

# CHAPTER THREE

## THE ORIGIN OF MAN AND ITS SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

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### **The Origin of Man**

One of the things about which man continues to wonder is how he came to be where he is, how he is, what he is and why. Although he has been able to conquer many of the problems of the environment and has also gone to non-earthly environments, for example, the moon, his own very origin continues to perplex him. But because he is an intelligent animal, because he is a unique member of the animal kingdom, he has been able to find some explanation through religious beliefs, through myths and legends and through scientific evidence.

#### **a. Religious version**

Many people hold their religious beliefs about the origin of man. These religious beliefs centre on a supernatural being (God or Allah) who created man at a particular point in time and placed him on earth. It is very interesting to know that the major religions in the world today, Islam and Christianity, share a common set of beliefs about the origin of man in the Garden of Eden. The Bible says in the Book of Genesis that God created everything by command. Man was his last creation “*Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness*” and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle and over the earth” (Gen. 1:26). The Holy Qu’ran says God commanded His Holy Prophet Mohammed to “*recite in the name of the Lord, Allah, who created man from clots of blood*”. Both the Holy Qu’ran and the Holy Bible say that God created Adam, the first man and Eve (his wife). Also, the African traditional religion says that God created man and put him in the world. However, there are other beliefs about the origin of man which can be explained through myths and legends (Hartle, 1967).

#### **b. Myths and Legends**

Almost all societies have myths and legends (stories) about the creation of man and the world. Myths and legends are like religious beliefs, but they are generally not held as sacred or holy, but are treated as stories about happenings in the very distant past. The following are some examples of myths and legends which relate to the origin of man.

### **The Legend of the Tiv**

According to the Tiv people of Benue State of Nigeria, the first man to live on earth was Takurudu. He had a brother called A'ondo, the sky god. A'ondo gave his brother, Takurudu, seeds to grow and taught him how to make a hoe and farm. A'ondo also promised to send rain to water Takurudu's crops on request. Takurudu had two sons, Ipusu and Ichongo, the founders of the two major Tiv clans of today. According to this legend, it was from them that all the people of the world originated and dispersed to where we find them today. According to the Chinese, in the beginning of the world there was nothing, but darkness and confusion. Then a great egg appeared which opened into two parts: 'The upper part became heaven and the lower part became earth. A being called Panku came out of the egg. Panku held a hammer in his right hand and a chisel in the left. With this right hand he created the sun to rule the day and with his left he created the moon to rule the night.

Panku created the five elements: earth, water, fire, metal and wood. Then he breathed on the metal and a cold cloud formed and this was masculine, Yang. Then Panku breathed on the wood and a vapour arose, this was feminine, Yin. These two spirit-clouds gave birth to a son, Ying Yee, and a daughter, Cha Noee. Then these two mortals had children and so the earth became populated (Pidginton, 1978). All this took Panku 18,000 years and when he finished, he dissolved back into all the parts of the universe he had created. The Yoruba believe that life started at Ile-Ife. According to the legend, Olodumare (Olorun) sent Orishanla to create the earth. On his way to the earth, Orishanla attended a party, got drunk and could not carry out the instructions given to him by Olorun. All the materials, comprising some quantity of earth in a snail shell and a chicken with five toes, were abandoned by Orishanla. However, Oduduwa (Odua), Orishanla's younger brother, who knew the message Olorun sent his brother, collected the materials from his fast-sleeping brother and created the earth. The myth has it that Odua threw the earth in the snail shell onto the water that covered the whole world and allowed the chicken to spread it all over the world (Onwuejeogwu, 1975). That was how the earth was created. The serious quarrel that started between Oduduwa and his brother, Orishanla, was settled by Olorun. Oduduwa was allowed to rule the earth he created. This was how Oduduwa became the king of Ife. Olorun gave Orishanla the power to create human beings. Thus, Orishanla became the creator of human beings. Olorun created other gods such as Ifa and Oramfe.

### **(c) Scientific Version**

The scientific version of the origin of man sees man as a descendant of the apes. This means that man is believed to have developed from apes to take his present form of a modern man. Thus, the scientific version sees man as a product of evolution, from one-celled organism to many-celled organism. This process led to the development of human beings through the family of animals called **primates**.

The scientific version of the origin of man was stated by an English biologist called Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882). Darwin suggested that people are simply

the most intelligent and highly developed members of this primate species. From the scientific version of the origin of man, we are able to understand that:

- (a) Man belongs to the animal kingdom and not the plant or vegetable kingdom;
- (b) The animal kingdom can be arranged into two groups which are animals with one cell and animals with many cells. Man has many cells;
- (c) In addition to having many cells, one group is also different because the members have a backbone. The groups of animals that have a backbone are called **vertebrates**. Man is a vertebrate;
- (d) Man belongs to the mammal group which includes all animals who suckle their young and have hair, and
- (e) Man belongs to the primate order which includes monkeys, apes and lemurs (Andah, 1982).

### **Africa, the Earliest Home of Man**

The information we have on the earliest human settlements are from archaeological discoveries. Some of the oldest settlements of man-like creatures have been discovered in Africa. Various archaeological sites have been excavated and the most important site is the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania where the remains of *Australopithecus Africans* (meaning the Southern Ape Africa) was discovered in 1956 by two archaeologists, Dr. L. S. B. Leakey and his wife, Mary.

It is from this Olduvai Gorge that some of the apes are believed to have moved northwards to Europe and Asia where they passed through various stages of development similar to those left behind in Africa (Charles, 2010).

### **Types of Ancient Man**

Four types of ancient man have been identified:

- (a) *Australopithecus Africanus* (Southern Ape Africa).
- (b) *Homo Habilis* (Handy-Man).
- (c) *Homo Erectus* (Erect Man).
- (d) *Homo Sapiens* (Thinking Man).

#### **(a) Australopithecus Africanus (Southern Ape Africa)**

Scientists think that the *Australopithecus* was a scavenger (living on pieces of food which other animals left behind) and was not a hunter that he probably ate the fruits which he could find. There was an exciting discovery in Ethiopia, in 1979, of an almost complete fossil skeleton of a young female. The *Australopithecus skeleton*, nicknamed Lucy, looks like the modern woman. The important characteristics of *Australopithecus* are:

- (i) Date: lived 5 million years ago.
- (ii) Height: 5 feet tall (1.35 metres).
- (iii) Head size: small (between 440-500 cc).
- (iv) Posture: walked on two legs, and could stand.
- (v) Technology: tool user but probably not a tool-maker.

- (vi) Habitat: edge of the forest, likely a tree dweller.
- (vii) Life style: nomadic (going from place to place in search of pasture, water and food like the Fulanis of West Africa) (Pidginton, 1978).

**(b) *Homo Habilis* (Handy-man)**

*Homo habilis* means the ape-man who has the ability to make simple tools such as pebble tools. *Homo habilis* had other skills which he used to make a living in his environment. *Homo habilis* is closer in physical appearance to the modern man. He is also thought to be more “graceful” than *Australopithecus*. The following are the characteristics of *Homo habilis* (handy man).

- (i) Date: lived 1½ million years ago.
- (ii) Height: 4-5 feet tall (1.2-1.35 metres).
- (iii) Head size: 640 cc (larger brain-size than *Australopithecus*).
- (iv) Posture: walked on two legs, could stand erect.
- (v) Hands: opposable thumbs.
- (vi) Technology: first tool maker – associated with pebble tools.
- (vii) Occupation: a good hunter, and
- (viii) Lifestyle: nomadic, may have built temporary crude shelters along river beds (Pidginton, 1978).

**(c) *Homo erectus* (standing man)**

This was the last stage of ape-man before modern man appeared. Although *Homo erectus* was still looking more of an ape, he could stand quite erect. He was quite smart and could chase and kill animals. He made better tools than *Homo habilis*. He lived in groups and hunted in groups. He most probably communicated with other members of his group in a primitive language. He had more skills and showed more intelligence than his forerunners. Characteristics of *Homo erectus* (standing man) are:

- (i) Date: one million years to 35,000 years ago.
- (ii) Height: up to 6 feet (1.83 metres).
- (iii) Head size: 850-1,500 cc (note, the size of his brain is larger than *Homo habilis*).
- (iv) Posture: stood erect; walked on two legs.
- (v) Hands: opposable thumbs.
- (vi) Technology: tool-maker, hand-axes and cleavers, a fire-user.
- (vii) Lifestyle: nomadic hunting bands (Onwuejeogwu, 1975).

**(d) *Homo sapiens* (thinking man)**

*Homo sapiens* means ‘thinking man’. It is a widely held opinion that the modern man developed from *Homo sapiens* – he is a thinking man. The earliest evidence of *Homo sapiens* in Africa dates back to about 35,000 years ago. At that time, man was a hunter and gatherer of food. He made stone tools and built crude shelter. He was a nomad who lived in small hunting groups. He was able to make fire and to roast his meat. We do not know much about his culture. However, by about 10,000 years ago,

*Homo sapiens* had begun to settle down and farm along the Nile River Valley in Egypt. The characteristics of the *Homo sapiens* (thinking man) are:

- (i) Date: 20,000 years ago to 60,000 years ago, modern *homo sapiens* began to appear.
- (ii) Height: up to 6 feet (1.83 metres) or more.
- (iii) Head size: 1450-1,600 cc (largest brain size).
- (iv) Posture: erect, walks on two legs.
- (v) Hands: opposable thumbs.
- (vi) Technology: from a stone-maker to present day high technology.
- (vii) Habitat: early *Homo sapiens* lived like *Homo erectus*. Modern *Homo sapiens* can live anywhere and in different types of dwellings.
- (viii) Lifestyle: from nomadic life to permanent settlements and space shuttles (Modo, 2016).

### **Uniqueness of Man in the Animal World**

Although the physical nature of man is similar to *homo Australopithecus africanus* (Southern Ape Africa), *Homo habilis* (handy-man), *Homo erectus* (standing man), and *Homo sapiens* (intelligent man) is a unique animal. The physical nature of man and the ways in which he behaves make him quite different from other animals. Thus, man is a very unique animal.

In order to clearly point out and discuss very meaningfully the uniqueness of man, we will fully discuss his physical and some of his behavioural patterns.

#### **(a) The physical nature of man**

Man lives in the animal world. One of the major qualities or aspects which make him unique is his brain. Man has a larger and more complex brain than any other animal. Man's brain has noticeably increased in size four times over the years, unlike other animals. For example, the brain of a lizard has not changed in over two million years. Man's brain has continued to grow making him the cleverest and most technologically advanced of all the animals on earth. Physically, man, unlike other animals, stands and walks completely erect. He has a very large head for the size of his body. He has a narrower pelvis which makes childbirth often rather painful and risky than that of other animals. While other animals have a "bracket-like" shaped backbone, man has an "S" shaped backbone.

#### **(b) The Behavioural Qualities of Man**

The uniqueness of man can be studied from the ways he has been living over many years. Man has a more developed culture and language than other animals in the world. He uses language to communicate his ideas and feelings. Man has different religions and has developed many ways of learning and storing his experiences which he keeps for (his) coming generations. Man has the ability to make simple as well as complex tools, for example, he made wheel-barrow, bicycle, car and lorry, train and aircraft. No other animal cooks his food apart from man who

invented fire and uses it wisely. Man is an intelligent animal; there is no other animal that is as intelligent as him.

### **Man's Capacity to Adapt to Different Environments**

Man's physical nature and his ability to think about himself and his environment, and plan for the future to enable him to adapt and live in the different environments of the world. In this section, we will discuss man's capacity to adapt to different environments by examining his physical and cultural variations.

#### **(a) Physical Variation of Man**

Like most animals, man is capable of growth. At birth he is almost a helpless baby weighing about 2.5kg and about 45cm long, but as days pass by, he gains in weight and size. He sucks his mother's breast for milk and gradually learns how to eat the kinds of food found in his environment. As a baby, man learns how to move and use his limbs and, at different stages, learns how to sit, crawl, stand up and move about in the home and outside his home unaided by his parents. Man has three main stages of growth: infancy, adolescence and adult stages. He also has four stages of intellectual development. These are stated as shown:

Different people in different environments in the world have different rates of growth and have different skin colours. However, at adult stage and almost in all cases, man is capable of making physical use of most of the material objects in his environment for his personal or community benefit. For instance, the early man made simple tools from stone while the modern man has been able to make more complex tools for farming, transportation and many other tools which he uses for his and the community's benefit. It is in this way that man builds his culture by working daily, doing those things which are important to his existence; and by organizing his activities, he earns a peaceful living. It is the sum total of the activities of man that we call man's culture.

#### **The four stages of intellectual development from childhood to adulthood**

Your teacher or parents (if literate) should explain these further

<b>S/n</b>	<b>States</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
1	Primitive or natural (0-2 years)	Pre-verbal thoughts Pre-intellectual speech Immature behavioural patterns
2	Naïve psychology (2-4 years)	Budding practical intelligence Correct use of grammar (language)
3	Object manipulation and associative collection (4-7 years)	Ability to manipulate visible and tangible objects

4	In-growth and concept manipulation (a) (7-11 years) (b) (11 and above)	Formation of pseudo-concepts Formation of genuine concepts Fully developed inner speech and logical reasoning
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Source: Modo, (2016).

### **(b) Man's cultural variation**

Man is a cultural animal. This means that unlike other animals, man grows in intellect, hence he is:

- (i) capable of developing his ways of life, for example, gathering and growing his food and making them fit for eating in different ways
- (ii) capable of building his home (house) in such a way that the weather and climate of his environment can allow him to have a healthy and secure shelter
- (iii) capable of organizing his society into social groups such as: (a) the family, (b) the age-group (c) the community
- (iv) capable of developing institutions such as: (a) traditional institutions; (b) religious institutions and (c) legal, political and economic institutions.

In adapting and living in different environment, man has built different cultures. Culture is the way a man lives his life in his environment. It is made up of:

- (i) The language and the way he speaks.
- (ii) The types of food he grows, and how he grows, cooks and eats the food.
- (iii) The types of houses he builds and how he builds them.
- (iv) The dresses he wears.
- (v) His physical appearance.
- (vi) How he organizes his society.

We pointed out above that man has the capacity to adapt to different environments. And that because of the differences in weather and climate, and the physical nature of the environment such as desert, ocean, big rivers, and different kinds of vegetation and so many other differences, man has adapted, in different ways, to the different environments. The adaptation has influenced man's physical and physiological nature and is responsible for the differences in his physical built. This is also the reason why we have different kinds of culture such as Nigerian culture. Remember that culture is the way of life of a man living in a particular environment. There are similarities and dissimilarities in cultures because culture is the sum total of how a man has adapted to his environment. Below is an example of how the San people adapted to their environment.

### **The San Bushmen of Kalabari Desert**

The story of how the San Bushmen adapted to their harsh environment in which they live is an interesting one. They are hunters and gatherers of food. Their knowledge of plants and animals would amaze most professional botanists and



zoologists. The men track and kill large animals with small arrows which are tipped with deadly poison, which they make from grinding up a certain beetle. The women provide the family with nuts, roots and berries which they gather. The men do not kill animals more than they need at a given time.

Sharing is the most important rule which governs their lives. Anyone who is stingy or greedy or hoards food is thrown out (ostracized) from the community. This is however, resolved by peaceful discussions. Such is the free simple life they live. They are perfectly adapted to a difficult environment.

### **Race and Racism**

What is a race of people? It is difficult to provide an answer to this question because it is difficult to explain exactly what a race is. Scientists have not agreed as to how to classify the different types of *homo sapiens* (thinking man). However, what is generally referred to as a race of people is a group of people that have common origin, having a similar physical appearance, skin colour, facial details, shape of head, type of hair, body form and other similarities. However, there are within the races mixtures of races and some individuals who do not fit the overall description applied to the whole group.

### **Reasons there are Different Races**

The following reasons are responsible for the emergence of different races:

- (i) Man lives in different and varied environments of the world such as the cold snowlands of the North Pole and the hot deserts as the Kalabari and others. During the process of adaptation to these different and varied environments, man's body shape was physically and physiologically altered to make it suitable and able to endure and live in the environments.
- (ii) Nature has tended to produce a kind of people best fitted for the climate and type of country they inhabit. For instance, cold climates are best suited for people with light-coloured skins while dark skins give better protection against a very hot sun. Also, hairy people are most likely to be found in the colder climates and those with less hair in tropical areas, but there are, however, some exceptions.
- (iii) When a group of people have lived alone, without contact with others over a long period of time, such people will develop special characteristics inherited from their parents and earlier ancestors.

### **(a) The Main *Homo sapiens* (thinking man) Groups of Races**

It is very difficult to put the races of man neatly into groups. However, some experts have worked out several groupings using the different criteria such as linking people into three main groups by the form of hair – straight, woolly or wavy (but these are only approximate terms), and also by blood groups.

It is however, convenient to think of the *Homo sapiens* as falling into six main groups. These are called Negroids, Australoids, Mediterraneans, Alpines, Nordics and Mongoloids.



There are also other smaller groups which exist within the six major groups. A generally held opinion by most scientists is that the groups of races above derive largely from three main racial types which are the Negroid, Caucasoid and Mongoloid.

**The six races of *Homo sapiens* (thinking man)**

Race	Where Found	Features
Negroid Group	Originally found in Africa and some Islands in the Pacific and far East (i) Negroes of Africa, (ii) Negritos, Papuans and Melanesians of Oceania	Dark / Black skin, woolly hair, broad nose and thick lips
Australoid Group	(i) Australian Aborigines (ii) The dark tribes found in Southern India and Sri Lanka	Heavy-looking, bony brows, with thick nose, black wavy or curly hair and thinner lips than Negroes.
Mediterranean Group	Indians and Pakistanis, Persians, Gypsies and Egyptians, Arabs and Jews	Dark-white and lighter-skinned
Alpine Group (Caucasoid)	Parts of Europe and Western Asia Alpine and Carpathians to the East	Broad-head. Some are round-headed and round-faced. Short and thick-set, with brown hair and sallow-skin, which are rarely blue
Nordic Group (Caucasoid)	Northern part of Europe – Scandinavia, Britain, Northern Germany and France, and parts of Russia	Tall, with light skin, lightish but not blonde hair, blue or grey eyes
Mongoloid Group	Chinese, Japanese, Mongols, Burmese, Malagasy (South East Asia), American Indians and Eskimos	Generally round-headed with broad faces, high cheek bones, and with small nose and stocky bodies.

**Source:** Modo (2016)

**(b) Racism**

Racism arises out of the belief that one's own race is superior to every other group. A racist, therefore, is a person who believes that his own race is superior to others or a particular race. A *racists discriminates* against (treats unfairly) anyone who has a different skin colour or speaks a different language. We also say that a racist is prejudiced that is, he or she “prejudges” a person's ability on the basis of his/her cultural background or physical characteristics.

**Universality of Man**

In this unit, we have learned many things about the origin of man. Scientists believe that man evolved over a period of 5 million years. All men are *Homo sapiens*. Man is found in different and varied environments of the world. Although, some of the environments have harsh climatic conditions such as the snowlands of the Arctic and the hot deserts of Kalabari and Australia, man learned and has adapted to these environments. Man has modified or altered some of the physical

features of his environment to enable him to properly adapt and live with some comfort. In an effort to adapt and live in his environment, the varied environmental conditions have influenced man's physical appearance and physiological state. Nature also made it possible for man to get fitted for the climate and type of country he inhabits. The natural environment and other factors influencing adaptation have resulted in different cultures of man in different places. In any environment man is found, he builds houses, makes tools, devices methods of getting and preparing his food, develops institutions and organizes his society into different social structures.

Man is a universal being. In spite of the differences in colour, shape or size, man belongs to the same species – *Homo sapiens*. Man mates and produces offspring, adapts to his environment and develops cultures. Although people are classified into races, there are mixtures of races, and some individuals within the races who do not fit the overall description applied to the whole group. No human race is superior to any other. All men are basically the same. Certain individuals may be very intelligent – they may be clever in some subjects than others, but this is not due to the race they belong. It is just their personal characteristics. One can also see how universal man is in his quest for knowledge about God or Allah. All over the world, God is called by different names in different languages, but many of the basic teachings of these religions are quite similar.

### **Social Environment**

Man is a *homo sapiens*, and is different in many ways from other animals. We also have learned about the capacity of man to adapt to his environment. Also, we have learned that man lives in the company of other men. We can now remember the stories of the San Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, how they live, hunt and kill large animals with deadly poisoned arrows. We also learned how they share the meat and how the greedy ones among them are sent away from the community. Equally, we learned that the women gather nuts and make food for the family. Of great importance is how the San Bushmen resolve arguments through peaceful discussions and how they never go to war with other neighbours. This way of living is what we refer to as social living. The San Bushmen have developed a culture in which every member of their community must accept, live in and contribute to its development. *It is the culture of the people that constitutes their social environment.* (Ekpenyong, 2014)

Social environment refers to a nonmember of people who for one unit and are held together by common ties. It is all about a society and their relationship with others, including how they interact, provide their needs and solve their problems, (man being a social animal). The social environment is made up of groups of people with whom an individual lives and interacts on a daily basis e.g. the family, village, local government, clubs and associations which man belongs, participates and interacts with others as a member (O'Donnel, 1981). Remember that culture is the sum total of material and intellectual equipment of a people. It includes their knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs acquired or developed as a society. The factors listed below make the social environment of the San Bushmen possible and

peaceful. We should note, also, that it is the same factors that are responsible for the existence of all environments including the social environments in which we live.

- (a) Man is a social being. He lives in a society, interacts and cooperates with other people in his society to build a peaceful and happy society.
- (b) Like the San Bushmen, all the members of any society have rules and regulations which they must obey.
- (c) Members of a community work and make contributions to the development of their society in various ways. Thus, they participate in the affairs of their community.
  - (i) The trader, tailor, road builder, teacher, governor, president, taxi driver and other members of the society while doing their legitimate jobs contribute directly to the development of the society. This is possible because they are providing various services which are needed by others but which they (others) could not provide for themselves.
  - (ii) Members of a society often engage in communal “self-help” projects either by directly doing the work by themselves such as road/bridge-building or by raising a fund to which members contribute some amount of money to enable them hire the services of experts in the given field.
  - (iii) Election of the community’s political representatives, at Federal, State or Local Government Levels, is done collectively by the members of the community.
  - (iv) Even the strangers that settle in our communities also make contributions to the development of our culture because they obey our rules and regulations, learn our ways of life and take up gainful employment. They also learn and communicate in our language and may adopt our religion and ways of dressing.
- (d) Members of the same social environment commonly speak the same language. They communicate in the language. The language is an important part of the culture of the people. A non-member of the society would not be able to speak the language unless he learns how to speak and use it in different social settings. For example, in greeting elders and rulers, in worshipping, dancing and in commerce.
- (e) In some cases, members of a social environment have a common religion, common occupation, common ways of entertainment and leisure; while in others, mostly in modern societies, you find people with different religions, different occupations, different ways of entertainment and leisure, and different outlooks to life. These mark the difference between a primitive and a modern society.

- (f) We learned that the physical environment influences man's physical and physiological states, and in return man changes the physical environment in an effort to adapt and make living a comfortable experience in his physical environment. In other words, man is physically influenced by his physical environment while in return, by his cultural activities, man changes to some extent the physical appearance of his environment.

In the same way, by obeying the rules and regulations, by belonging to some institutions in his social environment, by going through a pattern of socialization, learning and communicating with the language of his group members, man's behaviour is strongly influenced by his social environment. It is very true that man can also influence his social environment in many ways. As we have seen, man is an intelligent being. He is capable of thinking about how he can improve for his own benefit and that of his community, hence, his physical and social environments. In many ways, man has brought about different changes in his social environment. This has been possible because man does not live alone in a community. He lives with other people with whom he interacts, works together and this brings about mutual love and understanding among the members of the community. Man has introduced various occupations, religions, entertainment, education, technology; he cannot do all these alone but does in cooperation with other members of his community. In performing his roles, man keeps all the rules and regulations as laid down and observed by all the members of his community. He is also invited, as well as he invites others, to take part in the social, cultural, political and economic affairs of his community. To have a peaceful social environment, there must be mutual understanding and love in a community (Murdock, 1949).

### **Meaning of a Community**

A community is usually regarded as a social unit. This is because all or most of the members share common social, cultural, economic, political, professional values and aspirations. For the purpose of happy and peaceful coexistence, communities make some rules and regulations guiding the behaviour of every member of the community. All members of a community live in the same area. Thus, we can explain a community as a group of people, who for one or more reasons are living in a particular geographical area (Ataire, Mboho and Aborh, 2021). The people may have been born there or they may have moved to the area. Thus, a person is either born into a community or he joins the community. He can refuse to continue to be a member of the community by moving out of it. Naturally, anyone who joins a community must be ready to accept and share the values of aspirations of the members of the community, if he is going to be a happy member of the community (Otite, and Ogwnwo, 1979).

Some of the most interesting and most important things we should know are that members of a community cooperate with one another for the smooth running of the community, if you always break the rules and regulations of the community in

which you live, you can be thrown out of it and if you break very serious rules (laws), you can even be sent to jail. The community is a social unit; members of a community come together to defend the community against attack.

### **How Communities Develop**

Communities can and have developed as a result of:

- (a) Natural factors.
- (b) Economic factors.
- (c) Social factors.
- (d) Health factors.
- (e) Political factors.
- (f) Cultural and traditional factors.
- (g) Religious factors.

All the above factors which we have identified as being responsible for the developing of communities are discussed below. You should understand them very well so that you will be able to identify what factors are responsible for the development of the communities that you know.

#### **(a) Natural Factors**

(i) **Original communities:** We discussed the origin of man and how man managed to adapt to his environment in different places of the world. We noted that men live in the snow regions as well as in the hot tropical lands. So, one of the ways in which some communities developed is that some people were created by God or Allah or emerged through evolution to be the original occupiers of some areas. They increased in number by procreation and became communities. Examples of such communities who, perhaps, are the original of the first occupiers (communities) are the San Bushmen of the Kalabari desert and the aborigines of Australia.

(ii) **Fertile farming lands:** The earliest communities were located along the fertile valleys of rivers. Examples of such communities are along the Nile River in Africa and the Tigris – Euphrates Rivers in the Middle East. Some of these and similar small farming settlements in other areas of the world have developed into small towns.

(iii) **Presence of mineral resources:** Communities have grown around natural resources such as gold, tin, salt or limestone. For example, the Ewekoro community in Ogun State developed as a result of the cement factory built around the limestone deposit at Ewekoro.

#### **(b) Economic Factors**

Closely related to other factors, such as the presence of fertile lands and mineral resources that influence the development of communities is the economic

factor. In the course of development, members of a community engage in different activities according to their natural abilities. Some people who had special skills or talents found that they do such things which other members of the same community or in other communities could not do or could do but at greater costs. Thus, people found it possible to exchange one item for another. This was the earliest form of trade and it is called **trade by barter**.

Some communities have developed because of trading activities, particularly in food items. Such communities are usually, in modern times, found at road junctions where two or more important roads meet, or at central points where members of different communities could easily meet to trade. An example of such a community is Ago on Auchi-Igarra road in Edo State. At Ago, the main item of trade is yam. The community, although a mixture of people from different parts of the country speak Yoruba as their common language and have long developed a common culture.

**(c) Social Factors**

Special communities also developed around working places, either because workers found it easy to live close to their places of work or special provision was made to accommodate them in places close to their places of work. For example, in the University of Ibadan, there is 'Abadina community'. Although a part of the university community, it is unique and different from the main university community made up of students, lecturers and senior or high grade level workers. The Abadina community is built for the junior workers. We also have the IITA community in Ibadan and the Ahmadu Bello University community in Zaria.

**(d) Health Factors**

In modern times, in some countries of the world, people who have transferable diseases are provided places very far away from their original communities. Such people are prevented from living among others in the community. They live and get married and later give birth to children. Gradually, they increase in number and form large communities. In some parts of Nigeria, we have leprosy settlements that have developed into small communities. In some cases, members of such settlements produce food items and many other things such as local cloths and crafts. A good example of such a community is the Akure leper's community in Ondo State.

**(e) Political Factors**

Some communities have been formed by strong war leaders. In some cases, such war leaders caused the breaking apart of communities and caused some members to move out to live far away from their original communities. Such leaders had to protect the members of their break-away communities from the invasion of others.

Also, because of security strategies, some communities have emerged at the top of Plateau lands or in such remote areas outside the reach of their enemies. Many

Nigerian communities were founded in this way, for example, Egba community of Abeokuta, Ogun State.

**(f) Religious Factors**

It is now common to find people with the same religious beliefs and aspirations forming communities and living away from other communities in order to have time to practice their religious activities. Some communities have been formed in this way. For example, the earliest settlers in present day United States of America left Europe in 1942 in order to find a place to practice their religion in peace. Likewise, the community means a group of people who live in the same place and have common social, cultural, political interests and aspirations. Because of political reasons, many communities, in modern times, have been brought together to form nations. For example, Nigeria is a nation made up of many communities which emerged as a result of the factors already mentioned and discussed above. So all the communities that make up Nigeria occupy a geographical entity which we now refer to as the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This means that apart from the individual characteristics of each of the communities, they now have same national, political, social and cultural interests. They are now governed centrally by the Federal government. It is important that we know that the various communities now called Nigeria were brought under one central government by colonial rulers who governed us for a long period.

**Conditions Making Living in a Community Possible**

There are four main conditions that make living in a community possible and peaceful. These are:

- (a) Adaptation to community will.
  - (b) Interaction and cooperation with members.
  - (c) Participation in community affairs.
  - (d) Obedience to community rules and regulations.
- a. Adaptation:** Since the interests of the community as a body are more important than the interests of each member, people must learn to adapt to the customs, rules and regulations of the community which have been established to maintain peace and sustainability in the community.
- b. Interaction and cooperation:** Man as a social being has to interact and cooperate with the other members of his community in an effort to achieve the objectives of the community. Interaction and cooperation develop a good atmosphere necessary for the development of the community. Interaction is important for group awareness and cooperation.
- c. Participation:** Interaction and cooperation call for active participation in the community activities. This means that in order for the community to develop, members of the community must participate in all the worthwhile



ventures of the community. These take various forms. It could be participation in community projects like building roads, schools or hospitals, participation in festivals; participation in discussions about community projects. It is through our participation and contributions that we will be praised as being good members of the community and be remembered by future generations.

- d. **Obedience:** “Obedience is the first law in heaven”. It is the most important attribute a member of the community must display to be able to live in a community. The community regulates the relationship among members of the community by providing them with rules and regulations. For law and order to prevail, community members must learn to obey these rules. The freedom, happiness and success of the members of the community depend on how these members of the community obey its rules and regulations.

### **Social Stratification**

The respect or recognition, importance, power and influence or prestiges of an individual in the community greatly depend on the position the individual occupies in the community. In any community, every individual or group of individuals has its position in the community. Thus, all the individuals in a community can safely be divided into different social groups or strata. This is called stratification. In traditional and in modern societies, certain factors determine the social grouping stratification of the members of the community (Owen, 1968; Mboho and Awak, 2013). The factors are:

(a) Age	}	Traditional society
(b) Sex		
(c) Family background		
(d) Personal achievement	}	Modern society
(e) Wealth		
(f) Western education		

In Nigeria, age is a very important factor in society, and old people are treated with great respect. This is particularly true in Eastern Nigeria, where the villages are ruled by councils or male elders. Whether one is male or female, age affects one’s status in Nigeria. In traditional societies, sex affects the status of people. For example, in many traditional governing types of council in Nigeria, women are not usually chosen as members. For instance, the traditional power structure does not integrate women in Annang traditional society (Mboho and Awak, 2013).

However, in the modern constitutional system, women are free to run for political offices. Wealth and personal achievements are also very important in determining one’s social status in some societies in Nigeria. While it is true that wealth and personal achievement determine social status some societies in Nigeria,

it is not true in India/ and some parts of Abia and Imo States. In India, there is a system of classification that is known as the “caste system” and in Abia and Imo States; there is the “Osu”. Members of such social strata of the society are looked down on as inferior members of the society. Once a child is born into this social stratum, he remains there forever and no amount of wealth or personal achievement can move him from that social stratum to a higher one.

However, in some other parts of Nigeria, exceptional people (both men and women) can rise to the top of their profession through hard work and endurance. For example, a child may become a professor or a medical doctor and the parents may not be able to read or write. Education is an important factor in determining one’s social status in modern society (Murdock, 1949).

### **Inter-community Relationship**

We have already discussed the factors responsible for the development of communities. We also now know the communities existing in different parts of our nation. Communities are located in different vegetational zones. In the southern part of Nigeria, such crops as cassava, oranges, palm produce, cocoa, yam, etc are produced while in the northern parts with savannah vegetation, grains such as maize, beans, millet, cotton, etc., are produced. By the nature of their environment, some communities do produce what some other communities cannot produce. It is this situation that leads to exchange of goods through trade.

Thus, inter-community relationship means each community is depending on the others in one way or the others. The relationships are discussed in details as follows:

- a. The relationship among rural communities.
- b. The relationship between rural and urban communities.
- c. The relationship among different urban communities.
- d. The relationship between national and inter-national communities.

#### **a. Relationships among Rural Communities.**

Rural communities in Nigeria are usually small and far away from the urban communities. Farming is the main occupation of the rural dwellers and it is important for the survival of the community that all the farmers cooperate in growing food crops. In some rural communities, farmland is held in common and is given out at the beginning of the planting season by mutual agreement. However, in some cases, farmland is owned by individuals or families, and the farmland is fragmented.

There are social, cultural, economic and political interactions within and among rural communities in Nigeria. For example:

- i. There is inter-community trading
- ii. There are inter-community marriages
- iii. There are inter-community disputes over farmland.
- iv. There are inter-community clashes sometimes resulting in the death of many people

- v. There are inter-community and intra-community cultural ceremonies.
- vi. In modern times, rural communities have been engaged in political struggle for power and leadership
- vii. Communities are known to cooperate in the provision of social amenities to their communities, such as establishing and building communities' institutions of learning.

**b. Relationships between rural and urban communities**

Historically, most urban centres developed from rural communities where there had been good trade routes (usually rivers) and favourable natural resources. Those who live in rural communities are mostly farmers while those who live in urban communities are mostly 'white collar job' workers, working in government establishments and in industries. This situation gives rise to a flourishing trade between people in rural communities and those living in urban communities. Rural communities depend on the industrial products manufactured in urban communities while urban communities, in turn, depend on the agricultural produce from rural communities. Urban communities are usually the commercial and administrative centres. Politics and social amenities are almost always provided from urban to rural communities.

**c. Relationships between different urban communities**

There are many ways in which urban centres relate. Some of these are: economic (through trade and business), social (through sports, recreation, cultural events and personal ties), political and (through uniform laws and official cooperation), and education (through training centres, polytechnics and universities). Some urban centres specialize in the provision of specialized training centres or research institutes; for example, Ibadan has the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, the Defence Academy is in Kaduna and Jos has tin mining. Although far apart, these urban centres depend on one another for one thing or the other.

**d. Relationships between national and international communities**

We have already known that different communities make up a nation in the same way; different nations make up the larger community of mankind, known as the world. As communities are interdependent for happy and progressive existence, nations are also interdependent for the same reasons. The nations of the world are interdependent in the areas of economy, politics, culture, commerce and industry. Some nations are better endowed by nature to produce certain goods and services much more cheaply and with greater economic advantage than others. So, many countries specialize in the production of goods and services in which they have economic advantages over the other nations of the world.

They then buy or import those goods and services in which they are at an economic disadvantage to produce. This is responsible for regional or national specialization in the production of goods and services, which in turn has given rise to international trade. This is international interdependence on trade matters by the

nations of the world. In order to make the interdependence among nations possible, international laws and regulations have been formulated. Every nation must obey such laws and regulations guiding the behaviour of independent nations. Relationships between nations have further been made possible by the formation of international bodies, for example, the United Nations (UN) which was formed in 1945 after World War II. It is meant to ensure international cooperation and participation in world events. It is made up of 159 member countries and has many other agencies promoting education, health, and agriculture, and technology, cultural and social activities at an international basis.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), made up of all African countries, was established to promote peace and development in the African continent. This has now given way to the African Union (AU). The AU became operative from year 2002. It is not a mere continuation of the OAU. It aims at enhancing the economic, political and social integration of the African people. The assembly serves as a Pan-African parliament. There is an Executive Council. African Union (AU) parliament is represented by all member-states. Members are elected from governments, the civil populace and the non-governmental organizations (NGO). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is similar to other already mentioned international organizations. It was established to promote economic, cultural and industrial cooperation and development of West African member states. National and international relationships are important for the maintenance of people and ensuring development in all parts of the world.

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