

## 40 YEARS OF EXISTENCE OF DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AND RURAL SOCIOLOGY: SUCCESSES AND PROBLEMS.

By

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### INTRODUCTION

The training and instruction of children and youth to acquire enough knowledge for positive changes in behaviour and skill for development had been part of the developmental efforts introduced in Nigeria since independence in 1960. This aspect of developmental efforts had manifested in the establishment of University education system, hence establishment of University of Ibadan and University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) among the first four-generation universities in Nigeria.

In line with the thrust of university education that emphasises quality teaching and research for advanced learning leading to awards of degrees, development break-through in the country was premised on the adequacy and standard of research conducted in Nigeria Universities. On the basis of this belief, the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology was established in 1967 along side other Departments in the Faculty of Agriculture. Ever since, it has recorded successes in terms of expansion in scope, implementation of philosophies, break through in researches and services to the public. The successes, opportunities, constraints and future plans of the Department are, therefore, highlighted in this write-up.

### PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT

The goal of the Department is to produce graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes in the agricultural development process, and those who possess the competence to effectively transmit such skills to farmers and other members of the public. The objectives are to:

- (i) enhance students' acquisition of the understanding of basic natural science concepts, which are applicable to agriculture;
- (ii) enhance students' comprehension of agricultural science concepts, principles, theories and skills in crop production, livestock production and soil management; fisheries and renewable resources;
- (iii) help students' understand basic principles in agricultural economics and farm management;
- (iv) a mastery of the concepts, principles, theories and skills in agricultural extension and rural sociology, needed to effectively transmit improved practices in agriculture to the practicing farmers and other members of the public.
- (v) teach skills in research methodology needed to diagnose and approach agricultural development problems with confidence and effectiveness;
- (vi) help students' acquire experience in rural development projects in some rural communities in the catchments area of the university through exposure to extending research information in agriculture, health, housing, home economics and other areas of rural life to improve the quality of life of the rural dwellers.

### THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

- (i) **Undergraduates:**  
The Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology was established in 1967 along with other Departments in the Faculty of

Agriculture. The Department runs a five year academic programme leading to the award of a Bachelor of Agriculture (Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology). The curriculum of work consists of a set of courses in Agricultural Extension, and others in Rural Sociology. Emphasis on teaching is in the following areas of extension:

1. Extension teaching learning process and method;
  2. Agricultural Communication
  3. Programme Planning in Extension
  4. Extension Organization and Supervision
  5. Social Psychology in Extension
  6. Youth and Women Development Programmes
  7. Monitoring and Evaluation of Extension Programme
  8. Group Dynamics in Extension
  9. Teaching of Agriculture and
  10. Research Methods in Extension. Emphasis on teaching is also in the following areas in Rural Sociology
1. Introduction to Rural Sociology
  2. Diffusion and adoption of innovation
  3. Organization of Village Communities
  4. Rural Community Development
  5. Introducing Technological Change in Agriculture and
  6. Social change in Agriculture.

The courses and the course outlines are as listed in the University Hand Book.

**(ii) Postgraduate Degree Programme**

*The Department offers:*

- (i) One and half years M.Sc in Agricultural Communication based on course work and an independent research work.

- (ii) One and half year M.Sc. Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology based on course work and an independent research work.
- (iii) A minimum of two years M.Phil. in Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology based on one year course work and an independent research work.
- (iv) A minimum of two years after M.Phil. or otherwise three years Ph.D. degree in full study in Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology.

The courses and course outlines are as listed in the University Postgraduate Handbook.

**(iii) Other Academic Programmes / outfit.**

**(a) Demonstration Unit (Teaching and Research Farm)**

The Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology runs a demonstration farm of three hectares on the Teaching and Research Farm for the purpose of exposing research findings of the other departments in the Faculty of Agriculture to practising farmers, and for teaching students how to plan a demonstration farm. Emphasis is on arable crops, cassava, soyabean, maize, tomatoes, okro and leafy vegetables with the aim of determining the effect of use and rate of application of fertilizers to these crops. In recent years research and transfer of improved Agricultural technologies have been expanded to include livestock productions e.g sheep and goat rearing, indigenous poultry farming and turkey production. Others include snail production, fish farming, beekeeping and cane rat rearing.

### **(b) Integrated Isoya and Ede North Rural Development Projects**

As a major rural development strategy, the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology runs an outreach programme for the Faculty of Agriculture – the Rural Development Project – in two ecological zones: a rain forest station in the Ife-East and Ife-Central (formerly Oranmiyan LGA) Local Government Areas, and a derived savanna station in Egbedore (formerly Ede) Local Government Area. This project, is the field-based laboratory for the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, which enhanced testing of extension principles and philosophies among rural farmers; teaching of student about rural living; collection and establishment of database; and assisting in the empowerment processes of the rural dwellers. Historically, when the then (University of Ife) now Obafemi Awolowo University moved to its present permanent site in Ile-Ife in 1968, it was recognized that the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, in cooperation with other Departments in the Faculty of Agriculture, could play an important role in helping to improve agricultural production in the then Ife Division and thus raising the level of living of rural habitants.

In 1969, nine villages were selected for their contiguity and accessibility to the University. These are Erefe, Aroko, Iyanfoworogi, Ladin, Akeredolu, Isoya, Olorombo, Esera and Walode. These villages are situated in the rain forest belt of southern Nigeria. There are two marked seasons (a dry season from November to March with an average rainfall of 5” and a rainy season between April and October with rainfall ranging between 40”–60”). The majority of the population is dependent wholly or partly on the land for its livelihood. Cocoa is the major cash crop and the area, with highly suitable soils and rainfall. It therefore, has been scheduled as one of the major cocoa redevelopment areas. The villages are also individually characterized by varying proportion of adult males who are either full time farmers, part-time farmers, artisans

and traders.

The following are some of the objectives of the project, which have helped the Department to make a lot of impacts relevant to the public.

- (1) developing a model for approaching rural development in the selected villages that could be applied later and on wider scale;
- (2) field – testing and demonstrating innovations;
- (3) serving as a research centre for testing and applying methods of community development and extension; and
- (4) assisting the inhabitants of the area to improve their level of living.

In 1982 the Isoya Integrated Rural Development Project was replicated at another Ecological zone, (derived Savannah). The following villages were selected in the zone: Aro, Ojo, Ikotun and Ile Aro with the headquarters at Awo in Egbedore Local Government area of Osun State. Some of the action programmes at this new location are:

- (a) Agricultural programme and
- (b) Arable crops
- (c) Livestock – West African Dwarf Goat Management Programme.

In both locations the Department have successfully introduced the innovations, which are widely adopted by farmers in the outreach programmes as in Table 3- 5.

This project has been evaluated to assess the total number of innovations released and the number adopted, and to determine the rate of adoption.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **(i) Status of Graduates**

The Department has graduated about 1,000 undergraduate students since its inception. Most of these students found their job placement in Nigerian Universities as Lecturers and administrators, the banking industries such as African International Bank, the Savannah Bank and Merchant Banks as Managers and Accountants, the Oil Industry such as the Shell Development Company Plc. as Agricultural

Extension Officers and Community Development Supervisors; the States' Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) as Programme Managers and Supervisors; International Agricultural Agencies and Research Institutes as Researchers and Programme Officers both in Nigeria and other countries of the world. In the area of Postgraduate Training Programme, the Department has trained more than 200 graduates in its M.Sc., M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes. These graduates are found in Nigeria Universities, Research Institutes and Agricultural and Rural Development Management Training Centres in and outside Nigeria, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) in Nigeria and Consultants to some neighbouring countries.

**(ii) Teaching and Research Activities.**

Staff activities include teaching, research and public service, which have been demonstrated both at home and abroad. Teaching activities involves course and tutorial for undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Emphases have been placed on the listed core areas of extension and rural sociology. Research activities of the staff members of the Department have continued to expand beyond Ile-Ife and environs inspite of the discouraging financial situations. Some specific research activities included the following

- Sociological studies of cooperative group farming in selected states of the Federation;
- Rural energy systems research in Osun and Oyo States;
- Baseline studies of Extension organizations in some states;
- Level and standard of living of rural people
- Comptemporary rural based institutions in Nigeria,
- Farming systems research in Nigeria;
- Evaluation of farmers response to fertilizer use;
- Longitudinal growth study of Isoya children and Impact.
- Study of Extension Teaching Methods.
- Impact evaluation, Training, and Rural Development;

- Adoption of Innovation. Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Agriculture;
- Rural youth, farm children and agriculture;
- gender, agriculture and rural development.
- leadership and participation in agricultural and rural development projects.

The findings of the above research efforts have had some impact and played significant role in improving socio-economic status of Nigerians.

**(iii) Public Service**

The Department has in the past rendered activities to the immediate locality especially the host community (Ife and Environments), the nation, and some International Organisations.

**Local Service Activities:** The Isoya Rural Development Project, which linked the University with the constituent communities, has over the years transfered research findings from the university in the following areas: Agriculture, Health, Home Economics and Education. Others include environmental management, women and youth development.

The various innovations introduced to the project communities consequently trickled down to the other communities, which have contributed to the improved livelihood of the rural dwellers. Our major success has been in the area of Agriculture. Maize and cassava, which used to be a subsistent crop are now a commercially produced with increases in yield of over 400 percent per hectare. We have succeeded in organizing both male and female Cooperative groups and these have become effective targets for bringing about desirable changes in the rural communities.

**National Services:** The Department mooted the founding of Agricultural Extension Society of Nigeria (AESON), the only Professional Body of Agricultural Extension in Nigeria. In addition, the Department hosted the 9th National Conference of AESON in 2004. Another professional society to which members belong and have made significant impact is Nigerian Rural Sociological Association (NRSA). The Department housed the Editorial Secretariat for the Nation. In addition, the Department in

1999 hosted national research network of Children- in-Agriculture Programme (CIAP) Conference. The various research activities in the Department always stress relevance to policy and policy implications of the various research findings.

**International Services:** The Department had contributed to International Programmes by participating in relevant International Conferences where issues relating to development in the world were discussed extensively. Such International fora include:

- Rural Youth Leaders held in Hertsching, Germany (2002)
- CTA/AESON Workshop on Scientific writing skills for Agricultural Scientists November, Nigeria 1999.
- African Regional Workshop on Assessment of Impacts and Adaptations to Climate Change (AIACC) projects Amazi South Africa, 2003.

Academic staff also participated in a number of International Global researches:

(i) Participation in a global project titled "Assessment of Impact and Adaptation for climate change (AIACC) Project" with Sub-theme "Food Security and climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa.

(ii) DFID/NRSP PROJECT CNC03/01 CCUP-Need Assessment and Uptake Promotion of Rain water Harvesting. (RWH) Research Success from Tanzania to Nigeria. A collaborative Research involving University of Newcastle Upon Tyne UK; Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Other International Engagements are membership of the followings Organizations:

(i) College of Research Associates, United Nations University Institute of Natural Resources in Africa, Ghana (June, 2002 to date)

(ii) International Rural Network, University of Aberdeen, Inverness, Scotland: 2003.

(iii) West African Global Change Research Network: 2003.

(iv) International Reading Association, USA: 2003 to Date.

### **STAFF STRENGTH AS AT 2002**

**Table 1: Staff strength**

S/No.	Staff	Expected Number	Actual Number	Difference (Vacancies)
i	Academic Staff	14	09	05
ii.	Technical Staff	06	02	04
iii	Administrative Staff	06	04	02

Data in Table 1 show that the Department is understaffed, which has been putting heavy load on the staff particularly academic and technical staff. This has been causing a lot of problem in execution of Departmental

Programmes. Data in Table 2 also show the name, qualifications and areas of specialization of the academic staff.

**Table 2: Technical and Administrative Staff.**

S/N	Name	Status/ Position
1.	F.W. Obayomi	Senior Workshop Supervisor
2	J.O. Owolabi	Agric. Superintendent.
3.	M.L. Ibeawuchi	Chief Typist.
4.	V.M. Akanbi	Chief Clerical Officer
5	P.E. Okpetu	Superintendent ( Driver)
6	V.O. Akosile	Typist II
7.	S.G. Ogunyemi	Senior Messenger

**Table 3: Academic Staff and Name**

S/N	Name	Qualifications	Status	Specialization
1	A.A. Jibowo	B.Sc. (Ife) M.Sc., Ph.D (Wis.)	Professor	Extension Programme Planning and Development, Group Dynamics and Leadership in Extension
2	E.A. Laogun	B.Sc. (S.W. Missouri), M.Sc. (N.W. Missouri); Ed.D. (Okla)	Professor	Agricultural Extension Training Programme, Participation and Administration
3	A.J. Farinde	B. Agric. (Ife), M.Phil., Ph.D.(Ife)	Senior Lecturer	Agricultural Communication, Programme Evaluation and Youth Development
4	D.O. Torimiro	B. Agric. (Ago Iwoye) M.Sc., PhD. (Ife)	Senior Lecturer	Rural child/youth development, rural community development and extension.
5	O.F. Deji	B. Agric. (Ife); M.Sc., PhD. (Ife)	Lecturer I	Gender Issues and Rural Development
6	F.O. Adereti	NCE (Ondo); B.Sc. Voc. Agric. Ed (Nsukka); M.Ed. Science Ed, Ph.D. Agric. Extension (Ibadan)	Lecturer I	Agricultural Education, Gender Issues and Rural Development
7	A.O. Ajayi	B.Agric.; M.Sc., Ph.D. (Ife)	Lecturer II	Children in Agriculture, Agric. Extension Training and Finance
8	O.D. Kolawole	OND (Akure); B.Agric.; M.Sc. & Ph.D. (Ife)	Lecturer II	Indigenous Knowledge, Adoption Behaviour
9	A.F. Agboola	B. Agric. and M.Phil. (Ife)	Lecturer II	Indigenous Knowledge Diffusion of Innovation

## 10. PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The Followings are the plans of the Department. The aim of the plan is to promote academic, research, physical and staff developments.

**Academic:** Based on our mandate to produce human resources that are relevant to the development programmes of the nation as a whole, the plan to do this are as follows:

- Introduction of diploma and refresher courses to our graduates.
- Establishment of more linkages (local and international).
- Promoting student industrial work experience through entrepreneurial trainings.
- Mounting seminars and annual lecture through -out the sessions

### **Research:**

- To promote collaborative research with relevant institutions and agencies.
- Producing reports and monographs for reference.
- Seeking sponsorship for research

**Physical Development:** In order to achieve the stated goals, the following physical development of the Department are proposed:

- (i) Establishment of Communication Laboratories
- (ii) Securing office space, and
- (iii) Sustained and functional transport facilities.

## THE HOME ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

In 1980, the senate of the University approved a B.Sc. ( Home Economics) degree programme in the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology. The first set of students was admitted into part I of the programme in October 1981.

### **The Goals and Objectives**

The Programme is designed to produce graduates who would contribute effectively to the development of self-reliant economy and promote self-employment. It is concerned with the application of science and technology to

develop the individual, the family and the society.

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- i. To produce highly competent individuals for posts in the public and private sectors or for self-employment in the following areas of specialization: Hotel Management; Textiles, Clothing and Interior Decoration; Resource Management; Human Nutrition; and Child Development and Family Relations.
- ii. To train a cadre of manpower capable of improving the quality of family life through technological, educational and community action programmes.
- iii. To promote research in the above-mentioned areas of specialization.

## 2. The Academic Programmes.

The Home Economics started in 1980/1981 session. The programme was designed with four areas of specialization:

- a. Child development and Family Relations.
- b. Foods and Nutrition
- c. Resource Management & Extension.
- d. Textile, Clothing and Interior Decoration.

The duration of study is 4 years, with emphasis on the specialized area. Students also undergo practical experience programme during the long vacation of second and third year for a total of 16 weeks in their different areas of specialization.

## ACCREDITATION TO FULL DEPARTMENT

During the 1998/1999 accreditation exercise, the National University Commission (NUC) accreditation team suggested the need for the Unit to have its own identity, in order for it to grow and develop. In line with this mandate,

the Unit has progressed into a full departmental status along with a change of name and an expansion of its present curriculum. It is envisaged that this development would contribute to the current needs of the society and more importantly increase enrollment.

The Unit with its proposed nomenclature – Department of Family, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences has re-designed its programme where core programme areas (Tracks) in the department would include:

- Child Development, and Family Relations
- Textiles, Clothing and Interiors Decoration
- Foods, Nutrition and Dietetics
- Hospitality Management
- Resource Management and Extension

The areas would help students to understand the interface between the home and family, as well as the greater society and the economy. The Hospitality Management track is a completely new area. It has been designed with the aim of introducing students to the Hospitality Industry, which is an arm of the Tourism Industry. This sector of the economy is presently getting a lot of attention at the National level. Teaching of this track would be in collaboration with the University Conference Centre and Guest Houses in order to achieve the desired goal of training manpower for Polytechnics and the human care Industry.

**Table 4: ACADEMIC, TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AS AT 2002**

S/N	Name	Qualification	Status	Area of specialization
1	G.E. Ogbimi	B.Sc., M.Sc.(Akron, Ohio),Ph.D.(Ife)	Senior Lecturer	Child and Rural Family Development
2	A. F. Dare (Late)	B.Sc., M.Sc. (Nebraska), Ph.D (Ife)	Senior Lecturer	Food Services: Management and evaluation.
3	B.O. Ogunba	B.Sc (Ife) M.Sc.(Ibadan)	Assistant Lecturer	Maternal and Child Nutrition
4	K.O. Soyebó	B.Sc (Ife), M.Sc. (Ife)	Assistant Lecturer	Household Resource Management
5	M.F. Olumakaye	B.Sc (Ife) M.Sc.(Ibadan)	Assistant Lecturer	School age children and adolescent nutrition
6	K.O. Ajila	B.S (Ife), M.Sc. (Ife)	Graduate Assistant	Textile Extension

L.I. Alli - Senior Technical Officer.  
E.M.Mosadomi (Mrs) - Chief Typist

Table 5: Isoya Integrated Community Development Programmes 1970 – 2002

S/N	Title of Programmes	Place where mounted	Duration	Impact
1.	Introduction of hybrid cocoa	Isoya, Akeredolu, Walode	1970 – 1972	The impact was well felt in and around the listed villages
2.	Introduction of hybrid maize 8322 – 13 (White) 8434 – 11 (Yellow)	Isoya, Olorombo, Walode and Iyanfoworogi	1974 – 1987	Production of hybrid maize widely adopted.
3.	Introduction of hybrid cassava (T.M.S. 30572)	Isoya, Walode, Molodo, Esera, Olorombo and Awo, Ojo and Aro	1978 – 1993	The hybrid maize and cassava were widely adopted by the farmers in the area. It started group production of food crops especially maize in the area listed.
4.	Introduction of Ife Brown Cowpea	Aroko, Esera, Obere in Ife area and Awo and Ojo in Ede area	1973 – 1990	The legumes plants, cowpeas, winged bean and soybean accepted especially in Ife area because farmers there focused on the production of cocoa. But in Ede area, the impact was well felt.
5.	Dry season vegetable farming	Isoya, Akeredolu Omolodo and Walode	1975 – 1970	Farmers adopted the practice.
6.	Introduction of Soya bean	Esera, Akoko, Akeredolu	1976 – 1978	
7.	Introduction of winged bean	Aroko, Esera, Obere	1976 - 1978	
8.	Introduction of Improved Goat keeping system	Isoya, Iyanfoworogi, Ogbagba, Toro and Akeredolu all in Ife area	1986 – 1993	The impact of goat project was well felt in the two areas of the project. The impact was also felt outside the project.
9.	Establishment of Rural Cooperatives Organization of farmers into Rural Cooperatives groups	Isoya, Aroko, Iyanfoworogi, Erefe, Olorombo, Walode, Akeredolu all in Ife area.	1976 to date	Rural Cooperative Organization has played a very significant role in improving socio-economic status of not only the project farmers in the two areas but also surrounding areas

Table 6: Agricultural Improved Practices/Programmes

S/N.	Title of Programmes	Place where mounted	Duration	Impact
1.	<b>Minimum Tillage Introduction</b>	Isoya, Olorombo and Walode	1970 – 1972	The Programmes was well adopted.
2.	<b>Introduction of Tractor for land preparation</b>	Isoya, Aroko, Erefe, Iyanfoworogi and Akeredolu	1974 – 1989	The practice was widely accepted by the farmers and it boosted the production of food crops in the area.
3.	<b>Use of optimum plant population in Maize cultivation</b>	- do -	1972 – 1974	Widely adopted
4.	Introduction of Fertilizer and other Agro-Chemicals:- - Insecticides - Fungicides - Herbicides	Isoya, Olorombo, Aroko, Walode - do -	1971 – 1978 - do -	The agro-chemical was widely adopted among the farmers in the two project areas and they are still in use to date
5.	<b>Intermediate Technology Projects</b> - Maize dryer construction - Maize dryer use/Demonstration - Maize Sheller use/Demonstration - Introduction of improved maize storage making use of low cost maize crib	Isoya Isoya  Isoya, Olorombo, Aroko, Esera, Akeredolu all in Ife. Aganran, Aroko, Esera, Olorombo in Ife area.	1972 – 1973 1973 – 1986  1984 – 1995  1988 - 1993	The technology was accepted and the usage was adopted for drying cocoa beans, and maize.  Maize Sheller was widely accepted and used by groups and individual farmers.  The impact of low cost maize crib was felt in and around all the villages where it was introduced.

**Table 7: Home Economic Extension Projects**

Title of Programmes	Place where mounted	Duration	Impact(s)
Women Co-operative Organization (an education project to demonstrate Co-operative approach to solving socio-economic problems of rural women and the communities at large)	Isoya, Aganran and Olorombo in Isoya area	1976 to date	It has an improvement on the status of the women in the socio-economic upliftment of rural dweller and poverty reduction  - do -
School Nutrition programme (An Educational project to school age youths)	Awo and Aro in Ede area	1977 – 1983	Awareness on the functions of various foods in the body. Awareness on the use of local food to retain the nutritive value.
Children Health Monotonies Project on Children weighing. (Pre-school child Nutrition Programme)	Akeredolu	1976 – 1983	Monthly weighing provided staff with an objective measure of the impact of the nutrition programme. It provides visible evidence of individual children's progress and thus encourages their mothers to practice better child feeding. It also encouraged mothers on hospital and clinic visit when necessary.
Play Group Organization for pre-school age	Walode and Isoya	1979 – 1986	Children appear neater and healthier. It created awareness to the parent on the need for the development of children mentally, physically and emotionally through playgroups.
School Youth Programme (Teaching handcraft to Rural Youths)	Iyanfoworogi in Isoya Abudo Olope in Ede area	1988 - 1992	Encouraged youth to be self dependent.

## **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **Textile Clothing and Interior Decoration**

Student undergraduate projects have included research in the areas of textile, clothing and interior decoration specifically in the areas of tie & dye, fabric selection and care interior decoration and textile design as well as fabric merchandizing.

### **Food and Nutrition**

There has been work on recipe development and testing, food processing, infant feeding practices, food habit of adolescents and hospitality management. Recently student researchers have focused on recent global events such as exclusive breast-feeding practices and the involvement of women in food security.

### **Child Development**

So far research activities have only covered the management of privately owned childcare centres and the UNICEF rural community – based daycare centres. There is a proposal for the development of a Crèche to serve as a laboratory for the child development area. This is intended to assist the student as well as working mothers in the community. Its main objective is to enhance teaching and research.

### **Resource Management and Extension.**

Students have been involved in research that focuses on money and time management, assessment of maintenance culture of the home and office equipment and the management of family business.

### **Research Activities and Publication**

Nutrition guidelines continue to change over the past 20 years. These changes can be attributed to the social, economic, cultural and psychological implications of food and eating. Therefore research activities in the area of human nutrition have focused on food production, food habits, and infant feeding practices, nutrient intakes and the foodservice system to reflect the immediate environment and compare with what obtains globally. Some studies on cultural aspect have compared infant feeding practices of mothers of different professionals as well as urban and rural

dwellers. The level of education and income of mothers as related to their nutritional practices was investigated.

Childhood malnutrition has remained a public health problem especially in sub Saharan Africa for quite sometimes. Research therefore, seek to understand the various determinants of childhood malnutrition focusing on early child development and care among children under the age of five years. Although malnutrition has always been associated with non-availability of food, but research is pointing to other factors such as food choice, nutritional knowledge, feeding practices, food preparation and storage, which have been overlooked and considered less important. Women have been identified as the centre point in household food security and must be targeted in solving malnutrition problems. Other studies have focused on the nutritive content of some uncommonly consumed vegetables (IITA varieties) compared to the more commonly consumed *Amaranthus*. Some works have also been done on the role of women in the economic development through food processing. The study highlighted the socio-economics of maize processing in particular as well as the extent of resource use productivity among processors.

Most recent area of research has focused on food and eating within the food service enterprise, particularly those referred to as the bukateria. This was as a result of the Federal Government's intervention in the development of the small-scale enterprises. (SSES). Studies on SSEs have not included the food service system, rather emphasis has been on food processing enterprises. The food service has been established through research as income generating, therefore contributing to overall economic development.

These research findings could be a useful basis for further research. They are useful for nutrition education both within the health care facilities and the media. Development and planning strategies as well as for policy makers. The thrust of research effort in the area of Child and Family Development and Family Relations deals with the development of the Nigerian child and the family. Since women in the rural areas

play important role in food production, there have been focuses on both their farm and off farm activities. Most of these women responsible for production are, coincidentally, also in their active child bearing age. Consequently, they have infant and preschool children. The type of childcare facility available to the working mother is one of the most important factors that affect her ability to fulfill her dual roles. The Nigerian urban working mother is able to play her dual roles of being a mother and an employee successfully due to the availability of child care services such as day care centres, nursery schools, housemaids and nannies.

The preschool year (2 – 5 years) is a critical period for child to acquire certain competences and developmental milestone in their physical, social, physiological and cognitive development. The home alone in the rural areas does not provide enough stimulation to support the total development of the child. Hence, there is need to support the benefit of the home with a good group experience such as day care centre and nursery schools. There was need to sensitize rural populace about the benefit of group care facilities to the total development of over 70% of Nigerian pre-school children resident in rural communities where such services are lacking or inadequate. Studies were designed to find out about the need, level of awareness and attitude of mothers towards the care of their preschool children outside the home part of the day. The means through which the facilities can be established and sustained was also addressed. Community based day care centre was the suggested types of services that would be affordable to mothers. The suggested means through which these centres can be established and sustained was through cooperative efforts between mothers, local organizations and the communities.

Household resource management ranges from reduction of waste to conservation of resources for effective and efficient

utilization for the family and national development. Such resources include material, human and natural resources that are available for family use. Research activities have focused on rural household resources management to determine the economic and socio-cultural factors as it affects the utilization of household resources as well as environmental factors that influence the use of these resources.

## CONCLUSION

The Department has come a long way since its inception. It has trained more than 1,200 students who are in various areas of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology and Home Economics. These young men and women most of whom are in close contact with the department have proved themselves capable of applying the knowledge acquired, to improve the quality of life of individuals and families. Through this they have fulfilled one of the major objectives of establishing the Department.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Department acknowledged the administrative and financial support of the Federal Government, University Council and University Management for the achievement so far. The great contributions of academic, technical and administrative staff that have served in one capacity and the other since inception is appreciated for making the Department what it is today. We also thank eminent people and reputable organisations that have contributed in one way and the other.

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