Ruralites' patterns of adjustment to rapid socio-economic and political changes in Nigeria under Military Regime

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Abstract

Conceptualizing change as a generally de—stablizing process, this study set out to investigate (a) the level of rural popular awareness of changes in the larger Nigerian society during the Military era, and (b) their patterns of adjustment to those changes. A total of 400 rural based respondents from the three states of the former Western State of Nigeria were involved in the study conducted in 1976/77. It was found that a large proportion of ruralites in Western Nigeria were aware of most of the changes which took place in the country during the military era but the extent to which they felt directly affected by the changes varied with the nature of the changes themselves. Similarly, their patterns of adjustment varied with the nature of the change and did not depend very much on personal characteristics. Instead the range of alternative behaviours available, the speed with which a change was expected to be effected, and the adaptability of such change to pre—existing behavioural patterns or culture, were very crucial in determining the mode of adjustment.

Introduction

The military era has been a period in which Nigeria as a developing society, has undergone a series of socio-economic, physical-structural and political changes in very rapid successions. In fact, it is popularly held that the post-civil war Nigeria has undergone more changes per year than the pre-1966 Nigeria underwent in its six years of post independence socio-economic development. Change in any form is essentially a de-stabilizing phenomenon which calls for modifications or adjustments for the restoration of pre-existing or attainment of a new equilibrium for the system. This is not, of course, implying that there is a state of perfect equilibrium in any society. There is a sense, however, in which the society may achieve relative stability for some time. According to Goodenough (1963), stability arises when mutual cause and effects in change counterbalance one another so that the flow of change tends to remain within narrow limits. As the system approaches such equilibrium, change becomes a routine and the flow of events becomes confined to narrower bands of variability. However, the repetition of events within such an apparently stable system is never exactly the same all the time but merely a modal clustering of tracks. These modal clusterings are however essential to human cognition and discernment of discontinuities in their environments and for making

proper adjustments to them.

Changes brought about by the Military Government in Nigeria have not only taken place under a more or less forced compliance condition, but also generally call for urgency of implementation thereby curtailing the otherwise long period of adjustment ideally required by adopters of innovations. Hitherto however, the Nigerian population including the social scientists, have merely been absorbing and accomodating the series of rapid social and economic changes which the governments have introduced without any attempt at considering the strains which these changes have brought on the various strata within the population — particularly the more disadvantaged in the rural areas — and how these are coping with and adjusting to these changes. This study is therefore interested in highlighting the various types of problems which change in the society can bring to its members. More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- (a) To investigate whether Nigerian ruralites do perceive or are aware of the various changes (political, economic, social, physical or structural) which have taken place in the country in the past ten years.
- (b) To investigate the effects of such changes on them;
- (c) To investigate what lines of action they have adopted to cope with these changes i.e. their adjustment patterns; and
- (d) To investigate the factors affecting these patterns of adjustment, if any.

Theoretical framework

The problem of human adjustment to change in society has received a rather scant attention in the Nigerian social science studies. This is a curious situation because a sustained and sophisticated charting of the course of change both at the individual and societal levels is prerequisite for any attempt at intervention in terms of social policy.

Nearly all the theories of social change, particularly those of the equilibrium camp, have been formulated and expected to be operated under a democratic condition. However, not all changes are planned and implemented in a democratic, step by step fashion. Accidental or unplanned change such as natural disasters, sudden illness, external invasion or death may arouse such severe discrepancies and stress on the individual that adjustment becomes a big problem. While the psychological strain, situational discrepancy and role handicap produced by drastic or unplanned

^{*}The term "Democratic" is here used to imply freedom of the individual to make independent decisions. "Non democratic" by this meaning, will therefore apply to the absence of individual liberty to decide on those changes directly affecting him.

change have been recognized and studied (Kirk, 1964); Festinger, 1957; Stouffer, et. al. 1949; Pery & Pery, 1959; etc.) little attention has been given to the fact that changes (planned or unplanned) implemented under forced compliance conditions can and do often produce comparable effects on the individual.

Under a democratic and face-to-face conditions, individuals may have the alternative of accepting or rejecting change. Under such conditions too it has been found that changes which are substitutive rather than additive to the existing culture, are more likely to be rejected (Rogers, 1962; Spicer, 1952; Goodenough, 1963; etc.). At the individual level under democratic conditions, it could be said that the readiness to accept a change presupposes a perception on the part of the individual of his ability to adjust to such change. This, of course, is not saying that all non-adopters of change are necessarily incapable of adjusting to change as there may be non-adopters who resist adoption merely because of an intrinsic lear of change (Watson, 1973). However, under forced compliance or largely non-democratic conditions like in the case of a military government as has existed in Nigeria since 1966** the individual has no options neither can be debats on the issues a addition or substitutability of the change to accustomed modes of benaviour. Under such a condition, the carriers of change are generally concerned with changing the hanaviour rather than the beliefs or values of the target system (Chin & Benne, 1969). The attempt to forcefully induce behavioural compliance in the target system through the use of agent controlled sanctions rather than inducing the desired behaviour through identifying the social object of change with the system's existing beliefs and values may enhance rapid adoption but generally compounds adjustment problems. Such strategy therefore often fails to be reconcilable with the apparently good itentions underlying such change and may thus hamper the smooth harmonization of individual felt needs with the aspirations of the government.

In the power—coercive approach, the ingredients of power upon which the strategies of change depend may be the control over knowledge, the economy and or the government. Political power carries with it legitimacy and the sanctions which accrue to those who break the law. Thus when change is legislated and is introduced as a decree or an edict (in a non—democratic manner), violation or resistance to such a change becomes an act of breaking the law. However, the power—coercive approach is not always successful at forcing change down the throat of the target system. Often where a change is too sudden and calls for drastic sacrifices in the process of adjustment with the target system being unable to foresee the immediate benefits of making such sacrifices, they may resort to violent rebellion. The *Agbekoya* farmers' rebellion in Western Nigeria in 1968 against excessive taxation in the face of falling agricultural commodity prices, is a good example (Williams, 1974)

^{**}Nigeria returned to civil rule in October 1979.

This study therefore proceeds in the belief that when any form of power strategy is employed in bringing about change; individuals will tend to exhibit other forms of adaptation apart from the pre-programmed or authority-expected responses.

Methodology and sources of data:

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Information on a sample of the major changes which the various military governments in Nigeria have brought about since 1966 were obtained through a review of official documents, newspapers and other literature. These changes were then classified under five broad categories including political, economic, physical/structural and social changes, plus a mixed category in which items cut across all others.

Political changes included the military coup d'etat; drafting of a new constitution; local government reforms, and the creation of new states.

Economic changes included the Udoji salary award to the public sectors; change in currency from pounds and shillings to Naira and Kobo; Operation Feed the Nation programme; Group Farming scheme, and the fluctuations in prices for agricultural products. The latter was not a change introduced by the military government but became very serious during the period to the extent that the Gowon government in 1974 decided to take over the responsibility of fixing the prices paid by the Marketing Boards for farmers (West Africa, April 8, 1974).

Physical/structural changes included the construction of a network of new roads and the change from left to right hand drive.

The changes classified as 'social' were mainly those in educational policies including the launching of the Universal Free Primary Education (UPE) scheme, and the establishment of new universities.

Items which were classified under 'Mixed' category included the retirement and 'clean—up campaign' of the public service; campaign against wasteful spending, and the National Youth Service (NYSC) for graduates from universities and other institutions of higher learning.

For executing the major objectives of the study, four hundred respondents were randomly drawn from farming villages in six divisions in the former Western state of Nigeria (Ile-Ife, Ilesha, Ijebu-Ode, Oshogbo, Ondo and Akure divisions) so as to roughly cut across the three new states (Ogun, Oyo and Ondo) which have been created in this area. Twenty—two farming villages were involved in all, with the number of selected respondents per village varying proportionately with the known population estimates of the village. Farming villages were preferred in this study since they are the remotest units from seats of government. Moreover, it was assumed that even when both rural and urban dwellers used similar methods to adjust to specific change, the impact will be different when their relative levels of living are taken into consideration.

Respondents were mainly heads of households and therefore predominantly males (89%) who were old enough to have lived and witnessed the various changes in the country over the period 1966 – 76.

Table 1: Impact of all identified changes on respondents.

LYFEC OF CHANGE	ALL RESPONDENTS N=400						
		CTLY CTED %		RECTLY CTED '%	AFFI F	NOT ECTED %	WEIGHTED MEAN SCORE
Military Coup	47	11.75	48	12	305	76.25	1.36
Civil war	44	11.00	83	20.75	273	68.25	1.43
Draft into the army	41	10.25	67	16.75	292	73.00	1.37
Udoji awards	89	22.25	99	24.75	212	53.00	1.69
Change in currency	200	50.00	114	28.50	86	21.50	2.86
Change from left to right hand drive	123	30,75	128	32.00	149	37.25	1.94
OFN	172	43.00	68	17.00	160	40.00	2.03
Oil boom ·	47	11.75	81	20.25	272	68.00	1,44
Falling agric. prices	118	29.50	82	20,50	200	50,00	1,80
U.P.E. scheme	292	73.00	30	17.00	40	0,00	2.63
Drafting of constitution	- 20	5.00	3 7	14,25	323	80.75	1.24
Return or no return to civil rule	36	9.00	34	8,50	330	82.50	1.27
Retirement exercise	36	9.00	25	6.25	339	84.75	1,24
Group farming	152	38.00	27	6.75	221	55.25	1.83
Anti-wasteful Spending campaign	80	20.00	64	16.00	256	64.00	1.56
h.I.S.C.	80	20.00	34	8.50	286	71.50	1,49
L.G. Reforms	53	13.25	76	19.00	271	67.75	1.46
Creation of states	131	32.75	103	25.75	166	29.00	1.90

Pre-tested interview schedules were used for data collection which took place between July and December 1976. As the study is primarily exploratory, the level of statistical analysis used has been limited to simple descriptive, chi square and correlational analyses.

Findings

A. Ruralites' awareness of change

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they were aware of the various changes mentioned above, and to indicate whether these changes did affect them directly, indirectly, or not at all. For the first question, a simple frequency count was done while for the second a weighting of 3, 2 and 1 was assigned to the response 'directly affected', 'indirectly affected' and 'not affected at all' respectively. A weighted mean score (WMS) was calculated both for the individual items (See table 1 above) and for all items in each category as shown on Table 2 below.

Table 2: Categories of change and respondents' perception of effect.

Category of change	Rate of awareness (N=400)	WMS* of perceived effect
Political	62.3%	1.4
Economic	85.0%	1.9
Physical/Structural	98.0%	1.9
Social	97.0%	2.6
Mixed Item changes	29.0%	1.4

*WMS = Weighted Mean Score: 1 = Not affected at all; 2 = Not directly affected; 3 = Directly affected.

Although the chi square analysis performed showed no significant relationship either on an item—to—item or on aggregate basis between the level of effect a change has on a respondent and his awareness of such a change, Table 2 above shows that more rural people were aware of and more directly affected by social, physical/structural, and economic changes (in that order of decending importance) than political and Mixed Item type of changes.

A further analysis of the data shows that those specific changes with the greatest level of direct effect and of which the respondents were most aware, included such non—discriminatory changes as the change of currency from

pounds and shillings to naira and kobo (94%:2.9)*; the Universal Free Primary Education scheme (88%:2.9)*; the creation of states (96%:1.9)*; change from left to right hand drive (92%:1.7)*. On the contrary, the respondents were less aware and felt less directly affected by the more discriminatory type of changes (in terms of the number and category of people the change is immediately directed) like the National Youth Service (7%:1.4)*; the drafting of the new constitution (34%:1.2)*; retirements in the public service (34%:1.2)*; etc. Thus at this stage and based on the foregoing data, we can conclude that the ruralites' level of awareness of changes in the society and perception of the effects of such changes are dependent not on whether the change is political, economic or social in nature, but upon whether the change is discriminatory (i.e. is meant to exclude people like them) or non—discriminatory (i.e. is meant to affect everyone irrespective of status) in nature.

B. Effects of changes on the ruralites

Respondents were asked to indicate the ways and means by which they were affected by the various specific changes under each category. Here the responses varied according to the extent to which the specific change affected the individual. However, the general trend for each category of change could be summarized as follows:

(i) Political Changes

A great section of the respondents (62%) indicated that a change of government by military coup generally breeds fear and may lead them to restrict their movements, for a considerable length of time, to their village limits (42%), or remain indoors.

Most of the respondents (66%) were not aware of the drafting of the new constitution for the nation and so did not feel affected by it. Even among those who were aware, less than one percent bothered to make any contribution to the draft. This, they indicated, was because a greater proportion of them (91%) did not know what the constitution is all about, while others felt that their own suggestions would not matter.

With regards to the creation of states, this change tended to generate a new consciousness of social deprivation among the respondents. A considerable number (46%) indicated that they have encouraged leaders of their villages to make demands for social amenities from their new state's government. About 27% also indicated that they have developed more interest in things pertaining to their new states. Only a few (2%) indicated restricting their businesses to their new states while none indicated having severed relations with people in other states.

^{*}The first figure in parentheses represents total percentage of awareness while the second represents the mean perceived effect on the respondents.

Although 55 percent of the respondents were aware of the Local Government Reforms, only 13 percent felt directly affected and the same proportion indicated their intention to contest the election to the council thereby indicating that the respondents defined 'being affected by the Local Government Reforms' in terms of the intention to take active part in the running of the local government affairs.

(ii) Economic Changes

Such economic changes as the Udoji salary awards generated a great inability to sustain past levels of economic consumption among a majority (82%) of the respondents. This is because although the change was non-discriminatory to those in the public sectors in the very broad sense of the term, it was discriminatory to those in the private sectors, and particularly to the farmers and other rural self-employed persons. However, the effects of the change (inflation) was generally non-discriminatory.

Other forms of economic changes like the change of currency and the introduction of group farming, largely exposed some of the respondents to exploitation and or duplicity by some more enlightened members of the public. For instance, some of the respondents (12%) had to hire other people to assist them in changing their old currency while in the case of the group farms, only a few participants in the programme (25%) indicated that they spend a greater part of their time and resources on the group farms while the rest were working mainly on their private farms thereby cheating the others.

In the case of the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), most respondents (57%) indicated that this did not have direct effects on them.

(iii) Physical/Structural Changes

As earlier indicated, the major change in this category included the construction of a network of major highways and the change from left to right hand drive. Road construction affected a few of the respondents (19%) whose houses had to be pulled down in the process while a few others (30%) indicated that their farmlands were taken up by the new road. Another 30 percent of the respondents also indicated that the new road diverted traffic from their village thereby adversely affecting their road—side trading or forcing them to be carrying their wares a considerable distance for display along the new road.

As for the change from left to right hand drive, this change created instant confusion among a majority (69%) of the respondents. However, the confusion was not serious since most of them neither own nor drive motor vehicles. Nevertheless, it also exposed some of them to abuse by the more knowledgeable members of the public.

(iv) Social Change

The major change in this category was the institution of the Universal

Primary Education (UPE) scheme, Only a few respondents (18%) indicated that this change placed extra burdens on them in terms of having to provide the supportive facilities like uniforms and other requirements. However, the finding in this respect may be regarded as unique because the former Western Region as a whole had experienced the UPE scheme since 1955 (Ekong, 1977) and so had already developed some adaptive strategies. It is expected that the effects of the UPE scheme on ruralites would be slightly different in other parts of the country where the programme is a complete novelty.

(v) Mixed Item Changes

The respondents were largely unaffected by the retirement exercise. Similarly, only a few (9%) had children in the universities and so a greater majority did not feel affected by the National Youth Service scheme.

With regards to the anti-wasteful spending campaign, 52% of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of such campaign while only 20% felt they were directly affected by it. Such effect they indicated, was mainly in terms of the campaign discouraging drummers and professional praise singers from being patronized by affluent members of the society.

C. Patterns of Adaptation To The Changes

Here again, respondents were asked various questions to ascertain the adaptive strategies which they have devised in order to adjust to those changes which affected them. The general trends in the forms of adaptation for each category of change can be summarized as follows:

(i) Political Changes

A considerable proportion of the respondents (42%) indicated that whenever there is a coup d'etat, they take precautionary measures in order to safeguard life. Such measures include remaining indoors and or restricting their movements to their village limits for some time. Otherwise, the rest of the respondents said that they generally pretend that nothing serious has happened and continue with their normal duties.

The creation of states has mainly been seen as a means whereby social amenities could be extended to the rural areas. The growing idea of "statism" among urban elites does not seem to have fully gripped the ruralites — perhaps because the former Western State from where the three new states have been created, is homogenous in many respects (at least at the ruralites' level of political consiousness).

Apart from these perceived non-discriminatory political changes, the respondents tended to be largely indifferent to other apparently more discriminatory political changes like the drafting of the new constitution for the country, the local government reforms and the local government elections.

(ii) Economic Changes

The general patterns of adjustment to the inflation generated by the Udoji salary award by the respondents included:

- (a) Increased primary group solidarity and dependence on more well—to—do urban dwelling relations as evidenced by increased regularity of visits, and expectation of material support. Seventy nine percent of the respondents indicated having adopted such measures in order to cope with the inflation.
- (b) Increased cash mindedness as shown by the tendency of a large number of the respondents (79%) to put most of their farm and other products on sale rather than sharing these with relations. Similarly, 80% indicated the tendency to commercialize hitherto free labour and services.
- (c) Reduction of family size by giving some children away to go and live with urban relatives. About 66% of the respondents said they have taken this line of action since the Udoji award was announced.
- (d) Expression of a wish for fewer number of children or to stop further child bearing. Although this may not strictly be regarded as an adaptation strategy since a wish is no concrete and effective action, and the act of birth control or total cessation of child birth cannot be a unilateral act, it is still worthy to note that 64% of the respondents indicated this wish.
- (e) Increased tendency to defer social gratification, for instance, by actually cutting down on the number of parties organized. Forty three percent of the respondents indicated having done this.
- (f) Increasing prices of farm produce. Nearly 51% of the respondents admitted taking such steps.
- (g) Taking on of supplementary jobs. Seventy nine percent of the respondents indicated having looked for part—time jobs since Udoji awards were published.

With respect to the fluctuations in the demand for and prices of agricultural produce, those respondents who were farmers indicated that their methods of adjustment included the following:

- (a) Reduction in the various forms of capital input on their farms. Seventy one percent of them indicated this.
- (b) Search for supplementary incomes through part-time jobs; 65% indicated this.
- (c) Deliberate delay or total refusal to harvest; only 2% of the farmers

however indicated this line of action.

With the change in currency from pounds and shillings to naira and kobo, a considerable proportion of the respondents (61%) have not totally changed conceptually to the new units. Instead, they indicated that they find it easier to price in the old currency units and then do the mental conversion while receiving or paying the new currency for goods.

In the case of the Operation Feed the Nation programme, those respondents who were farmers (62%) indicated that they were somehow affected by the programme and that they were making adjustments to it by extending their farmlands and or prospecting for farm credits and other inputs. This of course, was the officially expected method of adjustment to the programme.

(ii) Physical/Structural Changes

As already alluded to, the changes in this category included the construction of highways and the change from left to right hand drive. Adjustment to road construction included erection of temporary stalls by the side of new roads by the ruralites for selling their wares, opening of new paths to link the villages to the new road and in cases of those whose houses were pulled down or whose farmlands became part of the new road, these had to find alternatives.

In the case of the change from left to right hand drive, the variety of adaptation devised by the non-vehicle operating portion of the respondents (60%) is a good evidence of the confusion which the change generated among this category of citizens. The various strategies of adaptation is better presented as in Table 3 below.

Table 3. <u>Mon-vehicle Cwming .uralites' Strategies for Adaptation to the</u>
Right hand drive.

Behaviour indicated	Frequency (N=240)	Percentage
Walk on the same side as vehicles	48	20.0
Walk on the opposite side to vehicles	107	44.5
Keep to the left always	23	9.6
Walk on the side that I like	17	7.1
Try to look at road signs before movi	ng 17	7.1
No answers	28	11.7

The vehicle operating portion of the respondents (40%) seemed to have adjusted to the change to the right either by knowing what to do, or imitating what other vehicle operators do. The apparent confusion among pedestrians indicated above may be a direct result of the fact that most Nigerian roads do not make separate provisions for pedestrians neither is there a widely known rule to guide pedestrians' movement

(iv) Mixed Item Changes

The changes which came under this category included the retirement exercise in the public service; the National Youth Service and the anti-wasteful spending campaign. Only about 2% of the respondents were affected by the retirement exercise. These indicated that they were adjusting to the situation through

- (a) Opening farms and becoming farmers;
- (b) Cutting down generally on their spending, and
- (c) Going into private businesses and contract jobs.

Similarly, only 9% of the respondents had children in the universities and 7% indicated feeling affected by the NYS programme. Their major method of adjusting to the extra year of service which their children have to serve before beginning to earn regular salaries, was to assume that the children had not yet actually completed their course of studies. This is adjustment by a process of denial.

On the anti-wasteful spending campaign, the method of adjustment indicated included the limitation of parties organized or attended to the very essential ones and the discouragement of drummers and praise singers. Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated taking such steps.

D. Factors Affecting Patterns of Adjustment to Change

A simple correlational analysis was carried out between specific adjustment strategies to the various changes and such personal characteristics as age, level of education, average annual income, family size and having urban dwelling relations. It was found that the correlations between personal characteristics and methods of adjustment to change, were generally very weak and in some cases negative thereby suggesting that the patterns of adjustment to change may be more attributable to the nature of the change itself than to the characteristics of the individual experiencing the change. The variation in the patterns of adjustment within and among the different categories of change discussed above, go to confirm this assertion. A further analysis shows that no specific personal characteristics could meaningfully account for the adjustment patterns to the

various political changes – particularly as most of the respondents were otherwise indifferent to political changes. Similarly, no personal characteristics could significantly account for the adjustment patterns to any of the mixed item changes – perhaps because these also affected an insignificant proportion of the respondents.

Level of education correlated weakly (r = 0.21) with knowing which side of the road to take following the change from left to right hand drive. However, in a largely non-discriminatory change like this one, people generally tend to adapt through imitation rather than the possession of any specific characteristics. Also the absence of any rule or set of rules in the country on how pedestrians should use the road as already referred to, makes the linking of specific road usage behaviour to personal characteristics unrealistic.

In the case of economic changes, such adjustment strategy as the reduction of family size by sending some children to go and live with urban dewlling relations, was weakly correlated with age of the respondent (r = 0.24); size of the family (r = 0.25); and the number of children the respondents has in school (r = 0.25). Similarly, adjustment through the reduction in the level of consumption was weakly and negatively correlated with level of income (r = -0.20), and the number of children in school (r = 0.14). Adjustment through increased visits to and expectation of material support from urban dwelling relations, was also positively correlated with having urban dwelling relations (r = 0.45). Adjustment by selling more farm produce rather than sharing with relations, was highly negatively correlated with level of income (r = -0.55). Similarly, in the case of currency change, adjustment by pricing in the old unit of currency was weakly and negatively correlated with level of education (r = -0.21) and positively with age (r = 0.20)

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this study show that a large proportion of rural people in western Nigeria are aware of the various changes which have taken place in the country during the period 1966-76. However, the level of popular awareness varies according to whether a specific change affects everyone directly irrespective of status (i.e. non-discriminatory), or affects only certain categories of people in the society (i.e. discriminatory). In this respect, it has also been found that changes of a political nature tend to be seen by ruralites as affecting them less than economic changes. An earlier study (Ekong, 1977) had also shown that the level of active political participation in western Nigeria is generally low; that most citizens in this part of Nigeria would like to vote for others rather than want to be voted for. The present findings of a general attitude of indifference to political changes can be regarded as a further proof of either an underdevelopment or deadening of a "civic culture" (Almond & Verba, 1963) at the grassroots in this part of the country. Among the requirements for modernization identified by Lerner (1958), Almond & Coleman (1960), Berelson et. al. (1954), Szentes (1971), etc., is political

participation. This transcends mere voting and includes the development of genuine interest in politics, discussion of politics and motivation to participate as an actor in the political area if need be. However, in this instance we can explain part of the seeming political apathy in western Nigeria to the bitter experiences which the past political activities in this part of the country brought to the people (See Post & Vickers, 1973), and the fact of the presence of a military regime which has also imposed a temporary ban on political activities.

The implication for future research therefore is that further studies need to be done to ascertain the level of political participation not only in the western portion, but throughout Nigeria when the civilian government eventually returns.

On the patterns of adjustment developed by the rlespondents to the various changes, we can conclude that the strategy of adjustment to change is more dependent upon the range of alternative behaviours opened to individuals than to the individual's personal characteristics. Such alternative behaviour may range from the option to adopt or reject the change, to the deferment of adoption to such a time as would be more convenient to the individual. However, change under a military regime generally assumes forced compliance rather than the democratic posture. In such a case, as demonstrated in this study, adopters have to devise personal modifications of the change in order to adjust to them.

Other factors which affect the relative ease with which people adjust to change as also revealed in this study, include —

- (a) The adaptability of such change to existing behaviour or culture (as demonstrated in the case of adaptation to currency change in which the new currency could only be used in terms of the old method of counting), and
- (b) The speed or urgency with which the change is effected. In this respect, a change which takes the people unawares thereby giving no time to the development of mental strategies for adjustment, as in the case of a military coup d'etat, is more likely to cause shock and panic in the first instance.

Similarly, a change which could be tried in bits (as in the case of the currency change which was started with the introduction of the lower denomination of coins in 1972 before the currency notes in 1973), affords easier adjustment than one (like the change from left to right hand drive) which cannot be so tried.

The general implication of these is that planners of change must be conscious of the fact that change is essentially a de-stabilizing process and that in planning for change, adequate consideration must be given to the issue of what could be done in order to cushion most of the problems which the people — particularly those in the rural areas — are likely to face in adjusting to such change. Admittedly, some changes by their very nature, do

not allow for such cushioning as the dimensions of the accompanying adjustment problems may not be clearly obvious until the change has been fully implemented. In such instance, it behoves a concerned system to assist its members to adjust properly to the new situation.

Also important is the question of whether the target system's final behaviour is generally the same as the pre-programmed or authority-expected behaviour. In other words, planners of change must anticipate the possible adjustment strategies which the target system is likely to devise and fore-study how such strategies would affect the congruency of the ultimate behaviour to the authority-expected behaviour and then make provisions for deviations in order to ensure uniformity. The adjustment to the Operation Feed the Nation programme indicated by the farmer respondents in this study, serves as a good example.

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