

**SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER ROLES AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING IN FARM-FAMILIES
OF OGUN-STATE, NIGERIA: EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITIES**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

BY:

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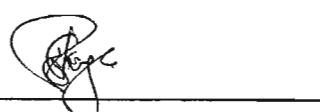
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**GENDER STUDIES CENTRE,
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

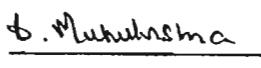
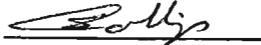
AUGUST 2003.

DECLARATION

In accordance with the regulations of the University of Natal, I, Grace Oluseyi SOKOYA declare that this Ph.D. thesis entitled - " Socio-cultural constructions of gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm-families of Ogun state Nigeria: Exploring the complexities" is my original and independent research. It has not been previously submitted for any degree, and is not being concurrently presented in candidature in any other University. All sources and literature have been duly acknowledged.

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- (2) PROF. STEVE COLLINGS SIGNATURE:  DATE 17.11.03

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DEDICATION

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
FOR HIS GRACE AND ENABLEMENT
TO EMBARK UPON AND COMPLETE THIS PROJECT**

ABSTRACT

The study set out to explore the complexities of the socio-cultural constructions of gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm-families of Ogun state Nigeria. The intention of the study was to gain insight and understanding of the farmers' life experiences since farm-families are gendered institutions with peculiar needs, problems and aspirations. The study was motivated by a dearth of research on the constructions and determinants of psychological wellbeing and gender roles in farm-families. This thesis is therefore an attempt to fill the identified gap in knowledge, by generating empirical data on the socio-cultural constructions of psychological wellbeing and gender roles in farm-families.

The thesis is essentially interdisciplinary in nature, drawing from and contributing to the bodies of knowledge in gender-based research, social psychology, family studies, developmental research, and agricultural extension. The inclusion of men's and women's views and perceptions, as opposed to a polarized view of men exclusively as the oppressors and perpetrators of female subordination is a poststructural feminist approach toward de-emphasizing gender dichotomies. In addition, the incorporation of children's perspectives is due to recognition of family factors as determinants of children's gender identity construction, life outcomes, and the psychological wellbeing of the entire family. Research participants included forty adults (17 men and 23 women) and thirty-one children (17 boys and 14 girls), drawn from five farming communities in Ogun state Nigeria. These include: Kango, Ogijan, Boodo-Sanyaolu, Obafemi, and Ilewo-Orile. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, multiple methods of data collection were employed. These include life history methodology, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews,

and interactive observation techniques. Although ‘psychological wellbeing’ is a difficult construct to define because of its complexity and high subjectivity, adopting the social representations’ framework, the constructions, meanings and determinants of psychological wellbeing and gender roles were allowed to emerge from the participants, within their peculiar socio-historical and cultural contexts. Findings reveal that the constructions of gender identity and gender roles in farm-families are the foundations of the internalization of gender ideals, socio-cultural constructions, psychological wellbeing and coping strategies. Children then grow up to become part of the society and continue the trans-generational perpetuation of gender ideals and reinforcement of gender stereotypes, and these have several implications for the psychological wellbeing of entire farm-family members. The problems of women-subordination vis-à-vis male-domination, therefore, have their roots in the socio-cultural constructions of gender, gender roles, and their ideological representations. Research outcomes thus provide basis for the development of sustainable culture-specific feminist strategies, which address the origins and foundations of gender stereotypes, as well as gender-sensitive and gender-specific interventions for the enhancement of farm-families’ psychological wellbeing.

The adoption of Yoruba terminology in the constructions of psychological wellbeing and related concepts in the thesis is the beginning of an innovative research process for inventing contextually meaningful and relevant Yoruba terminology for previously Western-based concepts. In this thesis for example, psychological wellbeing is construed as - *ilera-okan*, *alafia-okan*, *ibale-okan*, *ilera pipe t'okan-t'ara*; while stress and emotional disturbance are construed as – *aibale-okan*, *iporuuru ati pakaleke okan*. This is a unique contribution to knowledge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGES
TITLE PAGE.....	i
DECLARATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xix
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xx

CHAPTER ONE **INTRODUCTION**

1.1. Preamble.....	1
1.2. Background to the study.....	2
1.3. Problem statement.....	6
1.4. Rationale for the study.....	8
1.5. Key Questions addressed in the research.....	9
1.6. Structure of thesis.....	9
1.7. Conceptual definition of terms.....	14

CONTENTS	PAGES
CHAPTER TWO MAJOR ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES OF STUDY	
2.1. Introduction.....	16
2.2. Socio-cultural constructions of gender and gender roles.....	16
2.3. Constructions of psychological wellbeing and factors influencing psychological wellbeing.....	22
2.4. Gender roles and multiple role performance.....	28
2.5. Gender roles and psychological wellbeing.....	30
CHAPTER THREE LITERATURE REVIEW	
3.1. Introduction.....	33
3.2. Gender identity construction and gender role socialization.....	34
3.3. Multiple gender roles and role conflicts.....	42
3.4. Factors influencing psychological wellbeing.....	54
3.5. Gender roles and psychological wellbeing.....	65
3.6. Stress and coping in families.....	68
3.7. Appraisal of reviewed literature.....	73
CHAPTER FOUR THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, AND DESIGN	
4.1. Introduction.....	75
4.2. Framing the study.....	75
4.2.1. Social representations and development of gender identity	75

CONTENTS	PAGES
4.2.2. Social representations of the sex/gender concept	77
4.2.3. Social Representations of Power, Control, Dominance and Oppression	78
4.3. Research design.....	85
4.3.1. Research methods.....	86
4.3.2. Description of participants and context of study.....	93
4.3.3. Selection of farming communities.....	94
4.3.4. Validity and reliability.....	98
4.3.5. Research protocol and ethical issues.....	101
4.3.6. Methods of data analysis and interpretation.....	103
4.3.7. Problems encountered on the field and limitations of study.....	104

CHAPTER FIVE

WHOSE NARRATIVES? SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF COMMUNITIES AND PARTICIPANTS

5.1. Introduction.....	106
5.2. Socio-historical contexts of communities and biographical sketches of adult participants..	107
5.2.1. Kango community.....	109
5.2.2. Boodo-Sanyaolu community.....	116
5.2.3. Obafemi community.....	126
5.2.4. Ogijan community.....	134
5.2.5. Ilewo-Orile community.....	138
5.2.6. The farm-children.....	142

CONTENTS	PAGES
CHAPTER SIX CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER IDENTITIES AND GENDER-ROLE SOCIALIZATION IN FARM-FAMILIES	
6.1. Introduction.....	143
6.2. Construction of gender identities.....	143
6.3. Gender identity construction and children's educational aspirations: Implications for social transformation.....	158
6.4. Summary and Conclusion.....	160
CHAPTER SEVEN FAMILY DYNAMICS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING: ANALYSES OF FARM-CHILDRREN AND PARENTS' NARRATIVES	
7.1. Introduction.....	163
7.2. Family factors and farm-children's psychological wellbeing.....	164
7.3. Parent-child relationships and psychological wellbeing.....	169
7.4. Marital dynamics and psychological wellbeing.....	173
7.5. Power dynamics, family decision-making and psychological wellbeing.....	184
7.6. Summary and conclusion.....	189

CONTENTS	PAGES
<i>CHAPTER EIGHT</i>	
CASE STUDIES OF HOW MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS COPE WITH STRESSFUL LIFE SITUATIONS	
8.1. Introduction.....	193
8.2. Framework for understanding coping strategies in the selected case studies.....	194
8.3. Using life histories to analyze stressful life experiences and coping strategies.....	197
8.3.1. Case One: Ms. Taiwo Adekunbi.....	199
8.3.2. Case Two: Ms. Ogunneye.....	207
8.3.3. Case Three: Ms. Fatona (Olori-Elewo).....	216
8.3.4. Case Four: Mr. Adeleke.....	222
8.3.5. Case Five: Mr. Akinlawon.....	227
8.4. Coping strategies of male and female farmers: A gender analysis	237
<i>CHAPTER NINE</i>	
TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING IN FARM-FAMILIES	
9.1. Introduction.....	244
9.2. Gender role patterns in farm-families.....	245
9.3. Constructions of psychological wellbeing in farm-families.....	247
9.4. Factors influencing psychological wellbeing in farm-families.....	252
9.4.1. Factors influencing farm-children's psychological wellbeing.....	253
9.4.2. Factors influencing parents' psychological wellbeing.....	253
9.4.3. Exploring the interconnectivity of gender roles and psychological wellbeing: A gender perspective.....	254

CONTENTS	PAGES
9.5. Trans-generational perpetuation of gender ideologies in farm-families: A discursive strategy.....	296
9. 6. Uniqueness of Yorubas' constructions of psychological wellbeing.....	298
9.7. Summary and conclusion.....	299
<i>CHAPTER TEN</i>	
THE TRAJECTORY OF SELF (Researcher's Life History)	
10.1. Prologue.....	303
10.2. My life history and experiences.....	304
10.2.1. My roots.....	304
10.2.2. Childhood days and early educational life.....	304
10.2.3. Career life.....	306
10.2.4. Career goals and aspirations.....	308
10.2.5. Marital life.....	309
10.2.6. Leisure and extra-curricular activities.....	314
10.2.7. My Christian experience.....	314
10.2.8. Memorable days.....	315
10.3. Reflections.....	316
10.4. Gender roles and psychological wellbeing.....	317
10.5. Epilogue.....	319

CONTENTS	PAGES
<i>CHAPTER ELEVEN</i>	
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
11.1. Overview	320
11.2. Summary of findings	321
11.3. Conclusions	328
11.4. Recommendations	331
11.4.1. Capacity-building	331
11.4.2. Use of education as an instrument of change and social transformation.....	332
11.4.3. Need for improved funding of agricultural extension and services	335
11.4.4. Need for improved rural infrastructures	338
11.4.5. Further research needs	339
REFERENCES.....	342

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	PAGES
TABLE I: LIST OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES	95
TABLE II: SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATING ADULTS	96
TABLE III: SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATING FARM-CHILDREN	97
TABLE IV: GENDER ANALYSIS OF STRESSFUL LIFE SITUATIONS AND COPING STRATEGIES	238

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	PAGES
FIGURE 1: A TRIPODAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING.....	7
FIGURE 2: A DIAGRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE MAJOR THEMES IN THE STUDY	84
FIGURE 3: MAP OF NIGERIA, SHOWING LOCATION OF OGUN STATE.....	108
FIGURE 4: MAP OF OGUN STATE, SHOWING LOCATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF SELECTED FARMING COMMUNITIES....	108
FIGURE 5: SITE LOCATION MAP, KANGO COMMUNITY.....	109
FIGURE 6: SITE LOCATION MAP, BOODO-SANYAOLU COMMUNITY.....	116
FIGURE 7: SITE LOCATION MAP, OBAFEMI COMMUNITY.....	126
FIGURE 8: SITE LOCATION MAP, OGIJAN COMMUNITY.....	134
FIGURE 9: SITE LOCATION MAP, ILEWO-ORILE COMMUNITY.....	138

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDICES	PAGES
APPENDIX I: SUMMARY OF ADULT PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE.....	361
APPENDIX II: BIODATA OF FARM-CHILDREN PARTICIPANTS.....	365
APPENDIX III: SAMPLE QUESTIONS USED DURING PILOT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH ADULTS PARTICIPANTS (MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS).....	369
APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ON LIFE HISTORIES, GENDER ROLES, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN FARM- FAMILIES (ADULT PARTICIPANTS).....	370
APPENDIX V: SAMPLE QUESTIONS USED DURING FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH FARM-CHILDREN (BOYS AND GIRLS).....	372

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. PREAMBLE

This research is premised on the recognition of farm families as gendered institutions with peculiar needs, problems and aspirations. Their life experiences are to a very large extent influenced by their unique socio-historical and cultural contexts. My close interaction with farm families in southwestern Nigeria for over seven years provides the basis for the development of insights into the various problems and needs of farm families in general and their psychological wellbeing in particular. I am of the opinion that when family members have adequate psychological wellbeing, they will enjoy good health, experience good interpersonal relations within and outside the family, and be able to contribute meaningfully to development at individual, family and societal levels. I also believe that adequate psychological wellbeing within farm families would enhance their efficiency and productivity in their chosen vocation. Farm families are however confronted with many problems, while gender dynamics within the family set-ups and the psychological wellbeing of members are fraught with a series of complexities.

The thesis is an attempt to explore these complexities with a view to generating information on how these impinge on the psychological wellbeing status of members of the farm family. The complexities include the following, amongst others: gender identity development; biological determinism of gender, socio-cultural constructions of gender roles, and gender relations in the family. The complexities further include: the socio-cultural constructions of psychological wellbeing, and factors influencing psychological wellbeing, as

well as the resources and strategies employed by farm families to cope with strain, conflicts, and stress. The thesis is essentially interdisciplinary in nature, drawing from and contributing to the bodies of knowledge in gender-based research, social psychology, family studies, developmental research, and agricultural extension.

This chapter discusses the context of the study, statement of the problem, rationale for the research, and key questions addressed in the research. The chapter closes with conceptual definitions of the key terms used in the thesis.

1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Agriculture is the mainstay of rural economy in Nigeria. The nation largely depends on the agricultural sector for the provision of food and nutritional needs. Despite the attempt by Nigerian government to stimulate agriculture through large irrigation schemes, an expansion of credit, the use of high-yielding seeds, and incentives to foreign business, food production has failed to keep up with population growth, which is increasing at 3% each year (Nigerian Databank, 2002). Unlike in developed countries, farmers in Nigeria are still faced with hardships and drudgery in the performance of their agricultural activities, having to use local and traditional implements for their on- and off-farm activities. Other problems alongside that of unmechanized farming and unmechanized processing of food crops include: inadequate access to agricultural inputs (for example, seeds and seedlings, fertilizers, and agro-chemicals), marketing difficulties associated with middle-men problems and transportation difficulties, lack of access to credit facilities, poor waste-disposal methods, and inadequate access to basic social amenities, for example, health, electricity, and drinkable water. The farm families are also confronted with a myriad of environmental risks to their health and safety.

It is the realization of the crucial need to ensure sustainability through agriculture and agricultural extension, which culminated in the decision of the Nigerian government in 1988, to create three Universities of Agriculture. The University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria (UNAAB), being one of these three Universities, has a tripodal mandate of teaching, research and extension. The Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC) of UNAAB was established in 1991 to implement the University's extension mandate. In addition, the Women-In-Development (WID) programme was established in the same year, as a Unit of AMREC – UNAAB, and was charged with the responsibility of improving the participatory capabilities of women in the University's catchment areas, which include the University's extension villages and the entire South-western Nigeria.

Farming in Nigeria is largely a family-operated activity, and in contrast to most other occupations, it provides the physical, economic, and social conditions that influence the needs, interests, and biological processes of the family. Many patterns characterize farm-family life in south-western Nigeria. These include, large families living together, polygamy, strong parental authority, family care and respect for elders, co-operation between relatives, lack of assistance from the husband in domestic work, involvement of parents in the choice of spouse, little privacy, importance of children, importance of the extended family beyond the nuclear family, large numbers of agents of socialization, fostering of children amongst members of the extended family, dependence of family members on husband and father for provision of basic needs, and dependence on wife and mother for care and nurturing. The family is a highly valued institution in Nigeria. Nigerian families in general and farm families in Ogun state in particular are to a very large extent, cohesive household units.

The family as the fundamental unit in the society needs to be optimally healthy, because this underpins all social development. Ensuring the wellbeing of people at every stage of their lives has both immediate and long-term benefits. Basic needs, such as good

nutrition, and adequate shelter, which contribute to psychological wellbeing are strong factors in Nigerian families (Sokoya, 1998). These factors have direct impact on labour and productivity, and are therefore critical to the development of the nation. Certain features distinguish farm families from other families especially in urban communities. In the context of this study, a farm family means a family of two or more people related by blood or marriage, co-residing in a community and earning a large share of their income from farming activities. The study was conducted in Ogun state, which is one of the eight states in southwestern Nigeria.

In farm-families, certain roles are considered feminine while some are considered masculine. These roles are determined by gender and are assigned to the different sexes by the family and society. Boserup (1970) drew dramatic attention to the importance of female farming in Africa. Africa is the region of female farming par excellence, where men fell the trees, but to women fall all the subsequent operations (Boserup, 1970). Gender roles in farm-families include on- and off-farm work, marital roles, parenting roles, community roles, and the ability to effectively function in the various roles. Men and women having been conditioned to some rigid and narrow gender roles by their socialization, are required by the society to perform these assigned roles, sometimes under compulsion, tension and pressure, in order to satisfy societal expectations (O'Neil, 1981). A rigid gender role expectation, according to O'Neil (1981) is a common source of strain, conflicts and emotional complexities in families.

From my close interaction with these farmers, I have observed that the majority of farm-families in Ogun state, as in other parts of the country are poor, and are confronted with a myriad of socio-economic and political problems, which may impinge on their psychological wellbeing. Uncertain returns from farming occasioned by the effects of unpredictable weather patterns, climatic conditions, crop infestation by pests, livestock

diseases, land invasions and concessions, are also a common source of fear and anxiety to farm-families (Sokoya, 1997). In western Nigeria, the Land Use Decree (LUD, has increased the marginalization, dislocation and fragmentation of small agricultural holdings and has also rendered access to land more difficult for women (Adedipe, Olawoye, Olarinde and Okediran, 1998).

The above-mentioned factors tend to perpetuate the poverty of farm-families and have direct implications for their psychological wellbeing. Psychological wellbeing is a vital component of human health and it is influenced by variations in biological and socio-economic factors. Empirical literature shows that psychological wellbeing is sensitive to psychosocial stress, and there is clear evidence of gender differences in the nature and extent of psychological distress experiences (Sonpar and Kapur, 1999). Psychological wellbeing translates as '*ilera-akan*' in *Yoruba*. *Ilera-akan*, in *Yoruba* is construed as a subjective feeling, regarding the degree to which an individual feels healthy within him or her 'inner-self'. The inner-self in this sense means the mind or the psyche. *Ilera-akan* also involves the degree to which the individual perceives the overall quality of his or her life favourably.

A situational analysis of rural women in some of the extension villages of AMREC-UNAAB (Sokoya, 1998) revealed a low literacy level (30.8%), high rate of self medication (90.39%), low utilization of health-care facilities when ill (5%), and high patronage of quacks and medicine hawkers, poor health practices and hygienic habits associated with ignorance, poor knowledge of nutritional values of food as revealed by sole intake of carbohydrate foods, and inadequate access to land, credit facilities and other vital agricultural inputs (Sokoya, 1998). From the findings of this survey, it became a priority to design adult literacy and farm-family health education and care projects for the programme beneficiaries, alongside other projects aimed at enhancing agricultural production and income generation.

In addition, anecdotal reports (AMREC/UNAAB, 2000) and field experience in my work with many of these families in the University's extension villages for over seven years, reveals low self-morale as an outcome of the highlighted deprivations and lacks associated with their impoverishment and psychological wellbeing. These women exhibit signs of low self-esteem, perceive themselves as inferior to their urban counterparts, and do not feel that their contribution towards national development (in terms of food production and food security) is being appreciably valued by the various tiers of government. In light of the background to the study provided above, this research intends to explore the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing amongst farm-families in Ogun state Nigeria. The major issues to be explored in the study include the following:

- Socio-cultural constructions of gender and gender roles
- Socio-cultural constructions of gender roles and multiple role performance
- Stressful situations confronting farm-families
- Available coping resources and coping strategies adopted by male and female farmers
- Factors influencing psychological Wellbeing

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Psychological wellbeing cannot be understood without a deep appreciation of men and women's lives as individuals, as partners of their spouses, as parents of their children, as workers in their chosen vocation or career, and also as social beings. The role of power in household relations is an important issue in mediating psychological illbeing. The complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing are numerous. These complexities are interconnected showing their interdependency. This is illustrated with a tripod as shown in figure 1, on page seven. Constructions of gender identities, biological determinism of gender, socio-cultural constructions of gender and gender roles are represented on one leg of

the tripod; socio-economic status, weather patterns and geographical location on the second leg; and the constructions of psychological wellbeing, factors influencing psychological wellbeing; and coping resources and strategies on the third. Gender relations in farm families also have their inherent problems and tensions.

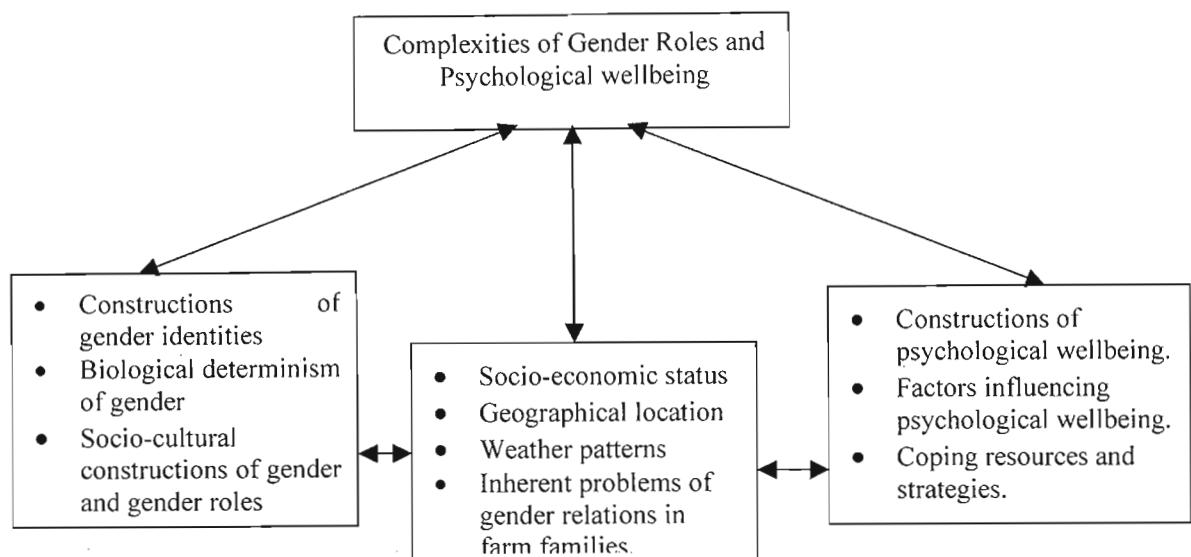


FIGURE 1: A TRIPODAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

From the foregoing, the thesis presupposes that gender roles within farm-families and the family members' psychological wellbeing are interdependent. While gender roles will influence psychological wellbeing, I also believe that adequate psychological wellbeing will enhance better gender relations and a further enhancement of psychological wellbeing. The health of the farm-family and in particular, the psychological wellbeing of its members is very important for family and societal development. Adequate psychological wellbeing of farm-families is a pre-requisite for optimum productivity in the rural and agricultural sector and thus a pre-requisite for national food security. The main objective of this study is therefore, to

explore the complexities of gender roles and perceived psychological wellbeing of farm-families in Ogun state Nigeria. This is in consonance with the social psychologists' conviction of the importance of studying the origins, structure and inner dynamics of social representations and their impact on society (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995)

1.4. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There is a dearth of research, and thus knowledge about relationships between gender roles and psychological wellbeing of farm-families, both locally and internationally. Feminist studies have long viewed men as the oppressors. There has been a concentration of research on women and their disadvantaged position. There also seems to exist a polarized view of men exclusively as the perpetrators of female subordination and victimizers, failing to see them also as victims, who are prone to certain conditions of psychological illbeing as a result of their gender and gender roles. Gender research in agriculture has also focussed largely on women's contribution to family farming.

Research of this kind is needed to explore the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm families. This study intends to fill this gap by generating empirical data on the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing of farm family members. Findings of the study will therefore contribute significantly to the body of gender research in agricultural extension. It is also expected that the study will generate information that will be useful for gender analysis and development of gender-sensitive and gender-specific interventions needed for the enhancement of the psychological wellbeing of farm-families. Such intervention would enhance harmonious gender relations, improved productivity, as well as optimum contribution to development (at family, community, state and national levels). Models evolving from the study will serve as a springboard for

developing extension strategies for rural families in general, and in particular, farm families in South-western Nigeria.

1.5. KEY QUESTIONS ADDRESSED IN THE RESEARCH

- How is gender identity construction of children influenced by gender role socialization and gender division of labour in farm families?
- How does gender relations in farm families influence their psychological wellbeing?
- What stressful situations confront male and female farmers, and how do they cope with the situations?
- How do farm family members perceive and construct their psychological wellbeing?
- Are gender roles perceived by farm family members to have influence on their psychological wellbeing and to what extent?

1.6. STRUCTURE OF THESIS

In line with the key issues addressed in the study and the research questions above, the thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and overview

This chapter discusses the background to the study and the context. The chapter presents the research problem, rationale for the study, and the key questions addressed in the research. The thesis structure, highlighting the major themes of each chapter is also included in the chapter. The chapter closes with a glossary of terms used in the thesis, and their conceptual definitions.

Chapter 2: Major issues and perspectives of the study

This chapter highlights the major issues addressed in the study, and discusses the perspectives in which they are explored. The major issues include: social and cultural constructions of gender and gender roles, gender roles and multiple role performance, constructions and determinants of psychological wellbeing, and gender roles and psychological wellbeing.

Chapter 3: Literature review

The aim of this chapter is to review previous studies in the current area of research. These include studies related to - gender identity construction and gender role socialization, gender division of labour and performance of multiple roles in families, determinants of psychological wellbeing, gender and psychological wellbeing of females and males generally, and studies related to gender roles and psychological wellbeing of families and farm-families in particular. Research investigating the supposed connection between gender roles and psychological wellbeing is sparse both in developed and developing contexts. Specifically, there is a dearth of literature on farm-family studies in Nigeria. It is expected that findings of this study would contribute to the body of knowledge and research on farm-families generally, and their gender roles and psychological wellbeing in particular, where current literature is seriously lacking.

Chapter 4: Theoretical framework, Research Methodology, and Design

The theoretical applications, conceptual framework and research methodology are discussed in this chapter. The social representations' framework proposed by Moscovici (1988) is adopted in the study. The study also draws from feminist post-structuralists', feminist anthropological and African feminist theories due to their interconnectedness with the theory

of social representations, and relevance to the study. The study is qualitative in design and multiple methods of data collection were employed in the data-gathering process.

Chapter 5: Whose Narratives? Socio-historical and cultural contexts of communities and biographical sketches of research participants

This chapter describes the socio-historical contexts of the studied communities, and introduces the research participants. For each family, biographical sketches of each adult participant are extracted from the detailed life-history data generated. Excerpts of the narratives are also used extensively throughout the chapters on data analysis and interpretation in verbatim form. The chapter also presents demographical data on the participating farm-children. The inclusion of this chapter is to enhance an understanding of the narratives discussed and interpreted in the following chapters, within their socio-cultural constructions and socio-historical contexts of the research participants, as prescribed by the adopted framework, which maintains that social psychological phenomena and processes can only be properly understood, if they are seen as being embedded in historical, cultural and macro-social conditions. The summaries of the adult and children's participants' profiles are also included as Appendices I and II. In addition to the participants' profile, my life history as the researcher is included in the thesis as chapter ten.

Chapter 6: Constructions of gender identities and gender role socialization in farm families

This chapter explores the socio-cultural factors influencing the construction of gender identities of farm children. The narratives of farm children, regarding the constructions of their gender identities are analysed, identifying how gender role socialization, and gender division of labour in families influence the constructions of their gender identities. Patterns

of gender division of labour in farm-families and the rationale for sustaining stereotyped gender roles are also explored from the perspectives of the participating parents. The chapter also discusses how the children perceive ideological gender-role representation, and their aspirations for the future.

Chapter 7: Family dynamics and psychological wellbeing: Analyses of farm children and parents' narratives

This chapter examines the interpersonal process within the farm family system and discusses how gender relations in the home, and the family climate influence the psychological wellbeing of members. The chapter presents and discusses the perspectives of children and parents regarding the influence of gender dynamics on their perceived psychological wellbeing.

Chapter 8: Case studies of how male and female farmers cope with stressful life situations: A gender analysis

The chapter presents case studies of five farmers (three females, and two males), extracted from the life histories collected in the study, focussing on how they have coped with the strain and stress of family life, and the burden of agricultural activities, which constituted stressful life situations at one time or the other in their life-cycles. Using the analytic scheme proposed by Mandelbaum (1973), the dimensions, turnings, and stressful situations of each of the five selected participants were explored. Individual experiences and adopted coping strategies (adaptations) were also analysed and appraised. The chapter closes with a systematic gender analysis of the experiences and coping strategies adopted in the selected case studies.

Chapter 9: Toward an understanding of the constructions of psychological wellbeing and gender role patterns in farm families

This chapter explores how the male and female farmers construct their psychological wellbeing, and the factors that influence their psychological wellbeing, in relation to their gender roles. Patterns of gender roles in farm-families are therefore explored, with a view to identifying how the gender role patterns in the families, influence the constructions of psychological wellbeing by the adult family members. The chapter also includes sections on the discursive strategies adopted in trans-generational perpetuation of gender ideologies; and the uniqueness of *Yorubas'* constructions of psychological wellbeing.

Chapter 10: The trajectory of self (Researchers life history)

This chapter presents my personal life history from childhood through early school days, higher education, and marriage, to date. It presents my experiences regarding how I became a gendered person, and discusses the influence of my gender role socialization on the construction of my gender identity. The factors influencing my psychological wellbeing as well as my coping strategies, from the perspectives of the study, also form an aspect of the chapter.

Chapter 11: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter presents an overview of the research process. A summary of the major findings is also presented in the chapter, highlighting the strengths and weakness of the participants, as well as the opportunities, available for the enhancement of their psychological wellbeing. Threats to gender identity construction and gender role socialization, of farm-children, gender relations in farm-families, vis-à-vis the psycholgical wellbeing of entire family members are also highlighted. The chapter closes the thesis with recommendations for culture-specific

feminist strategies, capacity building, social transformation, improvement of rural infrastructures, and further research needs.

1.7. CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Agricultural extension (*Amugbooro ati itankale ise agbe/ogbin*): is an educational process that aims at assisting a targeted “less-informed” people to acquire and effectively utilize the required knowledge, skills and attitudes aimed at improving their quality of life and uplifting their socio-economic standards. This term is applied to rural training and development programmes aimed at enhancing the production capacities and socio-economic status of the rural populace, most of which are farm-families.

Coping (*If'arada* or *If'aya ran isoro*): Strategies for dealing with threat (*Wiwa ona abayo*).

Farm-family (*Idile aagbe*): A family of two or more people related by blood or marriage, co-residing in a community and earning a large share of their income from farming activities.

Gender identity (*Idanimo isesi ako at'abo*): Developmental processes that include the internalization of sex-determined standards, gender-role identification, and gender-role preference.

Gender roles (*Ojuse ako at'abo*): Behaviours, expectations, and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine, which are embodied in the behaviour of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females.

Gender role socialization (*Awokose isesi ako at'abo*): The process whereby children and adults acquire and internalize the values, attitudes and behaviours associated with femininity, masculinity and both.

Household (*Idile*): Another term often used in describing African families, but is distinctive, because it includes every member of the family. Membership therefore includes temporary absentees as well as persons actually resident in the homestead at any one time.

Psychological wellbeing (*Ilera/alaafia-okan*): A subjective feeling, regarding the degree to which an individual feels healthy within his/her inner-being (mind or psyche). It also involves the degree to which the individual perceives the overall quality of his/her life as favourable.

Psychological illbeing (*Ailera-okan*): Antonym for psychological wellbeing. Another correlate of *ailera-okon* is, *aibale-okan*, which connotes stress.

Stress (*Ailera-okan* or *Aibale-okan*): Excessive external demands, which can be overwhelming and compromise one's ability to cope. Stress also means a condition that, predispose a person to *iporuuru-ati pakaleke okan*, which connote emotional disturbance.

CHAPTER TWO

MAJOR ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the major issues addressed in the study, and discusses the perspectives from which they are explored. These issues emanate from the research questions as presented in chapter one. They include: socio-cultural constructions of gender and gender roles, gender roles and multiple role performance, constructions of psychological wellbeing, factors influencing psychological wellbeing, and the interplay between gender roles and psychological wellbeing.

2.2. SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER AND GENDER ROLES

Gender is a socio-cultural construct. The social construction of gender surpasses biologically determined categories. The use of the term ‘sex’ is limited to the considerations of biological mechanisms, whereas, the use of the term ‘gender’ broadens the focus. In the context of this study, “gender” includes sexuality and reproduction, sexual difference, the social construction of male, female, masculinity and femininity. This broadens the focus of analyses to social, cultural and psychological issues that pertain to the traits, norms, stereotypes and roles of males and females. The difference between biologically determined categories of male and female are apparent. There are considerable differences in thinking about gender in terms of, what people (their bodies) are; what people do; what relationships and inequalities they make; what meanings all these are given; what social effects could result from gender dichotomies.

The construction of gender identities is to a very large extent dependent on the agents of socialization, which include family, religion, school and society. Social and cultural representations are central to the socio-cultural constructions of gender. Whereas individuals are born sexed but not gendered, for the individual, gender construction starts with assignment to a sex category on the basis of what the genitals look like at birth. A sex category thus becomes a gender status through naming, dress and use of other gender markers. Feminist social constructionists argue that the major way that many cultures represent gender is by difference (Hare-Mustin and Marecek 1990). Sex is a major category for distinguishing between human beings (Unger and Crawford, 1992). Sex difference as a social reality is constructed by the linguistic categories available, by what questions and modes of investigation are considered available, and by cultural ideology (Unger and Crawford, 1992).

We get systematic training in “how to be” each of our social identities throughout our lives. Gender identities are thus socially and culturally constructed and represented. Social representations are systems of thought, values and beliefs, which are socially created and communicated (Moscovici, 1988). Moscovici based his concept of social representations on the notion of ‘collective representations’. According to him, social representations refer to the stock of common knowledge and information that people share in the form of common-sense theories about the social world; and that they construct social reality from conceptual and pictorial elements in their environment. Representations are prescriptive in nature, are determined by tradition and convention, and often impose themselves on individuals’ cognitive activity (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995). A social representation involves a system of values, ideas and practices with twofold function: first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orient themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly, to foster communication, by providing the various aspects of their worlds and their

collective history (Moscovici, 1973). It is the ensemble of thoughts and feelings being expressed in verbal and overt behaviour of members of particular groups, in this case, the farm-families.

Hall (1990) explains that the values and beliefs about gender differences can be distributed on a continuum with traditional female values and beliefs at one end of the continuum and traditional male values and beliefs at the other. According to Hall, this mode of structuring diverse observations about women and men demonstrates that complementarities and oppositions occur between the two poles of typically female and typically male values (Hall, 1990). The social constructions of femininity and masculinity, and the ideology of gender relations characteristic of a culture, act as powerful organisers of human behaviour. Failure to observe culturally valued and gendered prescriptions for behaviour can lead to social disapproval and even punitive social reaction. It also leads to self-doubt, guilt and shame, since these values are deeply internalised and become core regulators of self-esteem (Sonpar and Kapur, 1999), while self-esteem is a vital element in psychological wellbeing.

Social learning theory proposes that gender typing is learned through reinforcement, punishment, observation and imitation (Unger and Crawford, 1992:42). This theory assumes that what a child learns about femininity and masculinity will vary according to their social class, ethnic group, family composition, and the entire environment (Unger and Crawford, 1992). The learning of gender-typed behaviour, according to Unger and Crawford, is made easier when parents set up the environment in such a way that some activities are much more likely to occur (and thus be reinforced) than others. They further noted that such learning may not always be expressed in immediate imitation but may be stored for later use. A small girl for example, may observe her mother devoting much time to shopping for clothes, planning new outfits, applying makeup, making her hair, and expressing concern about

weight. While she learns through these observations that attractiveness is a very important dimension for women, she might not express that knowledge very much until adolescence (Unger and Crawford, 1992). Cultures however differ in what specifically constitute the ideal gender roles for women and men. Gender roles are behaviours, expectations, and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine, which are embodied in the behaviour of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females in families and the society.

In Africa, girls have been historically and culturally socialized into becoming submissive women both to older women and male figures in the family and society (Besha, 2001). In both Western and African patriarchal societies, women are restricted to subordinate positions in all areas of life (Walby, 1990; Besha, 2001). Stereotypic assumptions about girls and women include, femininity rather than masculinity is inferior, passive and a less valued form of identity; a “good” woman is expected to conform to certain self-sacrificing, non-assertive, passive patterns of behaviour; girls and women are expected to be more domesticated than boys and men; women are biologically inferior to men, and thus have lesser human potential; emotional forms of expression are feminine attributes; women are expected to be passive participants in sexual relations; older women are expected to inculcate “virtues” of good womanhood into younger ones; women are expected to be nurturing, to take care of not only children but the elderly, the sick members of the family, and of course men. Women’s gender-role socialization is such that while nurturing qualities are reinforced, other qualities that make for healthy adulthood, such as independence, autonomy, assertiveness, and the development of instrumental competencies are actively discouraged. They are expected to, and do, use their physical, intellectual and emotional abilities and capabilities to build other peoples’ strength, resources and wellbeing. Yet, they have not been encouraged to value these interactions and activities (Sonpar and Kapur, 1999).

The masculine mystique and value system as identified by O'Neil (1981) comprises a complex set of values and beliefs that define optimal masculinity in society. These values and beliefs are learned during early socialisation and are based on rigid gender role stereotypes and beliefs about men and masculinity. Boys, for instance, are supposed to be tough and hide pain, be fighters and defenders (of self, sister and property), compete with and be better than girls and other boys; do the physical work and heavy duties, be in control and in authority positions, do well academically and pursue 'manly' careers and occupations, drink alcohol and smoke, and prove masculinity by having sex. Boys are not supposed to cry, show emotions or perform household chores (Horowitz, 1997).

Control and power are vital to a man's positive self-image, and competition is the vehicle to obtain both. Thus, men learn at an early age to compete for power and to establish their place in the home, school, or work setting. Power, control and competition, are learned by modelling after fathers and other men who have also learned that being powerful is an essential part of being a man. Numerous assumptions, expectations, and attitudes then emerge from these stereotypes. Some of these assumptions as identified by O'Neil (1981) include, men are biologically superior to women, and therefore have greater human potential; masculinity rather than femininity is the superior, dominant and more valued form of identity; masculine power, dominance, competition, and control are essential to proving one's masculinity; vulnerabilities, feelings, and emotions in men are signs of femininity and to be avoided; interpersonal communication that emphasizes human emotions, feelings, intuitions, and physical contact are considered feminine and to be avoided; sex is a primary means to prove one's masculinity; vulnerability and intimacy with other men are to be avoided; men's work and career success are measures of their masculinities; men are vastly different and superior to women in career abilities, therefore, men's primary role is that of breadwinner or economic provider while women's primary role is that of caretaker and of home and children.

Horowitz (1997) reported the responses of a group of male participants at a 'gender sensitization workshop' held in Durban, South Africa. The responses were generated during a thorough discussion on how men's lives will be improved through the elimination of sexism. The responses include, peace of mind (enjoy better life); ease life pressure; good example for your children; less inclined to commit crime and violence; collective decision-making; more productive at work; less tension (improved health); emotional satisfaction; possibility of having close non-sexual relationship with women, men, and children; accessing different kinds of experience, for example, child care and cooking; value things other than material objects; being able to accept help from others; better sense of self identity; and tap into all human resources including women's skills (Horowitz, 1997: 78).

A significant aspect of male gender identity is that of being the provider. A high commitment to the breadwinner role can be a source of strain for men, and in particular, the poor farmers in the project area. Men experience shame at their failure to protect and provide for their families and depression is high among unemployed men Ahmad (1998). Ahmad noted that the primary problem facing men was the social pressure to perform according to a pre-defined gender-role. There is growing evidence that stress not only causes disease, but also lowers life expectancy (Harrison, 1978). Brooks (2001) also observed how the differences in males and females influence their mental health.

The above stereotypes and many others persist in most social settings as strong and even decisive influences in the values of both men and women. These models become standards that perpetuate women's subordinate roles (Hall, 1990). In Nigerian families, women, mothers and wives are the cornerstones of the family (Sokoya, 1998). The full functioning of the home is part of the women's felt obligations as wives, mothers, or simply women. They play multiple roles in the family. They assume responsibilities for many of the vital formations of the family, ranging from provision of food, health-care, education and

other necessities for family sustenance. As guarantors of household subsistence and survival, and nurturers of children, women are first to be affected and worst hit by scarcities of basic resources and environmental degradation. From the above perspectives, the study will explore the interplay between gender identity construction and gender role socialization within farm-families, with a view to identifying how these influence gender division of labour and psychological wellbeing of the entire family.

2.3. CONSTRUCTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AND FACTORS INFLUENCING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Psychological wellbeing is both socially and culturally constructed, and there is growing evidence that these socio-cultural factors can directly affect health and wellbeing (Eckersley, 2002). In some ways, wellbeing might best be assessed subjectively as it is strongly associated with notions of happiness and life satisfaction. Thus, personal wellbeing might be measured in terms of how happy or satisfied people are with their life or with aspects of their life or their job. Wellbeing, health and fitness are all subjective concepts that can be interpreted in various ways by different people. Human wellbeing at both physical and psychological levels is the ultimate goal of development. However, while there have been attempts to track physical wellbeing through measuring aspects of health and nutritional status, anthropometric data, and mortality rates, psychological wellbeing has however been relatively neglected as an important aspect of the quality of life.

Psychological wellbeing in World Health Organisation's parlance is a synonym for mental health, and a major criterion in the definition of health. Health is one of the fundamental rights of human beings, without which they cannot function effectively, and to their personal satisfaction. Health, as defined by the Charter of World Health Organisation (WHO), is "a state of complete physical, mental (psychological) and social wellbeing and not

merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1946:100). Health really means maximizing one's potential by making choices to maintain one's emotional, physical, social and spiritual well being. The concept of 'wellness' refers to this positive approach to living, which is necessary for the high levels of individual performance. Wellness involves a balanced, controlled approach to the various dimensions of life: physical, spiritual, intellectual, occupational, emotional and social. It has, however, always been easier to define mental illness than to define mental health. The study of the characteristics that make up mental health has been termed "positive psychology" (Holmes, 2003). Some of the ideas that have been put forward as characteristics of psychological wellbeing include: the ability to enjoy life; resilience; balance; flexibility and self-actualization (Holmes, 2003).

Psychological wellbeing implies an internal balance amongst several factors, which include: responsibility, the ability to accept burdens and serious disappointments of life, and the capacity to positively cope with the varied demands of life (Sokoya, 1998). Without satisfactory psychological wellbeing, individuals cannot contribute meaningfully to the overall progress, growth and development of themselves, their families, their immediate communities and the nation at large. Health in general, and psychological wellbeing in particular, are much more complicated than biological processes. Wellness according to Hermon and Hazlar (1999) is more than just a physical issue. In the World Bank's World Development report (2000/2001) titled '*Attacking Poverty*', it was reported that forms and degrees of security and insecurity vary by region internationally, and by gender. Gender roles as prescribed by society have implications for the psychological wellbeing of both genders.

In social psychology, dimensions of psychological wellbeing, especially constructs including self-esteem and self-evaluation, are generally defined as a function of one's actual characteristics relative to characteristics or achievements one would ideally have (Carr, 1999). Psychological wellbeing is both socially and culturally constructed. There is growing

evidence that cultural factors can directly affect health and wellbeing (Eckersley 2002). Augostinos and Walker (1995) argue that the study of cultural processes through which men (and women) act and interact for the codification of inter-individual and inter-group conduct, creates a common social reality with its norms and values, the origin of which is to be sought again in the social context. From the above, and due to the social representations' framework adopted for the study, it becomes pertinent to discuss the constructions of psychological wellbeing, in *Yoruba* context, since the study was conducted amongst the 'Egba' ethnic group of the *Yoruba* tribe of southwestern Nigeria.

The *Yoruba* concept for the 'human being' is '*eniyan*' and '*eniyan*' is conceived as having the structural components of '*ara*', '*ori*', '*emi*' and '*okan*'. It is believed by the *Yorubas* that, these four components work in harmony, to make an individual optimally healthy and rational. A lot of confusion usually accompanies the translation and interpretation of these terms. However, since the study was conducted amongst the *Yorubas*, and *Yoruba* was the medium of data collection, it becomes necessary to find English equivalents for these *Yoruba* terms. '*Ara*' is the *Yoruba* translation for 'body' in English. Gbadegesin (1991) describes '*ara*' as the physico-material component of the human being, which comprises both internal and external parts (for example, flesh, bone, heart, and intestines). '*Ori*', another component of '*eniyan*' has a physical and spiritual component. The physical '*ori*' is the human head, and it is considered very vital, because it houses the brain (*opolo*), which controls the functions of all other body organs. When someone behaves irrationally or is mentally ill, the *Yorubas* will say '*ori e ko pe*', literally meaning 'the person's head or in this case, the brain is not functioning optimally'. The spiritual *ori* is regarded by the *Yorubas* as the spiritual component of personality, as well as the determinant of destiny (Gbadegesin, 1991: 38), and fate (*ayanmo* and *kadara*). *Emi* translates as the spirit

or soul, and it is construed as the active principle of life, the life-giving element (Gbadegesin, 1991).

'*Okan*' is another element of *eniyan*, which is conceived as having both a physical and mentalistic component. The ambiguity in the meanings of the physical and mentalistic components of *okon* is not peculiar to *Yoruba*, recognising that the concept of the 'mind' is also ambiguous in the Western context. The physical *okon* translates as the heart in English (that is, the organ of the circulatory system, responsible for blood distribution to the rest body parts). The mentalistic '*okan*' translates as the 'inner-person', the 'mind', or the 'psyche' in English (that is, the seat of thoughts and emotions). Thoughts mean *ero* in *Yoruba* and it is believed to be a function controlled by both the *okan* (mind) and the *opolo* (brain), just like the mind and brain are construed as controlling thoughts and emotions in the Western context as well as in psychological and medical literature. Gbadegesin noted that, in the usage of the mentalistic '*okan*' the emotional states of *eniyan* are taken as the functions of the mind. The philosophical relevance of the *Yoruba* terms for the body components involved in the subjective appreciation of psychological provided the basis for my adoption of '*ilera-okan*' in this study as the *Yoruba* equivalent for psychological wellbeing. Hitherto, no attempt has been made to invent *Yoruba* terminology for Western-based health concepts. Gbadegesin also identified the functions of '*okan*' (mind) and '*opolo*' (brain) as being connected with '*ero*' (thoughts). According to him:

'*Ero*' as it occurs in '*okan*' seems to refer to a wider range of processes than what the '*opolo*' does. These include, willing, desiring, wishing, hoping, worrying, believing, etc. (Gbadegesin, 1991:32).

Gbadegesin's description of '*ero*' as a function of '*okan*', and what it entails, throws more light on the concept of '*ero*', which is very vital to the constructions of psychological wellbeing among the *Yorubas*. The components of one's thoughts (willing, desiring, wishing, hoping, worrying, and believing) mentioned in the quotation above constitute the basis for an

individual evaluation of the degree to which he or she is ‘feels healthy within’, or perceives the overall quality of his or her life favourably’. The function of *okan* in this regard also accounts for the subjective nature of *ilera okan* or *alaafia okan* (psychological wellbeing). *Ilera okan* or *alaafia okan* literally translates as ‘a condition of healthy living of the soul’, and connotes a situation where an individual has a ‘settled mind’, or enjoys ‘peace of mind’. Furthermore, the antonym for psychological wellbeing, which is psychological illbeing in English, translates as *ailera-akan*. Other correlates of *ailera-akan* are: *aibale-akan*, which connotes stress, and *iporuuru-ati pakaleke okan*, which connote emotional disturbance. From the above descriptions, and inter-relatedness of the components of *eniyani* (human being), it becomes clearer, what psychological wellbeing represents to the *Yorubas*.

The conceptualization of psychological wellbeing in the *Yoruba* context is however similar, if not the same with its conceptualization in Western context. Psychological wellbeing can thus be regarded as a universal concept. This is evident in Veenhoven’s conceptualization of psychological wellbeing, and its synonyms below. Veenhoven (1984) likened psychological wellbeing to the subjective ‘appreciation of life’, ‘happiness’ and ‘life satisfaction’. He however alluded to the term ‘happiness’ (which he conceived a synonym of psychological wellbeing), in his inventory of empirical investigations. According to Veenhoven, the word ‘happiness’ is used where somebody has made an overall judgment about the quality of life. Veenhoven goes further to explain that, making an overall judgment implies assessing past experiences, and estimating future experiences, both of which require a marshalling of facts into a convenient number of categories. It is pertinent to note that, ‘happiness’ as construed by Veenhoven is not a sum of pleasures, but rather a cognitive construction, which the individual puts together from his various experiences (Veenhoven, 1984). Veenhoven further observes that, when evaluating the favourableness of their lives, people tend to use two or more less distinct sources of information, that is, their affects and

their thoughts. Furthermore, three different kinds of happiness were identified in Veenhoven's analysis. They include: 'overall happiness', 'hedonic level of affect', and 'contentment'. 'Overall happiness' is the general judgment of life, and the term 'overall' is used to emphasize how it is different from the narrower components of happiness. 'Hedonic level of affect' is the degree to which various affects that people experience are pleasant in nature, while 'contentment' is the degree to which the individual perceives his/her aspiration to be met. The concept presupposes that the individual had earlier developed some conscious wants, and that he/she has formed an idea about their realization (Veenhoven, 1984).

Although this study is not interested in measuring the different levels of psychological wellbeing, it is pertinent to note the similarities in the Western and *Yoruba* concepts of 'happiness' and 'contentment'. 'Happiness' translates as '*idunnu*' in *Yoruba* and connotes a state of being satisfied; while 'contentment', which translates as '*itelorun*' is construed as the precursor of '*idunnu*'. In other words, the *Yorubas* believe that an individual has to be satisfied with a situation before he/she can be happy, or enjoy psychological wellbeing. The *Yoruba* concept of '*itelorun*' agrees Veenhoven's conceptualization; because, when an individual assesses the degree to which his/her aspirations (*erongba* or *ilakaka*) are met, he/she is assessing the degree to which his/her desires are met, appraising past achievements and estimating future desires and aspirations.

A relationship has been established between socio-economic status and health (Sokoya, 1998). The *Yorubas* believe that psychological wellbeing is important for a meaningful existence, and that (ise) poverty, is a paramount cause of *ailera-okan* (psychological illbeing), *aibale-okan* (stress) and iporuuru ati *pakaleke okan* (emotional disturbance). The association between poverty and psychological wellbeing is not surprising, when one considers that poverty imposes considerable stress on people while at the same time undermining many potential sources of social support. In her discussion of the mental health

consequences of poverty, especially of women, Belle (1990) points out that poverty undermines the ability to fulfill important social roles and that such failure may be the conduit between experiences of poverty and depression. While for men, a failure in their role as breadwinner affects their wellbeing in the form of elevated symptom levels over and above the financial strain of unemployment (Ross and Huber, 1985). Poverty usually affects women more than men, because of women's weaker fallback status arising from their lack of access to land and control of resources, and also because of their responsibilities to their children, which are intrinsic to their identity and self-esteem (Sokoya, 1998). In recognition of the fact that several other factors influence general wellbeing of farm-families and their psychological wellbeing in particular, this study intends to explore other factors, within the farm-family system, which may influence the psychological wellbeing of members. From these perspectives, issues likely to emanate may include, poverty, health, and problems associated with on and off-farm practices. These include problems associated with weather patterns, availability of farmland, farm-size, input sourcing, processing, preservation and marketing of farm produce.

2.4. GENDER ROLES AND MULTIPLE ROLE PERFORMANCE

Role theorists (Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1991) define a role as an expected pattern or set of behaviours that exist in the minds of people, and often focus on how the enactment of one role interacts with another. '*Ojuse*' is the *Yoruba* term for 'role', and its usage in *Yoruba* language usually connotes responsibility. Kossek and Noe (1999) define work-family role synthesis as the strategies an individual uses to manage the enactment of work and care giving roles. It involves decision-making choices governing the management of multiple role involvement. Ilgen and Hollenbeck emphasize that involvement of people in multiple roles can be complex and stress provoking, since with few expectations, the more that one exhibits behaviours

expected in particular roles, the better; and roles can have conflicting demands (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

Furthermore, most role theorists have traditionally assumed that the social expectations and demands for managing the care-giving role are often in conflict with those for the work role. Work and family roles are generally seen as being in contention with each other (Kossek and Noe, 1999). It is for instance believed that if one allocates more time to enacting the family role, less time will be given to the work role, otherwise, role conflict due to spill over from heightened and differing role pressures may occur.

Based on these assumptions from role theory, work-family role synthesis is defined as the strategy an individual adopts to manage the joint enactment of work and family roles. In essence, it is one's general approach to structuring the combination of work-family roles, given one's personal and organizational circumstances. Thoits (1992) argues that rather than examining simply the number of roles held, it is more fruitful to examine how one structures or combines multiple roles. In other words, the way in which one combines roles is likely to be crucial an influence on individual psychological outcomes as the number of roles held per se (Menaghan, 1989). Both individual and social factors determine how one integrates roles (Turner, 1978)

Writing about women in the United States, Milkie and Peltola (1999) noted that the roles of wife, mother and worker are independent, and may be in psychic competition with one other. Time in one role may be equivalent to neglect of another role. They further noted that, many women are however, dis-empowered, lacking access and rights to land and decision-making in the household, and even the control of their own reproductive functions and fertility. The gender division of labour in farm-families often overwhelms them. In addition, because women feel stronger commitment and obligations to the parental role than men (Hays, 1996), they are affected more by the psychological and emotional consequences

arising from role overload, role conflicts and other socio-economic pressures. DeVault (1991) reported that women sometimes felt anxious about preparing meals for their families because feeding the family represented caring, rather than simply filling empty stomachs. Berk (1985) observe that there are gendered ‘shoulds’ and ‘musts’ attached to how people spend time, and these likely affect gender differences in feelings of successfully balancing time commitments. One important gendered ‘must’ for example is the expectation that mothers must be all giving to their children. Demands that take a woman away from her child, especially a young one, may cause her a degree of emotional stress (Hays, 1996). Although the above perspectives may seem Western, to a large extent, but, having worked with rural farm women for over seven years, I have observed that a great deal of similarities exist in the ideological representations of what is expected from each gender within the family. It is expected that this study would provide insights into how multiple role performance is perceived by women and other members of their families, and how their, and other family members’ perceptions of these roles influence their psychological wellbeing.

2.5. GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Tensions, stress, strain and emotional complexes are inherent within family relationship; and even more so are inevitable where polarized stereotypic masculine and feminine gender roles are demanded. Tolson (1977) observes that these polarizations are divisive and a potential source of friction. Rigid gender socialization into narrow roles is not in the best interest of individuals (O’Neil, 1981). This is the origin of gender role strain and conflicts, and has serious implications for the psychological well being of men and women. The words ‘strain’ and “stress” connote different meanings; but in common usage, they together with others like “tension” and “pressure” are simultaneously applied to environmental forces (Langner, and Michael, 1963). Males and females in family relationships are therefore prone to emotional

disturbances that impinge on their psychological wellbeing. Men and women having been conditioned to some gender roles by their socialization have been deprived of the opportunity of being their real selves. They have been restricted to certain roles as prescribed by society, “acting” assigned roles, many times under compulsion, tension and pressure, trying to satisfy societal expectations.

Gender role conflict is a psychological state in which gender roles have negative consequences or impact on the person or others. The ultimate outcome of this conflict is the restriction of the person’s ability to actualize their human potential or the restriction of someone else’s potential. Gender role strain is excessive mental or physical tension caused by gender role conflict and the effects of masculine, feminine, or androgynous roles (O’Neil, 1981). To function successfully in a complex and changing culture, men and women must have full access to the widest range of social, emotional and psychological skills. Harmony within and across roles is required for adequate psychological wellbeing.

The roles of housewife and motherhood have been associated with high levels of distress, primarily because they are high in demand and low in control (Sonpar and Kapur, 1999). Carstairs and Kapur in their study in Kota (Sonpar and Kapur, 1999) found that the change from the traditional matrilineal to a patrilineal system was associated with stress for women compared to men, because of the disempowering effects of the change on women. Connell (1995) observes that the cultural constructions of femininity function as a sort of cultural disarmament of women’s fight-back potentials. The burden of work and family maintenance for many women in the developing world generally, and women farmers in southwestern Nigeria to be more specific, is indeed arduous. The productive work that women do is usually unrecognised and the new economic policies have made women labour more invisible, and at the same time increased their work burden to the extent of affecting their health and nutritional status (Sokoya, 1998).

Factors influencing the psychological wellbeing in a developed context may not necessarily differ from those of a developing context. However, due to the differences in the socio-cultural and socio-economic experiences, the perceptions, interpretations, and fulfilment of gender roles, and multiple roles, as the case may be, may likely differ. These differences would further reflect differences in how psychological wellbeing is constructed and perceived within their socio-historical, cultural and socio-economic contexts. The current study is on rural farm-families who are believed to have peculiar characteristics. Farm-families are mostly rural-based, share same socio-cultural values, speak same language, live communal life in clustered dwellings, interact freely with one another, and have a sense of belonging to each other and their communities. From these perspectives, the study will explore the various gender roles in the farm-families, how individual family members (children and adults) function within these role frameworks, what strains and stresses emanate from the performance of these roles, and how the fulfilment, or otherwise, of these roles influence their psychological well-being.

These major issues and the perspectives in which they are being explored in the study, set the research tone, and provided the structure for the literature review. It also informed the choice of social representations framework adopted for the study, and the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to review previous studies in the current area of research. These include studies related to: gender identity construction and gender role socialization; gender division of labour and performance of multiple roles in families; determinants of psychological wellbeing; gender and psychological wellbeing of females and males generally; and studies related to gender roles and psychological wellbeing of families and farm-families in particular. The review also comprises studies carried out amongst urban and rural families, with a view to identifying the peculiarities of the determinants of psychological wellbeing in rural farm-families. The structure of the literature review is informed by the research questions, earlier stated in chapter one, and the major research themes as presented in the conceptual framework of the study (See Fig. 2, on diagrammatic representation of major themes in the study). The chapter presents a review of related studies in Western countries, in developing contexts and Nigeria in particular.

Research investigating the supposed connection between gender roles and psychological wellbeing is sparse both in developed and developing contexts. Therefore, coupled with the considerations of the major themes in this research, the dearth of literature in the current field also influenced the studies selected for review. Pertinent studies considered relevant to the current study were reviewed globally, in Africa and in Nigeria, in order to identify the cross-cultural similarities and differences in the various findings. In each of the review sections presented below, studies conducted in Western countries are first presented, followed by those

conducted in developing contexts. The reviews are then narrowed down to studies conducted in Nigeria. The review is structured as follows, on studies related to:

- Gender identity construction and gender role socialization
- Gender division of labour and performance of multiple roles in farm-families
- Factors influencing psychological wellbeing
- Gender roles and psychological wellbeing
- Stress and coping in farm-families

3.2. GENDER IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND GENDER ROLE SOCIALIZATION

Gender-role socialization has been discovered to be a strong factor in the construction of gender identities of children in several cultures (Barry, Bacon, and Child, 1957; Mead, 1977; Kagan, 1964; Obidigbo, 2002). It is also believed that gender identity, to a very large extent influences self-concept and self-esteem (Obidigbo, 2002; Partwardan, 2002), and that these in turn, influence psychological wellbeing (Partwardan, 2002). Identity, self-concept, self-worth, and self-esteem are therefore, terms usually used in association with each other in literature related to gender identity construction and gender role socialization. There is dearth of literature on gender identity construction of rural children in Africa generally, and Nigeria in particular.

Many developmental psychologists argue that to some extent, children grow up in gender segregated separate cultures in which different norms exist for social behaviour. These different norms are then carried into adult social interaction (Hoffman, 1972; Macoby, 1990). Kagan (1964) observes that gender identity construction in boys is determined by three kinds of experiences. These include identification with parent of same sex and, to a lesser extent, other same-sex adults, siblings, and peers; acquisition of the attributes and skills that define

masculine behaviour; and experiences with other people in ways that are congruent with masculine stereotyped standards. Marlowe (1981) argues that a warm relationship with a nurturing father who is secure in his masculinity is a crucial factor in boys' development of masculinity, and that a weak identification with the same-sex parent often prevents boys from developing confidence for many sex-appropriate skills. Regarding the acquisition of masculine stereotyped attributes, Marlowe observes that boys are expected to be physically competent, assertive, and autonomous. He further observes that sex-role congruent experiences, especially when approved by peers consolidate male gender identity.

Although the above study was conducted on boys, the three kinds of experiences identified by Kagan, as influencing boys' gender identity construction may likely influence girls' identity construction too. These three kinds of experiences also provide a background for exploring the gender identity construction of boys and girls in farm-families, little has been documented. In addition, since gender role socialization has been identified as a determinant of children's gender identity construction, which in turn influences self-concept and self-esteem, it is expected that findings of the current study will contribute to knowledge about rural farm-children's gender identity construction, gender role socialization and psychological wellbeing.

Patwardhan (2002) explored self-concept of students in relation to their ages, grades, and their future identity. The study was carried out in two stages, using different samples from high schools and the University in Asamara, Eriteria. In the first stage, self-concept of adolescents, their gender, and their grade differences were examined, while the second stage involved an investigation of the self-concept of youths in relation to their future identity. The study revealed that the difference between the female and male students on self-concept is not significant. It was observed that the female and male students exhibit a healthy relationship beyond physical attraction. The students have accepted their respective gender roles

successfully. Their sex-role socialization and conformity with sex-role norms seem smooth. This was interpreted as the Eritrean students having internalized traditional gender-role stereotypes. Neither the girls nor the boys assume any of the dimensions of self-concept as being more valuable than their counterparts.

It was also revealed that the students' future identity in Patwardhan's study, is dependent on their self-concept, as it is indicated by the negligible correlation coefficient between the two characteristics. Patwardhan observes that there is interplay between identity development, gender-role socialization and historical, geographical and cultural context. Culture, according to him, plays a central role in determining how self is defined. He also discovered that the self-concept of the total sample in the study was on the higher side, and this was attributed some significant features of Eritrean culture. The people are fair complexioned as compared to other African countries. The common person is honest, and does not think of cheating anyone. These features, according to him, are exceptional and precious, with a long history of war resulting in poverty and underdevelopment in Eritrea. The people are aware of the significance of their honesty and take pride in preserving it (Patwardhan, 2002).

Patwardhan discussed how self-concept and self-esteem influence children's psychological wellbeing, whereas the current study is not directly exploring self-concept. However, his argument regarding the existence of links between identity construction, gender role socialization, and the historical and cultural context is considered to be very relevant. As earlier discussed in the major issues and perspectives of this study (chapter two), gender and gender roles are socio-culturally constructed. Hence, I have adopted a social representations framework in exploring the complexities of the interplay amongst these factors – gender identity construction, gender role socialization, household gender division of labour, and psychological wellbeing of farm-families, in their socio-historical and cultural contexts.

Would there be similarities or differences in the determinants of gender identity construction and psychological wellbeing as illustrated in the study of Eritrean children relative to farm-children in Nigeria? The current study is expected to provide an answer to the question raised, and document findings peculiar to rural farm-children in the study area.

Michaelieu (1997) studied gendered parent and adolescent women's self esteem. Investigating the relationship between female identity and self-esteem in early adulthood, the study combines work on ego identity (Erickson 1963) and social identity (Tajfel 1984) to examine whether individual differences in self-esteem among college-age women are mediated by a strong sense of female identity. The study also explores whether retrospective accounts of certain types of parenting practices relate to young women's sense of female identity. As predicted, a strong sense of female identity, as well as specifically gendered parenting practices encouraging such an identity, were found to be positively associated with late adolescent women's self-esteem. The study identified female identity as comprising of three components. These include consolidated female identity, gender salience, and gender positivity.

- Consolidated female identity is the extent to which one has explored and reached a sense of clarity about what it means to be a woman. For example, when young women say, "I have given a lot of thought to how my life is affected by my gender". This concept of identity consolidation derives from Erickson's (1963) conceptualization of how adolescent ego identity is constructed, given available social roles.
- Gender salience is the extent to which gender is personally salient to an individual. For example, if asked to describe herself, a woman with a strong sense of gender salience would likely mention her gender.
- Gender positivity is the extent to which a person perceives her gender positively. For example, a woman with high gender positivity might say 'I like being a woman'.

The three components of female gender identity identified by Michaelieu shed more light on the subjective nature of identity construction. Although the study focuses gendered parent and adolescent women's self-esteem, it would further enhance our understanding and interpretation of findings from not only girls and women in the current study, but also the boys and men.

Cross-cultural studies suggest that gender differences and roles are acquired through the socialization process (Burr, 1998). Examining the upbringing of boys and girls in one hundred and ten cultures, Barry, Bacon, and Child (1957) found that pressure towards nurturance, obedience and responsibility is most often stronger for girls, while pressure towards achievement and self-reliance is most often stronger for boys. Barry, Bacon and Child (1957) concluded that the largest sexual differentiation and male superiority occur together in an economy that places a high premium on the superior strength and superior development of motor skills requiring strength, which characterize the male. Although there is a gender division of labour with women and men's jobs in all human societies, the content of these roles varies. Mead (1977) studied gender roles in three New Guinea societies (the Arapesh, the Mundugumor, and the Tchambuli), and found that they all had different conceptions of female and male gender roles. The Arapesh men and women were described as co-operative, unassertive, gentle, and shared a common adventure that is primarily maternal, cherishing, and oriented away from the self towards the needs of the next generation. The Arapesh men and women valued gentleness, caring and child-centeredness in adults of both sexes, whereas the Mundugumor women were equally as vigorous, independent and assertive as the men. Among the Tchambuli, the women were self-assertive and managing, while the men wore ornaments and were interested in gossip.

In a descriptive study, Ziarat (2001) examines perceptions of family functioning and division of household labour in a small sample of mothers and fathers in off-reservation Navajo Indian families. The study revealed gender-differentiated patterns of involvement in basic household labour in these couples. Mothers in this sample, reported investing significantly more time in cleaning, food-related work, and child-care responsibility than did fathers, but mothers and fathers equally participated in household maintenance. In their perception of how they and their families functioned, mothers and fathers reported similar levels of coping and competence, but mothers demonstrated significantly more commitment, cohesion, and communication skills than fathers. Overall, fathers showed high levels of involvement in household labour and family functioning.

She further observes that the study of fathers' role in Navajo families has been neglected, perhaps because of the matrilocal and matrilineal family system in this cultural group. Researchers argue that this family system does not encourage Navajo fathers to invest heavily in family life, and especially in children, because the father does not control family assets. Navajo fathers are involved in disciplining, teaching, playing with, and providing for their children's economic needs. Findings of the study did not elaborate the ways in which Navajo mothers and fathers operate in different areas of family functioning.

In a literature review on 'fathers, families, and child welfare in Cameroon conducted by Nsamenang (2002), it was observed that gender role patterns in families influence the socialization and gender identity construction of Cameroonian children. It was noted that the extent of child-to-child caregiving and the socialization of children by other children in Cameroon is substantial. Sibling care is far more extensive and perhaps developmentally more critical than direct maternal or paternal care. Furthermore, children do not belong solely to their biological parents. Kinsmen are expected to be interested and to take responsibility for the care of children of relatives. It was also observed that when men, women, and

children worked together for family subsistence (as found within farm-families), family members were close to each other and children had a clear picture of their parents' lives. Nsamenang stresses the impact of traditional education, which kept children in contact with parents, their social context and the activities of daily life, thus permitting them to learn from their parents' interactions how to develop an identity as husband/father or wife/mother. Evidence of father's presence in the household is preliminary, and considerable work remains to be done.

Investigating the gender gap in access to education in Nigeria, Okojie, Chegwe, and Okpokunu, (1996) undertook a study aimed at establishing the relative importance of selected socio-economic factors on women's education. Research participants were drawn from states with different educational levels, Anambra and Ondo States with high levels, and Plateau and Niger States with low levels. Data were collected using focus group discussions. Their main findings revealed that socio-cultural factors which include, cultural barriers (son-preference, large family size), religious barriers (female seclusion), poverty, and teenage pregnancy, as major factors hindering female education in Nigeria. The study revealed that the gender gap is wider in the northern part of the country, and narrower in the south. It was also observed that chores in the studied families were differentiated by gender, with girls generally washing clothes, grinding corn, baby-sitting and marketing farm produce, while boys were generally more involved with farm work. (Okojie, et al., 1996).

Obidigbo (2002) examined the relationship between self-concept and academic performance of 1000 male and female secondary school students in Enugu, Nigeria. Results indicated significant differences in the measurement of self-concept and academic performance of the students. Males were found to score higher than females on the measured items. The gender differences were attributed to cultural factors and socialization of the participants. He observed that in Africa, males and females are socialized differently.

Whereas males are socialized to be resilient, independent and outgoing, females on the other hand are socialized into dependent existence.

Socialisation of *Yoruba* children takes place chiefly within the extended family structure. Children therefore obtain the bulk of their training as members of the society from extended family members, since the child cannot continuously be under the surveillance of parents and other siblings. In farm-families specifically, as part of their socialization, children learn from a very young age to participate in the domestic and occupational roles of their parents. Fadipe (1970) observes that within the family compound, children are afforded frequent opportunities of various experiences not only of the practical effects of many items of the social code, but also of unpleasant consequences attending their infraction. A major way in which parents teach their children in Yorubaland is by sending them on errands (Akinware, Wilson-Oyelaran, Ladipo, Pierce, and Zeitlin, 1992). Errands according to Akinware et al., school the children in following sequential instructions, carrying objects, and finding locations, and also teach the social skills needed for verbal and commercial transactions.

Children are also taught to report to their parents any kind gestures of others and to show them any gifts received, and must gradually learn how to be honest without being a tattletale (Babatunde, 1992:95). Early cross-cultural comparisons (LeVine, Dixon, LeVine, Richman, Leiderman, Keefer, and Brazelton, 1994; Doob, 1965) characterized African parenting practices as emphasizing obedience and responsibility. Corporal punishment is frequent, even for minor offences, and stealing is particularly harshly dealt with. LeVine found that elite fathers were rather less authoritarian towards their children, and more willing to spend time with them, but the emphasis on discipline and respect was maintained (LeVine et al., 1967).

Findings from studies on gender role socialization (Barry, et al, 1957; Mead, 1977; Ziarat, 2001) and gender gap in education (Okojie et al., 1996) all suggest that socio-cultural factors play a major role in gender identity construction and perpetuation of gender stereotypes. These studies however did not examine the influences that gender identity construction and gender role socialization could have on the psychological wellbeing of both genders, either directly, or indirectly. Obidigbo's (2002) study however noted a relationship between self-concept and academic performance, and attributed the gender differences to gender role socialization. In addition, reviewed literature on family gender relations (Nsamenang, 2002; Fadipe, 1970) reveal similarities between Cameroonian and *Yoruba* cultures, as regards patterns of gender division of labour and socialization of children in the families. There is dearth of literature on gender identity construction of *Yoruba* children in general and farm-children in particular. However, the reviewed literature on the socialization of *Yoruba* children (Fadipe, 1970: Akinware et al., 1992; Babatunde, 1992: Levine et al., 1994; and Doob, 1965) provides a foundation for an investigation of influence of gender role socialization on gender identity construction of farm-children, as it is being done in this study.

3.3. MULTIPLE GENDER ROLES AND ROLE CONFLICTS

Pleck (1977) proposed that men's and women's work and family roles, function as a system, with the components affecting each other. Research on the problems of combining work and family roles has focused almost exclusively on women, especially on white, upper middle-class women who are pursuing 'male' careers in business and the professions (Unger and Crawford, 1992). Most of the studies investigating the relationship between multiple role involvement and wellbeing in Western cultures use measures of either psychological or physical wellbeing. The specific roles that women occupy within their role-set connote role identities that have both a subjective component as well as a structural component (Moen,

Dempster-McClain, and Williams, 1989). Unger and Crawford (1992) believe that at the interface of a person's evaluation of his or her competence to hold multiple roles is an optimal adaptation. All human beings are involved in many social roles. Each of us functions as a friend, worker, daughter, or son, and depending on life-stage and personal choice, we may also become marital partners, parents and grandparents (Unger and Crawford (1992). Research has consistently shown that most women workers experience role conflicts.

Stohs (2000) studied multi-ethnic women's experience of household labour, conflicts, and equity. The study examines a group of four hundred and nineteen multi-ethnic women (sixty-four African Americans, one hundred and thirty-six Asian Americans, one hundred and seventy-one Hispanic Americans, and forty-eight Middle Eastern Americans) from Southern California. The study examines Chafetz's (1988; 1990) thesis that women with macro level power (high socio-economic status) will show higher levels of conflict with their spouses over household labour. Such conflict is expected to relate to dissatisfaction with the division of household labour as well as time or task differences with spouses over housework. The multi-ethnic women in this study differed among themselves by socio-economic status (proportional income, job status, and education) as well as by the household time and tasks with their spouses, but such factors did not influence conflict. Results indicate that regardless of ethnicity or macro level power, multi-ethnic women who perform more household tasks than other women are more dissatisfied with the division of labour. These variables alone influence the number of conflicts per week reported by racial and ethnic couples. When reasons for conflict are compared, the equity issue of "unfair share" is cited more frequently than any others. In general, comparisons with one's spouse on traditional "woman's tasks" and time on "women's work" are not salient to the experience of household labour conflicts among the multi-ethnic women in the study, even when macro level power is attained.

Data were collected from the women in the study through a two-page questionnaire about household labour through a snowball sampling technique. The questionnaire included data on all members of the family by age and gender, as well as the amount of time in an average week each member of the couple devoted to the tasks of, preparing meals, meal cleanup, cleaning the house, washing clothes, childcare, shopping for food, pet care, yard work, or other work. The respondents were also requested to circle how satisfied they were with the household division of tasks. Data were analysed using MANOVAs and ANCOVAs to test for mean differences overall, and among ethnic and socio-economic groups, for all of the study variables.

Findings of the study revealed that, compared to their partners, these women from different racial and ethnic groups spend 16 hours more per week on frequent, necessary, and repetitive household tasks, that is, the tasks that are traditionally relegated to women. Overall, the women in this study performed 5.8 tasks per week. On the comparative difference in number of tasks, women in the study reported that they did 1.6 tasks more than their partners per week. It was revealed that although household labour remains gendered between African Americans, it is less focused on specific tasks, and the time differential between spouses is lower than among Whites. Among Hispanics, women and men are less inclined to believe that household labour and providing financial support for the household should be shared. Along these lines, Hispanic women work significantly fewer hours for pay (15.6 per week) than White or Black women. In addition, Hispanic men are more inclined than other groups to agree that men should provide the financial support for their families.

Results of Stohs' study did not fully support the Chafetz's social exchange theory of micro and macro level power dynamics, which claims that women with macro level power will have spouses with less micro level power. The claim is however supported by the fact that women with higher socio-economic status show smaller time and task differentials with

their spouses on housework. Whereas Chafetz's theory also hypothesizes that, women with macro level power will have less satisfaction over any time or task differentials with their spouses, and will engage in more conflicts over the household division of labour. Results of the study suggest that those multi-ethnic women who perform more of the household tasks are more dissatisfied with its overall division and engage in more conflict over it, regardless of their macro level power or ethnicity.

All the ethnic and racial groups in Stohs' study experienced equivalent levels of conflict over the household division of labour. When those reporting conflicts gave rationales for its occurrence, they cited "unfairness" more often than any other reason. Thus, the issue of inequity is also salient for those who experience conflict. Ambivalence about macro and microlevel dynamics appears evident. In general, 73% of all multicultural women claimed that conflict occurred between themselves and their partners some time during the week. Stohs reported that these results show important differences as well as similarities with studies done on the broader population of U.S. women (Stohs, 1995), which found that only 58 % of White women reported conflicts between partners over the household division of labour.

Furthermore, the multi-ethnic women in the sample reported doing 1.6 tasks more than their partners. This figure is a half point more than that reported by the Whites. Finally, the multi-ethnic women spent sixteen hours per week on household tasks compared to only twelve hours per week reported for White women. Therefore, multi-ethnic women have a higher level of conflict and do more of the household labour than White women, yet the issues that stimulate conflict differ somewhat. While the sample of White women was approximately the same age and had the same size family as the multi-ethnic sample (in the latter study), the women earned approximately half the family's household income and worked forty-two hours per week for pay. However, conflict among Whites was related

primarily to issues that focused on time and task comparisons over “women’s work”. Equity factors (including comparisons on “women’s work”) among the White sample were significantly more salient to conflict than practical factors such as age and number of household members. In addition, the multi-ethnic women are not interested in fighting over time and task disparities with their spouses, yet they engage in conflict when burdened with too much household labour and they cite the fact that “others are not doing their fair share” as a reason for conflict. Stohs observes that conflicts over household labour are neither contingent upon a woman's access to macro level resources, nor to her multicultural orientation. In addition, conflicts are not due to specific time and task comparisons with one's spouse.

Stohs' multi-ethnic analysis of women's experiences of conflicts in gender division of labour is quite interesting, but raises a lot of issues for consideration in the current study. Although African Americans are included in the multi-ethnic sample of four cultures, the gender division of labour in such families would definitely be incomparable with that of Nigerian families in general and rural farm-families in particular. Will the women farmers have the same experiences as these multi-ethnic women in Stohs' study? How will women and men in the current study perceive and interpret conflicts that may emanate from their multiple role involvements and their spouses'? The current study intends to explore these issues, and thus bridge the existing gap in literature regarding perceptions of multiple role involvement and psychological wellbeing in farm-families.

Milkie and Peltola (1999) used a gender perspective to examine the perceptions about work-family balance, of time use, role harmony and work family trade-offs, focusing on gender, as a hierarchical structure that infuses everyday relations in the family and work place. The gender perspective suggests that employed women and men have different role expectations, actual and felt expectations and demands, and that women's demands are higher

overall. Using a sample of married employed Americans from the 1996 general social survey, they unexpectedly discovered, that women and men report similar levels of success and kinds of work family trade-offs. They however discovered some gender differences. For men, imbalance is predicted by longer work hours. Wives who work fewer hours, perceived unfairness in sharing housework, marital unhappiness and trade-offs made at work for family, and at home for work (Milkie and Peltola, 1999).

They agreed with earlier observations of (Mirowsky and Ross, 1995) that, women's location in the social structure also affords them less power and control in work and family spheres, and most likely contributes to a greater total workload, more sacrifices and difficulties in balancing work and family. They suggest that feeling balanced is also related to the cultural expectations of specific roles and role combinations, as well as harmony within and across roles in a marriage or partnership. Because the meanings of roles are gendered, the impact of the competing demands of these roles is not uniform for women and men. For example, gendered expectation and the structure of everyday relations make being a 'good' mother and wife different from the masculine roles of "good" father and husband (La Rossa and LaRossa, 1981).

Findings of the Milkie and Peltola's (1999) study suggest that socio-cultural constructions of gender also influence how family and work roles are balanced. Since work and family roles are generally seen as being in contention with each other (Kossek and Noe, 1999), the current study intends to explore whether male and female farmers share this notion. This study will also examine how gender roles within farm-family systems are constructed, and shared amongst members, and how role combinations influence individual and collective psychological wellbeing.

Danes (1998) investigated the relationship amongst multiple role involvement, perceived discrepancy in the balance between work and leisure, and satisfaction with the level

of living for five hundred and thirteen farm women in the United States. Her sample represented countries from the entire state and included farm women from all age groups, income levels, and types of farms located within the state. The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of multiple roles holding on the wellbeing of farm women within the social context. The study revealed that self-esteem, locus of control, and age were statistically significant in predicting role involvement, with age as the highest predictor. The younger the farm woman, the more the farm woman perceived being controlled by external forces, the higher the level of self-esteem, and the higher was the density of her role-set.

She posits that for farm women, it is much more appropriate to use a measure of wellbeing that is more inclusive, such as satisfaction with level of living. Level of living, according to Davis (1945), is made up of complex combination of consumption, family and friend support networks, working conditions, possessions, freedoms, atmosphere, and the balance or harmony among them in relation to needs and felt wants. This, according to Danes, is a concept that is much more reflective of the integrative orientation of the farm-family system, and the rural environment. Although farm women experience many of the same role conflicts and problems as urban women, performing their roles is often complicated by the somewhat unusual structure of the rural value system, labour market system, and community organizational patterns reflecting its socially integrated nature (Bescher-Donnelly and Smith, 1981; Heaton and Martin, 1979). The social context in which women experience their work and family roles are further affected by the dynamics of the family business system of which most of them are a part.

Findings from Dane's (1998) study provide some answers to issues raised in Stohs' (2000) findings, since the study was conducted on farm women, although in a developed context. Her argument however is that farm women find it more difficult than urban women to manage role conflicts emanating from multiple role performance, due to their geographical

location and other identified societal influences. In as much as her argument is relevant to the current study, it would be interesting to find out whether socio-cultural factors in developing contexts would have the same influence on farm women. This study will also explore how farm women and men in the study area perceive, interpret and manage conflicts emanating from family and work roles.

Albers (2001) studied women farmers' participation in agriculture in the early 20th century, as part of a larger regional-historical research project (Society in Westphalia, Continuity and Change from 1930 to 1960). The study was based on interviews and historical sources. Findings of the study show that women farmers in the study area have been the victims of agrarian re-structuring. With the emergence of modern agriculture, women farmers became systematically marginalized, finally losing their independence on the farms as farms became subdivided. In pre-industrial agriculture, women farmers ran their own farms, and were able to make a living as farmers. According to her, it was only between 1920 and 1960 that the women farmers in Westfalen-Lippe (Westphalia) lost their independence due to agricultural reforms. The founding of vocational agricultural schools for farm girls after the end of Second World War is also identified as contributing to factors that culminated in turning farm women into rural housewives and consumers. Once women were no longer able to gain a living of their own by engaging in farming, they turned their backs to living and working on a farm. The research report did not include an analysis of any post-1960 developments in farming.

The experiences of women farmers in Westphalia is different from those of women farmers in Africa generally, and Nigeria in particular. The reverse is actually the case. While the women farmers in Alber's studies have lost independence due to agricultural reforms, women farmers in Africa and Nigeria, are getting more involved in agriculture, although they have been increasingly been overburdened with on and off-farm activities (Boserup, 1970;

UNECA/FAO, 1975; Obono, 2001). These findings will however provide a background for exploring how the increased involvement of farm women in the study, in agriculture, has influenced their socio-economic status, their role fulfilment, and psychological wellbeing within their socio-cultural contexts.

Turner, Kaara, and Brownhill, (1997) studied social reconstruction in rural Africa. The study uses a 'gendered class analysis' to consider how, at the household national and international levels, women farmers are exploited and resist that exploitation. They traced the struggles in Kenya of two groups of landless women to assert control over their own labour in agricultural production in the decade 1985-1996. The women of Maragua have refused to produce coffee, an export cash crop, and instead are producing bananas and selling them independently. In the second and very different setting of Mwea, a government rice producing project, women have appropriated the inputs, notably irrigation water, to produce garden crops for their own consumption and sale. The success of women in sustainable agriculture is linked to their success in establishing control over their own labour power, in the face of efforts by husbands, the state and private firms to retain control.

Nsaamenang (2002) conducted a review of the literature, on 'fathers, families, and child welfare in Cameroon, a West-African country. The review discusses fatherhood in Cameroon in the context of anthropological, sociological, and psychological literature. Although the primary focus of the review is on fathers, it does not exclude mothers, because according to him, "to consider the status of either sex without reference to the other is to distort the reality we are trying to understand" (Fortes, 1950:363) cited in (Nsamenang, 2002). Nasamenang noted that African fathers in general, an Cameroonian fathers in particular, have had little opportunity to be heard by researchers, and that by contrast, North American and Western European fathers have been studied extensively. It is further noted that the variety of views on parenting in scientific literature are not always in agreement with the values or

reality in Cameroon (Goodnow, 1988; Maccoby and Martin, 1983) cited in Nsamenang (2002).

Nsamenang observed that the traditional childcare role of the Cameroonian father is non-specific and not routinized, whereas the mother's is to keep the home, perform other domestic tasks and, more importantly, to oversee and supervise sibling care-giving rather than provide direct childcare herself (Nsamenang, 1992: 246). This review is considered relevant to the current study because Cameroon is a West African country like Nigeria, and the family gender role patterns described by Nsamenang is quite similar to what operates in Yorubaland. It is expected that the study will generate relevant information regarding the roles performed by fathers in farm-families, and the influence of these roles on their psychological wellbeing as well as on the psychological wellbeing of other family members.

In Boserup's (1970) studies in different rural African communities, including Nigeria, it was found that in almost all cases, women did almost 70% of the work. A UNECA/FAO (1975) report estimated that African women supply 70% of the workforce in production of food crops, besides 100% workforce in food processing, 50% workforce in animal husbandry and 60% in marketing. Historically, Nigerian women have been a force to reckon with in the economic sphere, as well as in the household. Obono (2001), adopted an historical framework for his analysis and noted that through the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods, women have left footprints to show their involvement in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of the nation's development. The study also examined the prominent roles of rural women as producers, mothers, family caretaker and their societal roles towards political, economic, religious, social and cultural development.

The Nigerian woman is described as a sweeper, cook, dishwasher, cultivator, storekeeper, builder, and runner of errands, cart, lorry and donkey. All these roles according to Obono, are combined to ensure effective functioning of the home and a pointer to the fact

that women are strong physically, emotionally, mentally, and industrious - a reason why they do not break despite the combination of all these roles. She further observes that a woman's responsibilities increase in the absence of her husband, either by migration to the urban area or by death. She further argued that women try to be good providers for their children with the hope that at old age and/or widowhood, the child may provide for them in turn and serve as their social security.

Obono, however, noted that most of these identified roles are performed to complement men's activities. Nigerian women have worked side by side with men in the division of agricultural labour. While the men performed arduous tasks of felling trees, gathering and burning of bush, making ridges and climbing trees, the women undertook planting of seeds, harvesting, transporting, processing, and selling of farm products. The women worked not only to support their immediate families, but also to supplement the resources of their extended family (Obono, 2001). Obono further noted that despite the fact that most women suffer sex discrimination, subordination, and arduous responsibilities, they still achieve a lot, and contribute greatly to the economic, political, religious and cultural upliftment of their communities.

Spiro (1981) conducted a study on women's rural activities and time budgets in Nigeria. The study was carried out in Oluwatedo and Ilora villages in Oyo state, southwestern Nigeria. Sixty households were included in the survey, of which 53 were headed by men, and 7 were headed by women. Data were collected from large samples of women and men living in the villages, through general survey questionnaires. Intensive time-budget survey was further conducted over five months with a randomly selected smaller sample of women farmers and traders. The study investigated the role of *Yoruba* women in farming and trading, and analyzed the patterns of their farming and trading operations. It was

observed that, while the role of *Yoruba* women in trade has long been acknowledged, their role in farming is much more controversial.

Time budget analyses showed that all women in the villages, regardless of age or occupation, spent 25% of their time on farming, either on their own behalf or on behalf of husbands. Women were actively involved in the production functions of hoeing, planting, thinning, applying fertilizer and weeding, as well as the basic marketing functions of harvesting, transporting crops to store and selling. Crops were produced mainly for sale in the market. Over 50% of the adult women in the villages were involved in some type of trade, both at home and in the market place. *Yoruba* women operated mainly within the internal marketing system of Nigeria, through a system of daily (urban) and periodic (rural) markets. Their degree of mobility depended on the type of commodity traded, but all women in the villages, irrespective of age or commodity, followed the most basic trading pattern of home-market-home, usually visiting only one supply and one retail market. The amount of capital a woman had was a more important determinant of commodity traded than age. It was discovered that more time was spent on farming than trading, but one advantage of periodicity is that it allowed traders to participate in more than one occupation at a time.

The study also reveals that although *Yoruba* culture defines ideal areas of domestic responsibility for both women and men, there were considerable overlaps. *Yoruba* women are expected to make substantial contributions to the household economy and consequently, their domestic responsibilities were organised in such a way that they posed the minimum of constraint on their child rearing and childcare responsibilities. Time spent on domestic chores ranged from 33-38% and this, combined with 30% of women's time for leisure, means that women used only a third of available time for income generation activities. Furthermore, although the majority of women's time was spent in domestic (33-38%) and 'other' activities (30%), the main finding of the study was that all women participated in farming regardless of

their main occupation (25%). Marketing occupied only a small proportion of time (8-12%) even for full time traders. Spiro (1981) further observed that *Yoruba* culture is organised in such a way as to allow women to raise their children and to fulfil their domestic and social duties through their economic activities.

Turner et al.'s (1997) finding suggest that women of Maragua are becoming aware of their rights and potentials, as the women in the study are reported to resist exploitation at household, national and international levels. Women in other parts of rural Africa may or may not necessarily share the same experiences with women of Maragua. Obono's (2001) findings suggest that Nigerian women are resilient, and do not break easily despite their multiple role involvement; while Spiro's (1981) study noted the time investments of women in family, farming and trading activities. Obono's finding that women perform the breadwinner role effectively in the absence of their husbands is also worth probing further in the current study, as the sample comprises married women living alone, and widows. The findings in Spiro's study provide a background information regarding time-budgets of *Yoruba* women within their multiple role frameworks. However, although Spiro classsified 'farm-crop processing' as domestic roles, 'farm-crop processing' is considered in the current study as part of the women farmers' occupational roles, because it is part of farming activities.

3.4. FACTORS INFLUENCING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Studies on psychological wellbeing use a variety of definitions of psychological wellbeing, for example, life satisfaction, happiness, and emotional stability. Literature suggests that, self-esteem (Crocker and Major, 1994; Zhang and Leung, 2002), desire for intimacy with other people (Baumeister, 1998; Zhang and Leung, 2002), performance of multiple roles (Bernard, 1972; Bersoff and Crosby, 1974; Unger and Crawford, 1992), fulfillment of goals and aspirations (Carr, 1999), educational and literacy status (Osuala, 1990; Sokoya, 1997),

and socio-economic status (Obeng, 2002; 2003) play key roles in the determination of psychological wellbeing. The studies identified above are reviewed in the following section.

3.4.1. Self-esteem and desire for intimacy as determinant of psychological wellbeing

Self-esteem has been discovered to be a major predictor of life satisfaction (Crocker and Major, 1994). The relationship between individual self-esteem and life satisfaction has been found to be stronger in individualist cultures (Dienner and Dienner, 1995), suggesting that culture works as a moderator. This implies that the link between self-esteem and life satisfaction is not consistent when there are differences in people's backgrounds. Defining the boundary conditions between self-esteem and life satisfaction is therefore, one of the challenges faced in studying life satisfaction and its correlates, which include psychological wellbeing. Crocker and Major observed that it is obvious that research and theory on self-esteem and its relationship to life satisfaction has overwhelmingly emphasized the individual aspects of the self. In other words, feelings of self-worth and self-respect are derived from an individual's personal attributes, competencies, and standing, relative to other individuals.

Zhang and Leung (2002) studied the moderating effects of gender and age on the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction in Mainland China. The study focused on moderating effects of gender and age on the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction in Chinese people. The sample comprised 1347 mainland Chinese aged 14-88 years, 53% females from three generations. They used the General Life Satisfaction scale by Leung and Leung (1992). Zhang and Leung's regression analysis in the study indicated that the relationship between collective self-esteem and general life satisfaction was stronger for the male participants than for the female participants. The effect of individual self-esteem on life domain satisfaction was stronger in the male group than in the female group. The effect of individual self esteem on life domain satisfaction was stronger in the older people than in

the younger people. However, the effect of collective self-esteem on life domain satisfaction was stronger in the younger people than in the older people suggesting that younger people derive strength and support from group relations. The results reflect differences in life tasks and social expectation between male and female, as well as between younger and older people.

Whereas individual self-esteem refers to feeling and evaluations of self-worthiness (Baumeister, 1998), collective self-esteem refers to feelings and evaluations of the worthiness of a social group such as racial, ethnic or work groups, of which one is a member (Crocker and Major, 1989). Research evidence shows that collective self-esteem could also be a potentially strong predictor of life satisfaction. Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, and Broadnax (1994) conducted a study on the contribution of collective self-esteem to psychological wellbeing. They found that even after controlling the effects of individual self-esteem on life satisfaction, collective self-esteem still correlated with certain aspects of general life-satisfaction. Although self-esteem has been found the best predictor of life satisfaction among adults (Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers, 1976), parent relationship has been demonstrated the best predictor of life satisfaction among adolescents (Leung and Leung1992), suggesting that age might be a moderator between self-esteem and life satisfaction. The desire to be connected and intimate with other people has been discovered to be essential to human experience (Baumeister, 1998) and psychological wellbeing in families.

Findings of Zhang and Leung's (2002) study reveal that intimate relationships, approval by other and marital satisfaction contribute to self-esteem and psychological wellbeing. It is believed that an understanding of the differences in how men and women view themselves and their relationships with others, in family relationships, has the potential to illuminate more of the mechanisms that contribute to a wide array of gender-based

differences in social behaviour. When people get married for example, they take on additional roles as spouses and parents (marital and parental roles), and desire to effectively function within these role-frameworks. The current study will explore not only the problems associated with multiple role involvement, but also the benefits derivable from family life and acquisition of multiple gender roles in marital relationships.

3.4.2. Multiple role involvement as determinant of psychological wellbeing

Side by side with research showing widespread problems with role conflict and overload are some studies showing benefits associated with multiple roles (Bertz and Fitzgerald, 1987; Nieva and Gutek, 1981). Bernard (1972) observes that working women have fewer psychological problems than do homemakers. In addition, Bersoff and Crosby (1974) observe that married women constantly report higher job-satisfaction than single women. People who are happier at home also tend to be happier in the job and experiences less job stress (Unger and Crawford, 1992). In a systematic study of over 200 middle-aged women in the United States, having both a job and a family was related to feelings of greater competence, mastery and pleasure. The women who had the overall best psychological adjustment were those who had husbands, children and high prestige demanding jobs (Baruch, Barnett, and Rivers, 1983). Having multiple roles was related to higher self-esteem and job-satisfaction (Pietromonaco, Manis, and Frohart-Lane, 1986).

From male gender-role perspectives, Bernard (1981), observes that men's primary family responsibility to be a 'good provider' is compatible with being heavily involved in work, while women's responsibilities as primary parent, emotional nurturer, and housekeeper are not. In a systematic study of over 200 middle-aged women, having both a job and a family was related to feelings of greater competence, mastery and pleasure. The women who had the overall best psychological adjustment were those who had husbands, children and

high prestige demanding jobs. One reason suggested for why involvement in many roles enhances psychological wellbeing was that success in one domain may help people keep a sense of perspective about other roles (Crosby, 1982). Unger and Crawford called for more research on how family and personal life affect work for women and men, and on benefits to women and men of juggling dual roles, and on role issues among women, who are not heterosexual, financially privileged, or white. Studies on multiple role-involvement in the developing context generally, and specifically on Nigerian farm-families have focused on the inherent problems and conflict, without investigating the benefits derivable thereof. The current research intends to contribute to the body of literature in this area, which is currently lacking.

3.4.3. Career aspirations and role fulfilment as determinants of psychological wellbeing

Another factor discovered in literature as a strong determinant of psychological wellbeing is attainment of career goals and aspirations. Using data from the Wisconsin Longitudinal Survey (WLS), Carr (1999) examines whether men and women who fail to achieve their career goals consequently experience poor psychological wellbeing. The WLS is a long-term study of a random sample of 10,317 men and women who graduated from Wisconsin high schools in 1957. The respondents were first surveyed during their senior year in high school, when they were 17-18 years old, and were re-interviewed when they were 35-36 years old (1975), and 52-53 years old (1992-93). Findings reported in the study are limited to the 2,337 men and 2,728 women. The objective of her study was to assess whether indicators of career goal attainment influence psychological wellbeing above and beyond the effect one's absolute level of occupational standing. A guiding assumption of the research is that the personal consequences of goal attainment may vary based on the social context in which goals are formed and pursued. Specifically, Carr predicted that when aspirations reflect rigid social

norms or structural barriers, rather than one's personal aims, then the psychological consequences of goal attainment would be less acute. Three factors predicted to constrain one's aspirations are gender, current occupational opportunities, and one's stage in the life course. As individuals age, their aspirations may adjust to reflect actual workplace and family constraints. The research explored whether there are gender differences in the psychological consequences of goal attainment; and whether goal attainment at different points in the life course or at different points in history impacts psychological wellbeing differently.

Carr assessed psychological wellbeing at midlife (that is, age 52-53) as midlife is believed to be the stage in the life course when men and women assess their past accomplishments, and come to terms with the extent to which their earlier goals have been realized. Psychological wellbeing is assessed with a 42-item scale, which comprises six sub-dimensions of wellbeing: autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life, personal growth and self-acceptance. Separate analyses were done for each of the six subscales, and generally similar patterns emerged throughout.

The analyses of Carr's (1999) study show that for men, having a "career" or longest job that is of higher status than the one aspired to in youth is a source of enhanced psychological wellbeing at midlife. For women, however, having a career that matched up to, or surpassed the goal set forth at age 18 was not a significant predictor of midlife mental health. It was believed that goal attainment might matter differently for girls with professional aspirations, who were very certain about their youthful aspirations, or who had employed mothers as "role models". Findings of the study support the hypothesis that goal attainment may not be relevant for wellbeing when those goals reflect adherence to rigid social norms, or to a confined set of opportunities. Yet, the finding that early goals have little relevance for the midlife wellbeing of women may be cohort-specific and period specific. When the second phase of the life course was examined, a very different picture emerged.

Carr's study also shows that, women, who, at age fifty-three, held lower-status jobs than the ones aspired to at age thirty-five in 1975, evidenced significantly poorer levels of psychological wellbeing at age fifty-three. For the women in their thirties, family responsibilities likely became less time-consuming as their children matured, and returning to work, or investing more heavily in one's current job were likely options. Moreover, social changes in the 1970s brought new career opportunities for the women at precisely the time in the life course that these women would be investing more heavily in their work lives. These results suggest that career accomplishments are vital for women's maintenance of mental health at midlife. These findings call into question early claims that women – particularly women who came of age in the 1950s, an era marked by traditional gender-role expectations - possess a "fear of success".

Carr further discovered that, among men who hoped to remain in their current jobs, wellbeing varied very little based on one's degree of goal attainment. Regardless of whether one fell short of their goal, matched their goal, or surpassed their goal, men who hoped to remain in their 1975 job evidenced virtually identical levels of wellbeing at age fifty-three years. Among men who sought a change in their work life, however, a very different story unfolded. For this subgroup of men, wellbeing levels were highest when their occupational goal was precisely met. That is, these men fared best when they went on to hold the exact job that they desired in 1975. Oddly, for these men, surpassing one's goal by a large distance was a negative, significant predictor of wellbeing. Thus, securing a prestigious job may not be a source of emotional wellbeing; rather, it may be accompanied by a new and more difficult to achieve goal. These men may exemplify Durkheim's (1897) cited in (Carr, 1999) claims that success leads to rising expectations rather than self-satisfaction.

Carr offers several psychological explanations for these findings. First, men may realize that success, at least defined in terms of occupational status, might not be all that they

had earlier envisioned. She argues that perhaps occupational success has been achieved due to sacrifices in other domains, such as interpersonal relationships or hobbies. Second, those who surpass their goals gauge their success by a different reference group than do others. Men who succeed beyond their expectations may live and work in situations where their peers are also very successful. She concluded that attainment of occupational goals would enhance psychological wellbeing, while failure to do so will lessen wellbeing (Carr, 1999).

Similar to some of the findings in Carr's study reviewed above, educational and literacy status have been discovered to be strong determinants of role fulfilment and psychological wellbeing of Nigerian women (Osuala, 1990; Okojie, et.al, 1996; Sokoya, 1997, 2000). Osuala (1990) examines the nexus between Nigerian women's struggle for role fulfilment and adult education. She observes that the women in the study experienced staggering disparities between their illiteracy and their optimal role expectation. As middle-aged workers and mothers of large families, they undertook self initiated study in adult evening classes. Through focus group discussion methods, the women revealed their role related problems, and how the quest for literacy through adult education programme conflicted with the performance of their traditional gender roles. Findings of the study reveal that the women were able to successfully manage the conflicts and the specific ways by which adult education empowered them to be self-actualizing in the traditional roles.

The studies by Carr (1999) and Osuala (1990) indicate the role that education is perceived to play in enhancing role fulfilment. Although Carr used data from a longitudinal survey of Wisconsin's high schools, the focus of the study was an examination of whether men and women who fail to achieve their career goals, consequently experience poor psychological wellbeing. Although farming is considered as a vocation, it is equally relevant to consider it as a career; and farmers definitely have goals and aspirations, relative to their farming and agricultural practices and fulfilment of gender roles. It is in this regard that the

Carr's study is considered relevant to the current study. The current study intends to explore the goals and aspirations of the farmers, regarding returns to their agricultural investments with a view to identifying how fulfilment of these goals and aspirations influence the performance of their gender roles, and their perceived psychological wellbeing. In addition, the study will explore the farmers' goals and aspirations as parents, regarding their children's educational and career goals. Furthermore, since the study includes children's perspectives, the study will explore the educational aspirations of the farm-children, relative to their perceived future psychological wellbeing.

3.4.4. Intersection of gender, health, and poverty as determinants of psychological wellbeing

The links among health, gender and poverty have been demonstrated using both population health and feminist perspectives in numerous studies about women in developed and developing countries (Blaxter, 1983, Doyal, 1995; Kane, 1994; Mburu, 1983). Economists have also demonstrated that economic factors, such as income and labour market status, are prime contributors to the psychological health of individuals (Clark and Oswald, 1994; Theodossiou, 1998). Poverty remains a growing concern in many developing countries. Rural poverty is one of the greatest social problems confronting the world today, and the problem is more pronounced in the developing countries (Obeng, 2003). Unequal distribution of global wealth has exacerbated the problem of poverty in the developing world. People perceive poverty as a threat to the very existence of humankind. Limited access to production and credit facilities in the formal financial system by the poor is usually identified as one of the causes of poverty.

Obeng (2002) examined why women are most affected by rural poverty at Ampekkrom and Kwahu Nsaba both rural settlements in Kwahu South District in the Eastern region of

Ghana. Findings of the study reveal that lack of access to resources (land, capital and credit facilities), unequal distribution of wealth/resource and power, inadequate access to educational opportunities, and gender division of labour, all put rural women in a disadvantaged position, and thus account for their being poorer than their male counterparts. Causes of poverty therefore vary with location and status. For example, the cause of poverty for a rural household that relies on a small land-holding and that suffers from a low crop yield is not the same as for an urban household in a squatter shack community, whose main income-earner has lost his/her job due to recession or ill-health, or has suffered a drop in real income. A rural household's response to poor crop yields may be to send one of its members to an urban area to seek work, while an urban household may respond to declining income by sending their young children to rural relatives.

In another related study, Obeng (2003) examined the manifestations of rural poverty in Kwahu South District of Ghana. He observed that poverty in the study area manifests itself in various forms. Among these are poor diet, poor housing, wearing of tattered clothing, inability to meet community commitments, low quality of life, high rate of rural-urban migration, lack of social and physical infrastructure, high rate of illiteracy and school drop out, environmental degradation and high level of social vices. He stressed that the manifestations of poverty are especially pronounced in the meeting of the basic necessities of life, which include food, clothing and shelter. He also established a relationship between large family size and poverty. High population growth rate and family sizes are common features of most rural communities in Ghana, including the study area. The larger family sizes have resulted in most families in rural areas leading impoverished lives (Obeng, 2003). Both studies by Obeng (2002; 2003) on manifestations of poverty were conducted in Ghana. Findings of the studies about the experiences of rural households may however be similar to the experiences of rural farm-families in Nigeria. Both are developing countries in West

Africa, share the same colonial experiences, the rural areas have similar socio-economic problems. However, Obeng did not link poverty to psychological wellbeing, which is the focus of this research. In an earlier study of poverty and psychological wellbeing, and interactions with farm-families in Ogun-state Nigeria (Sokoya 1998), I examined the levels of needs' satisfaction in relation to the effects of poverty on the psychological wellbeing of farm families, with particular reference to the female gender, adopting Maslow's (1973) basic needs' theory, as the theoretical framework.

In contemporary Nigeria, the possibility of eating two or three meals daily is becoming increasingly difficult (Sokoya 1998). It is also becoming increasingly difficult for breadwinners to provide other basic family needs (housing, clothing, education, health) for their dependants. Inability to meet these basic needs is an index of poverty, which gives a sense of non-accomplishment to men as breadwinners. This predisposes breadwinners to having low self-morale, and lack of a sense of accomplishment, which precipitates psychological illbeing. Prominent amongst factors identified as influencing women's psychological wellbeing are, availability of food in the household, and health of family members, in particular, their children (Sokoya, 1998).

When basic needs are thwarted, or unmet, the farmers have the tendency to feel lonely, friendless and rejected. They experience feelings of fear, weakness and inferiority; they often feel dejected, anxious and depressed. Unsuccessful attempts to meet basic human needs were also observed to precipitate stress. Many farm families lack access to social amenities like electricity, education, health, and potable water, which predispose them to water-borne diseases and ill health. The main effect of the deprivations and lacks associated with poverty on the psychological wellbeing of the farm families was that of a low self-morale. Their state of poverty is hindering their ability to meet their basic physiological needs, and at the same time their efforts and contributions towards national development, in terms of food production

and food security. While the above study examined how poverty influences the psychological wellbeing of farm-family members, it did not specifically explore gender roles per se in relation to perceived psychological wellbeing. The current study is expected to fill this gap in knowledge.

3.5. GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Examining gender as a conditional variable in the effects of family satisfaction and economic strain on psychological wellbeing among married people in Oklahoma, Mills and Grasmick (1992), discovered that the positive effect of family satisfaction is greater among women than among men. Mills and Grasmick examined gender differences in satisfaction with family life and financial stress, as two key determinants of psychological wellbeing. Factors examined in the study include, gendered variations regarding emotional rewards of marital relationships, expectations of parenting and domestic roles, and psychological effects of economic strain. The sample was made up of one hundred and ninety-seven married adults, comprising one hundred and three women and ninety-four men, as part from an annual City Survey in Oklahoma. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using bivariate correlations. They predicted that women's wellbeing is expected to result more from satisfaction with the emotional quality of family relations, while men's wellbeing is expected to be more a function of financial stress. Their hypothesis is based on the premise that gender specialization in families persists across domains of marriage and work.

The prediction and hypothesis in Mills and Grasmick's study are based on gender stereotypes and rigid gender role expectations in families. While expressing warmth, being gentle, and responding to the needs of others are seen as appropriate for women, for men, the status of being married, regardless of the emotional quality of the relationship, is a more important link to wellbeing. Mills and Grasmick predicted that, wives stand to benefit more

than husbands from emotionally fulfilling marriage, but that they also risk a greater psychological cost from emotionally strained marriage. Mills and Grasmick also identified parenting, as a gender role affecting the wellbeing of men and women differently. They also predicted that the psychological distress associated with children is probably higher for women. Because women typically assume primary responsibility for child rearing, their role as mother, compared to men's role as father, is likely to be more central and to contribute more to their overall sense of wellbeing. Gove, Hughes, and Style, (1983) contend that the social roles women occupy, including the child-rearing role, make them more susceptible to psychological distress. Similarly, Mills and Grasmick observed that husbands and wives experience family work differently. The division of labour within the household according to them contributes little to husbands' depression, but it is significantly related to the psychological wellbeing of wives.

The study identifies family's financial situation as another key determinant of member's sense of wellbeing. Mills and Grasmick's prediction that economic distress affect men's psychological wellbeing more than it does women's has its roots in Parsons' (1959) classification of male and female behaviour into "instrumental" and "expressive" roles within the family. According to Parsons, family status was bound to the occupational status and achievements of the husband and father as provider. The prominent role of the woman was that of wife and mother. She was responsible for the expressive functions of the family, the emotional work of nurturing children, and maintaining the marital relationship. By this typology, the woman was limited to that expressive role as the husband was limited to the instrumental role.

Findings of Mills and Grasmick's study however, revealed that the psychological wellbeing of husbands and wives, regardless of the latter's employment status, is equally responsive to economic strain. Parson's earlier description of the family with the "male as

provider" implies that financial factors will have a greater salience in their contribution to the psychological wellbeing of husbands than wives. Evidence from the study suggests that husbands and wives, regardless of the latter's role in contributing financial resources to the family from employment outside the home, are equally impacted, in terms of psychological well being, by economic strain. As predicted, the study revealed that family satisfaction is positively and significantly correlated with psychological wellbeing. Also consistent with predictions, economic strain is inversely and significantly correlated with psychological wellbeing. Both of these relationships are significant beyond the .001 level. In addition, women were significantly lower than men on the dependent variable, and age is significantly and positively correlated with psychological wellbeing.

The Mills and Gramick's (1992) study seems the most related to the current research. Although the study was conducted in a developed context, it investigated similar issues that are of interest in the current research. These include, gender differences in determinants of psychological wellbeing, influences of ideological representations of gender and gender roles, and gender differentiation in household division of labour. In addition, it is only this study that directly links gender roles to psychological wellbeing, as it is being done in the current research. However, regardless of these similarities in research focus, a major difference exists in the approaches by both studies. While Mills and Grasmick adopted quantitative methods, the current study is purely qualitative, because, it is interested in exploring the social representations of the phenomena under study, relative to the socio-historical and cultural contexts of the farm-families. This cannot be achieved through quantitative measures. However, despite the different research approaches, findings of the current study will reveal whether there are similarities and or differences in the constructions and determinants of psychological wellbeing as exemplified in the study of married people in Oklahoma. It is expected that the farm-families in the current study will have unique experiences, relative to

their socio-historical and cultural contexts, which would differentiate them from the married people in Mills and Grasmick's study.

3.6. STRESS AND COPING IN FAMILIES

Factors influencing psychological wellbeing, also tend to precipitate stress in individuals and families (Sokoya, 1997). When needs are met and aspirations are fulfilled, psychological wellbeing is enhanced (Sokoya, 1997; Carr, 1999), but if otherwise, stress is inevitable (Kisseka, 1990). Literature is however lacking on the determinants of psychological wellbeing and causes of stress in farm-families. There is thus, a dearth in literature also, on the coping resources and strategies adopted by farm-families in coping with stress. Literature suggests that there are always individual differences in intervention and response to stressors in one's environment (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987). Lazarus and Folkman emphasized the importance of cognitive factors, including beliefs and attitudes to individuals' appraisals of events and to their coping abilities. Attitudes may affect whether a situation is perceived as stressful, and whether stressful situations are viewed as threats or as challenges to the self (Pyant and Yanico, 1991). Feminist researchers are concerned with at least two sets of stressful events for African women (Kisekka 1990). These include, factors emanating from the traditional cultural values, taboos and prescriptions, which are inimical to women's self-concept and their physical health, and factors revolving around structural changes resulting from the modernization processes, which have adverse effects on their socio-economic status.

In her study of women in northern Nigeria, Simmons (1990) observes that in a rural economy, women play very prominent roles as they mostly cultivate subsistence crops that can help them take care of their daily financial needs through the sales. She notes that they sometimes assist the men to grow cash crops to supplement their own yields and also assist the men in fishing, hunting and crop farming. She reports that in a rural area in Zaria, 86% of

the interviewed women reported at least one food process or the other from whose proceeds they fed their families and which they sell for income-generation. The women take up more than one occupation at a time to enable them meet all needs. Their production occupations include food processing, agriculture, trading and craft, which are all performed to meet the needs of their husbands, children and the community (Simmons 1990). Her study further revealed that women in northern Nigeria served as owner/operator of their own cottage industry, producing foodstuffs or craft articles, performing services, or trading. Some women did employ others to assist in buying and selling products, but none of them worked for the other for a regular salary.

Simon's (1990) study of women in northern Nigeria was actually a study of rural farm women, and it confirms earlier studies on how rural women are overburdened by their gender roles (Boserup, 1970; UNECA/FAO, 1975; Obono, 2001). The study revealed coping strategies adopted by women in northern Nigeria to function within their multiple role frameworks. Experiences of rural farm women in northern and south-western Nigeria may be similar in some aspects relating to their farming experiences. However, their marital and family experiences may differ to an extent, as these may be influenced by differences in the religious and other socio-cultural values. While Simon's findings provides a background for the current study concerning women's coping strategies, it is likely that these would be determined in the current study, by the coping resources at the disposal of the farm families, relative to their socio-historical and cultural contexts, as well as the socio-economic conditions. Findings of the study will thus reveal coping strategies of farm women in southwestern Nigeria. The current study will also explore the coping strategies adopted by male farmers and farm-children.

Dalisay, (2003) conducted a study on household coping strategies during the lean season in a community in Batangas province, Philippines. The study aimed at identifying

how low income households in Barangay Ambulong city are responding to threats to their ability to be food secure, and the coping strategies employed. Specifically, it aimed to (a) describe how low-income households in an urban community perceive their current state of food security or insecurity, (b) identify local indicators of food security or insecurity, and, (c) identify coping strategies employed by households with employed and unemployed wives to sustain food security and describe gender relations therein. At the core of the analytical framework adopted for the study are the biological needs, such as eating which is satisfied through the diet. The diet or the act of eating itself is determined by a host of factors in the environment external to the individual which include the physical environment, social environment, social organization, culture idea systems and technology. The factors in the external environment provide the range of options available to an individual to satisfy his biological needs such as eating. Inherent in the model is the notion of adaptation to stress. The analytical framework also looked at the microenvironment of the household and the macro environment external to the household.

The independent variables included the external environment of the household as well as aspects of the internal environment of the household that included household characteristics and perceptions of whether they were food secure or food insecure. All these were seen to affect the dependent variables that included the coping strategies, food intake and nutritional status of preschoolers. If perceived to be food insecure, the household will employ coping strategies that may be economic, social and nutritional in nature. Household food security was measured in terms of food intake and nutritional status of vulnerable groups (0 - 5-year-old children). Food intake and nutritional status in turn influence the household's perception of its state of food security and its decision to resort or not to resort to coping strategies.

Data were collected for a one-year period to cover the annual food cycle. Respondent-households were visited throughout the one-year data collection period. Two rounds of interviews were done, once during the abundant food season (December to May) and another during the lean food season (June to November). 56 purposively sampled households participated in the study out of which only fifty-three of the original fifty-six households participated till the end of the study. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, life history, focus group discussions, twenty-four hour diet recall, and observations. Data collected included household socio-demographic profile, income and expenditures, coping strategies, perceptions of current state of food security or insecurity, morbidity, twenty-four hour diet recall, and, height, weight and mid-upper arm circumference of 0 - 5 year old children. In addition, secondary data were collected from the city and Barangay profiles and development plan reports. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics like means and percentages. Diet diversity scores were computed for all households during the lean and abundant seasons.

The sample households that participated in the study had husbands and wives in the 21-30 age range. The average household size was 4.6. Nuclear residences were normally formed after marriage. Nevertheless, these independent households were formed just next to relatives and kin. Thus, though households were residentially nuclear, in effect, these were functionally extended. The highest level of education reached by majority of the husbands and wives in the study were only the secondary level. Anthropometric survey among the 0-5 year old children showed that although the nutritional status of the majority of the children was normal, it is still alarming to know that a third of the children and that more boys than girls had below normal nutritional status. The diet diversity scores showed that there was only a slight difference between food consumption during the abundant and the lean seasons.

The sample households acknowledged the marked differences between the lean and the abundant seasons. The lean season coincided with the rainy months that started in June, peaked in August, and ended in November. The peak of the lean month was locally referred to with the term *inaagosto*. The abundant month started and peaked in December and ended in May. This coincided with the dry months. The lean season brought about difficulties in the people's efforts to earn a living; hence, living was more difficult during these months. The study named economic, nutritional and health local indicators of food security.

Dalisay, (2003) discussed gender relations within the context of the coping strategies in terms of the relationship of the husband with his wife and the relationship of the employed wife and her employed husband. Case studies of two husbands and two employed wives were presented. It was observed that while the multiple burden phenomenon was present in the households wherein both the couple were employed this was not experienced in the households of the employed wives with husbands. Some resistance to the role reversal was noted among the husbands. Findings of Dalisay's study reveal the coping strategies adopted by respondents as including: seeking employment, proper budgeting and economizing, saving, having a *saydlayn*, and, job diversification. In addition, identified social strategies include: securing loans, children asking food from relatives, and, sending children to live temporarily with relatives. Strategies associated with nutrition include: consumption of famine foods, adjustments in intra-household food distribution, buying cheaper food alternatives, eating leftover food, skipping meals, and, cooking only one viand each meal. Dalisay (2003) observed that coping was gendered, with the women being chiefly concerned with the coping strategies to make ends meet. The sense of family obligations also proved to be a strong safety net in the community during the lean months.

Although the sample in Dalisay's study was drawn from an urban community while the current study is being conducted in rural farming communities, the experiences of the

urban families in Dalisay's sample as described in the study, resemble those of farm-families in Ogun-state, Nigeria. The adopted coping strategies are also similar to what operates in poor farm-families. In addition, although Dalisay's study did not set out to explore the psychological wellbeing of the studied families, the study findings regarding the gendered coping strategies, is quite relevant to the current study. One of the key issues in this study is to explore the stressful situations confronting farm-families, with a view to identifying the coping resources available to them, as well as their adopted coping strategies.

3.7. APPRAISAL OF REVIEWED LITERATURE

Research investigating the supposed connection between gender roles and psychological wellbeing is sparse both in developed and developing contexts. Most previous studies on gender roles and psychological wellbeing have been conducted separately, without exploring the supposed connection between gender roles and psychological wellbeing. Empirical literature on gender roles has concentrated on dual-earner families in the developed countries, particularly in the United States. Literature is also particularly lacking on the gender roles and psychological wellbeing of men in both developed and developing contexts. Furthermore, the few studies on the role of women in developing contexts have concentrated on their roles in family-farming, and agricultural development; and even these, did not investigate how the performance of these roles impact on their psychological wellbeing and those of the other members of the families. Previous studies on farming communities are greatly biased towards women.

In addition, previous studies have concentrated on farming systems research, and role of women, without particular considerations for the farm-family system as a unit of analysis. None of the reviewed studies investigated the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing of farm-families. Most of the previous studies on gender roles and psychological

wellbeing have adopted quantitative research methods, and thus did not report the participants' and socio-cultural representations of the studied phenomena in their socio-historical contexts. The uniqueness of this study is its feminist methodological approach, which emphasizes the importance of inclusion of women and men's views and perceptions as revealed by them in their storied lives. Specifically, there is a dearth of literature on farm-family studies in Nigeria. In view of the above, it is expected that findings of this study would contribute to the body of knowledge and research on farm-families generally, and their gender roles and psychological wellbeing in particular, where current literature is seriously lacking.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The theoretical applications, conceptual framework and research methodology are discussed in this chapter. The social representations' framework proposed by Moscovici (1988) is adopted in the study. The study also draws from feminist post-structuralists', feminist anthropological and African feminist theories due to their interconnectedness with the theory of social representations, and relevance to the study. The study is qualitative in design and multiple methods of data collection were employed in the data-gathering process.

4.2. FRAMING THE STUDY

The social representations' framework proposed by Moscovici (1988) is adopted in the study. The research also draws from the postulations of feminist post-structuralists', feminist anthropological and African feminist theories due to their interconnectedness with the theory of social representations, and relevance to the study. The developmental underpinnings of this framework are hinged on the peculiarities of the research participants (rural farm-families in Ogun-state, Nigeria), due to their peculiar socio-historical and cultural contexts. Moscovici's (1988) theory of social representations, postulates that social representations are systems of thoughts, ideas, knowledge structures, images, attitudes, values and practices, which members of a society or collectivity share. They are socially created, socially sustained and socially transmitted. According to him:

...social representations concern the contents of everyday thinking and the stock of ideas that gives coherence to our religious beliefs, political ideas and the connections we create as spontaneously as we breath. They make it possible for us to classify persons and objects, to compare and explain behaviours and to objectify them as parts of our social setting. While representations are often to be located in the minds of men and women, they can just as often be found in the world, and as such examined separately (Moscovici, 1988:214).

Moscovici believes that social groups establish their own identities and differentiate themselves from other groups, through social representations. Members of a social group therefore share these representations, and they enable individuals to make sense of their physical and social worlds, to interpret unfamiliar objects and ideas in terms of the familiar, and to relate with other members of the social group. The theory's clear imperative is the need to study communication as the sine qua non of social cognition (Augostinos and Walker, 1995:137). The role of social representation according to Augostinos and Walker is to conventionalize object, persons and events, and to locate them within a familiar categorical context (Augostinos and Walker, 1995).

Feminist psychologists (Unger and Crawford, 1992) posit that social constructionism - a term synonymous with social representations, is related to philosophical theories that attempt to understand what we know and how we know it. Social representations theory is therefore compatible with forms of social constructionism, and is useful for studying both issues of knowledge and the ontological correlates of knowledge (Gervais, Morrant, and Penn, 1999). There is sufficient data and evidence suggesting that the study of social representations contributes to an understanding of shared social knowledge (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995). Although this theory has been branded as 'European', I believe it is quite relevant in this study of rural families in an African culture. Gender, gender roles, determinants of psychological wellbeing and coping strategies have their social representations, hence this framework is considered appropriate for the study.

4.2.1. Social representations and development of gender identity

The social representations of the child are among the most fundamental of representations, both for individuals and societies, since they play crucial roles in shaping children's personality and identity development. Social representations' researchers have linked the theory to developmental psychology (Duveen and DeRossa, 1992). This is hinged on the acknowledged influence of the Piagetian theory on Moscovici's theoretical formulations. Since children are born not only into a physical but also into a social world of representations, a thinking society (in Moscovici's parlance), as they grow, they gradually and actively learn to understand and represent both the physical and social worlds, and adopt a constructivist position (Augostinos and Walker, 1995). Duveen and Lloyd (1993) applied the developmental perspectives of social representations theory to a number of studies on children's social representations of gender and discovered that gender is internalized in children as early as the age of two years. From the above perspectives, the social representations framework will be useful in the study not only for conceptualizing and interpreting research findings from adult participants in the study, but also for the farm children.

4.2.2. Social representations of the sex/gender concept

The sex/gender concept results from the assumption that, a cultural sex - 'gender', takes on a culturally specific form against the background of biological sex. Giddens (1989) defines 'sex' as biological or anatomical differences between men and women, whereas 'gender' concerns the psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females (Giddens, 1989: 158). Social constructionism is an important feature of social representation, since people's socio-historical and cultural contexts influence how they perceive and construct gender and gender roles. Social constructionism, therefore, allows us to ask

questions that cut across various levels of analysis that have been used to examine sex and gender. Feminist psychologists (Unger and Crawford, 1992) however argue that:

There is no reason to throw away the examination of biological variables if we also examine the cultural meaning of these variables. For example, biological factors produce different body structures that have different implications for women and men. Because at present only women can become pregnant, heterosexual relationships have different implications for women and men (Unger and Crawford, 1992: 618)

From the perspectives of these feminist psychologists, this theory will assist in providing explanations for the biological determinism of female oppression.

4.2.3. Social Representations of Power, Control, Dominance and Oppression

The values, beliefs, attitudes and opinions that people hold are ideological in nature. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) identify the role played by ideology in the restructuring of everyday social reality outside the political domain, and from this perspective present ideology as a concept, which refers to any formal belief system. They adopted a critical approach, which views ideology as the means by which relationships of power, control and dominance are maintained and preserved in any society. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) defines the psychological study of ideology as:

The study of social psychological processes and mechanisms by which certain representations and constructions of the world serve to legitimate, maintain and reproduce the existing institutional arrangements, social and power relations within a society (Augoustinos and Walker 1995:288).

Ideology plays a crucial role in the construction of reality for individuals and groups. It is a cognitive construct and it permeates human consciousness. In addition, power relations, control and dominance, which are basic characteristics of patriarchy, are obvious features in the traditional family setup in Ogun state, Nigeria where the study was conducted.

The theories of social representation, feminist poststructuralism', feminist anthropologists', and African feminism have similar views on the issues of gender-based dominance and oppression. Their interconnectedness in the adopted framework will therefore provide explanations for the internalisation of domination and oppression in family dynamics. Contemporary feminist anthropologists have shown that gender is an important analytical concept. Accepting the idea that women were universally subordinated to men in some manner, feminist anthropologists have developed different models to explain this situation. Ortner (1974), one of the early proponents of feminist anthropology, constructed an explanatory model for gender asymmetry based on the premise that the subordination of women is a universal, and cross-cultural phenomenon. She takes a structuralist's approach to the question of gender inequality (Ortner, 1974). Although contemporary feminist anthropologists are no longer focusing their research solely on the issue of gender asymmetry, a unifying aspect of feminist anthropology is that it focuses on the role, status, and contributions of women to their societies. Feminist anthropology has also been intimately tied to the study of gender and its construction by various societies, an interest that examines both women and men.

Engels attributed the oppression of women to shifts in the modes of production at the time of the Neolithic revolution (Rubin 1975: 169). According to him, once men had property (land or herds), they desired to transmit them to their offspring via patrilineal inheritance. This was accomplished by the overthrow of matrilineal inheritance and descent systems, leading to the "world historical defeat of the female sex" (Engels 1972: 120-121). Feminist anthropologists believe that, although females are subjected to universal subordination, they are not without individual power (Pine, 1996). They emphasize the domestic power of women. This power, according to them, is "manifested in individually negotiated relations

based in the domestic sphere but influencing and even determining male activity in the public sphere" (Pine, 1996:254).

① The poststructural feminist theory is a theory of subjectivity, of conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotion, which account for the relationship between the individual and his or her environment (the family and society). The theory enhances our understanding of why women tolerate social relations, which subordinate their interests to those of men, and the mechanisms whereby women and men adopt particular discursive positions as representative of their interests (Weedon, 1987). Weedon suggests that patriarchal power is structural and exists in institutions and social practices, rather than merely being individually determined. Feminist poststructuralist theory begins with the observation that patriarchy is a fundamental organizing principle in past and present human communities. It sees such organization as neither natural nor inevitable; it is a socially produced phenomenon (Weedon, 1997: 123). Patriarchy refers to power relations in which women's interests are subordinated to the interests of men. Patriarchal power rests on the social meanings given to biological and sexual difference. In patriarchal discourse, the nature and social role of women are defined in relation to the male norm. These power relations take many forms from sexual division of labour in the family, gender roles in procreation and parenting, and the social representations and constructions of femininity and masculinity.

The theory also highlights the way discourse practices are arranged in a hierarchical network, which promotes a sexual division of labour. This social construction operates most significantly in what Weedon calls common sense. Common sense refers to those taken for granted values and beliefs that are rarely commented upon. When common sense beliefs about gender structure how we live, then the power of the gender oppression is often invisible to those it affects. Feminist poststructuralist theory exposes the operation of such common sense beliefs by identifying and tracking the words, gestures, and practices that signify

gendered meaning in our culture. According to this theory, culture itself is constructed by systems of signifiers called discourses. According to Foucault, these discourses produce the subjectivity. It produces that quality we take most for granted, our very sense of self. As such, discourses become the most invisible and the most insidious sources of oppression (Foucault, 1981).

Feminist poststructuralist approach denies the central humanist assumption that women or men have essential natures. The approach provides a "conceptualization of experience, and an analysis of its constitution and ideological power" (Weedon, 1997: 121), and insists on the social construction of gender in discourse, a social construction that encompasses the desire, the unconscious and the emotional. Feminist poststructuralism therefore offers a useful framework for understanding the mechanisms of gender, gender roles and power relations in the family and their influences on the psychological wellbeing of family members. Although there is no distinct African feminist theory yet, a unifying factor amongst African feminists is their resistance to Western feminism. Nnaemeka (1998) identified six areas of resistance. These include: resistance against radical feminism, resistance against Western feminists' stridency against motherhood, resistance against the Western feminists choice of language in feminist struggles and academic engagements, resistance to Western feminists' inordinate and unrelenting emphasis on human sexuality, disagreement on priorities and areas of oppression, and exclusion of men from women's issues.

Since the current study focuses on grassroots families in Nigeria – Africa, these social constructivist perspectives of African feminists cannot be ignored. African feminists like the feminist anthropologists believe that although women are subordinated and oppressed in patriarchal societies, they still have their own power (domestic), which men do not have. They believe that men cannot be excluded from women issues in Africa and that opportunities

should be given to grassroots women (the oppressed) to speak for themselves. “Don’t speak for them,” they say. Though an African and a feminist, I choose to differ from my peers in African Feminism. My argument is, if we are saying that African feminism is what Western feminism is not, we should not expect the feminist strategies that worked for Western women to work for African women. As I recommended in an earlier writing (Sokoya, 2002), African feminist struggles should address the following problems:

- Gender role socialization and orientation in families, cultures and societies.
- Trado-cultural beliefs and discriminatory practices against women.
- Religions and their misrepresentations.
- Sexism.
- Patriarchy.
- Trans-generational perpetuation of women oppression.

From the foregoing, the framework for this study focuses on the social constructions and ideological representations of gender. Gender roles, psychological wellbeing, coping strategies are all socially constructed, socially sustained, socially transmitted and socially represented. The social representations framework explains the influences of social constructions power relations, and subjectivity, on gender and gender relations, as well as how people identify and function within their various role-frameworks. ‘Subjectivity’, is central to poststructuralist theory (Weedon, 1987), refers to the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, one’s sense of self and one’s ways of understanding one’s relation to the world. These have implications for how family members perceive themselves their roles and the available resources (coping and otherwise) required for the maintenance of psychological wellbeing.

Farm-family members (the social group of reference in this study) belong to other social groups (e.g. farmers groups, community-based organisations, farm/market commodity-based groups, and religious groups). The intersection of gender, gender roles, work, community commitments and personal needs for self-regulation predisposes the individual to the internalization of conflicting social representations from the various roles they occupy.

This can generate internal identity conflicts and aggravate gender role strains and conflicts in the family, as well as inhibit psychological wellbeing. In addition, the argument of some feminist anthropologists and African feminists that women have some innate domestic powers in-spite of their apparent subordination and oppression constitute a potential arena for identity crises and conflicts within the family. Farm-family members may therefore employ various coping resources and strategies to deal with these conflicts, and their psychological wellbeing status is ultimately dependent upon available coping resources and abilities.

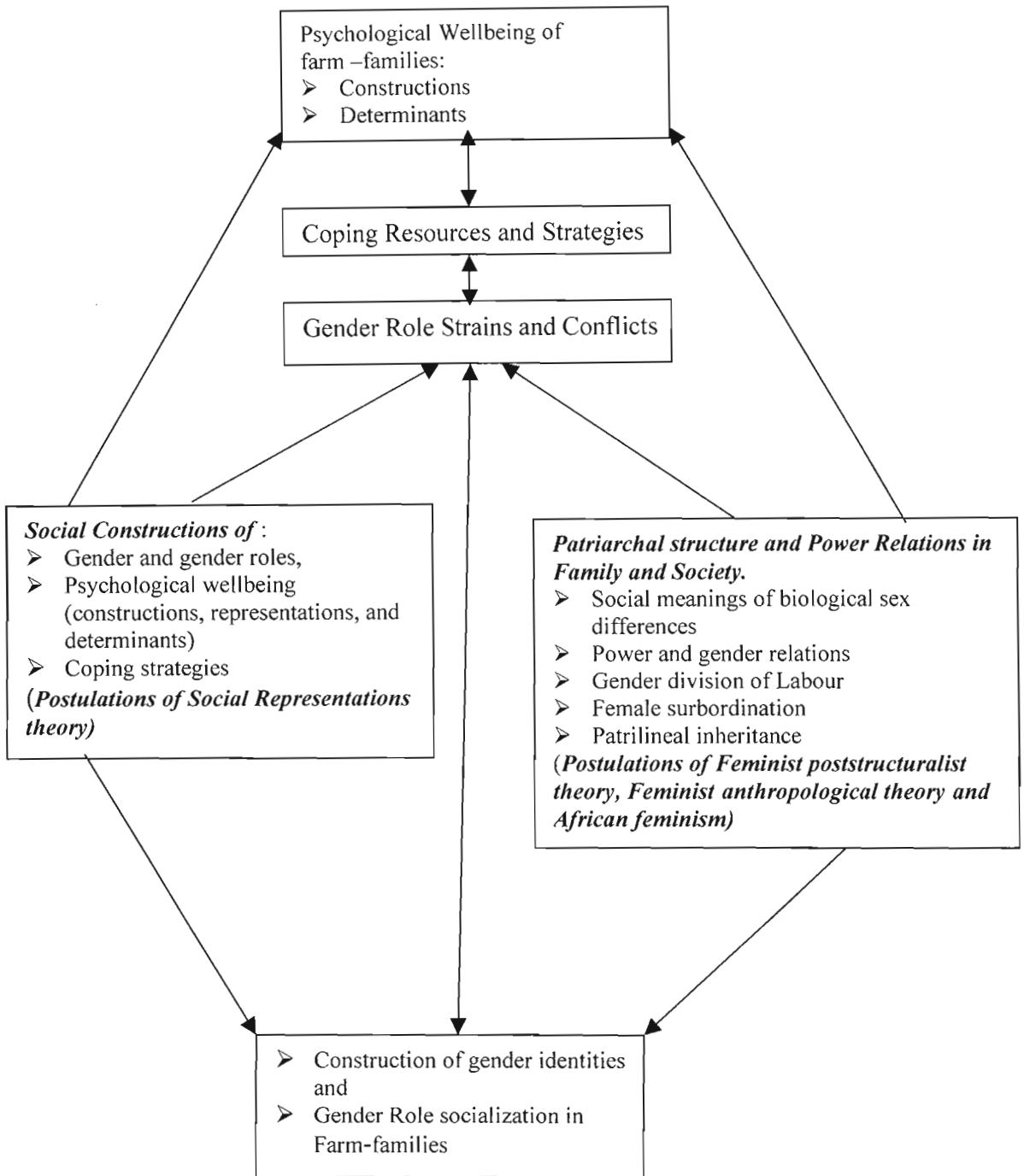


FIGURE 2: A DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE MAJOR THEMES IN THE STUDY (Sokoya, 2002).

Figure 2 shows a diagrammatic representation of the major themes in the study. In the figure, gender roles socialization and construction of gender identities in farm-families are directly influenced by the social representations and the patriarchal structures of power, gender relations, gender division of labour, female subordination, and patrilineal inheritance. Due to these direct influences, gender role strains and conflicts are inevitable in family relations. In addition, although society constructs the patterns of gender relations, the coping resources available to different genders, vis-à-vis the power relations and patriarchal structures, adequate psychological wellbeing and effective coping, individuals are still required to develop their own coping strategies.

To enjoy adequate psychological wellbeing, individuals need to be able to cope effectively with role conflicts, role strains and other inhibitors of psychological wellbeing and at the same time maintain a balance between the self and the environment at the subjective level. South-western Nigeria is a patriarchal society, and so, the coping resources available to the male and female farmers are unequal. It is expected that this study will provide explanations for how, why and to what extent, gender roles and gender role orientation in farm-families influence coping strategies and psychological wellbeing.

4.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is qualitative in design. Qualitative research designs usually depend on written, spoken and observed data or behaviour, and allows for telling the story from the respondents' viewpoint, thus providing the rich descriptive data (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). Qualitative methods are generally used for identification, description and explanation, an approach, which is ideal for this type of research. This study draws on the characteristics of this design as well as from my background knowledge and experience in family health studies and rural extension services. Principles of feminist research methodologies also guided the study. In

accordance with feminist studies' methodologies and approaches propounded by Mies (1983), feminist research is different from patriarchal or male-dominated research and raises the issue of subjectivity versus objectivity, arguing that feminist research cannot be value free. Acutely aware of the potential for researchers to become oppressors, feminist research methodology expresses a commitment to confronting power differentials through the establishment of non-hierarchical researcher-researched relations (Reinharz, 1992; Neuman, 1997). A dual-gender approach is therefore adopted in studying male and female members of participating farm-families. It is believed that the design and approach will enhance the quality of the study as well as the usefulness and applicability of the study findings.

4.3.1. Research Methods

Multiple methods of data collection were employed in the data-gathering process. Brewer and Hunter (1989) proposed that methodological diversity affords a systematic exploration of new avenues of research. Multiple methods according to them provide rich opportunities for cross-validating and cross-fertilizing research procedures and findings (Brewer and Hunter, 1989). They further argue that each type of method, if appropriately applied, could lead to potentially valid empirical and theoretical generalizations about society and social life. An exploration of the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing of rural farm-families embarked upon in this study is a relative new avenue of research, hence the adoption of multiple data collection techniques to elicit rich qualitative data. The data collection methods used in this study include, life history methodology, in-depth-interview techniques, systematic observations, field-notes taking, and focus group Interviews. The data gathering process took place between November 2002 and June 2003.

4.3.1.1. *The life history methodology*

Although the study is not basically a life-history research, life-history methodology is one of the methods employed in data collection. Because the intention in the study of lives is to gain insight and understanding of individual life experiences, this method was used to elicit data on the participants' life experiences within their socio-historical contexts. A major reason why I chose this method alongside other methods is, because I wanted to understand how the process of gender identity construction and gender role socialization in farm-families, influence their perceived psychological wellbeing, from childhood through adulthood, to old age. I was also interested in finding out what is perceived as important in their lives, what makes them happy, and what influences their emotional and marital wellbeing, relative to their respective gender roles. Another reason, is, the fact that stories are uniquely and individually constructed and that what individuals say about themselves are much more illuminating than any other research method. Life histories are interested in the way people narrate their lives, and not in the way they should (Goodson and Sikes, 2001).

Life story and life history are always dialectically linked together (Rosenthal, 1993). The terms life story is commonly applied to the narrated story by the other while life history refers to the interpretative and presentational work of the researcher. While Goodson and Sikes (2001) argue that there is a distinction between life stories and life histories, Roberts (2002) observes that such distinction is usually difficult to maintain in practice, where for example, the researcher conducts interviews with participants. Atkinson (1998) defines a life story as the story a person chooses to tell about the life he or she has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what is remembered of it, and what the teller wants others to know of it, usually as a result of a guided interview by a researcher. The life history on the other hand, as argued by Roberts (2002), is usually taken to refer to the collection, interpretation, and report writing of the 'life' (the life-history method), in terms of the story told, or as the

construction of the individual's past experience. The life history methodology was employed in gathering data from the adult participants (male and female farmers), focussing their life experiences. This method offered the research participants opportunities to review aspects of their lives from childhood and articulate their experiences, in relation to the research themes.

The narrative interview method was used to collect participants' life histories, over four interviews per participant, with the first interview being the lengthiest (an average of two hours), and the three subsequent ones lasting for an average of about one hour. In contrast to other forms of in-depth interviewing, the narrative interview leaves the field completely open to the interviewee, by simply asking participants to tell the story of the event being studied. Narrative interviews draw on the conceptual value of story telling as one of the most fundamental forms of human communication, and have been considered as a particularly useful method in the study of social representations (Laszlo, 1997).

During the first interviews, I discussed the research focus and major themes with the participants, and encouraged them to tell me the stories of their lives, taking as much as they would like, with a single probe, "I would like you to tell me the story of your life". Except for confirming utterances, eye contact, body language, I avoided interrupting their narratives. If a participant was 'stuck', did not know what to say, or how to continue, I tried to reassure him or her and encouraged him or her to continue by repeating the last statement made, without posing a new question. The second interview sessions were used to probe further, by phrases like, "Well, tell me more about your life in the area of..." (Specifying area where a gap has been identified). The sessions were also used to make clarifications regarding specific details, events or dates, and to collect data pertaining to the socio-historical and socio-cultural backgrounds of the participants' communities (that is, history of community, taboos, religious and community practices, trends in farming and gender relations in farming systems), as well as data on the major themes in the study, which include, constructions of

gender identities sources and causes of role strains and conflicts, coping resources and strategies, determinants of psychological wellbeing and family dynamics in general. These were linked to their life experiences as elicited during the first two interview sessions. The interview guide used during the life history and in-depth interviews, containing a list of prompting questions is included in this thesis as Appendix IV.

During the third and fourth interviews, clarifications were made where needed, regarding data collected during previous interviews. The fourth interviews were particularly used for validation of all data collected during the previous sessions. During these sessions I shared the life-history transcripts, data on community socio-historical backgrounds and data on the major research themes with the participants. This step served a dual purpose. It afforded me an opportunity for confirmation and validation of data, and also afforded the participants the opportunity of listening to their own stories as told, to confirm, or refute where necessary.

Self-reflexivity forms a vital part of this study as I equally record my personal life history as chapter ten, in this thesis. Reflexivity involves a process of self-consciousness, of researching one's own position in the research process. Reay (1996:59-60) describes reflexivity, as a continual consideration of the ways in which the researcher's social identity and values affect the data gathered and the picture of the social world produced. My subjectivity as a researcher could not be avoided. It did not only play a significant role in the conceptualisation of the study but also during the data gathering process. My biography reveals the lens through which I view the world, in relation to my research interest. Researcher's reflexivity entails a systematic reflection on how she affects the on-going flow of everyday life of the participants and the research procedure (Rossman and Rallis 1986). Rossman and Rallis argue that, the interplay of this sensitivity and a simultaneous awareness of 'self' and 'others' further enhances one's reflexivity as the researcher. The researcher

therefore values her unique perspective as a source of understanding, rather than something to be cleansed from the study.

4.3.1.2. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviewing is the hallmark of qualitative research (Rossman and Rallis 1998). ‘Talk’ according to Rossman and Rallis, is essential for understanding how participants view their worlds, and that deeper understandings are often developed through the dialogue of long, in-depth interviews, as interviewer and participant construct meaning. In addition to the life histories, in-depth interviews were used to elicit data on the major research themes, as explained above, during the third and fourth interview sessions with the participants. All interviews were conducted in *Yoruba*, the mother tongue of the participants. However, five participants (literate farmers) who could communicate fluently in English responded in both *Yoruba* and English. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim into *Yoruba* and then translated into English. These steps were to ensure that the original meanings in the raw data were retained.

4.3.1.3. Interactive observation and field-notes taking

Observation is fundamental to all qualitative inquiry. It plays an important role as the researcher notes body language and other non-verbal cues in addition to the spoken words. During interviews, I observed participants very closely especially considering the topic in question. Working in the field, face-to-face with real people entails the understanding of how they make sense of their world through multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, talking with people, listening to them, looking at their physical behaviours, clothing, decorations and space, and reading about them (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). Denzin (1970) defines participant observation (another term for interactive observation), as a field strategy,

that simultaneously takes place with document analysis, respondent and informant interviewing, direct participation, and introspection.

Throughout the data collection period, study participants were systematically observed, especially during the in-depth face-to-face interviews for the adults and focus group interviews for the children. In addition, two days were devoted to a close observation of each participating family, to shadowing their daily activities, their performed gender roles as well as capturing some critical incidents showing gender relations and psychological wellbeing in the family. All observational data were jotted down during the day and written-up in the evenings as field notes. These were reflected upon at the end of each day to ensure correctness and completeness. These were incorporated as part of data for analysis. The use of observation served two major purposes. These include triangulation and elicitation of rich data. By being there, interactive observation afforded me the privilege of an insider and enhanced the study findings.

Despite my long-standing relationship with the research participants, which spans over a seven-year period, my role as a researcher was overt throughout the fieldwork period. This is attributable to: intensity of interviews in terms of depth, length and number, due to the life history methodology adopted; frequency of visits to the communities and length of stay during each visit.

4.3.1.4. Focus Group Interviews (FGIs)

Focus group interviews allow the researcher to interact directly with research participants, thus providing opportunities for the clarification of responses, for follow-up questioning, and for probing of responses (Stewart and Shamsadani, 1990). Focus groups are collectivist, rather than individual data collection methods that bring the multivocality of participants' perceptions and experiences to the research process (Madriz, 2000:836). Focus groups have a

unique advantage of giving more room for the voices of participants, and decrease the influence of the researcher on the interview. This advantage informed the choice of the method in collecting data from the farm-children, as it minimized the power relations that might have ensued between the researcher and the researched, due to the age and status gaps between the researcher and the farm-children. The initial focus group interviews which were conducted in one of the University's extension villages also provided opportunities to explore, and gain more insight into the gender roles and the psychological wellbeing status of the respective members of the farm-families.

Six focus group interviews were held in the three communities where farm-children participants were selected (Kango, Boodo-Sanyaolu and Obafemi). There were three groups of participants, one group per community. The group sizes range between nine and twelve (see Table III), and meetings were held twice with each group. Using open response methods, questions eliciting data focussing research themes (constructions of gender identities, gender role socialization, gender division of labour in their families, perceived psychological wellbeing, coping resources and strategies, of self and parents), were posed to the farm children participants. They were encouraged to respond one after the other, in narrative form, with minimal interruption. Sample questions used during the pilot focus group interview with adults is presented as Appendix III, while the questions used with farm-children is presented in Appendix V. All focus group sessions were audio taped. This method also provided an opportunity for me to observe non-verbal responses, such as gestures, smiles, and/or frowns, which carry information that supplement or even sometimes contradict the verbal responses.

4.3.2. Description of participants and context of study

The research focuses on the farm-families in Ogun-state Nigeria. Ogun state is one of the eight states in South-western Nigeria, which is the extension mandate area of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB), Nigeria (Ogun and Oyo states). The University has twenty extension villages, situated in two out of the eight states in South-western Nigeria. The Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC) have the responsibility of implementing the University's extension mandate. I am the Programme Leader for the Women-In-Development (WID) Unit of AMREC-UNAAB, and have been working with these farm-families for over seven years. The WID programme has the responsibility of improving the participatory capabilities of women in the University's mandate area, in the development of themselves, their families, their immediate communities and the nation at large.

Hammersley (1990) used the term 'research focus' to refer to a set of phenomenon or some large aggregates of cases, about which a study makes claims and aspects of them that are of concern. The cases investigated in a study usually constitute the unit of analysis, although sometimes as is the case with ethnographic studies, the research focus may apparently be restricted to the case studied (Hammersley, 1990). The phenomena of interest in this study are gender roles and psychological wellbeing and the units of analysis are the farm families. Farm families in south-western Nigeria are mostly rural-based, poor, share the same cultures and predominantly speak the same language (*Yoruba*). From experience, having been born and brought up in this region, I have observed similarities in the gender roles, culture, environment, and socio-economic statuses of these farm families, which may have similar influences on their psychological wellbeing. Due to the homogeneity of these groups, it is believed that findings of this study will be useful in developing gender-sensitive

development programmes for the farm families in South-western Nigeria (UNAAB extension mandate area), of which Ogun state is a part.

4.3.3. Selection of farming communities

The purposive sampling method was adopted for the selection of communities and participants, for the following reasons. This sampling method allowed for the inclusion of communities from different communities in the state. It also enhanced an adequate representation of the various categories of farm-families usually found in farming communities, in the sample. These include, married men and women living with their spouses, married men and women living alone, and widows. Furthermore, the method allowed for a deliberate inclusion of two families, one from two different communities during the course of the research, to ensure that the sample is representative of literate and illiterate farmers. In addition, due to the intensity of fieldwork, number of trips to selected communities for data collection purposes, and cost of fuelling the trips, the communities were selected within a radius of forty kilometres from Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun state, where I resided during the data collection period.

Research participants were selected from five rural farming communities in Ogun state Nigeria (Table I). Three communities (Kango, Obafemi, and Boodo-Sanyaolu) were initially selected for the study. Two others (Ogijan and Ilewo-orile) were included during the course of the fieldwork when it was discovered that the majority of the initial participants were illiterates, and it was considered necessary to include some literate farmers in the study. Four of these communities are part of the University's (UNAAB) extension villages, while the fifth one (Obafemi) is not. The selected communities fall within three local government areas (Administrative districts) of the state. These are, Odeda, Obafemi-Owode, and

Abeokuta North local government areas. Table 1 below, shows a list of the selected communities.

No	Community	Local Government Area
1.	Kango	Odeda
2.	Obafemi	Obafemi-Owode
3.	Boodo-Sanyaolu	Obafemi-Owode
4.	Ogijan	Odeda
5.	Ilewo-Orile	Abeokuta-North

Table 1: List of selected communities.

4.3.3.1. Selection of farm-families and research participants

In each of the selected communities, the traditional rulers ('Obas' and 'Baales') and farm-families were informed of the research intentions and procedures. Following guidelines specified in the adopted deliberate sampling method described above, twenty-six farm-families were selected from those who indicated their willingness to participate in the research, from the five communities. This sample comprises, eight families each from Kango, Boodo-Sanyaolu and Obafemi communities (the three initially selected communities), and one family each from Ogijan and Ilewo-Orile communities. Husbands and wives represented thirteen of these families; husbands alone represented four; while the rest nine families, were represented by wives alone. Six of the nine women in the latter category are widows. Husbands of two of the three other women in the category are not resident in the communities, and the husband of the third woman was not around during the period of fieldwork. None of the husbands living alone are widowers. Although no deliberate steps were taken regarding the inclusion of monogamous and polygamous families in the study, the

sample turned out to comprise fifteen monogamous, and eleven polygamous families. A total of forty adults participated in the study. These include, seventeen men and twenty-three women. Women outnumber men in the sample, because, six widows participated in the study, while there are no widowers. It was observed that men usually re-marry after the death of a spouse. Table II below, represents a summary of the adult participants.

Community	No of Families (Husbands and wives)	Widows	Husbands Alone	Wives Alone
Kango	4 pairs	2	1	1
Ogijan	-	-	1	-
Boodo-Sanyaolu	4 pairs + 1	2	1	1
Obafemi	4 pairs	2	1	1
Ilewo-Orile	1 pair	-	-	-
Total	(13 Men +14Women) = 27 13 Families	6 Women 6 Families	4 Men 4 Families	3 Women 3 Families
Grand Total = 40 Participants (17 Men, 23 Women) from 26 farm-families				

TableII - Summary of number of participating adults

4.3.3.2. Selection of farm children participants

The inclusion of children's perspectives in the study is due to the recognition of family factors as determinants of child outcome, and the psychological wellbeing of the entire family. Thirty-one (31) children participated in the study, comprising fourteen girls and seventeen boys. Boys outnumber girls in the sample, because, during the data collection period, most of

the girls were with their mothers, processing farm crops (cassava in particular), which are stereotyped as girls and women's job. The children were drawn from Kango, Boodo-Sanyaolu, and Obafemi, the three communities where the study was commenced. The convenience sampling method was employed in recruiting children participants for the study. The sample accommodated children in the communities who were available, and are willing to participate in the study. The farm-children include children whose families participated in the study, and those whose families were not included. This was because, in the majority of participating families, the children are grown and have left home. Only seven out of the twenty-six participating families had their children or grandchildren living with them in the communities at the time of study. Grandchildren from these families participated in the study.

In addition, even if many children of the participating families were to be available, it would have been difficult to exclude some children, due to the focus group method employed in collecting data from the children. However, findings from the groups of children involved in the study are considered to be representative of the participating families, because rural farm-families have the following similar characteristics - rural-based, share same socio-cultural values, speak same language, live communal life in clustered dwellings, interact freely with one another, and have a sense of belonging to each other and their communities. Table III below, is a summary of children-participants, categorised by community and gender.

No	Community	No of Children	Genders
1.	Kango	9	4boys, 5 girls
2.	Boodo-Sanyaolu	10	6 boys, 4girls
3.	Obafemi	12	7 boys, 5 girls
	Total	31	17boys, 14girls

Table III- Summary of participating farm-children

4.3.4. Validity and reliability

Kirk and Miller (1986) stressed the need for objectivity in scientific and social research. The typical justification, among all perspectives, for a validity judgement is to ensure quality, trustworthiness and legitimacy (Scheurich, 1997). Hammersley (1990) posits that, validity means truth, interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers. Reliability on the other hand, refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category of different observers, or by same observer on different occasions (Hammersley, 1992:67). Mishler (1991), described validity in qualitative research as – “Trustworthiness: grounds for belief and action” (Scheurich, 1997: 82). Scheurich, reconstructed validation as the processes through which researchers make claims for and evaluate the trustworthiness of reported observations, interpretations, and generalizations. The essential criterion for such judgements, according to Scheurich, is the degree to which we can rely on the concepts, methods, and inferences of a study, or tradition of inquiry, as the basis for our own theorizing and empirical research. If the overall assessment of a study’s trustworthiness were high enough to be acted upon, the findings of the study would be granted a sufficient degree of validity to invest one’s time and energy in, and put the reputation of the researcher(s) at risk as competent investigators (Scheurich, 1997). Caelli, Ray, and Mill (2003) argue that qualitative approaches need to be rigorous. According to them, the notion of what constitutes a rigorous qualitative study has been the subject of hotly contested debates over the past two decades, and is often intertwined with debates about what constitutes quality criteria. Some authors have grappled with the importance and interpretative implications of concepts such as reflexivity, legitimization, representation and the politics of location (Cheek, 1996; Coffey, Holbrook, and Atkinson, 1996; Purkis, 1994; Collins, 1990; Lynch and Woolgar, 1990; Richardson, 1991). These literature struggle with question such as: “What makes a qualitative account credible?”,

“How does one construct a multi-vocal account?”, “Whose account is privileged in a text?”, “What responsibility does an interpreter have to declare his or her positionality?” (Caelli, et al., 2003:14). Caelli et al, posit that, qualitative researchers need to (1) articulate a knowledgeable, theoretically informed choice of approach and rigor; and (2) select an approach that is philosophically and methodological congruent with their inquiry (Caelli, et al., 2003:14). Trusworthiness, dependability, and credibility are thus terms used to describe the validity and reliability in qualitative research.

Trusworthiness, dependability, and credibility are ensured in the study, by a rigorous research procedure, using multiple methods, and also observing the “triangulation” and “crystallization” principles. Multiple methods of data collection have been acclaimed to provide rich opportunities for cross-validation and cross-fertilization of research findings (Brewer and Hunter, 1989). The multi-method approach adopted in the study is a means of triangulation. Triangulation is a conventional term in qualitative research. It is a method of crosschecking and confirming the information elicited from qualitative data sources. A major early advocate of the triangulation method is Denzin (1970), arising in the context of his discussion of the advantages and limitations of observational research. He proposed the use of multiple methods of data collection as part of the methodology.

The adopted multiple methods yielded rich data and provided opportunities for more in-depth analyses, which is a major benefit of the research design. The design is reflexive and flexible, to the extent that data were considered and interpreted from many perspectives. Richardson (2000) offers the idea of crystallization in this regard. This idea is supported by several authors in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Janesick, 2000). Janesick (2000) is another proponent for use of the term, crystallization, instead of triangulation, in qualitative research projects. She believes that one should incorporate the use of other disciplines, such as “art, sociology, history, dance, architecture, and anthropology” to inform

research processes and broaden understanding. Janesick asserts crystallization can provide a deep understanding of a topic. Crystallization, is an emerging concept, and recognizes that any given approach to study the social world as a fact of life has many facets. The image of the crystal thus replaces that of triangle. The crystal according to Richardson:

..combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change and alter, but are not amorphous (Richardson, 2000).

Moving beyond methodical triangulation towards crystallization, Richardson identifies five criteria for evaluating social scientific studies. These include: substantive contribution to understanding of social life, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, and expression of reality. This study meets all these criteria. Credibility, dependability and trustworthiness in the research was further enhanced by the data collection and analyses processes. Six focus group interviews were held in three of the selected communities to complement and confirm data collected through life histories and systematic observations. In-depth interviews were conducted over a period of four interviews per participant thus offering them opportunities to confirm, correct or refute earlier submissions. Transcribed and analysed data were also shared with participants in the various communities, before the final compilation to enhance authenticity and quality. In addition to the above, the following steps were taken to further enhance reliability.

4.3.4.1. Intensity of involvement in fieldwork

I was actively involved in all aspects of the fieldwork. This include conducting and recording of interviews, transcription and translations; taking of field notes; and systematic observations. Transcribed data were also personally word-processed and edited to enhance data quality.

4.3.4.2. Training of field assistants

Two extension personnel from the WID programme of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, assisted with the mobilization of farm-families selected for the study in view of their established rapport with the participants. Four field assistants with prior experience in rural extension work were enlisted to assist with conducting in-depth interviews. Two training sessions were held for both the extension personnel and field assistants on the research focus and procedures. Practical demonstration sessions were also conducted in *Yoruba* to ensure competence and mastery before commencement of fieldwork.

4.3.4.3. Pilot Focus Group Interviews

Initial focus group interviews were conducted with male and female farmers, and another with farm-children (boys and girls). The interviews assisted with the further conceptualisation of the questions used in the subsequent focus group interviews, in-depth interviews, and life histories.

4.3.4.4. Accessible language

Both the in-depth and focus group interviews were conducted in *Yoruba*, which is the local language in the project area. Both the researcher and field assistants did translation of audio taped interviews in order to retain the original intentions and meanings. Aspects of data transcribed and translated by the field assistants were crosschecked with the audio-recordings for correctness and completeness.

4.3.5. Research protocol and ethical issues

Miles and Huberman (1984) stressed the need for ethical considerations in qualitative research, because of the nature of qualitative research, which requires observation and

interaction with groups. They identified several issues that researchers should consider when analysing data, and cautioned that researchers should be aware of these and other issues before, during, and after the research had been conducted. Some of the issues include: informed consent (Do participants have full knowledge of what is involved?), harm and risk (Can the study hurt participants?), honesty and trust (is the researcher being truthful in presenting data?), privacy/confidentiality/anonymity (will the study intrude too much into group behaviours?), and intervention and advocacy (what should researchers do if participants display harmful or illegal behaviour?). Power relations between the researcher and the researched, is another ethical consideration in research, especially when carrying out studies in vulnerable groups, which include, children, the sick, and the poor. Ethical considerations require that the researcher take every possible precaution to ensure that no harm will come to the participants as a result of the conduct of the study.

This study maintained the necessary ethical standards. The long-standing relationship and established rapport between the researcher and the research respondents did not take this important requirement for granted. Informational meetings were held with the ‘Obas’, ‘Baales’, and farm-families in the respective communities, to familiarize them with the research intentions and procedures. They were provided detailed information regarding the nature and purpose of the study and a further clarification made just before interview sessions. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage during the research process. They were also assured of confidentiality of data collected. While the adult participants in the study agreed that real names could be used in the final publication of the study, the farm-children preferred anonymity. Informed verbal consent was sought and received from the participating families, before commencing the study. These agreements influenced my relationship with both the adult and children participants throughout the

research process, and their wishes concerning the use of their real names are respected in the thesis.

4.3.6. Methods of data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. It involves sorting, categorizing, grouping, and regrouping of data into meaningful chunks. All data from life histories, in-depth interviews and observation were reduced to text and personally word-processed and edited. Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data is the process of systematically organizing the interview transcripts, field-notes, and other collected materials, bringing meaning to them to give a coherent story Rossman and Rallis (1986) proposed three approaches to generic analysis of qualitative data. These include, analysis by subjects, by data collection methods, or by themes. The analytic procedures proposed by Rossman and Rallis were adopted in this study. These procedures include six categories as follows: data organization; familiarization of oneself with the data; generation of categories, themes, and patterns; coding of the data; searching for alternative explanations of the data, and report writing. The approach of analysis by themes was adopted in the study, and data systematization was achieved by constructing coding frames for each of the datasets that emerged. The thesis is structured according to the major themes that emerged from the research findings. Several common themes emerged. These are structured around the five research questions and reported in chapters six, seven and eight. A reflective analytical chapter (chapter nine) follows this, which explores the crosscutting themes arising from the analyses in the light of the research questions and adopted methodology.

In addition, the analytic scheme proposed by Mandelbaum (1973) for the analysis and interpretation of life history data was adopted for an in-depth analysis of five selected life histories (three females, two males) out of those collected from the forty adult participants in

the study. This is presented in a separate chapter as multiple case studies on “How male and female farmers cope with stressful life situations: A gender analysis”. The analytical scheme uses three concepts - dimensions, turnings and adaptations of an individual life, for the analysis. Dimensions are described as categories for understanding the main forces at work in life (these include – biological, cultural, social and psychological). Turnings are periods in an individual’s life as a result of major changes, and adaptations are changes and continuities chosen throughout the life course to adjust to new condition. Dimensions in this study are - gender roles as determined by biological sex and gender, and perceived psychological wellbeing, vis-à-vis their social constructions. Turnings in the participants’ lives demarcated periods of major changes in their lives (memorable days, achievements, farmland acquisition, marriages, birth of a child or death of a loved one). Adaptations are the coping resources and resources adopted by the participants studied.

4.3.7. Problems encountered on the field and limitations of study

Some of the problems encountered during the course of the research include problems associated with some of the participants’ reluctance to share their life histories, in spite of their willingness, readiness, and consent to participate in the study. While some men and women are unwilling to remember their past, probably because of some bad memories of poverty and lack of accomplishment, some (the successful farmers), talked more during the interview sessions, and were even willing to grant more interviews. They were very happy, excited and forthcoming in sharing their past experiences, while it was an herculean task to gather require data from the former group of farmer. Meetings had to be scheduled and rescheduled. Sometimes when interview have been scheduled, I arrive in the communities to discover that such farmers have left for their farms. On those occasions I have had to await their return, either to conduct the interview(s) late, or reschedule other day(s). The

discrepancy in participants' responses was however taken care of by the sample size, which was initially considered a bit large for the study. Out of the forty life histories collected, only about four are considered very scanty. Nevertheless, data from all the participants proved useful and relevant in the study.

Another problem is that of 'absences', which I envisaged from the outset. The issue of absence according to Gervais et al., positions the researcher at the very heart of research practice, providing a link between the theoretical and analytical dimensions of research (Gervais et al. 1999:419). I knew that the participants might not say "everything" during the in-depth face-to-face interviews. Absences in the study were not taken as non-communication. They were used as opportunities to probe particular areas further. In addition, the multi-method of data collection enhanced the identification and interpretation of the participants' non-verbal cues, to large extent.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHOSE NARRATIVES?

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF COMMUNITIES, AND

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the socio-historical contexts of the studied communities, and introduces the research participants. The inclusion of this chapter is to enhance an understanding of the narratives discussed and interpreted in the following chapters, within their socio-cultural constructions and socio-historical contexts of the research participants, as prescribed by the social representations framework, which maintains that social psychological phenomena and processes can only be properly understood, if they are seen as being embedded in historical, cultural and macro-social conditions (Farr, 1996).

Roberts (2002), also observes that, how individuals account for their life experiences can only be understood within the contemporary cultural and structural settings, which influence the course of the major changes in their societies over time. In the same vein Giele and Elder (1998) noted that individual and social behaviour is multilayered, involving different levels of the social and physical contexts. They further argue that both the general, and unique aspects of individual location, affect personal experience, and thus can be understood as being socially and individually patterned through time. In addition, moving from life stories to life histories involves a move to account for the historical contexts, as life

stories remain uncoupled from the conditions of their social construction, in the absence of such inclusion (Goodson and Sikes, 2001).

5.2. SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF COMMUNITIES AND PARTICIPANTS

As mentioned in the research methodology, the study was carried out in five farming communities selected from three out of the twenty Local Government Areas (LGA) in Ogun state Nigeria. The communities include: Kango and Ogijan in Odeda LGA, Boodo-Sanyaolu and Obafemi in Obafemi-Owode LGA, and Ilewo-Orile in Abeokuta North LGA. Twenty-six families comprising forty adults (17 fathers, 23 mothers) and thirty-one farm-children (14 girls, 17 boys) participated in the study. All the participants are '*Egbas*'. '*Egba*' is one of the three major *Yoruba* ethnic groups in Ogun state Nigeria. Ogun state is one of the thirty-six states in Nigeria, and one of the eight states in south-western Nigeria (see Figs. III and IV). Figure III shows the location of Ogun state on Nigeria map, while Figure IV shows the location of the five selected farming communities within their respective LGAs on Ogun state map.

The site location maps of the five communities are also presented alongside the descriptions their respective socio-historical and cultural contexts. A summary of the profile of the farm-children participants is also included. For each family, biographical sketches of each adult participant are extracted from the detailed life history data generated. Excerpts of the narratives are also used extensively throughout the chapters on data analysis and interpretation in verbatim form. In addition, case studies of five farmers (three females, two males), selected from the forty life histories, are presented in chapter eight.

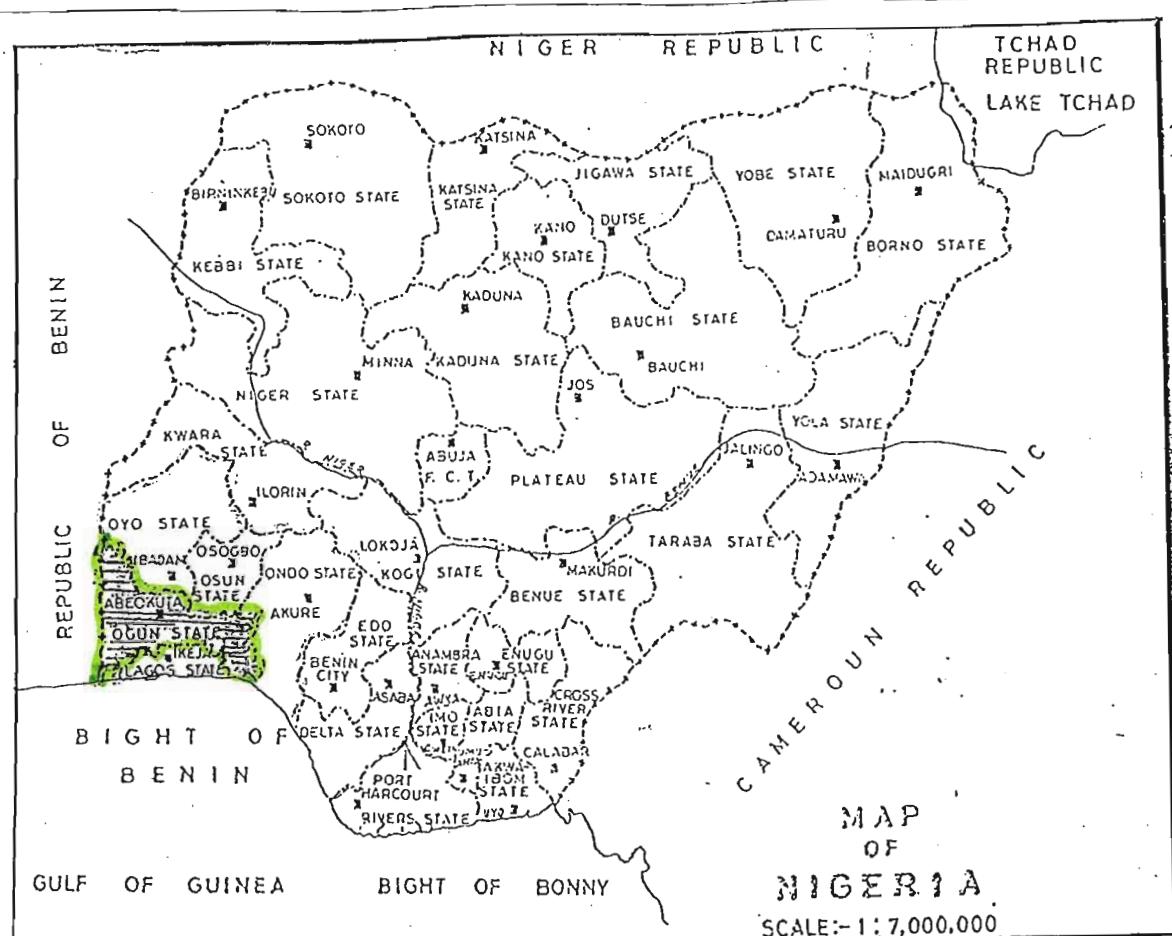


FIGURE 3: MAP OF NIGERIA SHOWING LOCATION OF OGUN STATE

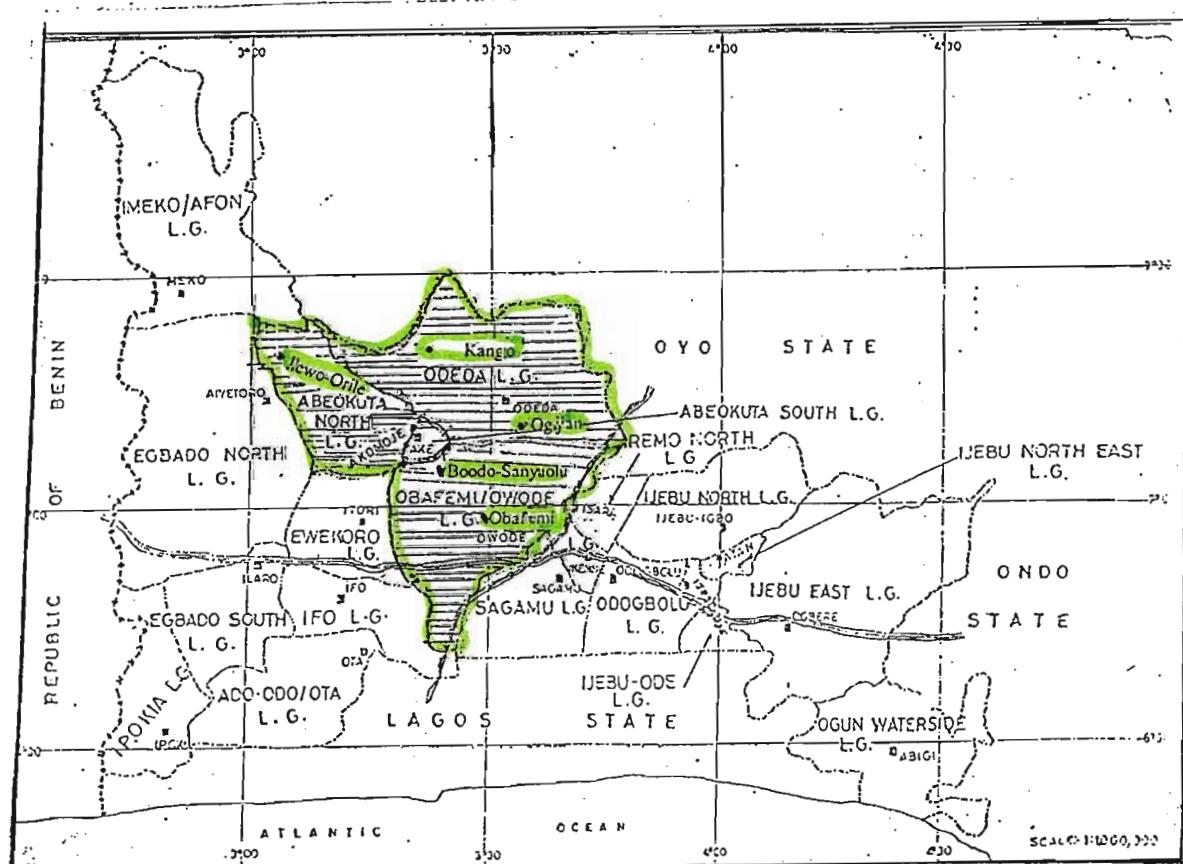
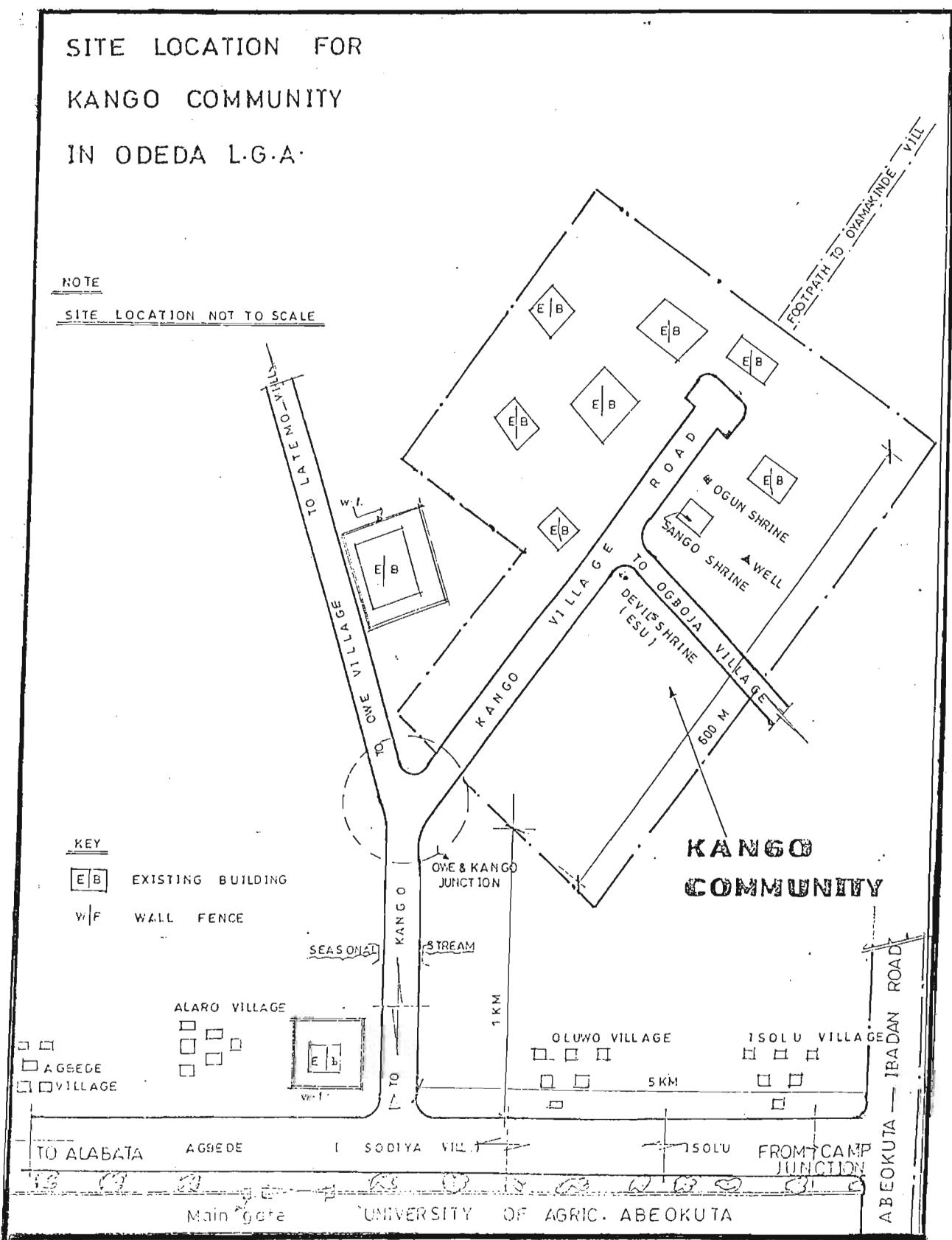


FIGURE 4: MAP OF OGUN STATE SHOWING THE THREE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS (LGAs) INVOLVED IN THE STUDY, AND LOCATIONS OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES.

5.2.1. KANGO COMMUNITY

5.2.1.1. Site Location Map



5.2.1.2. Socio-historical and cultural context (Kango Community)

Kango is situated in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun state. The village is located along Camp – Alabata road, very close to the permanent campus of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. (See Fig. 5 – Site location map of Kango community). Kango community is a very longstanding village, but the inhabitants could not say exactly when it came into being, due to lack of record-keeping and illiteracy. The first settlers in the community came from Ilugun in Abeokuta to farm in Kango. They originally hailed from Orile-Ilugun, another village along Abeokuta-Ibadan road, from where they came to settle in Abeokuta. Kango people belong to the traditional ruling family of Ilugun, near Mokola in Abeokuta. Every member of the community belongs to the same family and therefore do not inter-marry.

There are three shrines in the community. The devil's (*esu*) shrine is strategically located at the entrance of the village, while the '*ogun*' (god of iron), '*sango*' (god of thunder) shrines are in the centre of the community. The Christians and Muslims in the community conduct their worship sessions under a tent. A new Pentecostal denomination has just started evangelizing the community. The community is associated with a lot of traditional rituals and taboos, despite the fact that inhabitants of the community include Christians, Muslims, and traditionalists. Several deities are worshipped in the community. These include '*ogun*' (god of iron), '*sango*' (god of thunder) and '*esu*' (the devil), amongst others. For instance, every member of the community, regardless of religious beliefs is expected to perform the '*ogun*' ritual as and when due. The significance of the ritual is that the god protects the community members from accidents. It is also believed that the devil's shrine located at the entrance of the community has been strategically located to neutralize and disarm any evil being brought into the community.

Their main source of income and livelihood is subsistence farming. Gender roles and agricultural activities were also reported to have changed considerably over the years. In the past unlike now, men used to be the sole providers for their families. Women in the community are now responsible for the welfare and education of their children, while the men do not have to strain themselves to meet every family need. In addition, women were involved only in palm oil and cassava processing and palm-nut cracking in the past, unlike now when they are actively involved in farming. Eight families in this community participated in the study. They are, Amidu, Atanda, Olade, Musiliu, Enilolobo, Adekunbi, Saka, and Ademuyiwa families.

5.2.1.3. PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

AMIDU FAMILY

Mr. Lamidi Amidu

Mr. Lamidi was forty-six years old, and a Christian. His mother was the second of his father's two wives. He is the second of his mother's two children. He attended school up to standard four. He has two wives. He married his first wife at the age of thirty-four years, and inherited the second from his late brother. He has five children, two males, and three females. Only one of the wives participated in the study. He grows cassava, maize, pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables on a two - acre farmland in Kango village, which he inherited from his father.

Mrs. Rasida Amidu

Mrs Rasida Amidu was twenty-five years old, and a Christian. She is the lastborn in a monogamous family of five children. She lost her father while very young, and was brought up by an aunt who had no child of her own. Her education was stopped in primary two, to

enable her assist the aunt with her trade. She has four siblings, three males, and one female. She is her husband's second wife. She has two daughters. She grows cassava and maize on a 2-plot farmland, given to her by her husband, Mr. Amidu in Kango village.

ATANDA FAMILY

Mr. Atanda

Mr. Atanda was sixty years old, and a Muslim. He hails from a polygamous family, where his mother was the first of father's two wives. He is the first of his father's six children. He has five siblings, two males, and three females. He had no formal education. He married his only wife at the age of thirty years, and they had four children, of which only two, a male and a female are alive. He grows cocoa (very small), cassava, maize, and vegetables on a one-acre farmland in Kango village.

Mrs. Gbadun Atanda

Mrs. Gbadun Atanda was forty-five years old, and a Muslim. She is the only child in a monogamous family. She lost her parents at a very tender age. She did not know her father, and her mother died when she was eight years old. Her maternal uncle brought her up. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of seventeen years. She attributed her lack of formal education and early marriage to the premature death of her parents. She has a surviving daughter and son, out of four children. The farmland she (Ms. Atanda) inherited from her father was part of the land acquired for the establishment of the University of Agriculture. Her husband however allotted part of his farmland (about 1 plot) to her. She combines farming with cassava processing.

OLADE FAMILY

Mr. Bada Olade

Mr. Olade was fifty-six years old, and a Muslim. He hails from a monogamous family, and lost his father at the age of tree months. He had no formal education. He married his only wife at age twenty-five, and they are blessed with five children, three males, and two females. He grows cocoa, cola nut, cassava, and maize on a three-acre farmland in Kango, which he inherited from his parents.

Mrs. Abeke Olade

Mrs. Olade was about forty-eight years old, and a Muslim. She is the third born of her mother in a polygamous family where her mother was the second wife. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of twenty years. She is her husband's only wife. She grows maize and cassava on a half-acre farmland given to her by her husband. The farmland originally belonged to her father-in-law.

MUSILIU FAMILY

Mr. Ahmed Musiliu

Mr. Musiliu was sixty-three years old and a Muslim. He is the firstborn in a monogamous family of six children. All his other siblings are dead. He had no formal education. He married his only wife at the age of thirty-three, and they have two sons. He grows cocoa, oranges, cassava, maize, pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables on a two - acre farmland in Kango, which he inherited from his father.

Mrs. Silifat Musiliu

Mrs. Musiliu was fifty years old and a Muslim. She is the second born in a polygamous family, where her mother was the second of her father's three wives. She has two siblings, a male and a female. She went to school briefly, but was withdrawn in primary one, when she could not cope academically. She got married at the age of eighteen years and she is her husband's only wife. They have two sons. She grows cassava, maize, pepper and vegetables on a 2-plot farmland given to her by her husband. She combines farming with cassava processing.

ENILOLOBO FAMILY

Mr. Rafiu Enilolobo

Mr. Enilolobo was sixty years old, and a Muslim. He had no formal education. He has two wives, of which there is only one in residence. She was however away from the village during the research and thus could not participate in the study. He has six children, three males, and three females. He has three small farms, totalling about five acres. He inherited a small cocoa farm from his father and leased two other farms on which he grows cassava, maize, pepper and vegetables. He combines farming with hunting.

ADEKUNBI FAMILY

Mrs. Taiwo Adekunbi

Mrs. Adekunbi was twenty-eight years old, and a Muslim. She had no formal education. She is the third born, and second of a set of twins in a monogamous family of six children. She has five siblings, two females, and three males. She got married at age fifteen, and she is her husband's first of three wives. Due to her love for village life and farming, she opted to stay in the village with her mother-in-law, while her husband stays in the city, where he works as an auto-mechanic with his two other wives. He also owns a farm in the village, and visits

weekly to see his family and supervise work on his farm. He did not participate in the study. She has three children, two males and one female. She grows only cassava on a 2-plot leased farmland in Kango and rears ducks in her parent's village, which is about one kilometre from Kango, her husband's village. She combines farming with cassava processing.

SAKA FAMILY

Mrs. Alimat Saka

Mrs. Saka was sixty years old, a Muslim, and a widow. She is the second surviving child in a polygamous family of five wives and five children. She has four siblings, three males and one female. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of twenty years, and she is the first of her late husband's two wives. Her husband died about eight years before the study. She had five children, of which four are alive, one male, and three females. She grows cassava and maize on a half-acre farmland in Kango village. She combines farming with cocoa trading and cassava processing.

ADEMUYIWA FAMILY

Mrs. Simbiat Ademuyiwa

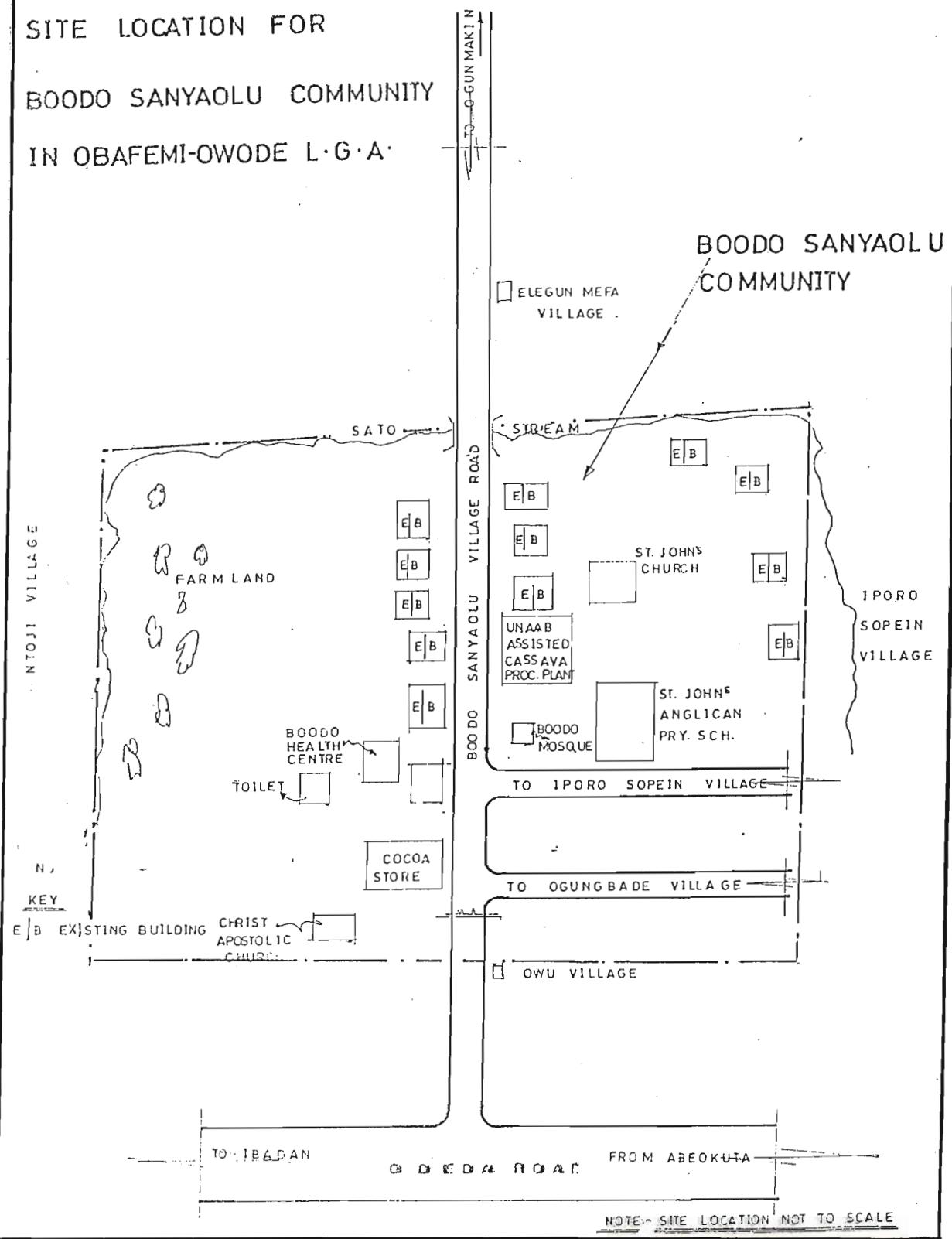
Mrs. Ademuyiwa is fifty years old, a widow, and a Muslim. She is the firstborn in a polygamous family, where her mother is the first of her father's three wives. She has two sisters from the same mother, and a stepsister. She lost her mother at age ten. She had been married and widowed twice. She married her first husband at age fifteen, and remarried after his death. She was the second wife of her second late husband. She has two children, a male for her first husband, and a female for her second husband. She grows maize, cassava, and vegetables on a $\frac{1}{2}$ plot leased farmland in Kango village. She combines farming with cassava processing.

5.2.2. BOODO-SANYAOLU COMMUNITY

5.2.2.1. Site Location Map

Figure 6:

SITE LOCATION FOR
BOODO SANYAOLU COMMUNITY
IN OBAFEMI-OWODE L.G.A.



5.2.2.2. Socio-historical and cultural context (Boodo-Sanyaolu Community)

Boodo-Sanyaolu is situated in Obafemi-Owode local Government area of Ogun state. The village is located along Odeda-Ogunmakin road, off Abeokuta-Ibadan road. The village is 45 kilometres from Abeokuta (Ogun state capital city) and 20 Kilometres from Odeda (headquarters of Odeda local government area). (See Fig. 6 - Site location map of Boodo-Sanyaolu community). Although the village is located in Obafemi-Owode local government area, it is nearer Odeda than Owode (headquarters of Obafemi-Owode local government area). The Dada family first inhabited the village in the early 1930s, whereas the actual owners of the land are the Sanyaolu family, who are Iporo descendants. ‘Boodo’ means “my settling place”. Many years later, precisely in the 1950s, the Sanyaolus, who are the owners of the land came to reclaim their land from the Dadas and changed the name of the village from Boodo-Dada to Boodo-Sanyaolu. The community is however popularly called ‘Boodo’ for short. The Iporos hail from Iporo-Sodeke in Abeokuta where they originally reside. They came to farm in Boodo-Sanyaolu and gradually settled down in Orile-Iporo, which spans from Alayin village in Odeda Local government area (7 kilometres from Boodo Sanyaolu), to Alapako village (20 kilometres away from Boodo) in Obafemi-Owode local government area. Boodo- Sanyaolu is the headquarters of the group Iporo descendants settlers in the area, numbering about thirty-two villages. These villages fall within both odeda and Obafemi-Owode local government areas. These various communities congregate annually in Boodo-Sanyaolu, at the beginning of every farming season to rejoice and felicitate with one another.

The community has a Health Care Centre, a Primary school, a mosque, and two big churches (Anglican and Christ Apostolic). Islam and Christianity are the predominant religions in the community. A major taboo (*Eewo*) in the community is that nobody should bring in any form of idol into the community or put any form of ‘juju’ (any diabolical harmful

spirit) on the farms. It is believed that anybody that flouts this ‘law’ will bring evil upon him/herself.

Civilization and agricultural extension services have greatly improved farming activities in the community. The community is a beneficiary of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB) Assisted Cassava Processing Plant (ACPP) project. Farmers testify to the improved yields from the modern high-breed and early-maturing varieties of farm-crops (cocoa, citrus, guava, cassava, maize) over and above the traditional varieties, which are becoming old and extinct. There is also a marked difference in the traditional gender roles of males and females in the community in the past and present. In the past, women were not involved in farming activities in the community, as they are, today. They used to be mainly palm oil and cassava processors. Women in the community gradually became actively involved in family farming at the beginning of 1970s, to the extent of owning their own farms, some of which are even larger than some men’s farms.

The increased involvement of women in farming, according to the farmers, is attributable to several reasons. These include changing gender roles, enlightenment by the government, and agricultural extension services, provision of agricultural inputs like fertilizers, seedlings, which were free in the past, but now very expensive and most of the time unavailable. Another major reason is the increased awareness of the need for women to contribute towards their family upkeep, and in particular financing their children’s education. The majority of men in the community take to polygamy, and they are not committed to funding their children’s education beyond primary level. In the past also, the male farmers were only planting food crops (yams, beans, cassava and maize) before the intervention of agricultural extension services. Women in the community are therefore very hardworking and mostly responsible for their children’s education, especially beyond primary level. Eight

families in the community participated in the study. They are – Soyoye, Kehinde, Adeleke, Ogunsan, Taiwo, Sodipo, Ogundairo, and Babatunde families.

5.2.2.3. PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

SOYOYE FAMILY

Mr. Olajubo Soyoye

Mr. Soyoye was 76 years old, and a Christian. He is literate. He had full primary education (Standard Six). He hails from a polygamous family, where his mother was the first of his father's four wives. He is the last born of his mother's four children. He had two sisters and a brother from same mother, of which only a brother is alive. He married his first wife at the age of 22 years, and married four other wives thereafter. Only his fifth wife, Mrs Soyoye who is involved in the study, is presently in residence. He has ten children from his previous marriages. The wife in residence has no child for him, but had three children from her previous marriage. He grows cocoa, colanut, plantain, oranges, cassava and maize on a three-hectare farmland, which he purchased in Boodo village. He combines farming with cocoa trading. He still plants and harvests, but cannot weed again due to old age.

Mrs. Mojirayo Soyoye

Mrs. Soyoye was fifty-five years old, and a Christian. She is a native of Ibadan and hails from a polygamous family, where her mother was the second wife. She is her mother's firstborn and has three other siblings, a female and two males. She has been married twice. Her first marriage was at the age of twenty-five years. She quitted her first marriage as a result of problems emanating from polygamous relationships. She was having incessant problems and quarrels with her husband's younger wife. She married her present husband in

1991. She had three children (two males, and one female), in her first marriage and none in the present marriage. She combines farming with cola nut trading, 'tinko' (dried meat) selling, and cassava processing. She farms on a 1-plot farmland, given to her by her present husband.

KEHINDE FAMILY

Pastor Adeyinka Kehinde

Pastor Kehinde was seventy-five years old, and a Christian. He is the firstborn of his mother, who was the first of his father's two wives. He married his only wife at the age of twenty-three years. They are blessed with seven children, three males, and four females. He has trained up to thirty-one children, and has twenty-five grandchildren. He holds the Associate Certificate of Education, from the University of Ibadan. He also once trained as a nurse through correspondence, with a South African based institution in Johannesburg between 1950 and 1953, but could not complete the programme, because he was not willing to leave teaching to travel to South Africa for the required four months practical training component of the course. He was a professional teacher, and was a headmaster for twenty-eight years. He has been involved in farming while still in active service. He retired as Grade I Headmaster, in 1984, into full-time large-scale farming.

He migrated to Boodo-Sanyaolu from his home village -- Idini, near Obafemi, to Boodo, in search of farmland, and now owns farms in both Idini and Boodo villages. His total farm holding is about fourteen hectares, of which ten hectares is used to plant cash crops (colanut, cocoa, and oranges), and four hectares is used to plant food crops (cassava, yams, maize, beans, and vegetables). He received Ogun state Agricultural Development Programme's (OGADEP) best farmer of the year, for two consecutive years (1975 and 1976), for having the best vegetable and maize farms under the FADAMA scheme.

Mrs. Abebi Kehinde

Mrs. Kehinde was seventy-two years old, and a Christian. She is the firstborn in a polygamous family, where her mother was the first of her father's four wives. She was educated up to Standard two, and was withdrawn from school to enable her father fund her younger brothers' education. She has five siblings from the same father, one female, and four males. She is the only wife of her husband, and they are blessed with seven children, three males, and four females. While younger, she has been involved in several types of occupation, but now combines farming with cola nut trading. She grows maize and cassava on a 2-acres farmland given to her by her husband, in Boodo-Sanyaolu village.

ADELEKE FAMILY

Mr. Sule Adeleke

Mr. Adeleke was seventy-seven years old, and a Muslim. He is the lastborn in a monogamous family of seven children. He lost his father while he was just three months old. His parents were farmers, and he too had been involved in farming from childhood. He had no formal education. He married his only wife at age thirty, and they are blessed with seven children, two males, and five females. He has five big farms totalling about six acres, which he inherited from his father. He grows cocoa, cola nut, oranges, lime, wrapping leaves, cassava, maize, pepper, and vegetables. He combines farming with a full-time job as Security Officer in the Community Secondary School, Obafemi.

Mrs. Alirat Adeleke

Mrs. Adeleke was forty-five years old, and a Muslim. She had no formal education. She had been married twice, though her first marriage was very brief. She has all her children from the marriage to her present husband. She grows cassava, yam, cocoyam, maize and vegetables on a four-acre farmland, which is given to her by her husband.

OGUNSAN FAMILY

Mr. Elijah Ogunsan

Mr. Ogunsan was sixty-four years old, and a Christian. He hails from a polygamous family where his mother was the first of three wives. He is the last of his mother's six children, of which five are alive. He has four siblings, two males, and two females. He attended school up to Standard one. He has three wives, but only two are in residence, and both participated in the study. He is very proud of his wives' farms, which according to him are bigger than some men's farms in the community. He had thirteen children from his three wives, of which eleven are alive, nine males, and two females. He has three farms on a 12-hectare land, which he bought in Boodo village. He grows cocoa, plantain, cassava, maize, pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables. He combines farming with cocoa trading.

Mrs. Abeke Ogunsan (A.k.a. Iya Adura)

Mrs. Abeke Ogunsan was sixty years old, and a Christian. She hails from a polygamous Muslim family, but became a Christian at marriage. She is popularly addressed as "Iya Adura" (Woman of prayer) in the community. Her mother was the first of her father's four wives. She is the sixth of her father's seven children, and the last of her mother's four children. She has four surviving siblings, all females. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of twenty years, and she is her husband's first wife. She has four surviving

children, all males. Her firstborn is about forty years old, while the lastborn is thirty years old. She has ten-acre farmland in three villages (Boodo, Iporo and Kemta). She inherited a six acres farmland from her father in nearby villages (Iporo and Kemta), and bought a four acres farmland in Boodo, her husband's village. She grows cocoa, plantain, banana, beans, cassava and maize. She combines farming with cassava processing and cola nut trading.

Mrs. Mogbadunola Ogunsan

Mrs. Mogbadunola Ogunsan was aged forty-eight years, and a Christian. She is the first child and the only daughter of her mother who was the second of her father's two wives. She has three siblings from same mother, two females, one male, and two stepsisters. She had complete primary education. She got married at age eighteen, and is the third wife of her husband. She owns a 3-acre farmland in Boodo village, which she inherited from her father. She grows cassava and maize. She combines farming with cassava processing and cola nut trading.

BABATUNDE FAMILY

Mr. Emmanuel Babatunde

Mr. Babatunde was eighty years old, and a Christian. He is the second child of his mother's three children, in a polygamous family of three wives. He was formerly a Pagan before his conversion to Christianity. He went to school for a brief period, but was withdrawn to enable him assist his father on the farm. He could however read his Bible and Hymnbook. He had two wives, but lost one (the eldest), six years prior to the study. The younger wife who is also a farmer, was not resident in the community, she lived in Abeokuta, and thus could not participate in the study. He owns fifteen acres farmland in Boodo and Okukenu villages, of which he inherited five acres from his father and purchased ten acres. He migrated from

Okukenu, a village near Obafemi, his father's village, to settle in Boodo village, where he has a larger farm. He grows cocoa, cola nut, plantain, fruits, maize, cassava, and vegetables. He had been involved in contracting business of bridge construction and school building renovation in his younger days.

TAIWO FAMILY

Mrs. Elizabeth Taiwo (A.k.a. Mama oni puff-puff)

Mrs. Taiwo was fifty-three years old, and a Christian. She is the younger of her mother's two daughters in a polygamous family, where her mother was the second of her father's three wives. She was withdrawn from school while in primary three, to enable her accompany her elder sister to Ghana, to assist her with baby-sitting. She got married at the age of eighteen years, and she is her husband's only wife. They live together in the village, but Mr. Taiwo was not in the community during the research period, and thus could not participate in the study. They are blessed with four children, three males and one female, including a set of twins. She grows cassava, maize and vegetables on ½-plot farmland, which she rented. She combines farming with cassava processing, cola nut trading, and puff-puff frying and selling in the community, hence her nickname, "Mama oni puff-puff" (puff-puff seller).

SODIPO FAMILY

Mrs. Aduke Sodipo (A.K.A. Iya Oniyian)

Mrs. Sodipo was fifty-five years old, a Christian and a widow. She lost her husband in 1992. She was her husband's only wife. She had full primary education, got married at the age 22 years, and has 6 children, 4 females and 2 males. Her firstborn is 35 years old, and lastborns are a set of twins, a male and a female. She combines farming with cassava processing and food selling. She sells pounded yam in the village and this is why she is popularly known and

addressed as "iya oniyan" (pounded yam seller). She grows cassava, maize, pepper and vegetables on a $\frac{1}{2}$ acre farmland, in Boodo village, which she inherited from her mother-in-law.

OGUNDAIRO FAMILY

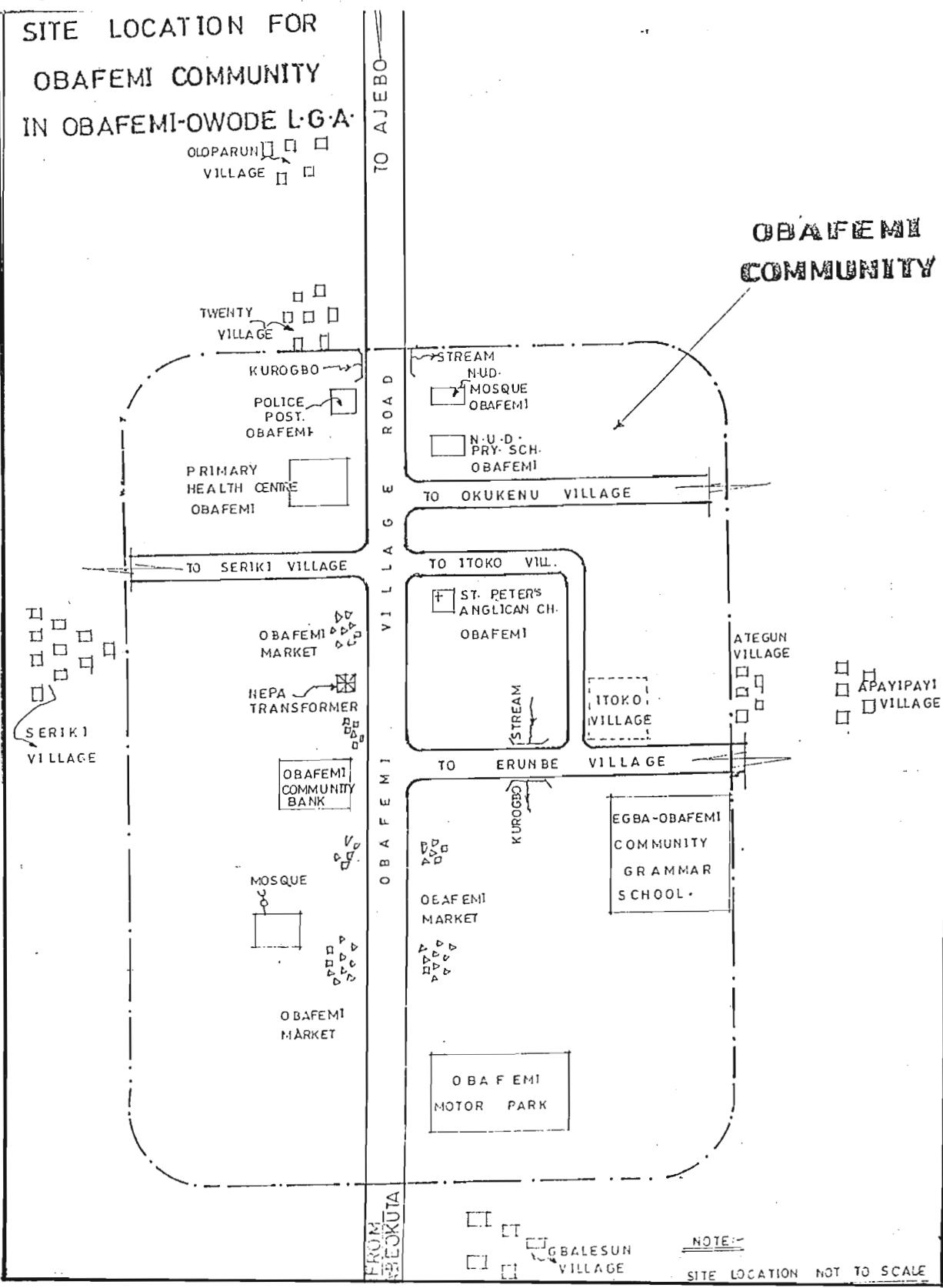
Mrs. Amudat Ogundairo (A.k.a. Iya daada)

Mrs. Ogundairo was sixty-five years old, a widow, and a Muslim. She hails from a polygamous family of three wives, where her mother was first. She is the third of her mother's seven children, but has lost all her siblings from same mother. She had eight stepsiblings, five males and three females, but only her elder brother is surviving. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of eighteen, and she is her husband's first of two wives. She has two male children, and fourteen grandchildren, seven males, and seven females. She inherited 4-hectare cocoa and cola nut farms from her late husband in Boodo village, and grows cassava, maize, pepper and vegetables on a .6-hectare farmland, which she purchased in the same village. She combines farming with cassava processing and cola nut trading.

5.2.3. OBAFEMI COMMUNITY

5.2.3.1. Site Location Map.

Figure 7:



5.2.3.2. Socio-historical and cultural context (Obafemi Community)

Obafemi is a big community and headquarters of the Obafemi-Owode local government area of Ogun state. It is situated along Abeokuta-Ajebo road, and is precisely thirty-two kilometres from Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun state.). (See Fig. 7 - Site location map of Obafemi community). The community was originally a market centre for the neighbouring villages. Farmers from these neighbouring villages, which include Abondo, Apena-Oderinde, Ategun, Okukenu, Apayipaiyi, Seriki, Erunbe, and Itoko as well as other villages along Abeokuta-Ajebo road used to bring their farm products to Obafemi market in the early 1930s days for buyers from the big towns and cities in and around Ogun state. These include, Abeokuta, Ajebo, Ipara, Iperu, Sagamu, and Ibadan, amongst others.

As the market became bigger the farmers and the traders started settling down in the community and the market gradually transformed into a residential area. Hence, the entire stretch of Obafemi today, is lined up with residential buildings and market stalls apart from the open market square located near the motor-park. The farmlands are therefore very far away from the residential areas in the community, with the farmers retaining their farms in their former homesteads mentioned earlier. Inhabitants of the community include both indigenes and strangers who have come there either to trade or work. The community has a Secondary school, two Primary schools, an Anglican Church, a Celestial church, two other Pentecostal churches, two mosques, a Primary Health care Centre, and a Police post to cater for the needs of community members.

Farmers and traders in the community experienced a great loss during the political war in southwestern Nigeria in 1965/66 when some aggrieved parties burnt several houses, properties, and store cash crops worth thousands of pounds then. Reports have it that majority of affected families did not survive the emotional trauma that resulted from this incidence. Mrs. Ogunneye one of the participants in the study reported that her late husband

and herself suffered great financial losses from the incidence. The resulting psychological trauma according to her, culminated in her late husband becoming a hypertensive patient up to the time of his death.

Improvement in farming activities and improved crop yields in the community is attributed to the influence of agricultural extension services. They also agree that there has been a marked difference in the traditional gender roles of males and females in the community from what it used to be in the past. Women, according to them are now more involved in farming due to an increased need to contribute towards family upkeep. The men in the community reported that it is becoming increasingly impossible for men to solely provide for their families' needs. Eight families in the community participated in the study. They are – Yesuf, Kusimo, Edunjobi, Koleoso, Olurotimi, Bankole, Ogunneye, and Sowemimo families.

5.2.3.4. PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

YESUFU FAMILY

Mr. Abdul Yesufu

Mr. Yesufu was seventy-six years old and a Muslim. He is the second born in a monogamous family of seven children. All his other siblings are dead. He had no formal education. He married his only wife at the age of thirty-seven, and two surviving children, a male and a female. He grows cocoa, oranges, cassava, maize, pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables on four - acre farmland, which he inherited from his father.

Mrs. Adunni Yesufu

Mrs. Yesufu was seventy years old, and a Muslim. She is the third born of her mother's four children, in a polygamous family, where her mother was the younger of her father's two wives. She had no formal education. She married at the age of twenty-two years and she is her husband's only wife. They have two surviving children. She had a set of twin-children, of which only one is alive. Her husband was not in the village during the research period, and thus could not participate in the study. She has been a farmer from childhood, and grows cassava, maize and vegetables on a $\frac{1}{2}$ acre farmland in Boodo-Sanyaolu, which she inherited from her father-in-law. She also rears some local fowls (free range). She combines farming with cassava processing.

KUSIMO FAMILY

Mr. Olusegun Kusimo

Mr. Kusimo was forty-eight years old, and a Christian. He is the firstborn in a polygamous family, where his mother was the second of three wives. His mother had seventeen children (three sets of twins inclusive), of which only three are alive. He has a total of seven surviving siblings, amongst his father's children. He had complete primary and secondary education. He was encouraged by his parents to marry early, in order to retain him in the village. He married his first wife at age nineteen. He has been married thrice. He had a second wife had left him before he married his present younger wife. He has six children, two males, and four females. Five of these children were born by his first wife, and one by his former second wife. The youngest wife does not have a child for him yet, but has four children in her previous marriage. Only his eldest wife who is a farmer participated in the study. The younger one is not a farmer.

He has four big farms totalling about seven acres, which he inherited from his parents. He grows cocoa, cassava, maize, pepper, and vegetables. He also owns a cassava milling business in partnership with a friend in the community. He combines farming and the cassava-milling business with a full-time job as a Clerical Officer in the Community Secondary School, Obafemi.

Mrs. Dorcas Kusimo

Mrs. Kusimo was forty years old, and a Christian. She had complete primary education. She hails from a polygamous family of three wives and seventeen children, of which only three are surviving. The rest died in their childhood, of childhood diseases. She married at age twenty, and has five children, one male, and four females. She grows cocoyam, cassava and maize on a 2-acre farmland given to her by her husband. She combines farming with food-selling in a primary school in 'Olofin' a nearby village. She also processes cassava from their farms for household consumption.

EDUNJOBI FAMILY

Mr. Sunday Edunjobi

Mr. Edunjobi was forty-five years old, and a Christian. He hails from a polygamous family, where his mother was the first of three wives. His parents were farmers and he had been involved in farming from childhood. He had complete primary education. He has been married twice, but now has only one wife. His first marriage was at the age of thirty-five. He has three children, two males and one female. One of the male children was born by his present wife, who participated in the study. He grows cocoa, cola nut, cassava, and maize on a four-acre farmland, which he inherited from his father.

Mrs. Nurat Edunjobi

Mrs. Edunjobi was thirty-eight years old and a Christian. She is the second born in a polygamous family where her mother was the second of two wives. She has two other siblings from her mother, a male and a female. She has been married twice. Her first marriage broke up due to domestic violence. Her former husband beat her during a quarrel over the loss of her business capital, which was allegedly taken by him. She grows maize and cassava on a $\frac{1}{2}$ -plot farmland given to her by her present husband. She is planning to start trading in pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables as soon as the husband can provide her with the take-off funds.

KOLEOSO FAMILY

Pastor Kehinde Koleoso

Pastor Koleoso was fifty-two years old and a Christian. He hails from a polygamous family, where his mother was the first of six wives. He is the fourth of his mother's six children, and sixth of his father's twelve children. He is the only survivor of a set of twins. He has seven surviving siblings, out of his father's children. He married his only wife at age twenty-three and has four children, one male, and three females. He is a professional teacher, and a graduate of University of Lagos. He is the principal of Obafemi-Owode Community Grammar School.

He started farming in 1982, and is now involved in both crops and livestock farming. He grows cassava and maize on a 3-hectares farmland. He inherited 2 hectares from his mother and leased the other hectare. He rears sheep and goat, and also owns a large poultry farm with about 750 birds. He intends to retire into full-time large-scale farming.

Mrs. Elizabeth Koleoso

Mrs. Koleoso was forty-nine years old, and a Christian. She hails from a polygamous family of three wives, where her mother is the first wife. She is the third of her mother's six children. She had complete primary education. Both of her parents were Muslims, but she became a Christian at a tender age, and decided to be attending church services. She eventually met her husband in the church. She combines livestock farming with trading in gift items.

OLUROTIMI FAMILY

Mrs. Fausat Olurotimi

Mrs. Olurotimi was twenty-three years old, and a Muslim. She is the younger of her parent's two children. She has an elder brother. She had no formal education, but has undergone apprenticeship in provisions' trading. She is married, but her husband (Mr. Olurotimi) resides in Lagos and visits her in Obafemi, her parent's village, occasionally. They have one child. She came to the village a year prior to the research period to take care of herself, when she fell ill. She is now well, but she is doing farm work to gather some funds to start provisions trading. She grows cassava, cocoyam, maize, pepper, okro, and vegetables on a leased 1-plot farmland. She combines farming with cassava processing.

BANKOLE FAMILY

Mrs. Hannah Bankole

Mrs. Bankole was thirty-eight years old, a Christian, and a widow. She is the firstborn in a monogamous family of two children. She had no formal education. She got married at the age of twenty. She lost her husband who was also a farmer, two years prior to the research period, after having been bed-ridden for a year. She was his only wife. She has two surviving

children, both males. The eldest is married with a child, while the youngest is still undergoing apprenticeship as an auto-mechanic. His education was terminated at his father's death, due to lack of funds. She was farming on her husband's farm before his death, but now owns no farm of her own because she could not afford the needed investment. She earns her living through casual labour as cassava processor.

OGUNNEYE FAMILY

Mrs. Abigail Ogunneye

Mrs Ogunneye was sixty-three years old, a Christian and a widow. She hails from a polygamous family of two wives, of which her mother was the first wife. She had no formal education. She is the third of her late husband's three wives. She has six children, two males, and four females. She grows cassava, maize, and yam on three farms totalling 3-acres in Obafemi, which belonged to her late husband. She combines farming with cassava processing (*fufu*).

SOWEMIMO FAMILY

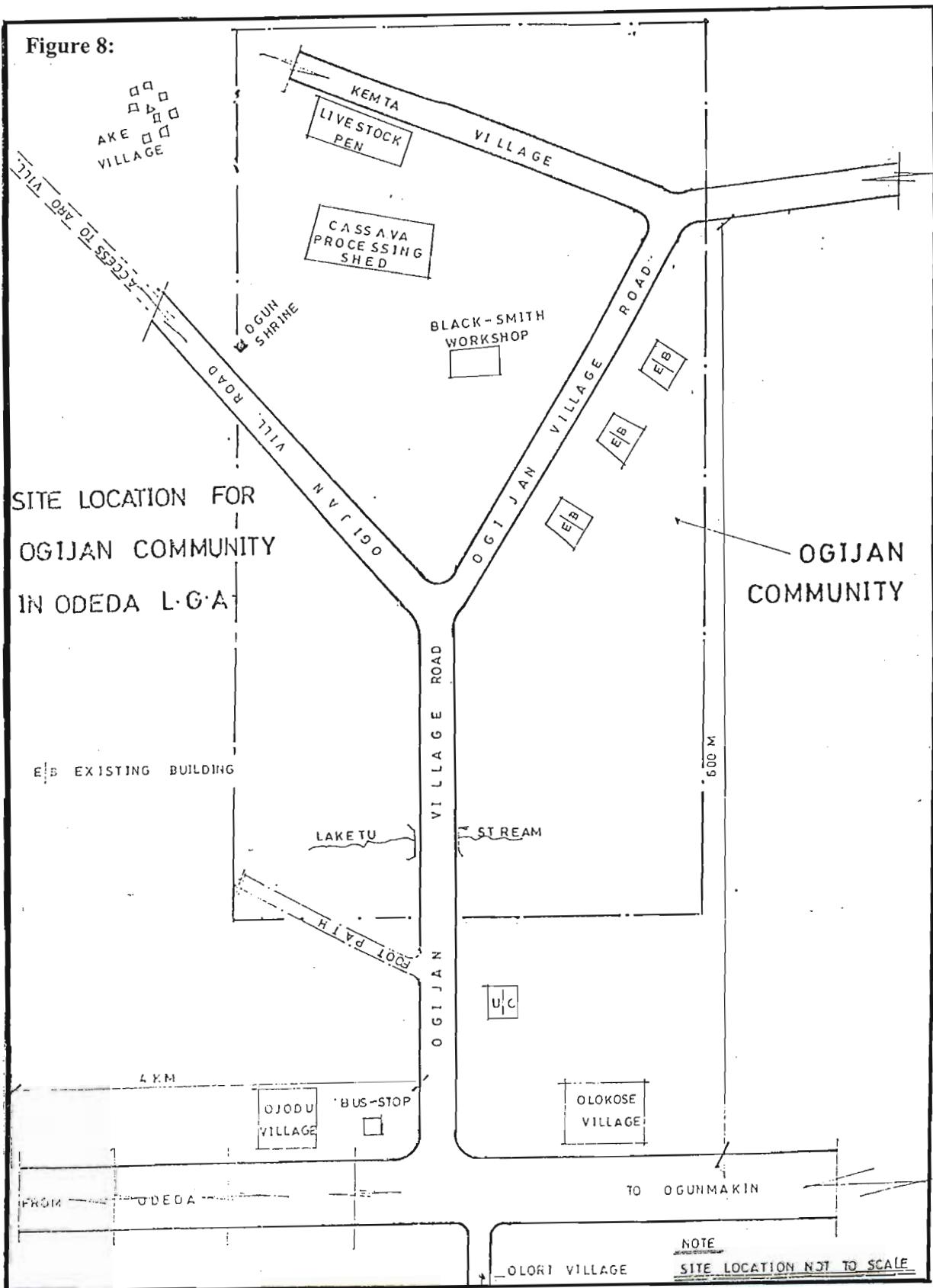
Mr. Rabiu Sowemimo

Mr. Sowemimo was seventy years old, and a Muslim. He had no formal education. He hails from a polygamous family of seven wives, where his mother was the fifth wife. He lost his father while still very young, but his mother lived till old age. He did not know his father at all. His mother had five children, four males, and one female, but only two of them, himself and his younger sister are surviving. He has married up to six wives in his lifetime, but has only two presently, of which none was in residence during the period of study. He had five children, of which only five are alive, three females and two males. He grows maize and cassava on his 1-acre farmland, which he inherited from his father.

5.2.4. OGIJAN COMMUNITY

5.2.4.1. Site Location Map

Figure 8:



5.2.4.2. Socio-historical and cultural context (Ogijan Community)

Ogijan is situated in Odeda local Government area of Ogun state. The village is located along Odeda-Ogunmakin road, off Abeokuta-Ibadan road. The village is 25 kilometres from Abeokuta (Ogun state). (See Fig. 8 – Site location map of Ogijan community). Ogijan was the name of the leader of hunters that first settled in, and founded Ogijan village in the early 1800s. This group of hunters came to the community on hunting expedition from Iporo, and gradually settled down in the community as farmers. Some of them dispersed to settle in neighbouring communities due to water scarcity in the dry seasons to found neighbouring communities now known as – ‘Olori’, ‘Ojodu’, ‘Lugboso’, ‘Osu’, ‘Olokose’, ‘Sogbade’ amongst others. Some of them later decided to move further again to acquire more farmland. Some of them went as far as ‘Balogun Lanloko’ and ‘Alagbagba’ along Abeokuta-Ibadan road. There is an Ogun shrine in the village, which every member of the community is expected to worship.

In the olden days, most farmers in the community were polygamists, and their wives and children served as unpaid farm labour. Farmers in the community in those days used to plant coffee, rice, melon, onions, yams and white beans. Not much of cassava was planted in those days. The farmers now plant mainly food and early-yielding crops, as they could not readily afford the energy-intensive, the huge financial investment and long maturity periods required of cash-crop farming. Increasing poverty levels and lack of access to credit facilities have also further compounded the situation.

In the past, farmers and their family members used to stay in huts in the farm area for a stretch of up to five to six days during harvest periods, rather than shuttling to and fro the village. Nowadays however, with increasing modernization and urbanisation, the available farm-labour has considerably reduced. Wives now own their own farms, while majority of farm-children have migrated to the urban areas for schooling and skill-apprenticeship

purposes, leaving men alone to cope with their farm work. In the past, women in the community work only on their husbands' farms (family farms) and do not own separate farms. Nowadays however, all the women in women in the village now farm independently, on separate personal farms. Only one of them in the entire community still works on her husband's farm, in addition to her personal farm. Women in the community are usually responsible for their children's education, while the men serve mainly as social figures as husbands and fathers.

Inappropriate pricing of agricultural products also discourages farmers. Produce buyers determine the prices of cash crops, while middlemen determine the prices of food crops. People have thus lost interest in farming due to meagre financial returns now grossly inadequate to meet family responsibilities and societal expectations. Another problem is the fragmentation of farmland resulting from inheritance sharing when the head of the family dies, coupled with huge financial involvement during social ceremonies, especially funeral ceremonies. In polygamous families for example, all surviving children of each wife of the deceased are expected to slaughter cows, entertain a lot of guests and spend lots of money on family uniforms and attires. The Akinlawon family participated in the study.

AKINLAWON FAMILY

Mr. Bamidele Akinlawon

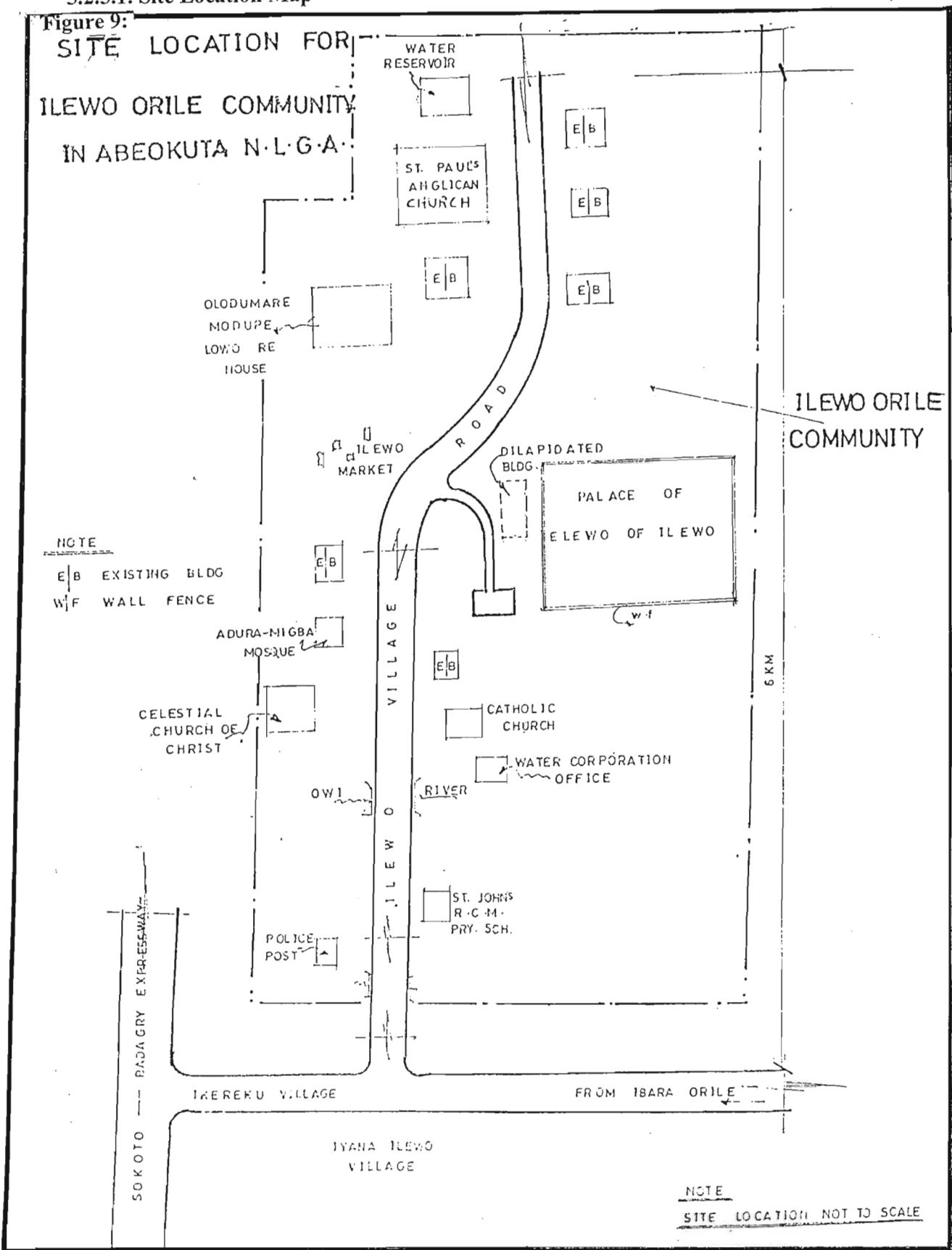
Mr. Akinlawon was sixty-two years old, and a Christian. He is the last born of his mother, who was his father's third wife. His mother had four children, two males and two females. He trained as an Interior decorator at the Yaba College of Technology, Lagos and also attended capacity building programmes in Liberia. He married his only wife at the age of thirty-one years, and has two children, both males. His wife, lives and works in the city as a civil servant, and thus could not participate in the study. He loved farming from his youthful

days, and retired into full-time farming in Ogijan Village. He is involved in both crops and livestock farming. He grows oranges, oil palm, maize, beans, yam, cassava, pineapple, pepper and vegetables, on a 2-hectare farmland. His livestock holding comprise, thirty-five sheep, thirty-eight goats, twenty local fowls, and about three hundred snails. He was formerly rearing ducks, but had to stop, when the village water source got polluted.

5.2.5. ILEWO-ORILE COMMUNITY

5.2.5.1. Site Location Map

Figure 9:



5.2.5.2. Socio-historical context (Ilewo-Orile Community)

Ilewo-Orile is situated in Abeokuta North local Government area of Ogun state. The village is located along Abeokuta-Badagry expressway, and it is about 25 kilometres from Abeokuta. (See Fig. 9 – Site location Map of Ilewo-Orile community). Ilewo-Orile was founded in the early 1900s by Prince Akinsale, one of the children of ‘Alaafin of oyo’. He migrated from Oyo in Oyo state of Nigeria in the 17th century with his wife ‘Agamu’ (Agamu means maker of drinking-water pot). The water pot brought along by his wife is still at the ‘oro’ shrine in Ilewo-Orile till today. Prince Akinsale left Oyo with one of his younger brothers, named prince Akinboyede who founded ‘Ibara-Orile’, a neighbouring village and his two younger sisters who founded ‘Ibooro’ and “Ilogun”. Prince Akinsale had four male children, namely – Akiro, Akise, Alaage and Akijogun, who in turn had their own children and became numerous. There is a Seconadry school, two primary schools, a Primary Health Care Centre and a Police Post in the community. The community has three big churches (Anglican, Catholic and Celestial), some other Pentecostal denominations, and two mosques. Although Christians, Muslims and traditionalists now inhabit the community, the indigenes are still obliged to worship the deities and perform annual rituals as and when due.

During an inter-tribal war (Adubi war) which broke out between 1900 and 1914, the Ilewo families were scattered to, and settled in the neighbouring communities, including ‘Igbogidi’, ‘Ori abule’, ‘Papa Ilewo’, ‘Kayero’, ‘Apete’, ‘Akiro’ and ‘Osara’. It was after the war that they came back to settle in the location known today as Ilewo Orile. Ilewo people now use these homesteads as farm settlements. Ilewo literarily means ‘Orile Owo’ (fountain of money). The name came into being as a result of huge financial returns from the cash crops (cocoa, colanut) and the farmers then were the first to be able to afford to roof their houses with iron sheets in those days. It had since been part of the ‘oriki’ (appeletion/praise

poetry) of Ilewo Orile people that they are '*Ilewo a'lo'bi ni koko*', which means that Ilewo orile people always have a stock of cola nut from which they can readily make money.

Ilewo-Orile indigenes, male and female have been farmers from the onset. In addition to other food crops, both men and women in the community are renowned growers of fruits, vegetables, pepper and tomatoes. The women are also ardent cassava processors. Up till about five years ago, farmers in this community used to have a problem with the marketing of their farm produce. Middle-women from Lagos used to come over to exploit the women and cart away their fruits, vegetables, pepper, tomatoes and processed cassava without adequate financial returns. The current traditional ruler stopped this practice by promulgating a law that everybody should bring his/her farm produce to the market square on market days where they should be sold, and that nobody should sell anything to the middle-women at home. The Ilewo-Orile market had since expanded and comes up every five days. Daily evening markets have also commenced early in the year 2003. The current traditional ruler of the community – His Royal Highness, Oba Michael Adegboyega Fatona, and his wife – Olori Magaret Mofoluke Fatona participated in the study.

ELEWO FAMILY

Oba Michael Adegboyega Fatona (Kabiyesi Elewo)

Kabiyesi celebrated his 68th birthday anniversary on 22nd January 2003, a day after the first interview was conducted. He is a Catholic. He is the firstborn in a monogamous family of seven children (5 boys, 2 girls). He married his only wife at the age of twenty-six, and they are blessed with seven children, two females, and five males. He trained as teacher and became a headmaster at a very young age before leaving the teaching profession. He also studied for and passed series of international examinations of the Institute of management as a

private student. He acquired his professional training as a Security Officer from specialised institutions in the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Before his enthronement as the traditional ruler, he was the Chief Security Officer of Chevron Oil Company in Lagos, a company he served for 17 ½ years. He was enthroned as the traditional ruler of Ilewo-Orile in 1987. He is the current Chairman of the Nigerian chapter of American Society of Industrial Security.

Because of his love for farming from childhood, he decided to go into large scale farming when he settled in the village as the traditional ruler. His farm holding is over 20 hectares, and he grows cocoa, cassava, yam, pepper, tomatoes and vegetables. Kabiyesi has a special indigenous technology of planting “Ewedu” a type of green vegetable that makes his species very unique in the entire state.

Mrs. Mofoluke Fatona (Olori Elewo)

Mrs. Fatona was 63 years old, a Christian and only wife of the traditional ruler (the Kabiyesi) of Ilewo-Orile, hence the title – “Olori”. She is the second born in a family of eight children. She is a native of Abeokuta, but brought up in Lagos, and never lived in the village before her husband’s enthronement. She is a professional teacher and got married at the age of twenty-one years. They are blessed with seven children, two females, and five males. She voluntarily retired from civil service as a Senior Assistant Inspector of education in 1987, to enable her to accompany her husband to the village, when he became the traditional ruler. She was never a farmer before coming to settle in the village, but now she combines farming with school proprietorship. The family owns a group of schools, A Nursery/Primary School and a Secondary school – Oriade International School. She farms on a two plots of 4-acre farmland, each given to her by Kabiyesi, and grows cassava, yam, pepper, tomatoes and

vegetables. Food items used in feeding the students in the group of schools are grown on Olori's and Kabiyesi's farms.

5.2.6. THE FARM-CHILDREN

Farm-children in the study were drawn from Kango, Boodo-Sanyaolu and Obafemi communities, which are three out of the five rural communities earlier described in this chapter. As earlier indicated in the research methodology, the thirty-one farm-children participated in the study comprise of fourteen girls and seventeen boys. Boys outnumber girls in the sample, because, during the data collection period, most of the girls were with their mothers, processing farm crops (cassava in particular), which are stereotyped as girls and women's job. The children participants' biodata are included in the thesis as Appendix II showing their names (psuedonyms), gender, and age in the respective communities. Real names of the children were not used, for reasons of anonymity and confidentiality. A summary of the adult participants' profile is also included as Appendix I.

CHAPTER SIX

CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER IDENTITIES AND GENDER-ROLE SOCIALIZATION IN FARM FAMILIES

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the socio-cultural factors influencing the construction of gender identities of farm children. The narratives of farm children, regarding the constructions of their gender identities are analysed, identifying how gender role socialization, and gender division of labour in families influence the constructions of their gender identities. Patterns of gender division of labour in farm-families and the rationale for sustaining stereotyped gender roles are also explored from the perspectives of the participating parents. The children's aspirations for future survival, prominent amongst which is education, forms a vital component of the chapter. This study thus establishes a link between gender identity construction, gender role socialization, educational aspirations of farm-children and their future psychological wellbeing.

6.2. CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER IDENTITIES

6.2.1. Socialization of children in farm-families

Since the study was conducted in Yorubaland, the farm-children participants are all *Yorubas*, and are socialised like every other traditional *Yoruba* child. *Yoruba* ideals in socialization are well defined. The word for education or training (*eko*), is wide in scope, but particular emphasis is put on etiquette and honesty (Fajana, 1966). The process of socialization in *Yoruba* families begins right from birth. Gbadegesin (1991) observes that, through the

rendition of '*oriki*' the mother constantly communicates with the newborn by tracing the ancestral history from the past, reminding the child of the values of the family and how the child's birth is noble and cherished. This raises the child's awareness as a member of the family and he/she begins to internalise the family's norms and values (Gbadegesin, 1991). The baby is normally carried on the mother's back and *Yoruba* women are amazingly adept at carrying on with the normal routine in the house or the market with child (Eades, 1980). The process of socialization that begins in the household gets into the larger community where the child is further exposed to the virtues of communal life.

In farm-families specifically, as part of their socialization, children learn from a very young age to participate in the domestic and occupational roles of their parents. They are therefore socialized into the traditional gender role patterns in the farm-families. Kayongo-Male and Oyango (1984) observe that the most striking characterisation of socialisation in the African family is the large number of agents of socialisation. Grandparents are important agents of socialization in traditional African societies; and they are more instrumental in introducing young people to sensitive topics such as, husband-wife relationships and sexual behaviour, as well as societal roles, values and tradition. Grandparents, according to Kayongo-Male and Oyango (1984), rely largely on storytelling, proverbs and songs as techniques of socialization. Siblings are also very heavily involved in the socialization process of younger siblings. *Yoruba* parents are traditionally affectionate and indulgent towards their children in the early years. After the indulgence shown towards children in their early years, there is an abrupt change after the age of about six, when the child is considered old enough to start taking on responsibilities.

6.2.2. Influence of socialization constructions of gender identities

Gender-role socialization has been discovered to be a strong factor in the construction of gender identities of children in several cultures (Barry, Bacon, and Child, 1957; Mead, 1977; Kagan, 1964; Obidigbo, 2002). In addition, prominent amongst the socio-cultural factors identified to be responsible for gender gap in education in Nigeria is the male-child syndrome (Okojie et al., 1996; Sokoya, 2000). By gender gap in education, I mean, the disparities existing between the literacy, school enrolment, and achievement rates of women, compared with men. In Nigeria for example, literacy and school enrolment rates are much lower for women than for the men. Other socio-cultural factors hindering female education in Nigeria include, large family size, religious barriers (female seclusion/purdah), poverty, and teenage pregnancy. However, although there is gender gap in education across the nation, the gap is wider in the northern parts, than in the south (Okojie, et. al., 1996; UNICEF, 2002).

The socialization process in family systems is believed to be central to the constructions of gender and gender role identity. Roles and responsibilities in farm families are gendered and the patterns of gender division of labour automatically exclude particular genders from some roles while inclusively restricting the performance of certain role to particular genders. Gender-role socialization involves broadening gender conceptions to include behavioural, social, and vocational aspects. Firstly, children must achieve gender differentiation before they can organize knowledge about what roles are appropriate for males and females. Secondly, the stereotypic behaviours that traditionally typify male and female orientations are not uniformly sex-linked. For example, not all males are aggressive, nor are all females unassertive. As a result, children have to rely on the relative prevalence of the social examples they observe. If for instance, children routinely see women performing homemaking activities, while males only occasionally try their hand at it, they are readily

conditioned to accept such activities as a woman's role. Social and cultural representations are therefore central to the socio-cultural constructions of gender identities.

The study revealed biological sex, bodily appearance, and gender-role stereotypes as having major influence on the construction of participants' gender identities. For instance, girls in the study described themselves by their gender, bodily appearance and emotional dispositions, while the boys described themselves by their gender and masculine stereotypes. The girls used phrases such as, "*I am a girl, I am a beautiful girl, I am a gentle girl*", while boys said: "*I am a strong boy, I am a man, I am an intelligent boy, I am a hard-working boy*". Role models of the girls are their mothers, sisters, aunts, and female teachers in school; while boys' role models are their fathers, brothers, uncles, and men in the community and the media, who have made it.

Gender role socialization and gender division of labour in families are also discovered to have strong influences on their gender construction. Their home environment, parents, school, and peers also contribute significantly to their gender identity construction. The girls, used the following phrases to describe societal expectations from girls: "*Well groomed, neat and tidy*", "*well mannered*"(for example, in sitting and communication), "*gentle, obedient and submissive*", "*servitude*"(to serve everybody, cook, wash dishes and dirty clothes), "*free to express emotions openly*", "*help mother, aunties and sisters to nurse babies*", "*assist mother in the kitchen*". Boys also discuss the societal expectations from them as boys: "*strong tough and active*", "*outgoing*", "*bold and courageous*", "*free to have friends*", "*do hard jobs in the home*", "*woo girls when matured*".

Responding to questions on what they like and dislike about themselves, vis-à-vis their gender. The girls said they like themselves for "*being beautiful*", "*being like Mummy*". One of them, twelve year-old Renike said she likes herself and her gender because her mother

buys her more things than her brothers. The girls used the following phrases to express their satisfaction:

“I like being a girl and being feminine”.

“I think it’s better to be a girl than to be a boy because we girls, do not get hit by our parents like the boys”.

“Boys are rough and stubborn”.

The boys said they like themselves for “*being masculine*”, “*being included in family decision-making*”, and “*assurance of inheriting parent’s property, though there’s not much to inherit*”. Reflecting on their dislikes, the girls expressed dissatisfaction about their gender for the following reasons: They claim to spend more time working for other people’s interest than for their personal needs, the society looks down on women, saying they are to be seen and not heard, they are expected to be servile throughout life (as daughters while young and as, wives, mothers and daughters-in-law when married), exclusion from family decision-making, and being expected to take orders from husband when married, because wives are not expected to make independent decisions. Examples of their comments include:

“Boys can escape household chores, but we girls can’t”.

“We girls do all the cooking while the boys laze about”.

“What I dislike about being a girl is having periods, but boys don’t have to go through the mess”.

Boys’ and girls’ satisfaction with their ascribed genders are part of a constant self-evaluating process, and the mirror into which they look for self-appraisal is constructed by the social representations of their worlds (family, school and community). The study reveals that the socialization process fosters gender typing in farm-families.

6.2.3. Patterns of gender roles and gender division of labour in farm-families

Gender roles are behaviours, expectations, and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine, which are embodied in the behaviour of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females. Although certain roles are outcomes

of biological predispositions, gender differences, gender roles and gender division of labour transcend the outcomes of biological predispositions in all human societies, and as has been earlier identified, these are highly dependent on the socialization process. The study revealed that different roles are assigned to boys and girls in farm-households. While the girls are assigned to indoor domestic chores like: sweeping, cooking, washing of dishes and clothes, fetching water, baby-minding, and processing of food crops. The boys are assigned to outdoor chores like: weeding, cutting of grasses, lifting of heavy objects, climbing trees to harvest cash crops (for example, cocoa, cola nut, oranges). These patterns of gender division of labour, according to the participants, exclude girls from tasks, which are considered to be ‘masculine’, energy demanding and risk involving.

Findings of the study however contradict this, as it was found that girls and women are responsible for transporting harvested food crops (on their heads), from the farms to their homesteads. This is an energy-demanding task. Girls and women participate in the planting of food crops, weeding of farms and carrying harvested food crops from the farms to the village. In addition to these farming activities, the girls are also expected to join their mothers in the performance of off farming activities like food-crop processing. Further to the children’s description of the gender role patterns in their families, the adult participants (parents) too were asked to describe gender role patterns in their families. The gender roles identified include: the breadwinner role, domestic, conjugal, parenting, Kinship and natal, occupational roles (on-farm and off-farm activities), self-regulatory roles, and community roles. Breadwinner roles are roles associated with the provision of shelter, food, clothing, education, training, and other family needs. Domestic roles are roles associated with cooking, housekeeping and other household chores. Conjugal roles include, the duties and responsibilities expected of each spouse toward the other. Parenting roles are roles performed

towards the children. Parenting roles include, childcare, training, education, provision of physical and emotional support and discipline to children.

Kinship and natal roles are roles expected of either a man or woman in his or her first family (that family of origin, before marriage), and the spouse's extended family. These include responsibilities towards, and expectations from parents, siblings and members of both extended families. Occupational roles include the on and off-farm activities. The on-farm activities are activities associated with farming, which take place on the farm. These include, land preparation, planting, weeding, and harvesting of farm products; while the off-farm activities include farm-related activities that take place away from the farm. These include, processing, preservation, storage, and marketing of farm products. Self-regulatory roles are roles directed towards self. These include: attention to personal needs (for example, health, body-care, clothing, feeding, rest and sleep).

Community roles include activities associated with participation in community-based organisations, religious groups, and expectations from these groups. Findings reveal that these various roles are gendered and, apart from having influence on the constructions of children's gender identities, they also have influence on the participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing. The discussion in this chapter is limited to the influence of gender role patterns on gender identity construction. Socio-cultural constructions of gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm-families are discussed in greater detail in chapter nine.

6.2.4. Influence of gender role patterns on gender identity construction

The gender role patterns in the farm-households exclude boys from being actively involved in the performance of domestic chores, which are considered to be feminine, and less energy demanding. Resultantly, the girls and women, are burdened by both on and off-farm roles, than the boys and men. Girls in the study expressed satisfaction with their assigned domestic

roles of cooking, sweeping, fetching water, washing plates and clothes and caring for the younger ones. Most of them, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the on and off farming activities. They particularly disliked going to the farm and being involved in the cassava processing (peeling, grating, sieving and frying), which are major off-farm activities in rural farming communities, in Yorubaland. The girls do not enjoy performing these activities, but still actively participate in them, because, they have to help their mothers in the fulfilment of their roles as farmers and processors. One of them, thirteen year-old Temitope, said:

I wonder where my mother gets her strength. She never seems to get tired. She goes to the market early in the morning after preparing breakfast for the household. On arrival from the market she goes to the farm. Comes back from the farm to prepare lunch and transfers to the processing shed. She has no time to spare even for lunch. She eats intermittently, while going on with her work. Imagine, my mother expects me join her at the processing shed as soon as I arrive from school, immediately after my lunch (sometimes 'Eba', but most of the time, we soak 'gaari'). I find it difficult to refuse her, because I pity her. She is very hardworking (Temitope).

Another girl, fifteen year-old 'Keji, said:

I don't like going to the farm at all. I usually feign illness or lie about having homework when I'm asked to come along to the farm, especially during the planting and harvesting seasons. Farm work is very tedious (Keji).

Boys in the study were more interested in farm maintenance and outdoor cleaning duties. They expressed their satisfaction with roles considered 'masculine' (climbing trees during harvests, for example), and expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of domestic chores. There were however two boys in the sample who claim to be actively involved in domestic chores in their families. One of them, Tunde is a first male child in a family of five children, while the other, Bayo, is the last born, and the only male child in a family of six children. Although they are actively involved in the performance of household chores, the explanations given by both Tunde and Bayo confirms an established patterns of gender division of labour in the traditional *Yoruba* family in general, and farm households in particular. Tunde's mother combines farming with marketing of pepper, tomatoes and

vegetables and therefore usually travels to other farms and markets in neighbouring villages and towns for buying and selling purposes. As her eldest child, Tunde has to cook for their father and his younger ones whenever his mother is not at home. The mother would have ensured that soup and foodstuffs are available in the home. Expressing his dissatisfaction with these roles Tunde said:

I don't like cooking and sometimes I have to cook. My mother travels a lot and we have to eat. I personally don't mind soaking 'gaari' but my younger ones will always cry of hunger, demanding solid foods. I must also cook for my father, when my mother is not around, since I would not expect him to cook his own food. I don't like washing plates and I don't have to, because I have younger ones to do it (Tunde).

Although the gender identity constructions of the boys and girls seem to agree with the ideological gender-role expectations, tensions, contradictions and ambivalence however characterize the study findings. From the narratives, it is apparent that the participating boys and girls were dissatisfied and sometimes ambivalent about the gender dichotomies and dynamics in their families, although they did not actually diagnose these dichotomies as gender inequalities, probably due to their ambivalences. Girls' self-perceptions of femininity and their feminine role are often considered less important or meaningful than masculinity, hence the resulting ambivalence, happiness derived from female attributes (for example, gentleness and beauty), and sadness over their gender role expectations and certain biological characteristics and (for example, restrictions on their movement and menstruation). Two of the boys do not like exclusion from kitchen duties. Three of the boys also expressed dissatisfaction with rigid male-gender role expectations. Mayowa, a fifteen year-old boys says he is dissatisfied for the following reasons: 'being expected to earn for other peoples' living (the bread-winner role), parents paying more attention to their success than their sisters', and giving them more grievous punishment for misbehaviour or poor academic results.

Expressing her dissatisfaction with how her mother restricts her movement, due to her gender, one of the girls, thirteen year-old Temitope said:

My mother never allows me to go out of the house after 7.00p.m, yet I would have loved to stroll around in the moonlight with my friends, just like the boys do. In addition, I prefer the boys in my class to the girls, as friends, but I dare not allow them to visit me at home because my mother will unjustly accuse me of being promiscuous (Temitope).

Gender, birth order, and gender of other siblings in the family were also revealed as contributing factors to gender identity construction and gender role socialization in families, which may in some instances contradict the expectations of the larger society. Male gender-role stereotypes for example, suggest that boys and men are expected to be bold, brave, and not vulnerable (O'Neil, 1981). One of the boys, seventeen year-old Bayo, an only male child, and the lastborn in a family of six children, due to his gender, his birth-order and gender of his other siblings, was socialized differently from his peers from families with different backgrounds, and this influenced his identity construction. Commenting on his peers' reaction to his 'difference', he said:

I can't understand why my friends usually laugh at me whenever I apologise for offending people. They say it is unmanly to accept faults and blame, that I should cultivate the habit of using 'bold-face' and 'bravado' (Bayo).

Bayo also shared his experience on how he became involved in performance of household chores after his five elder sisters left home. Before they left, he was never involved in such things. His sisters did everything, including washing his clothes and plates. Even after her sisters' departure from home, his mother continued washing his clothes, until one day during his early secondary school days, when his mother forgot to wash his white uniform, and he appeared dirty in school. His class-teacher (a woman) sent for his mother when they discovered what had been happening regarding Bayo's exclusion from household chores, and enlightened her on the need to make her son independent and useful for himself, and since then things have changed with him. Bayo's experience of gender role socialization is quite

interesting. His family is a typical traditional *Yoruba* family, where patriarchy is institutionalized and domination and oppression internalized. This is confirmed by the various roles played by his parents and sisters in his socialization process and their representations of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ roles.

It is, however, worthy of mention that Bayo’s case was compounded by the intersections of gender, age, and birth-order. His transition into the secondary school, which coincided with his sister’s departure from home, marked a turning point in his life, during which he experienced a marked degree of stress and crisis. These affected his academic performance in his first two terms in the secondary school. Bayo’s father believes that his mother is responsible for his poor academic performance, by distracting him from his studies. He wants him to excel academically, being the only male. Bayo says his father doesn’t want him to become a farmer like him. Bayo has been socialized as a typical *Yoruba* male. Even though he performs household chores, he believes it is circumstantial because his sisters were not around he needed to “assist” his mother. With Bayo’s socialization, he will likely grow to become like his father. When he gains independence and gets married, he may not likely want to perform these chores again, especially with a ‘subordinate’ female figure (the wife) around. He is very likely to have internalized some aspects of his father’s attitude towards his mother, and may re-play them in his own marriage, since modelling in the family is a strong factor in child’s socialization. His identity as a man in the same culture would therefore likely be a stereotype of his father.

6.2.5. Rationale for gender role stereotyping in farm-families

Because of participants’ ideological representations of gender and gender roles as revealed in the children and their parents’ descriptions of gender role patterns in farm-families, it was considered appropriate to explore their opinions concerning the reasons for gender division of

labour in farm families. This is a poststructuralist approach of exploring gender power relations and gender identities, which fosters an understanding of why women tolerate social relation that subordinated their interests to those of men. The approach, as earlier suggested by Weedon (1987), also exposed discursive strategies employed by many of the men in men in the study, in their quest to sustain male hegemony.

They believe that, that is how God has ordained it, and that is how their forefathers have institutionalised it. Some *Yoruba* myths were also associated with the identified reasons for gender division of labour. Below are some responses from male and female farmers. For example, Mr. Enilolobo argues:

Traditionally, different roles are expected of males and female in the family and by the society. Our forefathers shared different roles for males and females because some roles are feminine while some others are masculine. For instance, it is a taboo for men to perform certain feminine roles e.g. sweeping, washing of dishes. In addition, a man cannot be processing vegetable oil. It is a woman's duty and God has made it to be like that (Mr. Enilolobo).

The argument of Mr. Enilolobo in the above passage uses tradition, culture (for example, taboos), and religion to legitimise gender roles. In his own discourse, Mr. Edunjobi stresses the difference between the biological make-up of men and women, saying that men are stronger than women. According to him:

Different roles are shared for males and females because it is believed that males can withstand more stress than females and also because that is how roles have been shared in the beginning up till now. A woman is not strong enough to do what a man can do. A man is stronger than a woman. Some roles are convenient than others (Mr. Edunjobi).

The comments of Messrs. Enilolobo and Edunjobi above, confirm one of the underpinning arguments in this study that the socio-cultural constructions of femininity and masculinity, and the ideology of gender relation, characteristic of culture, act as powerful organisers of behaviour. Glover and Kaplan (2000) noted that a failure to observe culturally valued and gendered prescriptions for behaviour can lead to social disapproval and even punitive social action. Glover and Kaplan's explanation of how culture influences the perpetuation of gender

ideologies above, also offers an explanation for why Olori, who had been enjoying her husband's (Kabiyesi Elewo) involvement in household chores in Lagos, prior to their relocation to Ilewo-Orile, now refuses to allow him to help in the kitchen because they are now resident in the village, where adherence to cultural values is very high. Interestingly, in spite of the fact that the various findings of this study have revealed that the participating women farmers are overburdened, they too, argue in favour of gender stereotypism. For instance, Mrs. Musiliu asserts:

Women are not as strong as men. For instance, a woman cannot cut a large expanse of farmland, but a man can. Gender division of labour helps in the distribution of work and each person will know his or her own duty. It makes work go on smoothly and also helps an individual to be in good health (Mrs. Musiliu).

Mrs. Musiliu's assertions here, is an exhibition of internalised ideological gender role representations, believing that men are stronger than women. She even argued that gender division of labour is advantageous, in that it enhances a sense of responsibility, make work goes on smoothly, and fosters good health. My observations did not however agree with Mrs. Musiliu's assertions. The bane of the negative influence of gender roles on men's psychological wellbeing as discovered in this study for example, is their attachment to the 'family head's primary responsibilities' (*ojuse akoko beale*), labelled the "breadwinner roles", as shown in the experiences of Messrs. Adeleke and Akinlawon, earlier referred to in this chapter. The experiences of these two men are further explored as case studies in the chapter eight. In addition, findings of this study disagree with Mrs. Musiliu's assertion that gender division of labour fosters good health. Rather, the study reveals that women's adherence to traditional gender roles (for example, household chores, child-care, and post-harvest activities), and the addition of men's traditional gender roles (for example, breadwinner and some on-farm activities), increases their burden, deprives them of rest, relaxation and leisure, and predisposes them to conditions of physical and psychological illbeing.

6.2.6. Internalization of gender ideologies by farm-children

The reason usually given to justify trans-generational stereotyping of gender roles by the actors and perpetrators is – “*as it was in the beginning, it is now, and ever shall be*”. Findings of the study reveal that, the farm-children internalize gender ideologies right from a very young age, and thus grow up to become ‘stereotypes’ of their parents. The term ‘stereotype’ was introduced into the social sciences by Lippmann (1992), who, as a journalist, adopted the phrase from the world of printing. In printing, a stereotype is a metal cast that is used to make repeated and identical images of a character on paper. ‘Stereotype’ was used by analogy to describe the way in which people apply the same character to their impression of a group and its members. Stereotyping according to Augostinos and Walker (1995) refers to the process of activating and using a stereotype. Stereotypes are, therefore, essentially ideological representations. Whether favourable or unfavourable, “a stereotype is an exaggerated belief associated with a category” (Allport, 1954). Stereotypes justify social position. Their function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category. From the parents’ description of gender role patterns in farm-families and the reasons provided for trans-generational gender stereotyping, findings of the study confirm that socialization is the origin of stereotyping of gender roles. Stereotypes thus bind us to our world’s representations of ideas. As a follow-up to the responses provided by parents to justify gender role stereotyping, the farm-children were also given opportunities to explain what they perceive as responsible for gender role stereotyping in farm-families. Just like the responses of the parents earlier discussed in chapter, the children also attributed role gendering to tradition, and socio-cultural ideologies. For example, one of the boys, Bode asserts:

Asking male children to perform household chores is demeaning. It interferes with our self-esteem (Bode).

Bode's assertion in the above statement corroborates what the adult male participants also said concerning male-involvement in the performance of domestic roles. This connotes that Bode has internalised the tradition that, men are not supposed to perform domestic roles because it is women's responsibility, and as such demeaning for men. Further corroborating their parents' views the entire boys and girls in the study are of the opinion that: "*Males are stronger than females and it is believed that females are fragile*". The boys and girls even agree within the groups that it is unacceptable for a girl to prefer 'masculine' roles in the household, and vice versa. If a married man is found performing domestic chores, they say that it means that, "*probably he doesn't have a wife*". They, however, believe that when there are only boy children in the household, they would have to be trained in the performance of all household tasks. During one of the interviews, one of the girls, seventeen year-old Sumbo, said that she would continue to sweep her boyfriend's room even if she always finds it in a dirty state. When asked whether this would not cause a problem in marriage if the boy does not change his dirty habits and wants her to do everything, she gave no response. One of the girls, sixteen yr-old Bamidele describes how she would react if she got to her brothers house and found him in the kitchen:

I will definitely be annoyed, and query her for allowing her husband to prepare food in the house. That is a very bad habit. How would she leave her duties as a wife for her husband, just because of breastfeeding? I will also report the case to my parents when I return to the village (Bamidele).

The above representations confirm the theoretical positions of the social representations theory and the role played by modelling and ideological representations in the socialization process. One of the lessons learnt in Bayo's case is that the assignment of inclusive and exclusive roles for children in the family is neither in the best interests of the children nor the parents, noting the crisis and embarrassments experienced by Bayo and his mother. Children need to be equipped with the ability to function efficiently and effectively in all roles, irrespective of their genders, in order to be able to live independent lives in future.

6.3. GENDER IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

As part of the data-gathering process adopted in the study, the farm-children were given opportunities for self-reflection, regarding how they perceive construction of their gender identities, vis-à-vis the identified ambivalences, tensions, and contradictions, and their future aspirations. The boys and girls were asked to reflect on strategies they would employ at individual levels to positively deal with the dichotomies. Self-reflection is at the heart of identity awareness. Hall, (1990) posits that self-knowledge, planning and goals evolve from reflection. The capability for reflective self-consciousness enables people to analyse their experiences and to think about their own thought processes. By reflecting on their varied experiences and on what they know, they can derive generic knowledge about themselves and the world around them. People not only gain understanding through reflection, they evaluate and alter their own thinking by this means.

Despite the ambivalences in the boys' and girls' gender identity constructions, and resistance towards rigid gender role expectations in their respective families, findings of the study reveal that these children aspire to the sustain ideological representations of stereotypic gender roles in their adulthood and later years. All the boys and girls in the study aspire to acquire good education, which they perceive as the key to their survival, and gender role fulfilment. Below are Bimpe and Bayo's responses. Sixteen year-old Bimpe (a girl), said:

I will study hard and have good education, so that I can marry a well-educated and enlightened man. I will not want to live with in-laws when married so that we can live, as we desire.

Nineteen year-old Tayo (a boy), said:

I will rather study hard and struggle to have a good career, to be able to live up to societal expectations of a good husband and father. To aim at changing societal expectations regarding the bread-winning role of a man is to be unmanly. I will however encourage my wife on the need for sharing financial responsibilities in the home; but I will not force her. It is the responsibility of the man to provide for his family.

While they see education as a means for future survival and economic independence, they also believe that good education will empower them to function effectively in their respective gender roles. They believe that good education will enhance their future happiness and psychological wellbeing as women and men. The girls on one hand, believe that acquiring good education and marrying a well-educated man will make them good wives and mothers, while the boys on the other hand, also believe that good education will earn them their wives' respect, make them good husbands, responsible fathers, and good providers for their families. Although the boys and girls agree that education may influence changing gender roles and gender division of labour in families, they do not believe that it could effect a permanent change in the status quo. For girls and women, following the stereotype can lead to self-sacrifice and implicit acceptance of inferiority. For boys and men, the active pursuit of ambition can consume their lives and destroy intimate relationships with other people, especially women and children (Sharpe, 1976:68). From the narratives in this study, Bayo's mother and many of the participating girls have accepted their subordinated position as the norm.

In addition, the boys in the study and Bayo's father demonstrated how patriarchy has been institutionalized both in the older and younger generations, all because nobody seems to realise a need to challenge the status quo. Gender stereotyping is thus continually perpetuated even in the younger generation. The boys and girls have thus internalized the socio-cultural representations of their genders as described in the framework of the study, and adopted a discursive stance to explain their subjectivity and internalization of these ideological representations. They believe that nothing, no matter how much anybody tries, could be done to change the status quo, due to socio-cultural expectations. The social representations framework explains the influences of social constructions power relations, and subjectivity, on gender and gender relations, as well as how people identify and function within their

various role-frameworks. The children participants' identity construction and their social representations of their expected gender roles, both in the present and the future are revealed as being contingent on their socialization and interactions within their socio-cultural environment, as well as the ideological representations of gender they have internalised.

6.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Findings of the study reveals ascribed gender based on biological sex, gender division of labour in families, prescribed modes of dressing, identification with same-sex parent, parental expectations, and peer influence, as important factors in the construction of the children's gender identities. Constructions of gender identities and gender role socialization of boys and girls in the studied farm families are observed to be interdependent. Early gender role socialization influences gender identity construction, while gender identity construction also predicts gender role orientation in the present and future. Findings of the study confirm earlier cited findings by Barry, Bacon, and Child (1957), which found that pressure towards nurturance, obedience and responsibility is most often stronger for girls, while pressure towards achievement and self-reliance is most often stronger for boys.

The findings also reveal that some of the factors identified as determining boys' gender identity by Kagan (1964) also influence girls' gender identity construction. These include, identification with same-sex parent, acquisition of gender stereotyped skills and influence of the environment. These children's acceptance of their prescribed gender roles coincides with findings of Patwardhan's (2002) study of boys and girls in Eritrean High schools and University in Asmara, suggesting that children in both cultures (Nigeria and Eritrean) have internalized stereotypic gender roles. Socio-cultural factors are also responsible for this internalization in both cultures. Apart from other determinants of gender

identity construction discovered in the study, what makes the findings peculiar in this instance, is the children's attitude toward the sustenance of stereotypic gender roles.

The study also revealed participants' resistance to stereotypic masculine and feminine characteristics, as exhibited in their ambivalences, tensions and contradictions to rigid gender role expectation from both genders. However, despite these resistance and ambivalences towards the sustenance of rigid stereotypic gender roles, all the participating boys and girls aspire to acquire good education, which they perceive as the key to their survival and gender role fulfilment. These have implications for their present and future psychological wellbeing as identified by the participants themselves. Findings of the study, regarding how the boys and girls construct their gender identities and perceive their gender roles both now and in the future, suggest that their gender role socialization may constitute a barrier to their full development and a realization of their full potentials. Both the formal and informal curricula are therefore extremely important in the construction of gender identity, and gender role socialization in the society.

The study reveals not only differences, but also similarities in the perspectives of the boys and girls', regarding their gender identity constructions as well as their gender role socialization in the family. For instance, both boys and girls identified quality education as a vehicle and means for gender identity empowerment, and the desire to acquire good education to be responsible husband/father on one hand, and independent wife/mother, on the other, thus sustaining stereotypic gender roles. As earlier discussed above, while the girls believe that acquiring good education and marrying a well-educated man will make them good wives and mothers, the boys believe that good education will earn them their wives' respect, make them good husbands, responsible fathers, and good providers for their families. Although they agree that education may influence changing gender roles and gender division of labour in

families, they do not believe that it could effect a permanent transformation of the prevailing socio-cultural expectations.

The farm-children's identification of education as a vital requirement for role fulfilment, coupled with my personal perceptions of education as reflected in my life history, pre-supposes that education is highly valued in the study location. The importance attached to education in South-western Nigeria, and in particular, Ogun state where the study was conducted could be traced to the colonial past and Christian religion in the state. In the colonial era, the Missionaries established the first school and church in Nigeria, in Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun state where the study was conducted. There are therefore, so many schools in both the urban and rural areas of the state. Education at primary school level has also been free in the state since the early 1960s. The gender gap in education in the state is therefore not as prominent as the northern parts of the country. The socio-historical context of the study as well as the socio-cultural constructions of gender identity has influenced findings of the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FAMILY DYNAMICS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING: ANALYSES OF FARM-CHILDREN AND PARENTS' NARRATIVES

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the interpersonal process within the farm family system and discusses how gender relations in the home and the family climate influence the psychological wellbeing of members. The chapter presents and discusses the perspectives of children and parents regarding the influence of gender dynamics on their perceived psychological wellbeing. One of the roles of social representations, as identified by Augoustinos and Walker (1995), is to conventionalise objects, persons and events, and locates them within a familiar categorical context.

Voices of the farm children are presented as narratives and discussed alongside the childhood histories and current life experiences of their parents, to present a complete picture of interpersonal relationships in the family. Data generated during the pilot focus group discussion session also yielded some of the narratives. The narratives touch on participants' feelings as parents recapture events in their childhood and they remember that they were also once kids. Parents speak out about their spouses and children, and children speak openly about their parents and siblings. Themes emanating from the chapter include: communication patterns and parental dispositions, parental relations and parent-child relationships, marital dynamics, power dynamics and decision-making patterns in farm-families, and the roles played by these, in the determination of family climate, and psychological wellbeing of the entire family.

Frude (1991) describes the family as a system with emergent properties, and the members of the family unit as the elements. The family system encompasses the relationships between its various components, with each member having a relationship with other members, and with the family as a whole. Relationships are the links and contiguities that connect people. They are 'between' people rather than 'within' one or more individual. These relationships cannot be understood by examining people as individuals, no matter how extensive the analysis might be (Frude, 1991). The systems approach is adopted in this chapter, to discuss the perspectives of children and parents regarding the influence of gender dynamics on their perceived psychological wellbeing. This approach enhances an understanding of individual family members in terms of their roles within the system.

7. 2. FAMILY FACTORS AND FARM-CHILDREN'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

7.2. 1. Communication patterns and parental dispositions

Findings of this study reveal that communication patterns, parental dispositions, and the family climate are major determinants of the psychological wellbeing of every member of the household. Family dynamics essentially entail the dynamics of family interaction. Family dynamics, therefore, means a constantly changing interactive process in which members of the family function within the framework of their individual capacities, roles and expectations. The narratives of the children and their parents discussed in this chapter reveal that, every family member is sensitive to the interpersonal process in the home. The children are particularly sensitive to both their interpersonal relations with their parents, as well as relations between their parents. Potentially important family factors, such as happiness and the emotional stability of children, contribute to the overall psychological wellbeing of the

entire family. Parenting styles, parent-child relations, and marital relations all influence the climate of the home and contribute to the psychological wellbeing or illbeing of its members.

The children shared their experiences about how they perceive their parents' dispositions and psychological wellbeing, and how these influence their psychological wellbeing. The boys and girls identify and interpret their parents' outward dispositions and temperaments, as "good" and "bad moods". They associated their father's cheerful moments with moments of praise and acknowledgement of good deeds, and their bad moods with frowns, shouts and high levels of intolerance. Parental good and bad moods as reflected in their narratives are interpreted to be associated with their parents' level of psychological wellbeing. For instance, Abake, a thirteen year-old girl says the following, regarding her father's dispositions:

Whenever I see him cracking jokes and praising his children, I know it is a good day and he is happy, but when he frowns and shouts at people, I take cover, because that suggests that he is unhappy. He is not usually happy if the rain is late after he has planted his crops. I know he is sad when he does not interact with people around or when he just goes to bed after the day's work straight away (Abake).

Abake's statement above connotes that she is able to differentiate between when her father is happy from when he is sad, by his external dispositions. According to her, frowning, shouting at other people, and not interacting with people are interpreted as manifestations of unhappiness. Abake's decision to keep away from her father when he is not favourably disposed to others, or is unhappy, also suggests that her father's disposition and state of mind influences their interactions with each other in the family, and thus, the family climate. The experience of Tunde, a ten year-old boy, is similar to Abake's. Tunde says that he knows that his father is happy when the father praises him, jokes with people around. Joking with people around is an evidence of interaction with other people, which is a feature that manifested in Abake's interpretation of her father's dispositions.

The children also identify and interpret their mother's dispositions (good and bad moods). Tunde says he knows his mother is happy when he sees her chatting with people and praising her children. As in his father's case, Tunde believes that a happy mood is reflected in his mothers' outward disposition towards him, and other people around. A bad mood on the other hand is interpreted as connoting unhappiness, desire to be alone, and fretfulness. Layo, and Bola interpret their mothers' moods as follows: Similar to Abake's interpretation of her father's disposition, Layo (a twelve year-old girl) says that, When her mother is unhappy, "she prefers being alone, isolates herself, frowns, snubs, and shuns us". She further says that her mother is unhappy and annoyed with her as a daughter, when she (Layo) misbehaves, or she is late to inform her mother about her school needs. In this same direction, Bola, a fourteen year-old girl also reports her observations regarding when her mother is annoyed and unhappy. She says:

She is usually annoyed, when she asks me to come along to the farm when it is still sunny and I refuse, saying she should wait till sunset (Bola).

The experiences of Layo and Bola above indicate that the children are able to identify the sources of their mothers' unhappiness and annoyance. The girls' (Layo and Bola) also indicate that their behaviours as daughters influence their mothers' unfavourable dispositions. While Layo and Bola as shown in their statements above interprets their mothers' unfavourable dispositions, Banji, a nine year-old boy discusses his interpretation of his mother's favourable dispositions. He explains:

Whenever my mother commends me and says my 'oriki' (ancestral and family appellations) I know she is happy. I am also usually happy during such periods, because I know that she is pleased with me and would be willing to give me whatever I request of her at that time. I also desire to assist her more. (Banji).

Banji's statement above show how he connects his mother's usage of 'oriki' with her moods and the dual psychological effect of the rendition of 'oriki' on himself and his mother. 'Oriki' rendering is usually used by *Yoruba* to appreciate, motivate, encourage, and inspire loved

ones, especially children, grandchildren and husbands. '*Oriki*' recall good memories of one's ancestors in a eulogic phenomenon. '*Oriki*' in *Yoruba* have a dual psychological effect; that is on the speaker, as well as on the recipient (the person whose *oriki* is being rendered). Rendering somebody else's *oriki* (for example, a child, grand-child, or husband) is often a reflection of the state of mind of the speaker, and connotes that the speaker is pleased with, or favourably disposed towards the person whose '*oriki*' is being rendered. It is very unlikely that someone will render the *oriki* of another person whom one is not pleased with. Hence, Banji is able to associate her mother's favourable disposition with the rendering of his '*oriki*'. On the other hand, when someone's *oriki* is being rendered, the recipient usually feels happy, eulogized, and highly esteemed. Therefore, when you observe or hear a *Yoruba* woman rendering another person's *oriki*, it is most likely that she is appreciating that person, she is encouraging that person, or she is desirous of a favour from that person.

'*Oriki*' has significance in the enhancement of self-esteem and psychological wellbeing. '*Oriki*' rendering is therefore capable of influencing a favourable change in recipients' moods and thus the family climate. Barber (1991) describes '*oriki*' as a highly charged form of utterance. '*Oriki*' according to her, goes to the heart of a subject's identity, elicits its inner potency and evokes the subject's qualities as well as whatever is distinctive in the subject. Composed to single out and arrest in concentrated language, whatever is remarkable in current experience, their utterance energizes the hearer. They are heavy words fused together into formulations that have an exceptional density and sensuous weight (Barber, 1991: 12-13).

The children also identified what makes their fathers annoyed and how they recognize that their fathers are annoyed. Both boys and girls agree that their fathers are usually annoyed when they fail to carry out instructions promptly, or carry them out slowly or sluggishly. The

children also mention how they could alter their parents' dispositions. For instance, Keji, a fifteen year-old girl asserts:

I know how to alter his mood anyway. Whenever I indicate that I'm willing and ready to accompany him to the farm, he is happy (Keji).

Keji's statement above shows that, apart from recognizing and interpreting parents' dispositions, children are also aware of how they can influence or alter parents' dispositions for their benefit.

7.2.2. Parental relations

In addition to the recognition and interpretation of parents' dispositions, the farm-children's narratives also revealed that harmonious parental relations contribute to the children's emotional stability, and psychological wellbeing. The boys and girls are sensitive to conflicts amongst their parents and share their experiences about the factors that precipitate conflicts in their homes. They also discuss how parental conflicts affect their (the children's) emotional stability and psychological wellbeing. Some of the factors identified by the children include, lack of, or inadequate financial support of parents for each other, lack of mothers' submissiveness to father, with particular reference to gaining husbands' approval before embarking on a project, or making a journey. For instance, one of the boys says: "*My mother doesn't support my father financially*", while another boy says: "*My mother sometimes causes problems, when she goes to a place without informing my father*". Furthermore, one of the girls says: "*When my father doesn't hearken to my mother's advice, things go wrong*", while another girl says: "*When my father and my mother are not in good terms with each other, I am unhappy*". These children's appraisals of their parents' relationship evidences the influences of such relationships on their parents' dispositions toward each other, and the spillover influence on the children's psychological wellbeing.

7.3. PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Parents in the study claim that their children are their sources of joy and happiness. They are particular about their successes in school and chosen vocation or career. Bad or unsuccessful children however disturb parents' psychological wellbeing. The parents are also happy when the children love and relate well with each other. Fathers and mothers however differ on what make them happy concerning their children's life outcomes. The mothers are concerned about good behaviour and achievement. The fathers are also concerned about these, but they are more particular about justification of investment and what the children give to them when they visit. While the happiest moments of most mothers are when children graduate from school or from learning one trade or skill or the other, the fathers are more joyous when children come home with gifts and regular allowances. Commenting on the academic attainment of two of her children, and her sustained efforts at caring for them, Mrs. Kehinde says:

Two of my children graduated from the University not too long ago. I used to give them money. Even those of them that are working, I still give them money when they are in need. I want them to live comfortably. It is not my wish to be a burden unto any child. They do likewise for me too (Mrs. Kehinde).

Whereas, Mr. Babatunde believes that after investing in a child, the child is obliged to reciprocate, by caring for parents. Mr. Babatunde asserts:

Ti Okete ba dagba omu omo re l'o nmu (When the bush-rat gets old, it sucks from its children's breast). After investing in our children, we expect them to care for us in return. We are happy when nothing bad happens to our children and they visit us bringing gifts along (Mr. Babatunde).

Agreeing with Mr. Babatunde's comment above, Mr. Ogunsan also says that his children take care of him, and that he prays for them to enable to continue taking care of him. A general observation throughout this thesis is that both the male and female farmers use *Yoruba* proverbs and idiomatic expressions to exemplify their viewpoints. Ferguson (1970) describes the use of proverbs as an art highly prized by the *Yorubas*. He observes that proverbs are

used as spices in *Yoruba* conversation, not as a mere embellishment, but rather, a vital part of the fabric of conversation.

The study also reveals that although a patriarchal society where there is preference for the boy-child, most fathers and mothers in the study prefer their daughters because they visit them more often and are more caring. This is also a reflection of the gender construction of the nurturing role as an attribute for femaleness. For instance one of the fathers, Mr. Adeleke says:

Both my daughters and mothers take good care of me, but the daughters are more caring. It is a thing of the past to say that when girls marry they would not care for parents. These days, what a man can do, women do even better. For instance it is my daughters that bring me provisions and rice from the city when they come. They also give me money on a regular basis within their capability; but the men come in occasionally and bring only money (Mr. Adeleke).

Corroborating Mr. Adeleke's statement above, Mrs. Kehinde who earlier mentioned her commitment to continue to care for her children and assist them financially, also says:

I thank God that I have sons and daughters. They are all very good children. They often buy me dresses. For instance the outfit that I'm wearing in that picture is the Christmas gift from one of my sons. He buys it on a yearly basis while the daughters' gift comes in more often (Mrs. Kehinde).

The above comments indicate that, although women persist in the fulfilment of the motherly roles even when their children are grown, both fathers and mothers appreciate being cared for by children in their old age.

Discipline is another factor discovered in the study to influence a child's outcome. Discipline was revealed as a behaviour modifier in children. Deconstructing their personal childhood histories, parents in the study, emphasize the need for good parental upbringing and child discipline for assurance of a good future and responsible adulthood. They believe that when a child is well brought up and adequately disciplined as and when due, s/he he is being prepared for an independent adulthood and that he would bring glory, rather than shame to the family. One of the adult participants in the study, *Kabiyesi Elewo* of Ilewo Orile, a traditional

ruler and farmer, reported an incident in his childhood days, depicting the influence of childhood discipline on his later life, current status and psychological wellbeing. ‘*Kabiyesi*’ is *Yoruba*’s epithet for a traditional ruler, as the tradition does not allow that the Oba be addressed on first name basis, while ‘*Elewo*’ is his title as the traditional ruler of the Ilewo-Orile community. While deconstructing the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ memorable days in his life history, he recalled how he was loved and pampered by his grandmother and how this led to his father sending him away from home. Below is part of his narrative:

When I was in the primary school, I came home for the weekend. Then, my father was the patron of local social club called ‘*egbe Igbalaye*’. They feast, and hold their meetings once a month. During each meeting, they make financial contributions (*Ajo*). During these meetings they are usually served with bush-meat and pounded yam. On that memorable day, I wanted to eat out of the cooked bush-meat, and therefore decided to fake a sprained ankle, so that I won’t have to travel back to Abeokuta on that Sunday.

Elewo’s grandmother noticed how he was walking, and not knowing it was pretence, advised him to stay back in the village for proper care and attention. His father however discovered his trick on arrival from a trip made to the city earlier that day, and was very annoyed. His father was determined to send him out of the village to return to Abeokuta where he was living with relatives, that night, despite the fact that it was late.

My father pursued me until we got to Ibara-Orile (a nearby village). By that time it was 8.45 p.m. in the dark. I was running and he was running after me. When we got to a spot where there was a Maternity hospital then. Fortunately, there, was a man - a blacksmith, who knew my father. He used to come to Ilewo to sell hoes and cutlasses. He was easing himself at that spot. When we get there, my father called my name again and asked me to stop. He then said he was leaving me under the protection and guidance of God and that God should keep his eyes on me. He was reciting the type of prayer that the priest usually recites in church. He said he has given me what he thought would be useful to me in life and he doesn’t want to see me again.

His father then turned back to go to the village leaving him alone in the dark. It was the blacksmith, who now took it upon himself to take him to Abeokuta, in the thick of that night. That, according to *Kabiyesi*, marked the beginning of his suffering. *Kabiyesi* narrates his ordeal during their night journey:

He (the blacksmith) put the tray, which was very heavy, on my head. We started walking towards Abeokuta. He stopped at every village and in each of these villages they gave him local palm-wine (*Oguro*) and food; but he didn't give me anything to eat.

They did not arrive at their destination until around 1:30a.m., as the journey was on foot. By that time he was very hungry. On arrival, the blacksmith woke his wife up from sleep to fetch water for him to take his bath. It was after having a shower that they headed for Kabiyesi's guardians. On arrival at about 2.00 a.m., his guardian flogged the hell out of him again, saying that he wanted to start playing truancy. Kabiyesi says it was a day he will never forget in his life. He said if his father had not done what he did that day, he would have been nobody today. He further recalled how his peers who he was roaming about with in the village in those days, would have influenced him, and that he would have dropped out of school, as they did. His father's disciplinary action in the related story and in other circumstances curbed negative peer influences in his life. These according to him are responsible for his success in life and current status. Elewo's story reminds me of a day reported in my life history too when my father flogged me mercilessly for bringing home a bad character report form school.

Reflecting on how the training and discipline inculcated in him by his father had influenced him as a father, Kabiyesi speaks about his children. Their marriage is blessed with seven children, and he says that all of them are "well disciplined". Being well disciplined according to him connotes, "not pampering", "discouraging bad peer-influence", "not condoning idleness and laziness", and equally involving boys and girls in domestic chores. Kabiyesi's wife, Olori is also a disciplinarian. She supports her husband and corroborates his assertions, by saying that:

I hate pampering. There is nothing that a child needs, that I don't give, even if it means my not eating, but I cannot pamper. When my children were younger, you will find a cane at every corner of the house. I am a very strict disciplinarian.... All our children cook fantastically, till now. When I got to London, my son will tell his wife to rest that he wants to cook for Mummy. Honestly speaking by the

time you start eating, you wouldn't know that a man prepared the food. My children are not lazy. I trained them to ensure that they are useful for their future (Olori).

7.4. MARITAL DYNAMICS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Findings of the study reveal that effective communication in farm-families fosters marital wellbeing, and resultantly enhances participants' psychological wellbeing. This finding, agrees with an earlier finding by Mills and Grasmick (1992), that, marital satisfaction is a major determinant of psychological wellbeing. Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another. It is a way of reaching others by transmitting facts, thoughts, feelings and values, and can be in verbal or non-verbal forms (Sahni, 1997). Effectiveness of communication is enhanced by feedback. Participants' stories also reveal that length of marriage and marital experiences improve understanding and communication patterns in families. The stories also reveal spouses' desire from each other and what aspects of marital life influence their psychological wellbeing. Two of the women, a married woman, and a widow shared their experiences, regarding how length of marriage and experience enhance communication and understanding in their homes. Mrs. Musiliu says:

It is when couples are newly married that they quarrel and often misunderstand each other. We've been in this business (of marriage) for decades. Now, we understand each other better. We know each other's likes and dislikes and guide against them, in other to maintain peace and harmony in the home. When there is peace in the home, all of us will have peace of mind and be happy (Mrs. Musiliu).

Mrs. Musiliu's statement above indicate that couples understand each other more, as their marriage advances, and that increased understanding enhances couples' ability to maintain peaceable marital atmosphere. From her experience, she believes that when spouses are able to identify and honour each other's likes and dislikes, disagreements and quarrels would be minimized. Corroborating Mrs. Musiliu's assertions, Mrs. Ogundairo a widow, also recalls that communication problems gradually eased out during her marital years:

I thank God we were no more quarrelling by the time of his death. During the early years of our marriage, we used to quarrel a lot; but we have resolved all our differences before his death (Mrs. Ogundairo, widow).

The narratives of these two women show that spouses' can overcome communication problems as the duration of marriage increases and their communication patterns improve. Further to the above finding, communication patterns in the home are also discovered as having influence on the quality of marital relationship, satisfaction, and wellbeing. The study reveals that the participants perceive openness and frankness in communication differently. Kabiyesi Elewo for instance believes that when couple communicates frankly with each other, peace and harmony will abound in the home. He also believes that it is idle people that quarrel and fight. He said, no third party has ever intervened in their marital affairs since marriage. He said:

I love my wife not only because she is pretty, but more importantly, because she is very blunt, even more than I am. She criticizes me bluntly, not minding traditional and cultural expectation. When I go wrong she does not spare me. Because of this, I control most of the things that I do. She hates cheating another person, and does not tolerate it herself (Elewo).

Olori shares one of their frank discussions. This discussion ensued a few weeks after her husband's enthronement as the traditional ruler of Ilewo-Orile. She had decided on what she would be doing to keep herself busy, and wanted to know her husband's decision, knowing that he hates idleness. Rather than keep mute and stay in the palace as most wives of traditional rulers do, she decided to speak her mind. She communicated her desires and plans to her husband, and frankly asked him about his plans regarding what he intends to do to keep busy.

So the time I gave my husband was up. I then asked him "man, what do you want to do? I am off to work? So he said, "I am going to be a farmer". He said he decided to be a farmer, because he has much opportunity on his fingertips. I said he was going to be a farmer indeed. "Have you ever done it in your life? I asked. Do you know what it is to farm, can you till the land? Have you got the money and labourers to do it? Do you know the rudiments of farming? He said "leave me alone, I will do it"; and one thing, I don't do in my life is that, I don't argue with people. I leave you to exert your own opinion (Olori).

The experiences of Elewo and Olori support an earlier finding by Barnes and Barnes (1984) that, openness and frankness in marital relationships enhance marital stability, which consequently fosters spouses' psychological wellbeing. The situation is however different in the Ogunsan family where the senior wife, Mrs. Ogunsan expresses dissatisfaction that, her husband is too 'fault-finding'. She says:

'O ti le r'ojo ju'. Too much talking and complaints by my husband gives me stress. There is no disagreement between my husband's younger wife and I, only between my husband and I; and it is usually related to financing our children's education and training (Mrs Ogunsan Snr).

Mrs Ogunsan's statement above construes that she is dissatisfied with her husband's complaining attitude. *R'ojo* in *Yoruba* means to complain too much. *Ejo* means 'matter' or 'fault' while *ju* connotes 'excessiveness'. The women farmers in the study, including Mrs. Ogunsan, are highly committed to the education and training of their children, although these roles are traditionally believed to be the fathers' responsibility. Findings also reveal that many of the fathers in the project area (not limited to fathers in the sample) leave their wives to carry the bulk of their children's education and training expenses. Mrs. Ogunsan's dissatisfaction as expressed in the above passage therefore suggests that her husband gives many excuses and finds faults to cover up his failure to adequately fulfil his traditional gender role of educating and training his children. This interpretation is based on Mrs. Ogunsan's other expressions and further revelations during my systematic observations in the Ogunsan family.

As a traditional *Yoruba* woman, Mrs. Ogunsan did not directly complain that her husband is not doing enough. Rather, she rationalizes for him that he is trying his best within his limited resources and enormous responsibilities. Her dissatisfaction as expressed in the passage earlier quoted, may therefore not be dissatisfaction with her husband's failure to contribute to the children's education and training per se, but that she is more dissatisfied

about his and fault-finding attitude, as an excuse. The scenario in the Ogunsan family suggests that the communication patterns between Mr. Ogunsan and His senior wife has adverse influences on Mrs. Ogunsan's (Snr) psychological wellbeing. Mrs. Ogunsan says that, she would have been more satisfied with her husband just appreciating her financial input in the children's education and skill training, rather for him to be finding fault and complaining.

Desires of spouses from the marital relationships and from each other are revealed to be critical factors in determining marital and psychological wellbeing. The study reveals that all husbands in the study want their food to be timely. They also want their wives to be obedient, supportive, and to take proper care of their children. The wives on the other hand, are more particular about love, companionship, acceptance and support. The husbands believe that when their wives prepare good food for them as and when required, there would be minimal conflicts in the home, and all parties will enjoy peace of mind. For instance, Mr. Ogunsan of Boodo Sanyaolu community asserts:

The way to our hearts is through our stomachs. If a wife doesn't prepare food on time, the husband would be angry; but if he comes home and meets a well-prepared meal, he is happy. He takes his bath, eats, tunes the radio, and dances. There won't be any argument or quarrel. That is it (Mr Ogunsan).

Many men in the study corroborate Mr. Ogunsan's assertion above that, the way to their hearts, is really through their stomachs. The 'heart' as used here, is the mentalistic '*okan*' as described in chapter two, under the constructions of psychological wellbeing. This illustration indicates how a wife's ability to 'please' her husband in this area of food preparation of otherwise, could influence the husband's psychological wellbeing, influence his relationship with his wife, affect the family climate, and spill over the children's psychological wellbeing.

In all patriarchal societies, wives are expected to be submissive and obedient (Conway-Turner and Cherrin, 1998). The five communities where the study was conducted are

patriarchal societies. All the husbands in the study therefore desire that their wives should obey them. The wives also believe that it is binding on them to obey their husbands, to maintain marital harmony and peace in the home. Below are excerpts of two narratives from Mr. and Mrs. Soyoye of Boodo Sanyaolu community. Mr. Soyoye comments:

There is no way a woman won't frustrate a man. For instance, if I say I want something and she does it, I'm happy; but if otherwise, I'm unhappy. Like if we have a limited quantity of *gaari* at home and I ask her to process more cassava, she says she is not ready, I'm not always glad about such an attitude. I want her to always obey me, and once she does, that's all (Mr. Soyoye).

Mr. Soyoye's comments in the above passage reveals the *Yoruba* man in him, as traditional *Yoruba* men have been socialized to internalize male supremacy and dominance. He wants his wife to obey him, and demands for her obedience. His comments also show a general assumption held by many *Yoruba* men that women always frustrate men, and that they are necessary evils. Mrs. Soyoye is Mr. Soyoye's fifth wife, and she is the only one in residence. The wife in residence is the only one included in the study; it was therefore not possible to get their views concerning Mr. Soyoye's assertions. In her own comments, the participating wife, Mrs. Soyoye shows subservient attitude, which is also a reflection of her internalized ideals as a traditional *Yoruba* woman. Mrs. Soyoye explains:

I don't quarrel often with him. If we have any misunderstanding, we resolve it. For example, as I'm frying '*gaari*' now, if he says he wants to eat and I don't get up immediately to go and cook for him, he may get annoyed; but if I get up immediately to give him food, there won't be any problem. In addition, I do not enjoy his talking to me anyhow; if he talks to me anyhow and I tell him he shouldn't be doing that to me, more so that he is more matured and elderly, he stops and ends it (Mrs. Soyoye).

Although Mrs. Soyoye indicates in the passage above that she promptly obeys her husband, her statement that they do not quarrel often indicates that they sometimes quarrel. This further suggests that there may not be conflict-free marital relationships. Furthermore, Mrs. Soyoye's comments that "*I do not enjoy his talking to me anyhow; if he talks to me anyhow and I tell him he shouldn't be doing that to me*", indicates that, in spite of her subservient

attitude, Mrs. Soyoye desires to be respected. Her comments are also similar to Mrs. Ogunsan's expression of dissatisfaction about her husband's faultfinding attitude. The disposition of these women is a revelation that the women in this study too, desire respect from their husbands, not minding the age disparity that usually exist between couples in Yorubaland (husbands are older than wives).

Husbands in the study are found to be desirous and appreciative of their wives support, in the performance of on and off-farm activities and also regarding provision of financial support for their children's education. Wives support, according to them, makes them happy, promote peace in the home, and enhance the psychological wellbeing of all family members. However, when wives are not supportive, the husbands say it makes them unhappy and that it affects the family climate. For instance, Mr. Adeleke says:

My wife is really trying she is very supportive. I am always excited when my wife helps me on my farm. I am always happy when my wife is at peace with me. However, when I am short of funds, and she refuses to assist financially with our daughter's educational fees (for example, books and exams), I am usually displeased and sad; because then, I have to go a borrowing.

The situation is worsened in polygamous homes. When a wife cooks late, or she fails to support her husband, she usually loses his favour and her children suffer for it. Actually in most polygamous homes in the communities where the study was conducted, mothers are largely responsible for their children's education.

The wives and mothers in the study also associated the quality of their marital relationships with their psychological wellbeing. They discuss their desires from their marital relationships, and from their husbands. While prompt meals topped the list of husbands' desires, love and complementarity, are identified as the major sources of the women's marital wellbeing. The wives believe that when husband and wife love each other, they would be tolerant, and less critical about each other's faults. As highlighted in the foregoing section, Mrs. Soyoye is the fifth wife of Mr. Soyoye and the only wife in residence. Mrs. Soyoye had

been married twice, having left her first marriage due to wife rivalry problems in the polygamous family. She shared her experience about how she values her present marriage and her husband's love.

My husband takes care of all that are mine. He accepted me with all my previous children. My first son and his three sons live here with us. He plans with me and counsels me on all issues. If even a person doesn't have money he is able to share one's burden and offer good counsel. It is enough (Mrs. Soyoye).

Mrs. Soyoye's commendation of her husband's support in the above passage, illuminates our understanding of why she is subservient, and tolerates her husband's manner of talking down on her. Mrs. Soyoye's experience as shown is the above passage and in her earlier comment referred to, indicate that patriarchy and male dominance are not being perpetrated by men alone, but that it is also encouraged by women. Mrs. Taiwo, who is an only wife from the same community, also shares her experience about how her husband assists her with traditional "feminine roles".

We don't misunderstand each other often because we understand each other very well. There is love and peaceful co-existence. It is a house that has no love that people have misunderstanding. Ours' is not like that. When there is love in a family, you overlook many things. My husband helps me a lot. For instance, when there is no firewood at home, he goes to the farm to get and bring firewood near the village for me to carry home. I am always happy and quite appreciative of this gesture, because if he doesn't, there is nothing I can do. I can't force or command him to go and cut firewood for me. I love and appreciate my husband because he loves me and didn't marry another wife (Mrs. Taiwo).

Another factor identified as influencing marital wellbeing, include, husband's performance of the good provider's role. Women in the study, attach more importance to the husbands' responsibility for providing food and shelter for the family than their responsibility for children's education. While they believe it is husbands' responsibility to feed the family, they believe it is a joint responsibility to educate their children. Wives whose husbands invest substantially in their children's education see it as special privilege, a demonstration of their husbands' love towards the wives, and are usually very appreciative of it. Mrs. Adeleke

whose husband had earlier commented on her supportive roles towards their daughter's education, discusses her experience below:

I expect my husband to provide for our needs, especially, food in the house. When he is lacking in this, I get upset. It disturbs me emotionally; especially when he refuses to bring money for soup (feeding allowance) and wants to partake of the cooked meal that I've used my money to prepare (Mrs Adeleke).

Mrs. Adeleke's comment above, indicate that despite her financial assistance to her husband, she still expects him to perform the breadwinner role of feeding the family. Her emotional disturbance arising from her husband's refusal to give feeding allowance and yet expecting to partake of the prepared food is representative of the experiences of many other women in the study; and is a reflection of husbands' failure to fulfill breadwinner obligations on wives' psychological wellbeing. No wonder then, that it was revealed that husbands' ability to provide for the family needs enhances their wives' psychological wellbeing.

Different perspectives of complementarity and dynamics in polygamous families are discovered to also influence marital and psychological wellbeing. Boserup (1970) observes that the major reasons for *Yoruba* farmers marrying more than one wife are that wives contribute much more to the family income than the value of their keep, and that the dignity and standing of the family is enhanced by an increase in progeny. Amongst the polygamous families included in the study sample, only one of the households had more than one wife in residence. The study reveals that family type, by number of wives (monogamous/polygamous), and literacy level, were found to contribute to spouses' commitment to the relationship and readiness to embark on joint financial investments. While the literate farmers (male and female) in monogamous relations believe in joint ventures, the illiterate farmers in polygamous families believe it is not worth it. The reason for this is obvious. Both husbands and wives from polygamous families believe that such ventures will definitely breed conflicts, since both parties would not be able to exercise equal control over the resources. The participants actually believe that the idea is Western, and that it is only

practicable with the '*Alakowes*' (knowledgable/educated people). Below are two different perspectives of complementarity, as shared by a female and a male participant (Mrs. Soyoye, and Elewo). Mrs. Soyoye argues thus:

These days you cannot combine any work with men (joint business). If you do, there will be conflict. When a woman needs an amount of money and wants to go and harvest some Cassava for sale or processing, the man may go and harvest it, and conflict will ensue. That's why women don't combine farm-business with their husbands any more (Mrs. Soyoye).

However, contrary to Mrs. Soyoye's argument above, Elewo asserts, "anything belonging to her is mine and she owns everything that I have" (Elewo). While Soyoye's family is a polygamous family, Elewo's family is a monogamous family. Observations in other families also show that joint business between husband and wife is not encouraged due to rivalry and inheritance problems. With the patriarchal nature of the societies, and patrilineal inheritance system, women do not usually benefit from joint businesses. More importantly however, the traditional farmers view joint ventures as an imported ideology, and feel that, it is the educated people who can practice it. The views expressed by the traditional farmers that joint ventures are practicable with educated couples is confirmed by Elewo's assertion in his brief comment above, that joint ventures are perceived as being meant for the educated.

Another factor discovered to influence marital wellbeing and psychological wellbeing in polygamous families is wife rivalry. Mrs. Ogunneye of Obafemi community is the third wife of her husband. She is now a widow. She narrates her experience of polygamy in the following passage:

I really had it rough with my husband's 2nd wife, who had no child for him. The woman was very diabolical and vowed that I will go the way I came, meaning that I would be childless. She tried a variety of methods to turn my husband's back against me but God overpowered her. Because of her desperation and use of charms (*juju*), our husband eventually sent her packing, when her devilish agenda was revealed. I thank God for seeing me through (Mrs. Ogunneye).

Mrs. Ogunneye's experience above shows how rivalry problems in polygamous families can affect the marital climate, and influence the psychological wellbeing of members. In her detailed narrative as recorded in her life history, Mrs. Ogunneye recalls how the rivalry problems gave her a lot of emotional disturbance (*iporuuru ati pakaleke okan*) while it lasted. However, Mrs. Ogunsan Snr. of Boodo-Sanyaolu community, who is the first of her husband's three wives, had a different experience in her own polygamous home. She says that, there is no rivalry problem in their family. Her husbands' younger wife who also participated in the study, shares this opinion (her rival's). The second wife does not stay with them in the community. According to Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr.):

There is no problem with polygamy, since he (the husband) would not put us in the same room. Initially when my husband married his youngest wife, we were all eating from the same pot for the first two years. We now eat from different pots, unlike then, when I rotate cooking duties with my rival. It was our husband's decision to separate pots. My junior wife now cooks for our husband. (She however did not disclose circumstances that actually led to the separation of pots (Mrs. Ogunsan Snr.).

Mrs. Ogunsan's assertions above are quite unique, and peculiar. My experiences as a *Yoruba* woman, and as an extension fellow working with rural families for over seven years, reveal that polygamous families are not always as peaceful as portrayed by the Ogunsan family. Actually, most polygamous families resemble those of Mrs. Soyoye's first marriage, and Mrs. Ogunneye's family. This is not to say however, that, there are no peaceful polygamous families. Of course, there are. Husbands' ability to properly manage the family with regard to: provision of family needs, prevention, control, and resolution of rivalry and sibling conflicts, are some the factors that could mediate peaceable coexistence in polygamous families. Age disparities amongst wives and wives' dispositions also have strong influences on the family climate in polygamous homes. In Ogunsan family for instance, Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr) is sixty years old, while Mrs. Ogunsan (Jnr.) is forty years old. The age disparity of twelve years mediates respectfulness in the relationships of these two women. Mrs. Ogunsan

(Jnr.) actually addresses Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr.) as ‘Mama’, *Yoruba* way of saying ‘mother’. The Ogunsan family is a Chrisitan family, and the family prays together twice daily (mornings and evenings). In addition, Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr) is acclaimed as a very prayerful woman by her family, and in the community. Hence, her nickname: “*Iya adura*” (Woman of prayer). The above description of the Ogunsan family, therefore, provides some explanations for the likely reasons why their polygamous family is peaceful and unique.

From the perspectives of the male participants, polygamy is perceived as a source of stress and strain for men, especially due to the pressure it places on them to effectively function in the provider’s role. They also believe that there is no way two women can cohabit peaceably under the same roof. Mr. Babatunde is a polygamist, but lives alone. All his children are adults and have left home. He lost one of his two wives six years prior to this study, and the other lives with one of their children in the cities, assisting them with childcare. He claims that she comes to the village regularly to take care of him. Sharing his experience of polygamy, he says:

Misunderstanding arises in a family where are two women (wives) who don’t love each other. Also, when husband and wife or the children don’t love each other, problems may arise. I thank God that my own children (that is, from different mothers) meet together to deliberate. This year (2002), they jointly celebrated my birthday and it was very great (Mr. Babatunde).

Other men in the study share the same experience as that of Mr. Babatunde an eighty-year old man. The absentee wives are usually reported to be with one child or the other, baby-sitting as grandmothers. This finding presupposes that polygamy may not be good for men, especially in their old age. In polygamous families, women are found to be more committed to their children than their husbands, as they derive pleasure in travelling all over their children’s places under the canopy of caring for their grandchildren, while abandoning their husbands.

7.5. POWER DYNAMICS, FAMILY DECISION-MAKING, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

The narratives of husbands and wives reveal that, decision-making, which is a prominent aspect power dynamics in farm-families families, is not often a site of friction. While the men said they are responsible for family decisions, the women believe that they equally make decisions, although they attribute them to their husbands. The men's representations of what constitutes major decisions include, when to have babies, timing of farming operations, choice of children's schools, wives' movement including when they could visit their families, choice of wives' friends, whether and when wives could embark on capital projects (for example, buy a land, build a house, employ annually-paid farm labourers). The men believe that the man is the head and should make the major decisions. In *Yoruba* they said "*Ibi ti a ba fi se ori, a ki i fi te ile*". This means the head should remain on top and not be used to walk on the ground.

It was however observed that the educated ones amongst the husbands believe that wives also should participate in family decision-making. All the men in the study, but two, claim that they take the major decisions in the family, while a few say their wives participate in the decision-making process. Conversely, only a few agree that their husbands take the major decisions. The majority of the women, claim to actively participate in decision-making. The widows in the study claim that their husbands made the decision when they were alive, and they are now fully in charge. For instance, Mr Ogunsan, in his comment below asserts:

We men, decide when to make babies. It is the man's responsibility to take family decisions. We men usually decide when we want our wives to become pregnant. We give them herbal potions and herbs to prevent pregnancies (Mr. Ogunsan).

Mr. Ogunsan's assertion above shows male hegemony and internalization of ideological representations of male supremacy vis-à-vis women. Mr. Amidu's assertions too, are similar, when he says:

I solely make decisions on my farm and offer advice to my wives regarding their own farms. Regarding childbearing, it is God that helped us to space our children. I usually want my wife to rest for some time because the second has a small baby. We don't use any form of Family Planning. I abstain if I don't want a particular one to be pregnant. In fact, my wife and I are still quarrelling on this issue. She wants to get pregnant and I don't have enough money to raise many children; but she refuses to understand and she is not enlightened about Family Planning. Whereas her rival, my second wife knows more about Family Planning (Mr. Amidu).

Agreeing with the views of Messers Ogunsan and Amidu above Mr. Atanda also asserts:

I solely make decisions on my farm and the major decisions in my family, including when to make babies. '*Emi l'okq, ati pe okq ni ori aya. Ibi ti a fi se ori a ki nfì tè ilè*'. (I am the husband, and the husband is the head of the wife. You do not walk on the ground with your head). We stopped having sexual intercourse when we stopped childbearing (Mr. Atanda).

Mr. Atanda's assertion in the above passage also displays male hegemony, and adopts *Yoruba* philosophical beliefs as a discursive strategy to rationalize his attitude. He had apparently internalized dominance and male supremacy, as a traditional *Yoruba* man, who had not experienced any form of Westernization. He was born in the village and grew up in the village. He also did not have the opportunity of going to school at all. Hence his disposition toward family decision-making is reflective of unadulterated patriarchy.

On the other hand, the representations of women's decision-making domains vary amongst the female participants. These domains include, when to have babies, when and how to make capital investments, timing of farming operations, choice of children's schools, what to eat in the house, when to buy clothes for themselves and their children. All the women in the study believe that they have decision-making power. Below are some of their responses. Concerning her role in family decision-making, Mrs. Adekunbi says:

My husband gives me money to spend on my farm, but I make the major decisions by myself. We jointly make decisions that affect our children and also regarding sexual matters (Mrs. Adekunbi).

Mrs. Adekunbi's role in family decision-making as highlighted in the above passage, portrays her as an independent woman whereas it may not necessarily be so. Mrs. Adekunbi is the first of three wives in a polygamous family. She lives in the village with her three children, while her husband lives in the city with his two other wives. Her husband visits the village once a week. This living arrangement presupposes that Mrs. Adekunbi is on her own for the major part of the time and thus has to take major decisions concerning herself and the farm, when her husband is not around. However, her position as a senior wife (*Iyale*) in a *Yoruba* confers certain privileges on her, vis-à-vis other wives in the household. Some of these privileges include her elevated position over and above other wives, and her being next in command to their husband. Eades (1980) had earlier made this observation about the ascribed privileges of senior wives in *Yoruba* families. Mrs. Kehinde, another female participant, comments on her involvement in her home as well as her natal family:

In my father's house I am the decision-maker. In my husband's house too, I make decisions in consultation with my husband (Mrs. Kehinde, Boodo-Sanyaolu).

Mrs. Kehinde's experiences of involvement in decision-making in her natal family also confirm an earlier observation by Eades (1980) that, seniority, is of crucial importance in *Yoruba* social structure. Mrs. Kehinde's involvement in decision-making in her marital family may not be unconnected with her husband's liberal attitude toward decision-making. Pastor Kehinde (her husband) is a retired School Headmaster, and the influence of Western education cannot be ruled out in his disposition; unlike Mr. Atanda, mentioned above. Mrs. Musiliu and Mrs. Ogundairo's comments are in agreement with earlier comments by the hegemonic men that, family decision-making is the prerogative of men. For instance, Mrs. Musiliu explains:

My husband makes all major decisions on family matters. We also help each other in the area of finance (Mrs. Musiliu).

In the same direction, Mrs. Ogunneye also shares her experiences concerning her involvement in family decision-making during her husband's lifetime. She says:

When my husband was alive, he took the major decisions in the home, including when to make love. But since he died, death, I've been taking all major decisions in my family (Mrs. Ogunneye).

Mrs. Ogunneye's comment in the above passage shows that until her husband's death, she was not involved in the major family decisions. Assuming responsibilities for all family decisions at her husband's death may therefore predispose her to a situation of psychological stress, as later revealed in her case study in chapter eight.

Further to the comments by husbands and wives concerning their involvement in family decision-making above; although the majority of the women say that they make joint decisions with their husbands, when probed further, it was usually revealed that differences exist in the decision-making domains of men and women. Regarding when to have babies for example, both men and women believe they are in control. However, while a man can decide not to have sexual intercourse with his wife if he does not want a baby from her, a woman cannot refuse her husband sex in all the communities where the study was conducted. She cannot even adopt any family planning method without her husband's consent. Another area of contradiction in decision-making domains is how the wife spends her money.

20 of the 23 women in the study corroborate the men's views regarding "husbands' expectation that their wives should not embark on capital investments without their consent". They agreed that a woman who wants to remain in marriage in order to fulfil their nurturing roles toward their children should be obedient and submissive to her husband. In addition, while the husbands' responses reveal that, as men they exercise some control on their wives, wives' responses reveal that their decision-making domains as wives, are limited. One of the women however insisted that men are not in charge. She says that although she agrees that

wives should be obedient and submissive, there are ways she could influence family decision-making, without the husband feeling out of control. She says:

Who says they are in charge? We ‘make’ decisions our husbands ‘take’ them and claims responsibility. I don’t really think that men are in charge. It is good to give them the feel that they are in charge, but what really happens is that if you relate very with them in humility, you will be making the decision while he takes them and claims responsibility for the outcome, good or bad (Mrs. Olade).

The argument of this woman is that women have a lot of power and influence in the family decision-making process, but that not all women use them. Interestingly however, contrary to some of the above representations by husbands in the study, my close interaction with them and observation during the period of fieldwork revealed that the wives actually wield a degree of influence in family decision-making, with particular regard to the performance of female stereotyped gender roles. Apart from prompt preparation of their husbands’ meals, the women exercise a level of control on how they balance their time within family work and farm work, which comprises on and off-farm activities. It was also observed that the level of interaction and harmony in the home influences whether or not the husband and “head” would be flexible or rigid about his masculine stereotyped gender-role as the decision-maker.

This finding corroborates Alamgir’s (1977) observation, cited in (Rogers and Schlossman, 1990) that the female contribution to household decision-making is greater than either party will publicly acknowledge. My observation reveals that the husbands are not as rigid about their ideological representations of who makes what decision, as I was made to believe during the interviews. However, it was not possible to probe the two specific domains of “when to have babies” and “when and how to make capital investments”, could not be probed further. It was generally observed that both husbands and wives in the farm-families are satisfied with their level of involvement in family decision-making. They both agree that the husband is responsible for family decisions (including the woman who shared her opinion that men are not in charge).

Findings of this study also agree with earlier observations by Kayongo-Male and Onyago (1984) that, the typical position of authority in African families includes the normative ‘head’, which is usually the father, whose position derives from the traditional African culture (Kayongo-Male and Onyago, 1984). Kayongo-Male and Onyago observed that, even if the father is unemployed, he is still respected and deferred to, in most families. To my mind, this is a significant feature of patriarchy. Patriarchy is male dominance in the home and in the larger society (Adams, 1992). Harris, (1995) calls it the control of both production and reproduction by males. The measurement of decision-making power within the household poses serious conceptual problems. Safilios-Rothschild, (1969) observes that, genuine differences of opinion are likely to exist among household members as to who makes what decisions. In addition, people may not admit the true allocation of influence.

Another consideration is that decisions in farm-family systems take place in a context, which limits alternatives. Studies on family decision-making in many countries indicate that women and men make decisions, which pertain to their own spheres of activity (Laird, 1979 [Paraguay]; Cloud, 1978 [Sahel]; Alamgir, 1977, [Bangladesh] cited in Rogers et al, 1990). Presumably in the female sphere, some of these decisions are fairly limited in scope. In a farm-household for instance the decision may not necessarily be regarding what type of crop to plant, but how much to plant. Roldan (1988) makes the important point that management of household finances need not imply control over them. In an environment of severe resource constraint, she points out that there are no decisions to be made; expenditure patterns are dictated by survival needs.

7.6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study confirms that family dynamics among of other factors, predict the climate of the home and the psychological wellbeing of its members. It reveals how every member of the

family, and the children in particular, are sensitive to dynamics within the family. It also shows how children perceive and interpret their parents' actions, moods, and dispositions, and how these influence their psychological wellbeing and future outcome. Phoenix, Woollett and Lloyd (1991) had earlier noted the importance of sensitivity in parent-child relationships. Lack of sensitivity, is considered to have different consequences depending on whether it is part of mothering or fathering (Phoenix, Woollett, and Lloyd 1991). Children in this study, however, claim that their mothers are more sensitive to their needs. The value of maternal sensitivity and the circumstances where it can be achieved provides explanation for mothers to stay around their children and give them time and attention. Mothers in the study believe that a determination to stay in marriage as obedient and submissive wives gives them the opportunity to be good mothers to their children. They believe that mothers' presence in the family enhances their children's psychological wellbeing.

Communication, mutual dependence, and complementarity, as revealed in the study, are anchors of good family relationships. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) refer to communication as the sine qua non of social cognition. This finding, agrees with an earlier comparative study by Corrales (1974), which revealed that open communication and marital satisfaction were correlated in rural and urban couples. In addition, Frude, (1991), opined that grievances tend to diminish when they have been aired, while silence allows discrepancies between people's views to widen. Open expression of feelings, according to him, reduces emotional tension and encourages family members to appreciate each other as confidants and therapists. He further noted that honest communication promotes healthy relationships and strengthens a family, making it more resilient and more adaptable to change.

Variations in the narratives by male and female participants regarding their involvement in family decision-making could be better understood from the perspectives of feminist anthropologists. Feminist anthropologists believe that, although females are

subjected to universal subordination, they are not without individual powers (Pine, 1996). They emphasised how women's domestic powers are manifested in individually negotiated relations. This power dynamic is confirmed by the narratives of the majority of female participants in the study, and in particular the assertion made by one of the women in the last section of the chapter. The study also confirms that discourse, is central to the production and maintenance of subjectivity.

The narratives in the various sections of this chapter reveal ideological representations of power and domination in the farm families, and also confirm that patriarchal power rests on the social meanings given to biological sexual differences. Ideology is a cognitive construct that permeates human consciousness. It is the means by which relationships of power, control and dominance are maintained and preserved in any society (Augoustinos and Walker 1995). The narratives by the male participants in the study reveal how 'husbands' have internalized male supremacy and domination. Internalization of oppression and domination emanate from ideological social representations. Their satisfaction with their level of involvement in family decision-making suggests that decision-making in farm-families is not often a site of friction, and thus, is not perceived as constituting a threat to their psychological wellbeing. The wives do not perceive their husbands' role in decision-making as oppressive. The women in the study accept their level of involvement as adequate and perceive these social representations as the norm within their socio-cultural contexts.

From the social representations' perspective, the women's attitude to their subordination is one of the peculiarities for which their socio-historical and cultural contexts is accountable. Feminist scholarship addresses diversity within families, and issues of diversity necessitate an exploration of the impact of cultural norms and expectations on family formation as well as family life concerns (Conway-Turner and Cherrin, 1998). Feminist scholars therefore, argue that an understanding of the diversity of women's

experiences within families is central to understanding family experiences. It therefore becomes imperative from the findings of this study, that, there is need to develop culture-specific feminist strategies aimed at curbing female subordination, starting with the communities where the study was conducted, and extending to the other parts of southwestern Nigeria.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CASE STUDIES OF HOW MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS COPE WITH STRESSFUL LIFE SITUATIONS: A GENDER ANALYSIS

8.1. INTRODUCTION

Findings discussed in chapters six and seven reveal that gender identity construction, gender role socialization, and ideological representations of gender roles in farm-families, have implications for the psychological wellbeing of family members. The performance of multiple roles and ideological gender role expectations were identified in chapter seven as the major sources of role strains and conflicts in farm-families. Findings reported in chapters seven and eight also reveal that the major sources of stress and strain for farm women are inherent in their multiple role-involvement, inadequate time for rest, relaxation and leisure, and children's outcomes; while the major stressors for men is associated with feelings of lack of accomplishment emanating from an inability to fulfil the breadwinner role. The various role-dimensions, and the factors influencing psychological wellbeing of the study participants as presented in chapter seven, also reveal that the male and female farmers are faced with various stressful life situations, which they have to cope with, in order to enjoy adequate psychological wellbeing. Coping with stressful life situations is therefore, one of the complexities associated with gender roles and psychological wellbeing.

The current chapter presents case studies of five farmers (three females, and two males), extracted from the life histories collected in the study, focussing on how they have coped with the strain and stress of family life, and the burden of agricultural activities, which constituted stressful life situations at one time or the other in their life-cycles over the years.

The structure of the chapter is different from the previous chapters, due to the case-study approach adopted. The first section presents an analytical framework for stress and coping as later discussed in the case studies. Each of the five cases is presented in the next section. Using the analytic scheme proposed by Mandelbaum (1973), the dimensions, turnings, and stressful situations of each of the five selected participants were explored. Individual experiences and adopted coping strategies (adaptations) were also analysed and appraised. The chapter closes with a systematic gender analysis of the experiences and coping strategies adopted by the male and female farmers in the selected case studies.

In the forty life histories collected in this study, I observed that the male and female farmers have adopted a variety of strategies to cope with the strain and stress of family life, and the burden of agricultural activities over the years. It is also revealed that resources at the disposal of these farmers (for example, economic resources, family resources, marital stability, farm-size, crop-yields), their previous experiences, and personal goals and aspirations, all contribute toward the adopted coping strategies. In addition, geographical location of the selected communities within the state, the socio-historical and cultural values, as well as religion also influenced adopted coping strategies. As discussed in previous chapters, the different gender roles in farm-families influence how the male and female farmers' perceive of their psychological wellbeing. Similarities and gendered differences were also observed in their adopted coping strategies.

8.2. FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING COPING STRATEGIES IN THE SELECTED CASE STUDIES

As would be seen in greater detail in chapter nine, male and female farmers construe stress (*aibale-okan*) as the antonym for psychological wellbeing (*Ilera-okan or alaafia okan*). In addition, stress, in the farmers' constructions represents a situation of unsettled mind and

emotional disturbance (*aibale-okan*, *igbokogbodo-emi*, *iporuuru ati pakaleke okan*). Coping (*ifarada ati wiwa ona abayo*) the other hand, is construed as the neutralizer of stress. Stress and coping, are concepts that usually occur together, as coping is the process by which people manage their perceived stress. Stress is a subjective feeling. It is a difficult concept to define, largely because it is a uniquely individualistic experience. Parry (1990) describes stress as a normal part of everyday life, and that it occurs whenever our bodies and mind are faced with demands, which task or exceeds our capacity to respond. According to Parry, all stress is actually both mental and physical, because the body and mind are not separate, but are two subsystems of one complex whole.

Stress, can also be regarded as excessive external demands, which can be overwhelming and compromise one's ability to cope (Brunner, 1996). Brunner describes such external demands as psychosocial factors. Making a distinction between stress and strain, Kisseka (1990) describes 'stress' as a noxious stimulus, and 'strain', as the individual's psychological cost or response to stress. Kisseka observes that there are many events and conditions that can be described as stressful, and that such stressful effects may be seen as immediate and intermediate causes predisposing to, and precipitating psychological illbeing. Strain or mental and bodily reactions to stress according to her, can result in disordered behaviour characterised by anxiety or psycho-physiological changes. Examples of usual manifestations of stress include disturbed sleep patterns, headaches, chest discomfort, irritability, restlessness, diarrhoea or nausea (Brunner, 1996). As stress builds, it can have detrimental effects on wellbeing. Brunner (1996) argues that stress, to a certain degree is necessary, in that it keeps one alert and motivates, but that it is not usually easy to determine at which point it becomes a problem.

From the above descriptions of stress, and for the purpose of analysing the case studies presented in this chapter, stressful situations are regarded as situations posing threat to

the quality of life and psychological wellbeing of individuals. These situations usually comprise a combination of psychological, physiological and behavioural symptoms that people experience when exposed to any change in their lives, which they perceive as being difficult to cope with, and which predispose them to mental, emotional or physical strain and stress.

Coping, on the other hand, refers to “strategies for dealing with threat”(Lazarus, 1966: 51). Lazarus emphasizes the importance of appraisal as a basis for coping responses. In his view, coping involves awareness, and cognitive activity, and refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to master the environment. Cohen and Lazarus (1979) and Lazarus and Folkman, (1987) suggested two main functions of coping. The first is emotion-focussed coping, which aims at controlling the emotional response to the stressful situation. This function is used when people believe that they cannot do anything to change the stressful situation. The second function is the problem-focussed coping, which aims at reducing the demands of the stressful situation or expanding the available resources to deal with it. People use this function when they believe that their resources or the demands of the situation can be changed. Personal characteristics such as locus of control and resilience also determine the coping strategy that an individual would employ in a particular situation.

Brammer (1991) describes the coping response as an active problem-solving approach to adaptation. A key coping skill is using our rational capacities to think our way around problems through transitions (Brammer, 1991). Brammer observes that a primary psychological principle is that changing our behaviour can start with our thoughts, feelings, or direct action. He therefore argues that because we are rational as well as emotional beings, we can control our destiny through our thoughts. This implies that if someone were able to assume control over thoughts and ultimately over behaviour in stressful situations, minimal outside assistance would be required to get out of the stressful situation. Brammer also

observes that coping strategies include some basic attitudes and skills, such as: developing a positive view of change (opportunity, control, and responsibility); building support (professional networks, family, and friends); changing negative thoughts; managing stress constructively; solving problems; and appraising potential for danger.

Closely related to the coping strategies identified above, are some strategies which people use in altering the problem or regulating their emotional responses when they are under stress, earlier identified by Cohen and Lazarus (1979). These include direct action, seeking information, turning to others, and resigned acceptance. With regard to direction action strategy, the individual does something specifically and directly to cope with the stressful situation. Seeking information has to do with acquiring information on the stressful situation (for example, seeking information from appropriate authorities, friends, colleagues, or family members). In resigned acceptance, the person resigns to fate and accepts the situation as it is. The coping skills and strategies identified by Cohen and Lazarus (1979), and (Brammer, 1991) provide a framework for analysing the coping strategies adopted by the participants in the selected case studies.

8.3. USING LIFE HISTORIES TO ANALYSE STRESSFUL LIFE EXPERIENCES AND COPING STRATEGIES

As I reflect on my own life history and experience as told in chapter ten of this thesis, I discover that life histories can yield pertinent and qualitative data either for research or therapeutic purposes. Learning about the experiences of others as they make their way through life is highly fascinating and quite informative. The process of integrating the component parts of one's self-definition from one's past, present, and future into a cohesive, unified sense of self, is a complex lifelong journey, which emerges as a 'storied life'. Lieblich and Josselson (1994) noted the uniqueness and value of life histories as a method of

inquiry. Hence, the life history methodology has been adopted for the analysis of the coping strategies adopted by the selected cases. In deconstructing the five life histories selected for the case studies, I have adopted the analytic scheme proposed by Mandelbaum (1973) for the analysis and interpretation of life history data. The scheme uses three concepts, namely, dimensions, turnings and adaptations of an individual life, for the analysis.

Dimensions are the main forces at work in the individual's life. These include, biological, cultural, social and psychological. Turnings are periods in an individual's life as a result of major changes, and adaptations are changes and continuities chosen throughout the life course to adjust to new condition. Dimensions in this study are, gender roles as determined by biological sex and gender, and perceived psychological wellbeing, vis-à-vis their social constructions. Turnings in the participants' lives demarcated periods of major changes in their lives (memorable days, achievements, farmland acquisition, marriages, birth of a child or death of a loved one). Adaptations are the coping resources and strategies adopted by the participants studied. The dimensions of an individual's life, usually influences how that individual would adapt to the turnings of life.

In addition, turnings in an individual's life usually place some demands on the capacities to manage such situations, or function in new role-capacities or position. Such situations are usually accompanied with a degree of stress. While good turnings lead to positive stress, bad turnings, most of the time, predisposes the individual to negative stress. It is the ability to successfully manage the situation and cope with the attendant stress that would determine how the individual adapts to the turning. The experiences of three of the five participants explored in these case studies are associated with life transitions. Brammer (1991) describes 'life transition' as a journey, usually to something unknown. The journey, according to Brammer, requires courage to cope with fear. Transitions are characterised by

change, resulting from a sharp discontinuity with previous life events and emergence of coping responses that the person may even not be formerly aware of (Brammer, 1991).

The categories of families living in farming communities earlier identified by the deliberate sampling method adopted for this study, are all represented in the cases. The five communities are also represented. Participants whose coping strategies are analysed in this chapter include, Mrs. Adekunbi (Kango; wife living apart), Mrs. Ogunneye (Obafemi; widow), Mrs. Fatona (Olori-Elewo of Ilewo-Orile; wife living with spouse), Mr Adeleke (Boodo-Sanyaolu; husband living with spouse), and Mr. Akinlawon (Ogijan; husband living alone). There is no widower in the sample. Hence, there are more women than men in the selected cases. Although participants had earlier given their consent regarding the use of their real name in the report, some of the names used in these case studies (not all), are pseudonyms. I made this discretionary decision for confidentiality purposes and ethical considerations, due to some revelations of unpleasant personal life experiences, and their interpretations.

8.3.1. CASE ONE

Mrs. Taiwo Adekunbi (Wife living apart; Kango community)

8.3.1.1. Profile (Dimensions, turnings, and stressful situations)

Mrs. Adekunbi is the first wife in a polygamous family of three wives. According to her, she is not under constant daily pressure like her female counterparts in the village to cook for her husband, because he lives in the city with his two other wives, and visits the village on weekly basis. Her living apart from her husband and the two other wives is based on an agreement reached with her husband before their marriage. It is her choice, and her husband agreed with her. She explains thus:

I was brought up in the village and I'm satisfied with village life and farm work. I opted to stay in the village because I have been a village girl all my life. My parents are from the village next to us here – ‘Owe’ (less than 1km from Kango). I told my husband right from our courtship days that I would not want to stay in town, because I know I cannot cope with the type of work they do in the city, apart from farming. I was not ready to embark on a new trade or vocation in which I have not been trained. I told him I prefer to stay in the village here with my mother-in-law, while he lives in the town, and he agreed. He married two other wives after me and they both live with him in the city.

Her explanation bothered me because I was wondering how a young woman of twenty-eight years old would decide to live all her life in the village. Her decision raises a number of issues. Is she afraid of urban life, having lived in the village for twenty-eight years? Why does she think that she would not be able to cope with urban life? Why is she so attached to farming and afraid of considering any other trade vocation? Her decision was influenced by anticipated stress of urban life, and daily pressures associated with co-habitation with spouse. Her life experiences however reveal that this decision predisposes her to other dimensions of stress pertaining to living apart, polygamy, and farming in a developing context. Mrs. Adekunbi is literate. She had complete primary education. She hails from a monogamous family. She is the second born, and first of a set of twins and of her parents. Her both parents are farmers and alive, but they live apart. Her father lives in Abeokuta, while her mother lives in Owe, her home village. Could her parents' example have influenced her decision? From her explanation, I supposed that her husband's decision to marry other wives might have been influenced by her decision to live apart. Incidentally, her husband could not participate in the study because he was not in residence. It was therefore not possible to ask him directly. I asked her whether she feels her action might have contributed to her husband's decision to become a polygamist. She says “no” and offered the following explanation:

I do not think his decision to marry other wives has anything to do with my decision to stay back in the village. Some men are traditionally polygamous, while others are not. They marry other wives, not because the first wife is not good enough. Polygamy has been the pattern of men from the past. We never discussed during our courtship days, whether he would not marry other wives. He was therefore not constrained to do his will. I can even never discuss such issues

with him, because our parents do not take such discussions with levity if it comes to their hearing. They can accuse one of having used ‘*juju*’ (charms) on their son in order to be controlling him all the time. His three wives are his responsibilities. If he gives us money, we will eat and if otherwise, we will still eat.

Mrs. Adekunbi does not seem to be bothered about her husband’s decision to marry two other wives, neither does she feel that her action might have contributed to his decision. She accepts it as husbands’ right to marry as many wives as they wish, since polygamy is permitted in *Yoruba* culture. She says that parents-in-law must not hear of a woman complaining about her husband marrying other wives. Mrs. Adekunbi claims to be enjoying her living apart and sees it as rewarding, because it shields her from constant pressure of having to cook for her husband on a daily basis.

8.3.1.2.Coping with anticipated and real stresses of married life (Adaptation)

Mrs. Adekunbi acknowledges that she tries her best to satisfy her husband and give him all her attention whenever he visits. She would have done all her washing, cleaned the house, and prepared his favourite soup and meal before his arrival, to ensure that nothing distracts her when he arrives. She says whenever her husband’s food is not ready before his arrival, for one reason or the other, and he has to eat what his mother cooks, he is usually displeased, and such instances generate conflicts in the home. Prompt preparation of husband’s meals had earlier been identified in the study (chapter seven) as one of the factors enhancing marital stability. She is of the opinion that her husband loves her, and refrains from doing anything that will hurt him, and affect the relationship. She hopes that if she pleases him, he will be continually happy with her and continue to love her. According to her, she tries her best to stay married to her husband, for her children’s sake, to enable her continue to perform her nurturing roles as a mother. From the above narratives, Mrs. Adekunbi have adopted two coping strategies (assertiveness and spouse-pleasing) on the one and, to protect herself from anticipated stressful urban life, and to prevent marital conflicts, quarrels and strained

relationships on the other hand, in order to enhance marital stability. Although her first strategy may reveal fear of the unknown on her part, she was assertive in her decision about what she wanted for herself and had her way. She does not perceive her decision as having any negative impact on her home.

She seems satisfied with her current status, but it is obvious that what her husband gives her, plus what she is able to generate on her own could not sustain her three children and herself, both now and in the future. Her financial resources are limited, and her skills are also limited. In addition, the undercurrent in her verbal responses (for example, "*trying her best to stay married*") suggests that all is not well, in spite of her assertions and positive outlook. Otherwise, there would not have been a need for such a statement. She says that her husband's three wives are his responsibilities, and that he gives them (his three wives) feeding allowance, which she augments, since according to her, "it is unfair and inexpedient to expect a man to provide everything". The weekly feeding allowance is to cater for her three children, herself, and him, when he visits. This money is to complement whatever she is able to take from her husband's farm, which is also in the village. In addition, her husband sometimes assists her financially at the beginning of each farming season. He gives her money with which to hire labourers to assist her with land preparation and planting.

He sometimes assists me financially to prepare my land for planting. He gives me money for this, to hire casual labourers, after his own land preparation has been completed. I don't pay such monies back because it is a gift. In addition, during the raining season and harvesting period, when we sell proceeds from his farm, we give him whatever we please, and use the rest to take care of the children and myself, and he doesn't raise questions. During the dry season, when there is not much to take from the farm, he gives us between two hundred and five hundred naira on each visit (weekly), depending on his purse, since he knows that his children are here and they have to eat (Mrs. Adekunbi).

Mrs. Adekunbi grows only cassava on a 2-plots leased farmland in Kango. She also has two ducks, which she rears in her parent's village (Owe), one kilometre from Kango, her husband's village. She combines on-farm activities with cassava processing. Mrs. Adekunbi

assertions suggest that she does not rely on her husband for livelihood, although she stresses the fact that husbands have the responsibility to take care of their wives, and that he tries his best. She augments whatever her husband gives her as maintenance allowance for her children and herself. She says that she is determined to contribute her quota toward the upkeep of the home, as a demonstration of love and support for her husband. Spousal support is therefore another strategy she adopted for sustenance of marital stability. With her limited resources however, she could not likely achieve much, and this predisposes her to some stress both in the present and in the future.

Mrs. Adekunbi was pregnant with her fourth child during the period of study. Her firstborn, a son, was thirteen years old at the time of study. He had completed his primary education, and he has commenced apprenticeship as an auto-battery charger in Abeokuta. Her second born, another son was nine years old at the time of study, and he is in Primary five. Her only daughter is in primary two. According to her, her daughter is the only one who had indicated her willingness to study. Regarding the financing of their children's education (for example, books, and uniforms), she says that they jointly fund it, depending on whoever has the money first, because the children belong to both of them. Mrs. Adekunbi's discussion of her aspirations concerning her children's future reveals that although she appreciates the value of education in the contemporary society, she is aware that her family's current financial status cannot meet the educational requirements of her three children. She is however determined to struggle and try her best to ensure that she assists her children who want to go to the secondary school or beyond. Concerning her daughter, she says:

My lastborn a female has already indicated her willingness to pursue higher education, right from her childhood, unlike the boys. Her teachers usually send for me to encourage me to ensure that I give her good education. This is because, she is very intelligent and brilliant in school. It is ideal to encourage a child in whatever career he/she decides to pursue in life, whether education or apprenticeship of a trade or the other. It is not everybody that is talented to be successful educationally; but if a child decides to be educated, it is the

responsibility of her siblings to assist financially, because she is in a better position in the future, she "will lift her siblings up" (*Gbe won dide l'oj o iwaju*).

Her plans for the girl's future education is to encourage her elder brothers to assist financially when they become adults, hoping that she will reciprocate in future. This plan does not look realistic, because the girl's eldest brother was thirteen years old, and had just commenced his apprenticeship scheme, which may not last less than two years. When would he be in a position to fund his sister's education? Mrs. Adekunbi does not seem to be projecting adequately into the future. What happens to the expectation of this girl, and even herself as the mother who have high hopes now, if the girl could eventually not acquire secondary and tertiary education? The stress factor identified here is her low socio-economic status, otherwise called poverty. The needed coping resource is money, and it is not yet available.

Surprisingly, Mrs. Adekunbi has other aspirations in life that requires money to be fulfilled. Despite the fact that she is farming on a leased farm plot, one of her topmost desire is to buy a land and build her own house on it. When asked how she intends to realise her ambition, she says that she is praying for her husband, and that she knows that if her husband has enough money and she requests him to assist her concerning the project, he would. According to her, she works very hard, and that she does not spend all the money she realizes from her farm and processing proceeds, and that she is making some savings. Furthermore, she is making some savings, and that she "does not eat with her ten fingers" (*oun ko fi owo meweewa jeun*). This is a *Yoruba* idiomatic expression stressing the value of making financial savings. Looking at her option of praying for her husband to assist her in the realising of her dream house, one tends to wonder how this could be possible, with her husband's status and number of wives. More so that he too is yet to buy a land, or build a house of his own.

8.3.1.3.Appraisal of Mrs. Adekunbi's experiences and coping strategies

The dimensions in Mrs. Adekunbi's life include, her gender (female); her age (28 years); her position as the first of three wives in a polygamous home (living apart); her religion (Islam); and her low socio-economic status. The turnings in her life took place at her marriage when she left Qw  (her home village) to start living in Kango and (her husband's village), although close to her natal village; and on becoming a mother, when she started having children. Her adaptations to the turnings as discussed above, include the available coping resources, and the adopted coping strategies. The resources available to her include, her ½ Acre cassava farm, two ducks, proceeds from her husband and her husband's farm, and weekly maintenance allowance from her husband. Her resources shows that she is poor, and her state of poverty is not unconnected with her residential location, her educational status lack of other skills apart from farming.

Obeng (2002) had earlier observed that primary causes of poverty include resource poor environment and lack of capacities to tap the resources of the environment. Within these limited resources however, Mrs. Adekunbi was able to adopt the strategies of assertiveness, spousal pleasing, spousal support, financial savings, hiring of casual labourers, self-regulation and decision to market her crops and processed cassava by herself. All these strategies are problem-focussed and proactive coping strategies, directing actions toward envisaged stress. In the first instance toward envisaged stressful urban life, and in the second instance toward envisaged health breakdown.

Her life history as told by her, reveals that, apart from her change of status from a single woman to becoming a wife and mother. She did not experience other major turnings probably because of her decision to stay in Kango village, rather than join her husband in the city. This decision however, made her to experience multiple roles associated with farming and village life. In order to cope with the stress associated with farming, she usually employs

casual labourers to work on her farm during the land-preparation period. She also hires labourers for weeding and harvesting, depending on the volume of work, and her own strength. Talking about the rationale for gender roles in farm-families, Mrs. Adekunbi argues that men are stronger than women, and that gender division of labour in families enhances complementarity. Concerning how she copes with her off-farm activities, she says that, she processes all her cassava by herself, because, the bulk of her income is realised through cassava processing. She also markets her harvested and processed cassava by herself. She also identified the problem of exploitation by middlemen and women who buy their agricultural proceeds off them (the farmers) at ridiculously low prices usually exploited them.

Her decision to market her crops and processed cassava by herself without allowing the interference by middlemen and women is also a survival strategy, to maximize her income. She argues that it pays to sell one's food crops by oneself, because, when they sell directly to middlemen and women, the profit margin is reduced. She also sometimes invites her fellow women in the village to come and buy cassava from the farm on particular harvest days, in particular, when her husband needs money. Responding to a direct question on how she copes with stress, Mrs. Adekunbi explains how she decides to stay back in the village, and takes conscious rest, when she feels tired. This can be described as another form of coping strategy - self-regulation. Her conscious effort to take a break and rest prevents a situation of stress overload and breakdown that may result from uncontrolled performance of multiple roles. Mrs. Adekunbi is a Muslim. She acknowledges God as her source of strength, but feels responsible for how she listens to, and interprets her self-regulatory needs.

Although Mrs. Adekunbi's life experience portrays a stressful picture to an outsider, she does not perceive herself to be in any stressful or crisis situation. She sees village life as her way of life, and her marital status (living apart), is not an issue for her, probably because it is a replica of her mother's status too. Children's successful outcomes have been identified

in the study as a vital determinant of parents' psychological wellbeing, the mothers in particular. Despite her aspirations for her daughter's future education, and building her own house, Mrs. Adekunbi does not seem to anticipate any future crisis, which might emanate from an inability to realize these aspirations. She seems content with her present life, on the premise that she is not under daily pressure to fulfil marital roles, and that her choice of residing in the village shields her from stressful urban life.

Within her limited resources, she is able to adopt some coping strategies, which is making her fulfilled in her current situation and enhancing her psychological wellbeing. These are some of the issues being handled by the Women-In-Development Programme of AMREC-UNAAB, which has the responsibility of improving the participatory capabilities of the women farmers in south-western Nigeria generally, and the University's extension villages in particular. It is expected that findings of this study, such as revealed in Mrs. Adekunbi's case, would provide the required information for designing relevant capacity building and improvement programmes for the women.

8.3.2. CASE TWO

Mrs. Abigael Ogunneye (Widow; Obafemi community)

8.3.2.1. Profile (Dimensions, turnings, and stressful situations)

Mrs. Abigael Ogunneye says her only regret in life is her inability to acquire formal education. This early life deprivation informed her decision to ensure that all her children have quality education. The decision has been the propelling force in her life since she got married, and she had to go through series of stressful situations in order to realize her aspiration of seeing her children well educated. Her determination also influenced how she coped with the stress and strains of family and work life over the years. Mrs. Ogunneye is the firstborn in a polygamous family, where her mother was the first of two wives. She has five

sisters and a brother. She had a half brother that died six years prior to the study. She was sixty-three years old at the time of the study. She is a Christian, and a widow. She is the firstborn in a polygamous family, where her mother was the second of two wives. She is the third wife of her late husband. The second wife had left the marriage long before their husband's death, about ten years prior to the commencement of the study. She resides in Obafemi, her husband's village. She farms on a four-acre plot of land, which she inherited from her husband. Her mate (the senior wife) who resides in Abẹokuta is not inclined toward farming, hence her opportunity to exercise considerable control over the farm. She (her mate) however shares from the proceeds of their husband's farm, up till now. Mrs. Ogunneye narrated her experiences of how she was deprived of formal education by her father:

My father did not allow me to go to school. I actually wanted to. My grandmother was also against my going to school. She said that I might die, if allowed to go to school. There is a childhood cousin of mine, who is the only child, of his mother. His mother is my maternal aunt, and she wanted me to come and live with them in Lagos order to keep my cousin's company. She visited us in the village, to discuss her desire with my father. She actually came prepared to take me along with her, had my father agreed. She had already bought and sewn my school uniforms. After discussing her desire and mission with my father, he thanked her for the kind gesture but said that she could not be allowed to take me away immediately, because, there were certain things he had to do for me before releasing me. My father told her that my grandmother would bring me later. Alas!! It was a deceit. I was very unhappy that day, and I cried for several hours, because my father did not allow me to accompany my aunt to Lagos, to be educated. My aunt also felt bad, because, she had already told her family in Lagos that she would bring me with her.

Further expressing her deprivation, she says:

Had it been that I went to school then, I think I would have been an educated person today. My cousin is now abroad, and has a mansion at Gbagada, in Lagos. He has only one child who studied in London. When the boy came to Nigeria sometimes, and I was introduced to him, he was just looking blank. He could not say a word of *Yoruba*, neither could he understand what we were saying. Unfortunately, I could not communicate with him in English either. What a shame. It would not have been like that, if I had gone to school. I decided right from my childhood that what I could not achieve, I would try my best to ensure that my children achieve it; and this is qualitative education. This influenced my determination to educate my children by all means possible, especially when my husband was ill and was not able to provide for them as he would have loved to, and subsequently after his death.

From her story, one could understand why Mrs. Ogunneye was resolute in ensuring that she gives her children good education, in spite of the various stressful situations she had to go through. She has seven children, two males, and five females. All her children are well educated and hold good jobs. They are all happily married with children. Her firstborn is a son, and he is banker. He is in the United States of America. Her second, third and fourth children are daughters. They all have tertiary education. Her second and third daughters are professional teachers, while the fourth is a computer scientist. Her fifth are a set of twins, two daughters. Both had tertiary education. The first twin is a food technologist and a teacher, while the second twin is a printer and a businesswoman. Her lastborn is a son. He too had tertiary education. He is an artist, and has his own company. Mrs. Ogunneye is fulfilled, having realized her life-long ambition to give quality education to her children. Rejoicing, she says:

I thank God for enabling me to take good care of my children and seeing all of them through their educational careers. All my children are well educated; they are independent, and all happily married. I give all glory to God. Their happiness in their various homes is my own happiness too.

8.3.2.2. Coping with stress associated with changing roles

When her husband's illness became protracted, Mrs. Ogunneye's assumed more responsibilities than hitherto, in order to fulfil her financial obligations, and more importantly realize her lifelong aspiration of giving good education to her children. Mrs. Ogunneye says that it was a period of hardship for her, but thank God for seeing her through. The coping strategies she employed during this period of hardship and financial crisis include turning to farming, self-deprivation of new clothing, and reliance on God. Mrs. Ogunneye narrates her experience about how she became gradually involved in her children's education, and her husband's hesitation toward her sharing in the breadwinner responsibility.

My husband tried his best during his lifetime, before he fell ill. He was a loving husband and caring father. When my children were in primary school, my husband would buy pencils, pens and erasers and keep somewhere so that when the children are in need of them, they will know where to go. If not for his sickness, I would not have been buying most things for my children because my husband hated hearing "my mother bought this, my mother bought that". He was however very cautious, because of the need for equal treatment of my stepchildren. Ours, being a polygamous family. There was a time when my twin children got admission into the primary school and needed new uniforms, my husband planned to buy the uniforms, but he was prevented by his illness. I had to buy the uniforms and hid them. When he got to know, he asked me why, and I told him that I just felt like buying the uniforms to complement his efforts. He thanked me and prayed for me too.

She recalled that during his lifetime, her husband was very loving and highly committed to the breadwinner role. She said that her husband would ordinarily not allow his wife/ves to take his place in sharing his responsibilities before his illness. Hence, Mrs. Ogunneye's observation that "*he hated hearing my mother brought this, my mother bought that*". In addition, the narrative shows that just like the men involved in the study, as earlier discussed in chapters eight and nine, her husband appreciated her support, especially when he was incapacitated in fulfilling his breadwinner role. Her husband's cautiousness, mentioned in the narrative is also quite understandable. Husbands and fathers in polygamous families are always cautious not to be accused of favouring a wife or a child above the other, in order to avoid conflicts in the home. With her husband's protracted illness, she became fully involved in financing her children's education, despite her husband's initial hesitance. She also shares her life experiences about how she coped during her children's days in school. Hard work and self-deprivation are prominent amongst her adopted coping strategies during her children's growing years.

At a point, my husband became very ill. I therefore had to work hard to educate my children. I had to deny myself of buying new dresses during that period. For over five years, I could not even buy a handkerchief. There was an incident, when my second child, was flogged also punished for almost a week at school, due to our inability to pay her fees on time. When my husband fell terribly sick, he could not go to the farm again to plant his cocoa, yam and other crops. Gaari was also very expensive during that period. My women folk in the community were all involved in farming and I told my husband that I wanted to start farming too.

He disagreed with me, saying that he didn't marry me for '*wahala* (anguish, strain and stress). I begged him and he later agreed. So, I started farming. I neither knew how to weed nor how to make ridges, but I paid labourers to do it for me, and I planted whatever I wanted to plant. When the farm needed weeding, I hired the labourers again. I now know a lot about farming. I can plant all types of crops now, if I choose to. However, I still hire labourers to work on my farms.

Before then, she was trading in provisions. But her stock had dwindled considerably. This was due to lack of replenishment, and the political war in Obafemi during that period, when political hoodlums destroyed a lot of properties. It affected her husband's business too. He was then combining farming with trading in building materials. He used to have a very big shop before the crisis. His ill health actually started at that period. Despite her inexperience, she ventured into farming as a means of survival. She acknowledges that in spite of the fact that farming is a strenuous and capital-intensive, she decided to venture into it, because of the advantages she identified in the vocation. She explains why she developed interest in farming:

Although farming is very strenuous, it is a very good vocation. If a farmer has cassava on his farm, and has many children, there is nothing he cannot do with the cassava. He can make gaari (roasted cassava granules), elubo-lafun (cassava-flour), fufu (cassava-pasta) and more to feed his children. In addition, if it is yam that he has on the farm, the same thing happens. Farming is particularly appreciated during periods of food scarcity. Farmers make a lot of profit during such periods. There is a friend of mine who built a house from the money he made from her farm produce. Farming is good, but it is only if one is able to invest a lot of money into it. To buy a cocoa farm or even rent one requires a huge financial outlay, but it is highly profitable. For example, if someone rents a cocoa farm for eighty thousand naira for a period of three years, and he/she is able to work hard on the farm, he can make a profit of the same amount in the first year.

Mrs. Ogunnaye's explanation in the above passage indicates that she had carefully considered the options before embarking on farming. It also shows that she benefited from the experience she acquired while managing her husband's cocoa farm during his period of illness. It further confirms the viewpoint of other male farmers in the study, that although cash-crop farming is highly lucrative, it requires a huge financial outlay for profitability and sustainability. In addition to farming, it was also during that period of hardship that Mrs.

Ogunnøyę started processing fufú (cassava pasta), in order to meet her children's financial and educational needs (to pay their fees, buy them clothes and also to feed them). Recalling her experience during that period, she says it was not easy for her at all:

You know, being the only one to carry all the expenses, it was not easily at all. I give all glory to God, for seeing me through. By this time then (10.00 a.m), I would have prepared four baskets of fufú (processed cassava). On market days, I prepare as much as five baskets. I am still into fufú-making now, because it is highly lucrative. I however stopped preparing it by myself, about five years ago, when my elder brother's wife started living with me. We do not prepare much of it again these days, because my expenses have reduced considerably. I now trade in soft drinks (soda) and pure water (water in 500ml sachets). My second child, used buy these drinks in crates and send them to me from the city, before Coca-cola trucks started coming to Obafemi.

Fufú-processing is a highly emerging demanding task, and at the same time very lucrative, as it rewards the stress Mrs. Ogunneye had to go through to fulfil her financial obligations. The process involves peeling the harvested cassava, fermentation by soaking for about four days, making into paste, and coking on fire. The cooking process takes so long and it is always with local firewood. In addition, for her to have prepared five baskets by 10.00 am, she must have woken up very early in the morning. She said that she used to wake up by 4.00 a.m. on a daily basis then. Yet, she decided to go into the business, all for the sake of her children. Now that her aspiration has been realised she says that she does not require preparing as much again.

Her current level of involvement in the fufú-making process also confirms an earlier observation in the study, that women's workload reduces with advancement in age, especially when there are younger women in the household. In Mrs. Ogunnøyę's case, her sister-in-law is the one that relieves her of the processing activities. She (Mrs. Ogunnøyę) however says that she remunerates her labour. This is an unusual practice in *Yoruba* households, as younger women are conventionally expected to serve the older ones. It however shows her magnanimity and kindness. This gesture, according to her, enhances her sister-in-law's commitment and dedication to the work. Mrs. Ogunnøyę is today a very happy woman.

8.3.2.3. Appraisal of Mrs. Ogunneye's experiences and coping strategies

The dimensions of Mrs. Ogunneye's life include her gender (female), her position as the youngest wife in a polygamous family of three wives, and subsequently a widow, her age (63 years) and her religion (Christian). She started experiencing turnings in her life right from childhood, through marriage and widowhood. Her being deprived of education as girl-child informed her life-long aspiration to educate and train her children. Her decision and aspiration also informed the other turnings in her life, for instance, when she had to switch from provisions' trading to farming and fufu processing. Although her adoption of farming and fufu processing as coping strategies increased her stress during that period of financial and economic crisis, it enhanced her adaptation to her changing roles. It also fostered an effective combination of her traditional female gender roles as a woman, with her husband's breadwinner role, which he was unable to perform during his illness and after his death. Her coping strategies include, hard work, change of occupation (farming and fufu processing), endurance, self-deprivation of new dresses, and reliance on God.

Although she is sixty-three years old, she looks much younger than her age. She attributes this to her *ifokonbalẹ* (peace of mind), and *aisi pakaleke ati iporuuru ọkọn* (absence of anxiety and worries). She says that although she had to deprive herself of new dresses and other good things in her days of struggling, she can now afford to buy whatever type of dress she desires. She says that all her children take good care of her, and that they all appreciate her efforts to put them in a good footing. Furthermore, she says that she never nursed the ambition in her youthful days, of building her own house, but that today, she has almost completed a four-unit, three-bedroom apartment in Abẹokuta. Mrs. Ogunneye attributes her ability to wade through the crisis period and the realization of her aspiration to God. She says that she would not have been able to cope, if not for God's enabling grace, especially during

the period of her husband's illness, when she had to combine income-generation for family sustenance with caring for him.

Because of the peculiarities of experiences of widows in southwestern Nigeria, it is pertinent to compare the status and coping resources available to Mrs. Ogunneye, relative to the other women in the study, before proceeding with the analysis. Mrs. Ogunneye experience is one of the six widows in the study. Only one of the five other widows had complete primary education. She, and the remaining four, had no opportunity for formal education. Two of the other widows were the only wives of their late husbands, while Mrs. Ogunneye and the rest were in polygamous relationships. Only one of the other widows had a larger farm holding than Mrs. Ogunneye. Furthermore, she has more children than the other five widows. (Appendix I represents a summary of adult participants' profile). When compared with the other widows, her children are the best educated. This brief comparative analysis shows that Mrs. Ogunneye's experience, with particular regards to the fulfilment of her aspirations and children's educational achievement is unique, and different from the other widows in the study.

Widows across the globe share two common experiences: a loss of social status and lowered socio-economic status (United Nations, 2001). Some of the problems that usually confront women at their husbands' death include, inheritance disenfranchisement, widowhood inheritance, widowhood rites, and the most severe of them all is poverty. In addition, widows make up a sizeable percentage of the world's poorest people (World Bank, 2000). Furthermore, African widows, irrespective of ethnic groups have been categorized by the United Nations (2001) as being the most vulnerable women in the region. This picture shows that Mrs. Ogunneye had really achieved a great feat in realising her lifelong ambition of educating her children. United Nations (2001) observes that in many parts of Africa, the poverty of widowhood usually causes children especially girls to be withdrawn from school.

In addition, widows' coping strategies in many countries involve exploitative informal sector work, putting children into child labour, begging, and ultimately, commercial sex work. There is a particular widow, in the current study for example, a thirty-eight year old woman, who is poor to the extent of having to work for her fellow women as a casual labourer (Cassava processor). She has two sons, and it is difficult for her to feed her children and herself since the death of her husband. She is the only participant in the study who has no farm of her own.

However, according to the United Nations (2001), many widows have shown remarkable courage in the face of tragedy, and either individually, or in cooperation with other widows become self-supporting and entrepreneurial, running small-scale business, farming and supporting mother dependants. Mrs. Ogunneye belongs to this group. Although she did not recall experiences of maltreatment after her husband's death, she would normally have gone through the usual rites in the Egba culture. She is however fortunate that she has authority over her late husband's farm, despite the fact that she is the youngest wife in the household. This was however made possible by her involvement in farming activities during the period of her husband's protracted illness, and the fact that Mrs. Ogunneye's success story as a widow is attributable to her commitment to the fulfilment of her life-long aspiration of educating her children, as a form of compensation for her own childhood deprivation.

8.3.3. CASE THREE

Mrs. Magaret Fatona - *Olori* (Wife living with spouse; Ilewo-Orile community)

8.3.3.1. Profile (Dimensions, turnings, and stressful situations)

‘*Olori*’ is the *Yoruba* title for the wife of an *Oba* (King or traditional ruler) in Yorubaland. The traditional ruler is called *Oba*, and addresses as *Kabiyesi*. Literarily translated, *Kabiyesi* means, *K'a bi o o si* (no one questions the king’s authority). Mrs. Magaret Fatona was sixty-three years old at the time of the study. She is a Catholic. She is the second of her mother’s eight children in a polygamous family, where her mother was the second of two wives. She has five children. Her first child, a daughter, is a university graduate. She owns a private catering business. Her second born is an Accountant, the third is a Computer scientist, and the fourth is an Economist. The fifth one is a University undergraduate, and he is studying political science. Three of them are based in the United States of America. She successfully combines her traditional role as ‘*Olori*’ with her marital, parental, kinship and natal, work, and community roles. She attributes her success to her childhood training and education as a teacher.

Although she never lived in a village before her husband’s enthronement as the *Oba*, she successfully adjusted to village life, and now combines farming with her multiple roles. According to her, she is interested n farming because of her husband’s interest in farming. She had all her education in Lagos. She is a professional teacher, and rose through the ladder to become an Assistant Inspector of Education in Lagos state, Nigeria. She voluntarily retired from active service when her husband became the Elewo of Ilewo-Orile, to enable her accompany him to settle down in the village. This according to her was to enable her give him the necessary support. She says that her decision was influenced by her love for her husband, and the *Yoruba* tradition:

I retired prematurely sixteen years ago, due to the enthronement of my husband as the *Kabiyesi* of Ilewo. Apart from the fact that tradition requires that I accompany

him to the palace as he relocated, I could not have left him to go home alone. We love each other so much, we are very fond of each other, and we have been together since our wedding. More so, a Yoruba adage says, “*aponle o si f’ oba ti ko l’ Olori*” (Nobody respects a king who has no queen).

8.3.3.2. Coping with changing roles (Adaptation)

As a working-class woman, *Olori* had been combining multiple roles of wife, mother, and worker, since she got married, long before her husband’s enthronement as the *Oba*. Her husband’s new status as a traditional ruler however expanded her role framework to include that of *Olori* (*Oba*’s wife), while her decision to embrace farming and food-crop processing added on and off-farm roles to her existing roles. Her decision to accompany her husband to the village was voluntary, and was a demonstration of love, dedication, and support for her husband. She had to cut her career short, in spite of her length of service, and future prospects of her career as an Assistant Inspector of Education. Village life in Ilewo-Orile is not comparable with life in Lagos. Lagos is urban and the commercial centre of Nigeria, while Ilewo-Orile is rural. She grew up in the heart of Lagos and never lived in the village. Yet, she copes successfully in her new roles. She was never a farmer, but now she farms. A vocation she embraced due to her husband’s interest. This period was a major transition in *Olori*’s life. Brammer (1991) describes ‘life transition’ as a journey, usually to something unknown. The journey, according to Brammer, requires courage to cope with fear. Transitions are characterised by change, resulting from a sharp discontinuity with previous life events and emergence of coping responses that the person may even not be formerly aware of (Brammer, 1991). According to *Olori*:

I never lived in a village, I was born, bread, educated, and trained in Lagos. I had always been a Lagos girl. In fact, I was brought up in the central part of Lagos; but it had no adverse influence on me. I really enjoy farming now. Whenever my husband decides to harvest his crops I would not go to school. I usually make the school bus available to convey harvested crops from the farm to the house here. We usually discuss the timing ahead, to enable me to schedule my plans ahead accordingly.

Olori's approach to the 'change' as shown in the above passage, depicts that although 'change' often makes us anxious, it is also sometimes stimulating. Brammer argues that 'change' strains our adaptive capacities and challenges us to develop more functional coping skills and attitudes (Brammer, 1991). Olori was able to summon courage and develop effective coping strategies in her new situation. After relocating to the village, she decided to establish a group of schools in Ayetoro another community not too far from Ilewo-Orile. The school had since expanded from being a Nursery and primary school, to now include a secondary school. The conglomerate of schools is named Oriade International group of schools. Oriade means the "crowned head". Due to her developed interest in farming, she now owns two plots of four-acre farmland, each given to her by Kabiyesi. She also has a school farm in Ayetoro. She grows cassava, yam, pepper, tomatoes and vegetables. Boarders in the group of schools are fed from the food crops grown on Olori and Kabiyesi's farms.

Her sustained interest in farming, combined with her educational preparation has contributed greatly toward the development of women and families in Ilewo-Orile, over the past sixteen years since her husband became the Oba. Her husband and herself had also succeeded in putting a stop to the exploitation of farmers in the community by middlemen and women. Kabiyesi established a rule that no farmer should sell his or her farm proceeds before taking it to the market, and that whoever was caught selling agricultural proceeds to middlemen and women in their houses would be dealt with as having flouted the Oba's order. On her part, Olori uses her car to convey food crops to the nearby markets, rather than sell at ridiculously low prices, or allow them to rot. She asserts:

Sometimes ago, when there were no buyers for the vegetables in this community, I would have woken up at 5.00 a.m., loaded the car and driven it myself to Lafenwa market (a big market in Abeokuta). I would sell everything, and by 7h00, I am back in the house. By 7h30 am I would have dressed up for work, by 8h00, I'm out off to school. I did that, times without number and nobody would ever know that I have gone out to the market early in the morning. Again, when the buyers (middlemen and women) started coming and they decided to cheat, I refused, and told my children not to sell the vegetables to them. There is a nearby

community – Joga-Orile, there were some buyers. By 6h00 I would pack all the vegetables into the car and off I go to Joga. In five minutes I was already there. The buyers would already be waiting for me. They know that every five days I would bring vegetables for sale. The vegetables include 'ewedu', 'efo' (green leafy vegetables), 'ata' (pepper), and 'tomatoes', and they were fast selling. Within a twinkle of an eye, everything would have been bought. By that time, I had no driver. I was driving myself, and anytime my husband wanted to go out I also drove him out. This road behind us leads to Joga. At that time, it was peaceful and you can go out at anytime of the day; but now, smugglers ply the road. The road is not safe again nowadays, as it used to be.

From the above narrative, we can see how Olori handled the problem of middlemen and women with her resources. It is however revealed that her car played a vital role in the process. Of all the women of Ilewo-Orile who lives in the village, only Olori owns a car. This brings in the issue of intersection of class and gender, and reveals that not all women farmers are impoverished after all. It then means that since other women in the village do not have such a coping resource, they cannot handle the problem in the same way, while Kabiyesi' 'order' (*ase*), that nobody should sell food crops to middle men was being upheld. The narrative also shows that Olori is an early riser. She says that she has been used to rising up very early in the morning right from her childhood:

My mother taught us the importance of rising early, and how to take care of the house. She trained us to wake up by 5.30 am, and wash plates, cook, sweep the floor and clean the house. It was part of my upbringing.

Olori also discusses how she combines her various roles, and prevents role conflicts. She attributes her successful combination of roles to her educational preparation as a teacher:

As a teacher, you have to be an organizer. You have to pass in organizational skills before you can be certified as a teacher. In addition, you can never be a good teacher, unless you are very well organized. To get organised, you need to ask yourself certain questions, and answer them before proceeding. "What do I do now? How will it affect my other roles? How do I fulfil all roles and obligations?" You have to sit down, think and plan. When I was in my final year in the college, I offered a course in practical domestic science. In a single practical examination, you are expected to cook, sew, perform household chores and at the same time, do baby minding. You have to be organized and ensure that the performance of one role does not jeopardize the other. Mine is to tell my children and other helps what I want from them, and ensure that they do it. I do my own part of the job and you do yours. That is organization. When I wake up each morning, before getting out of the house, I usually assign duties to my

children and helpers, regarding what I want them to do before my arrival. On my own part, I would have gone to the market for shopping and to the school before coming back home I don't allow cooks to cook for me. I cook everybody's food including the workers' food. I prefer to eat freshly cooked food, soup and vegetables. Kabiyesi too, loves it that way.

She also discusses how she prevents stress. This is achieved through self-organization, adequate programming, time management, and adopted sleep patterns (*early to bed, early to rise*).

I do not subject myself to stress at all. I programme my duties and do what I feel I can do. I don't bother myself if I cannot do something or complete my scheduled tasks. I don't put myself under stress. What I can do and do successfully is what I do. I am an early sleeper and an early riser. I usually take my bath and go to bed between 19.30h00 to 20.00.

8.3.3.3. Appraisal of Olori's experiences and coping strategies

The dimensions of Olori's life include her position as Qba's wife, her previous positions, and past experiences, which she brought with her into her new position. These include, her position as a daughter, professional teacher, and Assistant Inspector of Education. She started experiencing turnings in her life right from childhood, when she insisted that she was no longer staying with a guardian who maltreated her. Other turnings took place when she completed her training as a professional teacher and started working. It was on her first working day that she met the man who eventually became her husband. Apart from the turnings associated with remarkable events in her life (for example, her wedding, birth of children, promotion at work and family trips abroad), a major turning in Olori's life history is her transition from a Lagos-based Assistant Inspector of Education, to a village-based Olori, farmer, and food-crop processor.

In her life history explored above, I observe that her childhood training, educational background and teaching career, greatly contributed to the resources available to her, when she needed to cope with the stress associated with her changing life situation, and adaptation to the demands of the changing roles that accompanied her new status. Greenberger and

O'Neil (1993) had earlier noted that educational level affects the level of knowledge and skills that women bring to the management of multiple roles. In addition, Boland-Ahrentzen (1990) argued that role conflict caused by role accumulation can be offset by sufficient and appropriate resources, knowledge, skills and enhanced self-esteem. Olori had at her disposal, a good educational background, experience in teaching and inspection of schools, a personal car and school buses, money, and spousal support. The resources at her disposal, earlier identified, enhanced her ability to effectively cope with her situation. Olori's coping strategies are distinctively different from those of other women in the study.

The coping strategies she adopted include, spousal support (embracement of farming), establishment of schools, self-organization, and sleep patterns (early to bed early to rise), adequate programming, and effective resource management (for example, time, car, money). These strategies are all problem-focussed, as they aim at reducing the demands of the stressful situation and expanding the available resources to cope with the situation. In addition, due to her previous achievements in life, success in her current roles, and marital satisfaction, Olori has a very high self-esteem, and this propels her to desire more successes in her various role capacities. Her ability to cope successfully enhances her self-esteem, and this shows that a high self-esteem enhances one's coping ability. Danes (1998) had earlier observed that the higher the level of self-esteem, the more roles a woman could manage successfully.

The educational attainment of Olori as well as the resources at her disposal reveals that, although Olori is also a farmer like the other women, she belongs to a different class. In addition, while most of the other women have lived the better part of their lives in the various communities, Olori lived the better part of her life in Lagos. Her educational background, previous work experience, and socio-economic status all distinguish her from the rest women, and influence her adopted coping resources and strategies. Her outlook toward life, her decision to relocate in the village, the way she adjusted to village life, and contributions

towards the development of women and families in her community, however, makes her a worthy role model for other women farmers, and in particular girl-children in farm-families.

8.3.4. CASE FOUR

Mr. Sule Adeleke (Husband living with spouse; Boodo-Sanyaolu community)

8.3.4.1. Profile (Dimensions, turnings and stressful situations)

Mr. Adeleke is a native of Ijemo-Fadipe, a village about four kilometres away from Boodo-Sanyaolu. He was seventy-seven years old at the time of the study. He is a Muslim, and has no formal education. His parents were farmers, and he too, had been a farmer from childhood. He combines farming with a full time job as a Security guard in Orile-Iporo Community High School, Ijemo-Fadipe. He has five large farms totalling six acres, where he grows cash crops (cocoa, cola nut, oranges, lime), wrapping leaves (ewe-iran), food crops (cassava, maize, and vegetables). His topmost desire in life is to build a six-bedroom apartment in Ijemo-Fadipe. He had already purchased a piece of land for the project, but he is yet to commence the building, due to financial constraints. He is the youngest of seven children in a monogamous family.

He married ten years after his first engagement, because his former fiancée disappointed him, due to a protracted illness, which he suffered then. He has seven children, five of which are married. All these five, have complete primary education. His firstborn is a daughter. She lives in Ibadan, and she trades in provisions. His second born is a son. He is a motorcycle repairer in Odeda. He has two wives. His third born is a daughter, and lives with her husband in Owu (a nearby village). She is a full-time housewife. His fourth and fifth children are daughters, and are also married. One of them lives in Abeokuta, while the other lives with her husband in Boodo-Sanyaolu. His sixth child is a daughter, and she is in Junior Secondary School (JSS, class 3). She is the only one out of his entire children that has

secondary school education. His lastborn is a son. The boy has mental and language disabilities and thus could not go to school. There is no special school for such challenged children in the community.

From findings reported in chapters seven, it was revealed that Mrs. Adeleke (his wife), supports him financially, especially in relieving him of some aspects of his breadwinner role (for example, feeding the family and educating their fifth daughter). Due to advancing age, he is not as active as he used to be on the farm in his youthful days. He observes:

When I was much younger, I had more strength to work hard on the farm, but now, I am very frail and have little strength to work personally on my farms. I now make use of immigrant labourers from other parts of the country (for example, the Tiv from Benue state and Hausas from the upper northern states), which I employ and pay on a daily basis.

8.3.4.2. Coping with stress associated with role fulfilment and aspirations (Adaptations)

Although he has five large farms, proceeds from the farms are not enough to sustain the family. This is because he is not as energetic as before, and more importantly, because he does not have enough money to invest on the farms. Mr. Adeleke acknowledged that his wife is very supportive, and that, this makes her happy. He however mentioned on another occasion that although his wife is supportive, and ensures that everybody in the family feeds well, he feels unhappy when he is unable to adequately provide for the educational needs of their daughter who is in JSS 3, and has to request his wife's assistance. It is the current financial situation of this family that made Mr. Adeleke's uppermost desire to build a six-room apartment, to seem unattainable:

My topmost desire in life now is to build a house in Ijemo-Fadipe. I have purchased a piece of land and I'm planning to put up a six-bedroom apartment on it. It will enhance my psychological wellbeing (Mr. Adeleke).

He mentioned this desire while I was eliciting responses during one of the interviews, regarding what would make him satisfied with life as whole, vis-à-vis his current situation. Psychological wellbeing is a subjective and relative construct. What constitutes peace of

mind for Mr. A. may be different from that of Mrs. B. I tend to feel that that Mr. Adeleke's uppermost desire is informed by a feeling of inadequacy (no own house), which constitutes a dimension of stress and threat to his self-esteem and his psychological wellbeing. His inability to always provide for his family's needs and daughter's educational needs are equally stressful for him. So also is his lastborn's challenged situation. Stressors in Mr. Adeleke's life therefore include, lack of own house, inability to fulfil breadwinner role, and child's health situation. Men in the study have earlier identified these three factors, amongst the determinants of their psychological wellbeing. This confirms an earlier position that factors influencing psychological wellbeing, most of the time, also precipitate stress in individuals and families (Sokoya, 1997), and that when needs are met and aspirations are fulfilled, psychological wellbeing is enhanced (Sokoya, 1997; Carr, 1999), but if otherwise, stress is inevitable (Kisseka, 1990). Responding to a direct question about how he copes with stress, he acknowledges the support of his wife and care by his children.

I am glad when my wife helps me on my farm. My wife is very hardworking. In spite of her partial paralysis (she suffered from stroke few years ago), she still owns and manages a very big farm of her own. If you get there, you won't believe it's a woman's farm. She sees to it that every member of the family feeds well, since I cannot farm now as before. I also hire the few labourers that I can afford their wages, to work on my farm. When I am tired and stressed, I stay in-door and rest. I also send to one of my daughters to buy some beverages for me, which I drink and sleep.

8.3.4.3. Appraisal of Mr. Adeleke's experiences and coping strategies

The dimensions in Mr. Adeleke's life history include his age (77 years), his religion (Muslim), the number and statuses of his children, and his occupations as a farmer and a full-time security guard. He had lived all his life in the village. The turnings in his life took place during his protracted illness in his youth, which led to his being rejected by his former fiancée. Another turning was when he had to take up a full-time as a security guard in order to make ends meet. Mr. Adeleke however has limited resources to cope with both his

responsibilities as breadwinner and fulfil his uppermost desire of building his own house. His coping resources include his wife and children (who assist him financially), and money used in hiring casual labourers.

His coping strategies include seeking support from wife and children, taking up a full-time job as a security guard even at old age, hiring labourers, and resting, when tired. He took up the security guard's job nine years prior to the study at the age of sixty-six years. At this age, he was not expected to be in the civil service, because the retirement age in Ogun state civil service is sixty-five years. His official age at work is however forty-eight years as against his actual age, because of the government's regulations on retirement age. He says that although he is aware that he is too old for such a job, he took it because the job of a security guard is not as energy demanding as farming, and also because of the assurance of a regular monthly income. Although he acknowledges that his children do care for him, it is that with the children's current statuses, identified above, they may not be able to go far. His adopted coping strategies are all problem-focussed, directing attention toward having enough income to fulfil his breadwinner role.

As revealed in the summary of adult participants' profile (Appendix I), Mr. Adeleke is amongst the oldest men in the study. Only one participant, aged eighty years is older than he is. Mr. Adeleke did not go to school at all. Out of the seventeen men that participated in the study, only four had tertiary education, one had secondary education, two, had complete primary education, while three had incomplete primary education. Mr. Adeleke is one of the seven men who had no opportunity for formal education in the study. He is also one of the three men, out of the six men aged seventy years and above in the study, who had no opportunity for formal education. The three men in this category that went to school are: Mr. Babatunde, Mr. Soyoye, and Pastor Kehinde.

The life experiences shared by these three men are more pleasant than that of Mr. Adeleke. They live in their own houses and seem to be more fulfilled. All their children are adults and they claim that the children take good care of them. Seventy-five year old Pastor Kehinde is however comfortable to the extent of not having to rely on his children for survival needs. Mr. Babatunde who turned eighty years old few months prior to the commencement of the study, claimed that his birthday anniversary celebrations were organised and financed by his children. Seventy-six year old Mr. Soyoye asserts that he is contented with life and, his topmost desire is to own a GSM phone and a personal car. These according to him are however not pressing needs for him. This case analysis therefore shows that education and literacy play a key role in enhancing role accomplishment and psychological wellbeing. This finding agrees with earlier observations by Okojie et. al (1996) and Sokoya (1997), concerning the importance of education in role fulfilment.

In addition, amongst the six men aged seventy and above, Mr Adeleke is the only one who still has a daughter in the secondary school. This is due to the fact that he married and started bearing children late, having been jilted by his former fiancée. Children of the other men in this category are all grown ups and have left home. Four of the remaining five men in this group of above seventies have built their own houses and are residing in them with their families. The fifth man, Mr. Abdul Yesuf resides in his late father's (inherited) home, and he did not indicate aspiring to build a house of his own at his age. He seems contented with his inherited house.

Mr. Adeleke's concern about building his own house must have been a life-long ambition for him, due to the ideological representations of family headship and importance of property acquisition in *Yoruba* culture. One of the ideological gender role expectations from a man as *Baale* (head of the home) is that he should provide shelter for his dependants for example, his wife/ves and children (Eades, 1980). In addition, the *Yorubas* attach a lot of

importance to property acquisition by men, because of the belief that fathers should leave inheritance for their children. Celebrations at the completion of personal buildings, termed ‘*isile*’ (house-warming ceremony) are usually accompanied with a lot of cooking, eating, fun and pageantry amongst the *Yorubas*. Hence, *Yoruba* men experience a sense of fulfilment they succeed in building their own house.

The experience of forty-eight year old Mr. Kusimo reported in chapter nine, is a testimony to this. According to Mr. Kusimo, one of the determinants of his psychological wellbeing is because he is the first person amongst his siblings to own a personal house. Added to this, Mr. Kusimo also claims to derive pleasure in his other possessions, which include: a motorcycle, a cassava grinding machine and other household electronic appliances (for example, television, video and radio). From the above scenario, one then understand why Mr. Adeleke feels unaccomplished at his age of seventy-seven, because he is yet to own his house. His inability to provide for his family’s needs and fund his daughter’s education may therefore not solely be due to inadequate funds, but more to his priorities and commitment to his goal of own-house project. His austere lifestyle might be due to his financial commitment towards his imminent house project. Hence, his unfulfilled or yet to be fulfilled aspiration is impinging on his psychological wellbeing and gender role fulfilment.

8.3.5. CASE FIVE

Mr. Bamidele Akinlawon (Husband living apart; Ogijan community)

8.3.5.1. Profile (Dimensions, turnings and stressful situations)

Mr. Akinlawon was sixty-two years old at the time of the study. He is a Christian. He is the lastborn of his mother, who was the third of his father’s four wives. His father had thirteen children. His uncle, who lived in Lagos, brought him up. He is a native of Abeokuta, and resides in Ogijan community, in Odeda Local government area (LGA). He married his only

wife at the age of thirty-one years. His wife resides at Asero, in Abeokuta. Their two sons are in tertiary institutions in Ogun state. His love for farming, nature and natural environment propelled him to decide to retire into full-time crop and livestock farming. He also decided to settle down and reside permanently in the village, although this decision did not go down well with his wife and children. He farms a two-hectare piece of land in Ogijan community, out of which one hectare belongs to him, and the other hectare belongs to a relative who does not stay in the village. He plants cocoa on the farm plot belonging to him, and other food crops on the other farm plot. His livestock holding comprises, thirty-five sheep, thirty-eight goats, twenty local fowls, and about three hundred snails. He was formerly rearing ducks, but had to stop, when the village water source got polluted.

According Mr Akinlawon, his involvement in the performance of various household chores right from childhood, has greatly contributed to his ability to live an independent and self-fulfilling life. Although these duties were considered feminine, they were assigned to him because he was the only child in his uncle's home where he grew up. His guardians had no child of their own then. He narrates his experience, thus:

I stayed with my uncle and his wife in Lagos from 1949. Then, they have no child of theirs. At my tender age of eight years, I was involved in the various household chores, including grinding, pepper, fetching of water, sweeping buying foodstuffs things in the market as well. Performing all these duties nowadays are no big deal, to me because I am already used to them. I still grind pepper up till now, since I live alone in the village.

He said that since he started working in 1962, he had been cooking by himself. He detests eating from canteen and *bukaterias* (*bukaterias* are local canteens). He still grinds pepper up till now, and also performs domestic chores, more so that he is living alone in the village. After his primary education, financial constraints prevented him from acquiring secondary school education. He had to attend an evening school instead. It was during this period that he came across some missionaries in Lagos, who influenced the direction of his future career.

He recalled his experiences and how his life was transformed when he came across the missionaries:

When I completed my primary school education in 1956, I wanted to enrol in a secondary school but my father could not afford to pay the stipulated fees. I therefore had to attend an evening school in our area in Lagos. It was during this period, that I met some missionaries who were selling books, and we became friends. We became close to the extent that their children and I were always together. They were the ones that encouraged me to go to the technical school, since it was not as expensive as the secondary school. I was always with these missionaries, and I sometimes accompany them to Badagry on evangelism trips. I also learnt a lot of biblical doctrines from them. It was through these missionaries that I went for a leadership course in Liberia in 1977.

Mr. Akinlawon attended the technical college between 1959 and 1962, and studied interior decoration, and gained immediate employment into the civil service after graduation. In his workplace, he came across some White men again. Impressed by his diligence and dedication to work, the White men said that he was better as a clerk than an interior decorator, and changed his appointment accordingly. He also participated in management and leadership courses in the University of Ibadan, in 1972, Liberia in 1977 and Yaba College of Technology in 1980. Mr Akinlawon says that since his retirement into full-time farming, things have not been easy for his family. He says that as much as he loved farming, and despite his small family size, it has not been easy for him to maintain his family through the yields from his crop and poultry farms. His transition from being a Lagos-based civil servant, to becoming a village-based farmer had subjected him to a lot of stressful life situations over the years. Yet he is resolute in settling down in the village, in spite of the fact that his wife and children are in the city.

8.3.5.2. Coping with crises associated with a change in status (Adaptations)

The problems encountered by Mr Akinlawon during the crisis period that accompanied his change of status include, living apart, inability to provide for the needs of his family, with particular regards to feeding, paying house-rent, and financing of children's education. He

says that there are many problems, which arose and persist up till now. For example, he used to have a personal car when he just retired, but the car is now bad. It was not easy for his wife and children to adjust to village life. Explaining the reason underlying why he lives apart from his wife, he says:

For a person who has been used to making use of gas cooker to adjust to cooking on kerosene stove or even local firewood was a problem. She has been used to electricity supply. There's no electricity supply here in Ogijan. There is no pipe-borne water too, and there is a difference in the taste of tap water and well water. In addition, the people you meet and relate with in the village are different from the people you meet with in the town. All these posed a problem, which remained a source of fear for my wife and children. The main reason for our not staying together presently however is because my wife is still in active service.

Although his wife is very supportive, he laments that his inability to perform the breadwinner role, affects his self-esteem as man. He says that apart from his love for the natural environment, his inability to pay the rent of the flat where his wife and children reside in Abeokuta is one of his reasons for deciding to stay back in the village. He narrates some of his experiences of hardship:

There are so many problems confronting me. For four years after our firstborn completed his secondary school education, he could not further his education due to financial constraints. Up till now, I have not really been able to support the children financially in their education. I can't afford the money from what I'm doing (farming). But thank God, we are overcoming these problems through my wife's support and the help of our friends. My wife spends the bulk of her salary on the children's education. I however try my best to take food crops from my farm to my wife and children in the city, in order to prevent a situation whereby she spends her money on food again. .

Apart from his inability to fund his children's education, Mr. Akinlawon says that the situation so bad at a time that, he could not afford to eat well, and feed his family:

There was a period, when I had no money, not even a *kobo* on me, and my children were complaining that they took *gaari* to school. I had been tempted several times to trek down from the village to Abeokuta, on foot to see my family. For a period of about three months, I was eating only *gaari* (cassava flakes) and *eba* (pasta prepared from *gaari*), three times daily. I take *eba* in the evening, and eat the leftover the following morning. And in the afternoon I would soak *gaari* in water. For about three consecutive months I lived without taking pepper or oil, not to talk of meat, because I had no money. I thank God today that I have a lot of things to eat now. I have pawpaw and oranges.

Still talking about how inability to fulfil the breadwinner roles affects his self-esteem, Mr. Akinlawon mentioned how his limited contribution toward family sustenance also inhibits his involvement in decision-making and authority in the home. He says that a man's ability to assume responsibility for family-decision-making is dependent on his socio-economic status. He says that, without adequate financial resources to meet one's family's needs, a husband would not be able to exercise authority in the home, and that authority is linked with decision-making. He also observed that, no matter how strong love amongst couples is, there would be one misunderstanding or the other, especially when the husband is not in good financial standing. He further says that he does not normally tell people about these experiences except those who have similar problems. He uses his experience to counsel other people with similar problems, telling them that, there is a great number of Nigerian with similar problem and in the same situation. Mr. Akinlawon tries to explain why he had such a small farmland, despite the fact that he is in his father's village:

Our father married many wives and gave birth to many children so that they can make use of them on their farmland. There were many cocoa trees. Cola nut was also abundant in large quantities. In the *Yoruba* culture, when a man dies, these possessions, which looked so plenty would be shared amongst the wives and their children, as inheritance. A wife may have ten children while the other may have only one child. The properties would be equally shared for children of the two wives according to the number of wives '*idi-igi*' (maternal tree) regardless of the number of children from each wife. By the time these properties are shared, the land property would have been considerably fragmented. In a maternal tree with ten children for example, their own share would be further fragmented into ten fractions. The land thus becomes smaller, compared to what their father used to have. If one of the ten children would be a polygamist like his father, by the time he would be sharing his own land, probably an area of land not more than the size of a room would be the portion allocated for each of his children. This is why I decided that I would not follow my father's footsteps.

Mr. Akinlawon identified the problem of middlemen and women, who exploit farmers through their sharp and unscrupulous practices. The middlemen and women as earlier identified, usually buy the crops from farmers at ridiculously low prices, and fix prices by

themselves, thus maximizing the middlemen/women's gains. Most of the time, their profit more than that of the farmers who tilled the ground. He further said that because of poor pricing of food crops, he usually decides to give the bulk of his harvested crops away as gifts to friends, who he is sure, are usually appreciative of such gesture. He says that "profit-making is not all that life entails" and that if he had wanted to be a millionaire through unscrupulous means, he had all the opportunities while in the civil service.

8.3.5.3. Appraisal of Mr. Akinlawon's experiences coping strategies

The dimensions of Mr. Akinlawon's life include his age (62years), his childhood training in household chores, his educational background, his experience with the Missionaries who assisted him in his youthful days, his marital status (married, but living apart), his socio-economic condition, his occupation (crop and livestock farmer), and his religion (Christian). From the foregoing, the coping resources available to him include his farm resources, his wife, friends, and previous experiences acquired across his life span. His coping strategies include, planning ahead and limiting his family size (2 children). His situation would have been more critical, if he had more than two children. His other strategies include, endurance (going without food), religion (church attendance), giving food crops away as gifts, rather than sell at loss, spousal support, humility, helping others in spite of personal problems, and 'contentment' (*itelorun*). He says that his inability to employ labourers limits the output from his crop farms, but that he could not afford the money required to hire labourers.

Since his arrival in the village, he has been assisting people who have problems in financing their education. He cited a case of a girl in her final year in secondary school who was financially constrained in her education. Through his assistance, the girl had completed her studies, and she is now a surveyor. He says that there are many other cases like that, and that, it is his joy to assist other according to the ability the Lord has bestowed on him, despite

the fact that he was not able to pay his own children's educational bills. Above all, Mr. Akinlawon says that he is contented with village life, in spite of all odds. He thanks God for his current situation and he rationalizes that possibly he would have been dead by now, if he had been more comfortable, financially. He describes what sustains his interest in village life.

Living in the village has been granting me a lot of satisfaction. I wake up in the morning I see natural things. I walk about seeing natural things. Going out of the village, there are lots of artificial things even human beings. I see natural hair in the village although some of the villagers are copying what operates in the town. In the morning I hear birds singing and it given are an amount of joy. As these birds are singing, I don't think they are asking God about their enemies but are rather praising God I believe we can learn from them. Even my sheep acknowledge my presence. Back in the city, there are lots of distractions, pollution, congestion and so on. When there is proper orientation towards life, one would have less to complain about. I don't think about the latest clothes in vogue, or about the money I'm going to throw in the air at parties. I think more about how we can bless other people as some other people are blessing us. I desire that my family would also join me. I do say it that I want to live here and die here, but some think I'm cursing myself expecting from you younger one's not necessarily coming to live in a mud house, when other villagers are desirous of settling in the cities.

Mr. Akinlawon's coping strategies are both emotional and problem-focussed. His life history even reveals that he more often adopts emotion-focussed coping strategies than problem-focussed strategies. For example, his decision to give his harvested food crops away to friends as gift is more directed towards his emotion and psychological cost of not wanting to be exploited by middlemen and women, rather than toward addressing his family's financial crises situation. In addition, his approach toward assisting other members and children in his community financially is emotional and motivated by his past experiences with the missionaries and having benefited from other people's benevolence; while his wife is left to bear the family's financial burden alone. His contentment with village life and faith in God are also emotion-focussed coping strategies.

In order to appreciate the dilemma of Mr. Akinlawon, it is important to analyse his situation, relative to the other men in the study. It was observed that only the participants with secondary education and above usually have opportunity to travel and live outside the

rural communities, where the study was conducted. Mr Akinlawon is amongst the four men in the study, who had tertiary education. The four men are: Kabiyesi Elewo, Pastor Kehinde, Pastor Koleoso, and Mr. Akinlawon. These four men are the most educated in the study. They are monogamists and all Christians. Their religion, choice of marriage type, and attitudes may not be unconnected with the influence of education, and exposure. Mr. Akinlawon is actually nicknamed “Londoner” in his community because his ways of life are different from those of other farmers in the community. In addition Kabiyesi Elewo’s attitude toward gender division of labour in families is contrary to traditional gender role expectations. So also are the Pastors Kehinde and Koleoso’s attitudes towards gender role stereotypes.

Mr. Akinlawon is however the only one amongst this category of four knowledgeable farmers undergoing his type of stressful situations discussed in this case study. Mr Akinlawon’s story reveals that his experience is due to his limited coping resources. His farm-size is limited because he was able inherit the small portion from the fragmented farmland of his late father, who was polygamous. He is also the only one in the group of the four knowledgeable farmers, who live apart from his wife. Kabiyesi Elewo as a traditional ruler in Yorubaland has the entire land in his community at his disposal. Hence his farm size is unlimited. His current farm holding is over twenty hectares. He also has other private companies outside the community (one of these is a security company in Abeokuta) which he has employed people to manage on his behalf. He earns a good pension from his former employment, and has three of his children abroad. Pastor Kehinde is an accomplished professional teacher. He retired as a Grade I Headmaster, before he became a full-time farmer. He has both permanent and food crops on his farms, and his farm holding is twenty-eight hectares. He also earns his pension regularly, and all his children are adults, independent, and comfortable. Pastor Koleoso is still in active service as a Secondary school Principal. He could afford the needed investment for both his five-hectare crops’ farm, and

his livestock. Only one of his four children is still a University undergraduate. The rest three have graduated and are independent.

Different from the experiences of the three other farmers examined above, although Mr. Akinlawon has a quite substantial livestock holding (thirty-five sheep, thirty-eight goats, twenty local fowls, and about three hundred snails), he says that he could not afford the needed investments to maintain and expand his current farm holdings (crops and livestock). His two sons are still in tertiary institutions and he could not contribute toward their education as desired. Mr. Akinlawon's experiences reveals that his decision to 'live apart', by settling down permanently in the village may not be entirely due to his love for a natural environment as he claimed, but more to his declining socio-economic status. Some of Mr. Akinlawon's assertions suggest that his inability to fulfil his ideological gender role of a breadwinner makes him feel unaccomplished as a husband and father. For example, he said that he could not afford to pay the rent of the flat where his wife and children reside in Abeokuta, where they were living together before. He also said on another occasion that since he is unable to give a regular food allowance to his wife, he was not willing to increase her burden by staying in the city, and be fed by his wife. From the above analysis, Mr Akinlawon's decision to live apart may be another coping strategy, and his reason for doing so (love for natural environment), a rationalization for his action.

On the other hand, when Mr. Akinlawon's situation is compared with those of other resource poor farmers in the study, a different picture emerges. In his community and amongst other farmers in farming communities Ogun State, Mr. Akinlawon would be considered as very fortunate, at least more fortunate than the majority, for the following reasons: He is educated, and has travelled outside his community, outside Ogun State, and outside the country. He is actually nicknamed "Londoner" in his community. Regardless of the fact that the other country he has been is Liberia in West Africa, and not London. His

wife is also considered as an asset and a source of envy for him, because, out of all the men residing in his community, he is the only one with an educated and working-class wife. His status in the community as portrayed above also explains, part of the reason why he considers it necessary for him to assist other less privileged people in his community, in spite of his own predicament.

Mr. Akinlawon is also different from other farmers in his community in that, his livestock farm is well tended, very unique, and in a class of its own. He is actually our best livestock farmer in the Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC) of UNAAB. He is also one of the very few of the farmers in the University's extension villages that regularly visits the Centre (AMREC), to seek information regarding how he could improve his livestock and crop farms. This is another coping strategy, which other resource poor farmers rarely adopt. Mr. Akinlawon's childhood training, educational background, early life interaction with White Missionaries, and previous work experience are considered to have enhanced to his ability to cope with the change in his status. Yet within him, he feels unaccomplished. Mr Akinlawon's feeling of lack of fulfilment is more connected to his ideological gender role orientation, regarding what is expected of him as the breadwinner, than the reality. The socio-cultural constructions gender as stressed throughout this thesis is that ideology of gender prescribes norms and rules regarding appropriate behaviour, determines attributes, and also reproduces a range of beliefs and customs to defend and perpetuate these norms and rules. This is the root of Mr. Akinlawon's problems and of many other men in the study.

8.4. COPING STRATEGIES OF MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS: A GENDER ANALYSIS

One of the reasons for adopting a dual-gender approach in this study is to generate information that would be useful for gender analyses and development of gender-sensitive and gender-specific interventions, needed for the enhancement of the psychological wellbeing of farm-family members. In addition, in order to work towards egalitarian feminist goals, gender analysis has to be applied to both men and women so as to understand men's participation in daily life, gender stereotyping, and the enduring puzzle of why women put up with male domination, which is the goal of feminist poststructuralism (Weedon, 1987). It is therefore considered pertinent to conduct a gender analysis of the experiences of the male and female farmers in the study, with a particular focus on the five farmers, whose stressful life situations are explored in these case studies.

The analyses of participants' stressful life situation and adopted coping strategies in Table IV, and summary of adult participants' profile (Appendix I) show the resources available to the women farmers, relative to men farmers in the study. Women farmers are usually less educated than male farmers. Amongst the twenty-three women in the study, Olori has the highest education. Thirteen of the women did not go to school at all, three did not complete their primary education, and only the remaining six had complete primary education. Whereas, out of the seventeen men in the study, four had tertiary education, one had secondary education, two had complete primary education, three had incomplete primary education, and only seven did not go to school at all. This shows a degree of gender stratification. Gender stratification refers to a society's unequal distribution of wealth, power and privilege between men and women. It is evident that women around the world have fewer of their societies valued resources than men.

TABLE IV: GENDER ANALYSIS OF STRESSFUL LIFE SITUATIONS & COPING STRATEGIES

No	Name	Gender	Age in Yrs	Edu cati on	No of child ren	Farm size Livestock holding	Other Resources	Aspiration	Fulfilment	Stressful situation	Coping strategies
1	Mrs. Adekunbi	F	28	Pry 6	3	-2 plots -2 ducks	Nil	-Daughter's education. -Own house	Not yet	-Anticipated urban stress -Multiple roles	-Living apart -Assertiveness -Spousal support -Subservience -Financial savings -Labour hiring -Rest
2.	Mrs. Ogunneye	F	63	Nil	7	-3 Acres -15 sheep -20 goats	Fufu- processing	Children's education	Fulfilled	-Life transition -Widowhood -Changing roles -Multiple roles	-Change of occupation -Hardwork -Self-deprivation -Perseverance

3.	Mrs. Fatona <i>(Olori)</i>	F	63	Tertiary	5	-4 Acres -15 Local fowls	- Schools -Car & School buses Childhood training	Husband's Success	Fulfilled	-Life transition -Changing roles -Multiple roles	-Spousal support -Farming -Establishment of schools -Effective resource management -Self organization
4.	Mr. Akinladowon	M	62	Tertiary	2	- 2 Acres - 35 sheep - 38 goats - 20 local fowls -300 snails	Childhood training Friendships	-Fulfilment of breadwinner roles -Children's education	Not yet	-Life transition -Lack of gender role fulfilment	-Living apart -Information seeking -Helps other less privileged people -Gives crops away as gifts
5.	Mr. Adeleke	M	77	Nil	7	-	Full time job as security guard	Own house project	Not yet	-Lack of gender role fulfilment -delayed goal achievement (House project)	-Support seeking from spouse & children -Security guard' job

However, despite the fact that the women have fewer resources, their determination to succeed as wives and mothers inspires them to confront their stressful situations with strategies aimed at surmounting their problems: hence their adoption of problem-focussed coping strategies. The aspirations of the male and female farmers are also gendered. The gendered differences in the farmers' aspirations and coping strategies are also attributable to the ideological representations of masculinity and femininity. O'Neil (1981) posits that, masculinity is associated with ambition, competition, achievement, success, status, wealth, power and influence, while femininity on the other hand, is associated with cooperation, unassertiveness, lack of achievement, wealth, power and influence. The men aspire to fulfil the ideological gender role of breadwinner, and building own house, while the women express more concern toward their children's outcomes.

Olori's concern however is towards her husband's success on the throne, probably because all her children have succeeded in their education and careers. Her lastborn is already on the path of success, as a University undergraduate. Olori's marital experience and Kabiyesi's devotion and love for her might have influenced Olori's commitment to her husbands' success. Further more, due to differences in the individual characteristics of these women, as reflected in the dimensions of their storied lives, it is revealed that different situations in life constitute stress for them. Hence they have all adopted strategies peculiar to their situations. In the case of Mrs. Adekunbi, it was anticipated stress of urban life, and her problem was how to meet her daily needs for survival. In the case of Mrs. Ogunneye, it was anxiety over children's educational attainment. While in case of Olori, it was anxiety over husband's success as the traditional ruler. Summarily, the individual women were concerned with, survival, children's outcomes, and husband's success. Two of the women, both sixty-three year-olds, are fulfilled in their aspirations, and they claim that they are satisfied with life generally.

The coping strategies adopted by Mrs. Adekunbi, Mrs. Ogunneye and Olori Elewo has been extensively discussed in this chapter. These women's storied lives show that an individual's capacity to cope with an anticipated or real stressful situation is determined by the individual's aspiration and determination to successfully manage the situation. The experiences of Mrs. Adekunbi (wife living apart) and Mrs. Ogunneye (widow) in particular, show that women's responsibilities for family survival increase in the absence of their husbands. Obono (2001) had earlier made the same observation concerning how women cope with family responsibilities in the rural areas, with increasing urbanisation, which draws men away from the villages to seek employment in urban areas. Two of these women (Olori and Mrs. Ogunneye) are confronted with different stressful situations arising from changing roles and multiple role involvement. It was observed that although the situations were energy demanding and stressful, the situations were equally challenging, and the women coped successfully. La Rossa and Ritze (1993) had earlier noted that a multiple role set of women is often mediated by their own self-standards, which combine their self-expectations as well as those of society for the roles they occupy. These two women believed in themselves, and in their capabilities to succeed, and they coped successfully.

The experiences of the three women in these case studies and wives of the two men (although not included in the case studies), also show that the women, like many in the study are very resilient. 'Resilience' is a characteristic of psychological wellbeing. It is the ability to bounce back from adversity. Holmes (2003) argues that some people handle stress better than others, according to how resilient they are, and that those who cope well with stress, share the characteristic of resilience. The coping strategies adopted by these women focussed their peculiar problems, and are aimed at taking practical steps to alleviate the stressful situations. Mrs. Adeleke's supportive and complementary roles were discussed in chapters eight and nine. Her husband, included in these case studies, also acknowledges that, in spite

of her physical disability (having suffered from stroke, six years prior to the commencement of the study), she still struggles to combine her domestic roles with on and off-farm activities. This is a feature of resilience. In the same vein, Mrs. Akinlawon, although not included in the study, reflects a feature of strength and resilience as represented by her husband's story. She is able to pay the house-rent, fund the education of their two sons who are in tertiary institutions.

It is worthy of mention here, that Mr. Akinlawon is the only one out of the entire seventeen men in the study, who freely expressed his feelings about his situation. Ordinarily, due to their socialization, *Yoruba* men do not usually communicate their feelings of inadequacy or lack of accomplishment openly. This is a feature of restrictive emotionality. O'Neil (1981) argues that restrictive emotionality implies that men will have difficulty in openly expressing their feelings, giving up emotional control, and being vulnerable to self and others. This deficit according to O'Neil, depicts that some men will have difficulty in self-disclosure, recognising feelings, and processing the complexities of interpersonal life. The experiences of Mr. Adeleke, and Mr. Akinlawon, like many men in the study agree with earlier observations by Ross and Hubber (1985) that men's failure in their role as breadwinner affects their wellbeing. Three out of the four common areas where men experience pressures in family relations earlier identified by Ahmad (1998) also resemble the experiences of these two men. The areas include: social pressure to perform according to a predefined gender role; pressure to prove their manliness in terms of providing economically for their families, as well as being protectors of the family honour; pressure to prove their virility among their male peers. Only the fourth area, the absence of emotional outlet and support and based on the expression of soft, weak feelings put them under pressure to let out their emotions through anger and violence, is not relevant in the current findings. Ahmad's other observation that men felt that women's dependence on them posed a substantial additional burden on them, is

also not applicable in this study, because all the men in the study acknowledged that their wives are hardworking and supportive.

CHAPTER NINE

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING IN FARM FAMILIES

9.1. INTRODUCTION

The last three chapters explored some of the complexities relating to gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm-families. Prominent amongst these are, the interplay between gender identity construction, gender role socialization, and gender division of labour in farm-families, and the influence of family dynamics on the psychological wellbeing of entire family members. Thus far, it has been revealed that variations in household division of labour in farm-families are determined by ascribed gender according to biological sex, and this influences gender role socialization in the families. Findings reported in chapter six reveal that gender role socialization within families is a major determinant of gender identity construction of boys and girls in farm-families. In chapter seven, findings confirm that family dynamics, among other factors, predict the climate, and stability of the home, and the psychological wellbeing of its members. Furthermore, chapter eight reveals the stressful situations that farm-families are confronted with, the coping resources available to the families, and the adopted coping strategies.

This chapter seeks to further explore the socio-cultural constructions of gender roles and gender role patterns in farm-families, with a view to identifying how these role patterns influence family members' psychological wellbeing. Findings of the study demonstrate that gender roles and psychological wellbeing in farm-families are interdependent. While the

fulfilment of gender roles in farm-families influences psychological wellbeing, the effective performance of gender roles is also enhanced by psychological wellbeing.

9.2. GENDER ROLE PATTERNS IN FARM-FAMILIES

Gender roles, as conceived in this study are behaviours, expectations, and role sets constructed by society as masculine or feminine, which are embodied in the behaviour of the individual man or woman, and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females. Eades (1980) observes that in traditional *Yoruba* families, the husband usually provides the house and repairs it, if necessary. He also provides staple foods and some money for education and children's clothing. The wife provides her own clothing, the rest of the children's clothes and other items of food. When the husband is away on the farm, his wife may be almost responsible for feeding herself and her children. At some periods of the year, women are more likely to have more ready cash than the men. Many *Yoruba* wives go to great lengths to pay for their children's education if their husbands are unable to do so. In polygamous homes, the husbands try to treat the wives equally by sending an equal number of children of each of the wives to school. If any more go to school, it is because the mother has been able to fund the education. It is common for a child's career at school to be interrupted for months or even years if the parents cannot find the money, or either of the parent dies (Eades, 1980).

Eades (1980) further observed that household chores were the responsibility of the wife, who could delegate them to children and other women who are junior to her in rank. Historically and culturally, there have been changes in these various gender roles over decades. From the socio-historical and cultural contexts of the communities where the study was conducted, it is revealed that the social constructions and representations of gender roles is gradually changing from what it used to be in the past, especially regarding the breadwinner role. Although men as husbands and fathers are socio-culturally constructed as breadwinners

in families, current social norms encourage women and men to contribute toward family upkeep and Children's education. What makes the difference in changing gender roles today is the increased involvement of women in independent farming and other income-generating activities, which give them financial independence and empowerment. As family roles are becoming more diffuse, women continue to play central role in the division of household labour and childcare, while assuming an increasing share of the financial responsibilities of the family.

The study reveals that the physical presence of spouses and parents in the home have a unique influence on the perceived psychological wellbeing of entire farm-family members, especially as regards children's emotional development. '*Ojuse*' is the *Yoruba* meaning of a role, and it also connotes 'responsibility'. Hence, responsibility is always implied when *Yorubas* speak about roles, as it features in the participants' responses discussed in sections further below. According to Hall (1990), responsibility implies a sense of obligation or duty to act in specific normatively defined ways in order to meet the approval of the mainstream society. Another assumption about responsibility is that there is a moral imperative that dictates decisions conducive to accomplishing a purpose (Hall, 1990). This description of the term 'responsibility' explains the dispositions of the men and women in this study towards the fulfilment of stereotyped gender roles. In consonance with the participants' commitment to the performance of their respective traditional gender roles, findings of this study reveal that roles are gendered in the farm-families.

Gender roles as discovered in the study include: the breadwinner role, domestic, conjugal, parental, kinship and natal, occupational roles (on-farm and off-farm activities), self-regulatory roles, and community roles. Domestic roles are roles associated with cooking, housekeeping and other household chores. Conjugal roles include the duties and responsibilities expected of each spouse toward the other. Parental roles are roles performed

towards the children, and include: childcare, training, education, provision of physical and emotional support and child-discipline. Kinship and natal roles are roles expected of either a man or woman in his or her first family (family of origin before marriage), and the spouse's extended family. These include responsibilities towards, and expectations from parents, siblings and members of both extended families. Occupational roles include the on and off-farm activities. The on-farm activities are activities associated with farming, which take place on the farm. These include, land preparation, planting, weeding, and harvesting of farm products; while the off-farm activities include farm-related activities that take place away from the farm. These include processing, preservation, storage, and marketing of farm products. Self-regulatory roles are roles directed towards self, which include: attention to personal needs (for example, health, body-care, clothing, feeding, rest and sleep). Community roles include activities associated with participation in community-based organisations, religious groups, and expectations from these groups.

9.3. CONSTRUCTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING IN FARM-FAMILIES

Psychological wellbeing implies an internal balance among several factors, which include responsibility, the ability to accept burdens and serious disappointments of life, and the capacity to positively cope with the varied demands of life (Sokoya, 1998). Psychological wellbeing is a fairly difficult construct to define. For example, Crocker and Major (1994) and Zhang and Leung (2002) used the terms: life satisfaction, while Unger and Crawford (1992) used the terms: happiness, emotional stability, competence and mastery in their descriptions of psychological wellbeing. Some of the ideas that have been put forward as characteristics of psychological wellbeing include, the ability to enjoy life; resilience; balance; flexibility and self-actualisation (Holmes, 2003). Literature suggests that, self-esteem, desire for intimacy with other people, gender, performance of multiple roles, role fulfilment, educational and

literacy status, health, and socio-economic status play key roles in the determination of psychological wellbeing.

In her study of conditions that favour a positive appreciation of life, Veenhoven (1984) identifies some synonyms of psychological wellbeing. These include, ‘subjective appreciation of life’, also called ‘happiness’ and ‘life-satisfaction’. Veenhoven defined happiness as “the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of her/his life as-a-whole favourably”. In other words: how much s/he likes the life s/he leads (Veenhoven, 1984: 22). Veenhoven however clarifies that the word happiness is not used to denote an optimal appreciation of life, but the degree that an individual judges his or her life favourably rather than unfavourably. The current study is an exploration of the perceived psychological wellbeing of participants, hence, Veenhoven’s construction of ‘happiness’ as explained above is considered relevant.

The constructions of psychological wellbeing in this study are hinged on the recognition that psychological wellbeing is perceived in both social and cultural terms. In addition, due to the complexities surrounding the constructions of psychological wellbeing, and the social representations framework adopted for the study, participants were given opportunities to describe their own representations and constructions of perceived psychological wellbeing. Participants’ constructions of psychological wellbeing were explored through general questions regarding how satisfied they are with life as a whole, their topmost desires in life, their memorable days, what makes them happy, what makes them sad, and their future aspirations. In order to find out the participants’ perceptions of the interconnectivity between gender roles and psychological wellbeing, questions pertaining to how their gender roles are perceived to influence their psychological wellbeing and vice-versa are then asked.

9.3.1. Farm-children's constructions of psychological wellbeing

In the study, terms used by the farm-children in describing what constitutes psychological wellbeing include happiness, peace of mind, absence of emotional problems, and good health. For instance, describing a psychologically healthy person, sixteen year-old Tayo says:

A person is psychologically healthy when someone is happy, does not have any physical or emotional disturbance, and has peace of mind (Tayo).

Kunle's definition is also similar to Tayo's, but adds an interpersonal dimension, that:

When someone is happy and makes people around her happy, that person is definitely enjoying good psychological health (Kunle).

'Happiness' recurs more than any other term in the children's constructions of psychological wellbeing. This is an indication that they perceive 'happiness' as an important feature of psychological wellbeing. Happiness translates as '*idunnu*' in *Yoruba*, and means a favourable disposition of pleasure and contentment. Other recurring terms in the children's constructions include: peace of mind, absence of emotional disturbance, and good health. 'Peace of mind', which also means 'settled mind' translates as '*ibale-okan*' in *Yoruba*, and connotes a state of satisfaction with life. Absence of emotional disturbance means '*aisi idaamu ati pakaleke okan*', and also denotes the absence of worries and anxiety.

9.3.2. Parents' constructions of psychological wellbeing

In addition to the children's constructions of psychological wellbeing, participating parents were also given opportunities to describe their constructions of psychological wellbeing. Findings reveal that, psychological wellbeing is constructed by participating parents as encompassing peace of mind, contentment, joy, happiness, freedom from worry and anxiety, absence of emotional disturbance, freedom of movement, ability to cope with difficult situations, ability to fulfil financial obligations, and good health of self and other family

members. The responses of some male and female participants below represent the participants' general viewpoints. According to Mr. Sowemimo:

One enjoys good psychological wellbeing when one is in good physical and mental health. The features of wellbeing include peace of mind, happiness, no disability, and ability to do whatever one wills. It is because I'm well that I'm answering all your questions. In addition, poverty, lack of money to fulfil ones obligation as a husband and father, is a form of illbeing, because it can lead to hypertension. Sickness interferes with ones psychological wellbeing (Mr Sowemimo).

Following in the same direction, Pastor Kehinde explains that psychological wellbeing means *ifaya ran isoro*, that is, "the capacity to cope with lots of trials without having to brood over them". He goes further to describe psychological wellbeing as *aisi idaamu, ifoya, ati pakaleke okan* "absence of worry, fear, and anxiety". He also describes psychological wellbeing as the ability to cope with life, and enjoy *ifokonbale* 'peace of mind' in-spite-of the inherent stresses. He says that there is nobody who is not faced with one problem or the other, and that only God sustains people through the stresses of life. According to him, "God, is the fountain of everlasting joy" (*Oluwa ni orisun ayo aiyeraiye*). The women in the study also share the same constructions of psychological wellbeing. According to Mrs. Koleoso:

Psychological wellbeing means peace of mind, good health and contentment. It means beings free from problems and emotional disturbance, the ability to do what one desires and also go to where one desires, without any hindrance. Peace of mind is a pre-requisite for optimum functioning. When somebody behaves well and relates well with people around him, it shows he/she is enjoying good physical and psychological wellbeing. May God save all of us from all form of ill-health (Mrs. Koleoso).

Sharing the opinion of the above participants, but with some variations, Mrs Adekunbi says that psychological wellbeing has to do with the state of the body and mind. She argues that one can identify someone who enjoys psychological wellbeing by the way he/she comports him/herself and interacts with other people. Wellbeing, according to her, is not limited to having the ability to do what one has in mind, but also has to do with the health of one's children. She gave an example that when her children are ill, she is always under stress.

From these responses, it is revealed that *Ifokanbale* (peace of mind) is a paramount criterion in the construction of farmers' psychological wellbeing. Other recurring concepts in the participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing are: *idunnu ati ayo* (joy and happiness), *ilera ati alaafia* (good health and wellbeing), *itelorun* (contentment), *aisi idaamu*, *ifoya*, and *pakaleke okan* (absence of worry, fear, and anxiety, or absence of emotional problems), *ominira* (freedom), *ifaya ran isoro* (ability to cope with difficult and troubling situations), and *lile gbo bukata eni* (and ability to fulfil one's financial responsibilities or obligations) ability to cope with difficult situations (*if'aya ran isoro*), and ability to fulfil one's financial obligations (*lile gbo bukata eni*). Some of these concepts are highlighted in Chapter two, while conceptualising the major issues in the study. The concepts are however further explained below in relation to the contexts in which the participants use them.

Yoruba meaning of "peace of mind" is '*ibale-ókan*' or '*ifokanbale*', and it connotes 'settled mind' while the antonym *aibale-ókan* or *iporuuru ókan* connotes "stress" or a situation of 'emotional crisis'. 'Happiness', as earlier identified in the children's constructions of psychological wellbeing is the *Yoruba* correlate for "*idunnu*" and "*ayo*" which is another correlate for 'joy'. A condition of good, complete, or perfect health is referred to in *Yoruba* as '*ilera pipe*', while the health of body and mind is referred to as *ilera pipe t'okan-t'ara*. *Itelorun* (contentment) is the degree to which an individual perceives her/his aspirations to be met. *Aisi idaamu*, *ifoya*, and *pakaleke okan* (absence of worry, fear, and anxiety, or absence of emotional problems), signifies the absence of any situation or condition that might interfere with, or threaten one's peace of mind, while *ominira* (freedom), refers to the absence of situations that may limit or hinder one's movement, or other forms of independent actions. *Bukata* means 'financial responsibilities'. The ability to fulfil such responsibilities (*lile gbo bukata eni*) is constructed as vital to one's state of psychological wellbeing, especially for the men in the study. *Isoro* means stressful or troubling situations

and the ability to wade through and successfully cope with such situations without brooding over them or breaking down psychologically (*if'aya ran isoro*) is also perceived as a dimension of psychological wellbeing.

All the participants mentioned peace of mind in their constructions of psychological wellbeing. They believe that when someone is free from worry and anxiety over how to make ends meet, there would be peace of mind, happiness and peace in the home. The socio-historical and cultural contexts may be accountable for the similarities in constructions of psychological wellbeing by the adult participants. Most of them live in the communities, they have no access to the media, and they share the same culture, myths and socialization. There are also similarities in the children and their parents' constructions of psychological wellbeing. It is however interesting to note that although there are similarities, the children lay emphasis on 'happiness' while their parents emphasize 'peace of mind'. The difference in their areas of emphasis may not be unconnected with the differences in their ages, life experiences, gender role commitments, and responsibilities. While the parents' constructions are influenced by their role comitments to provide for the children, the children's constructions are influnced by their expectations from parents as 'consumers' and 'beneficiaries' of parental responsibilities.

9.4. FACTORS INFLUENCING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

IN FARM-FAMILIES

As a follow-up to the constructions of psychological wellbeing, the factors influencing psychological wellbeing in farm-families were explored. Participants were further asked to identify factors that they perceive as influencing their psychological wellbeing as previously constructed. It was observed that factors identified by the participants as influencing psychological wellbeing overlaps with factors that influence participants' constructions of

psychological wellbeing in some aspects. For instance, the ability to fulfil the breadwinner role and financial wellbeing are perceived by the male participants as enhancing their psychological wellbeing; while financial wellbeing also enhances the ability to fulfil the breadwinner role.

This section is subdivided into three major sub-sections as follows: The first sub-section (9.4.1) presents the factors identified by the farm-children as influencing their psychological wellbeing. ‘Section - 9.4.2.’ presents the factors identified by the parents, while ‘section – 9.4.3’ explores the interconnectivity of gender roles and psychological wellbeing from a gender perspective.

9.4.1. Factors influencing farm-children’s psychological wellbeing

Factors identified by the farm-children include: harmonious relationship between parents; prompt payment of their school fees; good parental health (mother in particular); ability of parents to meet their needs at appropriate time; freedom of movement; accomplishing difficult tasks and passing examinations; success in parents’ businesses and good farm-yields (because it puts the parents in a better position to provide for their needs); parental praises and other forms of reward for accomplishments. All the boys and girls in the study acknowledge that parental approval, praise and rewards make them happy and encourage them to live up to their parents’ expectation. The boys and girls also identified factors that lead to emotional disturbance as including: conflict in the home; untimely provision of their needs and financial requirements; and being overburdened by domestic chores.

9.4.2. Factors influencing parents’ psychological wellbeing

The factors identified by the parents as influencing psychological wellbeing include: rest, relaxation and leisure, children’s wellbeing and success, financial wellbeing, and availability

of food in the home, marital stability, spousal support, spouse's success, social connectedness, family health, good returns to farming investments, goal achievement, fulfilment of gender roles, and divine providence. In addition, the adult participants indicated that without 'adequate psychological wellbeing' (*alaafia tabi ilera-okan t'opeye*), nobody could accomplish anything worthwhile in any capacity (*ko si eniken i t'o le gbe nkan t'o nilari se*). It was also observed that factors identified by participants as influencing psychological wellbeing are in many instances connected with their respective gender and gender roles within the families. Furthermore, factors identified by the farm-children as influencing their psychological wellbeing mentioned above (section 9.4.1.) are interconnected with their parents' ability or inability to fulfil their parental roles and marital obligations.

9.4.3. Exploring the interconnectivity of gender roles and psychological wellbeing:

A gender perspective

In exploring these factors influencing psychological wellbeing and their inter-connectedness with gender roles, the following themes emerged, and are discussed below.

- Ability/Inability to fulfil gender roles
- Men's leisure and women's multiple role involvement
- Outcomes of gender role performance
- Family health
- Social connectedness
- Goal achievement and fulfilled aspirations
- Divine providence

9.4.3.1. Ability/Inability to fulfil gender roles

From the determinants of psychological wellbeing identified by the participants, it is revealed that accomplishment of gender role expectations enhances psychological wellbeing. Gender role expectations in farm-families include, but are not limited to: the breadwinner role, conjugal roles, parenting and extended family commitments (kinship and natal roles).

9.4.3.1.1. Fulfilment of the breadwinner role

In *Yoruba* culture, men, as husbands and fathers are generally expected to be breadwinners in their families. All men and women in the study believe that men are responsible for their families' general wellbeing. Although there are variations in the extent to which men could fulfil this obligation, all men in the study accept this ideological representation and have internalised it. The women also believe that whatever they contribute toward family wellbeing and the education and training of their children is to complement their husbands' role as the breadwinner. Shouldering responsibilities at children's weddings is also part of the breadwinner role. These include, paying dowries, when a son is getting married, and organising the wedding ceremonies when a daughter is getting married. Below, are some of the responses of the men and women. Mr Kusimo asserts:

My primary responsibility (*ojuse akoko*) as the head of my family (*baale*) is to provide for the needs of my family. That is, to give feeding allowance to my wife at all times. Apart from this, I strive to give my children good education and train those of them that may prefer to learn a trade or the other. As the family head, I take care of my wife and children, to make sure that everything is in good order. I also teach them how to farm – planting cassava, pepper, and other food crops, because of the future. This enhances progress and peace in our home (Mr. Kusimo).

Further stressing the importance attached to men's responsibilities as head of the family, Mr. Sowemimo also says:

My responsibility (*ojuse*) as a husband and father is to carry the family responsibility, as well as that of the extended family. I make sure that everybody is in good condition of health. As the head of the family, I see to the general

welfare of every member of the family I am expected to give money to my children and support them in whatever trade they decide to learn. I should also be able to organise a befitting wedding for any of my children who are ready for marriage (Mr. Sowemimo).

The statements of Messrs Kusimo and Sowemimo above show that they perceive looking after the wellbeing of the entire family as their responsibility. It is further observed that the women in the study share the same view with the men, that husbands and fathers are responsible for family provisions. For instance, Mrs. Adekunbi explains that because the man brought his wife into the family from her previous home, it is mandatory for him to adequately take care of his wife. Sharing her personal experience, twenty-eight year old Mrs. Adekunbi argues that polygamous men are always under pressure to fulfil the breadwinner role. Mrs. Adekunbi is the senior wife in a polygamous family of three wives. She has three children, and she was pregnant with her fourth child, during the period of study. She says that her husband gives her money for the family needs, depending on what he could afford. Another woman, a younger wife in a polygamous family of two wives, Mrs. Amidu says:

My husband provides food for the family. He gives each of us (*two wives in a polygamous home*) one hundred naira every three days; each of us prepares our own food. We don't cook together to prevent quarrelling, and our husband eats from anyone of us. If either of us were not at home, our children would eat from the mother that is at home (Mrs. Amidu).

One hundred naira mentioned by Mrs. Amidu above as feeding allowance for her children and herself, for three days is grossly inadequate even for a single person. She would definitely need to augment it. Yet, the man is still perceived as the breadwinner. With the current economic situation in Nigeria, it is becoming increasingly difficult for men to provide solely for the entire family. The situation is even worse with farm-families, the majority of whom are poor. Women therefore engage in independent vocations such as trading, pottery, weaving, household production, and cottage farming (Adekanye, 1999). Adekanye further observes that, traditionally, the number of wives and children a man has is supposed to be an indicator of status, apart from providing him with a pool of family labour for production. The

increasing cost of living, however, means that a man may not be able to provide adequately even for one wife. In addition, there are several ‘pots’ (*ikoko obe* or *isaasun*) or catering facilities in the household. Each wife has her own ‘pot’ for herself and her children, with the husband “circulating” between the different wives’ ‘pots’. The wives compete for the husband’s favour in catering for him. Traditionally, a man has the choicest portions of food (Adekanye, 1999). The ability of men to function within this role-framework as breadwinners is revealed as contributing to men’s psychological wellbeing. All the men in the study identified the fulfilment of the role of breadwinner, or otherwise, as influencing their psychological wellbeing.

Mr. Sowemimo who is seventy years old shares his experience regarding the strain he goes through to fulfil the breadwinner role.

I used to enjoy farming because it is very lucrative. But now, farming is no more a pleasure for me. It has become a difficulty. I now sit down to do weeding. This is why I have bought the grinding machine. It brings in the money that I use to meet family expenses. Although the grinding business is not doing on very well, I am trying my best to ensure that I do my best in meeting my family’s needs (Mr. Sowemimo).

Contrary to the above views that men should provide for their families, Mr. Akinlawon says he does not believe that women should be dependent on their husbands for family sustenance. He argues thus:

I do educate the village girls that any female dependent on the wealth of her husband would fail. I advise them that, they should go to school, or learn particular skills; and strive to be financially independent. Even if they marry husbands who are rich, they can always supplement the income to care for their children and themselves. The women in this village are very hardworking. None of them is solely dependent on what their husbands could give them. The men in this community are not committed to educating their female children. Their lack of commitment is not due to their poverty, but it is just that they do not want to (Mr. Akinlawon).

Ironically, despite Mr. Akinlawon’s argument above, he too, is emotionally attached to the fulfilment of the breadwinner role. His personal experiences of lack of fulfilment as explored in the case study of his stressful life experiences in chapter eight, reveals his ideological

representation of gender roles. The idea expressed in the above passage by Mr. Akinlawon is, however, attributable to two factors. The first factor is the influence of his exposure to alternate notions about gender roles. He is educated and ‘knowledgeable’ relative to his socio-historical and cultural context. Secondly, he is a beneficiary of spousal support as his wife is the one bearing most of the family’s responsibilities (paying house rent, and financing children’s education). Mr. Akinlawon’s feeling of lack of accomplishment as a man, and the influence of this on his psychological wellbeing, might be due to his socialisation as a child and internalisation of gender stereotypes.

9.4.3.1.2. Financial wellbeing

To successfully perform the breadwinner role, the ‘breadwinner’ needs money for both recurrent and capital expenditures. Financial wellbeing is thus identified in the study as a factor influencing psychological wellbeing. Poverty and the inability to meet the basic need of the family are identified to be determinants of the degree of psychological wellbeing in the study. Both the men and women expressed their opinion that, when food is available in the home, it means a relief from poverty and their peace of mind is enhanced. For example, Mr. Ogunsan expressed this with a *Yoruba* adage that: ‘*ti ebi ba ti kuro ninu isẹ isẹ buse*’. ‘*Ebi*’ means ‘hunger’, while ‘*is’ẹ*’ means ‘poverty’, and ‘*buse*’ means ‘to end or terminate’. The adage therefore literally translates “when hunger is removed from poverty, poverty is terminated”. As discovered in previous studies (Belle, 1990, Sokoya, 1998) poverty undermines the ability to fulfil important social roles and such failure poses a threat to individual and collective wellbeing. For example, Mr. Adeleke, a seventy-seven year old man said:

Ability to provide for one’s family needs enhances peace of mind and psychological wellbeing. Poverty and lack of money makes me unhappy. I feel sad when I don’t have enough money to take care of my children and meet their needs (Mr. Adeleke).

In addition to poverty, unexpected expenditure, debts and financial crisis are also identified as sources of worry and anxiety, which interfere with psychological wellbeing. Corroborating the idea that financial crisis precipitates worry and anxiety, one of the widows in the study recalls her experience when she was in debt:

Sometime ago, I was in a huge debt and was highly disturbed emotionally. God has lifted all my troubles now, and I'm relieved (Mrs. Saka).

.4.3.1.3. Fulfilment of parental responsibilities

In addition to the breadwinner role, ability or inability to fulfil the responsibilities and obligations of parenting was revealed as influencing the psychological wellbeing of participating parents. This also has a spill over influence on the children's psychological wellbeing. While both parents are responsible for these roles, the study reveals that parenting roles are gendered in farm-families. In all the communities where the study was conducted, mothers are expected to be responsible for childcare and everything that pertains to domestic roles. The feminisation of domestic roles would be elaborated upon in a following section. Representations of participants' entrenched gender roles show that fathers are expected to be responsible for the education and training of children, while mothers are to be responsible for development of sound character and emotional stability. This study, however, reveals that both parents are now responsible for children education, and training due to the prevailing socio-economic conditions in Nigeria. Both parents are revealed to be responsible for character and emotional stability of children. Although mothers appear to be more emotionally attached to their children, the study reveals that fathers too, are equally psychologically concerned about their children's outcomes.

9.4.3.1.4. Parental presence and responsiveness

Parental presence is a vital component of the parental role. All the parents in the study are of the opinion that parents' physical presence in the home is vital for the children's emotional and moral development. The women in particular believe that a mother should be willing to tolerate hardships for her children's sake in order that she might remain in marriage to nurture her children to maturity. For example, Mrs. Adekunbi mentioned in one of the interview sessions that she is determined to stay in marriage, "come rain, come sunshine" (*ninu ojo ati ninu erun*) for her children's sake. Both the fathers and mothers in the study also agree that the children whose fathers are in in the home are better amenable to discipline than children who are brought up by mothers alone. Child discipline is a major aspect of parenting in Yorubaland. Both the mothers and fathers in the study agree that fathers are better disciplinarians. Mothers in the study claim that children fear their fathers more than their mothers, and that children are more responsive to instructions when their fathers are involved in their guidance and discipline.

Another interesting finding in the narratives of the farm-children is that most of the boys and girls in the study prefer their mothers to their fathers. The children perceived their mothers as being softer and more approachable, and fathers as being stricter and scary. Children's responsiveness to their father's instructions as observed by the parents in the above section, might therefore be due to the children's perceptions of fathers as being stricter. Furthermore, the children perceive their mothers as more responsive to their physical and their emotional needs. For instance, one of the girls, Morenike says:

I prefer my Mummy because she gives me what I want, and she rarely flogs me. I want God to help her to complete the building project she has embarked upon (Morenike).

Holding a similar view, one of the boys, Ade also asserts:

She gives me the things I need. I want to thank my mother that she bought me a bicycle to ease my daily commuting between our village and the school (Ade's

village is about three kilometres away from the school). She also pays my school fees. I want the Lord to give her long life (Ade).

That mothers are more responsive to their children's needs is also confirmed in the parents' narratives, discussed in chapters seven and eight. In addition earlier in this chapter, mother's constructions of psychological wellbeing is closely linked to the wellbeing of their children, while children's successful outcomes is an important factor that enhances mothers' psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, mothers' commitment to children's successful life outcomes and self-sacrificing attributes displayed by women in the selected case studies in chapter eight, corroborate the children's claims above. Although parental presence is also perceived by parents in the study to be vital to the reproductive health needs of their children (the girls in particular), findings reveal that the children learn about sexuality matters from their peers rather than their parents.

Findings further reveal that when either parent is not in residence, due to separation or divorce, it affects children's psychological wellbeing. For instance one of the boys, Kunle, comments on why he is aggrieved and what he dislikes about his mother:

My mother abuses my father and I don't like it. I know my father does not care for me. They are separated and I live with my mother. My mother provides for almost all my physical and educational needs, while my father rarely contribute to my upkeep. I visit my father occasionally when my mother asks me to. Although I appreciate her care and love, I don't want her to abuse my father again (Kunle).

Kunle comes from a separated family, and his mother is raising him single-handedly. However, in spite of his mother's nurturing roles, he disapproves his mother's abuse of his father, probably, owing to a longing for an absent father. Kunle's mother was not available for inclusion in the adult sample, and so it was impossible to learn more details about the home climate and her reasons for verbally abusing her ex-husband in their child's presence. The dynamics in this family has implications for the psychological wellbeing of Kunle and his parents, and in particular his mother. In farm families, mothers spend more time than fathers do with their children. In addition, the role of mothers makes them more nurturing and

sensitive to their children's needs. These factors may be responsible for the children's observations and interpretations as revealed in the above narratives.

9.4.3.1.5. The joy of motherhood

As discussed in chapter eight, women derive a lot of fulfilment in their accomplishment of mothering roles. This is evidenced in the experiences of Mrs. Ogunneye and Olori Elewo, as reported in their case studies in chapter eight. Expressing her fulfilment, Mrs. Ogunneye, a sixty-three year old widow who was able to educate all her seven children alone, owing to her husband's illness and death, says:

The ability to adequately fulfil my responsibilities as wife and mother give me a sense of accomplishment. I thank God for the way He assisted and enabled me to take adequate care of my husband when he was ill, until his death, and even thereafter. He was a very caring husband and father in his lifetime. I am also grateful to God for enabling me to take good care of my children and seeing all of them through their educational careers. My children give me joy (Mrs. Ogunneye).

Similarly, Olori, who had to retire prematurely from a promising career as an assistant Inspector of Education, as her husband (*Kabiyesi Elewo*), relocated from Lagos to Ilewo-Orile when he became the traditional ruler (*Oba*) asserts:

Having a sense of fulfilment is a vital source of both psychological and physical wellbeing. I am fulfilled in my various roles as wife, mother, career woman and even daughter to my parents. I am always grateful to God that I am fulfilled. I pray that God should guide and protect us, and our children, and be with each and every one of us (Olori).

The experiences of these two women, which have been elaborated upon in chapter eight, show that their individual successes were impacted by their determination to succeed. Mrs. Ogunneye and Olori Elewo identified their sense of fulfilment and accomplishment derivable, as strong determinants of psychological wellbeing. From my personal experience of working with rural families, I have observed that ultimate fulfilment as a woman is achieved through motherhood and that motherhood is a natural and necessary experience valued by most

Yoruba women. Both Western and African cultures value the institution of motherhood (Unger and Crawford, 1992; Oyewunmi, 2000; Arnfred, 2002), and the role of a mother is defined in terms of infinite patience, nurturing and self-sacrifice. The ideology of motherhood has been termed the motherhood mystique (Unger and Crawford, 1992). Although the Western society is in the process of “rewriting the script for motherhood” (Bernard, 1974), the motherhood mystique lives on in Africa in general, and in Yorubaland, in particular. Oyewumi (2000) recently observed that “mother is the preferred and cherished self-identity of many African women” (Oyewumi 2000: 1096). In Yorubaland, although the burdens of motherhood are most of the time heavy, in that a woman is sometimes unable to develop a sense of her self, motherhood is still viewed as central to a woman’s life and identity. It is seen as a natural and unchanging aspect of being a woman (Oyewunmi, 2000).

9.4.3.1.6. Fulfilment of conjugal roles and extended family commitments

Fulfilment of conjugal roles by spouses toward each other is another factor identified while exploring the interconnectivity of gender roles and psychological wellbeing. Findings reveal that the performance of conjugal roles, or lack of it, have influence on spouses’ psychological wellbeing. Fulfilment of conjugal roles promotes spousal support for each other and enhances their mutual psychological wellbeing. Conjugal roles as used here relate to the roles and responsibilities of spouses toward each other. They include the demonstration of love, affection, and commitment to each other. Mutual support, sexual fulfilment are discussed below as marital factors influencing spouses’ psychological wellbeing.

(a). Mutual support

How marital stability and spousal support enhance individual and mutual psychological wellbeing in farm-families have been discussed extensively in chapter seven. The study

further reveals that marital stability, love, spousal support and spouses success are identified by both the men and women in the study as contributing to their psychological wellbeing. It is just that the women speak more about the desire for support. For instance, Mr. Edunjobi asserts:

Peace within the family is a key determinant of psychological wellbeing. When there is peace between husband and wife, there will be no trouble. My wife's love and affection for me gives me satisfaction and peace of mind. I am always happy that I have a good wife. She helps me to take good care of my children, and she is always ready to listen to me. My wife is responsible. She takes good care of the house and obeys me. This makes me happy with her. She however sometimes disobeys me and pleases herself (Mr. Edunjobi).

As earlier observed in chapter seven, 'obedience' is stressed by men in the study as what they desire in their wives. Mr. Edunjobi's comment in the above passage also highlights his wife's obedience as a determinant of his psychological wellbeing. This presupposes that if his wife disobeys him, his psychological wellbeing would be affected. Mr. Edunjobi's desire, like many of the men in the study, is a reflection of his internalised masculine ideology. Furthermore, the *Yoruba* culture emphasizes the need for a woman to respect and obey her husband. Corroborating the influence of marital satisfaction on mutual psychological wellbeing, Mrs. Soyoye, like many women in the study says:

I am happy and contented with life when there is peace in my home, even when we don't have other material things. Family conflicts make me upset. I am an emotional person. I don't like to be shouted at. When family members fail to consider or tolerate each other, conflict will be common in the family, and when there is always conflict there won't be peace of mind. One needs to be patient with the other person, to prevent and/or resolve any conflict (Mrs. Soyoye).

It was also discovered that marital stability is valued beyond money in some instances. Mrs. Soyoye, one of the women participants who left her first marriage owing to marital conflicts and rivalry narrated how she appreciates her present husband's support despite the fact that she is not as financially comfortable as she was her previous marriage.

I was more financially comfortable in my former marriage. My present condition and financial status often make me feel depressed; but I thank God Almighty for

enabling me to cope. My present husband tries his best to make me comfortable, supports me in everything. Money is not everything. I know I am happier now. When there is life, there is hope (Mrs. Soyoye).

In addition, Mr. Yesusf, like many men in the study says that his wife washes his clothes. Messrs Ogunsan, Soyoye, Mr. Olasabi, and Pastor Koleoso also mentioned their wives washing their clothes. Kabiyesi Elewo too, in spite of his willingness to assist with household chores, and his commitment to ensure that boys and girls in the family are adequately trained in all roles, stated that his wife and children wash all his clothes. As a traditional ruler, Kabiyesi is a public figure, and thus attends many functions in a variety of attires. I presume his wife has propensity to take special personal care of his many traditional attires. This is part of the feminisation of domestic roles.

Fourteen out of the seventeen men in the study stated that they are not obliged to buy clothes for their wives, since the wives are now financially independent, and some of them are even 'richer' than their husbands. The situation is, however, different with three out of the seventeen men in the study. Two of the women, forty-nine year old Mrs. Koleoso and sixty-three year old 'Olori' claim that their husbands still buy clothes for them, while sixty year-old Mrs. Ogunsan stated that her husband stopped the practice many years ago when the family size increased. She, however, stressed that this did not bother her because she understands her husband's financial plight. The study revealed that women work on their husbands' farms, more than husbands do on their wives' farms. For example, Mrs. Atanda says that:

A man cannot help a woman on her farm; each person has his own farm. Our husbands only help us to monitor the 'farm-boundaries' (*aala oko*). That is the only assistance they render to us. He does not give me money for farming. He however sometimes lends me money when I don't have enough. I am happy about everything he is doing for me. When each one of us is working and having money, there is no problem (Mrs. Atanda).

Mrs. Atanda's claims in the above passage indicate that her husband's involvement in her farm work is minimal. This view is also expressed by Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr.) and (Jnr.). Mr. Ogunsan however, claims that he helps his wives on their farms, and assists with the general

supervision of the labourers' work. Mr Ogunsan's response reveals a contradiction regarding his involvement in his wives' farm. If the women's assertions are right, it shows that their involvement in their husbands' farm work is not being equitably reciprocated by the husbands. For instance, Mr. Ogunsan acknowledged on another occasion that his wives assist him on his farm during the planting and harvesting periods. He mentioned that the women are responsible for carrying the harvested food crops from the farms to the homesteads. When asked how he compensates these women for their labour inputs on his farm, he said he does not have to make any special effort at compensating them, because he assists them financially when the need arises, and that "*he is their husband, anyway*".

Mr. Ogunsan's explanation and the experiences of his wives show male hegemony and the interplay of power. Weedon (1987) has argued, from a poststructuralist perspective in that it is important to understand gender power relations, and in particular, the discursive strategies employed by men in their quest to sustain male hegemony. The hegemonic relationships in the Ogunsan's family are representative of what operate in the majority of the participating farm-families. Ironically, the women themselves do not seem to see anything wrong. While their husbands have internalised the *Yoruba* male ideologies of dominance and male supremacy, the wives too have internalised *Yoruba* ideologies of subservience, accepting their situation of multiple role accumulation as their destiny.

(b) Sexual fulfilment

Central to the discussion on conjugal roles, is sex, which is one of the expectations of spouses from each other. As identified by Maslow (1973), sex is one of the basic human physiological needs. Sex is also a basic ingredient for marital satisfaction (Harley, 1994). Since marital satisfaction has been identified as a determinant of psychological wellbeing in the study, it was considered necessary to explore sexual relationships in the participating

families. It was however observed that many men and women reluctant to respond to questions around the issue of sex. In Yorubaland 'sex talk' is considered as 'sacred'. *Yoruba* men will only discuss their sex life with friends, or doctors and/or nurses in hospitals when there is a medical problem. It is also considered abnormal for a woman to be probing the sex life of another person's husband. I, therefore, needed to exercise caution in eliciting responses in this sensitive area. I observed that some female participants were more forthcoming, probably because I am also a woman. Three women shared their personal experiences with me. Because of the sensitivity of this issue, the participants' responses in this regard are reported with pseudonyms. Below is a comment by a middle-aged woman in a polygamous home, who says that sex cools her nerves and releases her tension:

I am always the first person to make sexual advancement, by going into my husband's room, because our children are now grown up, and they sleep in my room. Whenever I have sex, I am usually relaxed and sleep very well. In addition, having sex after resolving a misunderstanding with my husband heals all the emotional wounds and restores our relationship to normal (Mrs. Olade).

Many women in the study however have a contrary view. They claim that having sex after a hectic day's work makes them even more tired. Most of them actually do not desire sex because it is a taboo for a woman in Yorubaland to desire or even request for sex from her husband. However, whether or not they desire it, the culture demands that wives must oblige their husbands. My experience in the *Yoruba* community, and experiences from the rural and urban women alike, shows that this aspect of the culture is still very much in operation. Many *Yoruba* men perceive the enjoyment of sex, as their prerogative. This phenomenon of unequal gender power in sexual relations is not peculiar to farm-families, neither is it peculiar to Nigeria. Mueller (1993) observed similar situations of unequal gender power in data collected from women in Ghana, Peru, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, while investigating gender power in choice of male partners and contraceptive use.

Two other women in their menopause explained that they stopped having sex when they stopped menstruation. One of these two women, who is the senior wife in a polygamous family says, that the decision was taken in agreement with her husband. The other woman however, is the only wife in a monogamous family. Her experience differs from the other woman because her husband still desires sex. She feels she is too old for the act of sex. Concerning Nigeria women, Adekanye (1999) made a similar observation that it is traditionally assumed that a woman's 'reproductive life' has come to an end at menopause, and that it means that, she stops being a woman. From the perspectives of the woman quoted above, and the husband in the monogamous family just referred to, sex could be seen as a basic need, the fulfilment of which enhances psychological wellbeing of some of the participants.

(c). Extended family commitments

Extended family commitments include spouses' conjugal roles expectations toward each other's extended family, and their individual family's expectations from them. These commitments are referred to here as kinship and natal roles. Kinship and natal roles are roles expected of either a man or woman in his or her first family (family of origin, before marriage). These include responsibilities towards, and expectations from parents, siblings and members of both extended families. For example, in Yorubaland, when a man marries a woman, he automatically becomes affiliated to her relatives, both in the immediate and extended families, and vice-versa. Thus, *Yorubas* frequently have a vast expansion of kinship relationships. There is also a rigid practice of respecting and honouring affinal kin. This affiliation most of the time implies inheriting each other's problems and responsibilities, which may include, education and training of younger members of the families, assistance of members with financial, health or other problems, and care of grandparents. Such

responsibilities also include bearing financial responsibilities associated with funeral arrangements at the death of parents of either spouse.

In Egbaland for example, as in many parts of Yorubaland, when a wife's parent dies, her husband is expected to make substantial financial contributions toward the funeral arrangements. The participants are all Egbas. (Egba, being an ethnic group amongst the *Yorubas*). These contributions amongst others include buying at least one cow (*maalu*), and buying new clothing (*aso ebi*) for himself, her wife and children to wear during the funeral ceremonies. On the part of the woman, she is expected to respect her husband's relatives, and take good care of them when they visit. As a wife, she has little power vis-à-vis her sisters-in-law and mother-in-law. She gives them the respect that is due to these statuses. A failure by either spouse to fulfil these obligations is often a site of displeasure for the other spouse, and may precipitate marital instability.

Spouses are therefore always under constant pressure to be 'good' not only to their partners but also their family members as well as members of spouses' extended family. This therefore influences individual and collective psychological wellbeing. When a spouse is able to fulfil the expected obligations, both parties are happy and the extended family members too are satisfied about their affine's performance. If otherwise, the spouses may feel unfulfilled. In addition, as daughters and daughters-in-law, women are expected to look after aging relatives, particularly parents. Hall (1990) observes that the values of loving and caring are so deep seated that they dissipate energies (and attention) that could have been focussed on the women's own lives.

9.4.3.2. Men's leisure and women's multiple role involvement

This section presents the research findings with regards to the influence of women's multiple role involvement, vi-a-vis men's opportunity for rest and leisure, on their psychological

wellbeing. From a psychological perspective, Kelly and Kelly (1994) define leisure as perceived freedom, intrinsic motivation, and non-instrumentality (Kelly and Kelly, 1994). Men and women in the study mention rest, relaxation and leisure as determinants of psychological wellbeing. They believe that when they are fully rested after a hectic day's work, they are relaxed and sleep well. Because of this belief, they often use medications like pain relievers and muscle relaxants on a daily basis when they are ready to go to bed. It was however discovered that men have more time for rest and relaxation than women. In addition, while the men have time for leisure (playing in-door games and visiting friends), the women rarely have the opportunity to rest and relax, because of their multiplicity of roles. For instance, Mr. Ogunsan says:

I am always happy everyday, but I am happier on Sundays. We have enough time for relaxation and enjoyment because we don't go to the farm. We only attend the Church service, and come back only to relax and enjoy ourselves. Whoever has soft drinks (soda) can take it on such a day. I am in the happiest mood on Sundays because I don't go to work. On other days during the week, I usually relax in the evenings in the company of friends, playing 'ayo' (a type of in-door game), or just chatting (Mr. Ogunsan).

The experience of Mr. Ogunsan in the above passage shows that his evenings and weekends are free, and he thus have ample opportunity for rest, relaxation and leisure. The experiences of the women on the other hand, show that they have little time for rest, because of their multiple role involvements. Added to domestic roles, the women are expected to perform parental roles, marital, kinship, natal, and occupational roles, which entails on and off-farming activities, since farming activities constitute a major role in farm-families. The experience of Mrs. Kusimo below is representative of the situation of many women in the study. Mrs. Kusimo, who combines farming with the job of a food vendor in a primary school in another village, explains:

I wake up very early in the mornings to take care of my children and the home, before getting out of the house. On my return from the school where I am a food-vendor, I prepare lunch for my husband and children, pending their arrival from school. After this, I have to go to the farm, if I do not have gaari processing to do.

I hardly have time for rest, because I usually go to the farm in the evenings and on weekends. We women derive our strength from God almighty. Sometimes, it amazes us how we are able to cope with the various responsibilities. We just have to continue performing them, and pray for strength from above because there is nothing one can do about it (Mrs. Kusimo).

Mrs. Kusimo's explanation in the above passage reveal that her multiple role involvement as a wife, mother, housekeeper, and worker (food vendor/farmer/food processor) deprives her of the opportunity for rest and relaxation. This is the general pattern in many of the farm-families in the study, except for a few, where the women are older and have younger women in the household to assist with these various roles. Some factors are identified as antecedents and consequences of women's multiple role involvement. The antecedents include, the feminisation of domestic roles and women's self-sacrificing attitude; while the consequences include exhaustion and exposure to health hazards through drug-misuse. Findings related to these factors are discussed below.

9.4.3.2.1. Feminisation of domestic roles

In Yorubaland, it is generally believed that women and girls are responsible for the performance of domestic roles. Domestic roles as used here, means household chores, and do not imply all roles being performed in the domestic sphere. The majority of men and women in the study share this view. Only five of the forty adult participants have a contrary view that men should also be involved in domestic activities. Below are some of the responses of male and female participants in the majority group, who believe that women and girls are responsible for performing household chores. For example, Mrs. Ogunsan (Jnr) asserts:

Housekeeping has been women's responsibility from time immemorial, but males can assist. It has been like that since the time of our grandparents. It is nothing new or strange. A woman's responsibility in the home includes fetching of water, preparation of food, washing of clothes, and taking care of the children. It is when one does all these that one is a good wife. A woman must also be very neat (Mrs. Ogunsan Jnr.).

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Ogunsan's assertions in the above passage, concur with the views expressed by the farm-children in chapter six, which explores the influence of gender role socialisation on the construction of their gender identities. The views of the men too, regarding the performance of domestic roles, also agree with Mrs. Ogunsan and the children's views. Women expressed the same opinion. Their views are that men's responsibility is fulfilling the breadwinner role. The men too, believe that the performance of household chores, and childcare are women and girls' responsibilities. Mr. Kusimo explained:

Cooking, sweeping, washing of dirty clothes, tidying of the house, fetching water, are duties of the woman. My wife assists in the proper upbringing and care of our children. She also trains the girls in the various household chores, cooking in particular. The responsibility of my girl-children includes helping their mother with household chores. Their duties include fetching water, sweeping the house and the surroundings, as well as washing clothes. Girls also grind pepper, cook, and fetch water (Mr. Kusimo).

Holding the same view of ideological role expectation, Mr. Soyoye argues:

Males don't have any household chore to perform. We have no special duties in the home. We wake up in the morning and pick up their cutlasses, go to the farm, comes back, eat and rest. We work on the farm. Male farmers don't sweep. Moreover, it is an abomination for a woman to step on a floor swept by a man, just as it is an abomination for a woman to climb a palm-tree (Mr. Soyoye).

Mr. Soyoye's argument in the above passage explains the taboo surrounding the exclusion of males from household chores in Yorubaland, for example, "*men do not sweep*" and "*women should not climb trees*". Many *Yorubas*, especially the traditional ones believe that, these taboos have been transmitted from generation to generation. This notion is reflected in the responses of many of the participants. *Kabiyesi Elewo* however differs in his opinion regarding the performance of household chores. In the passage below, he recalls how he used to share in the household chores in his home. He also mentioned in other instances, how his wife and himself have inculcated skills in the performance of household chores in their male and female children alike. According to *Kabiyesi*:

When my wife was still in government employment before I became an *Oba*, I used to take her to her place of work during my leave and prepare lunch before

her arrival. I also go to bring her back home when she closed for the day. If she was not ready I will wait for her. At times, even up till now, when she's tired and I offer to assist her in the kitchen; but she now refuses, because of my status as the *Oba*. She says I should leave the kitchen and drive me away, saying *m'a koba mi* (*don't implicate me*) (Elewo).

Kabiyesi's response above indicates that he is not as traditional as the majority of the participants are. His attitude may be attributable to the influence of his exposure to alternate notions about gender roles. Kabiyesi refers to rigid gender role expectations as '*osi bamba*' (an Egba idiomatic expression connoting something very silly, trite or nonsensical). However, even in Kabiyesi Elewo's family where he offers to assist his wife in the kitchen, the wife declines, because the *Yoruba* culture frowns upon men cooking, more so because her husband is now a traditional ruler. *Yorubas* believe that once a man gets married that marks the end of his 'kitchen duties'. It was, however, revealed that as women grow older, their workload reduces, especially when daughters-in-law and grandchildren live with them. In a situation like this, the young and middle-aged women are usually overburdened. For instance, sixty-five-year old Mrs. Ogundairo says that she does not perform any household chore anymore. She only works on her farms and processes cassava for sale. Her grandchildren and their mothers perform all the household duties. They also assist with the processing of cassava for household consumption. The situation is however different with sixty-year old Mrs. Saka who lives alone in the community, and still combines all her household chores with on and off-farm activities. She has a son and four daughters. Her son lives in Lagos with his family and visits her in the village occasionally.

Just like the case of Mrs. Kusimo (earlier referred to), whose multiple role involvement deprives of opportunity for rest and relaxation, Mrs. Sodipo also hardly has time for rest and relaxation. Mrs. Sodipo is a fifty-five year old widow, who has been carrying her family's responsibilities alone since her husband's death. Adekanye (1999) had earlier noted that the notion of leisure is foreign to wives in Africa, as women have always worked, even within the

confines of the family compound, as in the case of the women in purdah (religious seclusion). Acknowledging that farming is very strenuous, Mrs. Sodipo laments about how she has to combine both on and off-farm activities to enable her cope with her financial obligations.

Only God (*Olorun nikan*) knows how He has been enabling me to survive my situation. Ever since creation, God has said that man will have to work very hard for food, and He has been giving us sound health. For instance, I have been frying 'gaari' here, since 5.00 a.m., and I will not stop, not even for a break until I finish, maybe around 4.00 p.m. When I finish this task, I still have to peel my new consignment of harvested cassava, because if the processing were not commenced today, the cassava would get spoilt. At the end of the day, I will have my bath, eat, take my medications and go to bed. Tomorrow is another day. I usually buy drugs from drug sellers and they tell us the dosage to use (Mrs. Sodipo).

Her experience in the above passage shows that she has limited time for rest or leisure. She relies on medication (analgesics and haematinics) and God for the ability and strength to cope with her daily activities. Her expression also shows that she believes that ordinarily, she does not have the strength to cope with all the demands and stresses that she is subjected to, but that she draws her strength from God. Her assertion that God ordained work, and that this God who ordained work gives the strength to cope with the demands of work is an indication that her religion (Christianity) influences her attitude to work. The influence of divine providence on farm-families' psychological wellbeing is explored in greater detail, later in this chapter.

9.4.3.2.2. Women's self-sacrificing attitude

In addition to deprivation of rest leisure and relaxation due to multiple role involvement, many women are also deprived of time and opportunity to give adequate attention to their personal needs. Self-regulatory roles are roles directed towards self. These include: attention to personal needs, for example, health, body-care, clothing, feeding, rest and sleep. Findings of the study revealed that apart from the special care and attention during pregnancies, the majority of women farmers in the study (especially the traditional women) pay little attention to their personal needs. They rely on the daily medications purchased from medicine hawkers for their daily health, and seek medical attention for serious illnesses. Owing to their commitment to the funding of their children's education, the resource-poor women farmers deprive themselves of many necessities, for example, new clothing, as reflected in Mrs. Ogunneye's experience during her difficult years. The opportunities these women usually have to buy new clothing for themselves, is when a member of their family or social group has a ceremony and initiates the purchase of 'family/social uniform' (*aso-ebi*). This finding concurs with an earlier observation by Hall (1990) that women cannot sacrifice self in the long run, without sacrificing their own wellbeing. Hall noted that, historically, women placed a high positive value on self-sacrifice; and that selflessness has been and continues to be considered by both men and women as a feminine virtue. Although Hall was speaking in a Western context, her assertions are quite relevant to the current study.

Furthermore, most of the time, the women place more priority over the family diet over and above their nutritional needs. The best portion of the meals is usually reserved for the husband and father. The children are also given adequate food, relative to available family resources, while the women eat whatever is left, or sometimes go without food. Adekanye (1999) observes that socio-cultural factors allow for men to take the choicest portions of food, in Nigerian families. The women's self-sacrificing attitude is not unique to

Yoruba culture, but is part of the universal concept of motherhood mystique. Hall (1990) noted that, historically, women placed a high positive value on self-sacrificing.

9.4.3.2.3. The burden of role accumulation

Added to domestic, marital, kinship, natal, and parenting roles, are occupational roles, which include on and off-farm activities. On-farm roles activities, land preparation, planting, weeding, and harvesting of farm products; while off-farm activities include, processing, preservation, storage, and marketing of farm products. The study revealed although farming activities used to be men's work, women too now cultivate their own farms. However, the women acknowledged that they always employ the services of men labourers to assist with the tasks considered to be masculine on their farms. For instance, Mrs. Adeleke explains:

The men are responsible for bush clearing and ridge-making. They are also responsible for the harvesting of cocoa and palm-fruit. Land preparation is not an easy task at all. We employ labourers to assist with land preparation and planting. They help with planting too. We don't really take an active part in that aspect of farming. We sometimes clear the pathways by ourselves if they are not too bushy. The labourers also help us during harvesting, because the farm is far from the village. We cannot afford to do farm-work alone, otherwise one may fall ill (Mrs. Adeleke).

Mrs. Sodipo however states that she harvests her cassava by herself, and also processes them into gaari. She explains that she does not enjoy doing it but endures owing to her financial needs. It was further observed that men too, employ the services of male labourers to assist them, depending on their farm-size and task at hand. In addition, as men advance in age, they increasingly find it difficult to perform the major on-farm activities. This resultantly affects the returns to farming and thus their financial status, especially when they are not financially able to hire labourers. Seventy year-old Mr Sowemimo says that he enjoys weeding his farm, but finds ridge making very tedious. He further laments that at his age, he could not weed much again, but that he still manages to do the little he could, since all his children have grown and left home, and he could not afford to hire enough labourers.

Mr. Akinlawon acknowledged that women farmers are very strong and resilient, successfully combining multiple roles.

Our women farmers are very strong. There is no farm work being done by males that they could not perform. Females do all household chores, care for their children and still combine farming with food-crop processing. Some women clear bushes and make ridges, although it may not be on a large scale. Most men, including me, have limited strength to combine all these activities (Mr. Akinlawon).

It was observed that women are mostly involved in the off-farm activities. Men's involvement is most of the time limited to preservation and storage of crops. Men are also involved in the marketing of the cash crops, while their wives assist them in marketing the food crops. Some men however sometimes decide to market their food crops by themselves. When a husband does not trust his wife, or when he does not want the wife to know his financial status, especially in events of pending family expenditures. Women on the other hand, are responsible for transportation of harvested crops from the farms to the homesteads, processing, preservation and storage (for those who plant or trade in cash crops), and marketing. Depending on the volume of work at hand, the women also employ the services of fellow women to assist with the processing activities. It is observed that the off-farm roles are also gendered.

The men usually handle the preservation and storage of the harvested crops, while the women handle the processing and marketing. Cassava is the major food crop in the communities where the study was conducted, and can be processed into *gaari* (roasted cassava granules), *elubo-lafun* (cassava-flour), and *fufu* (cassava-pasta). It is observed that the processing technique, which is handled by women, is more strenuous and time-consuming than the other off-farm activities. For instance while frying *gaari*, the women most of the time spend the whole day by the fireside, because of the traditional processing methods they are using. Below are some of the farmers' comments on performance of off-farm roles. One

of the women, Mrs. Soyoye while explaining how she copes with the excessive demands of off-farm activities explains thus:

When we have a lot of cassava to process, it cannot be handled alone, since the cassava have to peeled on the harvest day, to produce a very good quality of gaari. We therefore employ casual labourers (fellow women) to assist us with the processing of cassava (peeling and frying), even though the labourers take substantial amount of the financial proceeds (Mrs. Soyoye).

Mrs. Soyoye's explanation above, show that off-farm activities, with particular regards to gaari-processing is strenuous for the farm women, as revealed in Mrs. Sodipo's experience about how she usually fries gaari from morning till evening earlier on, in this chapter. Pastor Kehinde also talks about his involvement in preservation and storage, thus:..

I personally handle the storing and preservation of the harvested crops, while my wife monitors them. Harvesting of crops is the duty of men while women are responsible for bringing them to the village. Women are also responsible for cassava processing (peeling and frying), and marketing. If a man carries gaari (processed cassava) to the market to sell by himself, he would be cheated, because he doesn't know much about the business. He would also be laughed at. However, many men market their crops by themselves nowadays (Pastor, Kehinde).

The crops usually preserved and stored in the communities where the study was conducted include: cocoa, colanut, maize, and beans. Although men handle the preservation and storage of crops in most cases, it was observed that these activities are not exclusive men's roles in the participating families. It was observed that the few women who had cocoa farms (Mrs. Ogundairo, Mrs. Ogunneye, Mrs. Saka and Mrs. Ogunsans (Snr. and Jnr.), personally handle the preservation and storage of their crops. It therefore shows that the activities of crop preservation and storage is gendered in the first instance, because, of the gender differentiation in the types of crops grown by men and women. Women usually do not plant permanent crops, because they do not own permanent farmlands. This is due to the aspect of *Yoruba* culture which forbade girls and women from sharing in their parents' as well as their husband's assets, of which land is a major one in Yorubaland (Eades, 1980). The culture is however changing gradually. Three of the five women listed above (Mrs. Ogundairo, Mrs.

Ogunnaye, Mrs. Saka) are widows, and their cocoa farms belonged to their late husbands. Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr.) bought her own cocoa farm, while Mrs. Ogunsan (Jnr) inherited hers, from her father, who is a native of the same village where she is married.

Still exploring the involvement of women in crop preservation and storage, it was also observed that women living apart, and widows are combining crop preservation and storage activities with the traditional female off-farm roles of crop processing and marketing. In addition, the women who combine cola nut trading with farming also preserve and store the cola nut after the initial processing activities. It was generally observed that although the on and off-farming activities appear to be gendered, the majority of the roles are not exclusively gendered. Harvesting of cash crops and palm oil processing are amongst the few exclusively gendered farming activities, and this is due to myth that "women do not climb trees". In palm oil processing for example, as earlier observed by Adekanye (1999), men did the initial harvesting. The children and wives of the farmers followed the harvesters to gather the cut bunches of palm fruit to a nearby collection place. Although stripping the fruit from bunches was usually done by men, women assisted in the case of a small harvest. The women took over the rest of the processing tasks. They sorted out the fruit, transported it, pounded it, mashed it, pressed the fruit into oil, and further processed the oil.

9.4.3.2.4. Exhaustion and drug misuse

Belle (1990) observes that many women work a "double day" maintaining households, raising children, carrying out economically productive activities in marketing and agriculture and in household-based industries. Numerous studies also document that women "work" more hours than do their husbands given their widely diverse economic and household responsibilities (Belle, 1990). Overwork leads to exhaustion and stress. Experiences of the women in this study reveal that they are usually overworked and exhausted from work overload, and always

need to resort to the use of medications that are not duly prescribed. Although the women identify multiple role involvement as a factor influencing their psychological wellbeing, work overload, also have adverse influences on their psychological wellbeing, owing to the effect of exhaustion and exposure to the hazards, which might result from usage of unprescribed medication.

In their study of health transition in Nigeria in the era of the Structural Adjustment Programme, Orubuloye and Oni, (1996) observed that most rural women in the country bought their medicines from hawkers. Medicine hawkers, who usually know nothing about drugs, sold the drugs used by Mrs. Sodipo, whose experience was just relayed. The medicine hawkers patronize villages all over Ogun State and sell variety of drugs, including analgesics, anti-rheumatics, sedatives and haematinics. Because of their lack of knowledge about pharmacology, these hawkers themselves lack adequate knowledge concerning the correct dosage, contra-indications, and side effects of the drugs they sell. The villagers, majority of who are illiterates, are therefore at the mercy of these medicine hawkers. Most of the time the prescriptions of the hawker vary from a selection of about six to eight tablets, comprising analgesics (for example, Panadol), anti-rheumatic (for example, Butazolidine), haematinic (for example, Ferrous Gluconate), and tranquillizers (for example, Valium). A combination of these drugs is believed by the hawkers and the villagers to produce ‘multiple actions’ (*onise-pupo* or *gbogbonise*), denoting that the drugs are capable of solving many health problems simultaneously. Hence, depending on the combination of the drugs, the daily dosage of six or eight tablets is usually referred to as *onise-mefa* (sextuple) or *onisemejo* (octuple).

Both male and female farmers patronize the medicine hawkers, but the female farmers patronize them more. Because of the exhaustion after each day’s work, and effect of the tranquillizer in the drug-combination, the farmers usually sleep well after taking the drugs. The analgesics also relieve the aches and pains associated with the strenuous activities.

Hence, they identify the use of these drugs as a coping strategy. The farmers, therefore believe in the efficacy of the drug combinations, even though the drugs might have ‘expired’, or be in wrong dosages. These are some of the dangers, which women farmers are prone to, due to the lack of time for rest, relaxation and leisure.

9.4.3.2.5. Ability/Inability to manage role conflicts

Adequate management of role conflicts is amongst the factors identified as determining farmers’ psychological wellbeing. Although findings of Danes and Rettig (1993) suggest that multiple roles held by farm women impose a double burden of overload and conflict and often lead to lower satisfaction levels; many women in the study (especially the senior wives in polygamous families and grandmothers), claim that they do not experience role conflicts. Below are some of their shared experiences on how women manage their multiple role expectations. For instance, sixty year-old Mrs. Ogunsan, a senior wife in a polygamous family of three wives, asserts:

I don’t experience any role conflict again. My mate (husband’s other wife) now cooks for our husband. My sole responsibility now is to take care of my farm and myself. Even when I was younger, I did not overwork myself. I do what I can do, and leave the rest for another day. Every work cannot be completed in one day (Mrs. Ogunsan Snr.).

It is observed that as women grow older, their burden of household chores, reduce, especially when there are younger women in the household. The role of younger wives of same husband, as in Mrs. Ogunsan’s case above, and daughters-in-law and grandchildren, as in the case of Mrs. Ogundairo (A sixty-five year-old widow and grandmother), and sisters-in-law, as in Mrs. Ogunneye’s (a sixty-three year-old widow) cases confirm this observation. Twenty-five year-old Mrs. Amidu, who is the younger wife in a polygamous family of two wives, explains how she copes with multiple role involvement and role-conflicts:

There is so much to do. I try as much as possible to perform all our roles in a way that one would not affect the other, performing them in order of priority. All the

same, conflicts still do occur. I thank God because he is helping me but I also apply wisdom because I plan my duties very well so that there will be enough time for everything that I have to do (Mrs. Amidu).

Mrs. Amidu's comments above show that women's (especially the young women) combination of the various roles could be burdensome, but like all the women in the study Mrs. Amidu attributes her strength to cope to God. The influence of the participants' faith in God on their psychological wellbeing had been discussed in an earlier section of this chapter, while exploring the determinants of psychological wellbeing. Case studies of how three of the twenty-three women in the study (Mrs. Adekunbi, Mrs. Ogunneye, and Olori-Elewo) cope with stressful life situations accompanying multiple role, role conflicts, and changing role, have also been reported in chapter eight.

While all the twenty-three women in the study function in multiple role capacities, only six of the seventeen men combine other roles with their family responsibilities and farming. The six men are: Kabiyesi Elewo, Pastor Kehinde, Mr. Adeleke, Mr. Edunjobi, Pastor Koleoso, and Mr. Akinlawon. Out of these six men, only two (Pastor Koleoso and Mr. Kusimo) acknowledged that they experience role conflicts. Mr. Koleoso combines a full time job of a Secondary School Principal, and a part-time job as Pastor of Redeemed Christian Church of God, with his farming activities (crops and livestock). He also operates a private Continuing Education Classes in the evenings. The combination of these multiple roles puts him under strains and stress. As a school principal, he always wants to be in school very early before all the other teachers. He resides in Abeokuta city and commutes daily between Obafemi and Abeokuta. His farms had always been in Obafemi, his home village, before his transfer eighteen months prior to the study, to the Community Grammar School in Obafemi as the Principal. His poultry farm is located on the outskirts of the city on the way to Obafemi (about six kilometres from the city), while his sheep and goat (small ruminants) are tended in the compound of his house where he lives in the city.

This picture presents Pastor Koleoso as a School Principal, a Pastor, and a crop/livestock farmer. None of the other men in the study have such role combinations. Pastor Koleoso has only one wife and four children, three of whom have graduated from tertiary educational institutions. Two of these are also married. His lastborn, a daughter, is an undergraduate at the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. According to Mr. Koleoso, he is trying his best to fulfil his obligations as a responsible of husband and father, and the same time meet up with societal obligations. He, however, acknowledged that his multiple roles often affect his physical health, and his physician had advised him to build ‘rest’ into his schedule in order to minimise stress and avoid mental breakdown. Mr. Kusimo also, combines a full time job as school clerk, with a cassava-grinding business, and farming.

This combination of roles according to him is energy sapping and stress-laden. Mr. Kusimo has two wives. He says that he is working hard in order to fulfil his family responsibilities and most importantly, give his children a better education than he had. Contrary to the views expressed by Messrs. Koleoso and Kusimo above, Pastor Kehinde says that he does not overwork himself, because he is a Pastor, and that he employs labourers to work on his farms. He further asserts that, stressing oneself to fulfil financial obligations is not worth it, and that no matter how hard somebody one works, only God’s blessing can make one to be rich. Quoting from the book of Proverbs he says: “The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, and He adds no trouble to it” (Proverbs, 12:22 - NIV).

9.4.3.3. Outcomes of gender role performance

The study revealed that successful outcomes are perceived as rewards (*ere*) for appropriate gender role performance, and these outcomes influence psychological wellbeing. Prominent amongst these outcomes are: children’s life outcomes, and good returns to labour and financial investments in farming activities.

9.4.3.3.1. Children's life outcomes

Yoruba culture places extremely high value on children (Eades, 1980). Children's life outcomes, are perceived as successful parenting by the *Yorubas*. Parenting roles include, childcare, training, education, provision of physical and emotional support and discipline to children. *Yoruba* tradition stresses that the parents are the first teachers of their children, instructing them in the 'proper' way of relating to elders and peers. In the communal atmosphere of the traditional family, parents of children who behave in culturally acceptable ways are viewed as successful, while parents whose children deviate from cultural norms are shamed and advised to "put their houses in order" (Babatunde 1992). Veenhoven (1984) also observes that children are generally seen in many parts of the world as an important source of happiness.

The birth of a new child is always a source of joy in *Yoruba* families. Both the male and female participants mention their children's wellbeing and success as sources of their joy and psychological wellbeing. They believe that a successful child would be independent rather than be a liability in the future. They explain that the joy of parenting is the children's successful outcomes. All the participants agree that, they are usually very happy when their grown up children visit them in the villages especially when they bring gifts. However, while the poor farmers depend on their grown-up children for survival in their old age, the situation is different with the well to do. For example, eighty year-old Mr. Babatunde expresses joy he derives from his children' successful life outcomes and the fact that they take care of him:

I am happy when I receive good news from my children and when they send me gifts either in cash or kind. All my children take good care of me. They send me money and sometimes bring beverages (for example, Milo, Milk and Tea). They are concerned about my health and welfare. They all celebrated my 80th birthday last October. However, I want them to give me more money, because I cannot do much work on the farm these days owing to old age (Mr. Babatunde).

Although Olori in the passage below does not rely on her children for daily survival, she too, expresses how her children's successful outcomes enhance her psychological wellbeing. She asserts:

The wellbeing of my children and grandchildren gives me joy. I am a grandmother now by the grace of God. One of our grandchildren is now in Primary five. Another one is in London. His dad is an Accountant. The first one is in Junior Secondary School (JSS-2), abroad. What else could I ask from God than to thank him? He has been so good, merciful and gracious. The children are fine and happy. Whenever I see them, I appreciate God. I am contented and praise God. We are not looking up to them for anything. They beg us to allow them to bring gifts for us. One of our children sent this Mercedes' Benz car to us (She points to the car). What better contentment do we desire from God? Our children in the United States sent the handsets (mobile phones) that my husband and I use (Olori).

It is generally observed that, children's success in school, obedience, and achievements in life (for example, holding a good job, getting married, having grandchildren, buying a car, building a house) constitute sources of joy and psychological wellbeing for women in the study. For example, Mrs. Ogunsan (Jnr.), the youngest wife in a polygamous family of three wives, says that she is usually very happy when her children bring good results from their schools, and when they obey her instructions; while Mrs Adeleke says that she is usually emotionally upset when her children are disobedient. According to Mrs Adeleke, the situation of his son who has a language disability disturbs her mind. Following in the same trend, Mrs. Yesuf also says that her children's wellbeing is always a source of joy to her, and that when she remembers them, she is always very happy. Mrs. Ademuyiwa explains that her major source of her joy is that her children are doing well.

It is observed that, parents' aspirations for their children are gendered. Although both the men and women are concerned about their children's success, the men speak more about their children's being successful and justifying investments on them, while the women tend to speak more about children as their major source of psychological wellbeing. In addition to children's successful outcomes, just being mothers, (that is, the ability to procreate) is a

source of joy for the women. Motherhood constitutes a source of joy for *Yoruba* women generally, because of the importance attached to childbearing (Oyewumi, 1997). For example, Mrs. Adekunbi says:

When God created me, I was a single being, but now He has multiplied me. I am married with children and they are alive and well. To God be the glory (Mrs. Adekunbi).

Veenhoven (1984) had earlier observed that the happiness of women in particular is believed to depend largely upon the presence of children in the house.

9.4.3.3.2. Returns to farming investments

Findings reveal that, good returns to farming investments also enhance psychological wellbeing of male and female farmers. Good harvests (*ikore goboyi*) and returns to financial investments in farming are regarded as rewards (*ere*) for the performance of occupational roles (on and off-farm activities). Absence of worry and anxiety is one criteria of the participants' construction of psychological wellbeing. The male and female farmers discussed how favourable weather patterns and good harvests constitute a source of joy to them because these ensure good returns to farming investments. However, when the weather is unfavourable, rains come late, or insects and/or pests invade the farms, crop-yields are adversely affected, they worry and become anxious. Their psychological wellbeing is therefore threatened. Other identified causes of unhappiness in connection with farming activities include unsatisfactory performance of labourers and non-availability as well as non-affordability of needed inputs (for example, fertilizers, seeds and seedlings, herbicides, and other agro-chemicals). For example, Mr. Kusimo, who combines farming with a cassava-grinding business and a full-time job as a school clerk, says:

I am always very happy when we plant and it rains as expected, because I am assured that by God's grace, that harvest would be bountiful. We used to gain thousands of naira, like two or three times over and above the initial investment. However, when an individual spends so much on a farm and has little or nothing to show for one's investment, it leads to unhappiness. There are however,

occasional hazards like drought, which affect farm-proceeds. Mass mortality of livestock also occurs in other instances. Although such occurrences could be depressing, one just has to accept it as an act of God (Mr Kusimo).

Good returns to off-farm activities, which include crop processing, preservation, storage and marketing also constitute source of worry and anxiety for the female participants in particular. Wrong pricing of agricultural products is a major problem facing farmers in the communities where the study was conducted, just like in other parts of south-western Nigeria. Prices of farm crops are usually unstable, and determined by availability (glut or scarcity), and are arbitrarily fixed by middlemen and women, who buy the crops from the farmers, most of the time at ridiculously low prices. Sometimes, some middlemen may even decide to pay for food crops that are yet to be harvested, leaving the poor farmers who need money to meet immediate expenses with very little harvest. The participants shared their unfortunate experiences of how such situations disturb their peace of mind. Another factor threatening good returns to farming investments is the problems associated with preservation and storage. Fruits and vegetables are for instance, seasonal food crops in Nigeria. They are available in abundance during harvests and very scarce and expensive during the dry season. Because there are no storage facilities, farmers have to get rid of all their harvested fruits and vegetables by selling at very low prices. This affects their finances, disturbs their minds and threatens their psychological wellbeing.

9.4.3.4. Family health and general wellbeing

Participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing indicate that both physical and psychological wellbeing are perceived as interdependent. As earlier expressed in their constructions of psychological wellbeing, both the male and female participants share the same opinion that without adequate physical health there cannot be psychological wellbenig. Mrs. Ogunneye for instance rendered a *Yoruba* proverb saying: "*ilera l'oogun oro*",

connoting “good health enhances one’s ability to prosper”. Furthermore, in their various role capacities (as wives, mothers, husbands, fathers and extended family members) the participants expressed their opinions that the illness of one member of the family affects the wellbeing of the entire family.

Veenhoven (1984) observes that psychological wellbeing and health can mutually influence each other. Veenhoven argued that ill health causes pain and anxiety, which impacts overall wellbeing. On the other hand stress and/or dissatisfaction with life (that is, conditions of psychological illbeing) may give rise to bodily alarm states, such as higher blood pressure, higher muscle tones, and faster digestion, which may lead to acute or chronic illnesses (Veenhoven, 1984). As mentioned earlier, mothers speak more of this in relation to the wellbeing of their children. It was also observed that men, as husbands, are usually anxious when their wives are pregnant, they expressed more concern for the general wellbeing of the entire household.

9.4.3.5. Social connectedness

Social connectedness is central to the psychological wellbeing of family members in Yorubaland in general, and in the project area in particular. Social connectedness refers to the relationships that people have with others and the benefits these relationships bring to individuals and society. The participants identified the influence of intimate family relationships, and extended family ties, on their wellbeing, especially during the periods of emotional stress and psychological trauma. Social connectedness, include family and community connectedness, stable and supported relationships and valued social position. It involves having someone to talk to, someone to trust, someone to depend on and someone who knows you well (Glover, Burns, Butler, and Patten, 1998). Hall (1990) argues that connection between people is an essential aspect of identity formation and meaningful

existence. The size of an individual's social network, the supportiveness of the network relationships are also identified as important factors in determining participants' psychological wellbeing (Hall, 1990).

9.4.3.5.1. Family affiliations (Intimate relationships and extended family ties)

The typical traditional *Yoruba* compound contains a large patrilineal and patrilocal extended family. The head of the family is usually the most senior male member. The family social network is therefore usually very dense and wide. By belonging to a social network, and through communication and mutual obligation, people feel cared for, loved, esteemed and valued. Eades (1980) identifies the basic kin terms used by *Yorubas* as follows: *baba*, 'father'; *iya (or mama)*, 'mother'; *egbon*, 'senior sibling'; *aburo*, 'junior sibling'; *oko*, 'husband'; *aya (or iyawo)*, 'wife'; *ano*, 'affine'; and *omo*, 'child'. These terms can be used in combination with specific relationships more precisely, and are regularly used in a classificatory sense to include distant kin, or even non-kin with whom an individual has quasi-kinship relations (for example, '*omo-oko*', '*omo-iyawo*', '*aburo-iyawo*'). English kin terms have also been borrowed: *mama*, *dadi*, *broda* (senior brother) and *anti* (derived from 'aunt', but meaning 'senior sister') (Eades, 1980). Affinal and natal relationships encompass each spouse's respective kinships.

9.4.3.5.2. Friendships

Although the male and female participants acknowledge the role of friendship and social connectedness in the maintenance of emotional stability, especially while undergoing some form of stress or the other, only four participants (two women and two men) claim to have confidants. The majority of the participants are of the opinion that there are no true friends nowadays. Pastor Kehinde asserts that, beyond the circle of the family, a person seeks friends

who will be honest, faithful, and truthful. He, however, laments that there are no true friends. He referred to the scriptures, which uphold the ideal of the true friend, and also admonishes people to choose their friends carefully, lest they be misled or find themselves abandoned in times of trouble. He concludes by saying that Jesus Christ is the only true friend. Mrs. Koleoso also says that:

Although we need friends, because friends bring us laughter, companionship, and support, good friends and confidants are rare these days. My husband and children are my friends and confidants.

Although literature suggests that friendships, especially among women, promote the possibilities for increasing one's strength and mutual support (Hall, 1990), 18 women in the study spoke of sustaining relationships with their adult children and their husbands, as shown in Mrs. Koleoso's assertions in the above passage. *Olori* too, made a similar assertion in one of her narratives, that she has no friend, and that her husband is her best friend. Only two women in the study, Mrs. Ogunsan (Snr) (a senior wife in a polygamous family) and Mrs. Saka (a widow) acknowledged that they have friends and confidants. Lowental and Haven (1968) cited in Veenhoven (1984) have shown that widows with confidants maintain higher morale than their fellow widows without friends and confidants. The two men who claimed to have friends and confidants are, Mr. Soyoye, and Mr. Akinlawon. From the experiences of the women in the study and their very busy schedules, it is not unlikely that lack of leisure time may be contributory to their lack interest in cultivating friendship.

9.4.3.5.3. Participation in community and group activities

Community roles include activities associated with participation in community-based organisations, religious groups, and expectations from these groups. Types of organizations existing in the communities include, cooperative societies, social clubs, housewives' associations, market women commodity-based groups, and religious groups. The Women-In-

Development (WID) programme, which I lead, also has functional women groups in three of the five communities where the study was conducted. The three communities are: Kango, Boodo-Sanyaolu, and Ilewo-Orile. In all the five communities, the women belong to a community-based or religious association or the other. It was observed that there are variations in women and men's involvement in community activities. Being patriarchal societies, men in the studied communities are responsible for decision-making and governance. The 'traditional rulers' (*Obas and Baales*) and the Chiefs (*Oloyes*) are males. Mr. Akinlawon noted that women in Ogijan village are barred from attending community meetings, where issues pertaining to both male and female members of the society are discussed.

This is, however, not the case in the four other communities. Apart from exclusive women and men's groups, the communities have other avenues accommodating both sexes. It was further observed that Christian women more than their male counterparts have more religious activities to attend to, in spite of their very busy schedule. Although the multiplicity of roles suggests role-overload and conflicts for the women; the women in study believe that their involvements in the activities of these groups enables them to interact and benefit from other people's experiences. According to them, participation in such group activities also creates opportunities for them to get out of their routinized busy work schedules, thus serving as a form of psychological relief. Since the women had previously been deprived of rest, relaxation and leisure, as earlier identified, their participation in group activities seem to be compensatory; as they reported that their involvement in group activites has a positive influence on their economic progress and wellbeing.

Goal achievement and fulfilled aspirations

Accomplishment of goals and aspirations is another factor discovered in the study as a strong determinant of psychological wellbeing. In the context of the participants' constructions, 'aspirations' (*erongba*) are construed as encompassing desires, longing, yearning and hope for the future (*ife-okan, inoga si, lepa, if'okan daniyan*). 'Goals' (*opin isure ije*), on the other hand, are construed as the target, purpose, and object of aspiration (*ami, ohun ti a nlepa*). Furthermore, in participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing, 'contentment' (*itelorun*) is the degree to which an individual perceives her/his aspirations to be met. The concept presupposes that the individual has developed some conscious wants and that he/she has formed an idea about their 'realization' (*imuse, afojuba*). When we assess the degree to which our wants are being met, we may look both backwards and forwards. Findings reveal that fulfilled and unfulfilled aspirations are mediators of psychological wellbeing. It was also observed that goals and aspirations are gendered in farm-families.

Socio-cultural factors also play a role in determining the priorities of men and women in families, and thus their goals and aspirations. An example is the importance attached to the ownership of a personal house, which is status symbol in Yorubaland. In addition, the *Yorubas* attach a lot of importance to property acquisition by men, because of the belief that fathers should leave inheritance for their children. Thus, the priorities and aspirations of male and female farmers differ, to a very large extent.

Mr. Adeleke, one of the participants, is seventy-seven years old. He lives in his house, which he inherited from his father, in Boodo-Sanyaolu village with his family. His topmost desire in life as discussed in his case study in chapter eight, is to build a house in Ijemo-Fadipe, his home village. Although he is yet to embark on the project, he says, his joy would only be full (*ayo kikun*) after building the house. Another male participant, forty-eight year

old Mr. Kusimo on the other hand, expresses satisfaction with what he has achieved in life, thus:

I am glad that out of all my siblings, I am the first person to own a personal house. I have motorcycle and a cassava-grinding machine. I also have a television, a video player, a radio and many other things.

Seventy-seven year old Mr. Adeleke who feels unaccomplished because he is yet to build his own house says:

I'm unhappy about my destiny. I feel sad because at my age, I am still struggling to build my own house. I pray to God to give me the privilege of starting and completing the building before I die (Mr. Adeleke).

It was therefore not strange to observe that while both men and women express how they are affected by their current socio-economic conditions, and how this impacts on their psychological wellbeing. The men generally tend to speak more about their financial status in relation to their ability or inability fulfil their breadwinner role more than the women. This is evidenced in the experiences of Messrs Adeleke and Akinlawon who lament their inability to perform the breadwinner role. In addition, the experiences of the three women explored in the case studies (chapter eight), confirm the priorities of women to invest in their children's successful outcome. Although the women also discuss their financial status and its effect on their lives, they speak more about the strategies they have adopted to increase their income in order to fulfil their financial obligations.

The study found that feelings of lack of fulfilment could be motivating sometimes. For example, one of the widows, Mrs. Ogunneye says that her only regret in life was that she could not acquire formal education, and that deprivation motivated her to make up for her lack of fulfilment in this area in the lives of her children. Nigerian women have been deprived in the area of education in the past for various socio-cultural reasons (Okojie, et al. 1996). In the past, few girls had opportunities for formal education, as people frowned upon a father who sent his daughter/s to school. For instance, out of the twenty-three women in the

study, thirteen did not go to school at all, three did not complete their primary education, and only the remaining six had full primary education. Sending girls to school in those days was regarded as waste of money and time. Families shunned education of girls and instead, married them off as soon as possible. This misconception did a lot to adversely affect the education of females in the Nigerian society. The majority of the women in the sample had no opportunity for formal education. The study reveals that many of the women desire that their children would have good education, hence their willingness to sacrifice all and work hard in order to provide a good education to their children. The educated men in the study also desire that their children should be more educated.

9.4.3.6. Divine providence and psychological wellbeing

Divine providence is perhaps what makes the difference in the *Yorubas'* constructions, perceptions, and interpretations of psychological wellbeing status. All the participants in the study perceive God as the provider of every good thing, ranging from financial, rain and favourable weather, abundant crop yields, to health and healing. They all believe that God is their creator, and only Him can give peace of mind to people. 23 of the participants are Christians, while the remaining 17 are Muslims. *Yoruba* name for the Supreme Being is *Olorun* or *Olodumare*. *Olorun* translates easily to mean ‘the owner of heaven’ or the ‘Lord of heaven’. The name *Olorun* is constantly found on the lips of the *Yorubas*, as seen throughout the participants’ narratives in this study. All the participants, regardless of their religious affiliations believe that God is the author of all things, visible and invisible. The names ‘Olorun’ and ‘Oladumare’ are also commonly used in their sayings and proverbs.

In *Yoruba* cosmology, *Oladumare* or *Olorun* is the Supreme Being whose supremacy is absolute. Other names and attributes of *Olorun* used extensively by the participants are: *Oluwa* (Lord), *Eleda* (Creator), and *Oba-Orun* (the king who dwells in the heavens). The

Yorubas believe that, like fathers, *Olorun* takes care of man. In this regard, thanks are profusely given to *Olorun* in personal and private communications, and in personal names, such as - *AanuOluwaposimi* (God's mercies unto me are in abundance), *Oluwasemiloore* (God has favoured me), *Oluwaseun* (God has done great things), *MoyosoreOluwa* (I rejoice in God's gift), *MofiyinfOluwa* (I give praises unto the Lord), *MosunmOluwa* (I move close to God), *Olorunyomi* (God has saved me) and in spontaneous prayers and expression of joy. The popular use of Olorun for the Supreme Being made it attractive and acceptable to Islam and Christianity. The Christians, for instance, believe that in the midst of problems and hardship, they could still enjoy adequate psychological wellbeing, if they rely on God's divine provisions and interventions. The Muslims also believe in the divine will of Allah as "*amuwa olorun*". Mr. Ogunsan's response below is representative of the views of most Christian participants in the study.

I'm happy that God is providing for both my family and me. I have learnt to rely on God's grace. I enjoy singing from the Hymnbook. My favourite is Hymn No 527. When I sing it, I'm always happy and when my children hear me sing it they know that Daddy is happy. I'm always happy anytime that I go to church.

It is apparent from the participants' narratives throughout the study, that their faith in *Olorun* plays a key role in determining their level of psychological wellbeing. Veenhoven (1984) posits that religion can act as an aid for psychological functioning. According to him, religions help to give meaning to inevitable sufferings, provide explanations for unintelligible things, and serve as social support. This notion is represented throughout this study. In addition, the participants believe that it is only *Olorun* who can give *itelorun* "contentment", *ilera-okan* "psychological wellbeing" and *ayo ayaraye* "everlasting joy".

9.5. TRANS-GENERATIONAL PERPETUATION OF GENDER IDEOLOGIES IN FARM-FAMILIES: A DISCURSIVE STRATEGY

Findings of the study reveal that the process of socialization, cultural beliefs and taboos, marital age gap, and *Yoruba* philosophical beliefs about destiny are central to the trans-generational perpetuation of gender ideologies in farm-families. How the process of socialisation influences gender identity construction, and perpetuation of gender ideologies have been explored extensively in chapter six. Throughout this thesis, it is discovered that the adult participants adopted cultural beliefs, taboos, and *Yoruba* proverbs, as discursive strategies to justify the perpetuation of male supremacy and dominance, and female subordination. Agyakwa (1992: 6) observes that African taboos are almost unlimited, as they cover the entire gamut of the African experience.

Agyakwa further observes that taboos appeal to the emotions, particularly the emotion of fear, thus preventing children and adults from flouting them (for example, “*men do not sweep*” and “*women don’t climb trees*”). In addition, *Yoruba* proverbs, apart from their use as spices in discussion reflect the cultural beliefs, and are usually used to defend actions as seen in chapters six, seven, eight, and the current chapter. Feminist poststructuralist theory enhances our understanding of these discursive strategies, because it theorizes why women tolerate social relations, which subordinate their interests to those of men and the mechanisms, whereby women and men adopt particular explanations in forms of discourses, to represent their interests.

Another important factor in *Yoruba* culture accountable for female subordination is the age gap, which usually exists between husbands and wives. In *Yoruba* culture, particular importance is placed on respect for elders; and men, almost always marry women who are younger than them. This arrangement therefore makes it easy for the wife as a younger person to be subservient to the husband who is older. The ‘gospel’ of ‘gender equality in

marriage' can therefore not be preached in *Yoruba* culture. Hence, there is a need to develop culture-specific approaches, in addressing the problem of female subordination in Yorubaland in general and communities where the study was conducted in particular.

The subordination of women farmers as revealed in this study is not unique to the *Yoruba* context. Literature suggests that female subordination is a global phenomenon (Conway-Turner and Cherin, 1998). Cross-cultural studies consistently show that, although women are moving into occupations outside the home, men are much less likely to increase their share of the domestic workload (Conway-Turner and Cherin, 1998). In addition, Guyer (1995) observes that women in traditional African communities perform the greatest proportion of farming, food production, fetching water, cooking, and caring for their children. Bernstein (1993) observed life for women in Besho, a Japanese farming community, and discovered that women are the busiest members of the household, hardly having time for rest and relaxation. Waring (1998) also recounts the experiences of a young woman in Zimbabwe, who starts her day at 4.00 a.m. and does not have time to rest until she puts her baby to bed at 9.00p.m. However, although the experiences of women explored above are similar to the experiences of the women in this study, the difference lies in the participants' perceptions of their subordination as 'women's destiny' (*kadara obirin*).

Feminist poststructuralist theory exposes the operation of such common sense beliefs by identifying and tracking the words, gestures, and practices that signify gendered meaning in our culture. According to this theory, culture itself is constructed by systems of signifiers called discourses. According to Foucault, these discourses produce the subjectivity. It produces that quality we take most for granted, our very sense of self. As such, discourses become the most invisible and the most insidious sources of oppression. Within these sources of oppression, however, also lies a source of hope. (Foucault, 1981:101) argues that, discourse, not only transmits and reinforces power; but it also undermines and exposes it, and

making it possible to be thwarted. Feminist poststructuralist theory therefore offers hope and for the improvement of gender relations in these farm-families, if appropriate strategies are developed.

In addition, *Yoruba* philosophical beliefs about destiny plays a major role in the process of internalisation of values, regarding dominance and supremacy on the part of men, and subservience on women's part. Gbadegesin (1991) argued that the concept of destiny is crucial in understanding the thoughts and practice of Africans in general. With particular reference to the findings of this study, concept of destiny in *Yoruba* philosophy becomes crucial to the understanding of the participants' perceptions and interpretations of their situation regarding their gender roles and psychological wellbeing. Destiny amongst the *Yorubas* is construed as the 'essence of a person' (*iseda eniyan*), and the purpose for which a person exists. The *Yorubas* believe that human beings (*eniyan*) are what they are, by virtue of what they are destined to be (Gbadegesin, 1991).

9. 6. UNIQUENESS OF *YORUBAS'* CONSTRUCTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Philosophical beliefs about destiny make it easy for *Yorubas* to accept pleasant and unpleasant situations alike as divine providence. These philosophical beliefs are also responsible for the resilience of *Yorubas* when experiencing stressful situations, as seen in this study. It is noteworthy that the concept of destiny (*kadara*) amongst the *Yorubas* is similar to the '*law of Karma*' amongst the Indians. Meyer, Moore, and Viljoen (1997) describe the law of Karma as a deterministic law, which postulates that nothing happens by chance, but that essential, pre-existing forces determine inescapable outcomes of life. This law is similar to the *Yoruba* concept of '*kadara*', in accepting physical and psychological functions as natural and divine (*amuwa Olorun*). However, while the '*law of Karma*' as noted by Meyer, Moore,

and Viljoen (1997) excludes the involvement of deities in such natural occurrences, ‘*kadara*’ in *Yoruba* philosophy, is hinged on divine providence, as the *Yorubas* believe that nothing happens without it being sanctioned by *Olodumare* (Almighty God).

Another factor that distinguishes Africans’ constructions of psychological wellbeing from Western constructions is resilience, derivable from ‘divine providence’ (already discussed) and ‘collective existence’. Talking about the resilience of Africans, Pasteur and Todson (1982) identified ‘collective existence’ as a factor that promotes optimal functioning amongst Africans. According to them, Westerners’ stress and tension can, to a large extent, be ascribed to the accenting of individuality, which in practice constantly refers individuals back to themselves. By contrast, the social network amongst Africans, and in particular the study participants as earlier identified, offers an essential security that neutralizes anxiety and tension. For instance suicide resulting from inability to cope with stress and strains of life rarely occurs amongst the *Yorubas* in general, and in the communities where the study was conducted in particular. Pasteur and Todson (1982) further observed that Africans give immediate and direct expressions to all issues at the conscious level, before they are repressed. This observation is confirmed in this study in the way the participants spontaneously interpret their experiences, and back them up with cultural beliefs, taboos and proverbs. These discursive approaches are coping strategies unique to the *Yoruba* context.

9.7.SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As revealed in this study, gender roles are not limited to the gender division of labour in relation to household chores, but encompasses breadwinner role, domestic, marital, natal, parental, occupational (on and off-farm activities), self-regulatory and community roles. From the socio-cultural constructions of gender, and gender role patterns in farm families, as well as participants’ constructions of psychological wellbeing, several links were established between

gender roles and psychological wellbeing of farm-family members. Findings also reveal apparent unfavourable consequences of women's multiple role involvement, which although acknowledged by the women themselves, they claim to enjoy the performance of these roles, as they believe that the role-combinations contribute to their sense of wellbeing. They also believe that it is their destiny.

The women in the study accept that they are overburdened by multiple roles; but believe that it is a condition they have to cope with, for them to be fulfilled as women in the socio-cultural contexts. They also believe that it is their destiny (*kadara*). In addition, the women claim that, the combination of independent farming and other income generation activities with their domestic, marital, parenting, and other roles, give them control over their labour and resources, and thus put them in a better position to fulfil their roles as good mothers to their children. Wifehood and motherhood, according to them, is the fulfilment of womanhood. They are also of the opinion that nobody could do anything to halt the perpetuation of gender ideologies, especially as it relates to male supremacy and dominance.

Unfortunately changes in gender roles so far, are biased towards making women more overburdened, as they take on addition roles and participate in the breadwinner role. For instance, Mrs. Ademuyiwa, one of the women participants says that gender division of labour does not affect one's wellbeing, but that it ensures effectiveness, and promotes marital support. Gender division of labour, according to her, fosters peace in the home. This finding indicates that women's multiple roles enhance their self-esteem, as earlier discovered by Bertz and Fitzgerald (1987) and Nieva and Gutek (1981). The study establishes a link between gender, health and poverty. Although both the male and female farmers respond to their state of finances as a determinant of psychological wellbeing, the men tend to speak more of their dissatisfaction in fulfilment of the breadwinner roles, than the women, who speak more about the strategies adopted by them to manage their multiple roles. Earlier studies have discovered

that psychological wellbeing of men and women are equally responsive to economic strain (Mills and Grasmick, 1992).

Allowing the definitions of psychological wellbeing to emerge from the participants is one of the strengths of the social representations' framework adopted for the study. Participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing reveal that psychological wellbeing is a complex construct. Findings reveal that psychological wellbeing is constructed as encompassing, peace of mind, joy and happiness good health of self and other family members, contentment, absence of worry and anxiety, absence of emotional disturbance, freedom of movement, ability to cope with difficult situations, and ability to fulfil financial obligations. In addition, factors identified as influencing psychological wellbeing include: fulfilment of gender roles, men's leisure and women's multiple role involvement, children's wellbeing and success, financial wellbeing, social connectedness, family health, returns from farming investments and trading, accomplishment of goals and aspirations, and divine providence.

The various determinants of psychological wellbeing identified by participants also revealed that it is difficult to have optimum psychological wellbeing; just as it is impossible to be satisfied with life in all the identified areas (determinants). An individual may have peace of mind, joy, and satisfaction with his/her marital relationships and at the same time be experiencing worry and anxiety over children's outcomes, personal goals and aspirations, physical health and the economic situation. What I have observed however is that the value placed on each of the determinants of psychological wellbeing identified influences the degree of peace, joy, and psychological wellbeing experienced when such desires are fulfilled, or the degree of sadness, emotional disturbance and psychological illbeing experienced when they are unfulfilled. Values are both individually and socio-culturally constructed. Women and men in the study, as individuals have internalised the socio-cultural representations of

their gender roles. Hence, what tends to be uppermost in their minds is consonance with their ideological gender role expectations. Women, for instance are socio-culturally constructed as carers and nurturers of children, hence their psychological wellbeing is closely linked to the wellbeing of the children, even after they have grown and left home. Men on the other hand, are socio-culturally constructed as family heads and breadwinners, hence the institutionalization of patriarchy, and the link between their psychological wellbeing and fulfilment of the provider's role.

The representations of what constitutes and determines psychological wellbeing of the studied farm-families are largely determined by the socio-historical and cultural milieu of the participants and communities. It is quite obvious that their socio-economic status, geographical location, occupation, gender, and gender roles influence these representations to a large extent. Part of this is a general observation that both the male and female farmers use *Yoruba* proverbs and idiomatic expressions to illustrate their viewpoints. Ferguson (1970) has earlier observed that, proverbs are art highly prized by the *Yorubas* and are used as spices in *Yoruba* conversation. Ferguson also noted that the proverbs are not a mere embellishment, but rather, a vital part of the fabric of conversation. Findings of the study reveal that the gender identity, as well as gender role orientation of the male and female farmers is largely influenced by the prevailing ideological representations of gender stereotypes in the *Yoruba* family, regarding the fulfilment of gender roles and responsibilities in the family. It is further discovered that while the fulfilment of gender roles influences psychological wellbeing, psychological wellbeing in turn, enhances the fulfilment of gender roles.

CHAPTER TEN

THE TRAJECTORY OF SELF

10.1. PROLOGUE

The inclusion of this chapter on my personal life history, experiences, and how I became a gendered person, is premised on the fact that as a researcher, my person is inseparable from the research project. Furthermore, due to the life history methodology adopted in the study, it becomes imperative that the researcher first shares her life history and experiences to enable the readers to know her/his background and from which perspectives the research is being approached. Rossman and Rallis, (1998) stress that, because the researcher enters the world of the participants, she may shape that world in significant ways. She not only affects the on-going social life/worldview of the research participants, she shapes the entire project. From the earliest stages of conceiving the research, her/his curiosities all the way to writing the final report, the researcher's biography is the lens through which she/he sees the world. As the research emerges and progresses, the researcher systematically reflects on how she/he affects the on-going flow of everyday life

The life history is a double autobiography, and is the result of a process that blends together the consciousness of the investigator and the subject, perhaps to the point where it becomes impossible to disentangle them (Watson, Barbara and Franke, 1985). Freeman discussed the influence of the investigator and field situation in structuring the outcome of the life history in form, content and meaning (Watson, et al., 1985). According to him, a life

history is a joint production and the role of the observer in understanding a life history is crucial. He wrote:

No comparison of life histories is possible without knowledge of the editor's perspectives and values that influenced the final form of the history. Failure to assess or at least recognise the observer's or editor's role leads to an image of a life history that is distorted and incomplete, since the editor is necessarily influenced by his own perspectives (Watson, and Watson-Franke 1985:12).

Giddens (1991) sees the 'self' as a reflexive project and believes that self-reflection by way of autobiographical thinking is a central element of self-therapy. The 'self' according to him, forms a trajectory of development from the past to the anticipated future. The trajectory of the 'self' has a coherence that derives from a cognitive awareness of the various phases of the life span (Giddens, 1991). The following is a trajectory of my life, hence the title of my 'storied life' which is a quote from Gidden's book (Giddens, 1991).

10.2. MY LIFE HISTORY AND EXPERIENCES

10.2.1. My Roots

I was born on 12th December 1960, to an Anglican Clergy, Rev. Canon Paul and Mrs. Mercy Akpaida. My parents hail from Edo state in Nigeria. They are both still alive and well. I am the second of their seven children and also the first of three daughters. I have six other siblings, an elder brother, three younger brothers and two younger sisters. I have a mixed cultural heritage, 'Edo' by descent and 'Yoruba' by birth, socialisation and marriage.

10.2.2. Childhood days and early educational life

I had my primary education at Christ Anglican Primary School, Iporo-Ake, Abeokuta, Nigeria, from 1966 to 1971, and my secondary education at Abeokuta Girls' Grammar School, Abeokuta Nigeria, from 1972 to 1976. My parents, the secondary school I attended and the church played major roles in the construction of my identity as a person and as a

female. My father used to tell us stories in the evenings. These included, both from the Bible stories, folklores, and stories about our family ancestors in Uneme-Nekhua, Edo state, Nigeria. I cannot remember experiencing any crisis during my childhood and adolescent days, except in regard to my mother's choice of dresses for me. The fashion in vogue then, was 'mini' and tight-fitting dresses and she consistently sewed 'midi' and 'maxi' dresses for me. When I protested, she explained to me that it was not good for a girl to expose her body parts and curves. Though I did not have an in-depth understanding of her reasons, I had no choice other than to comply. This mode of dressing has been part of me up till this day. In addition, when I was growing up as a girl, my parents emphasised chastity in my training. I have a big brother who we are very close. He always impressed on me that I should not allow any boy or man to take undue advantage of me, and strongly warned me against receiving gifts or money from members of the opposite sex outside the family circle.

I have a lot of beautiful memories about my childhood, but there are two important events I can never forget. First, the day I received the worst flogging in my life. My father flogged me mercilessly for having brought home a bad report. I was in Secondary class two, then and my Class-teacher wrote this in my terminal report - "This is a brilliant academic report, but she is irresponsible". My father could not take it in. He said – how on earth could his child be irresponsible. He actually flogged me severely, and I thenceforth made up my mind that it would not happen again. I had a terrible wound from the flogging that has left a big scar on my left leg till today. Some parents and teachers may term that disciplinary action of his, then as 'child abuse' today, but it worked, because it was the last time I brought such a report home. The wise saying is true after all – "Punishment that hurts chases evil from the heart" (Proverbs 20:30). My supervisor, Prof. Muthukrishna however felt otherwise. She critiqued the fine line between discipline in this form and child abuse. She is also of the opinion that punishment that hurts could sometimes be evil. While I agree with her opinion

that corporal punishment could sometimes be abusive, I argue that, with good intentions and love for the child, such strategies could achieve effective child discipline. My personal life experience is a testimony to this fact. Although I was not guilty of the alleged offence, which earned me the bad report, the beating I received from my father and the scar, were constant reminders of the need to be a well-behaved and “responsible girl”. The second event was the day I was able to independently sew a dress for myself. My mother was a seamstress, and I took delight in sitting with her and assisting her in my own little ways, not knowing that I was gradually learning the skill.

10.2.3. Career life

My maternal aunt – the late Christie, who was a nurse and midwife, influenced my choice of Nursing profession as a career. Although I resisted then, because I wanted a University degree, she encouraged me that nursing is a good profession for me as woman, and that I should determine from the outset to acquire higher education in Nursing, in the University.

10.2.3.1. Professional and tertiary education

I joined the services of the Ogun-state Government in the Ministry of Health, as a Student-Nurse in May 1977 and became a professionally Registered Nurse (R.N.) in 1980. Due to my quest for knowledge and advancement, I proceeded to Nigeria’s Premier University - the University of Ibadan and obtained B.Sc. Honours degree in Nursing Education in 1984. I became a professionally Registered Nurse Tutor (R.N.T.) in the same year. Upon graduation and after the one year National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), I resumed services at the Ogun State Ministry of Health as a clinical instructor.

I returned to the University of Ibadan in 1986, for my Master’s degree, this time in another discipline, Educational Management. In 1987, I obtained a Master’s degree in

Educational Planning and Policy. My result at this level was so outstanding, that I was requested to proceed with the doctoral programme. I completed the programme in Institutional Administration, and successfully defended my Ph.D. thesis in January 1990, at the age of a little over twenty-nine years.

10.2.3.2. Current employment

I assumed duty in December 1995 as the pioneer Programme Leader for Women-In-Development (WID) in the Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC), University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB). The University of Agriculture Abeokuta is one of the three specialized Universities of Agriculture, in Nigeria, with a tripodal mandate of Teaching, Research and Extension. The Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC) is an academic centre in the University, charged with the responsibility of implementing the University's Extension mandate. AMREC is responsible for the transfer of proven agricultural and other related technologies from the University to the end users, viz. the farmers and agriculturists. The WID programme which I have the privilege of leading is one of the programmes in the Centre – AMREC, and is charged with the responsibility of improving the participatory capabilities of women in the development of themselves, their families, their immediate communities, and the nation at large. These responsibilities are achieved amongst others, through capacity-building projects in literacy, health, farming systems operations and various income-generating activities, focusing the entire farm-families. At the present moment, I am a Senior Extension Fellow (equivalent of Senior Lectureship position).

As the pioneer Programme Leader for WID programme, I had the challenge of developing the implementation modalities of the University's WID programme. By implication, I have the responsibility to develop programs and projects, as well as formulate

action strategies for the implementation of the programme. I work with the farm-families generally and in particular, women and girls in the University's mandate area (South-western Nigeria, comprising eight out of the nation's thirty-six states). The WID programme of my University operates an Integrated Extension Model, which is an innovation over and above the conventional Women-In-Agriculture (WIA) programmes in Nigeria. This model is my brainchild. Over the years, several gender-sensitive approaches have been developed and adopted. The farm-family approach is one of such approaches. It enlists and enhances the support of the husbands and children of our programme beneficiaries in all extended innovations and technologies.

10.2.4. Career goals and aspirations

With a first degree in Nursing Education and post-graduate degrees in Educational Management, I believe my educational preparations have assisted me a lot on the job. Furthermore, having accepted the big challenge of pioneering the WID programme of my University, I have had cause to do a lot of independent study in the field of gender and development studies. However, I am aware that I have a lot more to learn in the interdisciplinary field of Gender, for my personal and career development, hence my current pursuit of a doctoral degree in Gender Studies.

Also, as a professional nurse and a Fellow of the West African College of Nursing (WACN), I have a deep yearning to continue to contribute to development of the profession in the West-African sub-region in general and Nigeria in particular. Most of my scholarly presentations (invited papers) were delivered at Continuing Education (CE) programmes for Nurse professionals. I have a strong passion for the profession and desire the institutionalization of Quality Assurance Programmes for the benefit of the professionals and more importantly, the beneficiaries of nursing service.

10.2.5. Marital Life

10.2.5.1. Courtship and early years

I met the man who eventually became my husband in March 1981 at the Cathedral Church of our Saviour, Ijebu-Ode. I had arrived in town a few weeks earlier for my Midwifery training and decided to worship in the church. He was a member of the ‘Guild of Stewards’ (severs and ushers in the church), and an elderly woman (about 70yrs. old then) who was also a member had invited me to join them. The woman led me to the vestry to introduce me to the other members who were busy counting the offerings (financial contributions) for the day. She announced “Please meet Miss Akpaina who has volunteered to assist us with our serving duties in the Church”. I cannot remember now, how many people were present in the vestry; but this man – Olusaanu, immediately made a cutting remark “she is not coming to assist us, but rather to do God’s work”.

I started serving on the next Sunday, and found myself seated beside him. This was our second meeting and I immediately remembered his remarks of the previous Sunday. He asked me my name and what I was doing in town. In the brief discussion that ensued, we both discovered that he knew my parents and they too knew him, his late father and some of his brothers. My father was the first Anglican priest in his father’s village – Ode-Lemo where I was born. His own father was a Lay reader in the church, and though much older than my father, they were close friends and very fond of each other. I did not grow up to know him in person, but I could remember my father talking of ‘Baba White’ – his nickname, because he was always wearing white outfits.

We gradually drew closer. I saw in him a ‘big brother’ and liked him. My parents were then working in Ajebo, a village about seventy-five kilometres from Ijebu-Ode. I used to visit them fortnightly. I told them about Emmanuel. They remembered him and memories about ‘Baba White’ was enlivened. Even my maternal grandmother, who was visiting us

then, remembered ‘Baba White’. Emmanuel was eager to visit my parents, and they too were willing to meet him once again. We went home together on several occasions. Unknown to me, he was already in love with me, and gradually on my own part, my deep liking for him developed into real love. My parents had no idea about the relationship, though we kept on going home together. They accepted him as a member of the family. By the way, my parents had very beautiful memories about their stay in Ode-Lemo and this they attribute to the fact that the people were very kind and caring to them while there. He formally proposed to me in February 1982.

“Out of the ordinary”

Emmanuel was seventeen years older than me and was previously married with six children. Hence, I was ambivalent concerning the relationship. *“What sort of thing is this?”, “Why have I put myself into this?”, “What will my parents say?”, “How will my brothers and my friends react to my choice?”* Yet, I could not resist him because I was deeply in love with him – his person. He was so loving and caring; but apparently more mature and experienced in such matters. He did not ‘rush’ me, but allowed me to reason things out and get convinced about what I wanted. Meanwhile, he was doing his best to communicate his love, affection and care. He was and is still a big brother indeed, always there for me. I became pregnant in August 1982. I had completed my Midwifery training then, and was a second-level undergraduate at the University. Neither my parents nor my brother knew until December 26th of that year, when we decided that I should tell. I was already 4months pregnant. I just could not summon up the courage to break the news of the courtship and pregnancy. It was not pleasant news for any member of the family to take in. They saw my action as a complete betrayal of my Christian upbringing and their status in the Church and society. They were dejected, disappointed and unhappy. Several questions were raised. *“Is this girl in her right*

senses at all?", "Does she realise the implications of what she is going into?", "Could this be real love?", "Definitely, this is out of the ordinary". My father was very annoyed and pronounced his verdict, "Go and have his baby for him, but you cannot marry him".

A disaster happened in our family on January 8th 1983. The Ajebo Vicarage got burnt. Due to the fact that the house was thatch-roofed, the fire spread fast and could not be quenched. Only the lives of the family members were saved in the inferno, and every other thing was destroyed. Every material belonging was lost. This incident coupled with the news of my unapproved pregnancy, received just about two weeks before then was very distressing for my parents. I was distressed too for making my parents unhappy, and also because I lost my belongings in the inferno. My mother was very supportive throughout the trying period of my pregnancy and delivery. She has been and is still a very loving and caring mother to us. She is currently in my home in Nigeria assisting my husband in taking care of our children. My baby-girl marked her 12th birthday last December.

The bond of a child.

I had my son – Oluwasemiloore (God has favoured me) in May 1983. In spite of all oppositions, I stuck to my choice. Though my decision to marry Emmanuel stemmed from my strong liking for his person and strong passion and love for him, the bond created by our son's birth reinforced it. Though I would have loved to abide with my parents' wish not to marry him, I could not, because of the implications that the decision would have had on my child's life and our future mother-child relationships, as well as the adverse effects that single parenting may have on his emotional development. I also knew that his other children needed a mother. It was not easy to father six children alone. Hence, I decided to persevere, to wait, to plead with my parents and brothers and to bear the 'shame' as it seemed then. My father, however, maintained his stand until December 1985 when he eventually agreed with my

choice and decision and organised our wedding in his Church. My father was very strong-hearted and strict, though he has softened over the years. I appreciate his sound principles. My brother (Bro' Mak) played a prominent and highly appreciated role of a mediator in getting my father to agree with me in my choice.

10.2.5.1. *My home*

My husband – Olusaanu is a builder by profession and the Executive Director of his own company – EGOLS Nig. Ltd. He is also a current Council-member of the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON). We got married on December 14th 1985. We are happy and blessed with many children. My husband is a devoted husband, loving father and highly gender sensitive. For instance, as I am currently studying here in South Africa, he is in Nigeria keeping the home front and taking care of our children. Since we met, he has been loving, caring, and very supportive all through my career. He encouraged me throughout my Undergraduate, Masters and first Doctorate studies. Actually, my enrolment for the Masters programme in 1986 was his idea, as I never envisioned that I would go beyond a first degree. I know I can always count on him. To know that someone somewhere cares, is enough motivation and a propelling force to move on. He has always been there for me. Actually, my career life has been part and parcel of my marital life since we have met. I had a book-launch as part of my 40th Birthday Anniversary Celebrations in December 2000. The Book-Launch marked the presentation of my first two books, titled:

- Ethics and Legal Implications of Health Care: A Handbook for Professional Nurses;
- Project development and Management Made Easy: A Concise Guide.

It was a very happy day for me. When my husband had an opportunity to speak on the occasion, he said these, amongst other things:

I love Grace not only because she is my wife. She is also my best friend, my lover, my darling, my confidant, my nurse, my cook and server of all my

meals..... my fashion designer..... she has succeeded in gradually eliminating all my tailors. She now sews all my dresses. She is a devoted wife and loving mother to all our children (Olusaanu, 12/12/2000).

He had repeated these words twice since then. First on the night of our son's wedding on 21st June 2001 and second, at a dinner organized by some friends and colleagues on 6th August 2002 - the eve of my departure to South Africa. I must place it on record that I have no regrets sticking to my 'hard' and seemingly 'unpopular' decision to marry him. My brothers and parents, especially my father, are now very happy about our relationship. Not too long ago when we visited him, he said:

I thank God that I did not insist on your not marrying each other. I bless him for eventually giving my blessings on your union and that I did not mislead you. I couldn't have wished a better husband for my daughter. Both of you are just wonderfully compatible. I pray that God's merciful eyes shall continue to abide with you and all your children in Jesus name (Rev. Canon Akpaina, July 2002).

My children - We are blessed with many children, 8 sons and 2 daughters. My husband had six children from his first marriage, and our union is blessed with four children. We have them in two sets of six and four. Before our wedding, our entire first set of children saw me as a big 'Auntie', but since I joined the family they have accepted me as their mother having lost theirs' while still very young. Our eldest son was 11years old when I met my husband. We were and are still very close. He was at our wedding, by which time he was almost 15years old. His younger siblings were aged – 13,11,8,7 and 6years old respectively, while 'Olusemiloore was then 2.5years old. We grew up and weathered the storm together as one 'unique' family. I must say that it was not particularly easy during the children's growing years. There were certainly some tense moments, but I thank God for His enabling mercies.

Our first son now a medical doctor, married in the United States on 21st June 2001. While called upon to give the 'Groom's response', he said the following amongst other things:

Fortunately and unfortunately, my biological mother is not here today; but I have someone here who has been more than a mother to me...She joined our family when I was just about entering High School and since then she has just been wonderful. She saw me through my secondary and tertiary education, and had always been there for all my younger ones and me. Put modestly, her devotion surpasses the cultural expectations in an average Nigerian family with similar circumstances. We have all been progressing in our academics and other aspects of our lives. (And to me he said, bowing down) I thank you for everything and highly appreciate your love and care (Gbolahan, Wedding videotape 21/6/2001).

On that day I must confess, I was overwhelmed. All the eyes at the wedding reception were directed at me. These comments really humbled me. I never imagined that he could say so much about me on such occasion. Something he had said a few years earlier then quickly flashed to my mind, "Mom is a highly principled woman. She does not tolerate any nonsense from any of her children".

10.2.6. Leisure and extra-curricular activities

I enjoy reading, writing and fashion designing. Fashion designing is actually my second career, my first love; just that my academic life has hindered my having enough time for sewing these days. I still enjoy sewing a lot but the time is not there. Both careers – 'academics' and 'fashion designing' are time-consuming. I have realised that there is no way one can effectively combine the two without one affecting the other. However, I still desire to return to my sewing machine some day, because it gives me opportunities to be creative. Let me finish these academics first. I also enjoy reading Christian literature and playing scrabble.

10.2.7. My Christian experience

As a daughter of an Anglican Priest, I was baptised on the 8th day; that is, 19th December 1960 and confirmed at age 12yrs – 26th December 1972. More importantly however, I made a conscious decision to be a Christian on 1st June 1987. I realised the value of the life and eventual death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary and decided to turn my life over to Him

as the Lord of my life and Personal Saviour. Since then, things have not been the same with me. My life is a bundle of beautiful testimonies. Jesus is real to me as my counsellor and healer. He reveals Himself to me everyday in the fulfilment of the various promises recorded in His word – The Holy Bible. My first testimony is the miraculous and divine healing received from ‘migraine’ (a severe hereditary form of headache) in June 1987. Since then, I have not suffered a headache for 5minutes. My current testimonies are my ‘unique’ family, my career, and this PhD in Gender Studies.

As a girl, I was a member of the ‘Girls’ Guild’ and now, I belong to the two adult women’s groups in the Church – ‘the Mothers’ Union’ and ‘Women’s Guild’. I am also a member of the Anglican Youth Fellowship (the youth wing of the Anglican Church). I was privileged to serve as the pioneer National Co-ordinator of the Fellowship’s Women Forum in 1990, a position I held for ten years (1990-2000), simultaneously as my husband served as the National President of the Fellowship. The forum leadership is charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing programmes at local and National levels, aimed at empowering members to be responsible Christian daughters, devoted wives, loving mothers and self-reliant responsible citizens. Actually, I believe I have a calling to advance women and womanhood. The Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI), an interdenominational Christian organization where I fellowship, has contributed immensely to my spiritual development and Christian walk.

10.2.8. Memorable days

My memorable days include the following:

- The day I succeeded in sewing a dress for myself independently (1972)
- The day my father flogged me mercilessly (1973).
- The day I broke the news of my courtship and pregnancy to my family (Dec. 26th 1982).
- The day I had my first son (May 21st 1983).

- My wedding day (Dec.14th 1985).
- The day I rededicated my life to Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour (June 1st 1887).
- The day I had my baby-girl after three boys in a row (Dec. 4th 1990).
- My graduation ceremonies (November 17th 1984, 1987 & 1990).
- The day I received a car-gift from my husband, as an advance gift for my 40th birthday (June 2000)
- My 40th birthday anniversary and presentation of my first two books (December 12th 2000)

10.3. REFLECTIONS

From the foregoing, the agents of socialization, in my own case, my family, the church, my schools, profession and career, have immensely contributed to my gender role socialization and gender identity construction. As the first of three daughters in my family, my mother played a key role in this aspect. This is partly informed by her choice of dress for me amongst other things. She was my role model as I learnt to do everything she did. Although she ensured that her sons and daughters were adequately involved in the performance of household duties, she expected we girls to be more committed and diligent.

In our church, all girls belong to the “Girls’ Guild”, an organization that is charged with the responsibility of grooming girls to become good daughters, virtuous women, loving wives, caring mothers, self-reliant and above all, responsible citizens. The Church also has two umbrella organizations for older women – “The Mothers’ Union” and “Women’s Guild”. The latter is for all women in the church, while membership of the former is restricted to only legally married/church-wedded women. In my “girls-only” secondary school, we were made to be aware that we are different from boys and that we needed to take proper care of ourselves. Particular attention was paid to our grooming to ensure that we grow and develop into women of dignity and repute. We were also taught subjects like – Home Economics and Needlework, which were considered feminine courses, as these are not offered in “boys-only”

schools. Nursing, which is my primary profession, is acclaimed to be a feminine profession, as there are more women than men in the profession. Women are also believed to be more sensitive, caring and better fitted for the profession. As *Extension Personnel* working with grass-root families for the past seven years, I have become increasingly aware of my gender and sensitive to the predicaments and challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society like Nigeria.

10.4. GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Through my life's trajectory, the following have been the sources of my psychological wellbeing. Peace at home and at work; good health (of self and every family member); harmonious marital relationships; success of children in their education and career; success in my career and studies. Our marriage is blessed with more sons than daughters, and all of them are encouraged to participate in household duties. Otherwise, the girls will be overburdened. There is therefore no gender discrimination in the division of labour in our home. However, I still pay particular attention to my daughters, because I want them to also become good wives and mothers. This I suppose is a multiplier effect of what my mother did to me.

Furthermore, having to function within multiple role-frameworks of a wife, mother, a career woman and a social being, there are times however that I feel bogged down with too many duties, obligations and responsibilities. This is a result of how I have been socialised and the social representations of womanhood in my world. My coping strategies include, rest, relaxation, recreation; sleep and vacations; prayers, bible studies and meditation; spiritual retreats and trust in God; sharing anxieties and concerns with husband and close friends; and prayerfully taking practical steps to solve any pressing issue or problem.

As a feminist scholar, I must say that my realization and appreciation of the ordeals and challenges of the oppression of the female gender calls for personal self reflection in spite of the fact that I do not perceive myself as ever been ‘seriously’ oppressed. I can however identify distinct areas of oppression in the lives of my mother and grandmother. The dictionary defines oppression as - “(a) to weigh heavily on the mind, spirits, or senses of; worry; trouble; (b) to keep down by the cruel or unjust use of power or authority: rule harshly; tyrannizes over; (c) to crush; trample down (d) to over power; subdue.

A close examination of these definitions of “oppression”, especially (a), reveals that in my becoming gendered as a female – daughter, wife, mother, career-woman among others, I am actually oppressed in real terms in spite of my own perception of not feeling “seriously oppressed” as earlier reported. Could this discovery be part of the process of ‘genderization’ and self-discovery? The biological aspects and social constructions of femaleness in my life history could be identified and analyzed through a variety of lenses.

From the perspectives of this study, having been born and brought up in the project area, it is suffice to say that I basically share the same gender role orientation and experiences with the research participants due to the similarities in our culture and ideologies. In reality however, and from the viewpoint of the social representations theory, this may not be absolute. It is worthy of note that there are bound to be variations in my social representations and constructions of some ideologies as the researcher, vis-à-vis those of my research participants, and thus variations in the complexities of our gender roles and psychological wellbeing (being explored in this study). These variations will emanate from the differences in our geographical location, socio-economic status, educational level, access to media and publications as well other basic social amenities like water and electricity for example. This does not however mean that as the researcher I would be insensitive to the

complexities of their gender roles and psychological wellbeing. I have been working with these families over the past seven years and spend most of my working hours with them.

10.5. EPILOGUE

For the reasons highlighted in the prologue to this chapter, I have tried as much as possible to ‘tell’ a lot about myself - my life history and experiences though inexhaustibly, from my childhood till now. The social construction of gender as expressed in my roles as a daughter, wife, mother, as well as the kinship roles in my first family and my marriage, as reflected in this story have all influenced my gender role socialization and person. The trajectory of my life above, reveals the determinants of my psychological wellbeing as - peace at home and at work, good health (of self and every family member), harmonious marital relationships, success of children in their education and career, success in career and studies. My relationship with my creator, as influenced by my Christian experience, and my family, also enhances my coping resources and strategies as well as my psychological wellbeing. Counting my blessings over these years, I wish to conclude by noting that, I have enjoyed the goodness and wonderful deeds of the Lord all my life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1. OVERVIEW

This project set out to explore the complexities of “Gender roles and perceived psychological wellbeing of farm-families” in Ogun state Nigeria. I am of the opinion that, when farm-family members have adequate psychological wellbeing, they will enjoy good health, experience good interpersonal relations within and outside the family, and be able to contribute meaningfully to development, at individual, family and societal levels. The wellbeing of farm-families is also believed to be a pre-requisite for optimum productivity in the rural and agricultural sector, and thus a pre-requisite for national food security. The intention of the study is to gain insight and understanding of the farmers’ life experiences, since farm-families are gendered institutions with peculiar needs, problems and aspirations.

It is expected that the study will provide needed information that will be useful for gender analysis and development of gender-sensitive and gender-specific interventions needed for the enhancement of their psychological wellbeing. The study was motivated by a dearth of research, literature, and thus knowledge, about the construction of, and determinants of the psychological wellbeing of farm-families. There is also a dearth of research on farm-family relationships and wellbeing. Previous studies on agriculture and farming communities are greatly biased towards the role of women and their involvement in farming, without particular considerations for the family as a unit of analysis. This research is therefore an attempt to fill the identified gap in knowledge, by generating empirical data on the complexities of gender roles and psychological wellbeing of farm-families.

The uniqueness of this study is its feminist methodological approach, which emphasizes self-reflexivity. Feminist research also emphasizes the importance of the inclusion of men's and women's views and perceptions, as opposed to a concentration on women alone, with a polarized view of men exclusively as the oppressors and perpetrators of female subordination. In addition, the adoption of a farm-family approach, and inclusion of children's perspectives in the study is due to recognition of the influence of family factors as determinants of children's gender identity construction, life outcome, and of the psychological wellbeing of the entire family. Recognizing that psychological wellbeing cannot be understood without a deep appreciation of men and women's lives as individuals, as partners of their spouses, as parents of their children, as workers in their chosen occupations, vocations or careers, and as social beings in peculiar socio-historical and cultural contexts, the social representations framework was adopted in the study. The research participants included 40 adults (17 men and 23 women) and thirty-one children (17 boys and 14 girls), drawn from five farming communities in Ogun state Nigeria. All the participants belong to the Egba ethnic group of the *Yoruba* tribe in South-western Nigeria. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, multiple methods of data collection were employed, and these include: life histories, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews, systematic observations and field-note taking.

11.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The key findings of the study are presented as a summary in this section of the concluding chapter. Constructions of gender identities and gender role socialization of boys and girls in the studied farm families are observed to be interdependent. Early gender role socialization influences gender identity construction, while gender identity construction also predicts gender role orientation in the present and future. The study also revealed children's resistance to stereotypic masculine and feminine characteristics, as exhibited in their ambivalences,

tensions and contradictions to rigid gender role expectation from both genders. However, despite this resistance and ambivalence towards the sustenance of rigid stereotypic gender roles, all the participating boys and girls aspire to acquire good education, which they perceive as the key to their future survival and gender role fulfilment. What makes the findings peculiar in this instance is the children's attitude toward the perpetuation of stereotypic gender roles. For instance, both boys and girls identified quality education as a means for gender identity empowerment, and they desire to acquire good education to be responsible husband/father on one hand, and independent wife/mother, on the other, thus sustaining stereotypic gender roles.

The study confirms that family dynamics, among other factors, predict the climate of the home and the psychological wellbeing of its members. Findings show how every member of the family, and the children in particular, are sensitive to dynamics within the family. It also shows how children perceive and interpret their parents' actions, moods, and dispositions, and the influence of these on their psychological wellbeing and future outcome. Marital stability is identified as a key determinant of children and parents' psychological wellbeing. Communication, mutual dependence, and complementarity, as revealed in the study, are anchors of good family relationships. Findings of the study reveal that effective communication in farm-families fosters marital wellbeing, and resultantly enhances participants' psychological wellbeing. Participants' stories also reveal that length of marriage and experience improves understanding and communication patterns. Findings also reveal that a mother's presence in the family enhances children's emotional development, while a father's presence enhances children's amenability to discipline.

Patterns of decision-making in farm-families show ideological representations of power and domination, confirming that patriarchal power rests on the social meanings given to biological sexual differences. However, findings reveal that decision-making in farm-

families is not often a site of friction, and thus, is not perceived as constituting a threat to the psychological wellbeing of both male and female farmers. The wives do not perceive their husbands' role in decision-making as oppressive. They accept their level of involvement as adequate and perceive these social representations as the norm within their socio-cultural contexts. The men have internalised domination and male superiority, while the women on the other hand have internalised subservience. These internalisations emanate from ideological social representations of gender and gender roles.

Although 'psychological wellbeing' is a difficult construct to define because of its complexity and high subjectivity, using the social representations' framework, the constructions, meanings and determinants of psychological wellbeing were allowed to emerge from the participants. The study reveals participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing as encompassing, peace of mind (*Ifokanbale*), joy and happiness (*idunnu ati ayo*), good health and wellbeing (*ileru ati alaafia*) of self and other family members, contentment (*itelerun*), absence of worry and anxiety, absence of emotional disturbance (*aisi idaamu, ifoya, ati pakaleke okan*), freedom of movement (*ominira*), ability to cope with difficult situations (*ifaya ran isoro*), and ability to fulfil financial obligations (*lile gbo bukata eni*).

In addition, factors identified as influencing psychological wellbeing include: ability/inability to fulfil gender roles, rest, relaxation and leisure, women's multiple role involvement, family health, children's wellbeing and success, financial wellbeing, availability of food in the home, marital stability, spousal support, and spouse's success, social connectedness, goal achievement and fulfilled aspirations, and divine providence. Both the male and female participants also agree that, without ifokanbale (peace of mind) and ilera-okan or alaafia-okan (psychological wellbeing), nobody can accomplish anything worthwhile (ko si eniken t'o le se nkankan ti o ni laari). These representations of what constitutes and

determines psychological wellbeing of the studied farm families are largely determined by the socio-historical and cultural milieu of the participants and communities.

As revealed in this study, gender roles are not limited to the gender division of labour in relation to household chores, but encompasses breadwinner roles, domestic, marital, natal, parenting, occupational (on-farm and off-farm activities), self-regulatory and community roles. From the participants' constructions and determinants of psychological wellbeing and the socio-cultural constructions of gender, vis-à-vis the patterns of gender roles in farm families, the study has established several links between gender roles and the psychological wellbeing of male and female members of farm families. There is evidence that traditional gender roles have changed significantly from what they used to be in the past. It was discovered, for example, that mothers in the study have taken on additional responsibilities. In addition to their traditional roles of nurturing, childcare, provision of emotional support and performance of domestic chores, the women now contribute substantially to family financing, and in particular, children's education and skill development (that is, breadwinner roles).

This is a major change in gender roles, from what they used to be in the past. The picture portrays the men as being relieved and the women as being overburdened. However, although the men do not feel pressured by their breadwinner roles and children's educational needs due to their wives' readiness to support, their emotional attachment to the fulfilment of these roles is still reflected in their constructions of, and determinants of psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, in spite of acknowledged strains and stresses associated with their increasing roles as well as the traditional roles of wife, mother, farmer, and crop-processor, women in the study are willing to persevere in the performance of these roles, as they believe that the role-combinations contribute to their sense of fulfilment and psychological wellbeing.

Different from the breadwinner role mentioned above, gender roles as regards the performance of domestic chores, have not undergone much transformation over the years. Women and girls are still, as in the past, responsible for cooking, sweeping, fetching of water, washing of dishes and clothes, while boys cut the surrounding bushes. The men are only involved in cutting nearby bushes in situations where the boys are grown-up and have left home. Most of the male and female participants are satisfied with the status quo and the reasons given for stereotyping gender roles in the family are informed by biological determinism, intergenerational transcendence, cultural beliefs and myths. There are, however, a few families in the study, who claim that they do not encourage gender stereotypes in their homes, with regard to how domestic chores are shared amongst family members, especially amongst the children. These are the educated families in the study sample. These families believe that it is time the traditional gender roles are upturned and everybody participates in domestic chores.

The occupational roles, which include the on and off-farm activities have also undergone major transformation over the years. The women, who used to be involved in the family farming activities (husbands' farms) and their own processing activities in the past, have taken additional responsibilities by owning independent private farms, which does not exclude them from working on their husbands' farms as and when necessary. 22 of the 23 women in the study own independent farms. The women's ownership of private farms has been necessitated by their involvement in the provision of family needs and children's education, and the women claim that independent farming enhances their income, enhances their financial dependence, as well as their ability to contribute to family upkeep. While most men in the study acknowledged their wives' supportive roles, many of them confess that they (the men) are usually on their guard to ensure that they are still recognised as head of the

family, and that the women do not become ‘un-submissive’ and ‘uncontrollable’ and because of their contribution, take charge, and become ‘unruly’.

Another interesting revelation is that women’s ownership of independent farms has both financial and emotional implications for their husbands. A major implication is the reduction in available unpaid labour for the husbands’ farms. Although wives still work on their husbands’ farms, the intensity has reduced considerably, due to their involvement in their private farms. Nowadays, the women are mostly involved in their husbands’ farm work during the harvest seasons, to transport the harvested crops from the farms to the homesteads. They are also actively involved in the processing of cassava from their husbands’ farms for household consumption and marketing. The reduction in unpaid labour has therefore necessitated men’s need to employ more paid labourers to work on their farms throughout the farming season; otherwise, their yields would be minimal. However, men who are inconsiderate, or who wants to be problematic sometimes insist that their wives, in spite of commitment to independent farms should work full-time on their husbands’ farms and this is usually a site for friction and marital disharmony, which constitutes a threat to family psychological wellbeing.

Generally, the findings of the study reveal that the socio-cultural constructions of gender, internalised ideological representations of gender roles, and the patriarchal structure of power, have direct influences on the roles performed by the males and females in the study. Mothers in the study specifically believe that a determination to stay in marriage as obedient and submissive wives gives them the opportunity to be good mothers to their children. In addition, although the women in the study accepted that they are overburdened by multiple roles they believe that it is a condition they have to cope with, for them to be fulfilled as women in the socio-cultural contexts.

Coping with stressful life situations is identified in the study, as one of the complexities associated with gender roles and psychological wellbeing. Study findings show that the major sources of stress and strain for farm women are inherent in their multiple role-involvement, inadequate time for rest, relaxation and leisure, and children's outcomes; while the major stressors for men are associated with feelings of lack of accomplishment resulting from an inability to fulfil the breadwinner role. Findings reveal that the male and female farmers have adopted a variety of strategies to cope with the strain and stress of family life, and the burden of agricultural activities over the years. It is also revealed that, resources at the disposal of these farmers, for example, economic resources, family resources, marital stability, farm-size, crop-yields, their literacy level and educational attainment; their previous experiences, and personal goals and aspirations, contribute toward the coping strategies adopted.

Using the life history method and gender analysis, the case studies of three female and two male participants reveal some similarities and gendered differences in the farmers' coping resources and adopted strategies, which are attributable to internalised ideological representations of masculinity and femininity. It is also revealed that women farmers are usually less educated than male farmers, and also have fewer resources. However, despite the women's subordinate position, educational deprivation and fewer resources, the women farmers appear to be more resilient, and to cope better, when compared with the male farmers, as evident in the selected case studies. From the male and female farmers' aspirations for their children, education is revealed as significant to both individual and collective wellbeing. Education is also revealed as a vital resource that can enhance the ability to cope effectively with stressful life situations. This finding confirms the value attached to education in the project area, and the inherent potential in adopting education as a means of social transformation, regarding a need for changing the internalised ideological representations of gender.

11.3. CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the major issues that this study set out to explore as conceptualised in the diagrammatic representation – (Figure 2, page 85), it is interesting to note that the findings of the study reveal that the constructions of gender identity and gender roles in farm-families are the primary sites for internalisation of gender stereotypes. Through the socialisation process, children internalise the socio-cultural constructions of gender, gender roles, psychological wellbeing and coping strategies, as influenced by the patriarchal structures and power relations in families and society. The children then grow up to become part of the society and continue the trans-generational perpetuation of gender stereotypes. Findings also reveal that the internalised ideologies influence how individuals (young, old, male, and female) perceive and cope with the strains, stresses, and conflicts of family and rural life, which ultimately influence their constructions of psychological wellbeing.

From the summary of the findings of this study presented in the previous section, it is revealed that the farm-families have inherent potentials, in the form of strengths and opportunities, which development interventions could address, in order to enhance their psychological wellbeing. The strengths include: resilience, perseverance, hard work, and participation in group activities. The opportunities include: potential for development, readiness to be helped, social connectedness, and spousal support. The farm-families are also confronted with many weaknesses and threats, which threaten their existence and psychological wellbeing. The weaknesses include: poverty, low literacy status, inadequate rural infrastructures (for example, water, good roads, and electricity), inadequate modern agricultural technologies, lack of credit facilities, inadequate access, non-availability and non-affordability of agricultural inputs (for example, seeds and seedlings, fertilizers, and agro-chemicals) and lack of credit facilities. The threats include: inequitable pricing of agricultural products occasioned by middlemen problems, “acceptance of destiny” (*gbigba kadara*) by

women farmers, socio-cultural practices (for example, male-child preference syndrome leading to females' deprivation of education, patrilineal inheritance patterns, widowhood practices), and perpetuation of ideological gender role representations. The above are some of the observable gender-related issues and problems confronting the farm-families. These problems and issues are associated with the socio-cultural constructions of gender, and ideological representations of gender roles.

There is a need to develop appropriate strategies aimed at promoting egalitarian gender relations in farm-families in view of the peculiarities of the African and *Yoruba* traditions, as different from the Western culture. From the findings of this study, it is quite obvious that strategies that worked for the Western women cannot work in farming communities in the study. For example, Western feminists often see the family as a prime site for female oppression, while men are perceived as the perpetrators of patriarchy. Contrary to this, the family is the most valued institution in Yorubaland. All the participants in the study look upon the family favourably. African feminism neither abandons motherhood nor dismisses maternal politics as non-feminist. Motherhood is perceived as the fulfilment of womanhood in Africa. While exclusion of men from women's issues is one of the strategies employed in the liberation struggles of Western feminists, African feminists perceive their men as partners in progress and thus find it unreasonable to exclude them from women's issues. Western feminism has some characteristic features, which are perceived by the African feminists as foreign and incompatible with African culture and ideologies. These include: radicalism, stridence against motherhood, liberalism, and socialism, to mention a few. Radical feminism, for example, advocates a total elimination of patriarchy and an organisation of a gender-free society. The major reasons of opposition by African feminists lie in the preference for traditional gender relations and family definitions.

In addition, the Western concept of the full-time housewife, whose role is invisible partly because she earns no income, is alien to *Yoruba* culture and tradition and the participating farm-families. Rather, as revealed by this study, the women's roles, as revealed by their experiences, are very visible. Furthermore, although the women farmers are obviously overburdened, they neither perceive themselves as being oppressed, nor see men as the perpetrators of patriarchy. Both men and women actually act as perpetrators of patriarchy and gender role ideologies in the interest of preservation of cultural ideologies in the communities where the study was conducted. Evidence from the study shows that not only the women are affected by the perpetuation of gender ideologies, but that the men too, are equally affected. Male supremacy and domination also have implications for the men's psychological wellbeing. In fact, the women's ability to cope better and the men's 'helplessness' as reflected in the included case studies, suggest that the men may be worst hit by the adverse effects of patriarchy. Hence, the desired change is in favour of both the men and women alike.

In addressing these issues the recommendations will aim at strengthening the identified farm-families' strengths and opportunities, while the weaknesses and threats would be addressed, using the 'what's the problem approach', from a poststructuralist's perspective. The 'what's the problem approach' is a policy development approach proposed by Bacchi (1999) for addressing gender-related issues. The adoption and adaptation of this approach to the findings of this study is very useful and relevant. This approach calls for a deeper reflection on the root causes of ideological gender role representations. This approach accepts that there are numerous troubling conditions, but states that we cannot talk about them outside of their representations, hence, their representations become what is important. The approach enables us to think about the interconnections between several aspects of the issue under consideration. The problems associated with the socio-cultural constructions of gender, and

ideological representations of gender roles as discovered in this study include: gender role socialization and gender identity formation in farm-families, socio-cultural beliefs and myths associated with femininity and masculinity, patriarchy, and trans-generational perpetuation of gender stereotypes.

If the problems of women-subordination vis-à-vis male-domination have their roots in the socio-cultural constructions of gender, gender roles, and the ideological representations of gender roles, there is a need to develop feminist approaches and methodologies that are acceptable to all concerned, and are able to stand the test of time. It is very crucial that the origins and foundations be addressed if the lived experiences and present situation of male and female farmers is to be turned around for the better. The following recommendations are therefore proposed, consequent to the outcomes of this study.

11.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations proposed in this thesis are being directed at the government, the extension delivery system, farm-families, and further research.

11.4.1. Capacity-building

Capacity building aims at improving the effectiveness, skills and knowledge of individuals, organizations and institutions in an attempt to achieve self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods. Farm-families will benefit from capacity-building programmes based on findings of this study. Capacity building is expected to serve two purposes in this instance. Firstly, it is desirable that findings of this study be communicated to the participants, who are the primary sources of data, and also shared with other farm-families in the mandate area of University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB), viz: south western Nigeria, with a view to generating participatory strategies for strengthening the identified areas of strengths and

opportunities in farm-families, and proffering long-lasting solutions to the identified weaknesses and threats. This is a challenge for the Women-In-Development programme of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Other researchers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), and government agencies involved in rural development activities should also cultivate the tradition of involving the men and women at the grassroots in the process of value changing for it to be meaningful, relevant and effective. Secondly, capacity-building project could be used by the government and parastatals at the various tiers of government (local, state, and federal) to implement development interventions aimed at enhancing the socio-economic and living conditions, as well as the psychological wellbeing of farm-families.

Such programmes would include: awareness and enlightenment programmes, health promotion and maintenance programmes, boy and girl-children development programmes, basic and adult literacy programmes, farming and agricultural improvement techniques, and specific skill development programmes. From the perspective of the ‘what’s the problem approach’ to addressing the socio-cultural problems, there is a need to address the root causes of the problems, which are inherent in internalised values and beliefs about gender. There is a need to empower women as well as men to gain access to needed resources, to make informed choices and to take effective action with respect to their reproductive and productive lives. Values and beliefs, are however, usually very difficult to change because they have been internalised from childhood. Values are social creations that exist long before the existence of individuals, and also survive them. The perpetuation of values is ensured through the internalisation process of socialisation, through which individuals internalise cultural values with the associated strains and stresses. Changing values will, therefore, require a determination and extra effort on the part of all concerned, and this may not be effective in the absence of the necessary commitment to effect a change.

Changing values can, therefore, be initiated through creating awareness about the internalised values regarding ideological representations of gender and gender roles. Using some of the study participants from within farming communities as resource personnel, in such awareness/enlightenment programmes would go along way in conveying the message of the ‘need for change of values’. Kabiyesi, Oba Michael Fatona and Olori, his wife, can for example serve as resource persons in enlightenment programmes for farm-families, and such programs for a start, could target other traditional rulers and community leaders. Farm-families in the University mandate area can also benefit from the lived experiences of participants such as, Mr. Akinlawon and Mrs. Ogunneye, presented as case studies in this thesis. The experiences of Mrs. Adekunbi, as well as, her future aspirations also provide a basis for developing capacity-building programmes for rural girls and young women.

11.4.2. Use of education as an instrument of change and social transformation

11.4.2.1. Recognising the vital role being played by the socialization process in farm-families and the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, and the value place on education in the study area, all agencies concerned with the upbringing and socialization of children need to be sensitized to the need for social transformation. The family, the schools, religious bodies and society at large have crucial roles to play in preventing trans-generational perpetuation of gender stereotyping and its attendant evils, of which internalization of domination and oppression are paramount. The school in particular, has a major role to play in children’s identity construction, as well as in the transformation of the larger society, working directly through the teachers, and indirectly through the parents. One of the initial strategies that should be adopted in providing a conducive climate for gender identity construction and empowerment is to ensure that the agencies involved in socialization of children are aware of the need and direction for change.

Education is an essential tool for enhancing equality, development and peace in all societies. If farm-children (girls and boys) are to be prepared for the demands and possibilities that their adult world will offer them, we need schools that will work to liberate girls and boys from gender-based constraints, allow all members of the school community to be more fully human in an environment that is safe and challenging, and encourage all students to move beyond the negative constraints that current understandings about gender can impose. Education should, therefore, not only be seen as a means for survival and role fulfilment, but should be seen and utilized as a social transformation tool to prevent the perpetuation of stereotypic gender roles in families and society. The Nigerian government, being one of those that has adopted the Education For All (EFA) framework, and having been selected as a World Bank EFA Fast Track Initiative country, should utilise this opportunity to educate 'all' in this regard (that is, both children and adults in rural communities). The government of Ogun State and the various local governments should also be committed toward the adoption and implementation of the EFA framework. Inclusive education strategies, in and out of school, to my mind, will have transforming effects on the prevailing socio-cultural practices influencing gender identity construction, gender-role socialization, children's educational aspirations, and the gender-gap in the Nigerian educational system.

It is important that teachers, students, parents, children, religious leaders, development workers, and rural extension personnel, be given opportunities to critically reflect on the impact of gender in their own lives and relationships both in the present and the future. It is also important to identify how the various institutions in society perpetuate gender stereotyping and dichotomies. Given that all students are entitled to an education, which assures them of a good future, it is essential that school curricula, at all levels, should be structured in a way that ensures that boys and girls have sustained opportunities to learn about masculinity and femininity. It is also important that the boys and girls are given opportunities

to learn how gender stereotypes are developed and maintained at both micro and macro levels. For teachers, students, and parents in particular, emphasis should be placed on the examination of socio-cultural practices that enforce and sustain trans-generational perpetuation of gender stereotyping, with a view to guarding against sustaining rigid gender-role expectations. The Ministries of Education, Health, Youth and Social Development, and Agriculture, as well as Universities of Agriculture could organise capacity building programmes for teachers, health personnel, community development officials, agricultural extension personnel, and other relevant personnel rendering services in rural areas, to empower them to address these issues at community levels.

11.4.2.2. Findings of this study revealed the importance of the general wellbeing of farm families, and their psychological wellbeing in particular, as well as a need for change of values with regards to gender ideologies. Consequent upon this, there is need to empower agricultural extension personnel and other community development personnel with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, to enable them cope with the development and transformation needs of the beneficiaries of their services. It is therefore recommended that the curriculum of institutions where these personnel are trained be reviewed to accommodate courses pertaining to the general wellbeing, psycho-social wellbeing and gender relations in rural families.

11.4.3. Need for improved funding of agricultural extension and services

Agricultural extension is an educational process that aims at assisting a targeted “less-informed” people to acquire and effectively utilize the required knowledge, skills and attitudes aimed at improving their quality of life and uplifting their socio-economic standards. This term is applied to rural training and development programmes aimed at enhancing the

production capacities and socio-economic status of the rural populace, most of which are farm-families. Resource-poor farmers often face uncertainty on many fronts. In addition to variations in weather, problems associated with sourcing and procurement of agricultural inputs, inequitable pricing of agricultural products, personal and family health needs, influence their productivity. Furthermore, the farmers usually have problems coping with risk, not because they are essentially conservative, but more because they are poor. As revealed in this study, they have few assets, and hence little or no access to credit facilities. Agricultural extension services thus play a crucial role in alleviating these problems, and improving the lot of the farm-families.

From my experience as the programme leader of the Women-In-Development programme of AMREC UNAAB, I have observed that the problems limiting the effectiveness of agricultural extension in Nigeria today, include: instability of budget allocation, instability of actual funding and disbursements; instability of agricultural research and extension expenditure, instability of personnel costs, and maintenance costs. These instabilities hinder the frequency, intensity and quality of extension delivery services to the farming communities. For these reasons, increased funding of agricultural extension is crucial to rural development, as well as to the improvement of the status of farm-families. As it has been highlighted above, the participating farm-families have a lot of potential, which can be harnessed through an effective and adequately funded extension delivery system. Due to the social representations' framework adopted for the study, it is considered pertinent to include here, some of the farmers' voices regarding the intervention desired from the government. Commenting on the problems confronting farmers in one of the communities, a male farmer said:

Insufficient farmland is a major problem confronting farmers in this community. Farmers have to travel far before they can get enough land for arable farming. Most of the farms around here are cocoa farms owned by a few individuals. Cash crops like cocoa and kolanut are the major source of income and primary source

of farming success. Although not many farmers have cash crops. Not all land is suitable for cocoa planting and its establishment is capital-intensive. Farmers require financial assistance from the government in order to be more productive (Pastor Kehinde).

Another farmer talked about the need for credit facilities, thus:

There is need to assist peasant farmers with loans, to enhance their productivity and to sustain agriculture in the nation. The loans should, however, be properly monitored and given to the right set of people. In addition, the farmers benefiting from such loans should use the loans for the purposes for which they are taken, and also be ready and willing to pay back such loans within stipulated periods. If the loan is repaid on schedule, the government would be encouraged to do more, and more farmers will benefit. Government should also provide enough and functional tractors for farmers' benefits, but the tractor drivers need proper monitoring (Kabiyesi, HRH Oba Michael Fatona).

A female participant also highlighted the need to reconsider agricultural policies, and the inclusion of stakeholders in policy formulation and development interventions. She says:

Food is very costly now, and it should not be so. Governments should learn to change their approach to formulating policies and to include all stakeholders, especially the project beneficiaries. For example, the government can come up with a programme such as is done in other advanced countries, whereby farm-produce is bought from farmers and stored by the government during harvest seasons, to prevent situations of glut in the market, and then released onto the market for consumers as needed. Government should also encourage research aimed at developing labour saving post-harvest technologies for women farmers in particular (Olori, Mrs. Margaret Fatona).

Talking about the improvement of rural infrastructures, with a view to making the farming communities more comfortable, and farming more attractive to the youths, one of the participants asserts:

The people in authority are the people making matters worse because they don't develop good roads in the rural areas. In addition, instead of building low-cost houses in the town we should have some of them in rural areas where civil servants, particularly those working with Ministry of Agriculture, and those who are interested in agriculture can move their family and settle may be in the units of twenty and to give them and just as we have in 'farm settlements' (Mr. Akinlawon).

Based on the above recommendation by the participants, it is recommended that:

- The University of Agriculture (UNAAB) should intensify efforts at improving the status of the University's model extension villages and make them real 'models' as the name implies.
- Funds should be made available for the development of sustainable capital and capacity building projects for farm-families in the extension villages.
- The University should collaborate with relevant agencies and the government to improve rural infrastructures (for example, provision of good road networks, water, and electricity) and ensure that the living conditions of the farm-families are improved.
- The Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC-UNAAB), and the Women-In-Development (WID) programme, in particular, should be strengthened, and adequately funded in order to be able to perform their extension responsibilities effectively. For example, the Centre (AMREC), and the various programmes should be provided with functional vehicles, audio-visual equipment, health-care monitoring equipment and adequate funds for effective extension activities.
- Further research on farm-families aimed at improving their general and psychological wellbeing should also be encouraged and funded.

11.4.4. Need for improved rural infrastructures

Governments at the local, state and federal levels have unique responsibilities toward the enhancement of the general wellbeing of the rural populace in general, and the psychological wellbeing of farm-families in particular. A major responsibility in this regard is the need for improved funding of the agricultural sector in general, and agricultural extension in particular. It is particularly recommended that the Federal Government of Nigeria should further strengthen the Universities of Agriculture in the country in order to enhance the fulfilment of their extension mandate. Other inclusive broad actions desirable from the governments at all

levels include: provision of basic infrastructure (for example, potable water, good road network and electricity), provision of educational opportunities for rural children and adults, and the provision of health facilities and quality control aimed at stopping the exploitation of farm-families by ‘quacks’ and ‘medicine hawkers’. Focussed actions include, provision of credit facilities and micro-financing opportunities for farmers, and making needed agricultural inputs available and affordable for the farmers.

11.4.5. Further research needs

The direction for future research emanates from the findings and the recommendations proposed above. This study is exploratory, and has thus opened up a wide area of farm-family research in agricultural extension. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, it has not been feasible to conduct an in-depth analysis of the various findings. Hence, it is recommended that further qualitative research be conducted in the following areas:

11.4.5.1. Having discovered that the socialization process plays a major role in the gender identity construction of farm-children, it is pertinent to conduct further research on the roles of fathers and mothers in their children’s gender identity construction, with a view to identifying strategies for stemming the perpetuation of gender ideologies.

11.4.5.2. Signifiers of marital harmony include role complementarity and effective communication, and marital satisfaction, which have been identified as a major determinant of psychological wellbeing. There is need to carry out further research on how marital wellbeing could be fostered in farm-families. There is also a need to carry out further empirical studies on what spouses could do to enhance each other’s psychological wellbeing.

11.4.5.3. Participants' constructions of psychological wellbeing, and factors influencing their psychological wellbeing reveal the influence of the socio-historical and cultural contexts of the study. Further research is needed with regards to how factors enhancing farm-families' psychological wellbeing could be strengthened. Further research should also focus on the factors hindering psychological wellbeing, with a view to identifying sustainable strategies for addressing such factors.

11.4.5.4. Different categories of individuals and farm-families in the study are confronted with peculiar stressful situations, relative to the dimensions of their lives, their life transitions, or turnings, and the coping resources at their disposal. Further empirical studies should focus on the causes of strains and stresses in farmers and farm-families and the required coping resources and strategies, in order to generate further information and databases on the peculiarities of farm-families. Such information is expected to enhance the development of sustainable strategies and policy interventions for the improvement of general wellbeing and status of farm-families.

11.4.5.5. Furthermore, having discovered that men and women alike as members of society, are perpetrators of patriarchy, and that men and women's psychologically wellbeing is threatened by the adherence to stereotypic gender roles, it is recommended that future research should incorporate both men and women's views, in order to identify long-lasting solutions to the protracted problems of patriarchy and transcendence of gender role stereotypes. There is also a need to specifically investigate whether patriarchy is good for men in *Yoruba* culture, as well as in other African cultures, with a view to generating African paradigms for interpreting and addressing the problems of female subordination in Africa.

11.4.5.6. The adaptation of *Yoruba* terminology in the constructions of ‘psychological wellbeing’ and relative terms in this thesis is the beginning of an innovative research process for inventing *Yoruba* terminology for Western-based medical and psychological concepts, and it is a unique contribution to knowledge. Further research is recommended in this area, in order that health personnel and beneficiaries of these services have a common language of communicating the health and illness conditions, as the case may be.

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APPENDIX I: SUMMARY OF ADULT PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

KANGO COMMUNITY

NOS.	NAMES	GENDER	AGE (YRS.)	RELIGION	LITERACY STATUS (Highest Educational Attainment)	FAMILY FORM	NO. OF CHILDREN	FARM SIZE
1.	Mr. Lamidi Amidu	M	46	Christian	Standard 4	Monogamous	5	2 Acres
2.	Mrs. Rasidat Amidu	F	25	Christian	Primary 2	Monogamous	2	1 Acre
3.	Mr. Atanda	M	60	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	4	1 Acre
4.	Mrs. Gbadun Atanda	F	45	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	4	½ Plot
5.	Mr. Bada Olade	M	56	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	5	3 Acres
6.	Mrs. Abeke Olade	F	48	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	5	½ Acre
7.	Mr. Ahmed Musiliu	M	63	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	2	2 Acres
8.	Mrs. Silifat Musiliu	F	50	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	2	2 Plots
9.	Mr. Rafiu Enilolobo	M	60	Muslim	Nil	Polygamous	6	5 Acres
10.	Mrs. Alimat Saka	F	60	Muslim	Nil	Polygamous	5	½ Acre
11.	Mrs. Ademuyiwa	F	50	Muslim	Nil	Polygamous	2	2 Plots
12.	Mrs. Taiwo Adekunbi	F	28	Muslim	Primary 6	Polygamous	3	2 Plots

BOODO-SANYAOLU COMMUNITY

NOS.	NAMES	GENDER	AGE (YRS.)	RELIGION	LITERACY STATUS (Highest Educational Attainment)	FAMILY FORM	NO. OF CHILDREN	FARM SIZE
13.	Mr. Olajubo Soyoye	M	76	Christian	Standard 6	Polygamous	10	3 Hectares
14.	Mrs. Mojirayo Soyoye	F	55	Christian	Nil	Polygamous	3	½ Plot
15.	Pastor. Adeyinka Kehinde	M	75	Christian	Tertiary Education (University)	Monogamous	7	28 Hectares
16.	Mrs. Abebi Kehinde	F	72	Christian	Standard 2	Monogamous	7	2 Acres
17.	Mr. Sule Adeleke	M	77	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	7	6 Acres
18.	Mrs. Alirat Adeleke	F	48	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	7	4 Acres
19.	Mr. Elijah Ogunsan	M	64	Christian	Standard 1	Polygamous	11	12 Hectares
20.	Mrs. Abeke Ogunsan	F	60	Christian	Nil	Polygamous	4	10 Acres
21.	Mrs. Gbadun Ogunsan	F	48	Christian	Primary 6	Polygamous	5	3 Acres
22.	Mrs. Amudat Ogundairo	F	65	Muslim	Nil	Polygamous	2	10 Acres
23.	Mrs. Aduke Sodipo	F	55	Christian	Primary 6	Monogamous	6	½ Acre
24.	Mrs. Elizabeth Taiwo	F	53	Christian	Primary 3	Monogamous	4	½ Plot
25.	Mr. Emmanuel Babatunde	M	80	Christian	Standard 4	Polygamous	8	20 Acres

OBAFEMI COMMUNITY

NOS.	NAMES	GENDER	AGE (YRS.)	RELIGION	LITERACY STATUS <i>(Highest Educational Attainment)</i>	FAMILY FORM	NO. OF CHILDREN	FARM SIZE
26.	Mr. Abdul Yesuf	M	76	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	2	4Acres
27.	Mrs. Adunni Yesuf	F	70	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	2	½ Acre
28.	Mr. Olusegun Kusimo	M	48	Christian	Secondary Education	Polygamous	6	7 Acres
29.	Mrs. Dorcas Kusimo	F	40	Christian	Primary 6	Polygamous	5	2 Acres
30.	Mr. Sunday Edunjobi	M	45	Christian	Primary 6	Monogamous	3	4 Acres
31.	Mrs. Nurat Edunjobi	F	36	Christian	Primary 6	Monogamous	2	½ Plot
32.	Pastor Kehinde Koleoso	M	52	Christian	Tertiary Education <i>(University)</i>	Monogamous	4	5 Hectares
33.	Mrs. Elizabeth Koleoso	F	49	Christian	Primary 6	Monogamous	4	½ Plot
34.	Mrs. Abigael Ogunneye	F	63	Christian	Nil	Polygamous	6	3 Acres
35.	Mrs. Hannah Bankole	F	65	Christian	Nil	Monogamous	2	Nil
36.	Mr. Rabiu Sowemimo	M	70	Muslim	Nil	Polygamous	5	1 Acre
37.	Mrs. Fausat Olurotimi	F	23	Muslim	Nil	Monogamous	1	1 Plot

OGIJAN COMMUNITY

NOS.	NAMES	GENDER	AGE (YRS.)	RELIGION	LITERACY STATUS <i>(Highest Educational Attainment)</i>	FAMILY FORM	NO. OF CHILDREN	FARM SIZE
38.	Mr. Bamidele Akinlawon	M	62	Christian	Tertiary Education (Technical Education)	Monogamous	2	2 Hectares

ILEWO - ORILE COMMUNITY

NOS.	NAMES	GENDER	AGE (YRS.)	RELIGION	LITERACY STATUS <i>(Highest Educational Attainment)</i>	FAMILY FORM	NO. OF CHILDREN	FARM SIZE
39.	His Royal Highness Oba Micheal Fatona (Elewo of Ilewo-Orile)	M	68	Christian	Tertiary Education (University)	Monogamous	7	Over 20 Hectares
40.	Mrs. Margaret Fatona (Olori-Elewo	F	63	Christian	Tertiary Education (Teacher Education)	Monogamous	5	4Acres

APPENDIX II: BIODATA OF FARM-CHILDREN PARTICIPANTS

KANGO COMMUNITY

NO	NAME	GENDER	AGE
1.	Bukola	Female	6 years
2.	Fayo	Female	7 years
3.	Dolapo	Female	12 years
4.	Tolu	Female	13 years
5.	Keji	Female	15 years
6.	Aanu	Male	7 years
7.	Kayode	Male	8 years
8.	Tunde	Male	10 years
9	Yemi	Male	14 years

BOODO-SANYAOLU COMMUNITY

NO	NAMES	GENDER	AGE
10.	Funlola	Female	8 years
11.	Layo	Female	12 years
12.	Abake	Female	13 years
13.	Bola	Female	14 years
14.	Banji	Male	7 years
15.	Kole	Male	12 years
16.	Folu	Male	12 years
17.	Kole	Male	12 years
18.	Toyin	Male	15 years
19.	Kunle	Male	19 years

OBAFEMI COMMUNITY

NO	NAMES	GENDER	AGE
20.	Funmi	Female	11 years
21.	Renike	Female	12 years
22.	Tope	Female	13 years
23.	Bimpe	Female	16 years
24.	Bamidele	Female	16 years
25.	Koye	Male	12 years
26.	Ade	Male	13 years
27.	Bode	Male	13 years
28.	Mayowa	Male	15 years
29.	Tade	Male	16 years
30.	Bayo	Male	17 years
31.	Tayo	Male	19 years

APPENDIX III

SAMPLE QUESTIONS USED DURING PILOT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS
WITH ADULTS PARTICIPANTS (MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS)

1. What roles are considered feminine in farm-families?
2. What roles are considered masculine in farm-families?
3. Why are roles gendered in farm-families?
4. What is the essence of gender division of labour in farm-families?
5. Does gender division of labour affect the psychological well being of family members? If Yes, how, and to what extent?
6. What makes you happy and contented with life?
7. What makes you feel unhappy and emotionally upset?
8. How do you know that you are emotionally or psychologically tensed?
9. What are the sources of strain and conflicts in your family and how does this influence your psychological wellbeing?
10. How do you cope with role conflicts, strains and stress?
11. What factors enhance your psychological wellbeing?
12. What assistance do you desire from your spouse to enhance your psychological well being?

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ON LIFE HISTORIES, GENDER ROLES, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN FARM-FAMILIES (ADULT PARTICIPANTS)

SECTION A – SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Community

Gender (Male/Female)

Age

Literacy level/Highest educational attainment

No of Children

Major Occupation (Farming/Food crop processing/ Trading)

Other Occupations

Own farm (Yes/No)

Family farm (Yes/No)

Farming preference (Crops/Livestock/Both)

Crops grown (Arable/Permanent - list out specific crops)

Type of livestock (Ruminant/ Small Ruminant)

Size of Farm holding

Source (Gift from spouse, Inheritance, Hire/Lease, Others-specify)

Size of livestock holding (Categorize by livestock type)

Income (Market day/Weekly/Monthly/Annual)

SECTION B – LIFE HISTORY

About parents

Early childhood and experiences

Other siblings (Number, genders, educational attainment and present statuses)

Marital history

Children (Number, genders, educational attainment and present statuses)

Life Experiences

Beautiful memories

Aspirations and uppermost desires in life

SECTION C - GENDER ROLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Gender Roles (Personal, males, females, farm Labourers)

Rationale for gender division of labour in the family.

Patterns of decision-making in the family.

What is psychological wellbeing?

What factors influence psychological wellbeing of individual family members?

What are the sources and causes of strain and stress in farm-families?

How do you manage role conflicts?

How do you cope with strains and stress?

APPENDIX V

SAMPLE QUESTIONS USED DURING FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

WITH FARM-CHILDREN'S (BOYS AND GIRLS)

SECTION A: Biodata (Name, gender, age)

SECTION B - Gender identity construction

1. Who are you?
2. How do you know you are different from others?
3. Are you satisfied with your gender? If Yes/No, why?
3. What do like about your gender?
4. What do you dislike about your gender?

SECTION C - Gender role socialization

1. What roles are expected of boys in farm-families?
2. What roles are expected of girls in farm-families?
3. What in your opinion is the essence of different role expectations from the different genders?
4. What happens if and when a boys prefers performing “girls – role” and vice-versa?
5. Are you satisfied with the roles expected of you in your family? If Yes/No, why?
6. Don’t you think that men should in a way assist women seeing the bulk of work to be done by women?
7. In the future, if your husband desires to help you with some seeing that you have a lot of work to do (for example, sweeping, caring for the children, food preparation and the rest, how will you feel or what would you do)?

8. Supposing a woman gives birth to only boys, who will perform those roles expected of female children?
9. Are you satisfied with the roles assigned to you in your family?
10. Which of the roles assigned to you do you enjoy doing most?

SECTION D - Psychological wellbeing in families

1. What is psychological wellbeing?
2. What factors enhances your psychological well being?
3. What factors hinder your psychological well being?
4. What are the things that make you happy?
5. What are the things that cause conflict in your house?
6. How would you know that your parents are annoyed?
7. What are the things that makes your mother upset?
8. What are those things that makes your father upset?
9. What are those things that your father may do to annoy you?
10. What are those things they do which makes you happy?