigerian History),* they have a "unique and long-standing tradition of living in towns". The urbanised ways of the Yoruba are legendary in the sense that they are the most urbanised in Nigeria and indeed throughout the continent of Africa. They live in big cities such as Ibadan, Ife, Ogbomoso and Ilorin, to mention a few. In fact, these settlements predated the advent of European incursion into their territories.

It is possible to ascertain that the urban nature of the Yoruba was derived from coping with two related developments: the need for defence during Yoruba intra and inter ethnic warfare, and to facilitate trading activities among themselves and other groups with whom they share intertrade relationship — the Hausa and Nupe are examples.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What do you think is responsible for the urbanisation of Yoruba ethnic group of Southwest?

Religion

They are known to be deeply religious in the sense that there is so much attention paid to spiritualism and spiritual power (deities and ancestor worship and invocation). As a testimony, Yorubaland harbours the greatest concentration of religious beliefs and practices, compared to other ethnic groups in Nigeria. It is the most religiously heterogeneous group if compared with other large ethnic groups such as Hausa (North) Igbo (East) and Igala (Middle Belt). As a matter of fact, most modem religious organisations and movements in Islam and Christianity originated mostly from Yorubaland.

Cultural Attributes

The average Yoruba man has the greatest respect for elders and whoever he recognises as a social superior. This aspect of cultural attributes, although common to Africans in general, are quite unique in their own ways and practices. The act of prostrating on the ground to greet the aged and elders represents one of the most symbolic in the desire to submit to social superiors. Perhaps, nowhere is this gesture or act found among other ethnic groups.

They are also known to be independent in character formation and diplomatic in their dealings among themselves and with the outsiders. However, one of their benchmarks is the resentment of despotic leadership. These qualities, in the past, were manifested in their penchants for rebellion. This bellicose trait might have degenerated into intra-tribal and ethnic warfares even during early colonial times.

The cultural attributes we have listed remain with the Yoruba till today, and in fact, are manifested in their political consciousness.

7.3   The Benin (Edo)

Next to the Yoruba in the West are the Edo speaking people. They occupy the territory immediately east of Yorubaland. This group are found in the following local government areas in Edo State: Oredo, Ikpoba, Ogha, Egor, Ovia, Orhionmwon and Uhunonwode. Benin city, the capital is popularly referred to as Edo by the inhabitants of the city.

Before the advent of colonialism, the Edo had had a flourishing kingdom. According to Edo mythology, the kingdom was founded by the youngest son of the high God *(Osanobua),* with his other brothers, who included the first kings of I le-Ife and other Yoruba kingdoms, and the first king of the Europeans, all sent to live in the world *(agbon).* When they arrived in the world, they found it covered with water. The youngest son was directed by a bird to upturn a snail shell and so he did. Thereafter, sand fell from the shell and spread out to form the land. It

was for this reason that the first Oba of Benin became the owner of the land and his senior brothers had to come to him and barter their possession in return for a place to settle. Though he was the youngest, he became the wealthiest and most powerful ruler.

At the height of Edo kingdom in the 15th century, its territory had expanded from the banks of the lower Niger valley to Dahomey (now Republic of Benin). The empire also embraced other ethnic groups such as Western Igbo, and to a minute extent, some Yoruba dialect speakers in the West.

The historical connection between the Yoruba and Edo is well documented to the extent that at a time, the former produced the king for Edo peoples. This link is very significant considering the fact that the precolonial political systems of the two groups were similar in many respects. For example, the Yoruba recognise the Alaafi n of Oyo and Ooni of Ife as political and spiritual leaders respectively. In the case of Edo people, the Oba of Benin combines both the political and spiritual leaderships. I must also emphasise that both kingdoms are state societies with centralised government and traditionally recognised rulers, and similar authority structures.

Another important area to emphasise is that, the kingship link with Ile-Ife created cross-cultural exchanges on many fronts — Arts and political system. Also, this link is reinforced in the political history and the tradition of origin of dynasties which recognised blood link between the two ethnic groups at early periods.

Both the documented and oral traditions (histories) are indicative of established free flow of people, economic and cultural exchanges, especially at the edge of the forest zone (Ile-Ife) and other adjacent Yoruba towns located towards Benin kingdom border. The admixture of people of Owo (Yoruba) and Benin (Edo) artistic exchange (work of arts) can be cited as examples.

It was these cultural and economic exchanges that resulted in the establishment of Lagos as one of Edo outposts. In fact, history claims that the first settlers of Lagos were people from Benin. The subsequent immigrants were the Yoruba from the surrounding kingdoms.

All that I have emphasised is to show you the level of cultural and economic integration that prevailed between the Yoruba and Edo peoples. The next group to be considered is the Igbo people.

7.4   The Igbo

The Igbo are one of the three largest groups in present Nigeria. You can

locate this group to the East of the lower Niger valley. The prominent neighbours of Igbo are the Efik and Ibibio.

Unlike the Yoruba and Edo, the Igbo people were never organised into a large political group or kingdom. From the anthropological and historical accounts, little is known for certain of the evolution of Igbo society. However, the linguistic evidence suggests that Igbo language with other related languages (Yoruba, Edo, Igala and Idoma) evolved in the Niger-Benue sub-family of Niger-Congo languages. (Kwa sub-family).

Self-Assessment Exercise

It is said that the Igbo ethnic group was never organised into a large political state like the Yoruba and Edo peoples of the Southwest. In what group would you classify its political structure?

Since no centralised political system evolved, the largest political unit is the village. The major arm of governance is the council of elders called *Amala.* Also in some occasions, young men of proven ability are allowed into the council of elders.

Within the village itself, the political authority was never in the hands of individuals or families. Although there were many titled chiefs or clan heads, there was no evidence to suggest a ruling aristocracy which can wield power as a specialised occupation (like in the case of Edo and Yoruba monarchies). By Igbo tradition, the *Amala* is normally presided over by the head of the most seni or cl an or lineage in the village.

It was generally believed that there was never a religious leadership among the Igbo due to the minuscule struggle among villages. However, some anthropological findings show this not to be true. It was found out that there were many integrating mechanisms which bound these villages together. One of such mechanisms is said to be religion, represented by the oracle in Aro, called *lbinu Ukpabi* (popularly referred to as *Arochuckwu* Oracle).

This oracle is an all embracing epithet of Igbo concept of religions essence. The areas of influence of *Ukpabi* on Igbo cultural and political life include judicial and economic during the pre-colonial society in Igboland.

The story was told that it was through the control of *Ukpabi* that *Arochuckwu* people exercise cultural, economic and political influence on Igbo societies. We were also told by experts in Igbo culture that it

was this pre-eminence during the colonial period that gave the British the erroneous impression that Igboland was under the domination of *Aro* people. It was this impression created by the British that led to the destruction of *Arochuckwu* shrine. This perhaps has had a far reaching implication on the essence of African religion in Igboland till today.

Unlike the Yoruba, Igbo people are not known to be urban dwellers. Rather, their settlements consists of family compounds, dispersed over a large territory, however with no central authority.

Also, compounds do not exist shoulder to shoulder as in Yorubaland. Perhaps this tends to suggest a complete or weak spirit of communalism, and as a result, high value is attached to individuals' privacy in Igboland.

Summary

The focus of our discussion has been on the types of intergroup relations among some selected ethnic communities at a general and specific levels. It is indicated that interaction takes place at a variety of levels. It takes place, for example, through trade, migration and marriages across ethnic boundaries. Through these levels, cultural diffusions were made possible in religious practices, chieftaincy matters, dress and socio-political and economic institutions. Some examples were taken from the peoples of Southwest, east of the Niger, Savannah and Middle Belt zones.

Conclusion

The importance of inter and intra ethnic relations among the over 300 nationalities have been emphasized especially in the formation of political, social and economic formation before the incursion of Europeans in the 18th century.

Factors of trade, trade routes and religion have been identified to contribute to the promotion of inter-group relations. The consequences have been the spread of some common cultural traits, even at the level of shared myth of origin of some Nigerian ethnic nationalities. All the above put together implies that the socio-political and economic foundations of Nigeria was laid before the British amalgamation in 1914.

Tutor-marked Assignment
Exercise

Select any of the geographical zones (i.e. Forest or Savannah) of Nigeria, write a brief essay on the most significant cultural characteristics of the zone.

References

Akinjide Osuntokun and Ayodeji Olukoyi. *Nigerian Peoples and Cultures* Lagos: Davidson Ltd., 1997.

Otite Onigu. *Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnicity in Nigeria.* Ibadan: Shaneson C.I. Limited, 1990.

Unit 8

The Peoples of the North

8.0 Introduction

This unit is a continuation of discussion on intergroup relations. Most of what we have discussed so fans on select representations of the peoples of Nigeria. We have touched so far on the major ethnic groups, and principally from the forest areas and the grasslands zone. Our focus now shifts to the open grasslands where we have predominantly, the Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri peoples. These groups represent the most numerous and politically dominant groups. The traditions of origin of the peoples suggest the existence of relations among them in their early stages of state formation.

8.1 The Hausa People

In this unit, we are going to discuss the Hausa. Although this group is the most dominant in the open grasslands, it shares boundaries with several other minorities in the present day states: Kaduna, Plateau, Adamawa, Taraba, Bono, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Niger, Kebbi. Others are Sokoto, Katsina, Kano and Jigawa. In most of the states mentioned, the Hausa are almost exclusively dominant.

Before the 19th century, the Hausa were not one people, at least, not in the sense that we know them today. In fact, Hausa is more of a linguistic terminology than an ethnic concept, referring to those people in Northern Nigeria who are migrants from the Southern Saharan dispersion, Western Sudan and Chad.

They probably originated from the same source, but at a point in their history separated into different city-states. Each state was considered a separate political and cultural group. Interestingly, some groups of colonial historian scholars, notably, Brandbury, whose language map of Nigeria has remained the most detailed till today, refer to Hausa city-states as separate ethnic groups. In any case, what is peculiar about the Hausa is the fact that they perhaps became one Hausa people only after the Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio in the early 19th century (1803). It was the Jihad that united them under the umbrella of Islam. It is even real to suggest that, that was the beginning of Hausa nationalism which has today blossomed into one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria with a new theocratic state, the Sokoto caliphate, built on the ruins of the Hausa states. It is even to the credit of Uthman Dan Fodio's religious revolution in Hausaland that the political, religious and cultural homogeneity in Hausaland is hinged.

The relations between the Hausa and the Fulani (their immediate neighbours) could be described from two different perspectives. Firstly, before the Jihad, the Fulani began their gradual settlement in Hausaland, but were often treated as aliens. Historical evidence shows that some learned Fulani served Hausa rulers as judges, scribes and advisers, and some had become wealthy landlords, but were still denied participation in governance. Similarly, the relationship between the sedentary Hausa and cattle Fulani was not always cordial. The Hausa farmers had often fought the cattle Fulani over grazing rights.

Also, the Hausa farmers saw their crops being destroyed by animals and this often brought tension between the two groups.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Name all the Hausa states. Describe the intergroup relations among these states.

At the end of the Jihad, the intergroup relations between the two groups, became greatly altered. Fulani leaders took total control of Hausaland. According to history, of the twelve flag bearers appointed by Uthman Dan Fodio, only one was Hausa, and he had occasion to speak against marginalisation. Although, almost all the emirates in Hausaland are controlled by Fulani, but up till today, the Fulani have not been culturally assimilated by the Hausa, yet they control political power.

Compared to the Yoruba and Igbo in the forest zone, the Hausa is the most religiously homogenous group. For instance, out of every one hundred Hausa men, the chances are that ninety are adherents of Islam. In fact, most people do not know that there are quite a number of Hausa people who are not and have never been Moslems. The group refused to be conquered by the Fulani Jihad. They embraced Christianity and have remained so up till today. However they are only a tiny minority.

Farming is the major occupation of the Hausa, and in fact, the nature of their terrain favours intensive cultivation of grain crops (cereals), such as millet, guinea com, maize, legumes and beans. In recent times, it has become common to find farmers actively involved in the production of root crops — yams and cassava. These crops are known to be the preserves of forest belt peoples. The cultural change has become possible due to improved agricultural technology, especially the intensive use of modem agricultural input.

We must also mention the fact that irrigation farming is an exclusive preserve of the Hausa people.

The facts are straight here. Rainfall in the North is short and erratic. This notwithstanding, the North is blessed with abundant river flood plains, called *fadama*. Fadama areas are known to remain wet and arable all the year round. This opportunity permits farmers to cultivate a variety of crops — maize, vegetable, tomatoes, carrot and sugarcane during the dry season.

A particular cultural trait that is observable among the Hausa is that they are among the most travelled traders in West African sub-region. Within Nigeria, they are well known for cattle and kolanuts trades. In fact, they enjoy exclusive monopoly in the distribution of cattle trades and also provide the biggest markets for kolanut farmers in West Africa. The Hausa are also famous for weaving, dyeing, leatherworks and animal slaughtering (butchering).

They have also perfected the art of roadside retailing where they sell varieties of groceries and provision.

Without any exaggeration, their shops dotted almost all the urban centres of Nigeria. Local trade routes linked Hausa cities and towns with the Yoruba and Nupe cities to the Southwest, with Borno to the East, and with the Western Sudanic cities. For example, the cities of Katsina and Kano had since the 16th century been centres of trade originating from the Sahara and North Africa. Also, during the slave trade period, Zaria was known to be the chief slave trade market in Nigeria.

Self-Assessment Exercise

1.   What significant role did trade play in intergroup relations?

2.   The middle Belt of Nigeria is peopled by many ethnic groups. Select any two of your choice and briefly discuss.
    (a)   the cultural contact with their immediate neighbours
    (b)   intergroup relations

References

Akinjide Osuntokun and Ayodeji Olukoyi. *Nigerian Peoples and Cultures.* Lagos: Davidson Ltd., 1997.

Omorodi on F.I. *Ethnography of Nigeria.* Akure: Sylva Publications Ltd., 1997.

Notes

For further reading on the people of the north, go to Unit 10 where the ethnography and social organisation of the pastoral people (Fulani) is discussed.

Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA)

Exercise

Describe the relations between the Hausa and Fulani before and after the Jihad.

Unit 9

The Political Institution: East of the Niger

9.0   Objective

This unit continues with the description of ethnography of the Delta peoples. So far in our discussion, we have touched on the organisation of the people in the Delta region. The Igbo, Ibibio and Efik. We will now focus on the traditional political institutions.

9.1   Political Institutions

The maintenance of law and order in society, constitutes the major demand in the efficient use of traditional political power. Government in whatever form is expected to provide the management, direction and control required for efficient law and order.

In the traditional political system, two paramount systems can be identified: the monarchical and non-monarchical. What is important to emphasise in the two is that they are a mixed-bag in contents and contexts in the political system. It may describe a kingdom (monarchy), republican (stateless) or city-state. The capacity of the political system is to enter into socio-political and economic relations with other neighbours. This becomes an important issue in traditional political practices.

Having said the above, let us look at how these things operate at the level of traditional political system among the peoples, east of the Niger.

As we have noted earlier, we identify the nuclear family as the smaller unit of social and political organisation. This is in the sense that the oldest male family member is conferred with the title as head of a family unit. In this capacity, he controls the political, economic affairs and the fortunes of family members. Besides, he is regarded as the custodian of the family tradition and ancestral cults. In ibis position, he acts as the intermediary between the family's ancestors and the living members.

At the village level (based on extended family structure) the family is fused into a larger village political state. This is because, the village is regarded as a state, and each is independent of each other. And by this arrangement, each village state maintains its territorial independence, tolerating no interference in its internal affairs. Also, recognising no other authority except the one within its territorial boundary.

What we have described above is the general impression of social and political organisation among the people, east of the Niger. However, them are some differences in the way these institutions function in order to create social order in the society. We shall now take some of the groups in the area under discussion to bring into focus the socio-political organisation at the village/state levels. The material we are going to use will be taken from the publication by Nwanna Nzewunwa on the *Pre-Colonial Nigeria, East of the Niger* The publication contains the historical and ethnographic materials on the major ethnic groups. I must remind you that the major groups are the Efik, Ibibio and Igbo.

9.2   The Efik-Ibibio Political Institution

Among the Annang and Efik-Ibibio, the unit of political authority is vested in the extended family structure (lineage). It is called the *Ekpuk* (lineage or extended family). The nucleus is called *Itibe Ekpuk,* meaning literally the Royal Family. This is similar to the title given to the founding family *Ekpuk.* While the founding family, (the *Ekpuk)* produces the *Okuku Obong Obio* and *Amanayabo,* whose office is marked by elaborate investiture, the Igbo exercised headships carrying honorific and religious status with insignificant political influence.

The traditional governance at the village level is the joint responsibility of the lineage heads or elders of the lineages *(Ekpuk).* In Cross River, the *Okuku* (the founding family) directs other lineage heads, like *Amanayanabo.* The office of *Okuku* and *Amanayanabo* is said to have been autocratic, and from time to time he exercised right of life and death over his subjects.

Between the founding family and lineage heads is sandwiched the office of *Akpan Okuku,* whose responsibilities are those of communication between *Okuku* and lineage heads. The *Akpan Okuku is* usually the most senior member among the lineage heads in the village council. And as the president of the village council, he is conferred with executive, judicial and administrative powers. The Annang village system of government does not allow anybody to rise to prominence as no one could possess power beyond his lineage level *(Ekpuk).*

It can also be observed that the political process of governance among the Efik-Ibibio groups differs in the distribution of power. For instance, the *esop idung* (village council) main function is religious. The political and judicial functions are handled by men who are appointed for this purpose. The functions they play, are regarded to be those of holding ministerial appointments. Such functions include other aspects of traditional economy.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What do you understand by the concept "political institutions"?

The ministers are appointed from among a special class called, the *Obong* Order. This order is made up of royal members of the village council. With the Ekpuk heads and the *Obong* Order members, the *Obong Ibio* forms the village council, called *Esopidung.*

It is necessary to emphasise the fact that among the Efik-Ibibio, the bond of lineage and the village did not lie strictly in kinship/blood ties as in the case among the Igbo and Annang ethnic groups. This is explained by the fact that the lineage and village members belong to diverse ancestry who had migrated into the area from different settlements. Unity in the villages simply lies in the political autonomy, obligations, and the territorial isolation of the villages.

9.3   The Igbo Political Organisation

The traditional political system is based on the lineage structure. It consists of flexible democratic political systems, characterised by autonomous federations of lineages or villages, organised through lineage heads, age-grades and title societies. The age-grade and titled people cut across lineage lines. The body charged with decision-making processes is made up of representatives from lineages within the autonomous political groupings.

The body of decision-makers can be grouped into five categories: first, traditional archetype where decisions are made by consensus among the lineage representative based on age, wealth or privilege, but have no overriding influence in selection. The second is a slight modification of the first in which members of title societies and lineage elders constitute the political decision-making group (this system is found among the Awka Igbo). The third is found among Cross River Igbo in Abriba, Ohafi a and Arochukwu, where secret societies dominate the political scene. The fourth category operates where age grade and lineage heads form the decision-making body. This is common in Asaba, Aguleri and Abriba. The fifth is found among the Niger Igbo (Ogbani, Oguta Abo, Onitsha and Osomari), where the political structure is hierarchical.

9.4   System of Decision-Making

We have indicated in our discussion that the units of political organisation among the peoples east of the Niger are the village and lineage levels. In the execution of political decisions or policies at the level of the lineage, two factors are used– the human and the

supernatural. Also, the political and religious functions are distributed among the lineage representatives. Other organs of political and religious institutions can also be used in decision-making processes. For example, age grades are used in carrying out the legislative, executive and judicial decisions at the lineage and village levels. The use of age-grades is also classified. The oldest grade is normally co-opted into the village council when the need arises. In most cases, the role of the oldest grade is specified in the administration of oaths, offering sacrifices and initiating male members into secret cults. The role of the middle age-grade which is made up of successful business people is to assist the youths in military and social services. The lowest grade, the children, are used for public sanitation. Beyond these functions, the age grades organise public entertainments from time to time and assist in the maintenance of law and order and social control at both the village and lineage levels.

Exclusive Clubs

The term exclusive club is synonymous with secret society. The existence of exclusive club is a common feature in governance. The most prominent are the *Ekpe* and *Ekpo (Ekpe* means leopard and *Ekpo* — ghost or masquerade). The *Ekpe* and *Ekpo* are graded; each grade has its own peculiarities in dress, dance and rituals. Admission and advancement into and within any of the two clubs involves an elaborate ritual and monetary investments.

The *Ekpel Ekpo* represents the supreme authority in the maintenance of law and order. The two societies also represent a form of insurance policy for the living members, and a source of elaborate funeral ceremony for dead members. The functions of *Ekpe/Ekpo* include security duties and other civil intelligence responsibilities at the village and family levels.

In the case of the Igbo, the masquerade *(mmuo)* club operates. In the Delta and Riverine areas, people used the *owu.* Memberships into masquerade clubs are however restricted. It is necessary to emphasise that both the executive and masquerade clubs as a rule, are often exclusively for men. Women play no significant political and religious roles.

Religion

Religion represents the pivot on which the system of social control is anchored for effective implementation. In fact, the concept of life among the Annang, Ibibio, Efik and Igbo can be mirrored in peoples idea about god, spirit world, deities, ghosts and witches. According to their spiritual

essence, all laws have supernatural/ancestor essence, and the lineage heads and eldest family member derive their political, judicial and social authorities from the invincible ancestors.

Social Control

Social control is made possible through the use of exclusive clubs (secret societies). Also the use of folk play in which young men and women entertain the public and use satirical and abusive songs against social deviants represent the popular technique for social control. Similarly, oath-taking, divination and oracles and other forms of social control, are designed to serve the purpose of controlling social deviants. Another known form of social control is the rites of passage. For example, the puberty rites of the Annang called *Mbobo is* aimed at ensuring that no teenage girl had sexual experience before *Mbobo* ceremony which leads to marriage.

9.5   The Judicial System

The adjudication of justice starts from the nuclear family. This is the first court over which the head presides to settle minor cases among immediate family members.

The next court is the lineage level in which the heads settle cases involving fighting, assault, theft, interfamily disputes, adultery and divorce cases between and among nuclear families. The third is the village court. It handles inter-lineage cases, over which the lineages could not reach consensus. However, where consensus could not be final, divination is used to adjudicate cases. In such instances, a reputable diviner or oracle, such as the long juju of Arochukwu is consulted.

Self-Assessment Exercise

How does traditional judicial system functions?

Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA)

Exercise

Describe how the political institution functions in your ethnic group.

Note:

Use the references in Unit 8 for Unit 9.

Unit 10

The Pastoral People

10.0   Objective

We shall discuss the ethnography of another interesting ethic group in Nigeria — the pastoral nomadic Fulani. The ethnography of pastoralism is unique in the sense that the agricultural practices of this group, to a large extent, depend on farming a "living farm" (livestock). This is unlike their other neighbours in the northern savannah zones who are primarily agriculturalists.

10.1   Introduction

It will not be possible to discuss all the ethnography of pastoralism in this unit. What we shall do is to select some aspects that will be useful to you in understanding the dynamics of pastoral production and its associated socio-economic organisation of pastoralism. By the time we go through the themes, we shall perhaps be in a position to appreciate the ethnography of pastoral production, and especially the organization associated with farming a living farm.

10.2   The Pastoral Fulani

The pastoral Fulani are the most numerous among the pastoral ethnic groups in Nigeria. Others are the Shuwa Arabs and Tuareg groups. They are found in all the states of Nigeria, and in particular in the states located in the Sahel and northern Savannah zones: Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Bauchi, Gombe, Katsina and Kano.

They speak the Fulani language often referred to as Fulfulde; one of the Afro-Asiatic language subfamilies. Although the Fulani share a common language, they vary widely in their socio-economic organisation and methods of animal production. They have been classified into different categories on the basis of (a) socio-economic organisation and forms of husbandry practices, (b) pastoral movement, (c) method of resource extraction and, (d) cultural and cattle rearing practices.

Let us briefly describe the cultural peculiarities of each group.

(a)   **Nomadic Pastoralists:** This category of pastoral Fulani practise nomadism, moving South in the dry season and North in the wet season. They are known to have had a long history of contacts with sedentary neighbours and such contacts have encouraged inter-ethnic group relations. This group recognises wider

groupings as lineage and clan, but foremost is the smaller migratory unit that is able to move independently of the larger migratory group, the lineage, in search of pasture.

The annual migratory cycle which each unit follows is a reflection of the socio-economic needs and the requirements of animals. An important aspect of nomadic pastoral group as a social unit is that permanent habitation is usually not a cultural trait. Camps are shifted frequently in the dry season and less in the wet season.

(b)   **Semi-nomadic:** This group maintains permanent bases where the aged and a few other members of the family may remain for part of the year. Although this group practises a sort of land cultivation, it still retains the general nomadic cultural characteristics of absolute attachment to the herds and far less attention to arable farming. The technique of animal husbandry practice, social organisation and forms of economic cooperation are comparatively identical with the nomadic pastoralists.

(c)   **Semi-Settled Pastoralist:** This group maintains permanent habitations where it remains for most part of the year. The group holds no strict aversion to inter-marriage with non-Fulani. They easily integrate into the sociopolitical life of the area in which they find themselves.

(d)   **Settled Pastoralist:** This group consists of Fulani herd owners who maintain an interrupted contact with homesteads (cattle camps). Included in this category are the absentee Fulani cattle owners who reside in the urban centres. Among them also could be found Fulani who have turned agriculturalists and seek economic opportunities by converting their savings into cattle. This group enjoys all the political leverages that are the exclusive rights of the settled Hausa population.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Why is it that the Fulani are referred to as pastoralists?

10.3   Dynamics of Pastoral Production

The most important aspect of pastoral production is nomadism. Responding to the seasonality of savannah vegetation, especially in the rain belt zone where rainfall ranges from 150mm to 1000mm annually, they move from place to place in search of the uneven distribution of animal feeds and water. In the process, they are constrained by

environmental problems: non-availability of pasture and water, human and animal disease problems and land tenure system, which affect production dynamics.

Herding and deployment strategy is strictly organised in accordance with the seasonal distribution of pasture resources. There are two types of strategies employed in resource use. The first involves a grazing organisation which centres around restricted daily movement of herds with wet season grazing orbits. The second allows herd employment and camp displacement in the search for pasture and water in the long thy season. In such grazing organisation, it is not unusual to find some herdsmen splitting their flock into portions, retaining some in the home base camp and the rest sent to the distant places or to farmlands so as to take advantage of crop residues.

Crop residues grazing forms an important feature of deployment strategy, especially when harvesting of crops ceases in November/December. This is the period most pastoralists desert wet season grazing grounds for the farmlands. However, when the supply diminishes pastoral groups switch camps to the *fadama* lands (low flood plains), river beds and depressed lowlands where grazing resources are available until the rain starts in northern savannah in May/June. These aspects described weigh heavily on the minds of herdsmen when decision on herd displacements and family organisation are being contemplated. In addition, the locations of markets and other social amenities are known to dictate the pace and displacement of herds southwards and northwards.

10.4   Socio-Economic Organisation

We will now consider the pastoral Fulani socio-economic organisation. Our starting point is the household cattle camp, then we shall conclude by describing the domestic unit.

Household Camp Organisation

The primary socio-economic unit is the household camp. A household camp is not a fixed entity in that it is constantly being subjected to fission and recombination in response to social and economic factors; and also by the seasonal shifts in immediate ecological conditions.

It may consist a core of related males with their wives and children. This association may sometimes not necessarily be based on kinship relation alone. Cattle camps also do not stand in precisely defined relation to others in terms of lineages or clans. Affiliation to the larger lineage or clan group is normally recognised in general terms, however,

and most importantly, each household camp is a cattle owning unit. The composition and size of a cattle camp varies. For example, Dupire (1970) in *Organisation Sociale des Peul,* from a sample of about 300 camps of woodable clan in Niger Republic, shows that 46-60% consisted of single polygamous families (one man with his wives and children); 20% to 25% of groups of married brothers with their families; 13.5° to 21% of fathers with one or more married sons and their families; and 3.5% to 7% of other combinations of male kinsmen.

It is a common practice for household/camps to combine during the dry season to form ranchman lineage camps. The sizes of these camps fluctuate from year to year or even within one grazing season. Stability is encouraged by a strong preference for endogamous marriages. In some instances, up to 80% of marriages are consumed among members of a ranchman's lineage groups.

Agnatic Lineage Organisation

Hopen (1957) and Stenning (1959) showed that in the past, the agnatic lineages (Lenyol) whose common ancestors *(Mama ami go'o)* could be traced back through more than seven generations and whose names were adopted were linked by various obligations and forms of cooperations. Decisions or, pastoral matters, marriage arrangements, property distribution, social commitments, election of grazing leaders and matters of defence were lineage matters. And most importantly, one of the major functions of the lineage was to ensure the smooth establishment and continuity of families.

In the lineage organisation structure, two larger groupings are important. They are both referred to as Lenyol (Lenyi (pl)). The two can be distinguished according to how they are formed. One group of Lenyi, Dupire refers to as primary lineage, consists of former *transhumant* lineage group which no longer moves together. Individuals may affiliate with such groups through agnatic kinship, cross-cousin relationships or collective oaths. The second grouping is called maximal lineage or clan (Stenning, 1959). This group corresponds to a political unit of the pre-colonial period, but has lost all significance beyond a vague awareness of common origin. What is important to derive in the two groupings includes the following: memberships are co-residential, homesteads are grouped to form cattle camps; and they are linked by various forms of obligations, reciprocity and marriage, defensive matters and election of leadership *(Ardo'en).* These cooperative attributes ensure the smooth continuity of family lines In addition, the corporateness of the agnatic lineage social structure is demonstrated in the endogamous nature of marriage arrangements for the succeeding generations.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is Agnatic lineage? Describe its organisation.

The Domestic Unit

The domestic unit in pastoral social organisation refers to the family. The family is an important unit in pastoral social and economic organisation. It represents the system of social and economic relation through which the reproductive nucleus is integrated with the wider pastoral environment, and with the structure of pastoral society. We can therefore define a domestic unit as a residential unit of patrilineal kin with the oldest member recognised as the leader, and the unit always named after him (Awogbade, 1982). A domestic group begins with a marriage within the agnatic kinship group, usually based on infant betrothal.

The image concept of domestic unit can be expressed as follows: a domestic unit is viable when the labour it can provide is suitable for the exploitation of its means of subsistence, while the cattle are adequate for the support of family members of the domestic unit. This means that a domestic unit can only become independent when it has enough members to carry out the basic economic activities necessary for subsistence purposes.

Domestic Organisation

According to Fontes in Goody (1969:9): the domestic domain is the system of social relations through which the reproductive nucleus is integrated with the environment, and with the structure of society. The domestic structure thus becomes the starting point through which the process of redistribution and control of reproductive resources can be perceived.

For this reason, the domestic unit in a pastoral household is strong and corporate in character due to the fact that its reproductive resources, the livestock, revolves within the group. It is an economic unit or organisation in which its leadership holds absolute authority on the distribution and redistribution of family property to all the memberships in the unit.

Findings on the social and economic structure in households (Hopen (1958), Stenning (1959) and Awogbade (1982)) show that a distinct homestead and a distinct herd are the major criteria for the establishment of a homestead household, which automatically confers the insignia of authority on the founder.

It is also found out that in a household, a number of cattle are distributed to various huts *(suudu)* (Cuudi (p1)), each occupied by a wife and her children. The milk produced by this herd belongs exclusively to the woman and her children, whether used for consumption or for sale. This is to say that the milk from the cattle allocated to wives are generally needed to help meet the consumption needs of the wives and children. The head of a domestic unit also distributes his animals to his sons as they grow up, and when they get married more animals are transferred.

Management of Family Herd

The general management of the family herd is the exclusive responsibility of the household head, especially in respect of decisions on herd deployment strategy.

Management of herd demands constant attendance at markets and other gathering places where information is obtained on such vital issues of pasture conditions, rainfall and disease incidences. Due to these demands, a household head who must herd his own cattle is at a serious disadvantage in making management decisions. It is for this purpose that a young man, even after marriage will not leave his father's household until he has a son (between eight to twelve years old) who can be entrusted with grazing the cattle, even though he may have a viable herd of his own. Under this circumstance, he assists his father in planning the management of the herds, while his own cattle are tended with those of his father by a young unmarried brother.

As a man's sons grow older and they gradually produce their own sons, they leave him. And by the time his last son marries and raises a son of herding age, and in all probability, the father's cattle would have been distributed and his domestic group will cease to exist. In most cases, it is a normal practice for a father to move into the household of his last son. Also, in some known cases, fathers often die before all his sons have established their own households. When this happens, his remaining herd is shared among his heirs according to Fulani rules of inheritance.

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Tutor-marked Assignment

Exercise

Describe the culture and social organisation of the pastoral Fulani.

Unit 11

Marriage Institution

11.0 Objective

An important area of Ethnography of Nigeria that needs to be discussed is the marriage institution. Marriage as we all know is the starting point in the discussion of inter-kinship and intergroup relations. Theoretically, consummation of marriage is a developmental process which involves the distribution and control of the productive and reproductive resources associated with a change in the status of members of households. Members in a household must each pass through the necessary stages of development before each unit in the household can be recognised as a simple family. The process of formation of a family is completed when various rituals are performed The rites start with the selection of a wife and ends with the final formation of a simple family (nuclear family).

11.1 Introduction

Marriage constitutes the most important element of the transition from one social category to another. This is because for one of the spouses, it involves a change of family, clan, village, tribe or ethnic group. When a newly-married couple establishes residence in a new house, the change of residence is marked by ceremonies of rites of separation. One of the fundamental facts about marriage is its social reverberation. This is to say that the union of two individuals involves the creation of a whole set of new ties between their respective groups, social and economic obligations of burdensome kind, sometimes very stringent, in the case of close relatives of the married pair.

The above mentioned are the phases of marriage that will be discussed. And in doing so, ethnographic materials from some selected ethnic groups will be used. The description of the selected groups will afford you the opportunity to understand the form of rituals, the social and economic obligations that are associated with the consummation of marriages.

The ethnographic materials we are using are based on the publications by Dioka *(1997)Nigerian Peoples and Culture: The Forgotten Aspects of Nigeria Culture* and Omorodion (1997) *Ethnography of Nigeria.* These publications are selected from primary ethnography sources and are very revealing about the cultural life-ways of some Nigerian ethnic nationalities. We shall start the ethnographic description with the Tiv people.

Marriage among the Tiv People

The Tiv people are one of the dominant ethnic groups along the Niger-Benue complex zone. They are found south of the River Benue, and belong to the Congo-Benue, a sub-family of Niger-Congo family of languages.

The Tiv people have a simple social organisation based on agnatic lineage structure. One important thing that should be emphasised about the Tiv social structure is the fact that it is based on the principle of segementary opposition. That is to say, the agnatic kinship structure is the family and the compound unit.

The function of the agnatic lineage is political and religious. The kinship system is based on patrilineal ideology, that is, the recognition of common descendants through male only. In other words, the Tiv people practise patrilineal kinship system and the lineage forms the basis for all local groups. Each individual Tiv traces his descent from the founder of the entire group. That means that each lineage can be associated with a territory and the claims of territorial association forms part of the kinship system among the Tiv people.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Define marriage and marriage institutions.

11.2   Marriage Variations among the Tiv People

Omorodion (1997), identifies five variations in the marriage system of the Tiv people. These are: (a) marriage by exchange (b) marriage by elopement (c) kem marriage (d) marriage by bride-wealth, and (e) sister marriage. Let us briefly discuss these forms of marriage systems.

(a)   **Marriage by Exchange:** Families with grown up daughters and sons could exchange their daughters in marriage. This is considered among the Tiv to be a full contract marriage and acceptable. In practice, a young man with a young sister could exchange her for another girl as wife. A young man could also use his uncle's daughter in exchange for a wife. According to Omorodi on (1997), this type of marriage by exchange makes the children to be double cousins.

(b)   **Marriage by Elopement:** Marriage by elopement softened the rigidities of exchange marriage. A female ward could elope to marry another male member. The male member may exchange his female ward for the girl who eloped to him. Otherwise, if he does not have a female ward to give to the guardian in return, he

falls into debt to him. Such debt is commonly paid when the eldest daughter by this marriage is old enough to be married.

(c) **Kem Marriage:** This marriage variation involves a series of payments by the husband-to-be to his wife's guardian, mostly as demanded by the guardian. Children from this marriage get affiliated to the agnatic lineage of their mother's father. Evidences abound that a man may pay a fee to his mother's father's lineage so that he becomes foliated to his natural father's lineage.

(d) **Marriage by Bride-Wealth:** Bride price payments are normally not mentioned in marriage discussion. This is because it is believed that a lady is not being sold. The amount to be paid is usually determined by the quality of broomsticks agreed upon—each broomstick represents a specified amount of money. Bride price is never completed at once. As soon as a part is paid, the couple could marry and later complete the payment.

(e) **Sister Marriage:** Another interesting variation in the Tiv marriage system is sister marriage. This system involves a young man making a payment for what is referred to as "removing the shell" worn around the neck. This shell symbolises sexual inaccessibility of an unmarried girl to whom the man is attracted. The girl's mother accepts the gift on the consent of the girl. This is how the man gains sexual rights and can sleep with her in her mother's hut until she is married. Such sexual rights may span a couple of years, and in case pregnancy occurs, he becomes the legal father of the child.

11.3   Marriage System among the Benin

The marriage system among the Edo, (Benin people) is not too different from those obtained among the Igbo, and the Yoruba peoples, although certain glaring variations can be observed in the system.

As narrated in Omorodion (1997), the traditional process is as follows: when a baby girl is born, suitors begin to approach her parents for her hand, sending to them a log of wood and yams This is known as performing *Ivu-omo* (asking for the child). When the father of the girl, with the approval of his own father or elder brother, has chosen a suitable man, he informs him of the date of the formal betrothal. On the agreed date, the suitor prepares gifts of ajar of palmwine, two trays of sliced coconut with two kolanuts each and two shillings. On presentation to the father of the bride, the gifts are taken to the altar of the girl's patrilineal ancestors to notify them of the betrothal. The suitor is made to kneel before the girl's father, who says "we give the child to

you". Thereafter, the suitor begins to give to his prospective parents in-law such services which include – yearly presentation of yams to the parents, helping in farm duties and providing the mother-in-law with fire wood.

When the girl has passed puberty, the father informs the suitor that the time for him to claim her is approaching. When a date is fixed for the marriage, the groom prepares more gifts of wine, kolanuts and coconuts as further offerings to the ancestors of the girl on notification for the intending marriage rites to be performed and ask for the ancestors' blessings. It is at this stage that the groom or his father makes the marriage payment of twelve pounds to the girl's father, and with gifts for the mother and the people in the home who will serve as witnesses to the marriage. The marriage contract is finally sealed by the payment of two shillings which is called *anyi-imiomi* — the wine of receiving the child.

The next stage is the circumcision of the girl. This is usually done immediately after the bride price is paid. The husband is responsible for the expenses of the circumcision. After the circumcision she joins her husband and the next stage of the marriage ceremony would start.

This stage is the *irhioharie* ceremony – taking the bride to her husband. The bride is expected to go to her husband at night accompanied by four people from her father's family and three from her mother's. Her departure according to cultural practices, is characterised by sadness, even if feigned. On arrival, the bride is expected to feign shyness. She is placed in her husband's lap by one of those who accompanied her. The women in the groom's house bring a bowl of water in which money or cowries have been placed and wash the bride's hands. This simple rite, symbolises her acceptance into the household, and the money expresses the hope that the marriage will be a fruitful one.

The next morning after her arrival, a goat is killed and the blood collected The couple would stand and hold hands at the entrance of the house, with each of their foot on the doorstep. They would dip their big toes into the blood of the goat as prayers are offered.

On the seventh day, the bride would visit her husband's ancestral shrine with kolanuts and wine. She would be made to confess any relationship she had had with any man before her betrothal. If such a thing had happened, the husband would claim damages from those concerned. She would then pray to her husband's ancestral spirits to receive her into the family and make her fruitful.

The new wife would live with her mother-in-law who would teach her house duties as required from wives. She would never eat in the public

with her husband until she has her own kitchen. This represents the last stage of the marriage process.

11.4   Marriage System among the Hausa People

There are some criteria used in the classification of marriage system among the Hausa people. The criteria can be classified thus; (a) the degree or lack of wife seclusion and the circumstances and relations of the spouse and their kin (b) marriage based on kinship and quasi kinship relationship. This will include all forms of cousin-marriage; (c) marriage based on joking relationship, including marriages between members of different occupational groups, or marriage of prestige that involves parents giving out daughters as alms to selected men with no marriage payments.

According to Smith (1955), the mode of classifying or distinguishing marriages are the following types: marriages consummated on the basis of kinship relationships of the parents— *auren zummunta,* those based on love and desire of the pair— *auren baiko,* marriage based on alms given - *auren sadaka,* marriage of exchange— *auren mutsaya,* and *auren talami* (marriage of sandals). The marriages that are consummated under Islamic injunction (faith) is described as *auren kulle.*

The most common form of marriage consummation is the *auren zumunta* which denotes marriage between kinsfolk and it is the most preferred. The concept of *zumunta* is widely used, hence there are at least eight different types of *auren zumunta.* Four out of the eight refers to parallel and cross-cousin marriages in different forms. They are principally based on kinship affiliation. Of the remaining four types, two are classified under institutional friendship, one on common loyality and the last one on occupational grouping. Marriage based on *amen baiwa* (marriage of bethrothal) also exists in marriage cultural practices among the Hausa people. In this instance, a girl can be bethrothed to a would-be husband from age six up to the age of thirteen or fourteen, when she is expected to get married.

Auren mutsaya (marriage of exchange) is of a very low prestige. This type of mantige is contracted by the masters for their slaves. The last form of marriage that requires mention is the *auren dauki sandanka.* It is a type of marriage in which the husband regularly visits the wife in her compound for varying lengths of time. Such marriages are an exception to all Hausa marriages that stress virile-locality. Two types of *sanduka* can been identified (a) marriage that are consummated by economically independent old ladies (b) uxorilocal marriage, in which a wealthy woman purchases a compound, and settles in one part and rents out the other side. Such women are normally economically independent and are

free to divorce husbands without enduring any form of separation from the children or having to change their home.

Self-Assessment Exercise

List the differences in the marriage system of the Tiv and Hausa people.

Summary

Marriage and establishment of family is very important, especially in the formation of kinship and intergroup relations. Marriage, as we know, is the starting point in the developmental process involving the distribution and control of the productive and reproductive resources associated with a change of status of household memberships.

In the process of family formation, various rituals are performed. The rites normally start with selection of a wife and ends with the final establishment of a simple family (nuclear family). The marriage ceremony is marked in ceremonies by rites of separation.

One of the fundamental facts about marriage is its social reverberation in the sense that it involves the establishment of a set of new ties between two groups. It could be an external union between two unrelated families, and when this happens, it is based on exogamy marriage ideology. When it is a union between two related families, it is based on endogamy ideology.

We have used some selected ethnic groups to bring home to you the system of marriage practices. You will find the example used in the unit texts.

Conclusion

In this unit, we discussed the different phases of marriage systems. The ethnographic sources used to highlight marriage system are derived from sound ethnographic materials from some ethnic nationalities.

The following annotated points are the fundamental facts you are to bear in mind in the discussion on marriage system.

1.   The process of marriage involves a change of status in which there is normally a change of residence marked by ceremonies of rites of separation.

2.   The consummation of marriage involves inter and intra relationship between kinsmen, lineage, clan and ethnic groups.

The consummation creates a new set of social and economic societies among those involved.

3.   It is a developmental process involving the control of productive and reproductive resources.

Tutor-marked Assignment

Exercise

Choose two ethnic groups in Nigeria. Describe their traditional marriage systems.

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