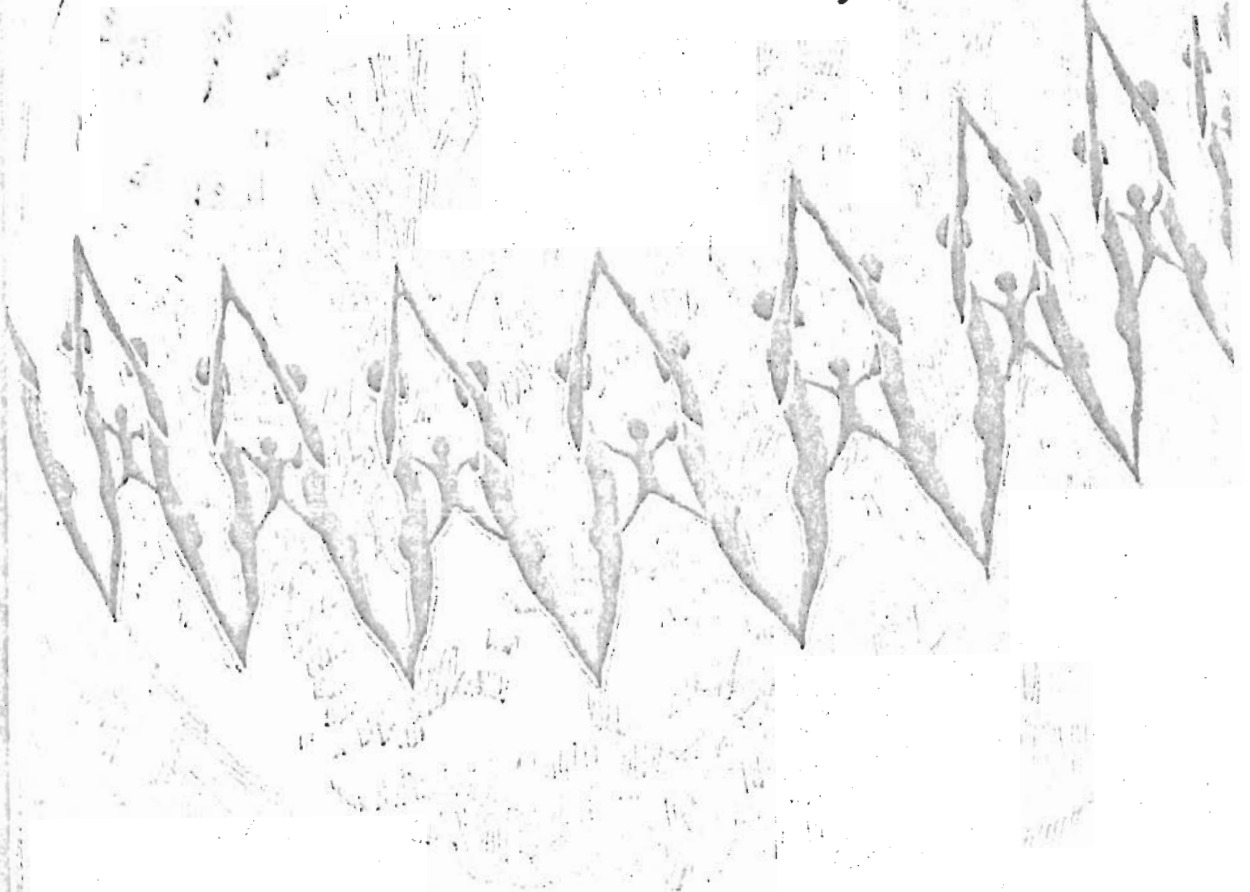


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## Education and the Extended Family Ideology: The Case of Nigeria\*

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### Introduction

The extended family system is the prevailing mode of family organization in most countries of Africa, and indeed of the 'third world' countries in general. As contrasted with the nuclear family type, the extended family is structurally more complex and more varied.

The nuclear family generally is made up of a couple and their unmarried children. On the other hand, the nuclear family may be enlarged to include parents of the couple, their grand parents, their married children and children's children (grand children), as well as various levels of colateral and affinal relatives such as siblings, uncles, aunts, nephews and in-laws. This gives rise to what is known as the extended family. The degree of extendedness varies greatly from locality to locality and from one social setting to another.

The extended family members may live together in large "Compounds" under a recognized head or they may be dispersed within the community. In either case, as Hunt (1966) has put it, the extended family exercises some controlling authority over all its members. It commands their loyalty, demands strict adherence to the norms of mutual aid; and makes major decisions (1966:6-7). Thus, members of the extended family are generally held together by what has been described as an "extensive kinship network of reciprocal social and economic obligations". (Dow and Werner 1983:80). This portrays the extended family ethos or ideology in its true form. The following quotation from Peter Marris' study of the city of Lagos (Nigeria) further highlights the essential features of this ideology.

... A strong sense of mutual obligations sustain ties of kinship as the dominant concern of everyday life. Every member of the family group has a status, rights and obligation; and enjoys the sense of security which comes from these. He is protected against unemployment, old age, the cost of sickness, and can appeal to it in any difficulty. In return, he will be expected to support othersto contribute to family celebrations to attend meetings, and reciprocate visits(1961: 39).

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Thus in the traditional African society the extended family undertakes various functions which in other (say Western) cultures are shared between the nuclear family and other social institutions like the school, the church, the judiciary etc. In such societies, therefore, the extended family ideology forms the pillar on which rests the entire social organization (Obikeze, 1981).

### **The Problem**

As may be inferred from the above, the extended family is about the most important indigenous African institution. It is highly valued by the African. On the other hand, African peoples and Governments have come to regard Western education as holding the key to socio-economic development and modernization. Education is also, by that fact, highly valued and pursued as a societal goal. But respectable opinions have been expressed, rather strongly, to the effect that the ultimate consequence of universal acceptance of Western education by Africans is the demise of the extended family system (Goode 1969, Caldwell 1965, Okedeji 1976). In other words, that the ideals of Western education are incompatible with the extended family ideology. Certainly, generalized claims of this sort regarding the future of such a vital institution as the African extended family is bound to agitate the minds of students of African society and culture.

To elaborate a little, studies carried out in some parts of the world particularly in the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Caribbeans have shown that in general, the resultant effect of education and modernization has been the alteration of the structure and functions of the extended family towards the nuclear family pattern (Greenfield 1969; Hill 1960; Parsons 1943; Ogburn and Nimkoff 1955). As William Goode has put it, "in all parts of the world, and for the first time in world history, all social systems are moving fast or slowly toward some form of the conjugal family system and also toward industrialization (1969 : 19).

However some other studies in the same, as well as other areas of the world, have indicated that the response of the extended family to the forces of education and modernization has not been that of total collapse. The extended family has shown marked ability for adaptation and resilience. It has either managed to remain very much the same or has had to undergo some adaptive change into what Litwak (1960) has called the "modified extended family" (1960:385). Under this situation, geographical propinquity and regular face-to-face contact are no longer needed for maintaining extended family relations.

With regard to Nigeria, evidence so far accumulated is by no means conclusive. Some studies suggest that the spread of Western education and urbanization have not brought about any profound alterations in the extended family ideology in Nigeria. On the other hand, some other studies, in the tradition of William Goode (1969), assert that a change in the extended family structure and practice is not only inevitable but is currently in progress. Thus in their study of Yoruba households of Western Nigeria, Okedeji and his associates observed that already "family relationships are altering under the impact of imported westernization, transmitted through schools, churches, the media, and officials;

and preaching on the whole, the message of the emotional nuclearization of the family" (1976: 127). Similarly in a recent study of changes in the traditional Sokoto family, Jean Trevor observed that, "in the last 20 years, the huge extended families of the Sokoto aristocracies have been breaking down into smaller conjugal units both from choice and because of economic pressures" (1973: 238).

In-between these two extreme positions are to be located other research findings which hold that while for the generality of Nigerians (both urban and rural) the extended family structure still persists, a change towards the nuclear family has become apparent among a section of the societal elite. For instance, in his recent study of the new Nigerian elite, Imoagene found that of the three types of elite he identified - the political, business and bureaucratic elite-only the bureaucratic elite employs the "Social closure" principle to detach itself from the extended family. In other words, it was only when the bureaucratic elite was isolated and analysed separately that a change toward neuclearization became discernible. Otherwise, "it is easy for a casual observer to conclude from the account that the new elite have not and are not creating barrier between their extended families and themselves, but on the contrary, their prominence has constituted a positive factor in the web of kinship relationships" (1977 : 68).

What these add up to is that evidence on the nature, magnitude and trend of change in the extended family system in Nigeria under the impact of western education and modernization is at best inconclusive and the basic question of the future of the African extended family system remains unsolved.

#### **The Study Focus :**

The number of socio-cultural variables that affect the extended family institution is literally limitless. These include urbanization, industrialization, education, occupation, religious beliefs, the mass media, income, to name only a few. Although these variables are so closely interrelated that it is rather difficult to isolate or partial out their independent effects in any given situation, it is often necessary in studies of this nature to focus only on a few 'strategic' variables.

To this end, and considering the great prominence given to Western education as a prime-mover of changes in the traditional extended family structure (Marris, 1961 : 140; Burchinal, 1969 : 410; Okedeji, 1976 : 127) we have decided, in this study, to focus only on two independent variables namely, education, and urbanization while bearing in mind that purity of effects cannot be expected.

Similarly, two dependent variables have also been chosen for this study. These are attitude to basic extended family norms and degree of compliance with customary extended family practices. One basic, (established) extended family norm is that a person should be his brother's keeper. In other words, better placed members are obliged in all circumstances to assist the less privile-

ged ones. Such circumstance may include helping to educate, feed, clothe, pay hospital expenses for, find employment for, and provide accommodation for extended family members. Three of these circumstances considered most recurrent in Nigeria today are used as indicators of extended family norms in this study. These are helping to educate extended family members; to find employment for extended family members, and to provide lodging for extended family visitors to urban centres.

Similarly, readiness to share one's earnings with other members of the extended family is used as an indicator of compliance with extended family customary practice.

Thus this study measures attitude to established extended family norms by enquiring whether or not one perceives or accepts it as a *duty* to educate, find employment, and provide accommodation for visiting extended family members. Further, compliance with extended family practice is measured by what proportion of ones monthly earnings is spent on the extended family members.

### **The Study Objectives**

Studies in Social Psychology have shown that attitudinal changes generally precede changes in customary behavioural patterns. Consequently, this study aims at ascertaining whether the Westernization processes as represented by education has produced appreciable changes (positive or negative) in the attitude of Nigerians to the basic social values which support the extended family ideology. Where such is the case, it follows that persons with different levels of education would vary in their acceptance of, and compliance with the extended family norms and obligations. More specifically, the objective of the study is to find out whether there is a relationship between the level of educational attainment and (a) attitude to established kinship and extended family norms; (b) degrees of compliance with customary extended family practices and obligations. The study is also interested in ascertaining whether there are rural-urban differences with regard to (a) and (b) above.

### **The Study Methodology**

#### **(i) Sampling Design**

The choice of the study population and the sampling design were greatly influenced by the suggestions that the onset of a change in the extended family structure "might be detected if the investigations were limited to what could be regarded"..... as the leading social sector of the population" (Caldwell 1965 : 183); and that this leading sector of the society, (Imoagene's bureaucratic elite), which "has its modal representation among the college educated, professionally employed, urban couples" may well provide "the best gauge of the direction of future change" in the African extended family system (Burchinal, 1969 : 410).

With this in view, we have chosen for this study, two communities considered fundamentally different in respect of the two independent variables- level of education and urbanization. These are a university town, Nsukka and a typical Nigerian rural community, Enugu-Ezike, both in Anambra State of Nigeria. The University of Nigeria community with its cosmopolitan outlook, relatively high level of education and individual sophistication accounts for the bulk of Nsukka urban population and contrasts sharply with the rurality of Enugu-Ezike.

The study sample consisted of 300 persons chosen from Nsukka urban population and 220 persons from Enugu-Ezike community. Seventy-eight per cent of the Nsukka sample (235) were employees of the University of Nigeria. The sample was chosen by stratified sampling methods. The data were collected in August-September 1982 using a questionnaire. Of the 520 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 493 were returned valid. The analysis that follows, therefore, is based on 493 cases made up of 281 from Nsukka urban and 212 from Enugu-Ezike community.

### **Results**

The investigation begins with an inquiry into the attitude of Nigerians toward the established extended family norms. This was approached from three different angles, namely, a purely Psychological perspective which dealt with the respondent's belief or perception; a socio-psychological dimension which dealt with respondent's intention or intended line of action in a specified social situation; and thirdly, an overt behavioural angle which dealt with what the respondent actually does in current life situation.

In pursuance of the first angle, respondents were asked to state, as far as they were concerned, whether they perceived or saw it as "a duty" to help educate or obtain employment for members of the extended family<sup>1</sup>. The responses are summarized below :

As can be seen from Table I, 64% of all respondents considered it a duty to help in the educational training of the extended family members. On the other hand, about 27% of the respondents did not see it as a duty to train extended family members in school, while approximately 9% were ambivalent on the issue. It is necessary to point out here that the fact that a person does not see himself dutybound to train extended family members does not imply that he will not

<sup>1</sup>Apparently this question sounds suggestive, loaded and likely to bias responses in favour of the established norms. This, however, is not likely to happen in the present circumstance because in this part of Nigeria, holding, and more so, publicly expressing opinions that clearly support the traditional life-style, and the not-totally-rational expectations on people does not portray one as an "enlightened" person and does not add to one's social esteem. One would not, therefore, feel 'ashamed' to say that one does not regard training members of the extended family in school as a *duty*, if, in fact, one does not feel so, knowing full well that this is not the same thing as saying that one is not training or will *not* train extended family members in school. With this in view, and considering that 78% of our urban sample come from the University community (advisedly), the response bias in the direction anticipated earlier is seen as unlikely.

Table 1. WHETHER HELPING TO EDUCATE EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS IS SEEN AS A DUTY X LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Education	Attitude			Total
	A duty	Not a duty	Don't know	
No. formal Education	10 (77.0%)	—	3 (23%)	13 (100%)
Primary Education	96 (80.0%)	19 (15.8%)	5 (4.2%)	120 (100%)
Secondary Education	81 (57.4%)	49 (34.8%)	11 (7.8%)	141 (100%)
College/University Education	128 (58.4%)	67 (30.6%)	24 (11.0%)	219 (100%)
Total	315 (63.9%)	135 (27.4%)	43 (8.7%)	495 (100%)

$$X^2 = 27.6; \text{d.f.} = 6; P \leq .01; C = 0.23.$$

or does not infact help in training such relations in school. By the same token, that a person sees himself duty-bound to render such helps does not ensure that, in reality, he will and does so any more than those who do not perceive it as a duty. All that the question reveals is that those who see the training of extended family members as a duty subscribe fully to the belief systems that underlie and support this extended family precept. For those who do not see it as a duty, it means that they do not share the basic belief systems that support the norm. We would therefore conclude from the data that majority of the respondents still subscribed to this aspect of the extended family ideology.

Considering the respondents' level of education, the data show that the highest proportion of conformists was found among those with primary education only (80.0%). These were followed by persons with no formal education (77%); those with college/University education (58%); and those with secondary education (57%) in that order. In other words, persons with secondary education showed highest deviation from this aspect of the extended family ideology (35%) followed by those with college/university education (31%). It needs also to be pointed out that there is a high rate of indecision (don't know) among the college educated (11%).

However the relationship between level of education and attitude to this aspect of the extended family norm becomes clearer when the "don't know" category is eliminated and "no formal education" category combine with "primary education" to form a new category, "low level of education" (see Table 1 (a).

Table 1 (a). LEVEL OF EDUCATION BY CONFORMITY TO EXTENDED FAMILY NORM ON EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

Level of Education	Attitude		
	Considered a duty	Not seen as a duty	Total
Low Education	106 (84.8%)	19 (15.2%)	125 (100%)
Medium Education	81 (62.3%)	49 (37.7%)	130 (100%)
High Education	128 (65.6%)	67 (34.4%)	195 (100%)
Total	315 (70.0%)	135 (30%)	450 (100%)

$X^2 = 18.4; d.f. = 2; P < .001; C. = 198$

A  $X^2$  measure of association shows that the relationship between level of education and attitude to the extended family norm on educational training is significant even at .001 level. This means that the higher the level of education the greater the tendency not to perceive the training of extended family members in school as a duty.

Very closely related to the 'duty' of training extended family members in school is that of finding them employment when out of school or on completion of vocation training. Data on this aspect of extended-family obligation is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. WHETHER HELPING TO FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR EXTENDED-FAMILY MEMBERS IS SEEN AS A DUTY X LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Level of Education	Attitude		Total
	Seen as Duty	Not seen as duty	
Low Education	98 (84.5%)	18 (15.5%)	116 (100%)
Medium Education	87 (68.0%)	41 (32.0%)	128 (100%)
High Education	112 (57.4%)	83 (42.6%)	195 (100%)
Total	297 (67.6%)	142 (32.4%)	439 (100%)

$X^2 = 24.25; df = 2; P < .001; C. = 229$

The Table shows that on the whole, a slightly greater proportion of the respondents saw the educational training of extended family members more as a duty (70%) than helping to obtain employment for them (67.6%).



Further, the effect of respondent's level of education is more pronounced in respect of the employment aspect of the extended family norm. For instance, among, persons with low level education, there is no difference in the proportion of respondents who conform to the extended family precept on educational training and helping to obtain employment (about 85%). However, as the level of education increases to secondary and college-university, the degree of conformity to the employment precept drops consistently and sharply. This contrasts the situation with educational training precept (Table 1a). Thus while 84.5% of those with low education; 68% of those with medium education and 57% of those with high education saw it as a duty to help members of the extended family to obtain employment; the proportion of respondents who saw educational training of extended family members as a duty varied from 84.8%, 62.3% to 65.6% for the low, medium and high levels of education respectively.

Statistically, a test for relationship between conformity to the "employment norm" and level of education is found to be significant at .001 level ( $X^2=24.25$ ). Further, a measure of the strength of association using Pearson's coefficient of contingency yields a  $C=198$  for the educational training precept (Table 1a) and  $C=.229$  for the employment precept (Table 2). This confirms that the effect of education is more on the observance of the employment precept than that of educational training.

On the whole, the data have shown that as the level of education increased, the tendency to question and repudiate the basic belief and attitudinal systems that support extended family precepts on educational training and finding employment for members also increased.

#### **The Hospitality Norm**

Enquiry about the extended family hospitality norm adopts the second perspective by focusing on respondents' intended reaction to a specified social situation.

The hospitality norm enjoins that one should at all times show hospitality to other extended family members. In modern times, this is interpreted to mean that it is the responsibility of the closest kinsman of a person who arrives newly in town to accommodate (and if possible also feed) him until he can take care of himself. To find out the extent to which respondents were incline to observe this norm, they were presented with a hypothetical situation where:

"An unemployed member of your extended family has just arrived in town and is putting up with a former school friend who is working as a messenger in a factory. You meet him suddenly and he explains that he has been trying but has not been able to trace your residence."

What would the respondent do?: (a) advise him to go back to the village; (b) invite him (visitor) to come over and stay with him; (c) avoid him; (d) or allow him to stay where he is.

Table 3. COMPLIANCE WITH THE HOSPITALITY NORM BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Education	Response			Total
	Stay Where he is	Invite him over	Go Home	
University Education	35 (22.4%)	110 (70.5%)	11 (7.1%)	156 (100%)
College Education	10 (18.5%)	43 (79.6%)	1 (1.9%)	54 (100%)
Secondary Education	19 (13.9)	109 (79.6%)	9 (6.6%)	137 (100%)
Primary or Less Education	15 (11.6%)	106 (82.2%)	8 (6.2%)	129 (100%)
Total	79 (16.6%)	368 (77.3%)	29 (6.1%)	476 (100%)

$X^2=9.3$ ; d.f.=6;  $p \leq .2$ ;  $C=0.14$

The data show that only 5 respondents (1%) would avoid the visitor. To facilitate statistical computations, this category is merged with those that would allow him stay where he is.

Table 3 shows that 22.4% of those with university education; 18.5% of the college educated; 13.9% of those with secondary education and 11.6% of those with primary education or less would allow him stay where he has been. On the other hand, 70.5% of the university educated; 79.6% of the college educated; 79.6% of those with secondary education; and 82.2% of those with primary education or less would invite him to come and stay with them. This shows that as the level of education decreases from the university to the primary levels, the percentage of respondents who would not comply (i.e. allow him stay where he is) decreases from 22.4% to 11.6%. This, again implies that from the point of view of expressed intentions, the more educated persons are less prone to comply with extended family hospitality norms than the less educated.

On the effect of urban-rural residence on compliance to the hospitality norm, the data show that there was an appreciable difference between urban and rural residents, with the urban residents showing a less degree of intention to comply than rural residents. Thus 74.4% of urban residents and 31% of rural residents would invite him to come and stay with them while 12.5% of the rural and 20% of urban residents would have him stay where he was. However, chi square test shows that the difference between the urban and rural residents was not statistically significant at .05 level.

Similarly there was little and statistically non-significant difference in the degree of intention to comply among male and female respondents with the males showing relatively greater degree of conformity than the females.

### Expenditure on Extended Family Members

Thus far we have been considering expressions of attitude and intentions to comply with various aspects of the extended family norm. In this section, we adopt yet a different perspective by inquiring into respondents' actual behaviour pattern with respect to the extended family precept on sharing part of one's income with extended family members. Some earlier studies have shown that even persons who express the intention to conform to extended family norms fail to live up to such intentions when they have to balance the financial outlay involved with the demands of the immediate family and other personal commitments. Thus to ascertain the extent to which extended family sharing is actually practised, respondents were asked to estimate what proportion of their present monthly income was spent on members of the extended family.

It is necessary to preface our discussion on the income<sup>2</sup> variable with the following statement by J. C. Caldwell :

"It is difficult to establish the probable level of a peasant's income, because he has no employer and no wage scale, although the market prices for staples and his area of cultivation may be a guide to receipts for staples. However, his supplementary income may be substantial, difficult to detect and almost impossible to assess..." (1976 : 3)

In this study, the problems highlighted above were compounded by both the fear of taxation and by what Caldwell (1976) termed the fear that the information might be leaked to, or picked by extended family members (see note 2). Thus as many as 97 of our respondents who ordinarily responded to the other questions, and most of whom would not mind stating the proportion of their income spent on extended family members, declined to answer the question on their monthly income. The data summarized in Table 4 below are therefore to be read and appreciated with these problems in mind.

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"The difficulty of getting reliable income data in Africa generally and rural Nigeria in particular is well documented. To illustrate with just two cases: after a long period of intensive survey work in rural Nigeria, McDevitt concluded that "most of the money data were of little value" (1976:8-10). Similarly, discussing his field experience in Nigeria, J.C. Caldwell lamented that even with survey data "which yielded plausible answers to most responses and data that survived tests by matching against data collected by independent systems, we have not been able to show satisfactory relationship between stated income and other characteristics of respondents of provable accuracy such as occupation or education" (1976:3). In the present study, our experience has not been different. For instance 19.7% of all respondents refused to answer the income question while for rural residents the refusal rate rose up to 36.8%. Caldwell's explanation of this phenomenon is very pertinent for this study. According to him, "the failure to disclose all earnings, investments and expenditure to interviewers is conventionally explained as fear of taxation authorities, yet our experience in African suggests that a much more potent fear is that the responses will be *overheard by relatives* and others who have never been certain of the amount of money dispensed by the respondent and who have claims on his care and may have received different assistance from that given to others" (1976:3).

Table 4. RESPONDENT'S MONTHLY INCOME X PROPORTION SPENT ON EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS

Proportion Spent	Monthly Income (in N)*							Total
	Less than 100	100 to 199	200 to 399	400 to 599	600 to 799	800 to 999	1000 or more	
¾ or more	4 (9.0%)	5 (3.6%)	9 (10%)	6 (11.5%)	3 (7.5%)	1 (5.5%)		28 (7.0%)
About ½	6 (13.6%)	13 (9.3%)	16 (17.8%)	11 (21.1%)	7 (17.5%)	3 (16.7%)	2 (15.4%)	58 (14.7%)
About ¼	11 (25%)	49 (35.2%)	33 (36.7%)	14 (26.9%)	15 (37.5%)	7 (38.9%)	7 (53.8%)	136 (34.3%)
1/10 or Less	16 (36.4%)	61 (43.9%)	25 (27.8%)	17 (32.7%)	10 (25%)	5 (27.8%)	4 (30.8%)	138 (34.9%)
Nothing	7 (16.0%)	11 (7.9%)	7 (7.8%)	4 (7.7%)	5 (12.5%)	2 (11.1%)	—	36 (9.1%)
Number	44	139	90	52	40	18	13	396
Column %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Row %	11.1%	35.1%	22.7%	13.1%	10.1%	4.6%	3.3%	100%

$X^2 = 25.3, d.f. = 24, P .5; C = 2.4.$

\*N Stands for naira, the name of the Nigerian currency.

If we classify persons earning below N200. = per month as low income group; those earning N200. = to N599. = as middle income group and those who earn N600. = or more as high income group, the data show that 46.2% of the respondents were low income earners, 35.8% were in the medium income group while 7.9% belonged to the high income group. When the various income groups is cross-classified with expenditure on extended family members, no definite trend emerges as shown in the X<sup>2</sup> test. This is attributable to the truncated nature of the income data and problems associated with it.

A clearer view of the actual distribution of our respondents with respect to proportion of income spent on extended family members emerges from Table 5.

The Table shows that 40 respondents (9%) admitted that no proportion of their income was spent on extended family members. This means that 91% of respondents spent varying portions of their income on extended family members. More specifically, 7.2% spent three quarters or more; 14.7% spent about half; 34.3% spent about one quarter; and 34.8% spent on tenth or less of their income on extended family members. Considering the fact that the "one tenth or less" is

Table 5. PROPORTION OF PRESENT INCOME SPENT ON MEMBERS OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY BY SEX

Sex	Proportion of Income Spent					Total
	½ or more	About ½	About ¼	1/10 or Less	Nothing	
Male	25 (6.8%)	47 (12.9%)	137 (37.5%)	123 (33.7%)	33 (9%)	365 (100%)
Female	7 (9.0%)	18 (23.1%)	15 (19.2%)	31 (39.7%)	7 (9%)	78 (100%)
Total	32 (7.2%)	65 (14.7%)	152 (34.3%)	154 (34.8%)	40 (9%)	443 (100%)

$$X^2 = 30.0, \text{ d.f.} = 4, P \ll .001; C = .25$$

an elastic and imprecise category, it seems reasonable to hold that the modal proportion of respondents' income spent on extended family members was about one quarter.

The data also reveal noticeable differences in extended family expenditure by males and females. While there is no difference in the proportions of male and female respondents who spent nothing on extended family members, only 19.7% of the males, as contrasted with 32.1% of the females spent half of their income or more on members of the extended family. On the other hand, 33.7% of males as against 39.7% of females also spent one tenth of their income or less on extended family members. Furthermore, 37.5% of males and 19.2% of females spend about ¼ of their income on extended family members. It would then appear from this data that the female expenditure pattern concentrates at the upper and lower extremes while the male expenditure concentrates around the modal (and also median) value of about ¼.

Table 6 PROPORTION OF PRESENT INCOME SPENT ON EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS X LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Level of Education	Proportion of Income Spent					Total
	½ or More	About ½	About ¼	1/10 or Less	Nothing	
High Level Education	7 (3.5%)	29 (14.6%)	75 (37.7%)	68 (34.2%)	20 (10.0%)	199 (100%)
Medium Level Education	12 (9.8%)	25 (20.5%)	35 (28.7%)	42 (34.4%)	8 (6.6%)	122 (100%)
Low Level Education	13 (10.6%)	12 (9.8%)	42 (34.1%)	44 (35.8%)	12 (9.8%)	123 (100%)
Total	32 (7.2%)	66 (14.9%)	152 (34.2%)	154 (34.7%)	40 (9.0%)	444 (100%)

$$X^2 = 14.4; \text{ d.f.} = 8; \text{ Not significant at } .05 \text{ Level; } C = 0.18$$

Next, we consider the relationship between education on the pattern of extended family expenditure. As summarized in Table 6, there is a very little difference in the expenditure pattern of persons with different levels of education. For instance, while 10% of those with college or university (high) education said that they spent no portion of their income on extended family members, approximately the same percentage (9.8%) of those with primary or no formal (low) education also said that they spent nothing on extended family members. However, the table shows that as the level of education increases, the proportion of respondents who spent  $\frac{3}{4}$  or more of their income on extended family members decreases steadily. Such a clear relationship obtains only within this ( $\frac{3}{4}+$ ) expenditure level. For those with high education, the modal expenditure level is a quarter of their income. For those with medium as well as those with low education it is a tenth or less of their income. On the whole, we conclude that there is not a clear and consistent relationship between respondents' level of education and their pattern of extended family expenditure.

Place of residence—urban or rural—is another factor that is known to affect expenditure on extended family members. The evidence from our data is summarized in the following table.

Table 7. EXPENDITURE ON EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS BY RURAL-URBAN RESIDENCE

Residence	Proportion of Income Spent					Total
	$\frac{3}{4}$ of more	About $\frac{1}{2}$	About $\frac{1}{4}$	1/10 or less	Nothing	
Urban	13 (5.2%)	38 (15.1%)	91 (36.1%)	88 (34.9%)	22 (8.7%)	252 (100%)
Rural	19 (10.2%)	27 (14.5%)	58 (31.2%)	65 (34.9%)	17 (9.1%)	186 (100%)
Total	32 (7.3%)	65 (14.8%)	149 (34.9%)	153 (34.9%)	39 (8.9%)	438 (100%)

$$X^2 = 4.5, \text{ d.f.} = 4, P .5; C = .10$$

The table has not shown a remarkable difference in the extended family expenditure pattern of urban and rural residents. However, a greater percentage of rural dwellers (10.2%) than urban residents (5.2%) spent three quarters or more of their income on extended family members. At the same time, a greater proportion of rural dwellers (9.1%) spent nothing on extended family members than the urbanites (8.7%). Further, 15.1% of urban as against 14.5% of rural residents spent about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their income on extended family members; while 36.1% of the urban and 31.2% of rural residents spent about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their income. The proportion of both groups that spent 1/10 or less is the same. In summary,

we find a minimal difference in the extended family expenditure pattern of urban and rural residents.

At this juncture, it becomes pertinent to inquire whether the extended family expenditure pattern of Nigerians differs appreciably from that of non-Nigerians. Unfortunately the number of respondents in the later category is very small but the available evidence is presented in the Table below:

Table 8 PROPORTION OF MONTHLY INCOME SPENT ON EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS X NATIONALITY

Nationality	Income Proportion				Total
	½ or more	About ¼	1/10 or Less	Nothing	
Nigerians	96 (22.9%)	149 (35.6%)	145 (34.6%)	29 (6.9%)	419 (100%)
Non-Nigerians	1 (4.3%)	2 (8.7%)	9 (39.1%)	11 (47.8%)	23 (100%)
Total	97 (21.9%)	151 (34.2%)	154 (34.8%)	40 (9.1%)	442 (100%)

$$X^2 = 48.0; \text{d.f.} = 3, p < .001, C = .31$$

The Table shows that only 6.9% of Nigerians as against 47.8% of non-Nigerians admitted spending nothing on extended family members.

On the other hand, while 58.5% of Nigerians said that they spent a quarter or more of their earnings, only 13% of non-Nigerians spent that much on extended family members. Thus the fewness of the number of non-Nigerians notwithstanding, there is a clear difference in the pattern of extended family expenditure of Nigerians and non-Nigerians with the former showing a greater adherence to extended family sharing of income. Although it may be argued that the fact that the non-Nigerians were living far away from their relatives might have affected the pattern of their extended family expenditure, the difference in the expenditure pattern of the two groups is too great to be sufficiently explained by that fact.

#### Appraising the Extended Family System

In the preceding section, it was shown that a large majority of Nigerians (over 90%) spend part of their earnings regularly on members of the extended family. Thus the extended family system is seen by some authors as a leveling or equalizing mechanism which helps to maintain the so-called native socialism of the African society. On the other hand, some people hold that the extended family system places too much burden or responsibility on the more capable or fortunate members. To verify these notions empirically,

respondents were asked to state which of the following statements most adequately described the true situation of things;

- (i) the extended family system allots responsibilities to members according to their respective abilities,
- (ii) the extended family system distributes responsibilities equally to all members irrespective of their abilities,
- (iii) the extended family places too much burden or responsibility on few better-off members.

The responses are summarised in the table below :

Table 9.                   RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY AS A LEVELING AGENT X EDUCATION

Education	Assessment The extended family places responsibility :				Total
	According to ability	Equally on members	on more fortunate members	on the loyal members	
College/University	58 (27.6%)	6 (2.9%)	30 (14.3%)	116 (55.2%)	210 (100%)
Secondary	37 (26.6%)	7 (5.0%)	15 (10.8%)	80 (55.2%)	139 (100%)
Primary or Less	44 (35.8%)	13 (10.6%)	14 (11.4%)	52 (42.3%)	123 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>139 (29.4%)</b>	<b>26 (5.5%)</b>	<b>59 (12.5%)</b>	<b>248 (52.5%)</b>	<b>472 (100%)</b>

$$X^2 = 15.1, \text{ d.f.} = 6, p \leq .05; C. = 0.17$$

The table shows that about half of the respondents (52.5%) hold the view that the extended family system places too much burden on the willing and loyal members. This may not augur well for the future of the extended family as disloyalty would tend to increase with the weight of burden or responsibility. However 29.4% of respondents were of the opinion that the extended family system gives responsibility to members according to their respective abilities. In other words it is a mechanism for equitable distribution of rights and obligations. Twelve and half percent of the respondents were of the view that the system places too heavy burden on the few better-off or more fortunate members. While only 5.5% thought that it distributes responsibilities equally to all members irrespective of ability.

With respect to the effect of education on this evaluation, the data show that it is only at the lowest level of education that a noticeable difference occurs. Thus while 55.2% of those with college or university education and 57.6% of those with secondary education held that the extended family system places too much burden on the loyal members, only 42.3% of those with primary education



or less held the same opinion. On the other hand, 35.8% of those with primary education or less as against 27.6% of those with college and 26.6% of those with secondary education thought that the extended family system distributes responsibility according to individual abilities. This means that the view that the extended family system places undue burden on the willing or loyal members prevailed more among the "educated" than the uneducated persons.

Besides level of education, another important variable that is known to influence reaction to traditional institutions is urbanization.

Table 10. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY AS A LEVELING AGENT X URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE

Residence	Assessment The extended family places responsibility				Total
	According to each ability	Equally to all members	On more fortunate ones	On the will member	
Urban	81 (29.7%)	10 (3.7%)	33 (12.1%)	148 (54.4%)	272 (100%)
Rural	58 (29.7%)	16 (8.2%)	25 (12.8%)	96 (49.2%)	195 (100%)
Total	139 (29.8%)	26 (5.6%)	58 (12.4%)	244 (52.2%)	467 (100%)

$X^2 = 4.72$ , not significant at .05 level; d.f. = 3

As was the case with the level of education, the data show that more than half the respondents were of the opinion that undue share of responsibility is placed on the willing and loyal members. There is a difference in the proportions of urban and rural dwellers who expressed this view although this difference is not statistically significant at .05 level ( $x^2 = 4.72$ ).

Specifically 54.4% of the urban as against 49.2% of rural residents held the view. On the other hand, 3.7% of urban as against 8.2% of rural residents felt that the extended family system distributes responsibilities equally among all its members. There is virtually no differences in the proportions of urban and rural residents that expressed the other alternative views.

Finally we try to pool together our respondents' experiences with and attitudes to the extended family system by asking them to give an overall assessment of the suitability or otherwise of the extended family system for present day Nigeria. Specifically respondents were asked to say whether they considered the extended family system : (a) unsuitable for present-day Nigeria; (b) the most suitable for Nigeria of today; or (c) requires some modifications to serve the needs of Nigeria today.

Table 11. RESPONDENTS ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY SYSTEM FOR NIGERIA BY AGE

Age (in years)	Assessment			Total
	Most Suitable	Needs Modification	Not Suitable	
Youth (14-29)	33 (18.5%)	100 (61.8%)	35 (19.7%)	168 (100%)
Middle Aged (30-49)	45 (18.7%)	172 (71.4%)	24 (9.9%)	241 (100%)
Elderly (50+)	11 (45.8%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.7%)	24 (100%)
Total	89 (20.1%)	281 (65.7%)	63 (14.2%)	433 (100%)

$X^2 = 21.6, d.f. = 4, P \leq .001; C = .214$

The table shows that a good majority of our respondents (65.7%) were of the view that the extended family system needed some modification to serve the needs of modern Nigeria. About 14% held that the system was not suitable at all for Nigeria now while 20% hold that it was the most suitable for the present-day Nigeria.

When the respondents are categorized by age, a considerable difference becomes apparent between the younger and the older generations with the former calling for modifications and the later supporting the established order. Thus while 61.8% of the youth and 71.4% of the middle-aged persons wanted modifications in the extended family system, only 37.5% of the elderly persons felt that way. On the other hand, while 45.8% of the elderly considered the system most suitable for Nigeria, only 18.5% of the youth and 18.7% of the middle-aged persons shared the same view. Part of the explanation for the observed difference in views of the younger and the older generations may be differential exposure to the modernizing influences of Western education and urbanism. Our attention was therefore turned to the effects of place of residence and level of education on respondents' assessment.

Table 12. ASSESSMENT OF THE SUITABILITY OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY SYSTEM FOR NIGERIA BY URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE

Residence	Assessment			Total
	Most Suitable	Needs Modification	Not Suitable	
Urban	44 (17.6%)	175 (70%)	31 (12.4%)	250 (100%)
Rural	47 (24.7%)	111 (58.4%)	32 (16.8%)	190 (100%)
Total	91 (20.7%)	286 (65%)	63 (14.3%)	440 (100%)

$X^2 = 6.3, d.f. = 2, P \leq .05; C = .119$

The table shows that 70% of urban as against 58.4% of rural residents held that the extended family system needed modification while 17.6% and 24.7% of the urban and rural residents respectively thought that the system was most suitable for Nigeria. Thus the urban residents favour a modified type of extended family system more than the rural dwellers. This is as expected since rural residents, like the elderly, are generally, more traditional in their outlook than urban dwellers.

With regard to the effect of level of education, Table 13 shows that the proportion of respondents who held that the extended family system needed some modification increases steadily as the level of education increases. Thus for persons with University, College Secondary, and primary or less levels of education, the percentage of respondents who thought that the system needed to be modified was 76%, 73.1%, 65.6% and 48.7% respectively. On the other hand, the highest percentage of respondents who thought the system to be the most suited for Nigeria (37.8%) was recorded among those with primary education or less, while the highest percentage of those who thought that the system was not suitable for Nigeria (21.1%) was found among the secondary educated. Based on the data presented above it may be concluded that education has a considerable effect on people's assessment of the future of the extended family system in Nigeria.

Table 13.

**ASSESSMENT OF THE SUITABILITY OF EXTENDED FAMILY SYSTEM FOR NIGERIA BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

Education	Assessment			
	Most Suitable	Needs Modification	Not Suitable	Total
University	23 (15.7%)	111 (76.0%)	12 ( 8.3%)	146 (100%)
College	6 (11.5%)	38 (73.1%)	8 (15.4%)	52 (100%)
Secondary	17 (13.3%)	84 (65.6%)	27 (21.1%)	128 (100%)
Primary School or Less	45 (37.8%)	58 (48.7%)	16 (13.4%)	119 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>91 (20.4%)</b>	<b>291 (65.4%)</b>	<b>63 (14.2%)</b>	<b>445 (100%)</b>

$$X^2 = 97.4, \text{ d.f.} = 6, P \leq .01; C = .42$$

### Summary and Conclusion

This study has focused on ascertaining whether the forces of modernization as represented by Western education and urbanization have produced appreciable effects on those values and basic norms which support the extended family ideology in Nigeria. Analysis of the data indicate that some changes in attitude toward certain aspects of the extended family norms have become discernible among the more educated members of the society. Thus although the majority

of the respondents saw themselves as duty-bound to help in the educational training of extended family members, it was equally clear that the higher the level of education, the less the proportion of respondents expressing this sentiment. Similarly, while the hospitality norm would be generally observed, the proportion of conformists increased as the level of education declined. This is in accord with, and provides further insight into Imoagene's (1976) finding that the bureaucratic elite employs the social closure principle to achieve a measure of detachment from extended family members. For, it is this subtle change in attitude to extended family norm that is practicalized in the social closure phenomenon.

With regard to expenditure on extended family members, described as "the most practical expression of family loyalty" (Marris 1961:36), the study shows that there is a near-universal compliance to this practice and that there is no remarkable difference in the extended family expenditure pattern of respondents with high and low education. This is in agreement with Caldwell's finding that 84% of university students in Ghana expected that they would have to spend much of their salaries on relatives beyond their nuclear family (1965: 189-192). Similarly, Marris found that "70% of the heads of household interviewed gave some regular help to at least one member of their family outside their household" (1961:36).

However, the application of the 'closure principle' by the more educated class would have meant that they spend proportionately less of their income on extended family members than the less educated group. That this has not been the case may be explained by the fact that such expenditure by the educated persons may represent reciprocation or actual "repayment to the family for assistance previously extended to their own education" (Caldwell, 1965:189). This view is buttressed by Caldwell's finding that almost 90% of Ghana University students "have received considerable amounts of money at some stage in their education" and that "over half of all respondents, forming 3/5 of those receiving considerable assistance felt a specific moral debt to repay in some way assistance received" (1965:187-9). Further, in the Nigerian context, a man's prestige and esteem in society is closely linked with his willingness and ability to make contributions to family exigencies and community projects. Some level of success in meeting these demands assures for the individual not only due social respect; but also the social and political support of the extended family and the community as and when the need arises. Thus the more educated, and ipso facto higher income earners tend to spend a large proportion of their income in retaining and servicing this kind of family and community support.

Understandably, a majority of the respondents expressed disapproval of the way the system currently operates. They were of the view that the system places too heavy a burden on the loyal or willing members. Thus 65.4% of the respondents wanted some modification in the way the system currently operates. The proportion of respondents who expressed this view increased with the level of education.

This is a clear enough indication that much as the extended family system is still cherished by the African, it must undergo some adaptation in order to survive. Consequently we expect that a modified form of the extended family system will emerge in the course of time. It is the task of subsequent studies in this area to identify the on-set, the nature as well as the direction of such modifications.

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