

SETTLER- INDIGENE RELATIONS IN NIGERIA, 1920- 2014

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ABSTRACT: *This study highlights the interaction between settler migrant farmers and their host societies in the Western cocoa producing areas and some food producing areas of central part of Nigeria between the 1920s and 2014. The choice of date is informed by the time of the introduction of commercial cocoa production in Western Nigeria while 2014 is the year in which the dislocation of the peace in the food producing area, occasioned by the Chibok girls kidnap saga began. Using extant literature and field data in the study areas, the paper asserts that contrary to popular generalisations in some literature that ethnicity, economic interest, cultural and religious differences have engendered conflicts among indigene-settler relations, the people in our study area have coexisted peacefully. The paper examined the geo-economic imbalance in the distribution of resources which necessitated migration; the common need for capital formation to exploit the resources; use of non-economic methods like kinship ties, ethnic affiliations, and some customary obligations have remained important indicators in the rural social and economic life. It is the observation of this paper that the rural farming societies of our investigation, though an agglomeration of different ethnic nationalities, yet maintained a symbiotic economic and social cooperation in a system-devised method of absorbing the shocks and sometimes strained relationship among them, in a participatory way.*

KEYWORDS: Indigene, Settler, Rural, labour, migration, Farmers.

INTRODUCTION

The term settler in the context of our investigation is referred to migrants who moved to areas outside their original homes and settled for the purpose of engaging in farming to improve their economic needs. Indigene refers to the original inhabitants of an areas of economic exploitation. We are basically concerned with indigene–settler relations as is seen in two rural farming societies of Nigeria; the cocoa producing areas of Western Nigeria and the Middle Belt region of Central Nigeria.

Studies in settler-indigene relations have been undertaken by many scholars across the world, over time. We need not delve into the rubrics of the age long debate. This paper investigated how the two groups of people (indigene and settler) interacted, shared and exploited or explored land as a critical factor in their relationship. The use and exploitation of the resource called land has generated positive reaction or negative reaction, depending on several factors like its availability, the willingness of the different groups to share it, sometimes resulting to conflicts while at other instances gave rise to harmonious coexistence. While the idea of conflict over land has been more prevalent in the literature, this study shows a genre of indigene-settler relation that has produced peaceful coexistence. This is contrary to the study of Skinner among the Mossi which identified tribalism as a cause of conflicts between settlers and indigenes.

Conflict is a natural and necessary occurrence in human relationships. There are several reasons why societies have conflicts. There are social conflicts, economic conflicts, political and

religious conflicts. Nigeria has had its share of conflicts ranging from intra-ethnic to inter-ethnic, inter-communal, inter-religious, political and economic conflicts. There are several reasons and each conflict has its root cause. Each conflict has its aim. It could be either resisting oppression or suppressing others. Group interest can result to conflict. Scarce resources, limited and geo-economic imbalance among various contending groups pursuing different goals and interests have also caused conflicts in Nigeria.

Determinants of Rural Labour Migration

A major determinant of rural migration is the availability of land for farming. In spite of the strategic importance of petroleum products in the economy of Nigeria, agriculture is the cornerstone of Nigerian economy, “contributing 45 per cent of the GDP. The agricultural sector employs about two-thirds of the country’s total labour force and provides a livelihood for about 90 per cent of the rural population”(IFAD). It therefore remains the greatest employer of labour, especially for the rural dwellers. As a consequence, it is not uncommon to have conflicts over land and its use. We can agree with Obiakpor in his conclusion after his study of the conflicts between Aguleri and Umuleri, that “Land as a major factor of production has been the center of most conflicts in Nigeria”.(168). This assertion draws support from the fact that most communal clashes have come as a result of struggle over land. The people of Ife and their neighbours, the Modakeke in Yorubaland; the Aguleri and their brother Umuleri in Igboland, and the Tiv in Benue State of Middle-Belt of Nigeria are very negligible examples of conflicts over land in Nigeria. Commenting on conflicts over land among the people of Benue State, Oravee wrote that:

Communal and ethnic conflicts have been endemic in Tiv-land and these have undeveloped the area.... The communal conflicts in Tiv-land have so held a whole section down that progress has been sacrificed of the alter of underdevelopment (10).

From the examples above, whenever most people of different ethnic background came in contact, conflicts resulted mostly because of a clash of interest. Among rural communities, the cause of clashes are consequences of their quest for land. The geographic and economic distribution of resources are not equitable among the zones. There is a preponderance of climatic and therefore different vegetation, giving rise to different soil types and crops grown in different areas. The imbalance created by this factor often necessitated the movement of people from their places of origin to areas where land is still available for exploitation. Usually people migrated in search of arable land for cultivation, but, as Majuk (27) pointed out, by the 19th century such movements had been halted giving rise to permanent settlements, especially in the wake of colonialism.

One of the major determinants of labour migration since the 1920s in Western Nigeria was the cultivation of cocoa designated as cash crop in the British economic system. For a long time, it remained a major pull for labour migration. It is now an accepted opinion among scholars that crops which were produced for export to Europe constituted a major economic thrust of the colonial administration in Nigeria as elsewhere. Incentives were given to cash crop farmers through payment of higher prices, while coercive methods like aggressive drive for payment of taxes in a system beset with forced labour for the construction of road were rife. The system categorised food crops as subsistence, with low, and at best, no premium. These policies contributed to a new genre of migration. Thus, labour migrations became a characteristic of the colonial era in Nigeria. People migrated in search of money or work in the new economic order. These movements were both inter-regional and intra-regional. Regions which could produce

crops like cocoa, for example, attracted labourers. The establishment of cocoa farms in Ife in the Western Region in the 1920s led to the migration of people to the Cocoa belt. Falola reminds us that:

By the 1930s, the economy of Ife kingdom which fell within the cocoa belt of the then Western Region was dominated by cocoa cultivation. This had many far reaching impact on the Ife economy and society one of which was that many people from Yoruba and non-Yoruba speaking areas began to settle in Ife Kingdom in large areas (21).

Most of these migrants came from other regions of Yoruba land within the Savanna zone which was unsuitable for cocoa cultivation thus, enhancing intra-regional migration. There was also the movements of people from other parts of Nigeria who were not of Yoruba stock into the area in search of farm. Labour migration of such a magnitude was facilitated by modern means of communication. By this time colonial roads networks had been built, motor vehicles had been introduced. Encouraged by these developments and the free dissemination of information, people were encouraged to move out of their localities. The cocoa producing areas attracted workers from several areas, especially, rural areas of Yoruba land as well as Igbo, Urobo, Igala, Igbirra, and others, (Falola 18). New settlements of both indigenes and settlers emerged in those areas as a result of the establishment of cocoa farms. Some of them gradually metamorphosed into hamlets, villages and large cocoa farm settlements. In some of these places, stranger elements outnumbered the indigenous inhabitants as Falola observed in his study of Ife society, “the influx to Ife was such that the population of strangers outnumbered the Ife in many villages” (23). Thus, as new farms were established, new settlements were equally established and more and more settlers arrived. Berry aptly pointed out:

That the spread of cocoa growing in Western Nigeria can best be understood as a process of agricultural capital formation in a land surplus economy. By examining the patterns of migration associated with the spread of new plantings and the ways in which migrant farmers organised the establishment of new farms, we can see how this investment process was implemented, both technically and financially. In particular it appears that Yoruba farmers have, from the earliest days of cocoa production in Western Nigeria used both market and non-market mechanisms to mobilise a working capital needed to establish their farms and also to insure themselves against economic failure and/or personal misfortune during the long gestation period of their investment products. (75)

It is in this vein that people of non-cocoa producing areas moved into cocoa farming regions as either labourers or as cocoa farmers. As noted earlier, the influx of migrant farmers into the cocoa farming areas of Ife, Ondo, Akure of western Nigeria was phenomenal between the 1940s and 1960s. During the Nigerian Civil War in 1967-1970, there was a slowdown of such migrations to the cocoa belt from the eastern part of Nigeria because it was the theatre of war. Following the post war reconstruction and rehabilitation of the late 1970s and early 1990s, the number of migrants to the cocoa producing area reduced. By 1986 when Babangida introduced the deregulation of the economy of Nigeria which increased the number of the unemployed, more people, especially young men out of secondary schools also joined the army of migrant

workers. Migratory trend could also be determined by the economic policies of government in any given time.

Another determinant in rural labour migration in Nigeria is the food crops producing areas. This spate of migration is inspired by the desire to explore the resources of the nation for personal benefits. Among others, one of the areas that has attracted labour migrations is the central part of Nigeria often referred to as the Middle Belt. Patrick Dawan described the location of the region designated as central Nigeria as:

... located between Latitude 7°30" North and 11°15" North and Longitude 4° and 12° East of Meridian. It covers an area of approximately 342,390 Km² or 37 percent of the total land of Nigeria.... The area is sometimes referred to as the Middle Belt (Udo, 1970 Tyoden, 1993). It is structured into eight states of Benue, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Plateau, Nassarawa, Tarba and FCT (4).

The area had a low density of population in the 18th and 19th centuries as a result of inter-tribal wars. This area is home to over 250 ethnic groups which were raided for slaves, one of the factors for the out-migrations. This region is basically rural. However, after Nigeria's independence in 1960, and with the political restructuring of Nigeria into states during the military regimes in 1967, 1976, 1987, 1991, and 1996, state capitals emerged, leading to urbanisation (Idrees 11). With these developments, the area became stable for the exploitation of its mineral resources and for agricultural productions. The Niger/Benue and their tributaries provided a well-watered basin with several soil types for agricultural purposes. These indices served as a pull for migrant farmers who explored and exploited the fertile land for other food crops other than cocoa. Thus, an area which seemed unsafe for peaceful habitation in another time epoch was now ready to accommodate settlers from other parts of Nigeria. The 1991 population census puts the entire area at 18million, "an average density is about 50 persons 1km², one of the lowest in the federation" (Idrees 10).

With state apparatus to control conflicts among the ethnic groups, urbanisation, roads construction for easy evacuation of goods, ready markets in the urban centres and vast arable lands for farming, the area received farmers from other parts of Nigeria who settled there for the purpose of farming. Like the cocoa producing areas of Western Nigeria, the Middle Belt became a melting pot of several cultures. Much of the Middle Belt lie within the *Transition Belt*, that is, between the forest and the Savanna belts which makes the cultivation of "forest crops alongside crops of the savannah" possible (Njoku 28). Crops cultivated in this area include, yams, cassava, beans, millet, sorghum, corn, rice, but however not restricted to these. Since man is basically a mobile being, anywhere he perceived that his needs could be met, the tendency is to move towards that direction.

During the colonial period, crops like cocoa, palm produce, groundnut which were export products were considered as cash crops and received more attention from Europeans because of their importance to their industries in Europe to the neglect of crops grown for local trade and consumption. It was believed that producers of crops meant for export had higher premium and more returns to their efforts than producers of food crops for local consumption. Njoku emphatically debunked this error in his remark that:

The truth is that the so-called cash crops, in many instances, did not yield more income to farmers than the crops caricatured as subsistence. In fact, evidence abounds to the effect that in some circumstances, farmers

who produced crops for domestic markets made more money than those who produced the so-called cash crops for export. In many instances, some farmers turned away from producing for export to producing for the local market. And Nigerians who traded in domestic food crops often offered higher prices to farmers for their produce than those buying the same product for export (10).

The real market situation showed a dynamic economic productive capacity which was not dependent on foreign market demands. Even European traders, especially during the two World Wars, depended on local food production for their survival as well as supporting the war efforts. (Njoku 18).

One of the ethnic groups to migrate to the Middle Belt were the Bekwarra people. The first set of migrants from Bekwarra to settle in some locations of the Middle Belt, especially in Kadarko, Nasarawa State was in the 1930s (Obi Eneji, informant). Our field data shows that other group of settlers moved toward Bali, an area inhabited by the Jibu (Jibawa) peoples. The communities of this area, according to our informant, comprised Jatau, Zagah, Maihula, Suntai, Garababi, Pangari, Mayokam, Garaba-Chede and Jos-Maihula. Migrants from Ikom, Bekwarra, Yache of Cross River, some Tiv, Zaki Biam of Benue State, and the Bassai people of Taraba State, to mention these few, migrated to Bali. The list of migrants is not exhaustive as some groups of people came in from other directions.

The times of their arrival is not quite certain. It should be noted that settlers did not come in groups and at the same time. However, some of our informants arrived there before the Nigerian Civil War. Some arrived in 1980, while others moved into the area in 1986, during the Structural Adjustment Programm (SAP) (Ekaa Eneji). What is not in doubt is that many Nigerians migrated to the Middle Belt area as settler farmers. These categories of migrant farmers considered their endeavours as gainful employment and therefore gave their all. It is important to observe here that among this genre of rural migrant labourers, all of them were employed. They were engaged in all kinds of economic activities, weavers of baskets, tailors, and transporters of all sorts as well as traders, and many more, providing ancillary services to farming. Their activities in collaboration with the efforts of the indigenous farmers, have contributed to the quantity of food production in this area of Nigeria. The productive capacity of the area has been maximised, so much so that “The Middle Belt is referred to by some people as the food basket of Nigeria” (Njoku 20).

Settler-Indigene Relationship in Nigeria

This part of our study considers the relationship between the settlers and their host communities against the assumed notion of perpetual tension and conflicts engendered by such contacts. It is to be observed that beginning from the 1920s and up to 2014 when insurgent groups began their forays into a hitherto quiet food producing area of the Middle Belt, the two societies cited as examples in this paper, have had harmonious coexistence. This was partly made possible by the availability of land as a critical factor in their relationship. Land has remained an important factor in the capital formation for the agricultural sector for the production of food either for export or for local trade. The availability of land, to a considerable extent, determined the pattern and direction of migration of farm labourers. This was however contingent on other variables like willingness of indigenous inhabitants to embrace peaceful coexistence without which the exploitation of land would remain a farce. The presence of labourers alone was not enough to generate capital. It therefore behove the people, both indigene and strangers, to harness their human capabilities and the vast resources available to them for their common

goal. This was usually achieved through a good managerial and entrepreneurial skills, by relying on non-economic institutions like age-grade, kinship ties, family unions among others for the exploitation of the rural areas and their resources.

Rather than conflicts, rural migrant settlers have brought about changes in the social interaction between different socio-economic groups in Nigeria. Some scholars like Skinner, among others, have held the view that tribalism is a major cause of conflict between migrants and their host communities in West Africa (375). Such a generalisation cannot be taken as sacrosanct and as applicable to all societies. While it may be true in some instances especially among some urban migrants, it cannot be said to be completely true of rural migrants and their host communities. Although there may have existed instances of clashes between rural dwellers, however, the general and more common relationship between the migrants and their host societies has been that of cordial and harmonious social interaction, a relationship is necessary for the realization of their common economic gains which is paramount to all the interest groups in all those farming areas, whether in the cocoa producing areas of Yorubaland or in the food crop producing areas of the Middle-Belt.

One of the reasons for clashes between migrants and their host societies generally have occurred when migrants constituted a threat to the limited employment opportunities. This is common especially among urban dwellers. The settler migrants did not constitute a threat to their host. They self-employed and created employment for other by diversifying the economy of their area of residence. They were generally accepted by their host societies as agents for the exploitation of the natural resources or opportunities in those societies. Whether as labourers or as farm owners, the migrants were needed and relied upon for the exploitation of the resources of their destination societies. With their hosts, migrants had the same stake as they shared in the gains and losses of the farming activities (Berry 187).

To gain out of cocoa business, for instance, non-economic institutions were employed. Non-economic institutions like kinship ties, ethnic affiliations, and other forms of customary obligations like the age grade systems have always played crucial roles in the rural economy and social life. Also, in many cocoa farming communities, as Berry's study has shown, there is no polarization of interest groups between the rich and the poor (188). Thus, the farm owner guaranteed his migrant labourer some measure of security in the community because he needed his labour. So also were kinship ties and ethnic affiliations organised with the aim of profiting from their farming activities. In some of the rural societies, there were no strict stratification of society in terms of the rich and poor. This has enhanced the exploitation of the resources of the rural economy.

The general relationship in the farming villages can therefore be described as symbiotic. Kinship ties and ethnic leanings were prevalent amongst them but were meant to serve their economic ends. Social organisations were a kind of protective racket for individuals and groups which were not meant as opposition groups to other interest groups, but were used as a means to an end, that is, individuals or groups economic goals. Each ethnic group organised cooperation among its members. Where there was a clash with other interest groups, or with members of other ethnic groups, group leaders met and mediated, and where they could not agree, then the matter was brought before the "Bale", that is, the Yoruba indigenous leader, for migrants to Yorubaland, or the "Sarki" who was the indigenous leader for most of the Middle-Belt area. The ethnic affiliations among different groups provided the social stability needed in the rural societies and served as means of maintaining peace and harmonious co-existence among the settlers and indigenes.

Hardly were there attempts by migrants from different ethnic groups to come under one unit as an opposition to their host communities. Such an attempt would have created a sense of insecurity among their host considering the number of migrants in some communities. There have not been cases of resentment by the host communities as it was the case as shown by Udo (1964) in his study of Okoyong:

At Okoyong the local inhabitants blame the displacement of yam by cassava on the migrant farmer, whom they also accuse of impoverishing the land by over-cultivating it. There is a strong feeling here against the migrant farmer, but it appears that there is nothing the chiefs can do, since individual family is at liberty to lease its farmland for cash (336).

The lack of resentment amongst the host communities of our study areas may be as a result of the vastness of the uncultivated land area capable of absorbing more migrants. On the other hand, in the largely labour holding society of the Yoruba cocoa belt, the large number of migrants occasioned a situation of loose labour market and placed labourers on a poor bargaining position often exploited by labour employers. The different social organizations did not regulate the volume of labour to their areas. Cocoa farmers could afford to change the rates of interests paid to their labourers knowing that they could be replaced by others who would accept any condition of work out of desperation for self-sustenance. The cocoa producing area operated what Polly Hill referred to as rural capitalism. (155). By creating a situation of desperation among migrants especially among new migrants to the cocoa area, some of them become susceptible to exploitation by labour employers. In the rural capitalist structure, the nature of social interaction was based on economic interests. The middlemen who recruited labour for farm owners on the one hand, and other interest groups on the other, always strove to outsmart each other in profit making to the disadvantage of the labourer. Although interest groups among labourers existed for the interest of their fellow workers, they were too weak to defend their common interest as a labour union. The labourers did not constitute a trade union for the purpose of bargaining for better pay and as a consequence, no trade disputes. Although some of the labourers resorted to tacit collaboration with their fellow labourers and avoided rendering their services to those perceived to be shortchanging them. This method was minimal and far in-between.

There has been a great measure of social interaction among the rural migrants, their host communities, as well as migrants from other ethnic nationalities. Such interactions have been of historical significance. Conservative attitudes were submerged in the dynamics of social interactions which resulted to cultural interchanges and borrowings amongst the various groups.

Another sustaining factor in the indigene-settler relation in our study area, is in the area of the cultures of the various societies involved. Cultural interchanges between migrants and their host societies is another legacy of this kind of labour movement. There was cultural fusion expressed in intermarriages, types of food and their preparation, mode of greetings and the like. In most of these societies, the migrants have acted as the bridges linking different Islands of cultures. As Skinner has correctly observed, "sometimes the stranger [migrant] is viewed as a culture bearer and is honoured as a valuable asset by his host society" (307); and by extension, his home society as well.

Inter-ethnic marriages have resulted from these contacts. In almost all the farming villages where these migrants have settled, according our findings, there have been cases of marriages contracted by some of their members and members of their host societies and vice-versa.

Yoruba women, Tiv women, Jukun, Kutep, Bali women etc. have been married to Urohobo, Igala, Igbara, Bekwarra men. On the other hand, some women of the host societies have been married to some men from those societies. These marriages have received the blessings of their parents at both ends. There were many instances of migrants from other ethnic groups who were resident in the same area getting married to other migrants of settlers. The different ethnic groups allowed their young men and women the freedom to choose their spouses. This is a change from the traditional practice whereby parents chose spouses for their children. Inter-ethnic marriages facilitated cooperation and understanding between the various groups. Suitors have been known to travel to the homes of their spouses, to Bekwarra, for instance, to visit the woman's people or the man's people and thereby learning more about their life style. The exception was found in Kadarko where only Bekwarra women were married to some prominent Kadarko men while no Bekwarra man married their women. According to an informant, Bekwarra men did not marry Kadarko women because, among other reasons, there was a mystery about them that any farm which they worked on did not yield well. This last reason kept them out of farm work. We should not forget that most of the migrants were farmers whose primary source of labour supply was their household labour. In a similar study on Efik society, Adam (1998) showed such a reoccurrence where only Hausamen married Efik women and no Efik man married Hausa woman (88). Apart from this singular exception, inter-ethnic marriages had been common place among the migrants.

In marriages of this nature, in-laws became incorporated into the extended families and by extension the ethnic group of their spouse. This was clearly demonstrated in Zaki-Biam, Benue State, where some Tiv men who married Bekwarra women could join "Iriwu Bekwarra", a socio-cultural association of Bekwarra migrants in that area, as active members with full privileges of a Bekwarra person.

Food types and crop varieties have changed from one traditional area to another through the instrumentality of migrants. Some respondents claimed that before their influx to Yorubaland, Yoruba society depended more on cocoa-yam as their staple. Similarly, their hosts adopted the migrants' specie of yam which had higher yield, and which, to a large extent replaced their type of yam known as *Isu-akpada*.

Some of our respondents pointed out that Urohobo migrants farmers were more inclined to the production of palm produce while most Ibo migrants specialised in the production (tapping) of palm-wine, an alcoholic drink extracted from palm trees. While the liquor helped to lighten and cheer the hearts of these farming hands, the different varieties of food helped in meeting their dietary needs.

Using Bekwarra as an example of cultural interchange between indigenes and settlers, it is observed that in Kadarko and other parts of Nasarawa and Taraba States of the Middle-Belt, their major food is corn flour. Through these migrants, *fufu*, which is made from fermented cassava, has become popular and common-place. In Kadarko it is known as *abinchi-Dama*, that is, *Dama* (Bekwarra) food. In Bali, Taraba State, migrants adopted the use of corn flour as their food like their host society. Through Bekwarra migrants, for instance, *mumuye* or *agatu* yam species in Bali has found its way to their home in Bekwarra. The people of Kadarko call that yam species *didio*. The advantage of these species is that they mature faster than the species traditional with Bekwarra farmers. Such yam species, have been incorporated into Bekwarra yam collections, more for their shorter period of maturation than for their yields. They can come readily for use in-between the planting of crops and the new yams when there

is usually scarcity of food. They are the first to be harvested, especially during the New Yam festivals while their other yams are reserved for future use.

Most Bekwarra names are associated with their tradition. Thus, some names were handed down from forefathers or reflected some events in a particular family's life. These have however undergone some changes in the wake of the interaction of Bekwarra culture with those of other societies. This is one other area of change which is a consequence of the rural settler indigene relationship. Names, which originally belonged to non-Bekwarra societies, like Yoruba, Tiv, etc. have found their way into Bekwarra nomenclature and have gradually become incorporated. Some of such Yoruba names, among others, were Ojo, Bidemi, Bose, Biodiun, Ibukun, Male, Bamidele. For instance, Bamidele is an appeal to the baby to accompany his parents back to their roots. Such an appeal became necessary because of the compelling attachment of children to the place of their birth and the resultant peer group pressure. There were also Tiv names, for instance, "Ter-Nenge" (God has seen), "Haanongo" etc. which children of Bekwarra migrants were given, invitations were extended to other groups who shared in the joys of their neighbours.

CONCLUSION

This paper does not pretend to advocate a straightjacket assumption that the relationship between settlers and indigenes in the areas of our study is a paradise of innocence without clashes. There have been instances of clashes. For example, the 1998 and 1999 Tiv-Jukun crisis in Gassol Local Government Area is one such instances. The Tiv people belonged to Benue State while the Jukun are of Taraba State. The two States share a contagious boundary. For several decades, Tiv migrants had settled in the area between Bali and Gassol Local Government Areas of Taraba State. It is to the credit and ingenuity of the Tiv that most of the villages in those areas were developed. These Tiv migrants became powerful in wealth and number. This created fear of the possibility of their annexing the area, coming from a contiguous neighboring state. The indigenous people began to feel threatened about the prospect of losing political authority in their land, and began the crisis which forced the Tiv out of the area. The crisis was therefore motivated by struggle for political power rather than economic. The only way to wrest political power from the Tiv was to push them out of the land which was the source of their wealth. This conclusion is borne out of the reason that people of other ethnic groups resident in those areas of conflict were not affected.

There might have been a few other instances of clashes among settlers and indigenes, howbeit, the social structure of the rural areas provided the mechanism for settlement of disputes without recourse to violence. It should be noted however that in spite of these interactions between the various ethnic groups, each group still struggled to maintain its separate identity through the formation of ethnic group affiliations.

It has been pointed out in this paper that ethnic affiliations represented different tiers of government, where each group organized cooperation among themselves. All the various groups were answerable to the general body of the collective body, in this case, the indigenous and settler communities. We draw a lesson from these rural dwellers who lived by rules of corporate respect to rules for the survival of the whole. What mattered to them was individual survival within laid down principles of wealth acquisition. The settler indigene farmers in Yoruba land in western Nigeria and some societies of the Middle-Belt in Central Nigeria have

impacted their societies and contributed to resource development in Nigeria, especially in the agricultural sector.

Finally, our study has shown that the relationship between these groups of people has not only been symbiotic, but has also aided immensely in reducing unemployment. They have always been self-employed and have equally created employment in their places of origin and destinations respectively. Researches by scholars have pointed to rural-urban migration as one of the major causes of the high ratio of urban employment. Rural-urban migrants often constitute the bulk of the unemployed who parasite on the urban economy with devastating attendant social vices. Rural-rural migrants on the other hand, have created employment for themselves by exploiting the resources of their destination areas as contributors to the diversification of the rural economy at the micro level, and that of the entire country, at the macro level.

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