The Influence of Civilization in Eroding Family Values System in Nigeria: Religion as the Panacea

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ABSTRACT
Observing that values in our religious and family traditions have a long history, the paper enquires into the relationship between religion and family values system, addresses the problem of changes in family values in the traditional Nigeria communities under the influence of openness and civilization. Actually, the values of a given society are qualities which that group of people considers important. They hold them so dear because these qualities are marked by what that particular society identifies as excellent morally, spiritually, socially, economically and religiously. However, the study points out the theoretical context of its analysis relying on the theory of K. Krzysztofek. Then, in turn, examines the three most important societal values; work, family and religion, the historical basis of the development of these values and then the changes that occurred under the influence of civilization will be presented briefly. Therefore, this paper is descriptive in content; the survey shares that the influence of civilization in eroding family values is the hub that sustain the challenges of our three main societal which the society treasures. And contends that the impact of all this is to make the religion(s) begin to consider these values of work, family and religion not only as mostly theoretical but also most practically. Besides, any attempt to ignore or manipulate these values of work, family and Religion in any given society would result in various unhealthy challenges that would sabotage every system in the society.
Keywords: civilization, family, values

INTRODUCTION
Nigeria has existed with its own cultural family values even before the colonial era, with its own distinct cultural beliefs, values, norms and practices despite its multi-ethnic nature. The peculiar nature of the Nigerian cultural family values is evidence in their way of life depicted in marriages and family ties, legal systems, religious, economic and political structures. These value structures or systems were used to ensure and promote order of socialization and morality in the Nigerian society. The traditional culture and value system may not be perfect, but they serve the purpose of which they were meant to serve and kept the society moving without the rancour and disorganization experienced in the modern-day Nigerian society. Unfortunately, the eventual contact with western culture and civilization and subsequent upsurge of globalization are threatening to erode these well-established family values and practices (Madukwe and Madukwe, 2012). Since then, Nigeria's traditional culture, values and practices have withered and are still withering through well programmed western spells, storms and cultures that have pervaded through almost all sides

of human life and activities. This does not imply that the diffusion of western culture spells a bad sign for Nigeria but, the argument here is that Nigeria had a family values system which shaped the traditional Nigerian society economically, socially, legally and morally, and serves to maintain social order. However, influence of civilization affects all areas of life; Nigerian communities opened itself to the Western cultures and the world at large. Urszula Swadzba (2011: 332), argued that the accelerated pace began to reach not only the technical innovations and economic solutions, but new ideas, values and behavior patterns. Under the influence of civilization, openness, and contact with other cultures, traditional values are changing. The civilization processes also affect families and local communities with their new values. Such communities can also be found in Nigeria where traditionally, attention was paid to the importance of values such as work, family and religion. The transformation of Nigerian society towards modernity, civilization, westernization and globalization and its attendant social changes has greatly altered most Nigerian traditional institutions - one of such institutions being marriage and family Values system. Adinlofu (2009) assert that the African practices, relevance and functions are being, socially disfigured by the intrusion of modern western values. Therefore, the paper aims to evaluate the extent of the changes in these family values on the basis of my own research as well as the research of selected Nigeria area in southern Kaduna. And recommend that Nigerian as a nation today is to truly accept the values of work, family, religion and fear of God embedded in every religion and to seek to use every opportunity to reinforce them.

Theoretical context of the analysis

The concept of civilization is one of the most popular concepts. Civilization takes place on many levels. The most important of them can be distinguished as economic, political, social and cultural levels. Among these, the most important considerations for this article are the social and cultural aspects. Civilization in fact contributes to the expansion of many nations in the world such as the Western European, North American and African culture. This leads to a marked weakening of the national and cultural identity of many ethnic communities. There has been a significant change in the sphere of traditional forms of consciousness, and the axiological orientation, including religious, psychological and mental characteristics developed earlier. Civilization cannot be reduced to global systems of social and cultural linkages. This phenomenon also has a local dimension (Giddens 2006: 73). Swadzba (2011:2), cited that Krzysztofek (2002) provides five scenarios for the reaction of local cultures to the impact of civilization. The first is the full acceptance of global culture i.e. Simple Acceptance. However, this applies mostly to young people. The second possibility is a total rejection i.e. Lack of Acceptance. The generational factor is important because the elderly are more resistant. The third is a form of selective adaptation i.e. Partial Acceptance and Partial Rejection. The fourth possibility is hybridization i.e. Co-adaptation of Cultures. It is a compromise between nationality, ethnicity, locality and universality of the consumer culture. The last option is the cultural duality i.e. two levels of culture. This is the most desirable effect of the influence of global culture, which does not lead to the destruction of cultural identity. People can also participate in national and ethnic cultures while remaining within the global culture. Swadzba (2001:10-26), further argues that this

model can be applied to the analysis of the system of the group of values, which is one of the elements of identity. This analysis will be presented on the basis of the Nigerian communities. In traditional communities in Nigeria there were three essential values of work (farming), family and religion. This is shown in ethnological and sociological research. These three values are subject to a process of change under the influence of civilization.

Nigerian Concept of Family

The family is the most basic trait of social organization in Nigeria and indeed the globe in terms of socialization, child upbringing, transfer of cultural values and knowledge embedded in the process of socialization. Ojua et'al (2014: 3), argues that family is the traditional Nigerian institution responsible for the transmission of traditional norms and values, beliefs, knowledge and practical skills to the members of the society for their future survival, because the first point of interaction for any member or child for whatever reason is in the family. It is also the socio-biological unit that ensures orderly reproductive continuity of the human race (Ochalla-Ayayo, 2000). For them, the family in a typical Nigerian perspective is the cradle of human values and development. Broadly defined, a family includes all persons existing in an area or a group of people with common ancestors. This definition connotes an extended family system which is the pillar of Nigerian support system. However, Ojua et'al (2014:4) further highlighted that in a more restrictive term, a family may refer to a smaller group consisting of the husband, wife or wives, the children and probably dependents that form a part of the household. As a result of society growth, development, change and continuity, there are current developments that create a unique picture and differentiation between African and other family systems in the globe today. The traditional Nigerian culture does not recognize a nuclear family structure but rather cherishes and practices the extended family system whose membership include not only the man, his wife or wives and children but also blood relations of a common descent such as grandchildren, grand mothers and fathers, nephews, nieces, cousins, aunts, etc. (Madukwe and Madukwe, 2010). A Nigerian becomes fulfilled in life only in relation to the fulfillment of other members of the family. Ojuna et'al (2014) in Osonwa (2008) gave a vivid description of a Nigerian family as: a system whereby everybody is linked with all the other members living or dead, through a complex network of spiritual relationship into a kind of mystical body. Consequently it is not just being that the Nigerian family values, being rooted in kinship are an equally important existential characteristic of the Nigerians, thus, he is never isolated since persons are assimilated into one parental role. A person is an individual to the extent that he is a member of a family, a clan or community. According to Ojuna et'al (2014:6), Nigerians cherish children and by extension large families which give individuals a sense of belonging, hence, this serve as the core factor for the sustainability of the extended family values system till date, despite the socio-economic challenges in homes. Therefore, a Nigerian counts his blessings with regards to the number of children he or she has. This creates an inward satisfaction irrespective of one's social or economic status. The following are the types of Nigerian family structures being practiced in different parts of the continent: (a) nuclear family, (b) extended family, (c) single parental family, (d) step family, (e) matrilineal family structure (f) patrilineal family structure (g) monogamous family and (h)

polygamous family structure. Ojuna et'al (2014) cited that Researchers have variously shown that these categories of the family systems mentioned above do not often exist as exclusive families; they have been influenced by social change and other factors, thus at some point in society, they exist as combined or mixed level. However, Nigerians have a high respect for family values system at all times and levels mention above, makes the family institution custodian teacher and preserver of the social functioning of family values system for individuals and society members. Despite various socio-economic, religious, political and cultural changes, the family institution remains quite auspicious for society functioning.

Traditional Civil union

Family was another important value in traditional communities of Nigeria. Regional endogamy linked the local communities by bonds of kinship (Mrozek 1965: 147). The family, community of the workplace, and residence were the reference systems of Nigerians. The family provided a sense of security and the need for affiliation (Świątkiewicz 2001: 11). The period of real socialism strengthened the role of families. The Nigerian family became a refuge of existence for the traditional values of work and religion (Świątkiewicz 2001). The period of systemic transformation was a difficult time for the realization of the basic functions for many Nigerian families. Due to the opening to the world and civilization, the family became subject to new designs and trends. In sociological research, family still proved to be a great value (Zygmunt 2008). Neither sex nor age nor education affects the significant exceptions to this trend. It appears that a typical person who did not recognize the family as an important cause for transferring family values is a person aged 20 - 29, having a basic vocational or secondary education (Zygmunt 2008). Researchers did not only rank family as the most important value, but there is also a large distance between it and the other axiological values (e.g. religion and family). For example, studies carried out in Southern Kaduna showed that for the majority of respondents the family was the center of focus and integration of values, and the place of creation and transmission of culture. It is the family supporting traditional values, storing them in the open and referring them to future generations (Świątkiewicz 2009). Tradition cultivates family celebrations, which are an opportunity to strengthen family bonds in a circle of the extended family. The specific feature of such meetings is the exclusion of people not belonging to the extended family. Sociological studies carried out in some parts of Southern Kaduna show a continuous implementation of the traditional family model. Świątkiewicz and his colleagues found that a few families, most of the young ladies, divorcees and widows live alone. Alternative forms of family life based on co-habitation and young woman unions are marginal and represent one point eight percent of the whole (Świątkiewicz 2009: 148). Other studies carried out on the younger generation show that the majority intends to get married (Zygmunt 2008: 57). But are constraints by some cultural demands which stand as hindrance. Still, religious attitudes also influenced this phenomenon, the more religious being more in favor of the traditional family model. There is some evidence for a beginning erosion of family values, especially among the youngest generation. However, overall, in traditional Nigerian families modernization changes, involving the greater availability and acceptance of

alternative forms of family values and marriage, did cause significant transformations in Nigerians communities.

Religiosity – Traditional or Selective

The third important value in life is religion. Religion was one of the most important factors in the crystallization of social consciousness. It created a community of beliefs and facilitated a subjective and conscious understanding of the world. It introduced an order which concerned the spheres of work and family. It stabilized the local community life and contributed to its social integration (Świątkiewicz 1997). These functions have been weakened in the period of real socialism. Research conducted by other authors show that for the vast majority of the inhabitants of Nigeria, considered religion as an important matter (Górny 2008). It appears that people for whom religion is not important in life are mainly young people, mostly students (Górny 2008). The importance of religion in the lives of Nigerian communities can also be inferred from their self-declaration of belonging to one of the three major religions. It can be concluded that religion, despite the processes of civilization, globalization and modernization is an important part of life for Nigerians. The confirmation of the role of religion in life is participation in religious practices. Factors that affect participation in religious practices are the cultural transformations that are associated with civilization. They relate to the individualization and subjectivization of criteria for living in their faith and the weakening of the importance of religious institutions and the institutionalized model of religiosity (Swadźba, 2011: 6).It must be stated that Civilization factors seem to have somewhat affected the value of religion. There has been an abandonment of institutional religiosity by the young generation. However, the core of religiosity remained intact and even expanded in family celebrations. Strong ties with the Church endured and the dominant model of religiosity is that of the Church and Catholicism. This demonstrates the influence of cultural traditions in mostly Northern Parts of Nigeria. Cultivating these traditions, however, is diversified by regional and structural factors.

Change in Nigerian Family Values System

Changes in the structure of Nigerian families still reflect the enduring tensions between traditional and modern values and structures. Although there have been widespread accounts of families abandoning key traditional practices in favor of modern ones, the major trend remains the creation of systems of marriage and family organization that draw on both traditional and modern norms. The dominant feature of Nigerian families, as one observer notes, is its ability to "make new things out of old," and to draw forth new solutions from the traditional resources of family institutions (Betty Bigombe and Gilbert M. Khadiagala, 2001:3).As a result, the process of social adaptation of family organizations has produced an uneasy amalgam that is yet to crystallize into a dominant pattern. Thus the trend toward modernity has been captured in the gradual transformations of Nigerian marriage and family organizations away from corporate kinship and extended families toward nuclear households. This shift stems, in part, from the breakdown of collective, kinship-oriented systems of production and reproduction. Where nuclear households have solidified, there

have equally been significant shifts from high to low fertility rates in African families. Although demographers long attributed the prevalence of high fertility rates in some parts Nigeria to the resistance of indigenous socio-cultural systems to external value system. The rapid expansion of educational opportunities and availability of contraceptive methods have contributed to the emerging perception that large families are an economic burden (Therese Lauras-Lecoh, 1990:489). Despite significant internal differences between urban and rural settings and among.

Again, in Nigeria, the slow rates of economic growth and the mismatch between educational outcomes and labor opportunities have compelled smaller family sizes. In most urban areas, factors such as wage labor, the monetized economy and cost of living, have altered the value of children. In addition, while family networks previously mediated the negative effects of large families, resource constraints and economic decline have contributed to the reduction of family sizes and deluded the institutional structures of the extended family (Caldwell, J. C. 1994:179-87). Another change is the breakdown in the symbiotic and mutually beneficial exchanges between rural and urban communities as equally matched by radical changes within rural households. This results from the collapse of the traditional Nigerian family economy in which husbands were the chief breadwinners. This economy has gradually been making way for wage-earning family households whereby both the husband and wife have to strive to earn income primarily in the agricultural sector. Yet the transition to wage-earning households has occurred without corresponding shifts in power relations between the sexes, producing tensions that further destabilize the family. Silber-Schmidt's work on the Gure in Kaduna State as reported by Madhavan demonstrates the momentous changes in household structures as control over resources has shifted gradually away from men to women (Sangeetha Madhavan, 2001:503-27).With rampant unemployment and dwindling resources, men's central roles as breadwinners have been redefined, making it impossible for most men to fulfill these roles. As a consequence, men have felt a loss of power, and, unable to provide for their families, they have frequently turned to alcoholism, brutality, rape, and extramarital sex for succor. In contrast, women's main role as daily household and farm managers remains in close conformity with the traditional expectations and thus they have been better able than men to achieve the social values embedded in their gender roles. Yet as men are threatened by societal changes, the persisting patriarchal structure of powers allows men to nullify women's economic contribution to the family, thus heightening poverty and marital stress.

Influences of Civilization and Modernity

Olutayo A. O. and Akanle O. (2005: 9) allude to the fact that the Nigerian society is in a state of continuous change due to dynamics that may be internal; the current wave of change in family values in the country displays an escalation of extreme externalities. According to Olutayo and Akanle in Vaughan (2005) "the global era ushered in a notable crisis of the postcolonial Nigerian state". For instance, privatization and commercialization, un-adapted democracy, new migration and cultural patterns are all gaining momentum in the country and the effects are profound on indigenous family values as they constantly

interact (Vaughan, 2005; Olutayo and Omobowale, '2005). Although the family still performs some of its traditional roles (Afonja and Pearce, 1984; Ekong, 1984), the traditional family values and its process of inculcation and perpetuation is no doubt being compromised. While more Nigerians are still rural dwellers Ekong (2003), the rate of urbanization and urbanism is increasing at an alarming rate (Gbadegesin, 1994, Kennedy, 2003, Ruel, 1999, Pearce, et al, 1988) and the effects of modernization are more profound at the urban centers due to their constant contact with foreign cultures. It's appears that the influence of modernization is not likely to validate soon. Olutayo, and Akanle (2005: 9), argue that as Nigerians imbibe civilization and modernity, they become 'rational' 'computable ' and' liable' in the ways of modern ideals. For them, in the modern era, home, family, work/industry, education and even religion become separated. Families spend less time together and more time out of the home. The situation is best appreciated in the 'mega cities' of Nigeria where couples and their off springs may depart at dawn only to reunite at dusk, weeks or even months in some instances (Olutayo and Akanle 2005: 9). For them, the culture of eating together at home and the devoted bond it creates is gradually becoming unpopular. In a society that is modernizing and gulping stronghold that is ever associated with it - 'time is money' - the emergence of fast food restaurants is only timely. To make these restaurants' a home away from home', Nigerian cuisines are being introduced into the menu charts (Olutayo and Akanle 2005 in Nigerian Business Info.com, 2000-2001).

The question, socially though, then is: is it the food or the elusive filiations and sentiments associated with the habit? While, socially, the problem is not the fast food, the process that necessitated it and the challenges it has created are. Eating together in a typical traditional Nigerian family serves a lot of functions in promoting family values (Olutayo and Akanle 2005: 9). These functions include social control and effective process of socialization. 'The context of eating together enables the parents to understudy the children and even the spouse for behavioral change and appropriate correction is given. Family value, if necessary or some time could be withdrawal of food from a child may serve as a corrective measure for anti-social behaviour while an additional meal from parents may serve as reinforcement of valued behaviour. In essence, the context of eating together at home is germane in so many respects especially as it creates a propensity for togetherness. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) similarly observe that "people identify with certain objects or communication activities and through those objects or activities identify with other people".

CONCLUSION
Civilization spread all over the world and reached local communities, specially, Nigerian communities where traditional family values used to prevail. These values (work, family and religion) are changing under its influence. However, they do not change simultaneously on the same level with equal intensity. Using a theoretical model of Kazimierz Krzysztofek giving five possible scenarios for the reaction of local cultures to the influence of civilization it is not possible to distinguish only one model for the studied local communities. However there are three scenarios of reaction depending on the generational factor, education and social position. The highest percentage of residents of the old

traditional communities implement the third scenario involving the adoption of the external forms of global culture (clothing, lifestyles, consumption), but at the same time preserving and continuing their traditional values. This applies to both older and younger generations. Among some young people the first scenario dominates, which is characterized by a full acceptance of global culture. This means the rejection of traditional culture and a fascination with consumption. A small part of well-educated residents of traditional communities realize the last scenario. It involves participation in the local culture and preserving traditional values, especially family and religion, while, at the same time, assimilating the universal cultural code and participating in global culture.

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