



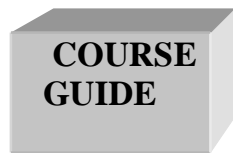
NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

COURSE CODE: CRS352

COURSE TITLE: SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION



CRS 352
SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

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Introduction

The issue of Religion has engaged the attention of scholars for a long period of time. Right from the medieval ages, explanations to social phenomenon were based on religious consideration. For example, criminals were considered to be possessed by demons. This line of thinking has persisted in some societies for a long period until the advent of modern science. Indeed, Religion permeates all facets of society.

This course will expose you to issues relating to Religion and how sociologists consider them. The course consists of three modules divided into 14 units. They include, course guide, concept and meaning of sociology and sociology of Religion, issues in sociology of Religion and the role of Religion in the society. The course Guide briefly explains to you what the course is all about, what course materials you will be using as you work your way through the course. It also gives you advice on the amount of time you may spend on each unit of the course so that you can complete the course successfully and in good time. The course guide provides some guidance on tutor-marked assignments, which will be made available in the assignment file. There are regular tutorial classes that are linked to the course. You are advised to attend the sessions.

What You Will Be Learning in this Course

The general aim of this course is to introduce you to how religion is involved in all aspects of societal life. During this course you will be learning the meaning of sociology and sociology of Religion, the nature of religious beliefs, issues in sociology of Religion, the importance of Religion to society, Religion and violence in Nigeria as well as the role of Religion in politics. Also, issues relating to Religion and culture as well as religion and social change will be examined.

Course Aims

This course aims generally at enabling you understand the relationship between religion and the society. Specifically, the course aims at:

- (i) Introducing you to the basic issues and concept in Sociology of Religion
- (ii) Explaining to you the relationship between Religion and society.
- (iii) Bringing to your understanding the role of religion in politics and development.

- (iv) Helping you understand the place of religion in violence in Nigeria.
- (v) Enabling you understand the major institutions of society as agencies of Religion

Course Objectives

In order to effectively achieve the aims set, the course sets its overall objectives which are always stated at the beginning of each unit. Always read these objectives so that you can check your progress. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- (i) Define sociology and Sociology of Religion. (ii) Explain the concepts of Religion and society. (iii) Describe the nature of religious beliefs.
- (iv) Outline and explain the elements of Religion
- (v) Discuss the theories of Religion and society
- (vi) Explain the relationship between Religion and society
- (vii) Outline and explain the major institutions of society as agencies of Religion
- (viii) Discuss Religion as an aspect of culture
- (ix) Examine Religion and change in the society
- (x) Outline the importance of Religion to society
- (xi) Discuss Religion and violence in Nigeria
- (xii) Explain the role of Religion to the development of the society.

Working through this Course

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units thoroughly, read recommend text books and other materials provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Each unit has self-Assessment Exercises and you may be required to submit assignments for assessment Purpose. The course should take you about 15 weeks to complete. You will find listed all the components of the course, what you have to do and how you should proceed to allocate your time to each unit in order to enable you complete the course on time and successfully too.

Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study units
3. References

4. Assignment file
5. Presentation schedule

Study units

The study units in the course are as follows:

Module 1: Concept and Meaning of Sociology of Religion

Unit 1: Meaning of sociology and sociology of Religion.

Unit 2: Concepts of Religion and society.

Unit 3: The Nature of Religious beliefs

Unit 4: Elements of Religion.

Unit 5: Theories of Religion and society.

Module 2: Issues in Sociology of Religion

Unit 1: The Relationship between Religion and society

Unit 2: Major institutions of society as agencies of Religion

Unit 3: Religion and Culture

Unit 4: Religion and social change

Unit 5: Belief systems in Africa

Module 3: The Role of Religion in the Society Unit 1: The importance of

Religion to society

Unit 2: The importance of society to Religion

Unit 3: Religion and conflict in Nigeria

Unit 4: The role of Religion in politics

Every unit contains a list of references and further reading. Try to get as many as possible of those textbooks and materials listed. The textbooks and materials are meant to deepen your knowledge in the course.

Assignment File

In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the Assignment file itself and this course guide in the section on assessment.

The Presentation Schedule

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of your Tutor –Marked Assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guide against falling behind in your work.

Assessment

There are three aspects to the assessment of the course. First, are self-Assessment Exercises, and second is the tutor-marked assignment and third is a written examination. You are advised to be sincere in attempting the exercises. You are also expected to apply information, knowledge and skill that you have acquired during the course. The Assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the presentation schedule and assessment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total course work. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final examination which will account for 70% of your total work.

Tutor-Marked Assignments

There are three tutor-marked assignments in this course. Each assignment counts 10% towards your total course work. Assignment questions for this course are contained in the assignment file. You will be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your reference books, reading and study units. You may also need to read and do further research on your own. When you complete each assignment, send it together with a TMA form to your tutor on time as indicated in the presentation schedule and assignment file.

Final Examination

The final examination for this course will be of 2-hour 15 minutes duration and will be marked over 70 marks of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-assessment, practice exercises and Tutor-Marked Assignments you have previously solved. All the areas of the course will be assessed. You may need to do thorough reading of the course material and even revise your Tutor- Marked Assignments and self-assessment Exercises to get your- self ready for the final examination. The final examination will cover all aspects of the course.

Course Marking Scheme

The table below shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

Table 1: Course Marking Scheme.

Assignment	Marks
Assignment 1-3	Three assignments, 10% each = 30% of the course mark
Final examination	70% of overall course mark
Total	100% of course marks

Course Overview

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take to complete them and the assignments that follow them.

Table 2: Course Organizer

Unit	Title of work	Weeks Activity	Assessment (of unit)
1	Meaning of sociology and sociology of Religion	2	1
2	Concepts of Religion and society	1	1
3	The nature of Religious beliefs	1	1
4	Elements of Religion	1	1
5	Theories of Religion and society	1	1
6	The Relationship between Religion and society	1	1
7	Major institutions of society as agencies of Religion	1	1
8	Religion and culture	1	1
9	Religion and social change	1	1
10	Belief systems in Africa	1	1
11	The importance of Religion to society	1	1
12	The importance of society to Religion	1	1
13	Religion and violence in Nigeria	1	1
14	The Role of Religion in politics	1	1

How to Get the Most from This Course

In distance learning programme, the study units replace the course lecturer. This is one of the great advantages for distance learning. You can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, time and place that you find convenient. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercises for you to do at appropriate points. Each of the study unit follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with other units and the course as a whole. Following this is a set of objectives that lets you know what you should be able to do as you complete studying the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you finish studying a particular unit, go back to check if you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this, you will significantly increase your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the unit guides you through the unit content material. Self-assessment exercises are spread throughout the units and answers are given at the end of the units. Working through these assessments will help you achieve the objectives for the unit and prepare you for the assignments and examination. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's work is to help you.

1. Read this course guide thoroughly.
2. Organize a study schedule. Adhere to the time you are expected to spend on each unit
3. Upon creation of your own study schedule, do everything to remain faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind in their course work. You should let your tutor know if you enter into difficulties.
4. Turn to unit 1 and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your Textbooks as contained in the reference section.
6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit you will know what other sources to consult for further information.
7. Keep in touch with your study centre. Up-to-date information about your course will be available there
8. Do your assignments diligently. They are made to help you achieve the objectives of the course.
9. Review the objectives of each unit to ensure that they are properly met. If you are in doubt consult your tutor.
10. When you are sure that you have met the objectives of a particular unit, you can now start work on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to face your study.
11. When you submit your assignment to your tutor, do not wait for its return before stating on the next unit. When the assignment is eventually returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments both on the tutor-marked assignment form, and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
12. When you finish studying the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for

the final examination. Again, cross check to make sure that you have achieved the unit's objectives.

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

There are 28 hours of tutorials (fourteen 2-hour sessions) provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials together with the name and phone number of your tutor as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Each assignment will be marked by your tutor. Pay close attention to the comments your tutor might make on your assignment as these may help you in your progress. Ensure that your assignment gets to your tutor on or before due date. Your tutorials are very important therefore try and attend all of them. It is an opportunity to meet your tutor and get help inform of discussion over areas of difficulty encountered in the course of reading.

Summary

This course introduces you to the study of sociology of Religion. Religion permeates all facets of society and is therefore a useful tool in the stability and development of societies. The course therefore undertakes a sociological examination of the extent of involvement of religion in the cultural, social, economic, and political development of the people. It focuses on issues of violence, politics, culture, and development with particular reference to the Nigerian situation.

Main Contents

Unit 1 The Concept and Meaning of Sociology of religion

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Meaning of Sociology
- 1.4 Factors that Necessitate the Emergence of Sociology
- 1.5 Methodology of Sociological Study
- 1.6 Definition and Subject Matter of Sociology of Religion
- 1.7 Summary
- 1.8 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 1.10 Glossary

1.1 Introduction

Hello my dear student. I welcome you to this interesting course CRS 352: Sociology of Religion. We are going to look briefly into the meaning of sociology, commenting on various sociologists and their views of the subject. Before going into this, let us state briefly the learning outcomes of our discussion.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- State the meaning of sociology
- Explain the factors that necessitated then emergence of sociology
- Identify the methodology of sociological study
- Discuss the subject matter of sociology of religion

1.3 Meaning of Sociology

Are you aware that the word sociology was coined by a French philosopher who later became a sociologist, his name is Auguste Comte. He combined the Latin word ‘socio’ which means society and the Greek Word ‘Logos’ meaning science to form sociology. Thus, sociology from its etymological origin means the science of society. Comte intended sociology to be a science based on systematic observation, and classification of facts rather than causal, off hand, speculation and rumor. The scope of sociology has grown to cover a systematic study of human, environmental, material, material and ideological components of society. The discipline analyses human ideas,

behaviour, grouping, organizations, administration, law, crime and punishment. Also, it looks into such human social problems like hunger, poverty, disease, homelessness, unemployment, ignorance, deviance, crime and violence.

There are other founding fathers or pioneer scholars of sociology apart from Auguste Comte who contributed meaningfully to the understanding, scope and development of the discipline. They include Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Talcott Parsons. Let us look briefly at the central views of each of these founding fathers or classical theorists of sociology as they are called.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define the concept of Sociology?

Auguste Comte:

He opined that sociology should focus on social statics and social dynamics. Social statics refers to structures and functions of sub-systems, institutions and persons that are relatively permanent. While social dynamics refers to the changes that occurs in human institutions overtime. His central concern is for sociologists to understand the fundamental laws of nature and why people behave the way they do under different circumstances.

In this regard, Comte formulated the law of three stages of societal growth.

Theological Stage- This is the first stage that society must pass through in her development. It is a primitive or preliterate state where nature and the world in general is understood from a religious standpoint. With this, the powers of the priest and clergy is very influential on human society.

Metaphysical Stage- The second stage he identified as metaphysical because it is marked by human reasoning, enlightenment and reformation. A time people started challenging religion's explanations of reality.

Positive Science or Scientific Stage- This stage for Comte can also be referred to as Positivism. It is known for individual revolution, scientific discoveries and technological growth and development.

Activity 1

What stage of social evolution or development do you think the Nigerian society is currently undergoing?

Herbert Spencer:

He was influenced by Charles Darwin's evolutionary (biology) theory of the species. Hence, he likens the study of society to a biological organism with interdependent but inter-related parts that function independently and inter-dependently. The central idea of Spencer is that each part of society plays necessary roles for the existence and survival of the whole.

Emile Durkheim:

He sees human relationships and societal growth as beginning from simple forms and growing into complex ones. Also, he considers society as a moral entity that is external to the individual but forces individuals to comply through belief system into a moral community of adherents.

Karl Marx- Marx is a German Philosopher. He focuses on society which he saw as built on capitalist economy which is characterised by social conflict between two opposing classes of society. The classes are the owners of capital (bourgeoisies) and working class (proletariat).

Marx Weber- He considers society as dealing with the study of organizations and the role of ideals in the development of human society. He was very passionate about sociologists studying the relationship between power and authority which he conceived as domination. Weber further argued that legitimate power results in authority which leads to the three types of domination. **Legal or rational, traditional and charismatic domination.**

Legal or rational domination is the basis for modern bureaucracies with definite hierarchical arrangements and structures as well of functions.

Traditional domination is through customs and traditions.

Charismatic domination is through gift of grace or extra-ordinary qualities of the individual person.

Talcott Parsons- He was concerned with human behaviour in the society which he Christened social action. He classified human behaviour based on motivations for human action. Parsons further argued that for society to survive and develop, it requires functional pre-requisites. Such prerequisites include pattern maintenance, tension management, goal attainment, adaptation to environment and integration of the various components.

1.4 Factors that Necessitate the Emergence of Sociology

Now, let us look at the major factors that influenced the emergence of the field of sociology.

- **Comtian Era** - Greek and Roman philosophers of old had earlier reflected intellectually on the societies of their time. Notably among these social philosophers were Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau. These earlier scholars who operated

before the era of August Comte focused their attention on social and political life of the people by examining the organizational and administration of society and the relationship between government and citizens.

- **Enlightenment Era** – During the enlightenment era, violent revolutions became wider spread in Europe. Notable among the revolutions were those of Germany, Britain, Italy and France. The unification of Germany brought wars in the country the revolutionized the nation. The English revolution brought about by conflict between King James I and parliament in 17th century brought many changes in Great Britain. Before the revolution, it was the church that crowned the kings, and gave them the supreme political power over the kingdoms. In 1789, France was faced with her own share of the revolution. In her case, there was a violent overthrow of King Louis XVIII that resulted in the strengthening of parliament. The major demands of the French revolutionaries were liberty, equality and fraternity.
- **Industrial Revolution** – This is another major factor that informed the emergence of sociology. The industrial revolution brought widespread changes like the disruption that accompanied the industrialization process; societies becoming more chaotic and pollution of the environment emanating from industrial by-products. Peasant migration from rural to urban towns for factory employment. The rise of cities with anonymity because there was a collapse of religion as a source of moral authority. Specifically, there was a disappearance of old views of social order as ordained by God, thereby giving rise to scientific explanations for the changes in social events.
- **Charles Darwin's Evolution Theory** – You have to understand that the biological evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin in the year 1859 greatly influenced the emergence of sociology. The theory traced the origin of all species of plants and animals from their earliest origin. For example, this theory led Herbert Spencer in England to conceive of human society from the view of organic evolution.
- **The Adoption of Scientific method of Investigation** – Sociology emerged partly due to the adoption of the scientific method in the study of social behaviour. As a new field sociology domesticated the methods of enquiry found in the other pure sciences like chemistry, physics, biology, etc.
- **European Exposure to different Societies** – The contact of Europeans with non-European cultures also influenced the emergence of sociology. Societies like African, Asian, and the

Americans were observed to be completely different from European ones. The realization that different societies were at different levels of development necessitated the scientific study of society to find out reasons for such.

- **Establishment of Sociology departments, Journals and Associations -**

I would like you to note the following facts;

- a.) Sociology became an independent field of study in **1892** with the establishment of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, United States of America.
- b.) In **1895**, the American Journal of Sociology was established to publish and document research and intellectual works of sociologists. at the University.
- c.) In **1905**, the American sociological society, a professional body of practitioners in the field of sociology came into existence.
- d.) In Africa, the first department of Sociology was established at the University of Ghana in the year **1951**.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Identify and briefly discuss the factors that necessitated the emergence of Sociology

1.5 Methodology of Sociological Study

John Rex summarised the methodology of sociology as clarification and search for laws and establishment of causal relations and sequences.

Based on empirical investigation, sociology clarifies social facts through observable characteristics of human behaviour and institutions or organization. Sociologists clarify human society into various systems example political, economic, cultural, religious, etc. Just like the biological sciences classifies the human body into various systems like digestive, excretory, reproductive, skeletal, etc.

In searching for laws, sociologists derive it from induction and deductions. Induction is the process of observing characteristics of a group of people by understanding the behavioural manifestations from the larger segments or corporate groups in society. On the other hand, deduction is by moving from the general characteristics to the particular phenomenon being observed, leading to the identification of similar characteristics or differences involved with the phenomenon under study. Also, sociologists seek to establish causal relations and sequences through cause and effects relationships. The sociologists apply the casualty model in understanding among variables, in

terms of independent and dependent variables. There are always cause and effects in social behaviour or social events, although the courses may not be the direct outcome in terms of effects.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the methodology used in Sociology

1.6 Definition and Subject Matter of Sociology of Religion

It is very good to understand that the Sociology of religion is the study of religion from a sociological perspective. It adopts the use of social variables to investigate religion. It is an essential part of the study of human culture and knowledge. Whereas, culture is the totality of a people's ways of life that is learned and passed down from one generation to another, religion is a powerful element of culture that is found in all human societies.

Inbuilt in every religion are theological and doctrinal teachings as well as values, laws, ethics, creeds, and beliefs that shape the life of adherents in a society. The sociology of religion therefore is interested in understanding the extent of involvement, participation and contribution religion has made in patterning and providing direction for a society. The extent to which religion has brought about changed and development in human society.

Sociology of religion also investigates the historical development of religion; its origin, and various forms religious beliefs have taken over time. Similarly, the impact of religion on different aspects of society like marriage, families, politics, economy, health, education, technology, peace, violence, war are studied.

We can simply say that sociology of religion is the study of the mutual relationship between religion and society, how religion shapes and influences society and how on the other hand, society determines and conditions religion.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Define sociology of religion and its subject matter

1.7 Summary

In this unit, we have dealt with definition of sociology, the meaning of sociology, the factors that necessitated the emergence of sociology, methodology of sociological study and the subject matter of sociology of religion. I hope you have noted that sociology of religion is very broad and relevant

as all aspect of society is studied in relation to their impact on religion or all religions impact on society as a whole or specific aspects of any society.

1.8 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Akpenpuun, D. (2009). An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion. Ibadan: John Archers Publishers.

Otite, O. and Onigu, O. (1979). An Introduction to Sociological Studies. Ibadan: Spectrum Educational Books.

1.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The concept of Sociology

- It is the science of society
- It is a science based of systematic observation, classification of facts rather than speculation

Answer to SAE 2

2. Factors that necessitated the emergence of sociology

- Comtian Era
- Enlightenment Era
- Industrial Revolution
- Charles Darwin's theory of evolution
- Adoption of scientific method of investigation
- European exposure to different society

Answer to SAE 3

3. Definition and Subject matter of Sociology of RELIGION

- Sociology of religion is the study of religion from a sociological perspective Industrial Revolution
- It adopts the use of social variables to investigate religion
- It examines the extent of involvement, participation and contribution religion has made in patterning and providing direction for a society
- It investigates the historical development of religion; its origin, and various forms religious beliefs have taken over time
- It studies the mutual relationship between religion and society, how religion shapes and influences society and how on the other hand, society determines and conditions religion

1.10 Glossary

Legitimacy- Lawfulness by virtue of being authorized or in accordance with law.

Unit 2: Concepts of Religion and Society

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcome
- 2.3 Concept of Religion
 - 2.3.1 The Supernatural
- 2.4 The Concept of Society
 - 2.4.1 Land
 - 2.4.2 Population
 - 2.4.3 Politics
 - 2.4.4 Work
- 2.5 Types of Society
 - 2.5.1 Tribal Society
 - 2.5.2 Agrarian Society
 - 2.5.3 Industrial Society
 - 2.5.4 Post-industrial Society
- 2.6 Summary
- 1.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 1.11 Glossary

2.1 Introduction

Hello! I guess you left the discussion forum in the last meeting full of excitement. You can agree with me that sociology is so broad, but more importantly so relevant and practical. In this Unit, we shall discuss the concept of religion and society with a view to familiarize ourselves with the core phenomenon in the sociology of religion. Also, we shall look into the various types of society. But before we make progress with these sub-themes, let us briefly state the learning outcomes of this unit's discussion.

2.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this Unit, you shall be able to:

- Define the concept of religion
- Explain the concept of society

- List and explain the types of society

2.3 Concept of Religion

Religion is a cultural institution of society that is instrumental for the satisfaction of needs. It is an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings. The supernatural and the sacred are two concepts that are very important in the definition of religion.

The Supernatural is a basic and crucial component in the definition of religion. Supernatural beings such as God, spirits and ghost are implicated in definitions of religion. There is a believe among theists that the great and supreme God is responsible for creating the universe, controlling all things and is accessible to believers. The Most High God is known to all cultures in Africa. Among the Tiv of Benue, He is called Aondo, the creator. Among the Nupe, Soko is the word for the one who dwells in the sky.

Do you know that human intermediaries are of two types namely human beings and spiritual beings.

Human intermediaries consist of Priests, diviners, ritual, elders who lead prayers and making of sacrifices to God.

Spiritual beings are ancestral spirits, spirits of national heroes and even gods such as those of the sky, thunder, rivers, etc.

The third category of supernatural beings is ghosts who are sometimes considered to be spirits of dead relatives.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define the concept of religion.

2.4 The Concept of Society

The word society emerged in the 16th century, derived from the French *societe* which stemmed from Latin *societas*, a friendly association with others. Society is a group of people who share a common culture, occupy a particular territorial area and feel themselves to constitute a unified and distinct entity: a network of relationships that binds members together. There are several elements of society include land, population, relationships, institutions, work, politics, history.

2.4.1 Land: Human beings interact with land to produce various usable commodities required for human development. More importantly, land is the habitat of man.

2.4.2 Population: People provide labour which work on land to produce results.

2.4.3 Politics: Political institutions carryout several valuable functions such as information dissemination, education, mobilization and governance.

2.4.4 Work: Engage a large number of people in working activities to provide food stuff and other needs.

2.4.5 History: It provides the necessary information about the background of a people; their customs, values, institutions, technology, progress and development of society.

Activity I

Can you conceive of society without these basic elements?

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Describe the concept of society with reference to its basic elements?

2.5 Types of Society

2.5.1 Tribal Society: A tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interests.

Characteristics

- a. The tribe inhabits and remains within definite and common topography
- b. The members of a tribe possess a consciousness of mutual unity
- c. They speak a common language
- d. They marry within their own group or outsiders
- e. They believe in ties of blood relationship between its members
- f. They follow their own political organization which maintains harmony

2.5.2 Agrarian Society: It is any form of society especially very traditional societies primarily based on agricultural and craft production rather than industrial production. It relies on permanent tools for the survival of humans.

2.5.3 Industrial Society: It is a social system whose mode of production focuses primarily on finished goods manufactured with the aid of machinery.

Characteristics

- a. Industrial societies are in a continual state of rapid change due to technological innovation
- b. The high level of productivity in industrial societies further stimulates population growth.

- c. New medical technologies and improve living standards.
- d. There is division of labour
- e. In most of the industrial societies, there is steady reduction in social inequalities

2.5.4 Post-industrial Society: This is the information society or the digital society. Post-industrial society describes the economic and social changes in the late twentieth and twenty-first century characterized by production of information and services as against production of material goods in the industrial society.

Characteristics

- a. Thus, there is a decline in manufacturing sector.
- b. There is an increase in the amount of information technology
- c. Information, knowledge and innovation are the new raw materials in this kind of society
- d. A large service sector.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3
List and explain the types of society

2.6 Summary

In this Unit we have looked at the concept of religion, with focus on the supernatural and sacred as two basic features. We saw human and spiritual beings as the two kinds of human intermediaries. in every religion. types of society.

2.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Durkheim, E. (1917) The Elementary forms of religious life. New York: Collier Books Ltd.

Dzurgba, A. (2009) An Introduction to the sociology of Religion. Ibadan: John Archers Publishers.

Mbiti, J. (1969) African Religions and philosophy. London: Heinemann.

Spencer, H (1896) Principles of sociology. Bloomington. The free press.

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The concept of religion.

- Religion is a cultural institution of society that is instrumental for the satisfaction of needs.
- It is an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings.
- The supernatural and the sacred are two concepts that are very important in the definition of religion.

Answer to SAE 2

2. Society and its basic elements

- Society is a group of people who share a common culture, occupy a particular territory and feel themselves to constitute a unified and distinct entity: a network of relationships that binds members together
- Land
- Population
- Politics
- Work
- History

Answer to SAE 3

3. Types of Society

- Tribal society
- Agrarian Society
- Industrial society
- Post-industrial Society

2.9 Glossary

Intermediary- a negotiator who acts as a link between two parties

Unit 3: The Nature of Religious Beliefs

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcome
- 3.3 The General of Belief
- 3.4 The Nature of Religious Belief
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 3.8 Glossary

3.1 Introduction

Hello my dear student! You have studied the meaning of religion in the last unit and you have equally seen that religion is based on the belief in the existence of supernatural beings who exert control and influence over people in society. Now, we are going to explain to you the nature of religious beliefs that will help you appreciate the contentious nature of religions. But before we do that, let us state the learning outcome for this discussion.

3.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you will be able to;

- Describe the nature of religious beliefs
- Discuss the fact that all religions of the world are based on one form of belief or the other

3.3 The General Nature of Belief

I hope you know that our beliefs provide us with direction and guidance and a sense of purpose that we need to decide and select a particular course of action. Belief in what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how we are doing it are necessary as a motivation factor within individuals. Our actions are based on beliefs because but these beliefs held by society, differ from one person to the other, a group from another and from one society to another. Some beliefs could be verified by others, while others cannot be verified by nature. Religious beliefs largely fall under the type of beliefs that cannot be verifiable through some form of scientific methods. Belief system give rise to systems of values and ethics such that when such values or ethical system flow from a

religious belief, it is referred to a religious morality. On the other hand, when they derive from secular or non-religious sources, they are called secular morality.

Activity 1

Can there be religion without belief?

3.4 The Nature of Religious Belief

It might interest you to know that scholars of religion hold that religion originated to satisfy man's intellectual nature in order to meet his desire to make sense of death, dreams and visions. Similarly, gods and spirits in the unseen supernatural world are perceived as good or evil, proud and jealous, they marry and beget children, can be offended and appeased when offended. These beliefs about the supernatural beings and the supernatural world are depicted in form of religious creeds and myths, they present pictures of heaven, hell, hades, the elysian fields, etc and characterizes them as places inhabited by God, Satan or gods and spirits. These supernatural beings are also believed to maintain contact with the natural world in human likeness or form. Sometimes these supernatural beings associate directly with mortal men to beget children through human mothers and establish an indirect relationship with the human world.

In every society, there are certain objects like trees, stone, animals that are regarded as sacred. Such objects are usually treated with reverence and people treat them with some degree of seriousness.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Describe the nature of religious belief?

3.5 Summary

In this unit, we have seen the general nature of beliefs and we went ahead to identify religious belief as one form of belief system that is non-verifiable. The supernatural beings were identified as a major component of religious belief as they have ability to establish indirect relationship with the human world by begetting children through human mothers. Also associated with religious belief is the sacred which could include natural elements or objects like tree, stone or animals.

3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Eddiefloyd, M (2003), Basic sociology. Enugu: CIDJAP Press Ltd.

3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The Nature of religious belief

- Gods and spirits in the unseen supernatural world are perceived as good or evil, proud and jealous, they marry and beget children, can be offended and appeased when offended.
- Beliefs about the supernatural beings and the supernatural world are depicted in form of religious creeds and myths, they present pictures of heaven, hell, hades, etc and characterizes them as places inhabited by God, Satan or gods and spirits.
- Supernatural beings are also believed to maintain contact with the natural world in human likeness or form.

3.8 Glossary

Appeased- cause to be more favourably inclined; gain the good will of someone

Unit 4: The Elements of Religion

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcome
- 4.3 The Elements of Religion
 - 4.3.1 Belief
 - 4.3.2 Ritual
 - 4.3.3 Emotions
 - 4.3.4 Organizations
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 4.7 Glossary

4.1 Introduction

Hello our great student! You are welcome to another exciting unit in our studies. We had previously discussed the nature of religious beliefs and its core expressions. In this unit we shall consider the elements of religion. Before we do that, let us briefly state the learning outcome.

4.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Identify the various elements of religion
- Explain the role they play in sustaining religion in society

4.3 The Structural Elements of Religion

Religion comprises of four structural elements. They are **Belief, Ritual, Emotions** and **Organizations**.

4.3.1 Belief- This is the most basic element of religion. Beliefs are strongly held convictions by adherents of a religion that their object of worship is capable of solving their problems. Religion is based on belief and recognition. Such supernatural beings are venerated and worshiped by believers.

4.3.2 Ritual- This refers to religious acts, ceremonial practices and customs that are geared towards the worship of the sacred. It is also a way of venerating and honouring the sacred. Normally, religious rituals require the observance of certain special types of behaviour such as prayers, offering of sacrifices, observance of feast, meditation, and the wearing of particular clothes. Ritual practices are faithful together for mutual stimulation and motivation and for reaffirming their belief in power of the sacred object of worship.

4.3.3 Emotions- this is a reference to the spirit of reverence, humility, ecstasy, excitement and even terror that is evoked in the believer as they present themselves in the sacred. During rituals and ceremonies, emotions are easily displayed as adherents become overwhelmed by the presence of the sacred.

4.3.4 Organizations- All religions are characterised by some form of organization. There are trained officials, priests, monks, pastors etc. who occupy the church hierarchy with full powers and authority vested in them. There are also ordinances, rules, and laws that govern the day-to-day conduct of members.

Activity 1

Using any Christian denomination of your choice, observe their belief system, ritual practices and organizational structure

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

While identifying the elements of religion, explain the individual roles they play for society's sustenance?

4.4 Summary

In this unit we have considered the four structural elements of religion such as belief, ritual, emotions and organization. Belief is the foundation for religious faith based on trust in the supernatural who is considered powerful. Rituals are patterned performances that are carried out to re-enact religious beliefs by adherents to their object of worship. Emotions are displayed by adherents at the presence of the sacred. There is an organizational structure in every religion which helps them perform their functions in the lives of their adherents.

4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Eddiefloyd, M. (2003) Basic sociology. Enugu: CIDJAP Press Ltd.

Igbana, W. (2009) Sociology: A Comprehensive Introduction. Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd.

4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The elements of religion and the role they play for society's sustenance

- Belief
- Ritual
- Emotions
- Organizations

4.7 Glossary

Hierarchy- the organization of people at different ranks in an administrative body

Unit 5: Theories of Religion and Society

Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcome
- 5.3 Structural Functionalist Theory
 - 5.3.1 Theological theory
 - 5.3.2 Metaphysical Theory
- 5.4 Marxist Theory
- 5.5 Symbolic Interactionism
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 5.8 Glossary

5.1 Introduction

I welcome you to this interesting unit, we shall be looking at theories of religion and society. Being a concept that cuts across all facets of life, scholars have attempted to give different explanations on religion and society. We shall just look at three of such theories. But before we go into that, let us look at our learning outcomes.

5.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- List the basic assumptions of structural functionalism theory and relate them to religion
- Discuss Marxist theory of religion
- Explain the theory of social interaction

5.1.1 Structural Functionalist Theory

This theory took its root from the founding fathers of sociology like Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Talcott Parsons. The central concern of the theory is to take all of society as its unit of analysis. It likens society as a living organism with different parts that are

interrelated and functions to maintain the entire system. Functionalism assumes that an entire way of life may lose its purpose or function through the process of change.

Spencer sees society as a living organism that exhibit different levels of structural differences and that greater differentiation of international structures leads to greater integration of the whole system.

Comte, the pioneer father of sociology opines that human understanding, development and societal changes have been through three major stages. They are:

Theological or Fictitive Stage – This is the stage when social events were explained by means of superstition and religious beliefs with religious leaders at the dominant class in-charge of society.

Metaphysical Stage – This stage marks the reasoning and logical deductions of arguments and discussion. A time when people started question reality and the kind of explanations given by religion.

Positive or Scientific Stage – This stage is characterised by the development of positive science, an era when scientific endeavours or scientific discoveries became dominant. Emphasis was placed on understanding reality and solving societal problems through the scientific approach. This theory assumes that society has sub-systems and institutions like family, education, religion, economy and politics. Talcott holds that for a society to survive the various systems and institutions must perform complimentary roles. Similarly, consensus in the people's values helps to maintain stability. Talcott Parsons emphasized that for society to survive, some functional prerequisites must be met. Such needs are met by the family, economic, political, religious and educational systems.

It might interest you to know that Emile Durkheim observes that there is no society without one form of religion because religion plays the essential role of uniting people in a society. He went on to argue that religion is a social phenomenon that can guide the moral life of society. Also, reduces deviant social behaviour, increases group consciousness and loyalty and it is the worship of society which is greater than all individual persons.

Activity 1

Going by the assumption or postulations of Auguste Comte, can you identify what stage the Nigerian society is current on and what factors are responsible for keeping her in such stage

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Explain the assumptions of structural functionalism as they apply to religion?

5.4 Marxist Theory

Do you know that this theory emerged from a German philosopher known as Karl Marx. He has a view about dialectical materialism. He holds that the material condition of a society is what determines human thoughts and ideas. These ideas are drawn from specific historical context. By extension, it is the social existence built on historical contexts that determines the consciousness of people in society. This social reality is subject to changes as human progress must pass through five stages namely; primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism and communism as its end point.

Associated to the thoughts of Marx is the idea of dialectical materialism. It is a view that it is through contradictions that reality evolves. For example, thesis (affirmation) to anti-thesis (negation or contradiction) and then synthesis (reconciliation) that brings about new order. So that dialectical materialism is the contradictions and their reconciliations that depict the material forces as they result in changes across different historical moments. Historical materialism is an extension of dialectic materialism with mode of production forming the basis of relationships on how society is arranged. It is good to note that the mode of material production and social relations are conditioned by the level of development of the society and the productive forces themselves. Human differences for Marx are generated by the socio-economic division of labour and relationship to the mode of production. Production relations respond slowly to changes as there is as contradiction between production forces and the relations of production. Society moved from slavery mode to feudal mode, then it moved to capitalism among others. A new mode of production begins a new circle of development.

Marx strongly holds that the economic activities of a society is the base or infrastructure that determines the infrastructure of society like the government and other institutions. He saw that capitalist society has two classes; the bourgeoisie (owners of capital and factor of production) and proletariat (the working class or labourers). He considers the relationship between both classes as exploitative and full of conflictual. The bourgeoisie exploit the labourers by paying them wages

that is far lower than their input at work. In fact, the surplus value (excess profit) made from production does not benefit the working class.

Marx expected the workers to protest, revolt or bring about a revolution of the system but he saw that the labourers have been conditioned by religion not to challenge those in authority. It was at this point that he considers religion to be a tool of the wealthy used to restrain the poor. In fact, Marx describes religion as the opium of the masses that make them incapable of scientific exploration, discovery, invention and organization of society. Religion thus serves as a support for capitalism and the exploitation it engages in. He felt religion makes the problem of life bearable as believers are taught patience, perseverance and longsuffering. The influence of religion makes people to forget their rights to decent life.

Criticism

The major criticism of this theory is the failure of the workers to carry out a revolution to overturn capitalist Europe.

Also, the middle class became dominant in Europe contrary to his predictions that they will go into extinction.

Activity 1

Do you really think that Marxism is relevant in explaining religion in the contemporary Nigerian society?

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the Marxist theory of religion

5.5 Symbolic Interactionism

Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead are responsible for the theory of symbolic interactionism. It focuses on human minded activities and nature especially as such social activities are studied with the techniques of natural sciences. They hold that experimentation, casual relationships, observation and interpretation as methods of science can be used in studying human mind. They identified a number of features or characteristics of symbolic interactionism to include:

- a. As minded beings, humans can continually interact with others thereby resulting in changes in their behaviours. Such changes can be found in;

- **Language-** in the process of communicating with others, gesture arises from interaction can convey a silent gesture language or vocal language. such vocal languages could be sacred or profane, formal or informal, vulgar or polite in nature.
- **Interactional Setting or Arena-** There is always a setting where human interaction take place. Such settings or arena are usually immovable because of their physical nature. Although such physical nature can be created from social situations, it is good to note that it is individuals that produce or create them.
- **Self-** Humans generate thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and actions alongside utterances from within themselves. These are processes that arise from outward and inward communication and behaviours.
- **Joint-act or Activity-** Here, communication takes place between groups of people and taking different forms depending on the people involved.
- **Interaction occasion-** The symbolic presence of all those involved in an interaction is demonstrated in the process.
- **Encounter-** Whenever there is an interaction, there is always an encounter. This encounter lasts as long as the people who are interacting have continuous mutual understanding and relationship. Overtime, people take the role of the other in the process of interaction.

The individual self develops from the complex interaction. The various roles we play helps individual to mentally take perspective of others with imagination helping the individual in making desired responses. Views of ourselves come from our we think of ourselves, and more importantly, what we consider as others view about us. They use concepts like ‘generalized others’ to mean those attitudes, viewpoints, and expectations of society as a whole. Also, ‘significant others’ is used to depict those persons who are important in the development of the self of the individual.

On religion, symbolic interactionists argue that it comprises of a body of symbols utilized by society to get meaning to unexplained issues of life. Like you know, symbols are very important in religions of the world. They could be objects derived from stones, rivers, mountains, and different animals. As sacred objects, these symbolic items are venerated and worshipped by believers. The ritual aspects of religious worship generally are understood as outward symbolic activities. Believers are expected to conform their lives in line with the God of their religious tradition.

Activity I

Are you aware of any circumstance that members of your faith tradition behave in-line with the religious expectations and moral codes?

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the symbolic interactionist theory of religion

5.5 Summary

In this Unit, we have examined the various theories as they apply to the interaction between religion and society. Various scholarly opines were considered on structural function of religion in society. The Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Emile Durkheim's were discussed. The Marxist theory was also discussed as it relates to the bourgeoisie and proletariat as the two classes in a capitalist society. More importantly, the place of religion as a limiting tool to workers who are exploited was highlighted. Symbolic interactionism as it applies to religion was also dealt with.

5.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Durkheim, E (1961). *The Elementary Forms of Religious life*. New York: Collier Books Ltd;

Karl, M. (1930). *Communist Manifesto*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Mead, G. (1934). *Mind, self and society*. Chicago: Chicago Press.

5.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The assumptions of Structural functionalism in religion

- The central concern of the theory is to take all of society as its unit of analysis.
- It likens society as a living organism with different parts that are interrelated and functions to maintain the entire system.
- Functionalism assumes that an entire way of life may lose its purpose or function through the process of change.
- Emile Durkheim observes that there is no society without one form of religion or the other.
- Religion plays the essential role of uniting people in a society. He went on to argue that religion is a social phenomenon that can guide the moral life of society.

Answer to SAE 2

1. Marxist theory of religion

- The German philosopher, Karl Marx propounded the theory of historical materialism
- Human progress must pass through five stages namely; primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism and communism as its end point

- Human differences for Marx are generated by the socio-economic division of labour and relationship to the mode of production
- Marx strongly holds that the economic activities of a society is the base or infrastructure that determines the superstructure of society like the government and other institutions
- Capitalist society has two classes; the bourgeoisie (owners of capital and factor of production) and proletariat (the working class or labourers)
- The bourgeoisie exploit the labourers by paying them wages that is far lower than their input at work
- Religion serves as a support for capitalism and exploitation
- Religion makes the problem of life bearable as believers are taught patience, perseverance and long suffering.

Answer to SAE 3

1. Symbolic interactionist theory

- Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead were responsible for this theory
- Religion focuses on human minded activities and nature especially as such social activities are studied with the techniques of natural sciences
- It gives rise to changes in human behaviours in the areas of **Language, interactional setting or arena, self, joint-act or activity, interaction occasion and encounter**

5.8 Glossary

Bourgeoisie: The social class between the lower and upper classes and owners of capital

Capitalism: It is a system of production and trade based on property and wealth being owned privately.

Proletariat: The working class of a society.

Module 2

Unit 1: Issues in Sociology of Religion

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcome
- 1.3 The Relationship between Religion and Society
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 1.7 Glossary

1.1 Introduction

Hello! I welcome you to this awesome unit. In this Unit, we shall examine the relationship between Religion and Society. The influence of religion on society will be looked at and how this influenced has shaped the direction of events in the society. But before we proceed, let us state our learning outcomes for this unit.

1.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

- Describe the relationship between religion and society
- Identify the influence religion has on society

1.3 The Relationship between Religion and Society

From our previous discussions, we now know that religion is the worship of society and society makes religious rules for societal peace, order, harmony and stability. The mode of religious practices and worship reflects the nature of the society where such a religion exists. Society receives rewards or punishments from supernatural beings based on their observance and adherence to laws handed down by such supernatural beings. Evil communities are visited with diseases, drought, and floods. Religion therefore ensures that members of society maintain a high level of morality so as to avoid punishment from their God. Society largely depends on religion for their well-being such as providing the meaning to life, providing answers to the existential questions of life, death as well as emotional and psychological support.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Describe the kind of relationship that exist between religion and society

1.4 Summary

We have discussed in this unit the relationship between religion and society. We have seen that religion and society mutually depend on themselves. Society for one, conditions the beliefs and practices of religion. Similarly, society receives punishment from supernatural beings whenever they engage in immoral acts as they sanctioned by religious beings. On the other hand, religion ensure the well-being of society through various ways like peace, order and answering life's difficult questions.

Activity 1

Observe your immediate environment to see the nature of relationship between religion and society

1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Durkheim, E (1961). The Elementary forms of religious life. New York: Collier Books Ltd.

Mbiti, J. S. (1975). An Introduction to African Religion. London: Heinemann Books Ltd.

1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Relationship between religion and society

- There is mutually dependent relationship between religion and society.
- Religious rules and values create peace, order, harmony and stability in society
- Religious worship reflects the nature of the society
- Society receives reward or punishments from supernatural beings
- Society relies on religion because it provides meaning to life, provide answers to questions of life like death and provides emotional supports

1.7 Glossary-

Existential- derived from experience or the experience of existence.

Unit 2: Major Institutions of Society as Agencies of Religion

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcome
- 2.3 The Family
 - 2.3.1 Nuclear Family
 - 2.3.2 Extended Family
 - 2.3.3 Monogamous and Polygamous Family
 - 2.3.4 Ghost Family
- 2.4 The Educational Institution
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 2.8 Glossary

2.1 Introduction

Hello dear student! I gladly welcome you this exciting unit. But first what is an institution? It is an organized system of social relationship which embodies certain common values and procedures that are geared towards meeting the needs of society. In this Unit, we shall be looking at some major institutions of society as agencies of religion. The institutions to cover are family and school. But before we proceed, let us state briefly our learning outcomes.

2.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the family as an agency of religion in the society
- Describe the educational institutional as an agency of religion in the society

2.3 The Family

Am very sure you have a good idea of family from your elementary and secondary school days. Now let us look at family as a sociological concept. It involves sex, children, parenthood, kinship, marriage and common residency. The family is expected to socialize her members in such a manner as to place God first in all their daily activities of life. The family is saddled with the primary responsibility of socialization.

Types of Family

a. **Nuclear Family-** It is also known as elementary family or natural family. It can be conjugal family otherwise known as the family of procreation, in which one is father or mother or the natal family also called family of orientation, that is where one was born.

b. **Extended Family-** Two or more nuclear families makes an extended family. That is a nuclear family in addition any ki with whom one is related by blood. DO you know that extended is very common within the African continent and used to be practiced in England and other Western societies before the industrialization which changed family relations and patterns of settlement.

2.3.3 Monogamous and Polygamous Family- The fact is that a monogamous family is equivalent to nuclear family because it is referred to as the simple legal family, while polygamous constitute of mother-centered family known as matricentric or matrifocal family and they share in one father or mother.

2.3.4 Ghost Family- This is set up through ghost or inheritance marriage. It is a situation where a male family member continues to bear children in the name of a dead family member such that the father (ghost), remains married to his wife and have children through a kinsman.

Activity 1

Investigate your local culture if ghost marriage exists and give reasons why it should continue in society.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

With your knowledge of the meaning of family, identify and explain its four types?

Functions of the Family

- Sexual regulation function
- The reproductive function
- The socialization function of the family
- Provision of economic support
- The status placement
- Emotional support
- The protection function of the family

2.4 The Educational Institution as Agency of Religion

Education involves the transmission of knowledge, skills and values to individuals in order for them to control their physical and social environment and adapt themselves to the demands of their society.

Types of Education

- **Formal Education**- it takes place in the classroom with professional teachers, structured curriculum and delivered through different teaching methods.
- **Informal Education**- it does not require a formal setting nor structured curriculum for teaching and learning. Individuals through discussion, observation and imitation acquire informal education.
- **Non-formal Education**- It is a highly specific education provided in non-school environment without a fully developed curriculum. Trade apprenticeship schemes, agricultural extension programme, National Youth Service Corps, and empowerment schemes fall under this category.

How Educational Institutions Serve as Agency of Religion

Educational institutions serve as an agency of religion in the following ways;

- Curriculum of Schools involves teaching of religion as a subject
- Imparting of religious values and morality into learners
- Education ensures the integration of various diversified religious sects and denominations into one body of believers

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

In what ways does the educational institution serve the purposes of religion?

2.5 Summary

In this Unit we have considered two major institutions of society that serve as agencies of religion. Types of family and the functions of family were well discussed. On the other hand, types of education and the specific ways educational institution serve as agency of religion were described.

2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Types of Family

- Nuclear
- Extended
- Monogamous and polygamous
- Ghost

Answer to SAE 2

1. Educational institution serving the purpose of religion

- Curriculum of Schools involves teaching of religion as a subject
- Imparting of religious values and morality into learners
- Education ensures the integration of various diversified religious sects and denominations into one body of believers

2.8 Glossary-

Diversified-having increased variety.

Unit 3: Religion and Culture

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcome
- 3.3 The Concept of Culture
- 3.4 Religion and Culture in Society
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 3.8 Glossary

3.1 Introduction

You are welcome to this Unit. We have seen two major institutions of society that serve as agencies of religion in our previous unit. In this Unit, we shall examine religion and culture as two inseparable phenomena. For one, we shall look at culture and its various components and proceed to examine its relationship with religion. Are you aware that religion and culture are perceived as two sides of a coin. As an aspect of culture, religion emanates from people's culture and their desire to provide answers to culturally defined problems of human life. But before we go deeper into this conversation, let us state our learning outcomes.

3.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Explain the concept of culture and its aspects
- Discuss the relationship between religion and culture

3.3 The Concept of Culture

You are to know that culture is a very important term in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It is defined as the complex whole of man's acquisitions of knowledge, morals, beliefs, art, custom, technology etc which are shared and transmitted from generation to generation. The concept is applicable to a group or society because culture is not an individual property. It entails things that are socially learned and shared.

Culture includes things that are man-made, artifacts, ideals, beliefs and feelings. There is room for cultural accumulation which means the process by which new traits or elements are added to a particular culture. This is based on the fact that cultures grow over time and changes as a result of acquisition or borrowing of more cultural elements. Sometimes, not all new cultural traits are accepted in a particular culture. They may be rejected. This fact connotes that culture is dynamic as it can be modified over time.

Activity 1

Do you know of any cultural practice that people of your community rejected in the past? Reflect on the reasons for such rejection for such rejection.

Causes of Cultural Changes in Society

- Ecological changes and the need for survival
- Inventions to exploit the environment efficiently
- Culture contact leading to the availability of alternatives
- Elements
- Innovations
- Process of cultural transmission from generation to generation
- The dynamic process involved in the interaction between society and culture

3.4 Religion and Culture in Society

Religion as we have seen constitutes a major aspect of culture both non-material and material. Every religious practice, value or norm is based on the cultural background of a people. So that we can say that, religion is culturally determined. It may interest you to know that religion is measured in terms of Western Christian ethical standards and requirements. This is a politicized belief that one religion is superior to another. It is this kind of belief that made early Christian missionaries in Africa to condemn the indigenous heritage of the various African people. On the other hand, the various African people received the foreigners with opposition.

Misunderstanding of the religious culture of Africans by the Europeans made them give different negative names to the local people. Names like idol worshipers, ancestor worshipper, and polygamous people. One way to correct the views of these early missionaries was the formation of independent indigenous churches as new religious movements. We have groups like Cherubim and Seraphim, Christ Apostolic Church.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Highlight the relationship between religion and culture

3.5 Summary

Culture is the complex whole of man's ways of life expressed in knowledge, morals, beliefs, art, custom, technology among others that are shared and transmitted from one generation to another. As the complex whole, culture is what houses religion in a society. Religion is a major non-material aspect of culture, though it also has material expressions in a people's culture. In Africa, the European religion did not find appreciate the local culture the people and that resulted in cultural clash.

3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Otite, O and Ogwoinwo, W. (1979) An Introduction to sociological studies. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

Igbana, W (2009). Sociology: A comprehensive Introduction. Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd

3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Relationship between religion and culture

- Religion as we have seen constitutes a major aspect of culture both non-material and material.
- Every religious practice, value or norm is based on the cultural background of a people.
- Religion is culturally determined.

3.8 Glossary

Acquisition-The act of acquiring possession of something.

Unit 4: Religion and Social Change in Society

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcome
- 4.3 The Concept of Social Change
- 4.4 Sources of Social Change
- 4.5 Factors that Affect the Rate of Social Change
- 4.6 Community Acceptance of and Resistance to Social Change
- 4.7 Religion and Social Change: The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism
- 4.8 Summary
- 4.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 4.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 4.11 Glossary

4.1 Introduction

I welcome you to this interesting unit of this course. In the last unit, we learnt about religion and culture. In this unit, we shall focus our attention on religion and social change. Before we go into all the exciting details in the unit's work, let us consider our learning outcomes.

4.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Explain the concept of social change
- Identify ways that religion can bring about change in society
- Discuss the protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism

4.3 The Concept of Social Change

The idea of social change implies the significant alterations of culture, social structure and social behaviour over time. It is a reference to the modifications that arise within social institutions, in social attitudes, values, beliefs, and pattern of relationship. For example, we can have a change in language, new transportation forms, new dance, dressing, worship or marriage rites.

4.4 Sources of Social Change

Invention- This is a reference to new use of existing. It is a social process because it contains series of empowerment and modification toward improving the exiting condition.

Discovery- This is a new perception of an aspect of reality that already exists. When such activity is put to use, it becomes a source of social change.

Increase in population- This may lead to decline in informal relations, the growth of secondary group relations, and the growth of formal institutional structures. It also means increase in pressure and demand on available resources. For example, there could be increased demand in infrastructure like housing, electricity, that may result in increased poverty, diseases, and crime in a society.

Conflict- This has remained a major source of change over the years. When they occur, may degenerate into open hostilities or even war known as armed conflict. You know very well that these hostile situations can result in all-manner of losses to individuals and society in general. For example, human miseries like death, pain, displacement, rape, diseases, among others. At times like these, social changes have already occurred.

Human Action- The kind of action that be engage in can also result in social change. That is to say, individual and group decisions and actions give birth to change.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Identify and discuss the sources of social changes

4.5 Factors that Affect the Rate of Social Change

- The structure of society and culture
- Attitude and values of society
- Perceived needs of society
- The cultural base

4.6 Community Acceptance of and Resistance to Social Change

- Specific attitudes and values of the Community
- Demonstration of the Usefulness of the change
- Compatibility with existing culture
- Costs of change

- Role of the change agent

4.7 Religion and Social Change: The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

Max Weber is a German scholar who provided the most valuable work on religion and social change captured in his book, “Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism”. He set out to show that there is a relationship between religious ideals and economic activities. He found out that religious beliefs have the capacity to influence economic thought and behaviour. Specifically, Weber opines that there is relationship between protestant teaching on ascetism and industrial capitalism. The teachings of John Wesley built in his congregation the spirit of hard work and a savings culture.

Calvinism holds a view that God predetermined some people to make haven and others to make hell. Because of the difficulty in verifying the list of those who will make heaven, there is an unofficial way, which is by being wealthy or successful in one’s endeavour. Living a life without pleasure and comfort was demanded from all Christians. Individuals who engage in one career or the other are to work very hard and avoid wasting their money and time. It was encouraged that monies must be reinvested. As a people called and chosen by God to make heaven, financial prosperity and ethical use of their wealth is demanded. The view that hard work, saving of profits, avoiding financial waste and accumulation of capital best captures this teaching. Thus, Weber saw in protestant ethic the building block for the development of capitalism.

Activity 1

Identify changes that have occurred in the Nigerian society because Christianity

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Explain the place of religion in social change

4.8 Summary

Social change is a significant transformation in the social structure and behaviour of people. There are a number of sources and factors that compel social change. Max Weber did a good analysis of the relationship between religion and social change in his work on protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. In this classic writeup he showed how the teachings of John Clavin built a consciousness of hard work and savings culture that gave rise to capital accumulation that serve as the foundation of industrial capitalism in Europe.

4.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Weber, M. (1958). The Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism. New York: Charles Scribner Ltd.

Appelbaum, R. (1970). Theories of social change. Chicago: Markham Publishing Ltd.

Bascom, W. R. and Herskovits, M. J. (1963). Culture and change in African Cultures
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

4.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The sources of social change

- Invention
- Discovery
- Increase in population
- Conflict
- Human action

Answer to SAE 2

1. Place of religion in social change

- The protestant ethic and spirit of capitalism by Max Weber is a social change theory
- Religious beliefs and ideals influence economic thought, behaviours and activities
- There is a relationship between Protestant teaching on asceticism and industrial capitalism
- Calvinism taught that an indirect way to be sure of making heaven is to enjoy material prosperity but life should be lived without pleasure with savings, hard work and proper use of one's time

4.11 Glossary

Capitalism- An economic system based on private ownership of capital

Predetermination- Set in advance

Unit 5: Belief System in African Religion

Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcome
- 5.3 Ancestor Worship
- 5.4 Magic
- 5.5 Witchcraft
- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 5.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 5.9 Glossary

5.1 Introduction

I welcome you to this Unit. In our previous unit we looked at Religion and Social Change. In this unit we shall be considering various belief systems in traditional African religion. Beliefs on Ancestor Worship, Witchcraft and magic shall be considered. Let us consider our learner outcomes before we go into the details.

5.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss ancestor worship as a belief system in Africa
- Describe the practice and operations of witchcraft
- Explain the concept of magic as a religious belief in Africa

5.3 Ancestor Worship

This is a major belief system in the continent of Africa. It is built around the idea that dead parents of families continue to maintain links with their descendants and they are able to control the world of those that are alive. They bring blessings or punishments to members of their families depending on their moral conduct and the societal norms and values. Ancestors are part of the spirit world of the Africans. They play the roles of custodians of the laws and customs and that is why they also punish their descendants as agents of social control.

Do you know that rituals are conducted in respect of the dead? Yes, such ceremonies are done to appease or cause the ancestors to be happy in return for their blessing that may come in form of food, rain, successful harvest and good health.

To be an ancestor is not an all-comer affair. There certain criteria or requirements to be met before they become ancestors upon their death. For example, one must be a biological parent, lived a good life, death in old age, did not die as a result of some abominable illnesses, and most have been married.

Ritual practices to the ancestors can be done by individuals, families and communally. At the communal levels, ancestors can be invoked by the chief priest during new yam festivals.

Activity 1

Investigate the practices associated with ancestor worship in your culture area or clan

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Discuss ancestor worship as a belief system in Africa

5.4 Magic

Magic refers to the control of events and the environment. Its activities involve secrecy and symbolism. It is helpful in providing rain and sunshine for crops and prevention of droughts. In some villages, magicians are contacted to control weather and prevent disasters at important occasions in the community. It also involves solving of economic and psychological problems. Sometimes, especially at times of desperation, magicians can become very manipulative to get whatever they want.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Explain the concept of magic as a religious belief

5.5 Witchcraft

They are believed to have some supernatural elements and powers by which they inflict harm on people especially their kinsmen. They meet at night and in secret places. They have the ability to turn into animals in order to project harm on other people but risk danger to their own lives if they are hurt in their transformed state. Witches are able to leave their bodies and carry on their activities

with the spirits. Because of their negative activities, witches are often accused of being behind prolonged illness, misfortunes and pains that people pass through in communities.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 3

Describe the practice and operations of witchcraft

5.6 Summary

In this unit we have discussed some core beliefs in Africa. They include belief in ancestor worship, magic and witchcraft. Ancestor worship for one is concerned with continuous social relations between departed family members and their living descendant. Such ties are for the purpose of keeping security watch and blessing family members, enforcing of morality and social control. Magic aims primarily to get the will of man done through controlling of nature's element and the general environment like crop, weather, rain among others. Witchcraft as a belief is about individuals who have abilities to leave their bodies during sleep and engage in meetings at secret places in order to cause harm on others in their communities. Witches can take different life forms in their transformed state like as rats, rabbits, cat among others. Because of their blood sucking activities, witches are generally accused of misfortunes and ill health.

5.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Bohannan, P. (1963). Social anthropology. New York: Rinehart and Wilson Ltd

Mbiti, J. S. (1975). An introduction to African Religion. London: Heinemann.

5.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Ancestor worship as a belief system

- Ancestor worship is built around the idea that dead parents of families continue to maintain links with their descendants and are capable of controlling the world
- Ancestors bring blessings or punishments to members of their families depending on their moral conduct and societal norms and values
- They play the roles of custodians of the laws and customs and that is why they also punish their descendants as agents of social control
- There are certain criteria be met before they become ancestors upon their death
- Ritual practices to the ancestors can be done by individuals, families and communally.

Answer to SAE 2

1. The Concept of Magic

- It is the control of events and the environment
- Its activities involve secrecy and symbolism.
- It is helpful in providing rain and sunshine for crops and prevention of droughts.

- In some villages, magicians are contacted to control weather and prevent disasters at important occasions in the community.
- It also involves solving of economic and psychological problems.

Answer to SAE 3

1. The Practice and Operations of Witchcraft

- Witches have some supernatural elements and powers by which they inflict harm on people especially their kinsmen.
- They meet at night and in secret places.
- They have the ability to turn into animals in order to project harm on other people but risk danger to their own lives if they are hurt in their transformed state.
- Witches are able to leave their bodies and carry on their activities with the spirits.
- Witches are often accused of being behind prolonged illness, misfortunes and pains that people pass through in communities.

5.9 Glossary

Symbolism- A system of symbols and symbolic representations.

Module 3

Unit 1: The Importance of Religion to Society

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcome
- 1.3 Importance of Religion to Society
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 1.7 Glossary

1.1 Introduction

You are welcome to this exciting unit. We have looked at various aspects of religion. In this unit, we shall look at the importance of religion to society. Just before we go into the interesting details, let us take a little time to consider our learning outcomes.

1.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of religion to society
- Describe the role of religion in the maintenance of order and stability in the society

1.3 The Importance of Religion to Society

Different sociological scholars hold that religion is an aspect of culture and social institution that constitute social reality. Below are the core importance of religion to society.

- **Group Integration and Unity** – It serves as a form of cementing element that bind people together into an integrated social group.
- **The Provision of Meaning** – Religion provides doctrines that gives meaning and hope to life.
- **Provision of Emotional and Psychological Support to Members of the Society** – Important events in life of individuals are marked by religious rituals and ceremonies. At

times of grief and general losses, religion becomes more active in individual and group life to provide them succour.

- **Religion and the Docility of People in Society** – To Marxists religion plays the role of supporting the status quo and diverting the attention of the oppressed masses from their real source of their problems.
- **Religion and the Control of Stress in the Society** – The doctrinal condemnation of worldly wealth and materialism pacifies the mind of members and gives them hope for a better tomorrow thereby helping in discharging stress, frustration and anxiety.
- **Maintenance of Social Control** – Religious rules legitimize secular laws and therefore are more potent in controlling behaviour in society

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Explain the importance of Religion to Society

1.4 Summary

In this unit, we have looked at the importance of religion to human society. From the various importance outlined, it becomes very clear that religion has multiple levels of relevance to the individual and group. Meaning to life, control of stress, provision of emotional and psychological support, social control, unity and solidarity, were identified as the core importance of religion to society.

1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Berger, P. L. and Luckmann, T. (1969). *Sociology of Religion and Sociology of knowledge*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.

Martin, D. (1969). *The Religious and the secular*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Importance of religion to society

- Group integration and unity
- The provision of meaning
- Provision of emotional and psychological support to society
- Religion and the docility of people in society
- Religion and the control of stress

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

1. Describe the concept of Church History in your own words (2 mins)
2. Name possible sources of Church History.

1.7 Glossary

Docility – The trait of being agreeably submissive and manageable.

Integration- The act of incorporating a racial or religious group into a community.

Unit 2: The Importance of Society to Religion

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcome
- 2.3 The Importance of Society to Religion
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 2.7 Glossary

2.1 Introduction

Hello student! In the last unit, we looked at the importance of religion to society. In this unit, we shall be considering the importance of society to religion. Before we reveal these details, let us state quickly our learning outcomes.

2.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of society to religion
- Highlight the role society plays in sustaining the institution of religion

2.3 The Importance of Society to Religion

It is good to remind you that society is a group of people, living together, sharing similar territory and evolving methods of survival. Such that human population (people), land (territory), relationship (interactions), institutions, culture and work become core elements that makes a society. So, what are the importance of society to religion?

- Society provides religion with values and norms
- It is society that gives religion members or adherents
- It provides the necessary support for the establishment and continued survival of religion
- Society legitimizes all forms of religious practices
- Also, it provides the necessary benchmarks for religious practices

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Explain the importance of Society to Religion

2.4 Summary

In this unit we examined the importance of society to religion. We saw that society comprised of people, institutions, land, social relationships, culture and work. We have specifically observed that religion depends on religion for its survival and continued relevance. Thus, there is no religion without society which provides necessary infrastructures for it to thrive.

2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Haralambos, M. and Heald M. D. (1980). Sociology: Themes and perspectives.
Slough: University press

Chalfant, H. P. (1986). Religion in Contemporary Society. Mayfield: Palo Alto.

2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Importance of society to religion

- Society provides religion with values and norms
- It is society that gives religion members or adherents
- It provides the necessary support for the establishment and continued survival of religion
- Society legitimizes all forms of religious practices
- Also, it provides the necessary benchmarks for religious practices
- Group integration and unity

2.7 Glossary

Infrastructure- The basic structure or features of a system or organization.

Survival- The state of remaining alive

Unit 3: Religion and Conflict in Nigeria

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcome
- 3.3 The Place of religion in Conflicts in Nigeria
- 3.4 Causes of Religious Conflicts
- 3.5 Effects of Religious Conflicts
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 3.9 Glossary

3.1 Introduction

Hello great mind! In this unit, we shall be looking at religion and conflicts in Nigeria. We shall see the place of religion in conflict with special attention given to causes of religious conflict and effects of such conflicts in society. Before we look through these interesting details, let us take a moment to state our learning outcomes.

3.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the place of religion in conflicts in Nigeria
- Identify the causes of religious conflict
- State the effects of religious conflict

3.3 The Place of Religion in Conflicts in Nigeria

You will recall that earlier identified several functions of religion to society. Here we shall see on major aspect of dysfunction or demerit of religion in society. Despite the ability of religion to unite people and integrate society in general, it can also be a source of conflict.

- The plural nature of Nigeria has given birth to conflicts due to multiple ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.

- Political conflicts lead to religious conflict at one point or the other because religion provides membership and support for human struggle.
- Colonialism is responsible for the foundation or origin of religious conflicts in Nigeria. Historically, colonial agents divide people in general and believers particular without any consideration for boundary.
- Also, the development of cities meant that people with different backgrounds will need to travel from one community to another for business or commercial reasons. This why cities like Kano, Zaria, Jos and Lagos often experience religious conflicts.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Explain the place of religion in conflicts in Nigeria

3.4 Causes of Religious Conflicts

- The problem of Cultural Integration-
- Religious Intolerance and fanaticism-
- The Influence of Non-Nigerian Muslim Migrants
- Urban Poverty

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Discuss the causes of religious conflict on society

3.5 Effects of Religious Conflicts

- Loss of lives and properties
- Gradual decline in business activities
- Agricultural activities are affected
- Retarded and crippled communication and transport system
- Disunity and disharmony among warring communities
- It has depopulated the communities

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

State the negative effects of religious conflict on society

3.6 Summary

In this unit, we have discussed one demerit of religion by looking at its place of religion in conflicts in Nigeria. We have similarly examined the causes of religious conflict and the negative effects of religious conflicts on society.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Discuss the negative effects of religious conflict on society

3.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Otite, O. and Isaac, O. (1999). Community conflicts in Nigeria. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

OKpe, O. and Ada, O. (2007). The Middle Belt in the shadow of Nigeria. Makurdi: Oracle Business Ltd.

3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. Place of religion in conflicts in Nigeria

- The plural nature of Nigeria has given birth to conflicts due to multiple ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.
- Political conflicts lead to religious conflict at one point or the other because religion provides membership and support for human struggle.
- Colonialism is responsible for the foundation or origin of religious conflicts in Nigeria.
- The development of cities meant that people with different backgrounds will need to travel from one community to another for business or commercial reasons. cities like Kano, Zaria, Jos and Lagos often experience religious

Answer to SAE 2

1. Causes of religious conflict

- The problem of Cultural Integration
- Religious Intolerance and fanaticism
- The Influence of Non-Nigerian Muslim Migrants
- Urban Poverty

Answer to SAE 3

1. Effects of religious conflict in society

- Loss of lives and properties
- Gradual decline in business activities
- Agricultural activities are affected
- Retarded and crippled communication and transport system
- Disunity and disharmony among warring communities
- It has depopulated the communities
- Society provides

3.9 Glossary

Conflict- an open clash or disagreement between two opposing groups or individuals.

Fanaticism- An excessive intolerance of opposing views.

Migrants- A traveller who moves from one region or country to another.

Unit 4: The Role of Religion in Politics in Nigeria

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcome
- 4.3 The Role of Religion in Politics
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 4.7 Glossary

4.1 Introduction

I welcome you to the last unit of this Module and Course. You will agree with me that Sociology of religion is quite an interesting and practical area of study in Christian Religious Studies. In this unit, we shall look at the role of religion in politics in Nigeria. The tribalized nature of politics, its historical development from pre-colonial through to our present day shall be examined. Let us take a moment and state our learning outcomes.

4.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the role of religion in politics
- Discuss the nature of involvement of religion in politics in Nigeria

4.3 The Role of Religion in Politics

- In the pre-independence era, Christian missionaries were responsible for formation of political associations and increasing political consciousness and participation.
- The radical political changes after the second World War transformed the ways missionaries strategize their activities in ensuring Christians fully participate in politics. The formation of Northern Non-Muslims League (NNML), later changed to Middle Zone League (MZL) is a good example.
- To sanitize and provide direction to politics for benefit to humanity as believers sought to improve basic infrastructure like health, social amenities, roads, education, economy among others.
- Religion plays the role of a watch dog to the society

- Religion has also played negative roles in politics by being manipulated for political reasons

Activity 1

What is your understanding of the concept of politics?
Do you think religion is related to it in any way?

4.4 Summary

In this Unit, we dealt with the role of religion in politics in Nigeria. We saw that religion serves as the watch dog of society as religious leaders continually criticize the inhuman policies and programmes of government. Regrettably, religion is manipulated for political gains by politicians.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Discuss the nature of involvement of religion in politics in Nigeria

4.5 References/Further Readings Web Resources

Ellias, T. O. (1963). Government and Politics in African. London: Asia publishing Ltd.

Schapera, I. (1956). Government and Politics in Tribal Societies. London: Watts.

4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Answer to SAE 1

1. The nature of Involvement of Religion in Politics in Nigeria

- In the pre-independence era, Christian missionaries were responsible for formation of political associations and increasing political consciousness and participation.
- The radical political changes after the second World War transformed the ways missionaries strategize their activities in ensuring Christians fully participate in politics.
- The formation of Northern Non-Muslims League (NNML), later changed to Middle Zone League (MZL) is a good example.
- Basic infrastructure like health, social amenities, roads, education, economy among others were provided to sanitize and provide direction to politics for benefit of humanity.
- Religion plays the role of a watch dog to the society
- Regrettably, religion has played negative roles in politics by being manipulated for political reasons

4.7 Glossary

Dehumanized- Divested of human qualities or attributes.

Watch dog- One that guards against loss, theft, or undesirable practices.