

**THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF COCOA PRODUCTION IN
SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

By

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ABSTRACT

Social relations, which are patterned interactions among key actors in context, affect outcomes of actions. In Nigeria, social relations between producers and buyers of cocoa are major issues affecting cocoa production. Previous studies have focused on agro-ecology of cocoa production with little attention to social relations of its production. This study was therefore designed to investigate the historical changes, farmers' network, cultural practices and constructed meanings underlying cocoa production in Southwestern Nigeria – a strategic hub of cocoa in Nigeria.

Social Action Theory, exploratory and descriptive designs were adopted for the study. Ondo, Osun and Oyo States were purposively selected as study locations because of their prominence in cocoa production in Nigeria. Primary and secondary data were utilised. Primary data included 45 In-depth Interviews with 15 farmers from each state, six Focus Group Discussions (two per state) with resident farmers, 12 Key Informant Interviews (four per state) with cocoa buyers, association executives and staff of government-owned agricultural agencies, and four Life Histories (two in Ondo, one each in Osun and Oyo) were conducted with elderly farmers. Non-participant observation was done. Secondary data included official memoranda, reports and minutes of meetings of the colonial Cocoa Consumers' Consultative Committee obtained from the National Archives, Ibadan. Data were thematically content-analysed.

The introduction of cocoa to southwestern Nigeria in 1874 shifted the attention of farmers from food crop to cash crop farming, leading to exploitative interrelationships between farmers and the cocoa buyers who determined the price. Colonialism expanded the frontiers of cocoa production with commercial exportation starting in 1910. While farmers embraced cocoa farming, exploitation persisted through land fragmentation, commoditisation of labour, individualisation of farm inputs and mistreatment of smallholders. The post-colonial epoch retained these trajectories. The survival of farmers was dependent upon and negotiated within the networks of kinship, occupational associations, buyers (merchants, licensed agents and exporters), and government institutions. Cocoa farmers developed a culture of work that combined resilience (*iforítì*), communality (*àáró*), attachment to crop, sharecropping, and marriage of customary calendaring with cultural events like masquerade festival. These practices informed strategic construction of meanings which belied cocoa production. Farmers constructed cocoa as 'money' (*kòkó d'owó*), source of livelihood and economic item for rural farmers' exploitation. Farmers also drew a parallel between cocoa and *àbíkú* (a child that is liable to premature death) with the saying that *eni tí ó bá lè wo kòkó yè ni ó lè wo ọmọ yè* (anyone who can successfully raise a cocoa tree can raise a child). Nevertheless, the increasing cost of production, rural poverty, youth apathy and feelings of neglect, and exploitation of cocoa farmers engendered non-regeneration of farms, poor fermentation and discouragement of new entrants that have led to scarcity of labour and shrinking cocoa spaces.

Social relations are tied to the existential realities of cocoa farmers in Southwestern Nigeria, and they implicate the transformation of cocoa production in the area. There is need for value-addition, inclusive policies, rural development and improved regulation of cocoa market to sustain the cocoa sector.

Keywords: Cocoa, Farmers, Social relations, Southwestern Nigeria,

Word count: 495

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by **Gbenga Sunday ADEJARE** in the Department of Sociology, Faculty of the Social Science, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to beautiful memory of my departed best friend and sister, Adenike Abiola Adejare-Idowu. The day you left this world (17-08-2020) remains the saddest day of my life. You were an abiding sister, friend, confidant and source of inspiration to me. You looked forward to the completion of this thesis, but I know you are very pleased for me now. I know we shall meet again where our joy and togetherness will be unending. Till then, good night my loving sister.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Cocoa production is historic and strategic to the trajectories of development in southwestern Nigeria. While its production has its root in colonial economy (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007), certain values and practices have sustained this production among the people of the area over time. Owing to the importance placed on cocoa, both within and outside the country, the global ranking of Nigeria among the cocoa producing states has been unstable from the time of its introduction in the 1870s till date (Adelodun, 2007). Even though Africa remains the hub of cocoa production, the processing and consumption of cocoa products (especially chocolate) satisfies the expansive interests and markets of the northern hemisphere global market where countries like the Netherlands, Germany, Colombia, United States, Switzerland and Canada, among others, constantly take the lead in the negotiations of cocoa price and policy frameworks (Anga, 2015; World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), 2014).

Several perspectives have been adopted to explain why the production of cocoa has often suffered some setbacks. Most of these perspectives are devoid of contextual inclusion of cocoa farmers' lived social experiences which Fairhead and Leach (2005) posited as the basis for inclusive study of agricultural activities in Africa. Whereas existing literature on cocoa production in Nigeria are not silent about the significance of the crop in advancing the economy of the country, considering the foreign

earnings derived from the exportation of cocoa, there is no asking that they have not sufficiently interrogated whether or not there is growing appreciation and motivation for the farming demographic to further engage in the cultivation of cocoa. As explained by Fairhead and Leach (2005), more attention has rather been given to the product (cocoa) rather than the producer (farmer). The demarcation between the former and the latter often lies in the relational gap between consumption and production of cocoa around the world which research focuses are yet to capture fully.

This, in part, is as a result of the dynamics of global supply chain, land tenure system, market economy, consumerism, soil science and environmental sustainability, social relationships, conflict, and sustainable development, among others, which can be nuanced within the context of cocoa production (Muojama, 2016; Skoog, 2016, Ngoong and Forgha, 2013). This explains why cocoa, both as food and cash crop, has continued to stimulate scholarship from various disciplines both in science and art of food production (Haynes, Cabbage, Mercer and Sills, 2012). In other words, efforts to boost the production of cocoa are constantly ongoing, given increasing global demand of cocoa vis-a-vis its unstable supply (Anga, 2016) as well as the global burden for ending food crises.

With this premise, it is imperative to interrogate the context of cocoa production, taking into account the livelihood of the smallholder farmers, most of whom do not only constitute the majority but also constantly question of the value of cocoa whether as cash crop or as food (Anga, 2015). This is because while most of the farmers merely see cocoa as a cash crop, spinning money, they hardly accept it as a food crop (Duncan, 2010; Opeke, 2005). This study, therefore, interrogates the social component of these complexities among farmers producing cocoa in southwestern Nigeria. It interrogates the historical trajectory of cocoa production as well as the interpretive significance of cocoa and how its production can be sustainable among the people of southwestern Nigeria. It explores normative values and cultural

practices that go into the production of cocoa within the scope of the study area. In addition, social intercourses/networks and how they impact on cocoa production processes, livelihood of cocoa producers and boost food supply in Nigeria and beyond are also put into perspective.

One important point of departure in sociological enquiry into the production of cocoa is the shaping of trajectories by the action or inactions and dynamic behaviour of social actors whose negotiated meanings have certain consequences for the development of the larger society. In context, it is important to beam a searchlight on historical development of cocoa production and its interplay with social relations of the people involved in its processes to unravel how social relationships impact on cocoa production over time and vice versa. Sociological perspective to this challenge is either non-existent or difficult to come by. For example, none of the research items compiled by CRIN as of 2009 examined the possibility of improving cocoa production from the social or sociological dimension (Fagbami and Folarin, 2009); of which Fairhead and Leach (2005) perceive as a very crucial, if not the most important, factor in not only diagnosing challenges but also making cocoa production as well as other agribusinesses sustainable in Nigeria and the continent of Africa as a whole (Ngoong and Forgha, 2013). Thus, the urgency of imbuing the dimension of social relations¹ into research and scholarship on cocoa production is not just a desideratum but a prime of place at this point in time when Nigeria's economic and social survival is threatened with the waning oil sector, unemployment, poverty and deforestation and trade deficit, among others.

Against this backdrop, it can be seen that common monothematic explanations on the subject matter of cocoa have not only become trite but capable of divorcing farmers, their lived experiences, practices, and their social networks from the contextual analysis of cocoa production (Ngoong and Forgha, 2013; Fairhead and Leach, 2005). Put differently, most studies

¹ sometimes referred to as *the social* in this study.

have focused on cocoa tree, soil composition, climate, income and market dynamics of cocoa production while the interplay of history of cocoa and the lived experiences of farmers who produce the cocoa have been largely ignored. The latter forms the premise for this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Cocoa is a global commodity with multiple externalities for the farmers that produce it. Meanwhile cocoa was (and perhaps is still) symbolic to Yoruba² – representing valuable resource, wealth or an equivalence of gold or hard currency – as a tool for socio-economic dominance (Aderinto, 2013), its symbolism is constantly negotiated with the passage of time and changing social realities. Whereas it can also be argued that perceptions about the importance or the value of cocoa influenced the lay-out of power and authority in colonial Yoruba societies (Berry,1974; Galleti, Baldwin and Dina, 1956), the post-independence status of cocoa in these societies has increasingly stimulated more studies with a view to upscaling its production. Similarly, even though plethora of policies and programmes have been embarked upon by Nigerian government and other relevant agencies from the 1960s to harness the potentials in cocoa economy for social and economic security in the country, improvement on its production has continued to seem like an impasse partly due to the absence of adequate knowledge of the structure of social relations, actors and actions involves and how they interplay in the processes of its production (Alamu, 2013).

In this vein, the global analysis of cocoa supply chain reveals that while cocoa is mostly produced by smallholder farmers, it is mostly processed and consumed by those who do not produce it (Pricewatercooperhouse [PWC], 2016; World Cocoa Foundation [WCF],

² Yoruba as used in this work typifies the person, identity, and land of Yoruba people of Western Nigeria.

2017). This is a concerning issue for sociological enquiry. Similarly, while Yoruba people are predominantly known to possess certain cultural values that drive their social intercourses and development (Oti and Ayeni, 2013), it is pertinent to inquire into how these values have either promoted or caused a decline in cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria. According to Leiter and Harding (2004) the situation in the tropics, compared to other regions of the world, has over time served as a conducive habitat for some export commodities, especially cash crops, of which cocoa is prominent; a situation that, more often than not, triggers germane debates relating to power relation, social change, and inequality which are imbued in social relationships. Unfortunately, available research works on the production of cocoa have scarcely punctuated these critical issues (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007). For instance, cocoa production is often explicated from a mere simple narrative of expansion and/or contraction in the demand and supply or from other variables that do not have direct bearing to the fabric of social interrelationships that underlie changes in its production. Borrowing a leave from Leitther and Harding (2004) as well as Ngoong and Foorgha, (2013), the apparent need to move beyond statistical or only economic level of analysis to incorporating *the social* of production that emphasises the need to understand the underpinning actions of cocoa producers, which in turn implicate the quality and quantity of production, comes to fore.

Again, it is important to note that while previous studies, such as Cadoni (2013), Alamu (2013) and Aderinto (2013) among others, have focused on cacao (cocoa tree), soil, environmental issues, economic motivations driving the production of cocoa, the import of farmers' constructed meanings regarding government policies, their farming experience, social organisations, and farming practices, which are of course important sociological lenses, has not received adequate attention. It is from this premise that this study adopts a sociological method of enquiry to investigate the often taken-for-granted aspects of cocoa farming – interrogating whether (or not), and how cocoa farmers, who are major actors

in the downstream sector of cocoa production, are motivated or demotivated to produce more cocoa (in good quality and quantity) with the existing social, political, economic and ecological situations in southwestern Nigeria. The research questions and objectives presented below rest on this aim.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions of this study are as follows.

- i. How has the production of cocoa in south-western Nigeria changed over time?
- ii. How does culture interface the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria?
- iii. What is the prospect for sustainable cocoa production in Nigeria?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the social relations (*the social elsewhere*) of cocoa production in south-western part of Nigeria. It is from this overall objective that the following specific objectives are derived:

- i. To examine how the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has changed over time.
- ii. To explore the social network of cocoa farmers in southwestern Nigeria.
- iii. To interrogate some Yoruba cultural practices associated with the production of cocoa.
- iv. To examine how the meanings constructed by farmers may affect cocoa production.
- v. To explore sustainable ways of producing cocoa in southwestern Nigeria.

1. 5.1 Significance of the Study

Existing literature are not silent about the importance of cocoa (Aderinto, 2013; Folayan, Daramola and Oguntade, 2006; Ayanlaja, 1983; Berry, 1974 and 1975; and Olayemi, 1973), yet its producers have neither been appropriately apprised nor considered quintessential in most of these studies, as the burden of survival and crises still riddle the downstream section of cocoa production in most of the cocoa producing communities (Moujama, 2016; FAO, 2017). Thus, relative neglect of contextual realities shaping the production of cocoa may impede apposite understanding of production trends, challenges and prospects of cocoa production. This may in turn implicate the nature of exploitation regarding economic, social and political inequalities that trail the experiences of farmers producing cocoa in Nigeria as well as other cocoa producing areas in Africa and the world at large.

Essentially, this study takes into account the hitherto taken-for-granted sociological explanation of how cocoa production is constantly shaped by history and normative values of a people. Thus, the study is potentially useful for pinning down the social organisation, construction and reconstruction of meanings associated with cocoa and what consequences these may have for scaling up its production thereby and positively impacting on the development of southwestern Nigeria as well as the entire country and by extension other cocoa-producing countries around the world. Again, as posited by Fairhead and Leach (2005), it is arguable that if themes such as ‘international relations’ (Downie, 2017), ‘political relations’ (Olaiya, 2016 and Beckman, 1976) and ‘industrial relations are a common place in the study of cocoa production, an attempt to include the dimension of ‘social relation’ is deemed not only appropriate but also long overdue because it has vast implications for interrogating the dynamics of the downstream sector of cocoa production in which the vast majority of cocoa actors (farmers) are found.

Another important posture by which the import of this study can be seen is its thrust towards crystallising the myth of efficient production of cocoa measured only in economic terms of fluctuations in market forces – forces of demand and supply. We may wish to suffice it infallible that apparent growth in the demand for cocoa world-over is an indication that cocoa production can be harnessed to boost Nigeria’s foreign earnings. This realisation in itself will remain superfluous without given attention to the sustainability aspect of the realisation. Hence, with a view to expediting policy-formulation processes, the study goes beyond stimulating the tempo of cocoa production to understanding social and power relationships that serve as immutable forces dictating the profile of cocoa production in Nigeria. Hence, the puzzles the study concerns itself with include: what is the historical trajectory of cocoa production since its introduction in 1887 in Nigeria? What factors stimulate farmers to cultivate cocoa? What are some of the challenges undermining cocoa production in Nigeria? What practices emerge from and perhaps sustain and/or inhibit cocoa production in Nigeria? What, in contemporary sense, is the potential of cocoa production in Nigeria? These and many more questions form the basis and potential contribution of the study. Potentially, this study reels out extensive contextual interpretations of cocoa, with regard to its value and production processes, beyond the common narratives rooted in economy or pure scientific study of cocoa as a crop. By implication, this will go a long way in rightly shaping the processes of policy making aimed at improving agricultural production and the general well-being of farmers, thus paving way for sustainable national development.

Lastly, the study is a useful addition to the ante of theoretical expansion in Africa as it latches on the need to enhance indigenous knowledge base for solving development-related challenges in Nigeria and other underdeveloped countries of the world alike. In all, the study is reveals the historical antecedents, contemporary issues, social structures, power relations and potentials embedded in cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria and by extension the entire country.

1.6 Scope of the Study

While this study covers some critical historical periods that predated the political independence of Nigeria through the post-independence epoch of the country. It punctuates the periods of cocoa boom, seesaw moment, and interrogates major issues in cocoa production in the country. Geographically, the study focuses on Southwestern Nigeria from which three states were selected on the bases of their cocoa production capacities and agro-ecological ranking. The choice of this region was informed by the fact that, apart from Cross Rivers in south-eastern Nigeria, cocoa is predominantly cultivated in the southwestern geopolitical zone of the country (Cadoni, 2013; FAO, 2009). Previous studies have also shown that there is high production propensity for cocoa production among the people of southwestern Nigeria compared to cocoa producers in other parts of the country (Adeoye, 2014; Akinagbe, 2015). Even though the study has far-reaching implications for different actors, the farmers who constitute the dominant smallholding majority in the downstream sector of cocoa production in the country were essentially centred (CA, 2013; ICCO, 2002; Freud, 2001).

1.7 Definition of Terms

Certain terms are deployed in the course of this study. They are defined as follows:

Cacao and Cocoa – According to ITC (2001), although confusion often arises as to when to use either cacao or cocoa, both can be used interchangeably. But for ease of understanding, cacao is used in this study to refer to the botanical species of tree (*Theobroma cacao* (L)) (Opeke, 2005) while cocoa typifies the fruit (pod and beans) of cacao used for different purposes.

Cash crop – A cash crop, simply put, is a crop cultivated for the purpose of money-making other than mere provision of physiological need for food. In other words, cash crops are commercial crops. Cocoa is an example of cash crop. Other examples include oilseed, coffee, oil palm, and cotton, among others.

Cocoa Processing – This entails the series of activities that are directed towards the conversion of cocoa beans (raw material) into products of cocoa products in their semi-finished forms (like cocoa powder, cocoa paste, cocoa butter and liquor). This process involves roasting, grinding, pressing and extracting activities to arrive at the desired finished cocoa product. According to the UNCTAD (2008), cocoa processing majorly takes place in cocoa-importing countries of Europe like the Netherlands, and the United States of America.

Cocoa production – Production as deployed in the context of this study refers to base activities of cocoa farming which, according to literature, take place in cocoa-producing countries of the world of which upwards of 70 per cent concentrate in West Africa (UNCTAD, 2008; WCF, 2016). Another form of cocoa production that may be investigated elsewhere may focus on the manufacturing of cocoa-related products which especially targets relatively developed European Japanese, Australian, and North American markets that account for the largest proportion of cocoa consumption in the world. Otherwise, cocoa production in this study means cocoa farming or cultivation.

Communal practices – Peculiar activities reifying both tangible and intangible aspects of culture of a particular people in terms of normative or ritual believe are defined as communal practices in this context.

Development – Development has no universally accepted definition. It is a multivalent, complex, multi-tiered and polygonal concept that has to do with wholesome advancement in the experience of people, their livelihood, their

environment and everything that define their existence as humans. As deployed in this study, development does not equate nominal growth in value of cocoa but how both cocoa producers and their cocoa-related endeavours experience positive transitions, hence the concern for sustainable Nigerian development.

Social Relations – In consonance with Mucha (2003), explaining the typologies of Max Weber, social relation is at the heart of what sociologists do. Thus, denoted as *the social* in this study, social relations refer to all intercourses that take place between or among social actors on the day-to-day basis is referred to as social relations. These intercourses are often implicitly subsumed in the classical relations of production of Karl Marx. For instance, explaining Marx, Ritzer and Stepnisky (2014:58) depicted human social relation as a true reflection of a “commodity’s true value” because it is the accumulation of human labour that births the output of the commodity. Social relations differ substantially about time, place, and situation.

Social Structure and Social Organisation – Social structure and social organisation are used interchangeably in this work. They are used to refer to basic social schema or architecture that determine the mode of relationship of a group. Power relations, system of authority, class, status and role, among others, are consciously or unconsciously defined by social structure and this largely implicates social relationships.

Value chain – Within the context of this study, value chain refers to the entire processes involved in cocoa production, from growing to final consumption to satisfy human needs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the review of relevant literature on the history and social relations of cocoa production in Nigeria, focusing more on the southwestern sub-region of the country. Aside from a review of relevant scholarly studies on cocoa production, theoretical frameworks and conceptual framework are also featured in the chapter.

2.1 History of Cocoa Production

The periods around 1900s marked a watershed in the history of agriculture in Nigeria, as commercialisation, both of labour and of crop, motivated many people to get involved in agricultural activities (Adepoju, Olaniyi and Raufu, 2007). Cocoa falls into the category of crops that were introduced during this period (Aderinto, 2013). Cocoa is generally believed to have originated from Latin America where, according to Mexican mythology, it was seen as one of the foods of the gods (Austin, 2009; Walker, 2000). Opeke (2005) explained that until the voyage of Christopher Columbus into the new land in the 16th century, cocoa existed solely in the Upper Amazon region of Latin America for between 3000 and 4000 years. Subsequently, the invasion of the Mayas by the Spanish led to the spread of cocoa and tea-drinking habit in Spain, France, the Netherlands, parts of Europe, and Germany (Leiter and

Harding, 2004; Opeke, 2005). By these accounts, it can be adduced that cocoa is not Nigerian nor African by origin (Crook, 2001; Ayorinde, 1965).

Studies have shown that since the introduction of cocoa (tree and beans) to the shores of African countries, West African countries in particular, towards the end of nineteenth century, its production has become significantly strategic to understanding social intercourses, economic negotiations, development discusses and trend, as well as political engagements, thereby influencing policy formulation and symbiotic cohesions in the continent (Nmadu, Salawu, and Omojeso, 2015; Ngoong and Forha, 2013; Duncan, 2010, Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007). This explains why scholarship on the subject matter of cocoa production in Africa is not only amply contextual but also current and intense given the expansive culture of cocoa drinking, chocolate production and other integral products of cocoa that are demanded globally (WCF, 2017; Skoog, 2016).

But down into the annals of history, cocoa was introduced to West African mainland; and then to Nigeria; and then to southwestern Nigeria (Berry, 1974). In his account, Opeke (2005) explained that cocoa was introduced to Nigeria from Fernando Po in 1874 by Chief Squiss Ibamingo. It was first cultivated in Cross Rivers and later in Western Nigeria in 1889 after which it began to gain commercial status (Adetunji, Olaniyi and Raufu, 2014). Sara Berry in her 1975 work on the intersection of cocoa in the western Nigeria, offered the most classic seminal and lucid evaluation of how the precolonial social formations in places like Ibadan, Ondo and Ife paved way for easy thriving of cocoa farming in Western Nigeria. She was careful to include the pertinence of interrogating and understanding the layers of social institutional arrangements upon which cocoa production thrived to foster its development at any point in time. It has also been recorded that prior to the surge in the oil sector in the 1970s and later the introduction of SAP (structural adjustment programme) in the 1980s, cocoa was arguably the top source of foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria (Cadoni, 2013;

Idowu, Osuntogun and Oluwasola; 2007). This was because Nigeria possesses conducive ecological temperature, and to a large extent the labour power, needed for producing cocoa in large quantity.

According to Aderinto (2013), in his study on the history of land tenure and politics, the increase in the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria was influenced by inter-tribal rivalry and conflict over land dues, not mainly because of the value of land, but because of the value of cocoa. It is from this point of view that one can appreciate the earlier view of Berry (1965) that the production of cocoa in Nigeria impacted social relationships and vice versa. Thus, beyond the economic value of cocoa, knowledge of the existing social organisation of its production is apparently vital and important (ITC, 2001; Olutayo, 1999). Elsewhere, it was argued that cocoa was induced as an instrument of war (Skoog, 2016; Global Witness Report, 2007) just as it has also been portrayed as stimulating development in Nigeria (CA, 2013).

In the same parlance, historical accounts show that emergent colonial and post-colonial conflict over land as well and the political economy of land use policy thrived partly due to the rising value of commercialised peasant farming, in which cocoa production finds expression, such that it was only theoretically useful to discuss the importance of land without an allusion to its economic value estimable in terms of the crops, cocoa in this instance, cultivated on it (Skoog, 2016; Aderinto, 2013; Crook, 2016). It is however important to note that whereas extant literature and studies on the history of cocoa are invaluablely useful, insightful, and pungent, the currency of these intellectual property is contestable when the changing social political narratives and environmental conditions shaping cocoa production in recent time are brought to bear. Hence, the need to engage history in line with current issues in cocoa industry is significant.

2.2 An Overview of Global Production of Cocoa

Global production of cocoa is closely tied to the boom in chocolate industry in the global North (Crook, 2001). Studies have shown that chocolate industry is huge business worth one hundred billion dollars as at 2015 with tremendous impact on cocoa producers, particularly the smallholder farmers (Higonnet et al. 2017; WCF, 2017; PWC, 2016). The global supply chain of cocoa recognises West Africa as the top cocoa producing sub-region in the world (IITA Annual Report, 2016; PWC, 2016) even though the same sub-region ranks as one of the least consumers of cocoa in the global market (FAO, 2014). As indicated by Agwu et al. (2014), the downward spiralling of agricultural contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) which was about 64% at independence (in 1960) but sharply dropped to 19% in 1985 as a result of glut in the oil sector continue to agitate the minds of many in Nigeria as this implicated the supply of food, balanced growth as well as care for the teeming youth population in the country. The neglect of agriculture is by every of its ramifications consequential for the protracted decline in cocoa production over time. To take this a little further in in-depth analysis is to even see the decline in the production of cocoa beyond the apparent instability in the forces of demand and supply to include the intersectionality of far-reaching interface of social and historical components of cocoa production, which more often than not is downplayed in the broad contextual explanation of the nexus of development in Africa.

While it has been argued that cocoa production is an agent of change through which the dynamics of social relationships in cocoa growing nations can be understood (PWC, 2016; Aderinto, 2013; UNCTAD, 2001), it is consequential to investigate how this change takes place, especially in relation to organic and mechanical relations of individuals concerned in the processes. For instance, the estimated average metric tons of cocoa produced in the world every year is three million, of which according to record, 90 per cent of this is from nine countries with Ivory Coast as topping the list and

Nigeria as number four after Ghana and Indonesia while others include Cameroon, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Malaysia (UNCTAD, 2004). The same account shows that West Africa, where Nigeria is located, accounts for over 70 per cent of this production. Notably, Nigeria is ranked the third and the fourth highest producer of cocoa in Africa and in the world respectively. The country produces about 12 per cent of the total world production of cocoa behind Ivory Coast (35%) and Ghana (13%) in Africa (Wilcox and Abbot, 2004); and behind Ivory Coast, Indonesia and Ghana in the global ranking (Erelu, 2008).

Even though there is consistency in the claims of scholars that cocoa, as a cash crop, is inseparable from the history of Nigerian social and economic development in the colonial and post-colonial epochs, the country still finds it difficult to sustainably tap the potentials in cocoa production to accelerate its development or latch on it to thrive in the global commodity market partly due to certain social, ecological and politico-economic factors that play out in devious dimensions in cocoa supply chain (Nmadu, Salawu and Omojoso, 2015; Olukayode, Yusuf and Alao, 2013; and Skoog, 2016). Consequently, production of cocoa in Nigeria in the recent past has been markedly unstable, chaotic and substantially regrettable, rooted in capitalism that defiles the dignity of labour characteristic of the vast majority of smallholder cocoa farmers (Oluyole and Sanusi, 2009; Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007). This is not to say that the preponderant notions that the oil boom syndrome, low yield, simple technology, aging cocoa plantations, size of cocoa farms, inconsistent production, dwindling world market price of cocoa, diseases and pests attack are not key players in the production processes of cocoa in Nigeria (Villalobos, 1989; Idowu, Osuntogun and Oluwasola, 2007). These realities have continually eventuated copious researches and policy actions in recent time to proffer solution to the challenges inherent in cocoa production. But, unfortunately, much has not been recorded in terms of output of these feats (Mbendi, 2016).

The acceleration in the market forces, with or without notional issues, is a major concern in the global production of cocoa. This is because it offers an insight into the dynamic flow of labour, demand and supply, pricing and the relational contexts of cocoa production both in the past and in the present times (WCF, 2016). While the demand for cocoa is increasing owing to the boom in chocolate consumption, aside from its other uses, the production of cocoa in Nigeria is unstable and relatively inefficient (Babalola, Ayinde, Chirwa and Thian, 2016). Several studies have shown that cocoa production is confronted with a number of problems and uncertainties (Gockowski 2007; Fantazy et al 2010; Otchere et al 2013; Babalola 2016). Many of these studies have examined cocoa production from agricultural and economic perspectives. Their findings also concluded that generally many of the cocoa farmers and workers are living below poverty line or are absolutely poorer with less than USD1.25 per day (MCF, 2013). Their studies connected the problems of cocoa production to unorganised marketing systems, farmers' lack of knowledge about market trends and prices, poor level of investment in infrastructure, lack of support for the local farmers and environmental hazards. These studies and many others have rarely or never examined the socio-cultural factors or communal practices that have influenced the production of cocoa. In other words, the social shaping of agriculture has been largely ignored by many of the previous researches and policies directed at improving cocoa production in the country.

In the same vein many studies have not assessed farmers' perceptions about cocoa production, even when it is obvious that socio-cultural factors and perceptions of cocoa farmers are largely inevitable determinant factors in cocoa production (Fairhead and Leach, 2005). This study thus historicises, contextualises and systematically analyses the social aspect of the production of cocoa and unravel potentials of cocoa production for individual and general development of Nigeria. This knowledge is essential in understanding the dynamics and projectiles of cocoa production in Nigeria and elsewhere.

In spite of the expanding global market for cocoa, its vital position in history, its role in the social and economic evolution of Nigeria as a nation, its production remains unstable and falls far below its capacity in the country (Ngoong and Forgha, 2013; OMONT, 2001). According to statistics, upwards of 70 per cent of the global supply of the beans of cocoa come from three countries in western Africa – Ivory Coast, Ghana and Nigeria (World Cocoa Foundation [WCF], 2016; PWC, 2016). It is also believed that the global demand for cocoa, though not stable, portend a lot of potentials for cocoa producing countries in the world (Anga, 2016). Notwithstanding the propitious statistical representation of these cocoa-producing countries within the global commercial space, there are prevalent adverse social and economic situations that eventuate instability and decline cocoa production, thereby beclouding development potentials embedded in these countries (Adhuze, 2014). This situation is a contraction that is worthy of in-depth study beyond the currently popular.

2.3 Cocoa Production in Nigeria

Cocoa was once a top foreign exchange earner for Nigeria when the country ranked as the second largest supplier of cocoa beans around the world, especially around the 1960s and early 1970s (Daramola *et al.*, 2009). With the surge in the oil sector, Daramola and colleagues explained that there was a reduction in the contribution of cocoa to the country's economy as a result of which people migrated from rural to urban spaces in search of jobs that are less laborious than cocoa farming. As a consequence, the production of cocoa was left not only the hand of fewer farmers but also in the hands of relatively weaker farmers who were weak for reason of old age. At present, consequent to the unrest in the Niger Delta, which is the major supplier of petroleum and the increasing population of Nigeria, it necessitates that Nigeria revert to agriculture as an alternative driving force for the nation's economy. The boom in oil investment in the 1970s and 1980s, however, led

to plummeting cocoa productions to the extent that it only accounted for 0.3% of agricultural GDP after the upsurge in the oil sector (Cadoni, 2013).

Nigeria has a history of cocoa production that is notably embedded with social and economic underdevelopment (Ajao, 2011). The need to explore the possible ways of up-scaling cocoa production in a more sustainable way such that it would have direct bearing to social realities of all groups (farmers, association, processors, governments and other actors in the industry) involved of utmost importance in this study. In consonance with the view of James Fairhead and Melissa Leach (2005), social dimension offers a new way to go in diagnosing many of the challenges confronting the development of agricultural sector in Africa. It is, of course, no gainsaying that many policies and programmes hitherto introduced in Nigeria have yielded little or no result simply because many of them lack direct bearing to the social conditions that often pre-empt agricultural productivity in Nigerian context.

Given the above situation, it is obvious that common narratives that dissociate processes accompanying the production of cocoa from their historical and social contexts may not only not be substantive but also incomplete. Thus, the impetus for this study is drawn from the need to locate sustainable ways of developing cocoa-related businesses by focussing attention on normative values, history, practices and general group behaviour within which meanings attached to the production of cocoa in Nigeria are often negotiated, with a special interest in the southern part of the country. This systematically combines with the interrogation of social changes that take place in cocoa production processes as influenced by the behaviour of various actors in Nigeria.

In so far that, according to WCF (2016), the perception of involvement in cocoa production is positive, indicating strong profitability, potency for capacity building and development, chances are that many investors as well as youths, are likely going to show interest in it. However,

given the fact that many of those who venture into it, including the government, does not possess adequate knowledge of the structures and systems that are operational and quite sine qua non for sustaining cocoa investment (Gockowski, 2007). What this, therefore, implies is that there is a need for an enquiry into the contextual understanding of *the social* of cocoa production. This problematic marks a turning point for deeper enquiry into the contours of cocoa production for proper insight into make sustainable policies.

Poverty, conflict, and underdevelopment characterise smallholder cocoa farmers in Africa (Skoog, 2016). Nigeria exemplifies this situation. In the downstream sector of cocoa, where about 90% of the farmers are smallholder farmers. The oil boom of the 1970s also relegated to the background the value of cocoa as essential export earnings (Babalola et al., 2016; Idowu and Oluwasola, 2007). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development considered cocoa as a competitive and lucrative economic cash crop that ranked highest in the aspect of income generation amongst other agricultural products in the world markets (UNCTAD, 2004). Its constituent elements have made cocoa a more dependable cash crop that is enjoyed globally in the form of chocolate either as part of a drink, snack or dessert (Freud, 2001). The social analysis of cocoa production, rooted in sociological imagination, offers a new dimension, beyond the conventional domain of scientific explanation, by which the importance of cocoa production. It is within this context that social networks, value chain, conflict of interests, social change and economy can be nuanced.

It is from this perspective that the dearth of empirical research extrapolating the contours of social dimension to the issues embedded in the production of cocoa in Nigeria can be seen as a major challenge and hence the need for further studies in this area. In other words, there are a number of cocoa-induced contradictions that often play out, for whose explanation sociological imagination is required, especially when the import of historical,

cultural and institutional trajectories in connection with the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria are brought to bear (Anga, 2016; Aderinto, 2013; Fairhead and Leach, 2005). Thus, it is important to understand the social status, formal and informal networks, culture and other primordial factors influencing the behaviour of various actors, especially farmers, to fully grasp the pathway to upscaling the production of cocoa in Nigeria (Dainville, 2004). In essence, cocoa production, as a social fact, is not only value-laden but also replete with interpretive and subjective existential realities than can be studied through inclusive methodology that integrates both objective and subjective aspects of the lifeworld of different actors.

2.3.1 Social Relation and Meaning-Construction in Cocoa Production

Construction of meanings is as important aspect of sociology as a discipline, especially within Weberian interpretive paradigm (Ritzer and Stepnisky, 2014). Centring a crucial point of departure for interrogating how constantly negotiated meaning(s) of cocoa has/have influenced its production over time, this position forms an integral narrative explicated by James Fairhead and Melissa Leach in their 2005 work on ‘The Centrality of the Social of African Framing’ – an attempt that exposes how divorcing farming from the social contexts that shape the re/construction of meanings may become counter-productive in expanding the development of agriculture and Nigerian nation. It is from this stance that the framework of social relations of cocoa farmers can be utilised to decipher various meanings emanating from the production (as well as the consumption) of cocoa.

In this vein, the work of Higonnet, Bellantonlo and Hurowitz (2017) on ‘Chocolate’s Dark Secret’ gives an important insight to contextual understanding of the variegation of the meaning of cocoa across borderlines. They carried out a research in Ivory Coast to examine how the production of chocolate, which of course is mostly luxurious, in the North America and

Europe interfaces the production of cocoa in the shores of Ivory Coast where the largest world supply of cocoa beans comes from. The bone of contention for these scholars is that the construction of cocoa meaning engenders spatial, economic and social conflict such that in spite of the boom in the chocolate industry, the vast majority of cocoa producers who are often plunged into states of poverty, environmental degradation and other forms of quagmires. In their own words, ‘chocolate is a guilty pleasure’ (Higonnet, Bellantonlo and Hurowittz, 2017:3). In the same tempo, Aderinto (2013) and Skoog (2016), have added crescendo to the volatility and susceptibility of cocoa-producing area to incessant conflict as a result of land struggle, which of cause can be traced to values ascribed not to the land itself but the economic worth of cocoa cultivated on the contested piece(s) of land.

Similarly, Olutayo and Omobowale (2007b) are expressive about how the interconnectedness of the world, otherwise referred to as global capitalism, has affected the pattern of social relationship and mode of production world-over. According to this source, the enmeshing of African continent into the nexus of global production and supply chains has been fuelled by the activities of international agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Bank. This assertion amplifies the position of Walker (2000) on how cocoa production has come with profound influence on the relations of cocoa production in southwestern Nigerian such that the activities of cocoa actor constantly influence relations of production and vice versa.

It is imperative to note that extant literature is mostly vocal about the utility of cocoa but silent about the value its producers place on it. For instance, many of the cocoa producing countries rank the least in the comity of nations consuming chocolate as the end product of cocoa (PWC, 2017). Giving insights into how the meaning of cocoa can be conceived both in the past and contemporary terms is one way to investigate whether or not cocoa farmers have a way of influencing its production within the context of their

culture and practices. However, there is an observed void of existing literature or research that specifically relate the contextual meaning of cocoa in relation to the lived experiences of its producers, especially in southwestern Nigeria. This study is an attempt directed at filling this gap.

2.4 Cocoa Farmers

The position occupied by cocoa farmers cannot be underrated globally because of the key role they play in the value-chain and the economic trends of demand and supply of cocoa beans around the world (Anga, 2015; Walker, 2001; Beckham, 1976). Farmers were remarkably dogged and unrelenting in build thriving cocoa industry, which unfortunately reduces them to situations of poverty, inequality, cheap labour, gender imbalance and imperial global capitalism (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007; Ayorinde, 1965). In Africa as a whole, cocoa farmers have variegated perceptions both for the value and production processes of cocoa and these significantly impact on not only their social organisation but also the quality and quantity of cocoa beans produced at any given point in time (Aderinto, 2013; Berry, 1974). Considering the factors that could affect production, farmers across the continents see the possibilities of cultivating cocoa from different soils as a clear imperative for consideration since climatic conditions vary in most places (Olaiya, 2016; Beckman, 1976). However, for a clearer understanding, reviews of literatures on worldviews of cocoa farmers about cocoa production are discussed in sub-headings below.

Socioeconomic factors include age, sex, education, occupation, among others. In particular, literatures are critical of their findings of the socio-economic characteristics of Cocoa Farmers. One of such finding was that cocoa farmers mean age is 50 (Busayo et' al, 2013; Uwagboe, 2010) indicated that the mean age of cocoa farmers stood at 70 years. Also, majority of these cocoa farmers were male (Busayoet 'al 2013; Oluyole and Sanusi

2009; Oladipipo 2010 and Olabisi 2008). Among cocoa farmers in Edo state Nigeria, the mean age was 50.8 which was a range age between 41 and 60 (Uwagboe *et al*, 2012).

2.5 Youth Participation in Cocoa Production

There is no consensus among scholars as to what the actual age category that constitutes youthful population because the definition is often influenced by subjective, chronological or functional factors that qualifies an individual to be referred to as youth (Akpan, 2010). Be that as it may, for purpose of this study and in accordance with Industry Report (2016) and Agwu et al. (2014), youths are those that fall within the age bracket of 18 years to 40 years. Beyond the controversy of definition of youth is the issue relating to proper integration of youths as a major fulcrum around which sustainable agribusinesses in contemporary senses pivot (IITA Annual Report, 2016). Thus, efforts at addressing inefficient appropriation of this group requires high level of urgency. As explained by LeVan (2015), apparent neglect or exclusion of youths has constantly led to expression of their frustration in Nigeria and other countries of the world alike.

The cardinality of youths to cocoa production cannot be overemphasised. Although the attempt to stimulate involvement of youths in cocoa and other agricultural productions is not recent in Nigeria, nothing much has been achieved in this regard (Akpan, 2010). For instance, rural-urban migration among young people is an inevitable feature of urbanisation which in turn occurs with increasing level of urban bias in the rate of development in Nigeria (Industry Report, 2016). Worse still, deficit in the supply of infrastructural facilities also accounts for increased exodus of youths from rural to urban centres (Anga, 2014). This realisation is a point of departure for this study which intends to unearth inherent potentials in cocoa production for the development of youths and Nigeria as a whole.

2.6 Cocoa Politics

The questions of *who gets what? How? And Why?* in the cocoa value chain presuppose a notion of conflict which eventually manifests in devious forms ranging from price regulation, to child labour issue, to gender agitations, to land tenure issues and the degenerate of the ecosystems, among other nagging issues (WCF, 2017; Aderinto, 2013). Traore (2009) was of the view that the crises in the agricultural sector and cocoa production in the post-independence Africa has its root in the aftermath of the introduction of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in Africa. SAPs indeed escalated the already existing schism that existed between the rich few that are urban, and the poor majority predominantly preoccupied with a subsistent extraction of agricultural products in the countryside. The dimension of *the social* to the impact of SAP on cocoa production, as conceived in this study, would give a more nuanced understanding of how SAP fractured cocoa economy as well as symbiotic cocoa producers in the country.

2.6.1 Sustainability of Cocoa Production

Cocoa production has many implications for *the social* and economic survival of actors involved in the processes. Studies show that in West Africa, cocoa farmers are faced with certain realities that impinge on its production. According to Verter and Beevarova (2014), the enmeshing of Nigeria into the global financial structure has a colossal implication for driving and sustaining cocoa production in the country. This, they explained regarding the activities of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in expediting liberalisation of cocoa market and subjecting the already unprotected farmers to unhealthy competition which further exacerbated their farming griefs. The unfavourable market conditions created by WTO in the integration of Nigerian cocoa farmers into the world capitalist system further found better

expression in the adoption of the structural adjustment programme (SAP) and the dissolution of the then marketing board – Nigerian Cocoa Marketing Board which was scrapped in 1986. Indeed, the impact of market liberalization, activities of multilateral organisations, SAP and other regulatory policies introduced constituted burden and backlashes for cocoa farming in Nigeria (Olubanjo, Akinleye, and Ayanda, 2009; Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007).

Apart from the financial requirements, technical knowledge of the quality and specifications required by major buyers on the international market is a key in underscoring the challenges of cocoa farming. Quality control, pricing, control of inventory, transportation, sanitation, and other aesthetic and technical requirements in the production of cocoa are often attended to by the big names in the confectionary and cocoa industrial production like the Barry Callebaut, Cargil, Archer Daniels Midlands and other multinational agencies (Adetunji, Olaniyi, and Raufu, 2007; ITC, 2001; Olubanjo, Akinleye, and Ayanda, 2009). Towards increasing investments and support for cocoa farmers, the truth is, while the cocoa business may seem very lucrative on the outside, many cocoa growers are very poor people. How is this possible? A review of literature on the implications of cocoa production shows that multinationals have been playing a significant role in the production most especially at the point of marketing of cocoa product in West Africa in general.

The foregoing gives us a background of how extant literature and studies have conceptualised cocoa production. It is however worthy of note that none of the studies critically give sociological explanation of the inherent social interrelationships and their implication in cocoa production processes. This is a crucial gap this study intends to fill.

2.6.2 Ecology of Cocoa Production

There are several ecological issues that are often encountered in cocoa production processes. According to Nana *et al* (2013), cocoa farmers in rural areas in Africa are much aware of climate change. Cocoa farmers often perceive the change in climate is as a result of God's plan to signify the end time. Cocoa farmers and/ farm workers may have come into contact with pesticides during the application process or when entering recently treated areas. In Nigeria, various regions and areas have taken a cultural and more localized since majority of the pesticide instructions are written in English languages and possess a little gap in understanding its full implications (Fadare, 2012).

2.7 Prospects of Cocoa Production in Nigeria

Cocoa as a significant cash crop in Nigeria has critical implications on the development of individuals and the nation as a whole. It has also remained the major employer of labour and suppliers of raw materials to local industries (Folayan, Daramola and Ogunrade, 2006; Oluwasola, Ige and Omodara, 2015). The standard of living of many Nigerians can be improved through effective cocoa production. The country socio-economic status can also be enhanced through fervent cocoa production. Not considering the implications of cocoa production in a country like Nigeria where significant studies have shown a decline in production (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007; Oluwasola, Ige and Omodara, 2015) is aberrant to academic learning. However, what then is more to be known about cocoa transcend its nutritional value, marketing, production incentives or utilitarian value of the produce to include dynamic historical antecedents, social structures, political economy and power structures shaping its value chain. Aderinto (2013) saw this lacuna by attempting brief historical of how cocoa politics often led to conflicts in the Nigerian past. In a similar parlance, Skoog (2016) examine

the post-independence conflictual role play by certain cocoa actors in Liberia. The existing accounts of how cocoa has often led to social change in Nigeria are either insufficient or old, hence the need for further investigation on the significance of cocoa in terms of its projectile within the context of Nigerian development.

A review of literature shows that many communities in Ondo State which are into cocoa production have been actively involved in this preoccupation for some years and hence form the heartbeat of development from various agricultural agencies for the prospects of cocoa productions. Such includes the Agricultural Development Project (ADP), Cooperative Societies Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture, Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) and even the Federal Ministry of Agriculture Nigeria (Nmada, Sallawu and Omojeso, 2015; Adhuze, 2014).

2.8 Theoretical Framework

Human beings exist in relativity: they exist relative to time, space, geography, belief system and other realities that shape their existence; but theories are a tool with which social scientists create a model of reasoning about realities, distinct from frictions or abstractions (Olutayo and Afolayan, 2013). In other words, theories offer social scientists a framework of reasoning within which further research and analysis can be situated. With this premise in mind, the social action theory of Marx Weber has been adopted in this study.

2.8.1 Social Action and Cocoa Production

This study is situated within the broad scope of social action theory. This is because the theory essentially gives room for deep understanding of social contexts of the construction, reconstruction and negotiation of meanings that

underlie overt and covert motives for cocoa production. To fully grasp the relevance of social action theory within the ambit of this study, the many assumptions of the theory are examined as follows:

1. Social action may be influenced by the past, present or future occurrences. This supposes that cocoa production is influenced by actions of the past, present or future. The past could include previous policies, administrations and experiences. The present includes the current happenings, while the future is the intention or plan of individual, government or other bodies which may directly or indirectly influence the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of cocoa.
2. Social action occurs as individuals engage in symbiotic relationships. It is possible only if there is another individual whose action or behaviour is promoting another to act in a particular manner. It implies that, there can be no social action in isolation. It also translates cocoa farmers to being encouraged or discouraged from production by their interacting fellows or individuals.
3. Social action should have another subjective meaning to another particular social action. Thus, if a cocoa tree falls accidentally, it is not a social action, but if a cocoa farmer deliberately cut it down, the subjective intention or meaning of the farmer's action has made it a social action.

As expounded by Max Weber social action has four stages (Ritzer and Stepnisky, 2014). These are:

- i. Traditional stage: this stage is concerned with customs, traditions and their usages. It is guided by customary habits of thought. Thus, all those actions which influence the production of cocoa, and are being guided or determined by customs or traditions are found within this stage.

- ii. Emotional/Affective stage: this stage is concerned with feelings. Emotional reactions to the action of others are embedded here. Expression of love, hate, pity or sympathy in response to the behaviour of others among cocoa farmers may be subsumed here.
- iii. Valuation stage: social actions that are concerned with values are considered within this stage. It includes what the cocoa farmers desire or consider importance. Here, such factors as religion, ethnicity or gender may be a key player influencing what is considered right or wrong by an individual doing, or interested in, cocoa farming.
- iv. Rational or purposive stage: Actions under this stage are guided mainly by reason and discrimination. It is goal oriented. Actions are considered rational based on some reasons of wanting to get some benefit from others. Thus, any action purposively performed by cocoa farmers to get some benefit is embedded here.

The social action theory is essentially deployed to probe in-depth understanding of human behaviour, the reasons behind such behaviour, and how such reasons have influenced perceptions and decisions of cocoa farmers and others in the study area. Action is human behaviour to which the acting individual attaches subjective meaning. It can be overt or covert. Action becomes social when the actor attaches subjective meaning to his/her action by taking into account the behaviour of others to whom his/her action is oriented (Ritzer and Stepnisky, 2014). Weber perceives social action as “that action of an individual which is influenced by the actions and behaviour of other persons and by which its direction determined” (Farooq, 2014:1).

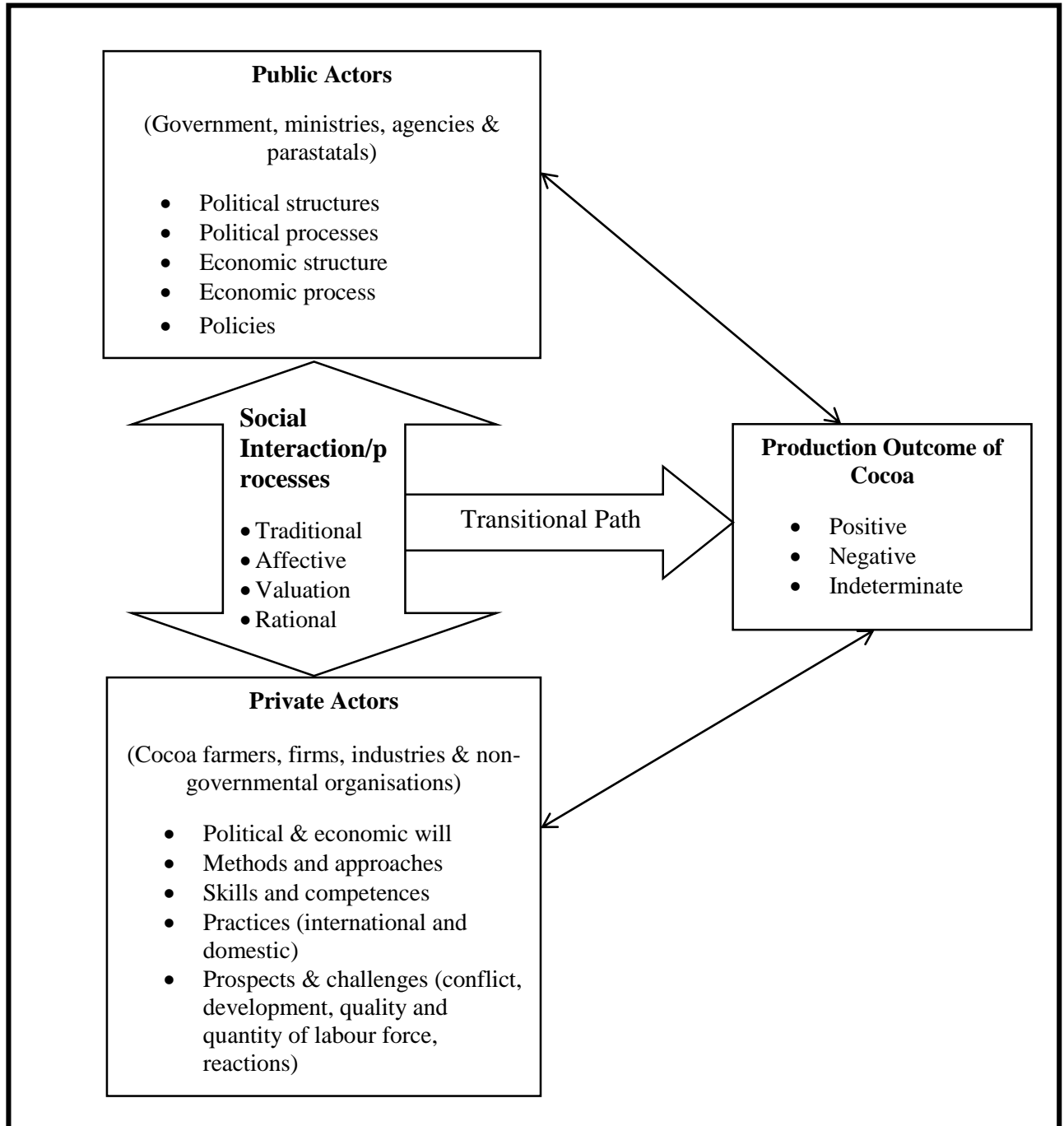
In the same vein, although a lot of studies have been carried out to interrogate why, in spite of increasing demand for cocoa vis-à-vis government push to re-invent an economy driven by agriculture – for

example the recent agricultural transformation agenda which aimed at boosting crop production, including cocoa (Ajani and Igbokwe, 2014) – the outputs of farmers remain relatively low and far beyond their potential capacity in Nigeria. This straddles with the challenge of aging cocoa farmers and their cacaos (cocoa trees) without substantial replacement or transition framework. If the claim that the production of cocoa was, and is still, profitable, the question then arises as to why cocoa production suffers from unpopular patronage, especially by Nigerian youths, in an era of massive unemployment and dwindling income from the oil sector. There is, apparent need to dig deeper into the annals of history to relate the trend of cocoa production and the corresponding prevailing social behaviour of cocoa farmers and other pertinent actors. This is because it is often difficult to separate human beings from the social realities that they interact with on daily basis (Fairhead and Lead, 2005). Among other crucial things, the symbiotic intercourses among cocoa farmers, social networks, historical trajectories, value system (especially as spelt out in their social organisation), practices and the mode of production and reproduction (of wealth) are vitally important in pitting the challenges of agricultural growth and development in Africa with their corresponding opportunities (Conservative Alliance [CA], 2013).

Elsewhere, cocoa metaphorically symbolises treasure, money or any other valuable resource. For instance, in the ancient Mexico, where cocoa was first discovered, the myth that cocoa was one of the foods of the gods which originated from the “Garden of Life” was prevalent (Opeke, 2005). Not until recently, the habit of cocoa drinking was majorly common among wealthy people in Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, and other parts of European countries (Opeke, 2005). The value attached to cocoa, as a very important commodity, further influenced its expansive cultivation, marketing, pricing, and strategic manipulation in the global commodity market and value chain (ITC, 2001, Kaplinsky, 2004; UNCTAD, 2008). In the view of Aderinto (2013) and Skoog (2016), cocoa can be interpreted as a

tool for boundary delineation and an instrument of war. Be that as it may, the gamut of meanings and normative values attached to cocoa cannot be fully comprehended without a careful interrogation of the fabric of social intercourses that produce the meanings that are interpreted. Thus, the social action theory gives the latitude for probing into the *whys* of various actors involved in cocoa production. This is further illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Interrelationship of Actors in Cocoa Production



Source: Author, 2019

The conceptual framework above highlights public and private actors as core players in cocoa production processes. Thus, the actions and policies (policies) of government affecting other actors in the cocoa industry cannot be taken for granted in order to grasp the consequent externalities of their actions. By this, it is expected that the programmes and policies of government would either promote or inhibit the production of cocoa as these (actions and programmes) have potentials for stimulating or demotivating farmers to be more or less interested in cocoa production.

The framework also reflects constant interaction between the key players and how one actor affects the other in cocoa production processes: it shows how the elementary factors embedded in each actor via any stage of interaction; be it traditional, affective, valuation or rational impinge directly on cocoa production, leading to positive, negative or indeterminate outcome.

The framework further illustrates that the effects of cocoa production are also directly felt by both formal and informal actors alike such that non-governmental structures are not passive in the production processes. It indicates that though, interaction between public and private actors are expected, sometimes actions of each may, without obvious interaction, impinge on the outcome of cocoa production. By this, it means that the gamut of skills, practices and informal relations of non-formal cocoa actors are equally important as those of the policy makers in order to fully comprehend the pathway to up-scaling cocoa production at any point in time. This framework, thus, serves as a conceptual instrument that will guide the researcher to carry out investigation on the basis of the searchable questions and objectives earlier raised.

Significantly, both theoretical and conceptual frameworks above have some things in common. They show that there are layouts of internecine action and reactions by different actors which ultimately produce an outcome. In essence, while cocoa farming is itself an art or endeavour that some individuals (farmers), this art is constantly influenced by the

interpretive meanings that those who engage in this art give to it. This cognitive process of negotiation of meaning is in turn influenced by the activities of other actors (formal or informal). The eventual outcome (product) of this process may either be productive or counter-productive, based on the path of transition.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on various steps and processes that were put in place in the course of data collection, collation, presentation and analysis in the study. The design, location, population and various instruments deployed for the study as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria are clearly stated and discussed in this chapter.

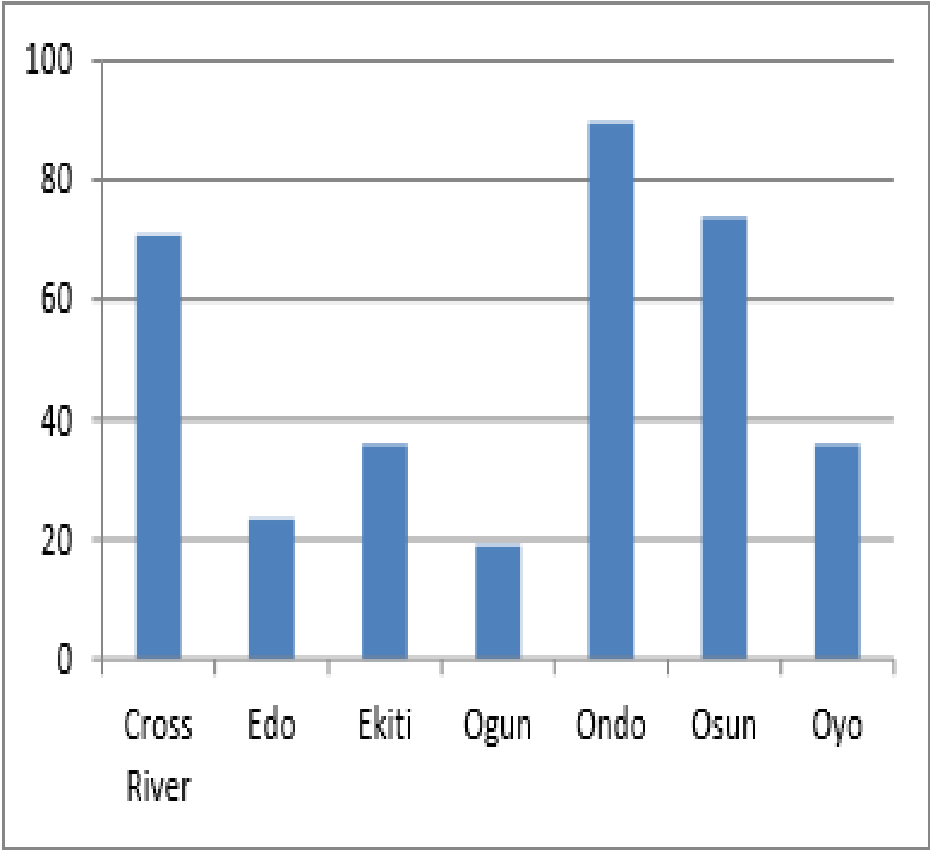
3.1 Research Design

The study is situated within methodological tradition of qualitative research. The study finds the qualitative research approach best suited for unpacking the often taken-for-granted relational aspects of coca production in southwestern Nigeria, in part, because of its focus on the meaning negotiated by farmers as well as their everyday practices and experiences. Owing to the subject matter of enquiry in this study – the interplay of social intercourse and the production of cocoa – a mix of historical and exploratory methods have been employed for reason of validity. Epistemic explanation of the utility of historical method shows that the past can be verified through “stories that could be substantiated according to the rules of evidence and those that” (Porra, Hirschheim, and Parks, 2014:540) as against myths that are unverifiable. Thus, the historical method was used for collecting

evidence-based record about the production of cocoa and practices before, during, and after colonial administration in Nigeria. In consonance with the view of Atkinson and Hammersley (2007) that ethnography accords a researcher an opportunity to partake in people's everyday lives over a period of time whether covertly or overtly, this study deployed method of observation to gather information about the production of cocoa in situ. This gave room for the collection of observable contextual actions, experiences, realities peculiar to cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria which may not have been achievable with the use of other methods. This aided notetaking on the field and engaging in face-to-face interaction through semi-structured interviews with various actors in the downstream sector of cocoa production, ethnographic reports are gathered for purpose of analysis in the study. Lastly, the study is exploratory in design because it seeks to unpack the contexts within which the production cocoa can be analysed and interpreted sociologically, thereby giving way to creative emergences that may further promote the production of cocoa in Nigeria. Newman (2014).

The process of selecting the location and participants for the study was non-probabilistic, but rather the criteria for inclusion were based on existing information on knowledge of peculiarity of the areas selected. Three (3) states were purposively selected out of the six (6) states in the southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. These states are Ondo which is the highest cocoa producing state in Nigeria; Osun, a moderately high cocoa producing state; and Oyo, a relatively low cocoa producing state (NBS, 2012). The chart below illustrates the graphical representation of the southwestern states in Nigeria producing cocoa according to the 2012 ranking of the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics.

Figure 2: Major Cocoa Producing areas in Nigeria by average (2006, 2007-2009, 2010) ('000MT)



Source: National Bureau of Statistics, 2012

In the same vein, qualitative data collection techniques were deployed: a total of forty-five (45) in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with cocoa farmers; nine (9) key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted, of which four (4) were from each group of government workers, cocoa association executive members and cocoa buyers. Primary and secondary historical data were garnered through life history from old cocoa farmers and archival materials sourced from the Nigerian archive, Ibadan.

3.2 Study Area

The location for this study was southwestern Nigeria. South West is one of the six (6) geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It is comprised of six (6) states, namely, Oyo, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Ekiti. Southwestern Nigeria is mainly a Yoruba speaking area not minding the existence of different dialects just as there are varying ancestral histories, even within the same state. It is important to note that apart from Cross River State in the South-Southern Nigeria, cocoa is predominantly produced in the southwestern zone of the country (Cadoni, 2013; FAO, 2009). Studies have also shown that there is high propensity for the production of cocoa in the southern part of Nigeria because of the availability of favourable weather and soil conditions for cocoa farming in the area (Gockowski and Oduwole, 2001; Amoa, Oni and Adeoye, 2014; Akinnagbe, 2015). The zone lies between latitude 5° N and 9° N of the Equator and longitudes 2.5 and 6 East of the Greenwich Meridian. It is on the fringe of the Atlantic Ocean in the south, Kogi and Kwara states in the north, Anambra state on the eastern side, and Republic of Benin in the west (Akinnagbe, 2015).

Ondo, Osun and Oyo states were purposively selected as the three strategic states for the study in the zone. This is because, apart from Osun state (also known as the State of Osun in recent political dispensation) that was created in a later date (27th August 1991), both Ondo and Oyo states

emerged as an offshoot of the fragmentation of the Old Western State of Nigeria on February 3rd 1976. These states have certain social, economic and geographical characteristics in common but also slightly vary in few areas – they belong to the tropics where relatively ecology necessary for cocoa cultivation can be guaranteed; they are all predominantly Yoruba; they share similar traditional history (rooted in Oduduwa mythology) and similar whether variation of dry season and rainfall. At the moment of this study, there are 18, 30, and 33 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ondo, Osun and Oyo respectively. While Ondo state covers a land mass of 15, 500km², lying between longitude and latitude 5⁰05' and 7⁰10', Osun state has an estimated area of 14, 875km² located on the longitude of 4⁰30' east and latitude 7⁰30' north of the Green Meridian, and Oyo state occupies a vast 28, 454 km² area of land located on a coordinate of longitude 8⁰00'N and attitude 4⁰00'E.

3.3 Study Population

While the study majorly focuses of cocoa producers (farmers), other formal and informal social actors of cocoa production in the southwestern Nigerian were also examined. The focus on farmers stems from their position as small subsistent smallholder producers whose social and economic standards hardly measure to their laborious contribution to wealth generated from the proceeds of cocoa globally (2013; ICCO, 2002). For the fact that the production of cocoa is not solely limited to cocoa farmers, the roles of other actors like government officials, traditional chiefs, non-governmental organisations, associations, multinational companies and middlemen are also included for interrogation to make the study more inclusive and robust.

3.3.1 Inclusion Criteria

Participants for the study were selected on the basis of their knowledge about cocoa production, location, Age, sex and occupation. The minimum age was 20 years old; reason is to get information based on substantial age-long experience. Only those whose occupation was cocoa-related or has something in common with cocoa farmers or their associations were considered qualified to participate in the stud. Membership of cocoa producers' association considered qualified an individual to automatically fall into this category. Residence especially anchored on duration of stay at the location under investigation served as a criterion for inclusion – only those who had resided for at least 10 yet year were enlisted as participants. In addition, the selection process was sensitive to gender balancing while minimal emphasis was given to political and economic statuses of the participants.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

Data collection process involved triangulation of primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources were collected through the use of qualitative data collection techniques – in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), life history (LH) and observation while archival materials (from the National Archive in Ibadan) and relevant documents from the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) were used as secondary sources of data collection – which essentially aided the punctuation of qualitative and historical trend analysis of cocoa production in Nigeria.

3.4.1 In-Depth Interviews

A total of 45 in-depth interviews were conducted among cocoa farmers in the selected states: 15 IDIs were conducted in each of Ondo, Osun and Oyo. The main criteria for inclusion of participant at this level i involvement and knowledge of how cocoa is cultivated.

3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion (FDG)

A total of six (6) FDGs were conducted in all whereas two FDGs were conducted in each of the three purposively selected states.

3.4.3 Key Informant Interview

Through careful consultation, four (4) key informant interviews were carried out in each of the selected three states to make a total of twelve (12) KIIs in all. This included four government officials, four cocoa association executive members and four cocoa buyers from each of the selected states. Key informants interviewed were individuals with the experience in cocoa production spanning at least twenty years.

3.4.4 Life History

According to Dhunpath and Samueul (2009: x), life history helps to “capture the fragility of and power of lives as told... lives as capable of being reconstructed”. Within the framework of this study, life history was deployed as a narrative research tool for data collection to capture lived life experience of cocoa producer to reflect on how meanings are constantly being negotiated in terms of the subject matter of cocoa and its historical and social trajectories. A total of four (4) LHs were conducted among cocoa farmers.

3.4.5 Archival Materials

The study made use of available archival materials from the National Archive in Ibadan to elicit relevant documentations showing the trend and dynamics of *the social* of cocoa production in Nigeria and with particular focus on the southwest of the country.

3.4.6 Observation

Observation technique was deployed in the study to enable the researcher gain deep insight into existing forms of interactions, roles, and meanings embedded in the day-to-day activities of cocoa actors. It must be stated that this tool of investigation was deployed carefully to avoid feigning of behaviour by some farmers who tended to act to attract some form of favour from the researcher. The researcher was sensitive to the fragility of this technique.

Table 1: Method of Data Collection by Research Objectives

Objective	Method					
	IDI	FGD	KII	LH	Observation	Archive
1	❖		❖	❖		❖
2	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖
3	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	
4	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	
5	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖

Table 2: Data collection techniques in respect of units of analysis

PARTICIPANTS	IDI	FGD	KII	LH
Cocoa farmers	45	6		4
Agencies of Government			4	
Cocoa associations			4	
Cocoa Buyers			4	
Total	45 in all	6 in all	12 in all	4 in all

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

Data gathered from the study were subjected to qualitative trend and content and analyses. Data generated through tape recording and note-taking from interviews, discussion sessions and observation in of the research field were carefully filtered, cleaned, compared and transformed before the final analysis. Data transformation process involved transcribing and translating from audio to text formats and translation from Yoruba to English respectively. Necessary comparison was done to check for possible dissonance or loss of information between data gathered orally and fieldnote for reasons of consonance and coherence.

3.5.1 Qualitative Trend Analysis

While trend analysis has risen to prominence in traditional quantitative research community, its use in qualitative studies remains minimal and rather unpopular. Nonetheless, trend analysis essentially helps to put the development of a phenomenon (of research interest) into a traceable historical perspective by the means of which the high, middle, and low points in the development trajectory of such phenomenon can both be documented and interrogated. Hence, qualitative trend analysis presupposes “the direction in which something³ tends to move, and the effects of which focusses on culture, society or business sector in which it develops” (Rech, 2016:7)

Thus, the use of qualitative trend analysis to analyse the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria involved extrapolating the pattern of change or movement of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria in relation to the implications of such production on the cultural and economic development of the people.

³³ ‘Something’ in the case implies cocoa production.

3.5.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

The word 'qualitative' differentiates the way qualitative researchers deploy content analysis from other users. The analytical technique helps in making sense of sense of themes that emanate from data texts. As argued by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), qualitative content analysis gives a researcher a leeway to analyse emerging themes in relation to theories while discussing the research findings. Thus, premised on the set research questions and objectives, emerging themes were analysed while discussing the findings in the study within the theoretical space of Weberian interpretive sociological tradition.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

In accordance with the ethical standard for conducting research that involves humans, this study relies on the generally accepted scientific rule of ethical procedures, processes and practices on research pertaining to humans. More so, the study was conducted with strict adherence to the basic ethical ideals of confidentiality, beneficence, non-maleficence, and voluntariness are highly prioritised. No participant was compelled or impelled to participate in the study. Individuals were allowed to withdraw, especially when they felt inadequate to supply the needed information. Before conducting any interview, proper introduction about the purpose of the study was given to the participants who in turn gave their consent.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, results and discussion of findings emanating from the study are presented. Centring on the broad aim of the study, the chapter is thematised according to the study objectives. Each of the study objectives thus forms a section of discussion even though they are all interlinked as a piece of empirical study about the trajectory of social relational component of the production of cocoa and how this implicates development in southwestern Nigeria, and by extension the entire country.

4.1 Changes in Cocoa Production in South-Western Nigeria

Cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria has been catalytic for the evolution of divergent social and economic behaviour of farmers whose farming, relational, and economic activities have been, and are still being, modified by this emergence. One therefore would not wonder why copious studies have been churned out to discuss issues of land, politics, soil science, and cocoa economy in this regard. Different from popular narratives, the direction of change interrogated in this study was tilted more toward the nucleus of relational component of cocoa production, rather than non-human oriented interrogations. However, it must be stated that previous studies were very useful in tracing these changes.

The early stage of cocoa growing in Nigeria is said to have coincided with increasing level of industrialisation and changing value system with, huge yet subtle, implications for social and economic architectures of the country (Berry, 1974). A bulk of the responses and historical documents gathered in this study are vocal about how the trend of cocoa production cannot be dissociated from the issues around family reformation, land

acquisition and control, cocoa pricing, quality and quantity regulation, marketing, shifting contexts of labour relations and other social and political forces that have not only evolved over time but also tangential to the seesaw movement of the quality and quantity of cocoa produced in the country over time. For instance, whereas there was minimal transportation service in the periods around the pre-cocoa Yoruba societies, there were intense transportation (mostly sea and rail) activities concentrating in the old Western Region with the advent and growth of the production of commodity-crops like cocoa at the wake of 1900 (NAI-CSO2637540/G.M5617). To put the trend of development in the perspective of historical projectile and for ease of analysis, the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has been categorised into three epochs – pre-colonial (pre-1900), colonial (1900 – 1960) and post-colonial (post-1960).

4.1.1 Pre-colonial Era of Cocoa Production

This period marked the inception of cocoa production in Nigeria and also coincided with early industrial evolution in the country. This was the period Berry (1974) themed a period of innovation in the history of agriculture in Nigeria. According to her (1975), the activities of missionaries significantly influenced the expansion of cocoa farms during this period. Even though Yoruba precolonial farmers continued to embrace cocoa farming in Lagos hinterlands like Ijebu, Ikorodu, Ibadan and Ondo, Ayorinde (1965:19) accounted for how many Yoruba people wrongly classified cocoa plant – mistaking it for “*ilakale*” (*Stecullalla trangancha*), another tree in the forest that looked like cacao. Beyond mistaking cocoa for another plant, there was a popular derogatory Yoruba slogan – *pele, iya koko* (a form of contempt or sympathy for a mother who anxiously gave birth to many children) – that was used to describe the astonishment of many Yoruba farmers about cocoa (Ayorinde, 1965:19). Aderinto (2013) described this phase as a precursor for tensions around intra-ethnic rivalry, land-related conflicts and other kinds of issues which later riddled cocoa production.

Similarly, available historical records indicate that there was not much production activities in the pre-1900 or pre-colonial epoch, yet it was remarkable in many ways. For instance, as at 1900, only a total of 183 hectares were reportedly planted with cocoa while commercial exportation of cocoa did not start until 1910 (Opeke, 2005) even though the first exportation was recorded to have taken place in 1895 (Hamzat, Olaiya, Sanusi and Adedeji, 2006). The struggle for land at this time of history was not violent because of the availability of fresh forest in the axes of Lagos and Ibadan (Aderinto, 2013). At the same time, labour capital was relatively cheap, not involving intense agriculture-induced labour migration (Walker, 2000). It is however important to note that there is a dearth of statistical records about labour and market activities for this era even though the momentum for cocoa expansionary trend was gathered in this period. As recalled by a participant, “our fathers did not joke with cocoa because at that time it was their main business and they made so much money. My grandfather and father knew the importance very well” (IDI/Farmer/Oyo/2018).

The south western Nigeria was typically an agrarian society and like any other part of Nigeria ab initio (Olatunbosun, 1975). But this rural populace was soon going to begin a new escapade with the unfolding realities of industrialism, commoditisation, privatisation, wealth exportation, exploitation and imperialism characteristic of colonialism and post-colonial relations in Nigeria, especially among the pauperised farmers (Nnoli, 1989). Needless to iterate that compared to other geopolitical zones, the southwestern part of Nigeria was early in the immersion into the process of industrialisation or industrial development which meant manufacturing, processing, a higher status of lifestyle and taste; and that was why some of the major companies like the United Africa Company (UAC) as well as processing and construction companies were centred around Lagos, Ondo and Ogun state; making the area was a commercial hub (KII/Expert/Male/2018). The development of cocoa sector was thus

coincidental to this era of industrial development and as a result there was the social class structure which emerged – an alteration of the status quo of the mode of social intercourses – because of this development. People in the rural areas and farms were concerned with the production of the agricultural produce in commercial quantity, while the hub-cities saw the emergence and growth of industries, leading to what was going to be Dupe Olatunbosun’s paradigm of neglect of rural majority (Olatun, 1975) and the tendencies for decimation of *the social* of the production of cocoa (Fairhead and Leach, 2005).

While this remains, results show that even though many of the cocoa producers may not accurately trace the timelines of how cocoa developed in southwestern Nigeria, because diversity prevails in terms of the actual time and place where cocoa originated in the country, they are not completely unaware of how cocoa has been a purveyor of change in the socioeconomic landscape of the area. Notwithstanding this data challenge, some of them relied on seemingly nebulous mental data⁴ while others attributed the origin of cocoa beans in Nigeria to mythology. The following are examples of these:

Cocoa production was introduced into Nigeria so many years ago and I think the cultivation started somewhere around River state; in fact, we met some of the farmers some time ago, some of whom said they brought in the seedlings from their master’s farm. They couldn’t even take the seeds away; they had to swallow the seeds and then went to expunged it somewhere in Cross River state and through fecal means. They then washed it and panted it; that is how they started producing cocoa especially in Cross River (KII/Oyo/Female/2018).

And that:

One thing about Nigeria over the years is that Nigeria used to be the second largest producer of cocoa in West Africa

⁴ Nebulous mental data such as making allusion to the fact that they were born into the production of cocoa, and that at least two older generation had been into the same occupation before they were born.

after Ghana. About 30 years ago Cote d'Ivoire began to pick up in the area of production and currently with some data disputing and discrepancies Nigeria is put in the position of probably the fifth, sixth or seventh largest cocoa producer in the world. The western region of then was the largest producer of cocoa in Nigeria, and evidence of it is the NTA which was established by the south western region, under Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and the Cocoa House (LH/Oyo/2018).

Nevertheless, the production of cocoa began with the planting of cocoa seed, even though there is uncertainty about, as narrated in the excerpt above, the way the seeds were introduced. Notwithstanding the controversies, the account given by Ayorinde (1965) shows that cocoa planting spread in Nigeria through the initial method of planting of seedlings which was initially introduced by Chief Squiss Ibaningo in Bonny. Since then, there have been increasing trend in the way seedling of cocoa was used to populate cocoa forests in the country. As the account further shows,

The original pods used at Ilesha were sent in 1896 through Mr Akamo of Ileigbo village to one Daddy Agbebi of Wasinmi, Iloro, Ilesha who handed them to Gurege Thomson; the quantity given was not known...The introduction of cacao to Ibadan was made through two different sources. The first was in about 1889 or 1890 when the late Reverend D. R. Oyebode, father of the late Anglican Bishop of Ibadan, and uncle to the late Olubadan, Sir. I. B. Akinyele, Kt., obtained a box of cacao seedlings from the Botanic Garden Ebutemetta, Lagos... The other source of introduction of cocoa to into Ibadan was through Daddy Ogunwole of Agbakin village at Idiape, near Agodi. He was drafted into the French Army and was demobilized after 6 2/3years of service in Porto Novo. According to Daddy Ogunwole, now deceased, he first noticed cocoa beans being dried in Porto Novo. He was prevented from bringing any pod through his kit when returning., but on getting to Lagos, he observed cocoa trees growing in Mr. Watt's Garden at Ebutemetta and from there he bought 200 pods at 3d. per pod. Mr Ogunwole later raised seedlings in a nursery and sold the seedlings at 3d. each. The cocoa plants that he planted started to produce in 1892 (Ayorinde, 1965:19).

The foregoing account illustrates how the cultivation of cocoa began in the then western Nigeria started with the acquisition of cocoa seedling either through gifting or by purchase. As time went by, farmers were incentivised to plant cocoa as the prices of cocoa beans increased – this is of course another delicate issue discussed in the latter part of this study. Thus, it goes without saying that the social structure of the people began to change with pronounced impact on the family institution. How? Cocoa planting stealthily infused the Yoruba society with a value system that motivated the expansion of cocoa production. A participant expressed this by saying that “since our fathers realised how profitable it was to own a cocoa farm, many of them did not hesitate to join the train as so did we their children” (LH/Farmer/Oyo/2018). This was further substantiated by another participant when he said:

Farming is what I chose to be doing for a living because it is what our forefathers ...before now we (the children) used to serve our fathers on the farm but now, it is not so, we are the one serving our children and there is nothing we can do about that (KII/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018)

Not only can the importance of the family social structure be seen in the foregoing, the unfolding structural change of this institution is also evident. This is more lucid in the last excerpt in which the disappearance of the use of family labour was expressed. Not only did children of the farmers later become apathetic toward farming activities, but other complex issues also ensued. As revealed by Eniafe (KII/Expert/Male/Oyo/2018), “if you look at the southeast and southsouth of Nigeria like Ebonyi, Enugu, Cross-River, Akwa-Ibom and their relationship with land, it is somewhat a little bit different from what we have in the southwest” – things have changed.

Conversely, “in the south-south if you look at the suitability pattern of land, the government ownership of land is more predominant. Compared to what you have in the southwest, it was discovered that quite a good number of suitable lands has been taken up by the government in the south-southern

and southeastern states and the little land available for individuals”, Eniafe added. Farmers indicated that there is a lot of tension over the little land available, in the southwestern part and that the suitability pattern cannot be compared to the ones owned by the government. This shows that there is a strong bond in family structure to hold onto land in the southeast and southsouth compared to what you have in the southwest. Once this kind of system exists, it is a more cautious approach that should be adopted because families do not easily sell lands or give up their lands compared to what is obtainable in the southwest⁵.

As a fallout of this development, the aspect of fragmentation of lands now begins to come in. Whereas this situation exists, government is not selling land, or if they are selling, the chances of ownership of lands coming from family structure is very slim. That means there will continue to be the fragmentation of land and once this happens, there is no binding rule to tell the owners to sell it for the production of tree crop such as cocoa, they could decide to diversify into other crops and that becomes another issue. That means that the chances of a single ownership of cocoa plantation in the southsouth and southwest might not be possible talk less of being rapid and that is why in a state like cross river, government operates a program where they assist families by making available some of that restricted forest and lands to farming families and communities by giving them as much as four hectares per person in a community (KII/Expert/Male/Oyo/2018).

Aside occasioning privatisation and fragmentation of cultivable lands, the production of cocoa was liable for the decomposition of family labour capital, ushering in a regime paid (migrant) labour. But in the pre-colonial or better still pre-cocoa Yoruba societies, the capital of labour was sufficiently sourced within the economy of the family – the family was a very significant unit of production and power negotiation in the society (Akanle

⁵ Sara Berry,

and Adejare, 2016). As would be seen subsequently, the architecture of this society was soon fractured with the expansion of cocoa economy, leading to privatised, commoditised means of production.

Meanwhile there was a good sense of commitment and dedication to the collective interest in the pre-colonial family structure, it was discovered that cocoa production later generated competitiveness and fading communality both in the family circle and in the larger society of cocoa farming communities. This was what was implied when Tiwadara said, “we cooperate but the cooperation is not really strong. For example, if we cooperate that we are not selling and that we would keep our cocoa, when the expenses of the family show up, everyone might be forced sell since there is no other way of getting money” (LH/Male/Osun/2018). But then, it must be noted that the family structure is significantly influential in the process of transfer of ownership of land, and even cocoa plantations as many of the planters of cocoa supposedly inherited the farms on which they operate (KII/Male/Ondo/2018).

4.1.2 Colonial Era of Cocoa Production

As a fallout of several conferences, especially the Berlin Conference of 1884, African continent became an economic annexe to the West where extractive production of agricultural resources like cocoa and other commodities could take place. Thus, the official colonisation of Nigeria took place during this period, and cocoa was a major resource through which colonial activities became prominent at this point in time. This therefore implied a lot of things within the cocoa sector, especially in the old western region where cocoa was predominantly produced. For one, it meant enhanced production. Berry (1968) explained that at the wake of 1900, many of businessmen and missionaries took to cocoa farming in and around Lagos as a substitute for slave trade. With the growing momentum, more workers were needed to

work in the expanding cocoa plantation, of which many were recruited – a task that was facilitated by “church connections”⁶.

In 1912, the Agege Model Farm was established to carry out experiments on a better way to plant cocoa, an exercise which ended in 1916 (RSA [Royal Society of Art], 1920). The outcome of this exercise had positive impact on the growth of cocoa sector such that it reported that the quantity and quality of Nigerian cocoa “greatly improved by adopting better cultural methods and by more careful preparation of the beans” (RSA, 1920: 176). This confirms the position that seeds of cocoa were made available “from the Botanical Garden at Ebute Meta, as well as from traders or labourers who had travelled to Fernando Po or other parts of West Africa” (Berry, 1975: 40). But with the establishment of the Agege Model Farm in 1912, and much later the establishment of the defunct West African Cocoa Research Institute (WACRI) in 1939 with its headquarters in Ghana (Olaiya, Sanusi and Adedeji, 2006), new methods of growing cocoa were adopted such that farmers would no longer use the seeds from their cocoa pods to for generation and regeneration of their cocoa plantations but would follow the prescriptions of experts from these institutions.

Consequently, more cocoa beans were produced by farmers, more paid farmers were recruited, and commercial exportation of cocoa beans witnessed an upward trend leading to upward pricing of cocoa – a trend many previous scholars described as healthy for the development of the country (Amao, Oni and Adeoye; Alamu, 2013; Berry, 1975; Ayorinde, 1965). But beyond this statistical growth, there were other emerging issues relating to labour and general livelihood of cocoa producers. For instance, the ‘native farmers’⁷ at this point in time relied on the consumption of their cocoa by Western buyers, especially the United Kingdom who both imported and re-

⁶ Sara Berry (1968:441) saw a growing trend in the connections of farmers based on their membership, especially the African church, in the Western region.

⁷ Colonial administrators often referred to Nigerian farmers as native farmers.

exported cocoa to other countries. This dependency situation has been described in a 1922 letter written by A. W. Flux to the Undersecretary of State, Colonial Office, as follows:

The exports from the British producing countries would lead to conclusion that in 1920 there was overproduction and that much more was imported into the United Kingdom than could be consumed. This is confirmed by the quantity in bonded warehouses... Whereas in 1913 only about a third of a year's entries for consumption in the United Kingdom was held in bond, in 1920 there was the equivalent of about a whole year's entries for consumption... the natural result was a drastic curtailment of imports and re-exports in 1921, and at the same time there was a heavy fall in prices (NAI-CSO26/4/37468-S.895/21:4)

The dependency of *native farmers* on colonial economy to sell their cocoa meant that they had to share in (whatever) economic stress the United Kingdom, and by extension the global market trend, dictated at that point in time. The outburst of the First World War (WW1) made this more egregiously pronounced – cocoa price became unstable between 1914 and 1918 due to uncertainties in the global market: a ton of cocoa sold for £39 in 1913 (before the war ensued) but was soon to drop to £14 in 1918. But at the close of WW1 the scramble for commodities in extractive economies resumed, giving impetus to the expansion of cocoa farming (Muojama, 2016). The immediate fallout of this development was the over-production alluded to in the excerpt above.

This trend continued throughout 1920s and 1930s with the price of cocoa reaching its peak of £44.15 in 1928 and its basest of £13.7 in 1939, a situation Muojama (2016:227) saw as precarious for *native farmers* whose living standard was impacted negatively – many of the farmers who had false hope in the rapidly expanding cocoa economy began to get frustrated, especially as they could no longer meet their needs and pay the hired labour.

Significantly, the expansion in the production of cocoa in this period brought about the issue of regulation and control of the sector, which colonial administrators took seriously. There were several ways by which the quantity and quality of cocoa produced were regulated. One major control mechanism utilised to regulate cocoa economy during this period was price regulation. As contained in the Cocoa Commission and the Bartholomew Plan (NAI-CSO26/36388/SI), the whole range of the challenges confronting the production, and of course its consumption, was reduced to a single word – “PRICE”. It was believed that regulating the price of cocoa would have a long-term practical implication for cocoa producers across British colonies like Gold Coast (now Ghana), Nigeria and the West Indian Island, amongst others. In fact, this was the idea of controlling the price of cocoa in the British colonies that later metamorphosed into the establishment of marketing board as the following lines suggest:

It is more likely that the Commission would consider proposals for forming a Marketing Board, and the question arises – is it possible to devise a scheme by way of Marketing board or such like, that can guarantee a fair price to the grower, without machinery for controlling that price? It is the writer’s submission that such is quite impossible, and that any marketing scheme without price control must prove illusory. What is fair price for Cocoa and is the controlling of that price a practical proposition, having of course, well in mind the repercussions of such control on a long-term view of the cocoa producing and consuming situation, and interests (NAI-CSO26/36388/SI:14)

In theory, the price control mechanism had the interests of both growers of cocoa and (chocolate) consumers in view – suggesting that fair trade was of the essence. However, events and realities shaping the lived experiences of cocoa planters later showed that the control of price of a commodity cannot be suitably determined by its consumers; but it is often the case: in actual sense, when it comes to cocoa production, the growers are mere price takers. The farmers were not always silent about their deprived situation during this historical timeline. For example, in a 1944 protest led by Reverend Ransome Kuti and Mr Showande, Egba Farmers, representing

15 Farmers Unions, there was a threat to hold up the production of rice because of the unfair conditions of farmers in the rural area, which of course was blatantly displaced by the then acting secretary of the of the Western provinces (NAI-IBMA1/437:160).

In 1942, the Ibadan District Farmers, under the aegis of Ibadan Co-operative Cocoa Marketing Union Limited, came up with two resolutions to assuage the pining of native cocoa farmers. These are as follows:

1. The prices of cocoa be increased by the Nigerian government in line with the consensus reached by cocoa producers and presented by Ibadan Co-operative Cocoa Marketing Union Limited.
2. That the Ibadan Co-operative Cocoa Marketing Union Limited be hereby empowered to represent to the Nigerian government from time to time the views of both co-operative and non-cooperative cocoa producers on matters affecting the welfare of the producers (NAI-IBMA1/449/Vol.VI).

In a similar posture, Captain W. J. W. Cheesman who acted as the Registrar of Cooperative Societies in a confidential letter dated July 22nd, 1942, wrote to the Ibadan Secretary of Western provinces, stating that “as the cost of labour has increased since 1938, the estimates made then should be correspondingly increased”. The following principles were his recommendation:

- (a) Agricultural labour should be adequately remunerated.
- (b) The farmer who is most unfavourably situated geographically should receive a net price, which will enable him to pay his way.
- (c) Because the labour wealth of the family has been used, this should not be ignored.
- (d) Because farmers keep no records and lose sight of establishment charges and depreciation (which should be funded for future

replacements), that is no reason why we should ignore them in our costing.

- (e) In manufactured articles, the cost of raw of raw products is a very small percentage of the selling price.

In February 1945, an endorsement numbered E36148/S.109/25 that proceeded from Gerald Greasy at the Colonial Office in Downing Street, London, was replied by the Ibadan Agricultural Department. The endorsement had raised the concern about the “fall in production of main crop cocoa”. Amongst other suspected causes of the fall, the reply of the Agricultural department revealed that the decline was occasioned by accumulated neglect of *native* farms – about 50% of cocoa farms were abandoned by farmers as the farms remained either unharvested or improperly cleaned. This situation was suspected to have been caused by crashing cocoa prices at this time. This can be further verified by the following culling from Captain Markie:

In my opinion, the main cause of the serious fall in production in during the last two years has been neglect of plantations during the last few years owing to low prices and particularly to the low mid-crop price. Evidence shows that with the low mid-crop price, farmers did not harvest their cocoa; pods became diseased with black pod, and the disease affected the cushions and consequently development of main crop. Production from well-tended departmental plots for the 1944-1945 season is slightly higher than for the 1943-1944 season and approximately the same as compared with the 1941-1943 and 1942-1943 seasons. The lowered yields from the *native* farms therefore were not due to seasonal variation, but to the effect of accumulated neglect (NAI-CSO 216/36148/S.109).

Because of the outcry of farmers, the colonial government, through the Office of the Secretary of Ibadan Western Provinces, quickly monstered some control mechanisms to avoid administrative hardship and loss of political control on cocoa production. It acknowledged that “Ondo Division (like other divisions) largely depends on the sale of their cocoa for the

payment of tax” and that there was going to be “political repercussions unless the position” was “quickly remedied” (NAI-IBMA1/449/Vol.VI:805).

In the same vein, the periods before and after the Second World War (WW2) saw a major shift in political and global power relations influencing the distribution chain – marketing and pricing – of cocoa. Thus, before 1939, the business space of cocoa was predominantly dominated by foreign firms who operated through the agency of their local buyers in the crop producing areas. These expatriate companies were very influential in the setting of market agenda such that farmers often felt marginalised – even though cocoa market was expansive, farmers had no control over the market as the prices were usually fixed by the expatriate firms (Hamzat, Olaiya, Sanusi and Adedeji, 2006). An important marker of historical trajectory of cocoa development around this epoch was the growing concern and reaction of farmers to the perceived marginalisation of their interest and intense profiteering of the expatriate firms that dominated the cocoa sector. For instance, in 1938, the cocoa farmers carried out a public display to decry the activities of the agents of the foreign firms, also known as the middlemen. In the report of findings on the enquiry about this crisis dated November 16th, 1938⁸, farmers indicated their interest in the elimination of middlemen, but the latter were rather indignant.

The 1939 proposal of Tobias A. Keppler and Julian G. Keppler are a vital reference point in discussing the aura of psychosocial conditions that further reified the issues around the production of cocoa and the establishment of produce board in West African colonies. This proposal highlighted the situations of prevailing prejudices against the growers of cocoa in Africa and the need to replicate the English Milk Marketing Board

⁸ A Confidential report by the Acting Resident of Ijebu-Ode to the Honourable Secretary, Southern Province, Enugu. Document retrieved from the Nigerian Archive by the researcher in 2018.

in the cocoa sector to curtail possible abuse of conditions for loans and payments to growers. Most significantly, the authors proposed that, instead of the buyers, the buyers should be in control of the make and maintain the price with the assistance of government. For this duo, the activities of various actors involved in the sale and control of the price of cocoa after it leaves the shores of Africa were counter-productive to the growers and needed curbing. In summary, the crux of the proposal was to safeguard the interest of the growers of cocoa by cutting down the activities of the middlemen and ensuring fair profits were received by these growers (NAI-CSO 26/36388/S.1:20-23).

Unfortunately, the proposal of Keppler and Keppler did not scale through as it was criticised on many grounds – it was seen as coming from the United States of America, impressionist, unscrupulous with unfounded claims and fraught with unrealistic propositions. Thus, the proposition was rejected. Interestingly, the establishment of the produce boards in British colonies was more or less a reaction to this proposal.

The British government established an agency known as the West African Produce Control Board to handle the marketing of essential commodities, including cocoa while the war lasted (World Bank, 1974). The post WW2 epoch saw another shift in the marketing of cocoa. It was during the war that the statutory organ known as the West African Produce Control Board (WAPCB) by the British government for fear of possible crash in the demand for cocoa (one of their niche market commodities in Africa). Towards the end of the war, it was proposed that WAPCB be replaced with control boards that were more country-specific to make regulation easier (Williams, 1953).

“The Post War Cocoa Trade and the Disposal of Profit Earned” featured in the June 28th West African Produce Control Board, dated June

28th, 1945, it was recorded that the modus operandi for produce purchase, pricing and disposal of profits was to “give maximum benefit to the Nigerian cocoa producer” (NAI- IBMA1/437:193). The producer was to rely on two things: the following: first is the stability of prices throughout the farming season and the second is fair share of the proceeds the come from the global sales of cocoa. To achieve the aim of this objective, a new control mechanism was necessary – cocoa marketing board. In the same vein, the following line: “Nigerians have thus supplied the capital with which to start the second phase of her economic exploitation” is an excerpt from the West Africa Pilot of October 31st, 1944. The line came as a reaction to the white paper on the introduction of cocoa board. The cocoa board was to perform the following functions:

- a) Fixing of guaranteed prices to the producers throughout the seasons. (According to Williams (1953), this function is rather implied but not explicit in the white paper on the establishment of cocoa).
- b) Making purchase arrangements and issuing licenses to approved buyers.
- c) Deciding for cocoa buying shipping and selling.

By this development, the Cocoa Board was the only body empowered to fixed prices, buy cocoa through licensed buying agents (LBA), and sell to shipping companies. By this development, the government is expected to regulate the procurement of cocoa. However, this development attracted mixed reactions in the country. The following excerpts speaks volume about the ambivalences that later trailed the establishment of the cocoa board in Nigeria:

The cocoa boards established in cocoa boards established in Nigeria and the Gold Coast⁹ in 1947 started at a most favourable time. They inherited respectively £8m and £13m from the West African Produce control Board, and in their first year of operation made additional surplus of respectively over £9m and 24m£... The profits, of course,

⁹ Now Ghana

resulted from paying the producer less than their produce earned, after deducting all the expense of marketing (Williams, 1953: 47).

The last lines of the above quotation show how the producers of cocoa are systematically to generate wealth they could not appropriate as the board was empowered to regulate the market, the same situation that led to the agitations from Gold Coast farmers in 1937 and 1938 whereby protested to the British colonial government to allow them to form their own cooperatives instead of surrendering their produce to the “Cocoa Pool”. The protest degenerated to the boycotting of imported goods from Britain (West African Pilot, 1944). It is important to note that even though the board was not established to ensure fair returns for the producers, at least as enshrined in the white paper on the establishment of cocoa board, the boards in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gold Cost and others constituent built a reserve (Williams, 1953). Conversely, there are views that the cocoa board in Nigeria was not a failure. While the board lasted farmers, at least, had a sense of being constantly informed of a uniform market price. The controlled price of cocoa for the season was made available over the radio which farmers always eagerly awaited (LH/Male/Ondo/2018). Similar, the following excerpts speaks to the significance of the board in the past:

In those days the cocoa board was a regulatory body for the entire industry; but today, we cannot find any regulatory body for the cocoa industry in Nigeria. As such we have individual or groups of people who are doing things in the cocoa industry in the way that should not be done. In Ghana, a part of the cocoa board partially deregulated; that is why there is certain level of sanity within the cocoa industry in Ghana. As such a regulatory body should be put back in place to check on the activities within the cocoa industry, be it any sector within the cocoa industry so that a certain level of sanity can be brought back into the Nigeria cocoa system (LH/Male/Oyo/2018).

In a similar sentiment, the existence of cocoa board in Osun, even though with relatively limited autonomy compared to the old cocoa board, shows that, in the least, some of the functions of cocoa board may still help

to cushion the shock in the chain of production and supply of cocoa. As findings show, one major issue that most of the farmers in southwestern Nigeria complain so much about is the irregularity and poor pricing of their produce – a function that the defunct cocoa board was expected to perform in favour of the producers. Unfortunately, the presence of cocoa board in Osun state has not really led to any significant improvement of the status quo. The notion that the increase in the yield of produce per hectare and land expansion in the cultivation of arable land has persisted for long. It is believed that both have the potential for both increasing the cocoa production capacity of Nigeria and leading to increased national and farmers' incomes (PWC, 2017). If this is true, one can argue that these two factors can catalyse the production of cocoa. It could also be seen that not only has the campaign for expansion of cocoa farm not transformed the cocoa sector in the country, but innovations that did not have direct impact on the producers of cocoa did not amount to any significant improvement in the cocoa sector, especially in the downstream.

There are some important deductions that can be drawn from the gamut of events that characterised the pre-independence production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria. The first is that cocoa economy is rooted in colonial economy: inasmuch as the planters of cocoa could not control the trend of cocoa production, they depended on the regulatory forces of colonial powers (expressed in price regulation and quantity and quality control). Another is that farmers, mostly by group association, can influence the market trend of cocoa. And by this, the instrumentality of control can be brokered. Lastly, since cocoa only add crude or extractive value at this point of history, it was difficult for farmers to ascertain the actual value of their cocoa beans. These realities did not cease to exist beyond this period, they continue to exist even after 1960.

4.1.3 Post-Colonial Era of Cocoa Production

It appears logical, and not necessarily convenient, to group the events shaping the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria after Nigerian independence within this epoch than otherwise. This is because it would be expected that the attainment of political independence would translate to change in the architecture of policies and programmes shaping the social relations of farmers as well as the general trend of production.

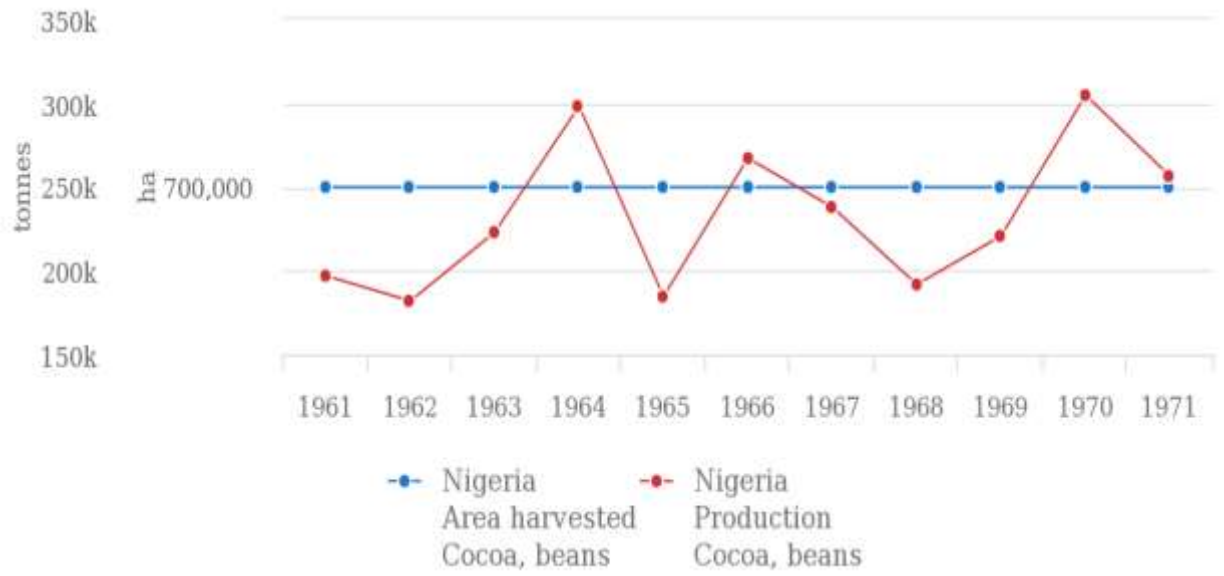
So, because of that, people abandoned cocoa to plant oil palms and other crops, even cassava. It was that neglect that could be blamed then, but now because of the removal of the cocoa marketing board people can now sell at the market price; it is a free market price now as long as it is within the international market price, so people are now getting up to 80% of the international price (KII/Expert/Male/2018)

Thus, the process of farming may not have changed significantly even after independence; interviewers indicated that the same process followed by their fore parents is the same thing they are still doing of recent: “clearing the fields, packing sticks, creating heaps, planting of cocoa and then observing all the rituals of maintaining the farm. A lot of other activities take place between planting and harvesting cocoa, but the worth of the harvest is what matters most.” (IDI/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018). Notwithstanding, there have been observable changes in the way farmers react to the dynamics of cocoa production. There are insidious alterations in some areas like the quality of cocoa, land, market regulation and the disposition of individual farmers, government and other agencies of cocoa. As findings show, there is increasing demand for organic cocoa globally but prevailing survival challenges, increasing cost of labour and climatic challenges make it difficult for farmers to adjust to this current shift. Also, arable land for cocoa farming is either depleted, fragmented or giving way to the surge of urbanity.

With 300,000 tonnes of cocoa produced between 1964 and 1965, Nigeria was ranked as the second largest producer of cocoa in the world after

Ghana (Hamzat, Olaiya and Adedeji, 2007). But this ranking was short-lived as can be seen in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Production/Yield quantities of cocoa beans in Nigeria (1961-1971)



Source: FAOSTAT, 2019

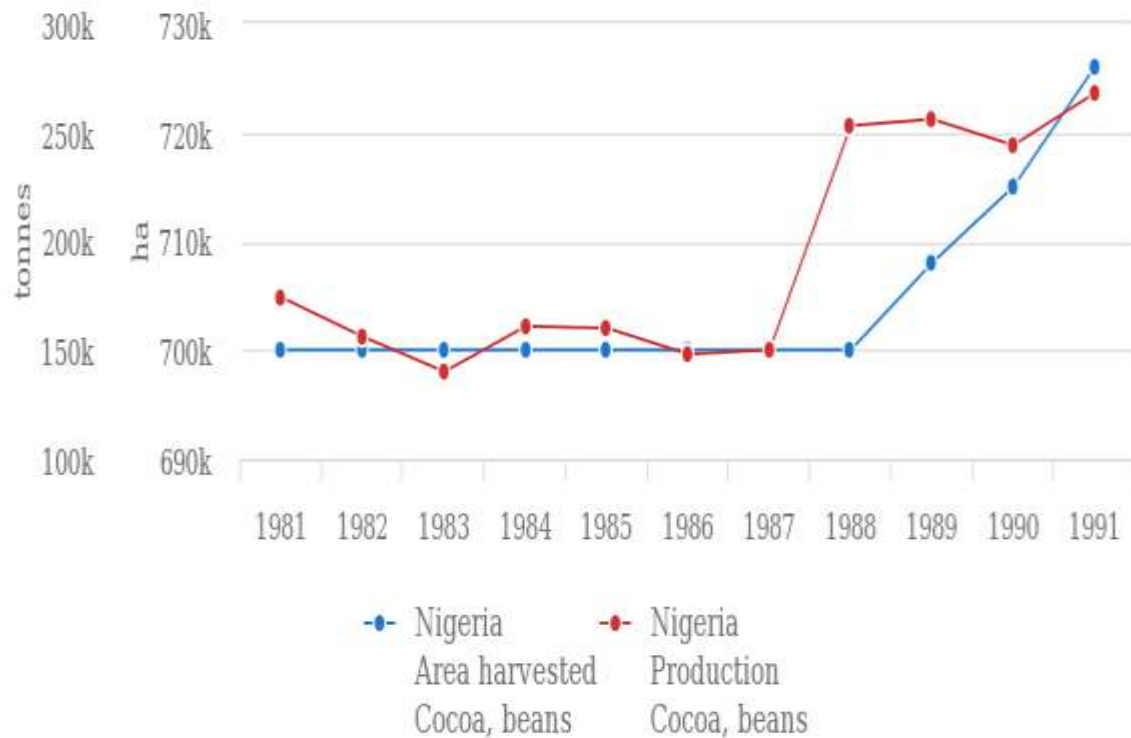
4.1.3.1 Cocoa Resuscitation

The Nigerian postcolonial era is replete with programmes and policies tailored towards the resuscitation or rebirth of cocoa production as a major contributor to national development and a potential source of diversification from oil economy. In a bid to restore the competitiveness of cocoa as a potential source of diversification from oil, several programmes and policies have been designed. The dissolution of the Cocoa Marketing Board in 1986 – a fallout of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) – was one of these initiatives (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007). Even though this development came under the pretext of enhancing the chances of planters at getting better value for their produced because it was believed that:

Government had been fully involved in the planning, replanting and the future planning of cocoa under the marketing board. They (government) went to a lot of places, a lot of locations for the productions and they planned for the improvement, they supplied input, they chemicals, and watched over the farmers as well as over the produce – it was well planned. So, people were encouraged but at the same time, government also used part of the money in making developmental programmes in the country like education, industries and others from the proceeds from agriculture because they paid the farmers certain amounts lower than the international price and then the rest is used by the government. Now, apart from that, there was a neglect in the cocoa industry (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

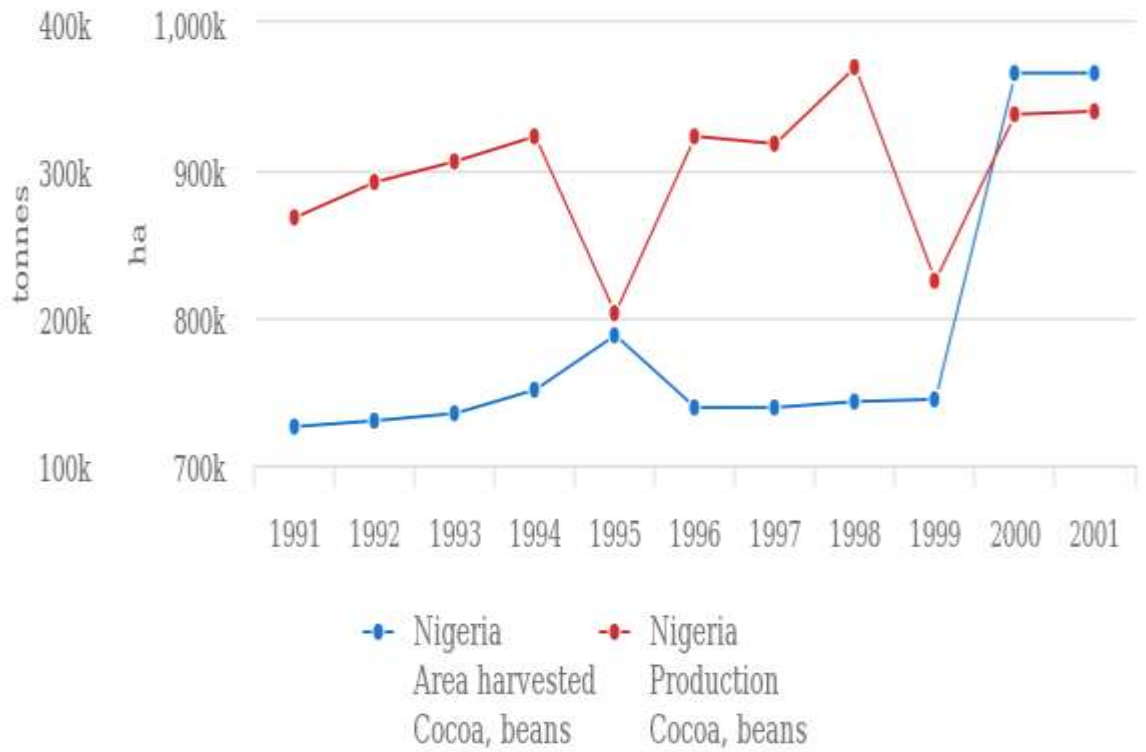
Apart from the impart of SAP, there are views that the economy of oil has also influenced the way cocoa embraced and produced by farmers. As indicated one of the experts interviewed would say, “one thing that is clear is the fact that the oil boom sector expanded up to the late 90s to 2000, and the emphasis on crude oil saw the diminishing emphasis on agricultural production, most importantly cocoa” (KII/Male/Ondo/2018). Figures 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the flow of cocoa production from 1981 to 2017.

Figure 4: Production/Yield quantities of cocoa beans in Nigeria (1981-1991)



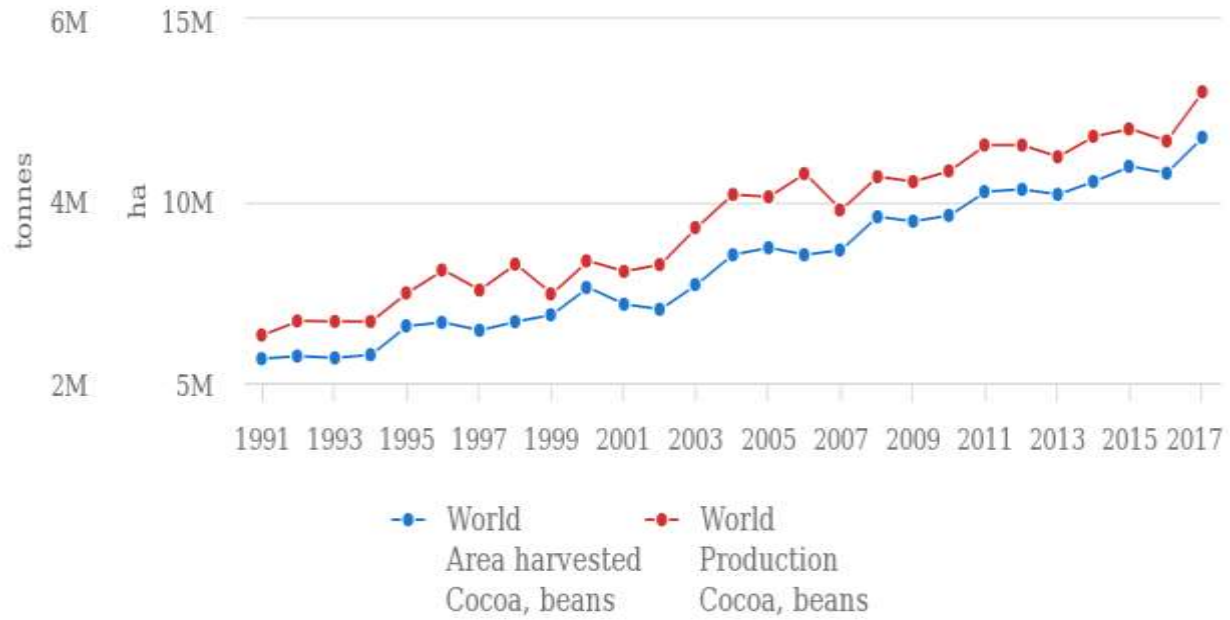
Source: FAOSTAT, 2019

Figure 5: Production/Yield quantities of cocoa beans in Nigeria (1981-1991)



Source: FAOSTAT, 2019

Figure 6: Production/Yield quantities of cocoa beans in Nigeria (1991-2017)

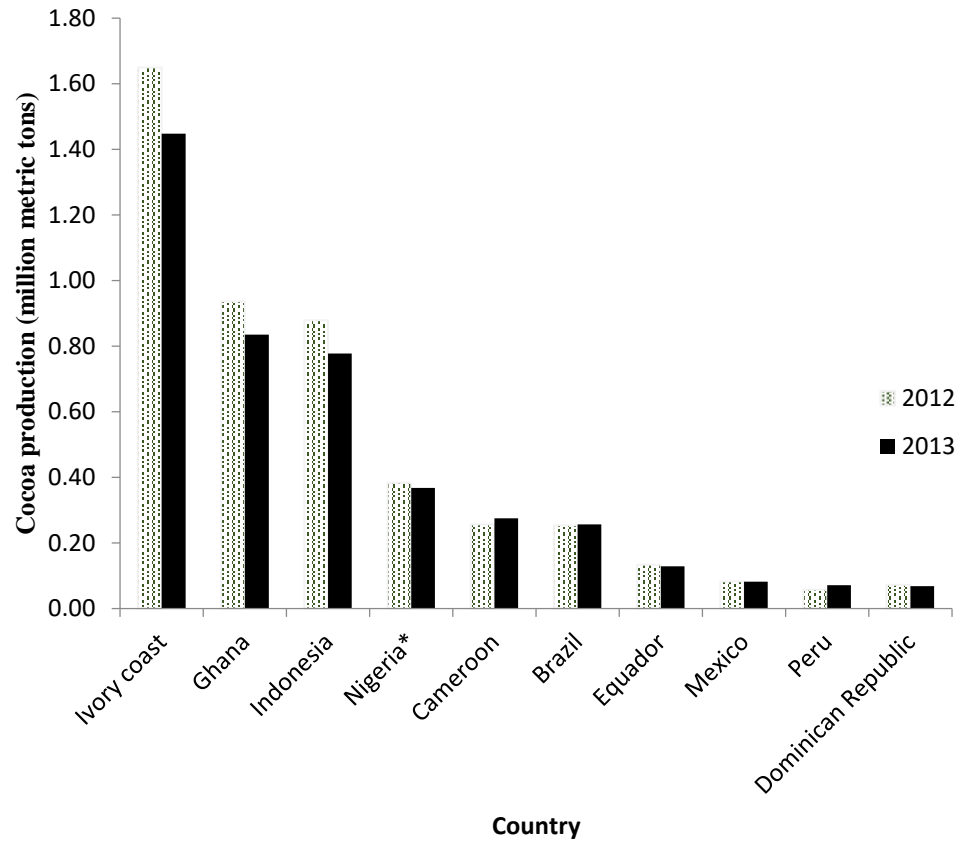


Source: FAOSTAT, 2019

4.1.3.2 Shifting Cocoa Empire

That Nigeria is no longer a major of supplier of cocoa is evident in the decline and instability in the volume of cocoa produced in the country in the past three decades in the global cocoa market (<https://2009-2017.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/nigeria/10801.htm>). This trend is illustrated below.

Figure 7: Top 10 Cocoa Producing Countries in the World (2013)



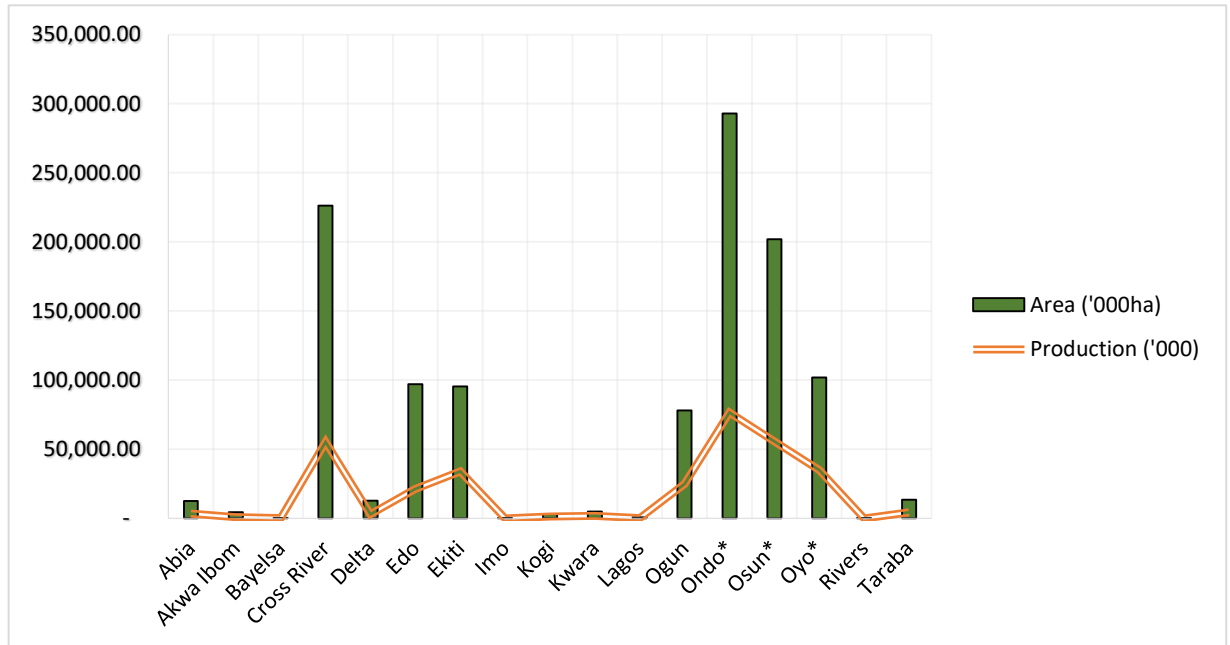
Source: FAO (2015)

Table 3: 2015 Estimated Area ('000 ha) and Production ('000 metric tons) of Cocoa in Cocoa Producing States in Nigeria

S/N	Location	Area ('000ha)	Production ('000)
1	Abia	12,670.40	3,507.90
2	Akwa Ibom	4,438.00	971.11
3	Bayelsa	201.80	81.10
4	Cross River	226,226.80	55,226.70
5	Delta	12,908.00	3,010.61
6	Edo	97,007.20	21,223.50
7	Ekiti	95,550.80	34,012.81
8	Imo	40.00	14.62
9	Kogi	3,050.00	1,302.00
10	Kwara	4,938.00	1,740.00
11	Lagos	678.10	144.80
12	Ogun	78,003.38	24,965.45
13	Ondo*	292,980.00	76,548.00
14	Osun*	201,880.30	55,773.30
15	Oyo*	101,990.10	35,008.10
16	Rivers	111.60	22.50
17	Taraba	13,446.80	4,450.10
18	National	1,146,121.28	318,002.60

Source: FAO (2015)

Figure 8: Cocoa producing states in Nigeria.



¹⁰Source: Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2018

¹⁰ * Study location

In actual sense of history, there are different sides to such development. For southwestern Nigeria the rate of urbanization over the years has been tremendous. Lagos, for instance, is transcending now from just city to megacity with large kind of urban area and enormous population. This urbanization often results from rural-urban migration of individuals who hope to get job and other opportunities in the urban areas. There are “facts about places in Lagos like Agege, Epe, and Ikorodu that used to have some plantations of cocoa, plantain and kola. All these areas have been given to urbanization – there are now buildings, shops, mega market complexes and so on” (LH/Male/Oyo/2018). There is an aspect of the shrinking land area of forest. Lagos still has some forest area that is suitable for cocoa production viz-a-viz keen the competition for space for developing physical infrastructure. As the following excerpt from an oral history shows, the shrinking land for agriculture in the southwest is one important concern in the production of cocoa.

Unfortunately, in the southwest, urbanisation is becoming a detrimental negative influence on cocoa expansion. However, when you look at the South-south zone, and even more importantly a place like cross river, which is estimated to have over 7000 hectares of underdeveloped area of land, and when you look at that land mass, it is a promising area for investment and that is why in a case of Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Delta and even Edo, we see an increasing rate of penetration into forest for the establishment of cocoa plantation. We could not say entirely that it is a negative thing; but what we can say is that in the south west, it is to the disadvantage of cocoa because the emphasis now for the south west is intensification of cocoa production which means that, for instance, if before you are having about 500kg per hectare or 400 kg per hectare the emphasis in the southwestern Nigeria is to increase the production capacity per hectare to between 800kg and 1 ton per hectare. This is dependent on certain kinds of technology that can help increase production capacity (LH/Male/Oyo/2018)

This development goes a long way to show that the expansion in urban city space and productivity in the cocoa sector are contiguous, and

important in the analysis of the trend of development in cocoa industry. Right from colonial epoch, attentions have continually been shifted to urban development so much so that rural-urban migration has always been on the increase, making development of rural space slow and sometimes stagnated (Falola and Heaton, 2008). This situation has some consequences explaining how the production of cocoa has changed over time. This is because many cocoa plantations have been destroyed pave way for the expansion of city space. For instance, areas like whereas Lagos used to be one of the important cocoa-producing states in Nigeria, an important geographical space in tracking the trend of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria. While there is no general agreement about the exact date that cocoa was first cultivated in this area, oral records, metadata and archival documentations show that cocoa production started in Nigeria towards the end of nineteenth century, and the then Western Region, now southwestern geopolitical zone, was the cradle of this emergence.

Suggesting that cocoa was well-birthed or that there was a time that the production of cocoa was well-favoured for Nigeria and Nigerians alike, previous studies tend to ignore the fundamental issues that have over the years, since the inception of cocoa in the country, structured alienation of the producers or planters of cocoa. Both regimes of regulation and deregulation of cocoa production have not in any way addressed this major challenge.

Some important indicators that can be used to study the trend of cocoa produced include the area of cocoa planted, actual production and the price of cocoa. While the tripartite factors are interwoven, it must again be reiterated that the price-factors tends to have a superlative and overriding influence over other factors determining the trend of production – the higher the price, the more the farmers are willing to produce and expand the hectarage of cocoa cultivated, and vice versa. But then, this reality is not separable from other realities such as inflationary trend, cost of living and environmental variables that influence the way farmers react to their social

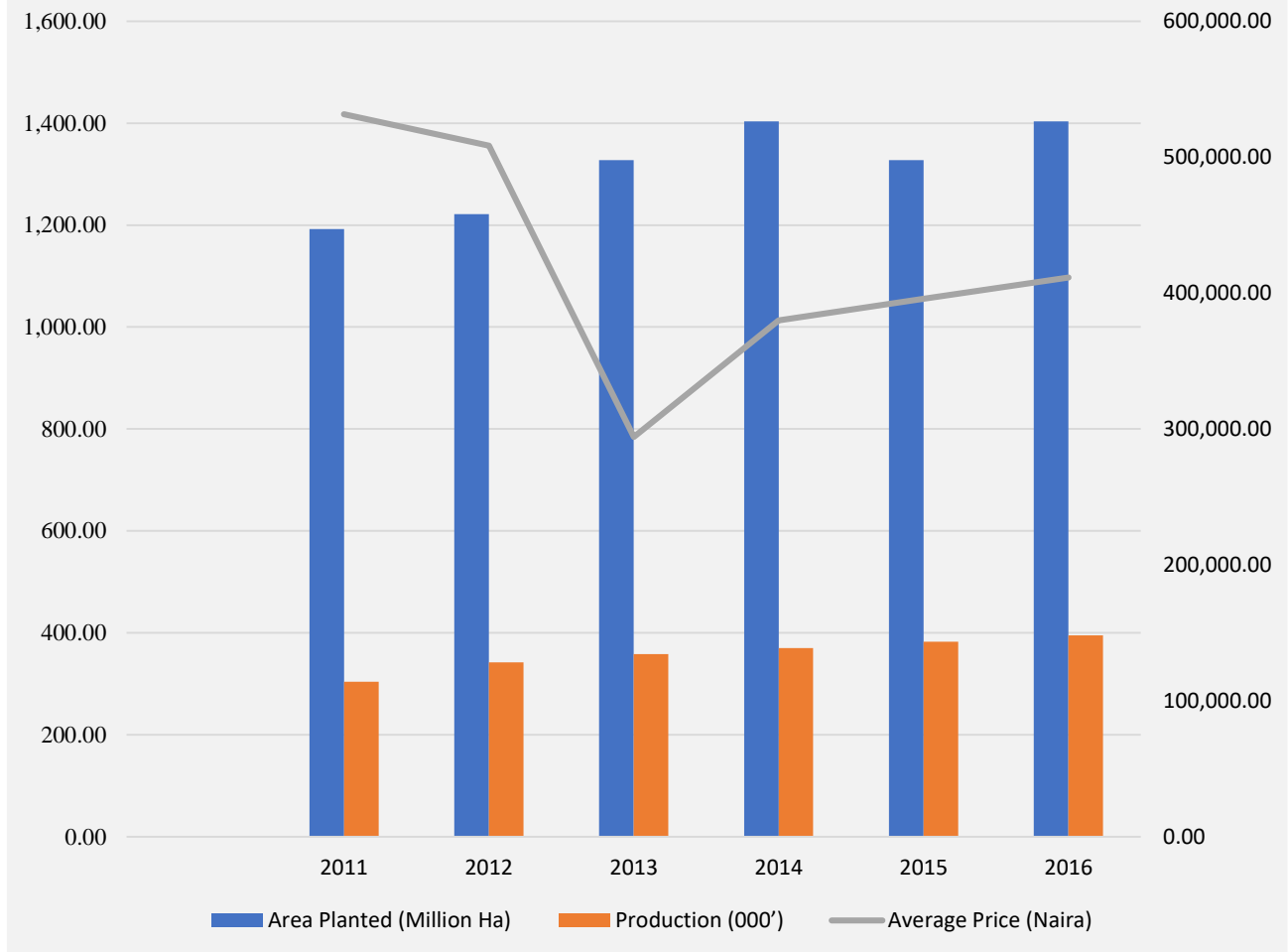
existence. Pictured in table 4 and figure 9 is a scenario of how the price of cocoa and the area of land planted have culture to which production responded.

Table 4: Cocoa Production (2011 – 2016)

Year	Area Planted (Million Ha)	Production (000 ³)	Average Price (Naira)
2011	1,192.0	304.1	531,673.3
2012	1,221.5	342.1	508,438.6
2013	1,327.8	358.1	294,171.4
2014	1,403.3	370.5	379,933.6
2015	1,327.8	382.9	395,695.8
2016	1,403.3	395.2	411,458.0

Source: CBN 2016 Annual Report

Figure 9: Area planted, production, and average price of cocoa (2011-2016)



Source: CBN 2016 Annual Report

In the spirit of independence, institutions hitherto established by colonial government, such as CRIN, gained more autonomy. With the introduction of hybridised cocoa seedlings, cocoa farming was expected to experience a boost and plantations expanded while the method of cultivating was expected to be enhanced. For instance, “the olden days cocoa was planted within the diameter of two feet apart while of recent, it is has changed to ten feet” (KII/Expert/Male/ Oyo/2018). Some respondents also stated that of recent, there exist improved seedlings which after planting can be continually harvested for up to 20 years unlike the previous ones that after planting, it can only be harvested in a particular season of the year, which they believed was not as profitable as the old one.

The long gestation period is one of the factors discouraging potential cocoa farmers. But that has been resolved at least to some extent with the new varieties of cocoa released by CRIN (Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria). We have 8 new varieties (TC1 to 8) and these can start producing beans under 3 years, compared to the long 8 years that farmers had to wait then (KII/ Expert/Female/ Oyo/2018). Commenting on this, a farmer said that:

There are many changes, and in fact in every way. The reason is that the kind of cocoa we had in those days is different from the ones we have today, especially the hybrid cocoa. Now we have cocoa that germinates in eighteen (18) months if it is properly taken care of. This is because by the time it is about a year, it would have started to bud and after that it begins to bring forth flowers. That is the first because such did not exist in the olden days. Then the cocoa we plant today, if well taken care of, does not yield less than the expected fruit unlike the ones planted in the olden days which when once they are harvested do not yield fruit until the next year. But the kind of cocoa we plant now continues to fruit. For instance, if I get to my farm, I will get fruit although it may not be much. That is the difference (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018).

In the same vein, another farmer stated that:

The ones in the olden days stay longer in age as some were already planted before I was born, I can count cocoa trees that were planted before I was born and are still there now and I am over 72 years. An Agric breed cocoa cannot last for more than 30 years before it will die. The difference between them is that the ones from the olden days take longer before they start fruiting while the ones which fruit early is in 5 years. But the *agric breed* starts fruiting in 3 years. Some people came to enlighten us and told us they will help us discover the breed that grows in 18 months, they have not brought it, but we believe they will because they promised we will get it. The major difference between the two breeds is that the cocoa being planted now is: quickly grow quickly die!

Following the introduction of high-yielding or hybrid cocoa, one would expect that there would be a corresponding improvement in the yield of cocoa per hectare. But as noted in the foregoing excerpt, the newly improved seedling was not greeted by all farmers with anticipated acceptance as the older one with longer gestation period was still preferred by some of them. That does not in any way discredit the laudability of this innovation, as some of the farmers saw this development as worthwhile and an ease to their past experience with long gestation for cocoa. In fact, not all farmers shared the notion that the old breed of cocoa is better than the new ones. For some, “the newly introduced cocoa is far better than the old ones because with the new ones, we can keep harvesting throughout the seasons unlike it was in the past when we could only harvest twice in a year” (IDI/Male/Farmer/Oyo/2018).

However, there are views that when it comes to “planting cocoa, the method is the same. The way they planted then is the same way we plant now” (IDI/Farmer/Ondo/2018). This view is held partly because cocoa planting has always been, and still is, labour intensive and most of the activities done on cocoa plantation require manual labour.

In the 1974 Second Cocoa Project of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), otherwise referred to as the World

Bank in recent parlance, CRIN was identified as a potential driver of “modern method of cocoa production” that would be responsible for bringing innovations closer to cocoa farmers (World Bank, 1974:14). But to say that CRIN has lived up to its expectation is another kettle of fish entirely as most of the farmers interviewed either complained of not getting seedlings from CRIN in good quantity, price, time or not getting it at all. The following excerpt further shows an expert’s position on the role of CRIN:

The concerned institute has been trying to make available most of the new varieties, but you know the national system usually constitutes some bottle necks because the institutes depend on the government for production and its other functions. But when these varieties were newly released, the federal government made it available through the NCDC (National Cocoa Development Committee) to the farmers in different states. They made available cocoa seedlings such that there were seed gardens in different states from where farmers could get their seedlings and for so many years the federal government mandated CRIN to release the new improved cocoa seedlings to farmers for free for some years, but it now attracts some costs at CRIN if farmers want to get. But I want to assure that it is only from CRIN you can get these hybrids because there is a way it is being done: it is done through hand pollination not just harvesting (KII/Oyo/Expert/Female).

Essentially, beyond the innovation characterising the introduction of new species into the family of cocoa seedlings, it is important to recognise the sensibility of how farmers react to this development, and this is exactly what played out in the way farmers have either received or rejected this innovation – as presented in the narratives extracted above.

While the position advanced by Hamzart, Olaiya, Sanusi and Adedeji (2006) that the development of cocoa in Nigeria has not departed from the old traditional farming method may apply to some of the persisting methods of using direct labour in cocoa production, it must also be stated that these methods are gradually giving way to the changes in the demography of

farmers, consumers taste, climate change and other factors that play out in the cocoa planting processes.

Furthermore, the inspection of cocoa farms is one aspect of the quality control measures, which is usually carried out by the govern. This exercise ensures that standard of best practices is properly communicated to and implemented by farmers. In a memorandum dated January 1st, 1922, from the Director of Agriculture in Ibadan to the Chief Secretary to the Government, Nigerian Secretariat, Lagos¹¹, issues relating to the grading of cocoa were discussed. The director explained how colonial government had been finding a means of teaching ‘the natives¹²’ how to properly ferment their cocoa. A system which would attract some levy from the farmers was instituted. Highlights from this memorandum suggests that:

- 1) Cocoa grading is purely in the interest of the producers. It is assumed that cocoa produced properly will meet recommended standard for exportation set by exporting firms and attracts higher pricing in favour of the producer; and
- 2) The system of grading will help to reducing friction in the system: since producers are motivated to produce higher quality cocoa, fewer cocoa with poor quality would be in circulation.

This practice was formalised by the Chamber of Commerce in 1922, where the then Department of Agriculture was to oversee produce inspection. One of the outcomes of this development was the introduction of four grades of cocoa, viz:

- 1) Grade one (F.F.)
- 2) Grade two (F.A.Q.)
- 3) Grade three (Good Nigerian Old Crop)

¹¹ See appendixes.

¹² The Director referred to local producers of cocoa as the natives in this memorandum.

4) Rejects (Cocoa not conforming to above grade)¹³

The downstream of cocoa sector in Nigeria, and in other cocoa-producing economies, depends of the availability of labour, because most of the cocoa productions activities – from nursery to planting, fumigating, harvesting, to fermenting and sun-drying – are done manually. While most of the responses failed to indicate the exact date or time cocoa production began in Nigeria, it was discovered that the development in cocoa sector in Nigeria coincided with the earliest stage of industrialization recorded in the country¹⁴. Much of the early development of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria took place alongside other social and economic developments in the area. In most part, the production of cocoa was held as the most viable means through which both social and economic transformation of the then western region could be accelerated. Apart from the perceived opportunities that the people in this part of the country saw in the production of cocoa, the society was suitably position for thriving cocoa cultivation. Thus:

This part of the country saw the earliest stage of industrialisation and that of industrial development which meant manufacturing, processing, and a higher status of lifestyle and taste. Some of the major companies, processing and construction companies were cantered Lagos, Ondo and Ogun states. Thus, constituting a commercial hub. Cocoa development was coincidental to the era of industrial development as a result which social class structure emerged. People in the rural areas, farms were concerned with the production of the agricultural produce in mass quantity while those in the cities concentrated on commerce – processing and manufacturing of goods and services. So, apart from the fact that cocoa was been exported as a primary produce, that meant there was a lot of activities at the point of the export, of which Lagos was the export point of cocoa

¹³ See appendixes: Letter to the Director of Agriculture by the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Lagos, Nigeria, West Africa, dated April 11th, 1922.

¹⁴ As gathered from an interview section with a senior researcher at a government establishment, early industrialization stage in Nigeria was marked by the arrival and establishment of many multinational corporations like the United Africa Company (UAC).

and so there was major warehouses around Lagos where cocoa was been stored to be exported and there was a lot of activities in the rural areas where cocoa was been produced. But in the urban areas like Lagos and Akure Cadbury and Nestle process the cocoa into several other secondary products like chocolates, beverages which were being consumed and sold. There was a social structure within the cocoa economy (KII/Agency/Male/2018).

In a similar account, a man aged 102 explained in an interview section that his father foreknew that cocoa was the only fortune that anyone could get at the dawn of 20th century. In his own words:

...It was in my time that cocoa entered Nigeria from Ghana even though I did not take it seriously. But when my father was about to die, he kept repeating that I should not abandon farming. When I saw that my block business was stalling, I decided to heed my father's advice that was why I came to buy land and started cocoa farming. That is over 40 years now (LH/Oyo/Farmers/2018).

In line with the two excerpts above, it can be deduced that many early farmers of cocoa in Nigeria saw it as the most viable crop that could help secure their future and those of their posterities. Thus, entrance into cocoa farming in the early stage of cocoa farming in Nigeria was more of the evolution of industry (cocoa sector in particular) than accidental historic emergence. While this account may be considered plausible on one hand, there are divergent views that entry into cocoa farming as at this period was also a symbol of poverty and lack of access to education and other kinds of jobs in other sectors other than agriculture.

Notwithstanding the controversies in the historical accounts on the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria, there are some common indicators that can be used to trace the trends and patterns of social reactions to the changes in cocoa sectors. One of these is pricing. The pricing of cocoa has been a topical issue influencing the trends both in the upstream and downstream of cocoa sector. At the upstream the buyers, mostly multinational companies who process cocoa into finished goods, ensure they

get premium quality cocoa beans at relatively low price. This they do through the agency of local grading agencies of government and local buyers.

4.2 Cocoa Farmers' Network

This section speaks to a core sociological concern of patterned social intercourse within which the production of cocoa takes place. In other words, the section interrogates the layers of social interrelationship on which the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria is premised. This is because cocoa production does not take place in a vacuum – farmers interact at various levels to cultivate and sell their cocoa beans. These day-to-day interactions have a way of shaping and/or reshaping the fabric of social cohesion and the disposition of the people towards what they do.

The works of Beaman and Dillon (2018) in Mali and Mekonnen, Gerber and Matz (2016) in Ethiopia and give an important insight into how social networks can serve as mechanism for information sourcing both for actions, reactions and learning, which of course would determine the level of innovation and development in agricultural settings. It is from this viewpoint that the mode of relationship(s) that the social network of cocoa farmers can be interrogated. But then, it must be noted that Yoruba people are largely communal, and this has a way of influencing their daily interactions and occupations. In a typical Yoruba parlance, it goes without saying that, *'agbajo owo la fi nsoya, agada owo kan o gberu d'ori'* (we only beat our chest with the whole palm, both hands better lift load to the head), *'k'arin k'apo, yiye ni nye'ni'* (there is honour in moving in the company of others), *'igi kan o le da'gbo se'* (a tree does not make a forest). Such philosophical portrayals are often deployed to express the knittedness and strength of unity that weave Yoruba people together.

Thus, farmers in Yorubaland are gregarious in nature, living and working in the company of their kinfolk, co-farmers and business associates. They support each other in many ways – keeping watch over each other’s property, family, and sometimes lending a helping hand to weed, harvest or raise funds for emergencies. While the bonding or networking process often takes place informally, some of them often transform into formal organisations such as associations and/or cooperative societies. Results indicate that cocoa farmers in southwestern Nigeria interrelate at various levels – they interact with family cycles, co-farmers, labourers, buyers, government agencies and sometimes exporters. These connections are important because, potentially, they can facilitate or demotivate the production of cocoa. This section of the thesis therefore examines how the social network of farmers implicates cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria.

If the nodes of relationship are reduced to three-fold links, then we might want to agree with Knapp (1920) that the strain between cocoa farmers, buyers and manufacture is not new; it is an age-long thing. But then, there is more to these layers mentioned by Knapp. The farmers’ immediate social milieu is made of intercourses that involve family members and to some extent co-farmers and other community members. The same is applicable to the other links in which the network can sometime be overlapping and intricate. But what is important to us in this study is not just the layout of these networks of relational connections but also the output of impacts of these. As shown in matrix 1, an insight into the existing relationship between cocoa farmers and cocoa buyers gives an insight into unpacking some of the relational issues that play out in cocoa production.

Matrix 1: Support system network for cocoa production in southwest

Commonly mentioned:



Types of support to cocoa farmers	Relationship network					
	Kinship	Co-farmers/association	Buyers	Government/Agencies	Exporters	Labourers
Labour	Grey	White	Black	Black	Black	Grey
Finance	Black	White	Grey	Grey	Grey	White
Inputs (e.g., tools, chemicals, seedlings)	White	Black	White	Grey	Black	Black
Training/expertise	White	White	White	Grey	White	Black
Market information	White	White	Grey	Grey	White	Black
Land	Grey	Black	Black	Grey	Black	Black
Emotion (encouragement, advice, participation etc)	Grey	White	White	Grey	White	Grey

Source: Primary data, 2018

4.2. 1. Kinship Network

Kinship or familial connection forms an important nexus of relationships in cocoa farming. To the extent that kinship is a core aspect of the lived experiences of farmers (Akanle, 2013), it is pertinent to explore how kinship ties impact on the production of cocoa. Evidence shows that in the past, land and labour were two important resources usually supplied through kinship or family network. But with the advent of market economy, this changed – individuals now offer their land and labour capital at a price. Notwithstanding, results show some of the cocoa farmers, especially the older ones inherited the land on which they established their cocoa plantation from their parent or through the assistance of their kinsfolk. The following excerpts speak to this reality.

...I inherited my cocoa farmland from my father. Because my father had a large polygamous family, I did not get as much farmland as I would, so I bought more later. I now have cocoa plantation in three different locations in Ondo state. (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018)

In another account it was revealed that:

...My husband was a prosperous cocoa farmer who had large expanse of land he was using for cocoa farming. I took up this cocoa farming when he died because I wanted to assist my children to be great people in life. But it was not that easy because I had some problems over the inheritance of this farmland with my in-laws. I later gather some money to acquire another piece of land on which I planted cocoa that; I was sure no one could content with me over this. (IDI/Farmer/Female/2018)

While the accounts above show that individual cocoa farmer may have inherited farmland from their forebears, there is also the apparent need to acquire more through personal acquisition. But many of the farmers complained that the fund to acquire more land is no at their disposal. While this remains, the agency of government in land acquisition is also very

noteworthy. As alluded to by one of experts interviewed, the policy of government in land acquisition goes a long way in helping cocoa farmer:

The land use decree should be modified to assist farmers to get more farmland, large hectares. Again, we also have the issue of young people that need to be encouraged to come into cocoa production by providing infrastructures and other social amenities within the villages so that they can stay while also trying to help them get credit to farm. The older farmers who still have farms but do not have a new land we are encouraging the planting schemes with the new varieties that we have that can yield in two years. We are trying to retrain them to replant their farms. So that if they replant with the new ones or they do the grafting of it, it can help them overcome this low production and Nigeria will get back to the 1970s' period (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

The foregoing account pointed more to the role individual farmers and their family network play in acquiring farmland, the latter speaks to the agency of government as an important player in this social schema. Apart from land issues, the changing pattern of family relations entails other issues relating to emotional and physical contributions such as partaking in the farming activities. Evidence shows that the family network is weaker in the recent time compared to the early stage of cocoa farming. Some of the reasons mentioned by the participants include non-appealing reward system of reward to farmers, poor farming conditions, lack of proper incentives to farmers and the rustic social life in the rural areas where cocoa plantations are mostly situated. For these and other many more reasons, apathy for cocoa farming is not only brewed by young people but also encouraged by some of their parent who scarcely wish their children returned to the farm. A participant captured this notion this way:

These days our young ones are not so interested in laborious farming activities, and this could also be traced to modernity. We (the parents) have paid the price by doing all that we can to secure their future, and one important way we did this was to be involved in cocoa farming which is a crop with future blessings. Our youths do not have so much patience to

endure what it takes to nurture and raise cocoa (IDI/Farmer/Female/Oyo/2018).

Another participant added that:

Who would have money today and say his child should follow him to the farm? He would not even go because the government is not encouraging those living in the farms/villages. Another thing with all this is that you cannot plant within three years and begin to see the gains. You would first use your body for it and, unfortunately, nobody wants to do that anymore out of all the children we are giving birth to. Imagine that when you first use four (4) years somewhere and it is after that time in the fifth year that you start getting the proceeds; imagine what one would have become otherwise. That is what chase most people away. For me, when I find it difficult to send my children to school, I struggled for them to go and learn a trade; they must not follow this path we are on and wait like we do (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018)

Even tough bulk of the responses gathered indicated waning family support system, some of the farmers still said that they enjoyed some family support. One of such is the one that said, “when it is time for harvesting cocoa or spraying it, like on weekend, they go with us together with the laborers, they also help in packing the produce together, help us to dry it and bring it home” (IDI/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018).

However, a more daunting emergence in kinship relations of cocoa farmer is the increasing tendencies towards private life, which of course was not an original situation as findings show. By this token, individuals tend to gravitate toward avoiding the possible intrusion or interference of other family members. This salutation was expressed by a participant as follows:

Personally, I have not been receiving any support. I work with my sweat. I am the one doing my work without any support from any family member. We are Yoruba and you know that if I take anything from any family member, he expects that we share the returns. It is not even possible because each person has his own responsibilities to cater for.

Such support could exist among the Whites, but such does not happen here (IDI/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018).

4.2.2 Occupational Associations

It cannot be overemphasised that Yoruba people are known for collectivism (Akanle, 2013). This collectivism is often expressed in the kind of occupational group they belong to. It was against this backdrop that an investigation was done to examine the existence and the significance of occupational associations or groups to which cocoa farmers belong. Interestingly, it was gathered that associations, when it comes to cocoa farming may be operated by or for farmers, but in most cases these association are politically motivated and are very useful in understating the dynamic relational networks of these farmers regarding social inequality – for instance, unequal access to loan facilities, farm input, land. While some divergences were observed among the three states in terms of how individual farmers embrace membership of association, it was also observed that most of the associations have some form of political influence, usually with relatively weak structure and ability to enforce the interest of their members.

There are farmers who run cooperative societies of which some of them are registered and more are not registered and what we have observed is that the farther away a community is from the state centre – that is the administrative headquarters of a state – the less likely it will be for the farmer group in such area to be organised and registered. In other words, the closer they are to the city the more organised they tend to be and the farther away they are from the city, the less organised they seem to become. In the same vein, organised groups that are further hinterland are not likely to be registered officially under the trade and rule establishment. But regardless of this, the structure is such that each community likes to protect its own interests, including its farmers.

The general umbrella for cocoa production is the Cocoa Association of Nigeria (CAN). Unfortunately, farmers tend to believe that the association (CAN) is dominated by marketers and not exactly the producers on the other side of the urban space. There is also the All Cocoa Farmers Association of Nigeria (ACFAN) that is believed to be closer and protects the interest of the farmers more than CAN. Regardless of that, they are all stakeholders in the industry. Tunde, an informant, explained that there are also some nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) or marketing groups like as well as exporters who try at their own level try to organise the cocoa farmers. Also, we have some organisations that participate in trying to help the cocoa industry, but at the grass roots the cooperative societies are highly significant to the farmers. For example, it was further explained by Tunde that there are two prominent cocoa association groups in Idanre, Ondo state, and that they have farmer association groups under the large cooperative society and each of these cooperative societies can boast of as much as over 3000 farmers or thereabout. Now their capacity varies to as much as 10,000 tons to 20,000 tons.

But one thing that is evident is that these associations have a structure once they are registered; they have people who are elected to power within the cooperative society. The dominant ones are the chairman, the secretary and the financial secretary. These positions are run time to time like every 2 years or 3 years. The idea of a cooperative society really helps farmers from the point of view that if they registered any meaningful organisation and government would want to identify with them because there is an existing structure already in place and that structure could be a feed-backward or feedforward information loop, and also in terms of key issues that deal with development initiatives run by the federal or the state government and also international bodies. This was confirmed in a group discussion where a participant reiterated that, “government used to assure us via radio that if we formed associations, they would help us with whatever we need. We did and have been consistent (FGD/Farmers/Osun/2018).

It is believed that it is easy for these local or international organizations to identify with the existing structures on ground. According to Tunde, “because there is an easy flow of information, exporters like OLAM and TULIP have cashed in on this structure to be able to give farmers certain incentives in the area of agrochemicals or training and also to be uptakers of their cocoa”. Sadly enough, most of these cocoa associations are far away from the state capital.

Similarly, unlike the cocoa cooperatives operated in the past where cocoa farmers had the opportunity to sell their produce, get loans and inputs, and agitate for their rights (as earlier shown), most of the contemporary associations are loose in their operation and are merely favour-seeking groups of individuals who have been conditioned to form associations to get government attention, assistance and (possibly) credit facilities and farm inputs (KII/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018). What this means is that belonging to an association does not necessarily translate to enhanced opportunity to farmers, and this awareness discourages many farmers from aligning with any association. This situation was described by a participant as follows:

At the state secretariat we have Cocoa Association of Nigeria (CAN) and I am part of them. It is the ministry of agriculture that called us to join. We are supposed to even be in charge of the association, but it is now those who have no idea about cocoa that are there, and they are spending the money that should go to those who know about it. I no longer participate actively when I noticed those things. Since I joined them, there has been no advantage or benefit I can point at. For instance, the association is supposed to be able to buy drugs and distribute to the farmers either free or at a rebated cost, but there is nothing like that. I have not been going regularly since I noticed these anomalies (IDI/Farmer and buyer/Male/Oyo/2018)

One common trend that is characteristic of these associations is that all too often, they usually lose membership not because of internal crises but because the associations are usually unable to deliver on the expectations of their members. Some members who joined because of the hope they had that

some support would be received as a membership benefit tend to withdraw as soon as this hope is not fulfilled. A good example of such situation was described in the following excerpt, and even more pungent is the one described below.

We approached a national bank in charge of agriculture. They told us to get a civil servant to stand as a guarantor for us after we had fulfilled all the conditions given to us as a group. This was when we were at the final stage to collect the money. No one would want to stand as a guarantor with all of his life's earnings and pension at stake. They gave us a condition they knew we would not be able to meet up with so that it would be as if they offered to lend us money but only that we were not willing to get a guarantor. I believe that if they really want to help us, it should not be that difficult. They have representatives who can come and check our farms. If they have any doubts, they can visit individual farms. People come to do mapping in our farms. There are various ways they can go about this – coming to the farm, taking our pictures and so on; but they chose not to do that, instead they asked us to come with a civil servant at the peak of his career as guarantor. We have not gotten anyone so maybe you could be of help (FGD/Farmers/Osun/2018).

Apart from these challenges, the importance of these associations has been alluded to by some of the participants who said they assist in terms of information dissemination, an avenue for training and an important platform for building social capital for farmers. Usually, there is a lead farmer that represents others. It is through this lead farmers that others get updates and learn about farming practices not just on the farm but also for group relations. The lead farmer must know how to go about encouraging other farmers. He will be the moderator and know how to change what is wrong to right. In this way he ensures that there is no strife among them. Sometimes he goes to people's homes or call them to empathise with them.

4.2.3 Cocoa Buyers

The agency of those buying cocoa is another vital link that connects cocoa farmers to cocoa exporter/consumers. As discussed earlier, this agency had been a key player in the sector prior to the introduction of the cocoa board which was later dissolved. These buyers are the go-between between those who want to sell cocoa (farmers) and those who want to buy cocoa (exporter). As a result of their importance, they exercise certain influence on the farmers. For instance, since the farmers do not relate directly to the exporters, the buyers serve as a medium for conveying the asking price of cocoa (which of course is not determined but sometimes manipulated by these buyers). They perform the functions of storage and transportation both for the farmers and the exporters because they would need to buy the beans in bulk from farmers, dry it more if need be, and store them until they are able to achieve sizeable quantity/tonnage for delivery to the exporters.

However, the relationship of farmers with these buyers is often fraught with distrust and marginalisation. While farmers on their side feel the buyers indulge in fraudulent and devious practices to short-change them, the buyers on the other hand often accuse the farmers of living beyond their means and unfaithfulness to transactional agreement. As explained by Oloja, many of the farmers do not accept the “fact that it is a kind deed from the buyers to lend money to needy farmers, especially when cocoa is out of season. Most of them often become extravagant. They use money borrowed to them wrongly” (IDI/Buyer/Male/Ondo/2018). Confirming what Oloja said that buyers often serve as lenders to farmers, one of the cocoa farmers in a group discussion said that:

We sell our cocoa beans to brokers who in turn sell to Local Buying Agency (LBA). We enjoy good relationships with our cocoa buyers. They sometimes give us loans when we are in dire need of money to do one thing or the other. The loans are usually paid back in form of cocoa beans. It is a give and take relationship (FGD/Ondo/Farmers/2018).

One of the reasons why cocoa farmers are unable to monitor and sell their produce at a satisfactory price is lack of adequate information. With the liberalisation of cocoa market after the dissolution cocoa board, farmers rely on the buyers for updates of market price. Apart from the more enlightened farmers who are able to demand for better prices, there are other farmers who are somewhat at the mercy of these buyers.

The buyers will say that is the amount their bosses gave them. They will say it is there boss that sent them. The buyers are bosses on their own, but they will tell you that they have bosses that will still buy from them or it is their bosses that sent them. They can give the excuse of dollar sometimes. Even as of this morning, you will be hearing different stories from the buyers in this community (FDG/Farmers/Osun/2018)

Notwithstanding the inability of most of these farmers to access, or at least influence, the price at which their produce is sold, they often express dissatisfaction over the reward they get from their ‘tedious labour’: they not only feel cheated but also marginalised deprived. As mooted by a participant, *government should help us increase it as this will make the business more profitable for others to join and those in it won't relent doing it* (Farmer/Female/Oyo/2018).

Against the notion that farmers are treated unfairly by buyers, buyers tend to appropriate the main challenge to possible understanding of how the market works on the part of the producers. According to Atakoko, the attitude of farmers is that they fail to understand that cocoa market is dynamic and characterised by fluctuating prices. He added that there were times in the past they bought cocoa for as much as ₦1,000,00/ton, which of course made farmers happy. But when the price fell, they (farmers) were angry and tried to fight the buyers and say that “we have reduced the price again, but we tried to tell them that we are not responsible for the fall in price, and that it was the decision of the *white men*”.

The mention of *white men* was a common place in the responses given concerning the channel of uptaking cocoa from the producers. Both farmers and LBAs were conscious of the influence of the *white* whose dealings are partly direct with the LBAs and somehow completely detached from the producers. This relational gap is a major cause of frequent displeasing to the farmers. As explained by Atakoko, farmers think buyers are the ones causing problem in cocoa trade because they (farmers) do not know the *white men*, but buyers know them. He went further to state that buyers cannot dictate for the *withe men*; it is whatever the *white men* say that determines the market trend. He went further to note that ignorance sometimes makes farmers to think that an incumbent government is the one dictating the price of cocoa, but the truth is “there is nothing that concerns the president or governor with the price of cocoa”. He therefore saw this challenge as a challenge of illiteracy on the part of most of the farmers. But because the buyers are the ones that farmers see their angst is always towards them.

On the other hand, the farmgate buyers of produce, when interrogated, said they were usually benevolent and kind to farmer by not only offering them loans but also buy giving they farm inputs. One of them particularly said that he aided the children of his farmer-customer when they were going to school:

As a buyer of cocoa, I know cocoa buying is both delicate and profitable. I remember one of my customer-farmer whose children are now graduates and doing very fine in their various careers. I also remember that most of these children were sponsored in school by me. I am saying this categorically because their father, who was of course polygamous, depended so much on the loan facilities I offered him for the education of his children. Even when I was yet an unmarried man, I was already shouldering the responsibilities of another man’s children: the children were so free that they could call me at any point in time to send them money for their upkeep, even though their father would later pay back with cocoa (KII/Buyer/Male/Ondo/2018)

More so, result shows that there are other operating conditions apart from the ones highlighted above under which the transactional relationships can either be smooth or problematic. Because most of the LBA get loans that they in turn give to farmers from exporters, they are also constrained to give certain stringent conditions and be tactful in their dealings so that they do not lose their stand in the business. Farmers who are indebted to buyers out of cocoa season are automatically at the mercy of such buyers regarding pricing when cocoa is in season. That was why a buyer said that:

We the buyers believe that the boss (exporter) who buys from us puts heavy loads on our head; the reason being that once they give us money, no matter the amount, it would not be enough. For example, if they buy at the rate of ₦600 per kilo from us because they gave us money that used for the business, they might buy at the rate of ₦610 from other that did not collect money from them, and you know that means I have been cheated because he removed ₦10 naira on my own. We buyers also do the same to the farmers: those who we do not borrow money to and want to patronise are usually given higher price in cocoa season. For example, if I have ₦500 at hand for a kilo, I might buy it for ₦490 if I am not owed; but as for the person I lent money to, I will want to buy at ₦470 or ₦480 because I would not want to lose. It is from the margin that I will be able to offset my running costs – remove the transport fee per kilo, and you know you must have been in the farm since January until harvesting begins in September/October, all the losses you have incurred during that space of time where do u recover it from? That is why you have to put a price margin and remove ₦20 or ₦30 naira from the actual price. But if you did not lend a person money, definitely you have to buy it higher (IDI/Buyer/Male/Ondo/2018).

In consonance to the position above, Arakoko said that his boss (one of the *white men*) gives him between ₦10,000,000 and ₦15,000,000 to use for buying cocoa from villages when cocoa is in season but gets about ₦2,000,000 when cocoa is not in season. He said he used to get the money in the past without the need of any collateral, but as soon as other buyers began to misbehave, the *white men* introduced the condition of collateral security. He said he uses his house, car, and land as collateral. An important

point he added, however, is that it would only be reasonable that buyers are very careful to not only make sure they use the money given to them well, but they also want to make profit. Commenting on the attitude of farmers, he said:

As we speak, the price of cocoa in Ondo is more expensive than it is in Oyo here. White men would reduce the price for cocoa not properly dried or with poor quality. White men have some devices they use for testing cocoa, if the standard for dryness is 7% and the cocoa is tested at 9%, they would reduce the price. I even told the minister of Agriculture that they should conduct an orientation for cocoa farmers, but they said the government is not funding them and they would have to carry cars to enlighten the farmers. Some farmers would dry cocoa on the floor and it's not supposed to be that way. The money that government would collect is what they are most concerned about.

Arakoko said he pay the state government a sum of ₦6,000 on every ton loaded and that some year in the past he paid up to ₦500,000 to the government on the tons of cocoa he loaded. He further retorted that buyers are not cheating the farmers because government does not take any money from farmers, it is from the local buyers that they collect money. He gave an example that he renews his license every year and that on every ten tons in one truck he would pay ₦60,000 to the government. He however lamented that there is nothing the government is doing to palliate the challenges faced by both growers and buyers of cocoa other than to collect money – “no orientation, and even the road we ply to buy the cocoa is bad”. One of his cars got damaged on bad roads to farm, and those that are still on the road are gradually getting bad. Thus, he said that the government ought to take up their responsibility by repairing the roads and taking vehicles down to the villages where cocoa is sold and educate the farmers, an avenue believed to be potential for generating revenue for the government. When asked about who determines the price of cocoa, the response given was similar to that of Atakoko. He said:

The white men themselves are in charge of how we buy the cocoa. Sometimes when it is expensive the price can suddenly come down simply because our work is controlled by the rate of exchange between dollar and naira. When one dollar was exchanged for four hundred-naira, one ton of cocoa was sold for up to one million naira; but when naira gained strength the price reduced again. It is the *white men* that control it. I am not sure, but I heard that there are two *white men* that control the price, and they stay overseas. It is like from the World Trade Centre in America that they determine the price of Cocoa. They are the ones determining how much we would buy and sell.

Again, Arakoko explained that it not true that buyers give farmers money to farm and collect all their proceeds later. He gave an example of how he has close to ₦1,000,000 with cocoa farmers in bad debt. The debt has become a bad debt to him because it is not certain that he can still recover it again. He claimed that it is the farmers that owe them money. He made clare the point that cocoa buying and selling happen in a competitive market, so if farmers are borrowed some money and cocoa gets more expensive the next year, the buyers would have to add to what they loaned out to farmers before. It is the person that offers a higher price that the farmer would sell to, according to him. He said that “we now borrow only the truthful farmers money because once a farmer collects money from you, he has become your boss”. And “If the farmer collects money and does not pay back, even if you call the police to arrest him the money would not come out easily”. Generally, buyers tend to portray themselves as being charitable to farmers as illustrated below:

I give loans to farmers to help them. Most of them run out of money to buy chemical or do one thing or the other when cocoa is not yet is season. But what is painful to me is that many of these farmers later make me regret my action, and that is why I have decided to reduce my charitable deeds to farmers. We do not make much gain from farmers other than the multiple of small gains that heap up for to make a big chunk. We also collect loans that we give to farmers but how can we repay if farmers fail to deal with us with sincerity? Some of them would start hiding from us when cocoa is in season while others would be looking for a way to secretly

sell their beans to other buyers instead of selling to the merchants they are indebted to (KII/Buyer/Oyo/2018)

The excerpt above can be interpreted from different angles. One is that the merchant portrayed himself as a charitable lender doing farmers some favour by giving them loan to meet their need preceding the season of cocoa. But what was not stated in this supposed charitable deed is the motive which, of course, is economic. Monies given to farmers in the form of loans by merchants are not payable in cash but in form of cocoa beans. By this, it is usually difficult for both parties, especially the debtor, to ascertain the accurate value of what is paid back considering the impact of inflation on money and variability of the value of cocoa. Aside this, buyers of cocoa scramble and induce farmers when cocoa is in season so that they can sell their produce to them. By so doing, farmers tend to sell their produce to highest bidder; but if the farmer is already indebted to a merchant, his bargaining chances would have been impeded hence the possibility of insincerity in the dealing of farmers to buyers and vice versa.

Appreciably, it has been shown that both parties at the two ends – those selling and those buying cocoa – see the *white men* as the originators of the market price of cocoa even though it still ‘white men’ remains an amorphous reference. This, reality, however, shows a deeper issue of dependency of Nigerian cocoa market on the patronage or dictates of the so-called *white men*. One farmer in one of the discussion sessions stated that *‘that is one thing about farming; it is the buyers that will name the price. Since there is no other way of selling the cocoa, it is the price the buyers’ name that we will sell* (FGD/Farmer/Female/Osun). The discussant went further to explain that cocoa beans were sold only to government or government licenced buyers in the past, but recently anyone with the ability to buy can buy since the market is no-longer regulated. According to him, *“even politicians with booties looted from public treasuries can venture into or sponsor people to invest in cocoa business. Even when the government intends to buy during the periods of scarcity, it is still them (politicians) that*

fix the price”. We also found that despite the presence of cooperative society in some areas that try to regulate the pricing, the buyers still downplay on the authority of the cooperative by refusing to buy at the fixed price and when sellers can no-longer feed their family since that seems to be their only means of survival, they still sell at the price that the buyers have fixed. We also found that in the whole of the farmer-buyer social relationship, the farmers are always at the receiving end of the selling-decision chain since they scarcely have other alternatives or viable mechanism for influencing the market price. This is implied illustrated in the excerpt below.

In order for the farmers to avoid been continuously cheated, they previous registered with a company named STARMACK which they sold their cocoa produce to in bags and the farmers indicated that the company then was buying in bags and paying them cash. They also stated that they were getting chemicals from the company on lease to prevent pest on their cocoa farms, but all these could not continue due to robbers which the interviewer said were attacking both the company and farmers. Due to the stoppage of business with these people, cocoa farmers stated that they have been passing true a lot of challenges ranging from getting chemicals to put on their cocoa farms; to the exploitations they receive from the buyers of cocoa since there is no fixed price in the open market until recently there is the introduction of licensed buyers (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo)

Locked in the “urban biased market framework” and “money economy” (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007:302), the struggle of farmers to cope with the changing dynamics of the demand for production and the rewards that are dwindling become daunting. Consequently, the farmers choose to either survive or exit production. When their choice favours survival, certain irregularities become inevitable – such as “*bring-it-like-that*” syndrome. *Bring-it-like-that* represents a form of malpractice that ensures when farmers sell their cocoa beans under certain pressures. These pressures could be in form of the need to pay off a debt incurred to buyers or

settle one bill or the other. It could also be as a result of the stiff competition among the buyers over cocoa that farmers intend to sell.

4. 2.4 Formal Agency

What we should understand about cocoa industry is that sometimes we want to say that it startled the farmers which is good enough, at least when we look at the issue from the angle of asking whether or not cocoa farmers are getting the right set of materials for cocoa farm establishment. Throughout the country, Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN), which is apex body saddled with the responsibility of producing seedlings for Nigerians, has certain setbacks like funding. It is not expected that farmers will use cocoa pods from their fields to regenerate cocoa seedlings for their farms because in that way they will not ‘breed to type’. They are supposed to get seedlings from the cocoa industry of Nigeria. Unfortunately, the facility on ground for CRIN to bring new improved seedlings which is on board to meet the needs of Nigerians is inadequate – CRIN is handicapped – which means that the demand for the high improved cocoa seedlings which starts bearing fruits as early as two years cannot get to all farmers; there is a wide gap. In the absence of the needed proper seedlings from CRIN, farmers use materials from their own farms to replant their cocoa farms. The capacity of their new seedling to produce more efficiently is in doubt and farmers who need hybrid planting materials, for instance if they need probably about 1000 seedlings a year, the best they will get is either non or 10 seedlings because this is coming from the source which is CRIN.

There are adopted villages in which CRIN tries to implement some of their research findings and encourage farmers. Some of these villages were visited in the course of the study, but unfortunately findings show that there seem to be little or no difference between the experience of farmers between the adopted villages and other cocoa farming villages. When questions were

asked concerning this reality, responses provided showed that CRIN is having a shortfall of funds and technical capacities because of underfunding and inadequate staffing. Notwithstanding these changes, farmers interviewed in these adopted villages reported that they had been receiving some support from CRIN in form of supply of new (hybrid) cocoa seedling and trainings on how to manage their farms to get optimum output.

When these varieties were newly released, the federal government made it available through the National Cocoa Development Committee (NCDC) to the farmers in different states. Through this agency, seed gardens were established in different states from where farmers could get their seedlings and for so many years the federal government mandated CRIN to release the new improved cocoa seedlings to farmers for free for some years but now it attracts some costs at CRIN if farmers want to get it. Evidence from this study revealed that these improved seedlings can only be gotten from CRIN, this is because there is a way it is being done: it is done through hand pollination not just harvesting. Every year, they (CRIN) do pollination and these pods are being sold to farmers (KII/Expert/Female/Oyo/2018).

The preferences in government in terms of funding for the industry is another related concern. Unlike cotton, cocoa as the only major tree crop available for southwestern Nigeria does not attract buffer funding from the Federal government to boost its production. And as long as that disparity exists, the farmer will continue to cry out loud. So political, cotton has a buffer which cocoa does not have access to (KII/Expert/Male/Oyo/2018).

4.2.5 Labour: Migrants, Hired Labour and Contract Farmers

Labour and labourers are essential to cocoa production. With the depletion of labour capital from the family, farmers make use of hired labour. Hired labourers enter into different terms with their hirers; some serve as contract

farmers, who manage the plantation on behalf of their landlords, and some are placed on wages. These hired farmers are often not from the place they do the farming, hence the concern of migration. Migrants in the context of the findings of this study are of two types: (i) those who migrated as labours into cocoa farming communities and (ii) those who migrate in search of good soil for cocoa.

Again, the disintegration of family labour has immense impact on the expansion of cocoa. It both gave room for ease of the labour mobility and at the same time privatisation and labour commoditisation. Results show that, because “not all land is cultivable for cocoa plantation” (IDI/Farmer/Male/Oyo/2018), people traverse geographical boundaries to search for land where their cocoa plantation can be established. The Responses produced by participants indicated that a wrong choice of land or soil for cocoa plantation can be counterproductive, leading to sinking of cocoa tree or poor yield. This assertion was confirmed in the submission of the discussants in a group discussion as follows:

...another thing is that before a place would develop, visitors must see that cocoa land is there, and they would stay there. That is why you can see that visitors are even more than those of us that are indigenes in this village; the main reason for their coming was to get cocoa land (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/2018).

This trend was found common among cocoa farmers in southwestern Nigeria. Migratory trend seems to be more in favour of Ondo state and to some extent Osun which are still reckoned with as high cocoa producing states in the country (NBS, 2018). Oyo State appears to be losing out in the trend as good land food cocoa cultivation shrinks, giving way to urbanisation and deforestation.

Importantly, the labour capital sourced from this category of people form an integral part of social relational nodes in cocoa producing communities. Evidence shows more often than not, this moving labour force

is met with either acceptance or rejection from the original occupant of the area also referred to as the indigenes. Interestingly, the former was found common as many of the Yoruba communities seem to be accommodating to moving farmers. When the mobile farmers get to a new space, they would either get a piece of land as a gift or at a price. The experience of a 72-year-old farmer, Agbeyemi, confirmed this. He moved from Oyo state to look for farmland in Ondo state. The following was his culled from an interview with him:

When we got here, we had to beg the Ondo indigenes to sell their lands to us. I must say that not all of them sold their land; some gave us their land with an agreement that at a particular time, we would begin to pay back while other sold the land to us. Apart from this, there were other kinds of agreements; for instance, some made us accede to conditions like sharing certain proportion of our cocoa produce them at the end of a farming season (Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018)

That there are many conditions for acquiring a farmland is one important insight that can be gotten from the narrative given by Agbeyemi. The issue of the sharing formula mooted by him was found commonly applicable to contract farmers who entered into an agreement with their landlord to share the proceeds of the farm based on a set term. This view is confirmed in the excerpts below.

The cocoa plantation I am managing is not mine. I came down to this place on contract basis. I have a landlord (the owner of the cocoa) who gave me a cocoa plantation to manage. After the end of the production year, we divide whatever income we realise from the sales of our produce (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/ 2018).

At the end of the farming year, the contract farmers (hirelings) are paid from the proceeds of the farm. I will take two-third of whatever comes as gross income from the farming year while the contract farmer takes one-third (IDI/Farmer/Female/Ondo/2018).

As a contract farmer, I do the weeding of the farm, spraying of germicide of cocoa pods and also do the harvesting of the

beans from farm. After taking the beans through the process of fermentation and sun-drying, we package the beans for sales. Then, whatever (money) we make from the sales will be shared between the landlord and me (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/2018).

The possibility of misunderstanding existing between and among individuals relating in this shifting labour relations cannot be swept under the carpet. But generally, it was found that the interrelationships were mostly devoid of degenerative disputes, as existing terms and traditional authorities potential take care of this possibility.

4.3 Yoruba Cultural Practices Associated with the Production of Cocoa

Yoruba traditional culture has a way of expressing itself in many facets of the life of Yoruba people. This multifacetedness finds expressions in a number of ways within the contexts of work, production, or productivity and the general symbiotic relationships of the people. Unwrapping the interphase of Yoruba culture and cocoa production significantly shows how the culture of a people may or may not impact work or production processes.

Over time, the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has thrived through these cultural practices. While it is important to reiterate the point earlier made that cocoa-consuming culture itself remains seminal and underdeveloped among most of the farmers in this area, as both literature and findings of this study have shown, they have been able to develop ligaments of culture-oriented practices that sustain cocoa production processes which in turn keep those that uphold this system in the occupation.

4.3.1 Culture of Work

Cocoa farmers are usually given to hard work as this goes a long way to project their culture of work. Relating culture to cocoa farming, one of the

cocoa farmers recited a popular Yoruba rhyme: *ise agbe ni 'se ile wa, eni 'ko sise a ma jale: iwe kiko, laisi oko ati ada, ko i pe o, ko I pe o'* (IDI/Farmer/Osun/2018). Cocoa farmers are not only generally given to hard work but are also conscientiously aware of the rigour involved in all the processes involved in cocoa production from planting, to maintenance, to harvesting, to marketing. Hard work in this sense does not only speak to the physical efforts put into the production of cocoa but also the dedication, commitment and devotion which are associated with cocoa production. As one of the interviewees put it: *"You can plant any other crop and walk away but with cocoa things can change very rapidly. One might check cocoa the day before and see that everything is ok and return there the following day to find things already going amiss"* (Farmer/Female/Osun/2018).

As results show, it takes a lot of dedication to produce cocoa and that is why one of the cocoa farmers remarked that *"ise koko soro se pupo. Ole o le se e. Eniti o ba le wo koko ye lo le wo omo ye* [Translated: cocoa farming is very strenuous and laborious. It is not for anyone lazy. Anyone who is patient enough to raise cocoa to the point of fruition will definitely be able to successfully raise a child]" (Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018). Comparing the rigour involved in cocoa production here with child raising shows that cocoa farming reflects deep cultural value of how Yoruba people value children and the process of raising them, hence the transfer of such ideal into the production of cocoa. Should a farmer choose to neglect his or her cocoa plantation the way a careless parent would leave their child, the consequent would be complete or partial loss of what would have otherwise been the output.

Resilience is a culture that most cocoa farmer exhibit throughout the phases of production – from the decision to plant cocoa, through the gestation period, harvesting, drying, and marketing. One way by which this resilience can be described is how many of the farmers have summoned courage and mustered strength to continue in the farming occupation after having their crops burnt down. In the course of the study, several cases of fire incidents

were recounted during the personal interviews and group discussions. The following excerpts are examples of this:

One of my farms has once been burnt down by fire, that was when I first started. Fire burnt one side. No matter how I plant on that side, I still do not get enough yield compared to the other side that was burnt. And I have shown all those who come to educate us, but I was told there was no solution, but I should continue planting. I still plant on the burnt side, but it does not balance with the rest of the plantation. Challenges are many on the farm; if I should start mentioning them, you can be sure that I would not finish till dawn. Like when it is time to start harvesting; when they start fruiting, one starts buying drugs and it has to be daily work, because one would not get good harvest if it were not done like that. And we do not have anyone to help us (IDI/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018)

It was gathered in another account that:

It was a tough time for us this village when fire ravaged our farms. We cried and cried. Many of our cocoa farmers got depressed. We have since then been soliciting for assistance from both government and other sources possible. CRIN has been coming to assist us by giving us seedlings to replant the farms (FGD/Farmers/Oyo/2018)

While the doggedness with which most farmers produce cocoa is commendable, it is pertinent to state that this trait is often frustrated. Frustration begins to set in when either there is perceived neglect by these farmers or unfair relationship with other actors in the sector, or a combination of the two. Ofttimes, these farmers feel neglected when policies that may better their lot are not put in place by the government. These policies may concern provision of necessary amenities (like storage facilities, good roads that would the transportation of goods and services, healthcare facilities, water and so on) to make living close to farm – which is what cocoa farming requires – encouraging. Relational issue concerns a sense of inequality fraught in the reward system for cocoa production in which farmers feel they do not always get rewards matching the efforts they put into the production of cocoa. They complain that the pricing of cocoa is not always encouraging.

It is against this backdrop that the sustainability of this culture of resilience once immanent in cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria can be further interrogated. As a result of the frustration that often trails the resilience that the production of cocoa requires, many young people in this area, and even by extension the entire country, are dissuaded from entering into this occupation. They would rather be ridding *okada* in hope of getting rather quick and relatively justifiable reward for their labour. But it must be noted that more labour, especially the young population, is needed to not only transmit this trait of resilience but also to boost productivity in the cocoa sector. The following excerpt is explicit on how the situation has gotten regarding the devaluation of this culture of resilience:

...the challenges there are much. You would see that you asked about youths the other time, and if we would not deceive ourselves, like the people standing here, like now if I gave birth to him, look at my hands and body; do you think, or would you recommend that my children should embrace this kind of suffering?... That is what is chasing the youths away. Who would have money today and say his child should follow him to the farm? He would not even go because the government is not encouraging those living in the farms/villages. Another thing with all this is that you cannot plant within three years and begin to see the gains. You would first use your body for it and, unfortunately, nobody wants to do that anymore out of all the children we are giving birth to. Imagine that when you first use four (4) years somewhere and it is after that time in the fifth year that you start getting the proceeds; imagine what one would have become otherwise. That is what chase most people away. For me, when I find it difficult to send my children to school, I struggled for them to go and learn a trade; they must not follow this path we are on and wait like we do! They must not their account and meet below ₦20,000 as is the case with most of us today. Is that how bad Nigeria has become? It is the same food that we eat with *those carrying millions*¹⁵. That is what made the youths run away; and as you could see you met us, who are rather getting old: this is because it is what we have done for long with our fathers, that is why we are still there. What work do we want to go and learn now?

¹⁵ By this, the participant was referring to corrupt politicians.

...that is why we are still doing it as our strength would allow us. Assuming the government turns up and also the youths, who are educated, go around the local government and take acres of land and advertise that they need workers; there are children that can do it for ₦10,000 per month considering the state of the country. But there is no such help, we only hear that the government would help the farmer, but we also do not deceive ourselves because we do not have another work to do, so we are here (IDI/Farmer/Ondo/2018)

The endangered culture of resilience in farming is implicative of some emerging trends in the cocoa sector. Because cocoa in itself is valued among farmers and others as profitable, findings have shown that many individuals who dabble into cocoa farming recently do so for reasons not backed by such considerations as had by those who had been there for a long time¹⁶. While improvement in the seedlings of cocoa, which reduces the gestational period for farmers, may be stimulating more entrance into farming, evidence also abounds about how unemployment and corruption are common factors forcing some individuals to consider cocoa farming. As such, it is difficult to sustain the culture of resilience when this kind of situation prevails.

4.3.2 Calendaring

Cocoa has some importance in the way the calendar of events is planned among these farmers. After the hard work of tending and raising cocoa till it is harvested, the period after this is symbolic of celebration. For these farmers *koko ti dowo* (translated as cocoa has become money). Evidence of these periods of celebration, which succeed the harvest, was evident during the interviews with the farmers. They captured it this way:

¹⁶ As many of the older cocoa farmers explained, most of them went into cocoa farming for reasons that transcended immediate gains they could get from such decision. They had the future of their children as potential heirs of their plantation in mind. Some of them saw cocoa farming as an alternative to becoming socially irrelevant because of their inability to go to school. Passion drove many of them into the preoccupation.

We usually look forward to the *season*¹⁷ of cocoa. Many of our social activities like marriage, burials, housewarming, and traditional festivity like *odun egungun* (festival of masquerade) and many others are planned to take place during this period because it is believed that there would be money as a result of the harvest of cocoa. In addition to this, many farmers lay the foundation of or complete their building project during the period of harvest. You see, cocoa harvest time is very important (KII/Osun/Male/Association leader/2018)

And that,

...Even though I did not have opportunity to acquire western education beyond primary school I knew if I persevered in cocoa farming my future would be bright. After suffering for some time, I began to reap the fruit of hard work when I started harvesting cocoa (IDI/Male/Ondo/Farmer/2018)

However, not all the farmers see the season of cocoa as a time of celebration. The period is also a time some of these farmers plan for the next farming season. It is also a period in which lenders¹⁸ to which farmers are indebted usually set for repayment¹⁹.

Furthermore, there are certain practices on land acquisition or ownership, management and redistribution among Yoruba people that influence the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria. During the early development of cocoa farming among the Yoruba people, the acquisition of land was not so difficult as individuals were given land to farm based on their ability (Berry, 1974). Even though land was, until commoditisation of it, a collective resource transferred to those who needed them for cocoa

¹⁷ This is the period between September and March in which the main crop is harvested. Mid-crop, which is not as much as main crop is harvested between June and August.

¹⁸ These lenders could be buyers of cocoa; either local buying agents (LBAs), cocoa merchants, banks, government or friends and family members. Cocoa farmers are often caught in owing debt in the period around cocoa season. They use these debts to either maintain their crops or settles personal bills.

¹⁹ This repayment in most cases is done with the use of cocoa beans as a means of exchange. As such, the value of the exchange is not always easy to calculate as the lenders often get more hoping to make some gains from the money borrowed out to these farmers. This was attested to by both cocoa farmers and merchants interviewed at various locations.

production in most old western Nigeria (see Walker, 2000), traditional chiefs played important roles in the allocation of land to individuals. In addition to this, the family institution plays significant roles in land acquisition in line with patriarchal hierarchical structure Yoruba family (Akanle and Adejare, 2015).

4.3.3 Conflict Resolution

In most cases, conflicts arising from cocoa farming are better solved at the community level. As findings show, farmers repose more confidence in the arbitration that takes place in their various communities than when such is handled by government or the law court. Cocoa farmers in southwestern Nigeria stated that they are experiencing boundary disputes. They also stated that there is always one dispute between one landowner and another, land buyer and another etc. The farmers, however, stated that such disputes are settled by elders of the community who in some circumstances send emissaries to such places in order to unravel the cause of the disputes for purpose of resolution. This position was confirmed by participants as follows:

The Baale would appoint wise people who are elderly to follow those in dispute to such places that this is a dispute. Any cocoa that is at the middle of the divided boundary and close to the boundary would be cut-off. They would make sure they resolve it in a way that is peaceful (KII/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018).

We do not usually get into conflict situation in cocoa production because everyone knows their obligations – only those who try to swindle or treat their contract farmers unkindly find themselves in conflict over the sharing formula. Once I reward my labourers as and when due, there would not be any misunderstanding (IDI/Farmer/Female/Ondo /2018).

Apart from disputes over land, conflictual relationship may occur between landlords and their contract and/or migrant farmer over the sharing of proceeds. When this happens, participants revealed that the traditional authorities are also resorted to for arbitration and resolution. The final decision of the local authority tends to prevail in most cases because the people tend to repose more confidence in this local system of dispute resolution. A discussant captured this view the following way:

One way by which conflict situation can arise is when the owner of the cocoa plantation perceives that the caretaker (contract farmer) fails to maintain the plantation well. The owner can channel such complaint through community leaders who in turn will address the issue and ensure amicable resolution. Both owners and caretakers of cocoa are treated with mutual respect in this community, and so we do not allow misunderstandings to escalate beyond community level – the community leaders are seen as the final arbiter (FGD/ Farmers/Ondo/2018).

Another discussant who happened to fall into the category of migrant farmers reiterated that:

We hardly have issues over cocoa production. If not for the peace that we enjoy here with our host community, especially landlords, we would have returned to where we came from long before now (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/2018). Cocoa is very important for many reasons. It helps economically and socially. Economically, cocoa is our means of livelihood. Socially, cocoa production has made it possible for us in this village to enjoy the presence of contract farmers who come from different parts of the country – some of them (contract farmers also known as caretakers) come from Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra, Cross River, Rivers, and so on. Without cocoa, life would have been very boring for us in this village (FGD/ Farmers/Ondo/2018).

4.3.4 Emotional Connection

The way cocoa farmers relate with their farms in southwestern Nigeria reveal a subtle flow of emotions that goes into the production of cocoa in the area. This can be seen in the pattern of residence, communication and a wide array

of activities that actually qualify them as cocoa farmers. As revealed in this study, unlike other farmers, cocoa farmers are so connected to their crops that it may mean as much as life to them. They sometimes equate the care that goes into raising a cocoa tree the care that proper raising of a child requires – “*Eniti o ba le wo koko ye lo le wo omo ye* [Translation: It is someone who is patient enough to raise cocoa to the point of fruition that will be able to successfully raise a child]” (IDI/Farmer/Male/Oyo/2018).

As a proof of the exiting emotional bond between the farmers and their farms, results show that most of the farmers live, or hire labours that can be trusted to live, close to their cocoa plantation. Living close to the farm of course means living in the village. Even though the infrastructures in these villages are usually inadequate, farmers cannot but live close to their farms to properly monitor the growth and development of their plants. Two examples of farmers, whose experience validate this reality, stood out in the course of the study. The following extracts are from the interviews conducted with them:

I was never a farmer. I am a university graduate. I worked in different companies around the world before I retired some years back. But before I retired, my father had purchased some acres of land in this community through the help of his younger brother who was living here. He secured the land by planting cocoa on it. Before he died, he called my attention to the investment (cocoa plantation) he had helped me to make and instructed me never to allow the investment to perish. At first, I felt it was not worthwhile to retire into a village after many years of working and living in the city, so I decided to give the farm to some paid labourer. Sooner than later, it dawned on me that I had to move down here (to the village) to get the best out of my inherited farm. And since I came things have not been the same: I think I now find more satisfaction in my routine visit to my plantations every day. I have bought additional farmland and secured more cocoa plantation: I see this as a big achievement even though village life is not altogether comfortable. My children are all in the city and they usually wonder why I chose to retire into the village (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018).

The care that a genuine cocoa farmer gives to his crops is similar to the care a parent of *abiku* gives to his child. From nursery to harvest, a cocoa farmer must not take his attention off each of his cocoa trees. You see, this means a lot of work and it can be very tiring and burdensome unless one is determined and passionate about growing cocoa and making a good success of it. Explaining the import of paying a careful attention to cocoa, a farmer said that:

We cannot compare those who are into cocoa farming with those who are not. For instance, if you plant cassava on a farm, for two weeks you might not need to go there. It might be weekly or just some days as long as there is no weed in the farm, but cocoa plantation takes more than that. If you have a cocoa plantation, it is like you have a company. You cannot leave your company and decide to go there only when you desire or have the time. A cocoa plantation requires that one visits the farm regularly to monitor it. The care it requires is like the care a human being requires. This is because you can observe cocoa today and think it is fine and then in the next few days something is wrong with it. But if one is not a good observer, he will not detect on time. Any good cocoa farmer must be a good observer who would be able to differentiate leaves of a healthy plant from a non-healthy one. That way dying plants can be rescued on time. It might be impossible to rescue some, but you would know what to do about them (IDI/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018).

It is important to take note of the way plant-human relationship has been depicted in the foregoing extracts. Both have, though theoretically, drawn upon the value of positive parenting to illustrate how farmers may be as close to their crops as a child. Of special note is the deliberate use of *abiku* which attracts a lot of superstitions and comes with some spiritual emotionality among Yoruba people. When probed further, the participant who used that terminology explained that just like an *abiku*, a cocoa tree that is not given timely and adequate care will die. And not that alone, cocoa farmers, in spite of the care they give to their cocoa trees, are not unaware that they stand a chance of losing their cocoa tree to shrinking, pest invasion, diseases, and other ugly occurrences – “Just when you think it as all about success story, you see a farmer starting all over again after three years of hard

labour. Why? Because all his cocoa plants have died as a result of drought or other sinister occurrences” (IDI/Farmer/Male/Ondo/2018). Closely related to this human-plant relationship is the concern of profitability. A farmer explained that it is only those who are emotionally connected and realise the need for constancy in caregiving to cocoa plantation that would enjoy the benefits that accrue to such practice. According to him,

the problem of cocoa is that it is the same day that one plants it that one must determine look after it and the profit we want to get from it. We cannot plant it and leave it or abandon it, or else we would not get any proceed from it (FGD/Farmers/Oyo/2018).

This human-plant relationship is one aspect of cocoa farming that is scarcely accounted for but remains crucial in interrogating the gamut of labour cost and dynamic processes that interplay to produce cocoa beans.

4.3.5 Communality (*Aaro*)

Communality is another way to espouse the production of cocoa and Yoruba cultural practices. Individuals not only live with others as neighbours but also cooperate with them in various aspects of life. They watch over each other’s affairs, lend helping hands, pool resources together, and give both moral and financial assistance to one another. These communal ties go a long way in reducing conflict and rivalry between and among the people, hence the presence of relative peace enjoyed in their communities. More often than not, this collective orientation performs functions beyond government and its agencies to continually encourage farmers to form cooperative that will both serve as a platform for applying for aids and also taking care of individual needs in their various communities.

“*Aaro*” is one way by this communality is expressed among the farmers. *Aaro* refers to a system whereby farmers collectively agree to fuse their efforts and focus on assisting one another in a rotational form; such that their coming together might yield better result than when they work

independently. For example, they can come together to weed each other's farm at different turns until all of them have benefitted from this rotation. As explained in a group discussion:

Cocoa farming is hard and can sometimes be too monotonous to do alone. We assist each other in this village in this regard. We engage in *aaro*, which means that we move around to help each other to clear their farms or assist with harvesting or other tedious activities in the farm (FGD/Farmers/Osun/2018).

Yes, we help ourselves when the need arises so to do. For example, harvesting of cocoa pods from cocoa trees can be very tasking. Volunteers from the village come to the aid of whoever needs help with harvesting of these pods. We also help ourselves during weeding of our plantation (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/2018).

The clearing of footpath to the farm, for instance, is usually done through collective effort. Similarly, findings show that the ties among farmers to one another could be so strong that they would rather solve conflictual matters at the village level than to involve law enforcement agent or other parties outside their community. This collective orientation was described by one of the farmers in a group discussion as follows:

There are times in that people help us when we want to work in the neighbourhood. They render little assistance like helping us transport cocoa manually on the farm. There are times we get such assistance but more often we pay for the services rendered. Some people may know someone and chose to offer to help a little. But for instance, at the time when my farm was gutted by fire, people came to my rescue. They came to help to help put out the fire (FGD/Farmers/Osun/2018)

4.3.6 Sharecropping

Sharecropping is another common practice among farmers in southwestern Nigeria. As remarked by a key informant, children who have already gotten white collar jobs in cities might find it difficult to go back to farm and resume farming. What they (these children) do instead is sharecropping – they hand

over the crop to some people who will sharecrop it and give them part of the proceeds. “But if you are not the owner and you are not there, you cannot do it well as a share-cropper” (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

For the children who have already gotten white collar jobs in the city, it is difficult to go back to farm and resume farming. What they do instead is sharecropping – they hand over the crop to some people who will sharecrop it and give them part of the proceeds. But if you are not the owner and you are not there, you cannot do it well as a sharecropper (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

4.3.7 Other Coping Strategies

Cocoa farmers are generally confronted with the need to adjust to certain changes that would in turn influence their productivity and livelihood. These adjustments come in form of adopting new method of planting, applying chemical or controlling pests and diseases on the plantation. It could also be in form of adjusting to market demand, often communicated to them by buyers or other professional bodies, including taste and price – for example, organic cocoa. Apart from making use of the knowledge passed down from one generation to another, cocoa farmers tend to embrace new ways of doing things, and that is evident in the interview excerpt below:

We get educated over time in this occupation. For example, when we were planting in those days, we would plant it (cocoa) by seed into ridges – three seeds in each ridge. But when our bosses came, the one they taught us is different... But it is when we also used our father’s wisdom with the new things, we were that we made significant progress: *‘to ba koju si e, ta a. To ba keyin si e ta a. To ba ku iwo nikan, ko tun ero ara re pa’* (IDI/Osu/Male/2018).

One of the ways by which cocoa farmers adjust to the survival challenges in through intercropping. Because cocoa farming requires some patience regarding the gestation period between planting and harvesting, farmers plant other crops like cocoyam, vegetables, banana and so on, to keep

body and soul together while awaiting the harvesting of their cocoa. This adaptive reality was further illumined in the following extract:

...Before the cocoa begins to yield profits, the other crops are what we live on. If not for these other crops like cocoyam and banana, it would be difficult to feed our family or survive. When the cocoa begins to bring forth fruits, we are definitely happy. When we begin to harvest and sell, we use the money to maintain our children and expand our farms by hiring more labourers. It is really not more than that (IDI/Farmer/Male/2018)

Religion has a standing when it comes to how cocoa farmers adjust to realities of events around them, as evidenced in the study findings. Some of the farmers take solace in how religion helps them to attend to the demand of cocoa farm. One of such is the following:

God gives me wisdom when I pray such that I put ideas that I've never learnt from anybody to work and when I do it, others imitate me. Even some of the methods for cocoa farming that are being taught in trainings have been used by me long before the trainings were organized. So, when the government said we should adopt these methods I was surprised because I had been using them for long and no one taught me. (IDI/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018).

4.4 Farmers' Constructed Meaning of Cocoa in Southwestern Nigeria

While cocoa production in Nigeria began in the same period industrialization began to pick up in the country, accounting for early structural and economic transformation of the then western sub-region especially, the discovery of oil caused a political shift of attention to oil production. Both cocoa and oil have some shared important historic indicators of social significance in general production trend. First, both have at one time or the other served as the leading sector of the country's economy. Cocoa sector was predominantly leading in pre-1970. Since 1970, oil production takes the leading position

among other sectors in the country. Similarly, both cocoa and oil have served as a quid. They served as a quid in the sense that they are more of extractive (crude) commodities rather than refined (finished) product, at least in relation to their productive value in the country. By implication, they tend to appeal more to their refiners, foreigners who transform them to finished products and consume them or resale them at higher economic values, than they do to the ‘local’ (indigenous) owners of these raw resources.

‘Eni ti o ba mo iyi wura ni a nta a fun’ (gold is sold to that person that knows its value). This Yoruba proverb encapsulates both the crude and refined economic commercial value of cocoa and oil. To the extent that both the exchange values of cocoa and crude oil are not determined by Nigeria or Nigerians, at least for reason of the fact that Nigeria mainly extract these products, it can be interpreted that these two products are like gold in its raw form that is bought by those who can add economic value to it. The study data shows that right from the inception of cocoa production in Nigeria, the crop has only been seen as a mere economic item with little or no significance for cultural trajectories. As one study participant would say: “the only importance is that we are getting little gains from cocoa plantation. There is no other importance because we can't eat it. The stress is even more than the little change we are getting (IDI/Male/Farmer/2018). In the same vein, another interviewee opined that “the importance of cocoa for us is for us to plant it, harvest it and sell to potential buyers... and foreigners who buy from our boss for exportation” (IDI/Male/Osun/2018).

How cocoa planters or farmers see their product (cocoa) has a way of showing whether (or not) they want to produce more, and this also implicate the quantity and quality of their produce. As Fairhead and Leach (2015:28) argued, the centrality of ‘the social in African farming’ – reflecting on the social conditions that constantly shaping farming activities in Africa, rather than dissociating farming (itself) from the farmers and their lived social experiences. With this in view, the trend of cocoa production shows that there

are certain value system and normative pattern of interactions that constantly shape the behaviour of farmers of cocoa, thus implicating the level of their productivity. As opined by Thomas and Thomas (1928) and cited by Ritzer (2014:200), “if men define situation as real, they are real in their consequences”. Thus, the social-psychological state of existence of man often transcends political and other forms of material component of life. As such, this study examines how prevailing value system in which cocoa farmers operate may or may not influence productivity within the cocoa sector. For some of the planters, the following is true:

Cocoa does not really have any traditional meaning because sometimes ago we had a big challenge selling our cocoa beans and as a result feared that our cocoa beans would waste, and our labour lost. I remember I was the person the community chose from our farmers' cooperative society to be in charge of sourcing market for our cocoa farmers. We would buy cocoa and also sell it to other buyers. The little gains will be given to the community. The only importance that one might want to attach to the production of cocoa in this place is that which comes from the money made from the sales of cocoa. There is no other importance because we can't eat it. The stress is even more than the little change we are getting. When there is no other opportunity, we choose cocoa plantation (KII/Chief/Farmer and Buyer/Male/Ondo/2018)

To the extent that most of the *native* planters of cocoa said “there is no other importance because we can't eat it. The stress is even more than the little change we are getting” (IDI/Male/Farmer/2018), one might be tempted to assumed that cocoa is useless to its producers, hence not worth further production. But then, that “the importance of cocoa for us is for us to plant it, harvest it and sell to potential buyers... and foreigners who buy from our boss for exportation” (IDI/Male/Osun/2018) shows that the interpretive economic importance of cocoa to its planters cannot be swept under the carpet, even though this may not come with much cultural sustainability propensity. As would be seen below, cocoa is interpreted differently, based on variegated situation.

4.4.1 Koko D’owo – The Tokenism of Cocoa

Money is central to cocoa production, and this goes a long way in unpacking the import of cocoa to its producers and how meanings are constructed by cocoa farmers. That cocoa symbolises money is one evidence that was constantly encountered in the way realities shaping the experiences of these farmers were presented by them – from association to family life, and beyond, money seems to be one important synonym of cocoa to its planters. This notion of money is one important reason that usually attracts individuals to be involved in the chain of production and distribution of cocoa. Whether as a cocoa farmer, non-cocoa farmer or trader, Yoruba people generally accept cocoa as a token symbolising money: songs, behaviours, ceremonies and associations are clustered around this reality. For a young man interviewed as a research participant, cocoa means the most among other kinds of trees around the world, simply because he grew up with this reality in mind. In his words:

Cocoa in the olden days when I was small and used to follow our fathers to the farm, was known as “*igi owo loko egan*”. There is no crop like cocoa in the whole world. It is very important, and people hold it in high importance. For someone who has a cocoa farm, if he takes care of his farm well, he won’t have to be chasing women, it is women that would be running after him (IDI/Trader/Male/Ondo).

This narration of tokenism has a wide array of interpretive implications for the production of cocoa whether as an individual or a group of farmers. At the individual level, motivations are drawn to engage in cocoa farming because, as indicated in the above excerpt, some sense of security can be ascertained in terms of financial stability, social prestige, and self-fulfilment. Using Kokofunmi as an example, “social significance in most of the cocoa farming communities is tied to your worth in money gotten from your farming” (IDI/Farmer and Chief/Male/Osun). According to him, “most of the people appointed as chiefs in this town are individuals who have over time contributed to the development of the town, especially through the donations of money”. Thus, the acceptance of the person of a cocoa farmer as

‘important’ within the communal setting has a way of further stimulating the production of cocoa. The following are evidential of the shared sentiment about the import of cocoa for a group discussion in a cocoa-farming village in Oyo state:

...The importance of it to me is that I know once you plant cocoa, it would be giving you your daily food till old age. It gets to a point where you do not have the strength to plant or do much rigorous work in the farm again; unlike when you plant maize, cassava or other crops, once you have planted cocoa, you will continue to harvest it till one grows old. Even before old age one would have started reaping a lot of benefits from it (FGD/Farmer/Female/Oyo).

What I see as important in cocoa is that (as you can see that I am old already and not doing any work and *money is entering* for me) it is a lifetime opportunity of making money through farming. I should tell you that it is someone that is sensible that would plant cocoa because cocoa is difficult to tend. But once a person plants it, his life is better because he would not have any suffering; because what I would eat till I die is on my farm right now. But if one is planting cassava, once you uproot it, it has finished. That is the importance I see in cocoa; it is one work you can eat from young age till your death. Once it stays that is it, there is no trouble for that person again (FGD/Farmer/Male/Oyo).

In making sense of these interpretive narrations held by the people about the import of cocoa, it is concomitant to see take cognisance of how these narrations are transferred down from one generation to another. For instance, there was a widely accepted claim that non-cocoa farmers were prone to poverty in the part, and this stance found expression in the form of leadership that existed during this time. This was why one of the old cocoa farmers said that:

...During the government of Awolowo, he categorically said that the future anyone that did not plant cocoa was uncertain and that such person would think, get frustrated and die. It is that period that we are in now. You know that anyone that does not have cocoa cannot be happy, he cannot be happy with the person that has it because cocoa now yields money, it gives peace. But when we first started it some people were

sorry for us, wandering when it would start yielding. But after 4 or 5 years it started to yield. (There are even some breeds of cocoa now that would start fruiting in the second year). But you know what? We are now sorry for those were sorry for us then (KII/Farmer/Male/Oyo/2018)

Interestingly, the sensational connection of money to cocoa seemed to have paled in significance with the passage of time. As data revealed, the younger generation no longer hold cocoa beans as an all-important symbol of money as the older generation. Of course, not because cocoa no longer has monetary value but perhaps because of the impact of education, availability of other job opportunities and the expansive urbanisation trend as against the shrinking rural space, amongst other things. More so, the push to explore less rigorous, but more rewarding, farming activities often cause a shift away from the ascribe importance to cocoa – youths, in contemporary sense for instance were, were indicted as less patient to endure the long gestation of cocoa or engage in the laboriousness of cocoa production.

4.4.2 Questioning Cocoa as Food

This is one question that generated divergent views and imprecise responses from cocoa farmers in the course of the study. While many of the farmers acceded to the edibility of cocoa (beans), many more displaced it as a food crop stating that it could only be food because of their knowledge of the fact that *white* people convert it into food items (chocolates) some of which are resold to them in form of beverages²⁰ or else it is food because of what it (it's naira worth) can buy after it has been converted to money.

The reason why we chose cocoa plantation is because we get little gains from it. Cocoa is not what we are eating: for food, we plant yam, cocoa, cassava etc but we are not selling them. Cocoa is the only crop we are selling because we use the gains to maintain our children and keep up with other financial needs. The only reason we get deeply involved

²⁰ Some of the brands mentioned are redacted for ethical reasons.

chose cocoa farming is because of the money we make from it (IDI/Male/Farmer/2018).

It was observed that farmers across the three states where the study was conducted tend to hold the same view about the value of importance of cocoa: they hardly accept it as food, and when they do so, they do it with caution, making reference to how those buy it interpret it to mean. For instance, it was common to hear the farmers make comments such as ‘we do not eat cocoa per se; since it is the white men that give us that said we should plant it and they are the ones buying it from us, so they are the ones that know what they use it for’. A more careful probe revealed that even though cocoa farmers agreed that cocoa is food to some, they do not accept it as food themselves; they only plant cocoa to eke out a livelihood. These views are illustrated in table 5 below and figure 10 below.

Table 5: Demonstrative narratives of the meanings influencing cocoa production.

Interpretation	Evidence/Narration ²¹	Drivers	Direction/Consequence on production
Lifetime occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlike government job or other kinds of employment opportunities, cocoa farmers do not retire; farming continues to keep you active even into your old age. - Cocoa plantations are transferable from one generation to another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Traditional belief system of Yoruba -Personal or borrowed experience -Make-beliefs -Literacy/illiteracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (+) Farming is encouraged, thus leading to enhanced production. ✓ (+) When sustained, this will reduce the incidence of abandoned plantation or <i>cocoa bush</i>. ✓ (-) Succeeding generation of farmers may become discouraged if their parents are seen as indigents or not-so-successful. ✓ (-) Ageing of both farmers and farms can lead to downward trend in production.
Owo (Money)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Native</i> planters, and Yoruba people in general, see cocoa beans as a symbol of money. - Cocoa farming is more lucrative than other kinds of farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prevailing value system -Fetishization of money -Cash-crop or extractive economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (+) More farmers are induced to enter into cocoa production. ✓ (+) New entrants will lead to increase in the volume of cocoa produced. ✓ (-) The upward trend may be sustainable in the long run; inflation, devaluation of currency or fluctuation in the value of Naira may lead to

²¹ Unless otherwise indicated by citation, this proceeds from primary data gathered through IDIs, KIIs, PGDs and LHs in the course of the study.

			withdrawer of cocoa farmers that are fetishized by money.
Hard work/resilience (<i>iforiti</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cocoa production involves the use of direct labour capital among smallholder farmers. Most of the farming activities are done manually from nursery to harvesting and sun-drying of cocoa beans. - '<i>Ole o le se ogbin koko</i>' (cocoa farming is no for lazy folks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Believe system - Training - Economy/finance - Available technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (+) Healthy ethic for increased productivity ✓ (+) Can help to mitigate restiveness and the challenge of unemployment. ✓ (-) May not encourage productivity if not well rewarded ✓ (-) Doing the same thing over and over again can lead to monotony.
Non-food²²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - So far as cocoa bean is produced in crude (unprocessed) form by the farmers, they do not see it as food, at least for immediate consumption. - For most farmers, the consumption of cocoa is but a luxury that is not always affordable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culture (which defines what people refer to as food). - Economy (standard of living and cost of living) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (-) Competition between food cop and cash crop may be unfavourable for the production of cocoa. ✓ (-) Good practices in processing cocoa (e.g., proper fermentation and drying) may not be strictly adhered to. ✓ (-) Marginal local consumption

²² This represents the view of many a farmer who explained that they do not see cocoa as food buy a means to getting food – economy.

		- Lack of awareness of the health benefit of cocoa.	
Means of Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buyers (LBA and LBCs²³) take advantage of farmers ignorance of FTMP²⁴ to rip farmers of their potential gains. - Deregulation, liberalisation - Male dominance, a gender dimension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (Non)Availability of fairtrade - Policy/Politics - Traditional gender relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (-) Reduction both in quality and quantity of cocoa produced
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals, even those who are not keen about the production of cocoa, often venture into cocoa planting to secure land and money. Thus, people keep their land²⁵ and money by planting cocoa. - Deforestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land politics -Racketeering/corruption - Land fragmentation - Government policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (-) There would be false expectations in terms of the comparison between the total area of land planted and the total area of land to be harvested. ✓ (-) Those who are genuinely interested in cocoa farming can be discouraged since the cultivable land shrinks with intense land politics. ✓ (+) It can lead to expansion in cocoa production if well managed.

²³ Licensed Buying Companies

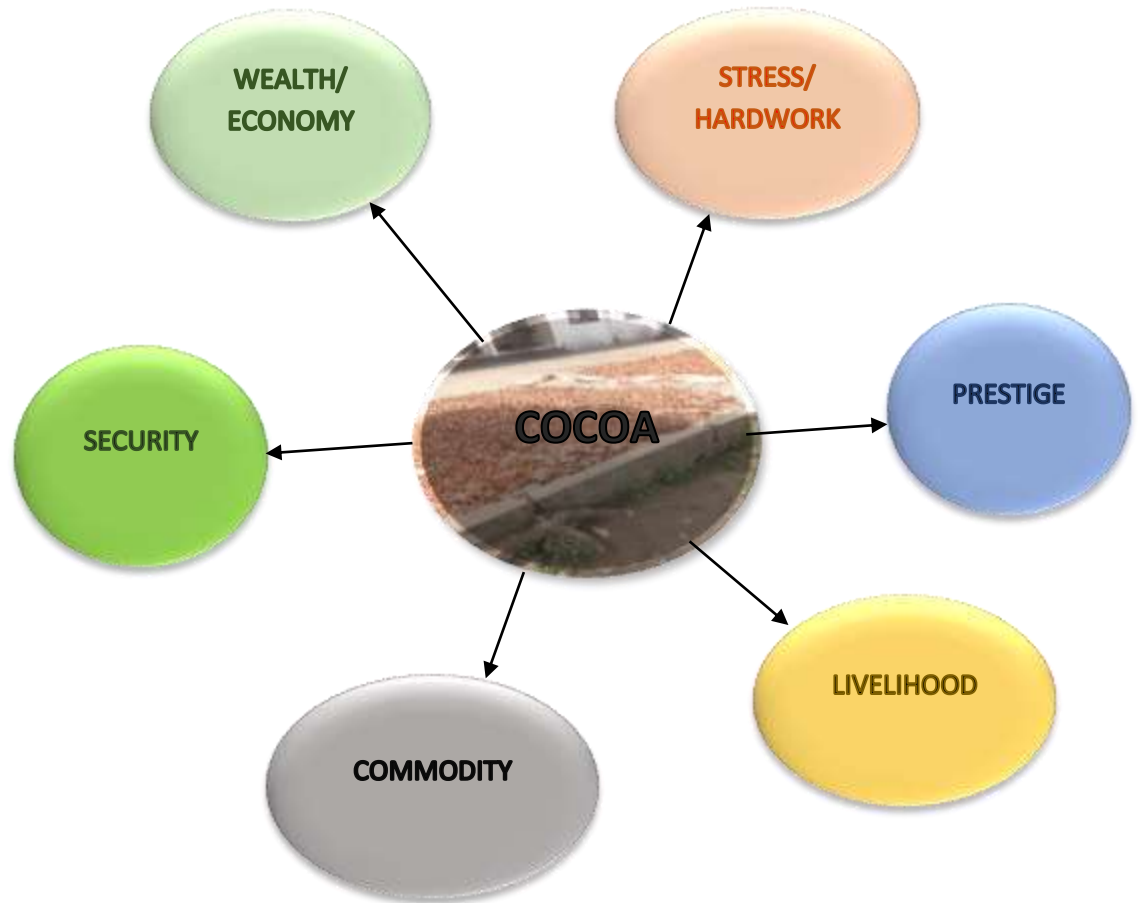
²⁴ Fairtrade Minimum Price

²⁵ Prior studies of Sara Berry (1975) and Saheed Aderinto (2013) are vocal about how land politics is critically linked to cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (-) Deforestation ✓ (-) Conflict over land ✓ (-) Poorly manage cocoa plantation and non-regeneration of trees. ✓ (-) Incidence of morbidity and mortality
Rurality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most cocoa farmers live in villages or rural spaces for reason of proximity to their cocoa farms. - Inadequacy or complete absence of social amenities is prevalent in most cocoa communities in southwestern Nigeria. - Higher cost of living than that of the urban (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007) - Urbanisation trend: city expansion versus contraction of rural space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural-urban dichotomy, subject to conceptual (mis)constructions. - Polity/policy/politics/governance - Drive towards urbanisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (-) Possible Depletion of farming population resulting from urbanisation and rural-urban migration. ✓ (-) Neglect/Abandonment of farms/plantations. ✓ (-) Low self-esteem of farmers ✓ (-) Low rate of replanting and regeneration of farms ✓ (-) General decline in the productivity of farmers. ✓ (-) Further shrinking of farming space.
Status symbol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cocoa farmers are classified as occupying higher social hierarchy compared to other farmers. - Cocoa farmers pride themselves as more economically stable than non-cocoa farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colonialism - Monetisation - Cash-crop/extractive economy - Social values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ (+) Having cocoa plantation synonymises having wealth, so more cocoa trees are planted. ✓ (+) Healthy competition for expansive production ✓ (+) Motivation to old and new planters

	<p>- Monuments such as Cocoa House and other investments procured from the proceeds from cocoa in the past confer importance significance on cocoa production.</p>		<p>✓ (-) Possible delusion in the value system that drives cocoa production.</p>
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Figure 10: Connotative Narrative of the Importance of Cocoa to Farmers



Exposition 1: Descriptive Narration of Farming Experience

Name: Igbalaiye

Gender: Male

Age: 74

Duration in Cocoa Production: 60 years

Igbalaiye has been a cocoa farmer for about 60 years. Even though the occupation was passed down to him by his father, he personally loved farming from his childhood. He loves farming because “it is an occupation you can engage in in till death; there is nothing like being sacked or retired from the occupation”. In telling his story and experiences as someone who has been in the occupation for a long time, Igbalaiye emphasises the rootedness of farming, of which cocoa cultivation is chief, in the cultural work ethics of Yoruba people. He strongly believes that “*Ise agbe ni ise ile wa*”, translated as farming is our traditional job. He added that:

There is no certificate you acquire as a professional in any field that can be used to work by any of your children. But if you have cocoa farm of plantation, you are already investing for your future and the future of your children. This is because cocoa trees can last for a very long period of time if there are well maintained.

As a smallholder farmer, Igbalaiye worked hard to establish his cocoa farms. Because he did not have money to pay hired labour, he relied of himself and his household for labour and other kinds of supports. He also sold his manhour at some point to feed himself and family and to be able to purchase some of the farm inputs he needed. Not until his cocoa grew up and he started making some money from the proceeds of his produce, it was very difficult for Igbalaiye to hire labour; “even the labourers knew those that could afford to pay for their wages”.

Igbalaiye’s kin was a major source of the support he enjoyed in becoming a successful farmer. His father had farmland that he inherited through their family lineage. This land was shared to Igbalaiye and his siblings. In situation when Igbalaiye desired to expand his farmland, he used the money he made from the sales of his cocoa beans to buy

more land. But he believes that his father gave him an opportunity to start out well by giving him the first piece of land with which he started his cocoa farming. More than that, the kin aided him in procuring the first set of farm inputs he got like seedlings and other items. Unlike then, “land for farming is scarce now and families are no longer integrated”, Igbalaiye quipped.

While growing up, Igbalaiye witnessed a lot of structural changes that took place in the geographical landscape of the then Western Nigeria. Narrating this evolution, Igbalaiye opines that it is probably because of modernity and exposure to urban life that people are not so much interested in farming. On the other hand, “if we look back to see the projects like Cocoa House building and other ones that our fathers built with the proceeds from cocoa, you will agree with me that cocoa farming contributed to the process of urbanisation and modernity in Yoruba cities. This trend, according to him has bred the emergence of social issues and decadent behavior in our society such that the youths are now looking for fast means of getting rich, corruption is on the increase, hard work is no more popular, and all these bring the country nearer to misery of poverty and other uncertainties.

Igbalaiye grew up seeing those who have now attained top positions in public institutions and private sectors attending public schools funded with proceeds from cocoa farming: “they all benefited from cocoa farming in one way or the other because all of them went to public schools funded mainly from the cocoa sector”. That both cocoa farming and cocoa farmers are not given proper attention in ‘modern Nigeria’ is one thing that grieves that heart of Kokyemi. He feels unlike before when farmers enjoyed different subsidies, regular supply of farm inputs like seedlings and chemical, access to bank credit facilities, and other forms of technical supports, “farmers have now been left alone to struggle by themselves”.

One change that Igbalaiye finds very significantly positive in recent time is the relative improvement in the competitiveness of cocoa prices. According to him, the prices of cocoa in 1920-40s were really poor because farmers were completely at the mercy of the private buyers. He said that the introduction of the cocoa board only made situation

better a little as farmers were still not rewarded adequately. When asked to compare that time to the current experience, he said things have really changed and that a tone of cocoa now sells at a relatively good price. But it is rather unfortunate that Igbalaiye was not unable to explain what he might interpret as fair pricing: he said:

I did not go to school; I do not know what cocoa is used for. But there is one thing I know: the asking price for cocoa is now more competitive and rewarding than it used to be. *Olorun ma se wa ni lebira lasan sa; o dabi enipe a kan lebira won sa* (we do not pray to be mere labourers to the buyers, but that what we apparently seem as). If we look at the turn of events very well, I will rather say that nothing has really improved even though there is freer market for the producers. You see, the amount of money we use to finance cocoa these days, compared to those days, is more. Cocoa hardly sank when I was growing up in the farm and our parent spent less money on chemical because there was good supply of rain and the atmosphere was more friendly. Even though we did not have the new (hybrid) breeds of cocoa that modern farmers plant now, the yield from our farm then was impressive. But now, we spend more on chemicals, labour and other things to keep our cocoa plantations alive; at the end of the day, the farmer has little or nothing to call surplus or even disposable income. You see, it is dicey to say it is better now.

4.5 Sustaining Cocoa Production

Sustainability is core to global discussion of development in contemporary sense, yet it is a multifaceted concept. From the perspective of United Nations, sustainability presupposes that there is inclusive, steady development that leaves *no one behind* (United Nations [UN], 2016). Whether or not some people are left behind (or will be left behind) or not, in the production of cocoa in Nigeria, lies somewhere in-between realities and expectations. These realities and expectations are both historic, current and futuristic.

On realities, from precolonial, colonial, to post-colonial epoch, cocoa has been produced by a people could only sell, but not consume nor dictate the price of their produce directly. They (the producers) depended on the agency of some gatekeepers (LBAs cocoa boards, and the global market) to obtain the price at which the product of their produce (cocoa beans) was to be sold. This situation aptly describes the reality ‘being left behind’ – they (planters) were left behind because they could not actively participate in the realities that shaped their existence as *native* producers of cocoa.

4.5.1 Sustainability Issues

A number of sustainability issues emerged during the study. They are examined below.

4.5.1.1 Farm Yields and Poverty

Most of the cocoa farmers are poor and poverty remains a big issue in Nigeria and is also rampant in the cocoa sector. Low rates of income for cocoa farmers are often due to low cocoa prices, small farm sizes, low yields per hectare and a lack of market access. The poverty resulting from these factors in turn lead to malnutrition due to food insecurity, illiteracy and young generation of farmers leaving the cocoa sector as it does not provide a living

Exposition 2: The ‘Then’ and ‘Now’ of Cocoa Farming

Name: Onikoko

Gender: Male

Age: 83

Occupation: Cocoa farming, trading and ogede (plantain merchant)

‘I went to school. I stopped at primary six. I moved into farming and God has been helping me since’ were the words quipped by Onikoko to introduce himself as the interview section began. Onikoko has almost 60 years of experience in cocoa cultivation, and later ventured into cocoa merchandise in which he has about 20 years of experience. Onikoko had a father who could not sponsor him and his two other brothers to further their education after their primary school. Hence, he was advised to enter into farming. ‘As at then, it was naturally symbolic of abject poverty for anyone to relocate from town to rural area’, Onikoko remarked. But he had no other option than to do the bidding of his father to return to the village to start farming in earnest as a good and obedient child. Generally cocoa farming in ‘those days’ required perseverance and determination because of the long period that cocoa breed cultivated then required – this breed was popularly known as ‘*baba nroju*’, meaning the father is patience. This does not imply that there were not no rich cocoa farmers during this period. Those who had large cocoa plantation were rich people, but Oniko’s father did not belong to this category. As recounted by him:

The planting of cocoa actually started in some areas of Ibadan and Lagos before it later began in Ondo state. Cocoa farmers were socially accorded more social prestige than other farmers cultivating food crops like cassava, cocoyam, maize or other crops. This was because cocoa had more economic value than other crops. The involvement of government in supporting, promoting and marketing cocoa beans also positively rub on the social value of cocoa production. But now, things have changed: government is no more actively involved in the production of cocoa while the market has become very open to buyers, especially foreign buyers.

In 1964/65, Onikoko made up his mind to own his own cocoa plantation. He was ready to face whatever it would take even though the market value of cocoa at that period

was not so encouraging. Something actually motivated him: he believed cocoa was a special kind of crop that any farmer cocoa relies on up to his old age. 'I really did not care or mind what cocoa was being used for; my concern was that I would be a successful producer of it (cocoa) because it guarantees steady income', Onikoko said. It is important to not the salient concern of Onikoko here – money. He was not really bothered about the traditional or domestic value of cocoa, all he wanted was the money that comes from the production of it. Explaining the variations in cocoa profitability and marketing, Onikoko applauded the liberation of cocoa industry from the monopoly of government-owned commodity market, commodity board. He said government only denied cocoa farmers of their legitimate income by quoting prices that were oft times at the detriment of cocoa farmers. He said cocoa's price has since the withdrawal of government monopoly been competitive. As a result of this, many people began to join cocoa farming. In his words:

Many people who did not have interest in cocoa farming began to join when they saw that cocoa farmers were becoming rich. That was what propelled me, too. We saw cocoa farmers building houses and buying new cars. Cocoa, I must say, does not have any serious traditional association with our culture as Yoruba people, the money we make from cocoa farming is what keeps us in the occupation.

Shedding light on the involvement of women in cocoa production, Onikoko explained that cocoa planting was predominantly dominated by men. He said women participated by in areas of home-keeping, giving emotional support to their husbands and also assisting in farming activities that are not very tedious like harvesting and fermentation of cocoa seeds. He added that some women were lucky to get some of the already established cocoa plantations allocated to them by their husband for their upkeep and for training their children. The need for labour was usually met by the availability of paid labourers. The labourers were paid on daily basis. Before his cocoa became mature, he made money through hunting. He would set traps in bushes and sell his catches to both pay his workers and feed his family.

Onikoko believes cocoa farmers can only be successful through the help of God. He explained that since no one can force rains to fall, no farmer can cause any increase in

his labour. He decried how farming has suddenly become more difficult due to shortage of rainfalls – before cacao can become sturdy and fruitful, there is need for adequate rainfall without which the tree will wither and die. While Onikoko believes that Government was very supportive to farmers in the past, he opines that cocoa farmers have been somewhat abandoned by government nowadays. And concerning associations or interest groups, Onikoko is not positively disposed. To him, those groups only exist to benefit few individuals who represent the group interest outside but appropriate the outcome of group efforts to themselves.

From experience, Onikoko observe that while the quantity of cocoa was not much compared to what is obtainable in recent time, the quality of cocoa was better. This, he explained, is because government regulated the quality produced through the produce examiners that made sure Nigerian cocoa was well graded. Notwithstanding, because of many factors such as employment of youths, improved cocoa varieties and liberation of cocoa sectors, there is drastic improvement the quantity of cocoa produced in the country. The unfortunate thing is the quality of cocoa produced is not as regulated as it used to be. Onikoko is now combining cocoa farming with cocoa trading. He combines cocoa trading with cocoa with cocoa farming to explore the benefits that accrue from the two; at least since he and many of the cocoa farmers believe cocoa buyers (local buyers) tend to make more money than the farmers who labour more. Even though Onikoko is now in his eighties, having several houses and cars, he is still very active in cocoa farming and merchandise. He sometimes does this by direct involvement – driving himself to and from farms, purchasing farm produces and closing sales – or through his paid workers. He has fully grown-up children are professionals in their (non-agriculture-related) careers living within and outside Nigeria whom he pays visit. However, Onikoko feels his old age is secured not only because he has trained children that are doing fine but also because his cocoa plantation is a lifetime *insurance policy*.

income. We found that low yields are both a cause and an outcome of poverty. Improving yields would improve the situation for cocoa farmers, but a lack of access to inputs such as loans and bad farming practices make the

future and prospect of cocoa plantation in Southwest Nigeria a drab. For example, most of the farmers complained of not having enough money to cater for their farms the way it is expected. Other farmers stated that the lands are vast but there is no money to pay labourers to work on the farms and as a result of the absence of money to engage labourers, maintaining the plantation seems difficult for them. Other complained of poor availability of cash to buy chemicals which they can spray on their farms after planting in order to improve their yields.

Findings have also shown that moribund farms are a common sight in southwestern Nigeria and that is probably because of the increasing cost and scarcity of labour. Labour is a critical issue in the south west; there is high dependent on migrant workers coming from places like the South-south (Benue, and the likes) but in the recent times, the increasing cost of maintaining this labour is on the high side. So, what we have now is a hectare farm that probably needs to be maintained or ten hectares that need to be maintained by four to five labour-workers. Sometimes it may be only one migrant labour that is available for hire to a farmer throughout the season. What this suggests about Southwest is that there are aged farmers who cannot do much of the work any longer on the field, they depend on migrant farmers. Meaning that if a farm is to be efficiently managed, there is a lot of capacity building on the part of farmers and to their benefit.

4.5.1.2 Organic Cocoa

There is a growing trend for the demand of organic cocoa globally, which is a niche market that is growing especially in some parts of Europe, to which Nigerian cocoa farmers can key into (Faturoti, Madukwe, Ogunedojutimi and Anyanwu, 2012). But we do not find farmers who are determined to grow cocoa in terms of organically partly because of technical knowhow resulting from absence of training and partly because of other kinds of irregularities in the sector. It was also found that there is apparent need to improve the way farmer process their cocoa to attract premium prices for their cocoa beans.

It was found that buyers who want cocoa produced without the use of any chemical are ready to pay higher price than those produced with chemical. For example, if non-organic cocoa is sold for 700 naira per kilogram, organic cocoa might sell between 800 and 1000 naira per kilogram. But one finds out that the marketers themselves who are buying organic cocoa, once they know that the other who are not doing organic cocoa would want to sell it at the same price with those who are, which discourages those who are not using fertilizers and take the risk which might mean that half of the farm may be spoilt – because if you are not using chemicals, there can be loss in terms of disease and insect infestation. You are just using cultural methods to maintain the farm and so there can be losses.

4.5.1.3 Market Structure and Regulation

The role of government in regulating cocoa market is one important thing alluded to by farmers as a key driver of the propensity for making cocoa planting more profitable and sustainable in Nigeria. It was found out that there are loopholes in the way government policy guarantees the marketability and flow of money in the downstream of the cocoa sector in the country. This is reflected in the excerpt below,

...he implementation of government plans (policy) are not well laid down and again, you find the situation of the Nigeria factor and political situation is such that everybody we have non-national outlook, people do things to grab for themselves, these are the things that spoil these policies. If you have a policy for input for farmers like GES (Growth Enhancement Scheme) and they are now giving the inputs to the farmers, you will find that some group of politicians or some group of other people will go and hijack those inputs and get them to the market. Things that are supposed to be selling for 50% off the price farmers will now go back to the market and start buying at 100%. This is not helping. You can see that the policies are supposed to work and help to improve production, but because of Nigeria factors, and

many other things, some of these policies somersault (KII/Oyo /Expert/Male /2018).

Another participant mooted that:

The best time we can say we had with cocoa pricing in Nigeria is when there was crisis in Cote 'devoir or when cocoa from Cote 'devoir is coming in late into the market because Cote 'devoir is stocking about over 4million tons of cocoa while the tons produced in Nigeria is still falling below 500,000 per annum. As such, if you have a country producing that much, it has a way of influencing cocoa price. As at last year cocoa was selling for about one million naira per ton and this year, cocoa is going for about 600,000 per ton, meaning that the prices fluctuate; those are the key forces responsible for the price of cocoa.

The license buying agents and merchants help the farmers get their produce sold because most of these farmers need money, but it is a lot of problem when they have to balance between indebtedness and raising money to solve their other financial challenges. For the farmers being indebted to the licensed buyers in the process of farming, they might not ferment well because they may just want to give it out that 'let me just give it out to this man and he will say I have settled my debt' but at the end of the day it gives a ripple effect because by the time the buyer takes it away, and this is being sold to the outer market where it has been exported to, this abnormal practice would be discovered and it becomes an issue of reputation for the exporting country. Hence the possibility of hearing such things like 'Nigerian cocoa is not good'. But when farmers have money to produce, they would be rest assured that any time they produce or ferment their crops, it would be sold for a good price (KII/Expert/Female/Oyo/2018).

There is a subtle trend of misrepresentation of Nigerian cocoa that has been revealed, and this is very implicative not only for statistical accuracy of calculating the country's gross domestic product (GDP) but also how Nigerian cocoa is perceived in the global market. This misrepresentation comes in form of putting cocoa beans produced in Nigeria in wrong bags and wrong branding. Because cocoa farmers are often under financial pressures

(for example the challenge of either settling their debts or providing for their needs as discussed in section 4.2 above), they tend to become unsuspecting of the incursive activities of some buyers of cocoa who, by some illicit means, buy and resell Nigerian cocoa from these farmers. As a result of this, the country tends to lose out in two ways – there is losing in the calculation of the total output of cocoa in the country and there is losing in the image of Nigeria in the global cocoa market.

Another aspect of the federal government is the produce inspection in the grading centres. As reported, “these grading centres do not operate as they use to, which could be linked to the problem of the collapse of the cocoa board because now you cannot actually say precisely that there are grades in cocoa, all we know is that people talk about good cocoa, bad cocoa” (KII/Male/Oyo/2018). This is considered as a bane of the industry, because some of the exporter and government workers complained of cases of rejection and different kinds of materials that have been reportedly found in already bagged cocoa beans because there is no regulatory organisation. One of the unfortunate consequences of this is that Nigerian cocoa is incorrectly packaged and sold out to the international market.

A close look at the stacked bags of cocoa stored in a warehouse in preparation for exportation in figure 11 shows that ‘Ghana Cocoa’ is imprinted on the bags, whereas the cocoa beans in the bags originated and would be exported from Nigeria. When the exporters were queried as to why the misrepresentation, the response given was that most of the good bags used for packaging cocoa in Nigeria come from Ghana. This misrepresentation was what of the experts interviewed alluded to when he said:

Some traders come from the Cameroon and buy our (Nigerian) cocoa and record that for Cameroon. Yes, they go right to the farms and buy from farmers since the farmers are ready to sell to anybody because they need money.

Somebody whose child is going to school now if he sees a buyer that brings say 100,000 naira, he will not hesitate to dispose of such produce. The farmers are not so concerned where the buyers have come from, so our cocoa goes to some of these countries. Even in the market you find a lot of cocoa bags already labelled 'Ghana cocoa'. Yes, most of the cocoa bags in town now are labelled Ghana cocoa. So, by the time it is taken to the world market or even Lagos itself, won't it be recorded as Ghana cocoa? That is the major problem we are facing (KII/Oyo/Expert/Female/2018).

Figure 11: Sampled improperly branded bag of Nigerian cocoa.



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

In the same vein, non-verifiable statistics constitute an issue. For instance, in 2005-2008 when the land available for cocoa and the land under use for cocoa in all the then 1014 producing states in Nigeria were estimated, it could be seen that the lands available were on the high side while production capability per hectare was on the low side. There is no gainsaying if there is a hectare of land producing about 300kg per hectare when the full potential is about 1 to 1.2 tonnage, such land is producing below capacity; there is no politics in that. But when we go internationally and say that we have cocoa with varying statistics and are not able to monitor what we have, there is a gap and people explore that gap for various reasons (KII/Expert/Osun/Male/2018). The fact remains that Nigeria has variations or discrepancy in cocoa statistics as regards to the amount of cocoa being exported. It is rather unfortunate that there is no way one can plan for the future of the industry when this kind of situation exists. This trend has been attributed by some people to the weak regulation of cocoa market by government, and that,

Since the cocoa board was dissolved and abolished, there was nothing much the farmers could do, they have to sort out themselves. In the past you know the government bought and dictated the price but now the market is open, so the farmers have to fend for themselves (KII/Oyo/Expert/Female/2018).

A similar challenge is the price of cocoa. We participants generally explained that apart from the farmers not having the capacity to dictate the price they wanted to sell their cocoa beans because it is an internationally regulated commodity, they were usually deceived by buyers who quote different prices to them. Sometime the buyers hide the price and there is nobody to challenge or regulate this irregularity. It is an important thing for farmers to be able to access credit so that they can produce at liberty and sell at liberty. They cannot sell at liberty when they are indebted. The campaign for banks to honour the use of social capital instead of the physical collateral for farmers to access needs intensification because most of these farmers do

not have the physical collateral but their social capital can help them to access loans.

Nonetheless, some cocoa farmers stated that they have benefited from the introduction of market liberalisation. Although the buyers engage in only non-price competition, their presence has resulted in prompter payments, increased access to credit or subsidized inputs, and greater assurances that farmers will not be cheated. In deciding on whom to sell, farmers appear to place considerable emphasis on which buyer offers prompt payments and with whom they have satisfactory social relations. Although the number of buyers has increased over the years, the farmers appear to remain loyal, but some of the farmers that produce large quantities shop around and sell to more than one buyer as a result of the availability of many buyers in the market who are competing effectively, aided by investments and built-up social capital. Nonetheless, cocoa farmers complained that they do not benefit uniformly from market liberalization: those that are socially connected tend to do better in their dealings with private buyers. In some communities, few benefits from services offered by private buyers, which are in any case declining in number over time. Sharecroppers, for example, are rarely offered services. The benefits from public sprays are also uneven: not all producers receive all the sprays they are entitled to. Although the number of buyers has increased, the farmers do not appear to take advantage of the competition among several buyers. The lack of farmer agency in the marketplace is a concern, and one wonders whether they would become any dynamic with further liberalization.

4.5.1.4 Rustic Rural Space

In addition, it was found that sustaining profitable production of cocoa in Nigeria would mean that the current position of the existing social amenities in cocoa producing areas would be improved. As earlier discussed, existing social amenities in virtually all the cocoa-producing communities are in a deplorable situation. For instance, power (electricity) is one critical bane of the industry. The roads in the rural areas are really bad to the extent that most of the costs that would have been to the benefits of the farmer amount losses in terms of carrying his materials from the field to the point of sale, this is depicted in figure 12 below. It was estimated that the cost of transportation is considered to be about 70% of the total cost let alone the agrochemical that they will use because cocoa for now is one crop that requires a lot of spraying of fungicide and fungicide control especially because of black pod disease. But there are also agronomic measures that can be put in place which can only be made possible through capacity building for the farmers (IDI/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018).

Figure 12: Sampled roads of some cocoa producing communities



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

It was not uncommon to hear the farmers call on the government to help them with the challenges that they are currently facing in sourcing for chemicals and price fixing by buyers in the open market. Many of the cocoa farmers stated that they need financial support in form of loans that they can be paying back bit-by-bit from the government to enable them to continue cocoa farming (buying of chemicals).

4.5.1.5 Climate Change

According to data from the study, it was recoded that a farmer invested 13,000 seedlings of cocoa, unfortunately because of the early stoppage of rain and late arrival of rain in July the farmer lost about 99% of his seedlings on the farm because he did not plan ahead to have an irrigation system in place. In other words, anyone who wants to venture into cocoa for field establishment needs to have an irrigation system in place, most especially it advised that such individual should have a borehole or a stream where he can easily pump water and that stream or water must run throughout the year so that if rain fails the irrigation can prevent high incidence of mortality. In the same vein, mortality rate has increased because temperature increase in Nigeria is between 1-3 degree Celsius, and that means if you establish your field seedlings anytime from August to October and you do not have an irrigation system in place, it is most likely that from November to May one will have 6 months of dry spell and with no irrigation in place one will experience mortality of between 70-80% for field establishment. There are techniques in place is that the farmer needs to be aware in respect of how to use cover crops for young seedlings, these techniques come through training which most of the farmers are not given to.

Even though there are deforestation, once these innovations and technology increase, there would be high production per unit area. What the

farmer is getting now is like 350/3 gram per hectare but with the new variety they will be getting 2.5 tons per hectare. If we now have fertilizer for specific areas, that researchers are working on which is expected to be available within the next one or two years, in a particular location, it can even double or triple production and can get the yield to almost five tons per hectare because fertilizer can increase yield two to three times (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

4.5.2 Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

There are sustainable practices that are also known as good agricultural practices for all aspect of cocoa production cycle that can further enhance profitable and sustainable production of cocoa, which, of course were found wanting among cocoa farmer investigated. There are laudable innovations like the equipment used for breaking pods are solar dryers which many of the smallholder farmers do not use because of financial incapability. There are several innovations for the production cycle of cocoa but sometimes the cost implications may only be conveniently carried out at only the community level and if the community is willing, they could accept those kinds of innovations. Also, the operational cost for cocoa is on the high side compared with other competitive crops.

Some are not fermenting up to the number of days required for fermentation – instead of 7 days for fermenting they use 2 days or not fermenting at all sadly because of the fact that some marketers buy cocoa that is poorly fermented from the farmer for the same price as those that are well fermented. As long as that disparity exists, it does not encourage those who are not processing to do what is right or needful and this somehow leads us to the area of regulatory bodies.

Results show that the removal of the marketing board can be seen as a double-edge sword. It was supposed to have helped the farmer to increase production because of the advantage of increased price of their income on

one side but it was also discovered that it is not helping them as such. They have relatively increase in price, better income, but at the same time other traders buying from them are not helping the matter because they lost quality because there is now rush from a lot of traders who want to uptake from a single farmer and they would say ‘Bring it like that, you do not need to ferment it for long: I don’t want another person to take it from me’. This is because if such buyer waits for the required 7 days for it to ferment another person can come in-between the 7 days and take purchase of such cocoa beans (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018). Such buyer might have done so with an impression that he would complete the required number of days for drying the cocoa but may never get to do so. This practice has a negative effect on the export of good cocoa because they end up exporting bad cocoa. As can be seen in figure 13 and figure 14, most of the farmers are still using their traditional methods both in fermenting and in drying cocoa.

Figure 13: Traditional cocoa fermenting process



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Figure 14: Cocoa drying process on cemented floor



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

However, results show that farmers know the good practices: they know how to spray; they know when to harvest; they know how to ferment their cocoa; and how to preserve their produce. In fact, it was gathered that “during the marketing board they normally followed the procedure because they knew that failure to adhere to prescribed method would mean that their product would be rejected (KII/Expert/Male/Male/2018). But now that the market has been liberated, ideal practices seem not to have been encouraged – such that it was gathered that “even if you have fresh cocoa, you have traders that will take it (IDI/Farmer/Male/Osun/2018)

4.5.3 Changing Gender Relations

Agricultural production in cocoa households is intricately linked to gender roles and relations. The role of gender in the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has been dynamic. This dynamism comes to for in the types of work both men and women do, and what level they are involved, in the production of cocoa. Oral historical data gathered show that women were not fully involved in major activities of cocoa production unless they helped their husbands or fathers in the hospitality aspect of farming – taking care of the home, preparing and taking food to their husbands in the farm, and giving them some emotional support – and harvesting of cocoa beans. It was not common for women to own and control their own cocoa plantation even though some did. Women who had cocoa farms often got them as a form of will or gift from their husbands, but the husband still exercise autonomous authority over the farming and the produce that comes therefrom.

Gender is a fluid global concept with significant influence on the trend of cocoa production among Yoruba people. Because cocoa production requires intense labour employment – from planting to harvesting, human direct labour is heavily relied on – gender dynamics do not only play out but also affect productivity and development in cocoa sector. In so far that Yoruba culture predominantly embraces patriarchy, the role of women has

often been debated and constantly seen as evolving. Agricultural production in cocoa households is intricately linked to gender roles and relations. While the traditional Yoruba woman is expected to play supportive role to her male that the culture of Yoruba is implicated in this change. While “in those days, it was only men that was doing this work but now, women have their own cocoa plantation, they have their own lands too. Men and women alike have cocoa plantation” in contemporary sense (Farmer/Female/Ondo/2018).

Women often work as family labour and provide close to half of cocoa production labour. Women are typically most heavily involved in cocoa harvest and post-harvest activities, including pod-breaking, bean fermentation, and transportation, as well as plot maintenance and weeding. Despite this, cocoa is considered a ‘man’s crop’– that is, a lucrative cash crop, which yields profits controlled and disbursed by the male household heads. Women are usually expected to work on the farm and also run the household as in doing the cleaning, cooking, taking care of the children and the gathering of firewood. It was found that the claim that work considered as soft jobs which do not require much exertion otherwise termed ‘women’s work’ was rather an illusion. It was found in the course of the interviews that women participated in all stages of cocoa production to varying degrees. However, the transport of cocoa beans to marketing and the negotiation of sales seem overly dominated by men, thereby limiting women farmers’ chances of benefiting economically from cocoa growing and preventing them from asserting their rights as cocoa farmers. Women in cocoa therefore often have a much heavier workload than men. Still, women are often not the owners of land, which is a precondition to join farmers organisation or to apply for a bank loan (land is used as collateral). The result of this is that women are often bypassed in decision making processes and are less informed about market developments and effective farm management compared to men.

Women were also found prominently involved in picking, packing and drying cocoa pods as these are considered less stressful compared to other kinds of activities of men in cocoa production. However, it was gathered that contrary to the pre-1980s gender relations of cocoa farming, the introduction regime of SAP (structural adjustment programme) in 1980s came with daunting impact on the relations of production of wealth in Nigeria. It changed the architecture of the relationship between men and women as the latter had to complement the former in providing for survival of the family. On the whole, the liberalisation agenda of SAP did not make survival easier by encouraging more work ethics but rather, it gave the women more to survival hardship and competitive economy that was originally dominated by men. As found out in the study, women still retain traditional effeminate roles of cooking for the men who farm, fetching water to spray the farms, carrying seedlings back home after harvest and so on, even though both males and females can perform these tasks (KII/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018).. When asked of the role of women in cocoa plantation, an interviewee stated, ‘women relieve their husband of the stress of returning home to start cooking after the hard day’s job of farming’ (IDI/Male/Osun/2018). Despite participating in all stage of cocoa production, however, there is significant underreporting of those figures due to a bias towards farmers being defined by land ownership, from which women are often excluded. A significantly larger number of women in South West Nigeria provide labour on cocoa farms; particularly farms owned by their husbands and families but are often not recognized for their roles in cocoa farming. An old cocoa farmer who at the moment is ‘hiring’ his farm agrees that women farmers are critical to the success of initiatives to increase quality and maintain production of cocoa in the in southwestern Nigeria. He opined that much of the irregularities that the issue ‘supposedly dwindling supply of cocoa of cannot be addressed without looking at women’s contribution to cocoa farming’ alongside aging cocoa farming population,

old cocoa trees and a lack of younger farmers interested in taking on the trade' (KII/Male/Oyo/2018). Nonetheless, the current trend shows that:

Both female and male are jointly involved in the production of cocoa even though male dominance is evident, perhaps because they have more stamina to do more laborious activities in cocoa farming than their female counterparts. It really makes little or no gender difference with the use of labourers (hiredlings) that can help women to do all they have to do in cocoa farming (IDI/Farmers/Female/Ondo/2018).

Even though there is some prevalent believe that:

...cocoa farming is usually more of male affairs here than female. Female are playing supportive role of helping with harvesting and feeding of farmers (FGD/Farmers/Ondo/2018).

4.5.4 The Youth Question

Results show that the youths are not actively involved in cocoa production and the reason is not farfetched: because everybody wants better living, even the old cocoa farmers there are not praying that their children should take up the kind of suffering they are going through now. Some of them live from hand to mouth. As revealed in the study, “the youth would be encouraged when labour-saving devices are introduced into cocoa farming, at least this will reduce a lot of drudgery. In the same vein, maybe if these youth have access to credits, access to labour saving-devices on the farms so that they do not have to bend down for so long (like 8 hours a day cutting grasses, if they can have money to buy chemicals to spray) that will reduce their time and I think the youth will be encouraged to join cocoa farming” (KII/Oyo/Expert/Female/2018). An older put this this way:

These days our young ones are not so interested in laborious farming activities, and this could also be traced to modernity. We (the parents) have paid the price by doing all that we can to secure their future, and one important way we did this was to be involved in cocoa farming which is a crop with future blessings. Our youths do not have so much patience to endure what it takes to nurture and raise cocoa (IDI/Ondo/Farmer/Vill.1/Female/2018).

Worse still, some of the older who seem not to have been fairly treated as farmer expressed their lack of willingness to encourage the younger folks to join the occupation. This can be clearly seen in the excerpt below.

I really cannot say what is going to be the exact consequence (*responding with ambivalence and reluctance*). All I know is that I inherited cocoa and I have made good effort to sustainably manage my cocoa plantation for the survival of my children. The truth be told, my children are not ready to be involved in cocoa production. As a result of their (her children’s) unwillingness to join in the production of cocoa, I have decided to give my farm to hired labourers (IDI/Farmer/Female/Ondo/2018).

Exposition 3: Sustainability through the inclusive youth participation

Name: Odo Olowo-Koko

Gender: Male

Age: 46

Duration in Cocoa Production: 25 years

Olowo-koko is a typical example of youth with strong interest and active involvement in cocoa production in SWN. He grew up in a humble home where they barely survived on three-course meal. He started off in life very early with the realisation that he needed to take the bull by its horn to break away from the shackles and cycle of poverty. According to him, *'bi a ba reni feyin ti, bi ole laari'* (it is easier to be seen by people as a lazy person when there is no support) – when one looks round and finds out that there is no one to lean on, for help, the next thing to do is to find for himself. With this mindset, Olowo-koko did not hesitate to embrace cocoa farming because he felt “cocoa farming would be better and would have future prospect such that whatever one wants to do in the future is possible without being ashamed as long as God blesses it.” Even though his parents were not originally cocoa farmers – his parent did farm food crops in a subsistent form – Olowo-koko saw a glimmer of brilliant future through cocoa farming.

Olowo-koko was the only child of his aged parents. He lost his father to death when he was but a little and left with his mother already stricken in age. His father left him a piece of farmland which he later developed into a cocoa plantation. Before he became a fulltime cocoa farmer, he had worked with several local firms as an unskilled labour, one of them was the Nigerian Postal Service in Lagos. He was both diligent, ascetic, and thrifty: he was working very hard, saving and ploughing the money he had in cocoa farming in their village. After working for a while, he resigned to fully face cocoa farming as his major preoccupation. While he was still in paid job, he was setting up his cocoa plantation simultaneously with the aid of a paid jobber. In addition to paying the caretaker of this setting plantation, he was also responsible for supplying farm inputs such as chemical and equipment to ease the smooth operations on the farm. He (Olowo-koko) was also committed to regular inspection of the farm – this he did by coming back home every weekend to monitor the progress of activities on the farm. He would come home (from Lagos every Friday) and return to Lagos on Monday. This he was able to do with his

meagre income (salary). Finally, he resigned from his paid job to face cocoa farming squarely.

On his arrival, after resignation from Lagos, Olowo-koko took over the full management from the paid jobber. But then he had to employ workers since the farm (cocoa plantation) was already flourishing well beyond what he could manage all alone. Some of the workers were placed on daily wages, some on annual pay scale. That is how he has been operating even ‘till today’.

A very important source of motivation to Olowo-koko is the positive disposition of the people of Abawa – a place where he was born and raised, and now one where he is reckoned with as Omo Daada (Illustrious son) – to cocoa farming. In this village, cocoa is the most popular and reputable occupation people engage in. There are a lot of migrant farmers who have come from other parts of Yoruba land, and even beyond, to ‘*mu oko*’ (acquire farmland) for cocoa farming: this is because Abawa has suitable soil for cocoa cultivation. Land allocation for farming or any other purpose in Abawa is done in such a way that disputes over land are reduced to the barest minimum: in fact, in Abawa, a piece of land cannot ‘be allocated to two people’.

Similarly, for Olowo-koko, farming comes easy as a habit: he loves farming from childhood. In his own words:

Farming is my hobby. I am very willing from my heart to do it. And I observed that as I do it, God gives me wisdom when I pray such that I put ideas that I’ve never learnt from anybody to work and when I do it, others imitate me. Even some of the methods for cocoa farming that are being taught in trainings I attend were those I had been using even before they were thought to us. So, when the government said we should adopt these methods I was surprised because I had been using them for long and no one taught me.

Because of the love that Olowo-koko has for cocoa farming, he found it very easy to transform passion into occupation – since he already loved farming, he went headlong to do all it took him to become an established cocoa producer in his village. However, as against the traditional method of planting, nursing and maintaining cocoa plantation, Olowo-koko spent a good amount of time in acquiring modern training on best practice. As he underwent training, he could recount that: “so many of the farmers here who do not

use the right methods always complain but those who were under the training experienced changes. There were a number of people who did not want to take the training initially but when they realized the benefits gained by those who underwent the training, they began to change”.

On the distinguishing factors between those who embrace cocoa production and those who do not, Olowo-koko believes that those who cultivate cocoa cannot be compared with those who do not. For instance, he says that while some great level of constancy and intimation exists between cocoa farmers and their cocoa – cocoa farmers are never too far away; they visit their cocoa farm constantly to both keep their cocoa trees alive and also secure the income that comes therefrom. On the contrary, other kinds of farming (including, cassava farming, plantain, etc.) do not require farmer-crop relationships as is the case of cocoa, at least as explained by Olowo-koko. According to him,

If you plant cassava on a farm, for two weeks you might not need to go there. It might be weekly or just some days as long as the land is weeded but cocoa plantation takes more than that. If you have a cocoa plantation, it is like you have a company. You cannot leave your company and decide to go there only when you desire or have the time. A cocoa plantation requires that one visits the farm regularly to monitor it. The care it requires is like the care a human being requires. This is because you can observe cocoa today and think it is fine and then in the next few days something is wrong with it. But if one is not a good observer, he will not detect on time. Any good cocoa farmer must be a good observer who would be able to differentiate leaves of a healthy plant from a non-healthy one. That way dying plants can be rescued on time. It might be impossible to rescue some, but you would know what to do about them.

Because of deep interaction, devotion, and immersion of Olowo-koko in cocoa production, he has consistently represented various groups and interests at the level of his community and beyond – serving as knowledge broker and a holder of traditional office title. In a nutshell, Olowo-koko represents an example of early riser that shows, by his self-made success, that cocoa production occupies an important space in the development of an individual, a career, finance, agribusiness, and collective good both at individual and communal levels.

4.5.5 Prospects

Evidence shows that there is hope for the future for cocoa in the South West. While some farmers claim that cocoa farming is the main occupation in their villages, some saw it as a means of livelihood, the main source of income, and so it is held in high esteem – “produce and sell it out to make money” (FGD/ Farmer/Female/Ondo/ 2018). Thus, cocoa is considered as a viable tree with money-spilling seed (beans). “It is the seed (bean) of cocoa that really gives the money that cocoa farmers look for in cocoa production, and not necessarily the cocoa (tree) itself” (IDI/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018). It was also revealed that some prospect can be seen in the way those who were once non-farmers, especially former civil servants, are retiring into cocoa plantations. One of the participants expressed high optimism in the cocoa sector by saying that:

Cocoa will still replace oil and it will come back to number one source of foreign earning because oil is coming down. There are alternatives to petroleum now, you see cars outside Nigeria now that do not use petrol but there is no substitute for cocoa yet (IDI/Buyer/Male/Osun/2018).

By this notion, it is believed that when there are many farmers, there will be increased productivity and in turn development as the proceeds from the different farmers of cocoa will be used for development of the land – and as the town expands, there will be need for new houses, hospitals, schools and other social amenities like water and electricity. Similarly, farmers felt there is hope in farming generally in Nigeria. An interviewer was quick to point to how Pa Awolowo and others made a lot of money from cocoa back then. They claimed that it is the over reliance on crude oil that make it looks as if there is no hope for agriculture in general in Nigeria. However, some of the farmers stated that if the federal and state government gives little more attention to agriculture in form of soft loans to farmers, there will be improvement even more than it used to be back then. There is a lot of prospect for cocoa production if the government can actually face what it takes to do it. Production funds and consumption finance are very important

for the farmers because they cannot work on empty stomach. They need something to smoothen their consumption, to smoothen their production expenses which, of course, will reduce shock and this will encourage them to produce more.

However, it must be noted that for the farmers to adopt more of the new varieties their ages must be considered: most of the farmers are old now, the average age of farmers producing cocoa in Nigeria is far, far, over 40. The mean age of cocoa farmers in Nigeria needs to come down because the old ones would not have energy as such as the youth and they are not too open to adopt innovations as the youth. By the time the youth take it up and something to encourage the youths comes up, giving them incentives, this will help to increase the production of cocoa and will improve productivity too (KII/Expert/Female/2018) A variety of explanations are provided as to why younger generations are unwilling to become cocoa farmers. The most important reason is that of the low income associated with the heavy work on cocoa farms. Younger generation often migrate to cities and towns in order to find work that provides better opportunities to improve one's livelihood like transportation. The availability of labour therefore decreases, which is mainly a problem for farmers who are too old to work the land themselves and rely on additional labour for their income. On how these challenges can be mitigated, the farmers stated that it is only God that can help them because they do not know what to do or how to go about the problem.

4.5.5.1 The Bottom-Top Approach

While farmers are expected to relate with agencies of government to grow their cocoa both for profit and for reason of meeting the international standards, the realities of inaccessibility and other constraints, such as finance and lack of awareness, make these farmers to rely on old practices,

which they deem more flexible and more accessible. For example, the practice of mixed cropping is still common among these farmers and not many of them are willing to join the trend of organic farming. Some state government are not ignorant of this nor inertial towards it. The establishment of Farmers Feed School in one way that one of the cocoa-producing states, Osun state, has attended to this situation. Cocoa farming in Osun has

...improved tremendously because, before, our farmers used to have between 200kg and 300kg per hectare but from 2007/2008 till this period we have embarked on massive extensional campaign, which is known as farmers' field school Osun State has about 66 million cocoa trees and about 10,000 cocoa farmers, while cocoa is cultivated on about 60,000 hectares of farmland. The cultivation of cocoa stated in Osun as far back as when it was introduced to the then western region of the country. When they pioneered cocoa plantations, Osun was of the major zones in Nigeria then. This Cocoa Farmer Field School (CFFS) was initially initiated by IITA under a programme called Sustainable Tree Crops Project (STCP). Later the idea was sold to and taken over by the Bill Gate Foundation, and from there the Cocoa Transformation Agenda (CTA) took it over, and eventually the state of Osun domesticated the idea. At the moment, it is the state that sponsors the programme, yet the initial purpose has not been deviated from (KII/Osun/Expert/2018).

Farmer field school was first introduced by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in the 1980s in Indonesia, and it was aimed at reducing both the incidence of invasion of pest and the use of pesticide on the farm (David, Agordorku, Dassanaga, Couloud, Kumi et. al, 2006). While the introduction of FFS in Nigeria is relatively recent, it is aimed at improving the livelihood of cocoa farmers through their productivity and earnings. As argued by the expert interviewed, "it was believed that if their productivity increased (per hectare), their earnings will increase and thereby translate to improved livelihood of cocoa farmers". CFFS consists of integrated crop and pest management which helps cocoa farmers to embrace an improved way of managing their farms independently. As a result of this development, the expert interviewed stated that production has currently increased to

around 500/600kg per hectare in the state. Within the scope of FFS, farmers are encouraged to use what they have in their environment to solve their farming challenges rather than go for chemicals that are increasing in cost on yearly basis. Cocoa producing communities are identified and organised into groups of 30s. If the group is more than 30, others will be regarded as observers. The group comes together on fortnight basis for training which takes like three hours. According to the trainers interviewed,

When we come together, we observe cocoa plantation and point out the problems or challenges in a cocoa plantation that has been chosen through popular selection process. After identifying the challenges, the trainers then look for practical steps to take to fix the problem. In the next meeting, we call it session, we implement the practical solutions. Cocoa plantation that is both old and close to the road is usually preferred so that: (i) we can easily identify the challenges associated with cocoa production; (ii) passers-by can see the results and impacts of FFS and take a cue from there; and (iii) others can go into their farms and implement the same procedures they have seen and learned from FFS. We even encourage them to invite others to benefit from the knowledge sharing process.

Since it is a practical approach – a discovery-learning process – that is affordable, farmers in the state tend to embrace this initiative. The state ministry of agriculture claims to have established close to 2000 FFS and that cocoa farmers in the state are very enthusiastic about the programme. FFS trainers try to ensure that individuals do what they have been taught without incurring any costs because they use materials available in their environment to solve their problem and at the same time boosting their productivity. For example, to control the black pod disease, which is the major disease of cocoa in Nigeria, farmers are taught that instead of buying chemicals, buying fungicides which they used to think was the only solution, they can overcome the disease by keeping cocoa environment free from weeds: the environment is very important in keeping cocoa from black pod disease. If the environment is not weedy, the activities of the fungi causing black pod disease will reduce drastically. They (farmers) are also told that they have to

remove the pathogen in the farm. By removing some of the mollified and infected pods and burying them, they reduce the incidence of disease to a very large extent. As such, those who have been using close to 100 sachets of fungicides per production season can now have it reduced drastically to maybe 10 or 5. Similarly, the drudgery of labour that farmers suffer when they spray fungicide is also reduced.

In the past, cocoa farmers were reached through top-down approach whereby research is first carried out without the knowledge of cocoa farmers and then then implementation is done. But CFFS appears as a reversal of this method as trainers first go to the farmers, and on their own they find out what is the challenges of the farmers are first (and that is why it is called discovery-learning process). For example, if the trainers wanted to know why black pod disease is spreading on the farm, they can take a single setup where they have cocoa pods that are affected by the disease and those that are not. They then observe the rate of the spread and observe the causes and then look for practical solutions. By so doing, it is the result that they communicate to researchers for them to carry out further study, and not the researchers communicating to the farmers without first carrying the farmers along.

This method is used to reach the *traditional people*, hence why it is a bottom-top approach. As attested to by the farmers interviewed in the state, farmers are first contacted to know their challenges, then CFFS would set up a discovery-learning procedure to diagnose the causes of the problem and how such problem can be solved using minimal resources available to farmers. First, in the group of farmers we sample, they choose six (6) men, six (6) women, six (6) youths, six (6) natives and six (6) sharecroppers. According to findings, they make this selection to encourage inclusion of all groups in the society and to encourage more participation in cocoa farming. CFFS enables farmers see that in the past their fathers used to produce at marginal rate (of about 300kg per hectare) and that it is possible to get about 1000kg per hectare, thus trying to influence their perception about cocoa

farming. It was also reported that CFFS has increasingly captured the attention of youths have into the production of cocoa in the state, and that cocoa production can be done in a more profitable way than their fathers had been doing it, and that it is far better than riding *okada* around (KII/Osun/Male/2018).

4.6. Discussion of Findings

In consonance with the set research questions in section 1.3 and the study objectives in section 1.4, this section seeks to extrapolate the analytical and theoretical significance of the findings above in tandem in the light of previous studies.

That the production of cocoa remains an integral part of development projectile in southwestern Nigeria is evident in the role it has played in shaping the contexts of social relations, farming and innovation of the area from late 1800s till date. As Yoruba people continued to embrace the new economy of cocoa, the structure of their society began to change in terms of what the people consider valuable and how the society is shaped by this reality (Berry, 1975). Accordingly, Aderinto (2013) and Muojama (2016), enunciated how the dynamics of cocoa production has impacted on land politics and income of farmers in southwestern Nigeria respectively. For instance, Olokada²⁶ says, ‘it is rare to find any family that does not have a background history of cocoa economy in Ondo state’. He, however included that the older generation possessed to ‘secure their future and their children’s future, the younger generation are not so much interested in this line of survival even though Ondo is still a cocoa-rich state’. The view of Olokada suggests that there is a dynamic trend in the production that does not only implicate intergenerational gap in wealth creation, transfer and sustenance but also the value system of the people of this geo-political enclave.

To the extent that cocoa production led to privatisation and commoditisation and exploitation of labour capital (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2007; Nnoli, 1989), it was impossible to maintain the sanctity

²⁶ Pseudonym. Olokada offered an oral history of how he grew up in Ondo town being conscious of the fact that ownership of a cocoa plantation is synonymous to indemnifying one’s future. He gave an example of his father who was in public service but had to purchase a cocoa plantation to prepare for his eventual retirement. But for this initiative, his father would ‘have become one of the retirees who live at the mercy of government to survive their post-retirement phase of life’.

of communality within which the pre-cocoa Yoruba families were situated. This is not a wee attempt at discrediting the proposition that the Yoruba people have a good sense of communalism that gave a soft-landing to the introduction of cocoa; but rather, it is to say that, rather than promoting this pre-cocoa value system, the production of cocoa slowly but certainly erodes this the prevailing values of the people. This was what Dupe Olatunbusun's (1975) work referred to.

As noted by Berry (1975:54), the initial scramble for and exploration of cultivable farmland in the 'Yoruba city-state' was primarily facilitated by the prevailing social structure and value system of the people then. This assertion is in tune with the position of Leach (2005) who sees an inseparable convergence between the existing social reality of farmers and their productivity.

Similarly, the main specie of cacao planted in the early experience of cocoa farming was the Amelonado variety, it existed alongside the Trinidad variety which was not very common (Okpeke 2005; Berry, 1975). The amelonado variety of cocoa has a long gestation period of about six to seven years, and this made it less encouraging for farmers who found it difficult to meet their survival need in gestation period²⁷. The effect of this challenge was soon to be minimized with the introduction of newly improved seedling, coupled with training to boost productivity in cocoa sector (KII/Male/2018). But then the challenge of poor funding of agriculture, among other challenges persisted. As noted by an expert on cocoa production in an interview session, it is *“unfortunate that the facility on ground ...to bring new improved seedlings which is on board to meet the needs of Nigerian cocoa farmers is inadequate. The concerned institutions are handicapped, which means that*

²⁷ The Amelando specie of cacao is satirically labelled '*baba nroju*', meaning 'father is persistent or resilient' (IDI/female/Ondo). The labelling was informed by the feeling of delay that cocoa farmers experience before it begins to fruit and be convertible for commercial purposes. Not so many are patient enough to go through this period of gestation.

the demand for the high improved cocoa seedlings which starts bearing fruits as early as two years cannot get to all farmers; there is a wide gap” (KII/Male/Oyo)

To cope with the required long gestation period of cocoa maturity, it was necessary for farmers to persevere and be resilient – “*eni ti o ba le wo koko ye ni o le wo omo ye*” (S/he is capable of successfully raising children that can successfully raise cocoa to fruition)²⁸. Those who joined cocoa farming before 1980 explained that it meant much patience, hard work and long perseverance to stay through farming cocoa simply because of long gestation of about seven years. Perhaps the most significant observable change with huge implication for cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria is the ‘emergence of oligopsonistic structure in cocoa purchasing’ (UNCTAD, 2008), in which few powerful multinational companies collude trading and processing of cocoa across geographical boundaries – they are directly involved both in purchasing and processing of cocoa beans.

It cannot be overstated that cocoa production is rooted in the expansion of colonial economy. Evidence shows that the setting of commercial production of cocoa was part of growing colonial influence on Nigeria. The colonialists succeeded in establishing a number of things to facilitate adequate supply of cocoa by their colonies, especially Gold Coast (now Ghana and Nigeria). Disintegration of the pre-cocoa family structure, privatisation of labour, land fragmentation, competitive trend between food crops and cash crops, rural-urban dichotomy, and scarcity of labour, among other things, were some of the fallouts of this development. As the culture of chocolate continued to be growing in the United Kingdom, United States of America, France and Germany in the first half of the 20th century, the colonial office in London continually held meetings to see to controlling

²⁸ This was quoted verbatim from one of the interview excerpts. Generally, cocoa farming was perceived as not only laborious but also requiring some level of dedication, commitment, and resilience.

various challenges that might be mitigating against adequate supply of cocoa. Among other remarkable steps taken by the colonialists include: (i) the establishment of Agege Model Farm in 1912; (ii) establishment of produce control boards across the colonies; (iii) survey of farms to control disease (iv) establishment of observation plots to check variations in the practice of *native* farmers and prescriptions by the ministry of agriculture; establishment of departmental plantations managed by the ministry of agriculture; and the establishment of training institutes like the West African Cocoa Research Institute established in 1939.

What is evident is that, even though there was apparent exploitation of *native* farmers, most of the mechanisms deployed by the colonialists, often leading to protests from farmers, aided the colonialists to dictate the trend of production such that the British colonialists were able to scale up their exports of raw cocoa in Nigeria from 3,616 tons in 1913 (NAI-Sheet No. 01904:6) to an estimated tonnage of 100,000 in 1950.

The process of farming and production of cocoa seems not to have changed significantly over time. Interviewers indicated that the same process followed by their fore parents is the same thing they are still doing of recent: ‘clearing the fields, packing sticks, creating heaps and after which cocoa is planted. They afterwards wait for it to germinate. Regular weeding of the plantation is continued to prevent incidence of morbidity and mortality of the plant. Nonetheless, there are certain insidious alterations in some areas like the quality of cocoa, land, market regulation and the disposition of individual farmer, government and other agencies to cocoa. As findings show, there is increasing demand for organic cocoa in the global market of cocoa, but the realities of survival challenges and climatic challenges confronting farmers make it difficult for farmers to adjust to this current shift. Also, arable land for cocoa farming is either depleted, fragmented or giving way to the surge of urbanity; thus, issues relating to farmland accessibility is not only enormous but also seemingly intractable for farmers, especially majority of

whom are smallholders. Others simply stated that the only difference is that in the olden days cocoa was planted within the diameter of two feet apart while of recent, it is has changed to ten feet, and as a result the productivity (yield) is better than what it used to be. Some respondents also stated that of recent, there exist improved seedlings which after planting can be continually harvested for up to 20 years unlike the previous ones that after planting, it can only be harvested in a particular season of the year – which they stated that is not profitable; thus, suggesting that the new breed is more profitable and better than the older one.

Furthermore, other farmers stated that previously they mix *kambadi* (gun powder) with the cocoa seeding prior to planting in order to ensure that *okete* (pouch rat), birds and *etu* (antelope) would not excavate the cocoa seedling and eat it up because of its sweet smell. Once this is done, if the *okete* touches the seedling with its mouth, it dies instantly. This process was used in safeguarding the cocoa seedling during plantation. However, this traditional means of planting cocoa seedlings seems to have been replaced by improved chemicals use in the preservation of the cocoa seedlings. Many of the farmers however indicated that with the change in time comes other more critical issues of ageing cocoa farmers who no longer have enough strength to continue cocoa farming. They also complained of the absence of those who will inherit their cocoa farms since many of their children are now civil servants, traders and involved in non-agricultural activities. They further stated that the only option left to them is to give their farms to ‘hirelings’ or sharecroppers in whom the landlords or employers could hardly repose much confidence as a result of their wanting to ‘eat more than the owner of the farm’.

To focus on the relational part of cocoa production is to dig out the humanity in the activities production of cocoa. In consonance with the view of Fairhead and Leach (2005), the challenges inherent in scaling up the production of cocoa in Nigeria has seemingly proved intractable not because

of a want or dearth of empirical studies, but because the humanity components of these studies are undermined, underreported or reported with a diminuendo.

Culture is both complex and central to the existence of a people. The complexity and centrality of culture to the existence of people concern their knowledge, interpretation, understanding or notion of certain practices, material and non-material objects, roles, values, social and political structures, ecology, beliefs and other things that define their existence. As posited by Oti and Ayeni (2013), Yoruba people are programmed, both consciously and unconsciously to go into relationships, eat or not eat certain food, and reflect of issues based on their cultural orientation. As documented in Akanle and Adejare (2015), Yoruba culture has traditional structures hierarchically established to regulate behaviour and foster collective development among its people. The import of these cultural layout in cocoa production in Nigeria was amply discussed in the work of Sara Berry (1975) on *The Concept of Innovation and the History of Cocoa Farming in Western Nigeria* where she linked the introduction of cocoa to the old western Nigeria to the ingenuity of Yoruba people and cultural creativity.

The social shaping of cocoa farming, even though not often recognised, is very important in the analysis of the past, past, and projected status of cocoa production in Nigeria. Fairhead and Leach (2015) pointed this out the centrality of ‘the social in African farming’ – reflecting on the social conditions that constantly shaping farming activities in Africa, rather than dissociating farming (itself) from the farmers and their lived social experiences. With this in view, the trend of cocoa production shows that there are certain value system and normative pattern of interactions that constantly shape the behaviour of farmers of cocoa, thus implicating the level of their productivity. As opined by Thomas and Thomas (1928) and cited by Ritzer (2014:200), “if men define situation as real, they are real in their consequences”. Thus, the social-psychological state of existence of man

often transcends political and other forms of material component of life. As such, this study examines how prevailing value system in which cocoa farmers operate may or may not influence productivity within the cocoa sector.

Cocoa in Yorubaland is symbolic in many ways. This symbolism relates to the role it plays in historical trajectory of the people. What makes cocoa important is neither because it is locally consumed as food nor because it is easier to cultivate compared to other crops but because of its value within the vast trade of global economy (Muojama, 2016). As noted by Falola and Heaton (2008), even though there are relatively wide spectrums of varieties of agricultural products in southwestern Nigeria, cocoa occupies the topmost position in the ranking of farm produces among the Yoruba people partly because colonial cash crop economy in this part of the country was based on cocoa production. Even though cocoa production did not end with the transition of Nigeria into a politically independent nation, it is important to state that cocoa sector of the country has constantly been unstable. The traditional value system, politics of resource allocation, modernity, climate change, consumer taste, urbanisation and global commodity market economy change and thus directly or indirectly impacting on how farmers of cocoa in this once cocoa-rich region define their experiences.

As explained in the oral historical account given by an 83-year-old man, even though cocoa was a significant crop in the history of industrial evolution in Nigeria, not everyone joined freely, some did so because it was perhaps the opportunity they had. According to him,

As a child, I was enrolled in school but could not go beyond primary six because of lack of financial support to further my education. I had started going to farm even while in school, so farming was already a way of life to me. Our father had a small shop where he sold petty household items. With time the shop closed up and our father returned to the village. On his return to the village, he advised that I also return with him since he could not fend for me and my two other brothers any longer after primary school. In reality,

farming was for the poor people in the society, and the farming of cocoa was not an easy thing to do. Cocoa farming requires a lot of patience, handwork and commitment. The specie of (local) cocoa we were planting then was known as *baba ma roju*, whose gestation period was not less than seven (7) good years. So, you can imagine the suffering, the hunger, and the endurance that came with cocoa farming them (LH/Ondo/Farmer/Male/2018)

Findings have shown that the boom in cocoa sectors influenced policy framework, especially at the level of produce regulation; it led to changes in the social structure and lifestyles, especially those of farmers; issues with land acquisition and use, which of is an important resource for establishing a cocoa plantation; and it gradually passed through a phase of recession during the surge in the oil surge later picked up as an alternative for economic diversification in Nigeria²⁹. While Cocoa is seen as the number one crop that is farmed in the South Western part of Nigeria and remains the mainstay of the Yoruba man till date. This is because cocoa remain the main source of income to most families in the South West and it is the proceeds or income from cocoa that is used in solving almost all family wants and needs. Most cocoa farmers in South West Nigeria indicated that they inherited their farmlands from their parents whom they indicated also inherited it from their fore parents. Some of the farmers stated that they got their lands through the process of lease, while other got theirs through hire-purchase.

Those that are in the areas of cocoa production value cocoa highly because if you have a cocoa farm that is doing fine, you will be regarded as one of the high-income earners in the economy. It is just like a Hausa man who has a cow: the number of the herds of the cow he has would determine how he would be regarded as being wealthy or not. So then, if you have a good number of cocoa farms (plantations), you are expected to have a lot of money, in fact as at that time, cocoa farmers used to have many wives; they

²⁹ It is believed that cocoa was the in-thing prior to the boom in the oil sector. For example, one of the key informants said, 'The event of the oil boom of the 1970s occasion the downward spiralling of cocoa production in the then Southern region' (KII/Oyo/Male/2018)

had good buildings; and they had good cars. Even up till now they still have money: now, a ton of cocoa sells for about 700,000 naira that is 700naira/k. That is just one ton, if your cocoa farm is a good one, you can get it in just one hectare but if it is not doing fine, you can still get it in two to three hectares of farm, now not to talk of people who have ten hectares and above; that is talking about millions they will be generating (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

This valuation process is not rigid as some factors constantly influence the next line of actions of these farmers. For example, changing government policy, market trend, climate and edaphic factors, among others, can serve as a catalyst for reconsideration of the value of a crop at any particular point in time. For instance, most farmers interviewed about how the attention of Nigerian government has shifted from farming to other sectors, consequently leading to the disappearance of the subsidy they had once enjoyed on the chemicals and other inputs needed for cocoa production. In a similar manner, farmers observed that the trend of market for cocoa is “not reliably stable because of the fact the price of cocoa is not controlled locally” (FGD/Farmers/Oyo/2018); often leading to frustration of their efforts and expectation. Findings have shown that while the cocoa farmers complained of being short-changed during the regime of general regulation of (cocoa) commodity market³⁰, the reaction to the liberalised regimes (before the introduction of the cocoa board and after its dissolution, especially during SAP) ushered the breeding of another cultural traits that characteristically depress the cocoa sector (Olutayo and Omobowale, 2006).

So, because of that, people abandoned cocoa to plant oil palms and other crops, even cassava. It was that neglect that could be blamed then, but now because of the removal of the cocoa marketing board people can now sell at the

³⁰ As mooted by an old cocoa farmer in a group interview, “unlike what we used to experience in the part when government was dictating the price of cocoa, farmers now have the liberty of selling t

market price; it is a free market price now as long as it is within the international market price, so people are now getting up to 80% of the international price (KII/Expert/Male/2018)

Cocoa plantations are usually located in remote and rural areas and life in the rural areas where majority of cocoa farmers, with the exception of ‘political’ and ‘absentee’ farmers³¹, do not have access to life-enhancing amenities. Most times, people living in these areas are transported either on foot or through motorcycle because the terrains of the roads are bad for cars and other kinds of vehicles. Apart from the hardship of navigating this rough road to transport farm produce (cocoa) to the market, the cost of cocoa is often impacted negatively. More so, bad road adds to fatigue and resentment associated with rural-living typical of cocoa production.

Apart from the challenge of poor access roads to cocoa producing communities, it was also observed that most of these communities lack adequate supply of electricity – some of these communities are not even connected to any source of electricity while some had been completely cut off for almost two decades³² –, good water, healthcare facilities, and education, among other. It was a commonplace for (cocoa) farmers to see themselves as wretched, abandoned, and ill-treated folks; not because they do not value what they do but because of perceived neglect of farmers and farming activities by government.

How the situation above affects the value of cocoa is that farmers’ psychic disposition to productivity in communities producing cocoa is negatively battered – they feel cheated by traders, who they usually accuse

³¹ Political and absentee farmers are not real time committed farmers. As discovered in the course of interactions with cocoa farmers in the village, individuals in this category enter into cocoa farming because either they embezzled money in political office and in search of what to do with such money – hence seeing cocoa and a business where such money can be tied down. It could also be as a result of transfer of inheritance. Most inherited plantations are not properly taken care of due to lack of interest of the part of the heir(s) who inherited such properties.

³² This claim was derived from random query of participants in the cocoa producing communities.

of quoting false market prices; they feel cut off from the tide of development that take place outside the countries where they live; they also complain of high cost of farm input and climatic and edaphic challenges.

In most cases, it takes deforestation – clearing out forest – to establish cocoa plantations. But sadly, “some farmers are doing it wrongly; in recent times, some farmers do what is called “zero canopy cover of trees” which is not the best. For a forest crop like cocoa, it is advised that for every hectare of land, there should be about 7 to 15 trees left untouched, but because of the pressure of having so many trees of cocoa established on the farm, as to fulfilling the population of 1000+ hectare, you find out that farmers often engage in total clearing of the big trees that can help preserve the ecosystem” (KII/Male/Oyo/2018). Although it is technically wrong to clear all the environment-supporting trees in the forest to cultivate cocoa (Adefila, 2013), farmers tend to explain the technicality away giving their own survival-related reasons. Some of them use the trees felled down as fuel to cook, some sell them to generate some income to support their families, and some do so to provide loggings needed for their homes (KII/Male/Osun/2018). Worse still, some farmers are ignorant and yet fail to seek for appropriate technology and advice at whatever level one is there are still precautions that can be taken by each group to ensure that agriculture is done under the best practices.

Furthermore, there are certain practices on land acquisition or ownership, management and redistribution among Yoruba kinship network that influence the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria. For example, during the early development of cocoa farming among the Yoruba people, the acquisition of land was not so difficult as individuals were given land to farm based on their ability (Berry, 1974). Even though land was, until commoditisation of it, a collective resource transferred to those who needed them for cocoa production in most old western Nigeria (Walker, 2000), traditional chiefs played important roles in the allocation of land to individuals. In addition to this, the family institution plays significant roles

in land acquisition in line with patriarchal hierarchical structure Yoruba family (Akanle and Adejare, 2015).

Modernity is a multi-layered concept within the broad context of cocoa production. Based on variegated interpretations, modernity could mean change in the method or way of producing cocoa – adopting new planting techniques, tools and improved variety (as is the case with the activities of most of the agricultural agencies). But it could also mean expansive demarcation between rurality and urbanity. In this case, modernity refers to a structural shift from the way living in the rural space is perceived and emerging realities of physical development. In this wise, physical development like modern houses, social amenities like tarred roads, good water, hospitals and other social amenities may add to what individuals term modernity. For instance, it was not uncommon during the study to see some of the participants pointing to some of these physical features as proofs of lining up with the trends in modernity: “as you can see, this place can no longer be referred to as a village; there are fine new buildings here and there. It is cocoa that is doing it, because this place was a village before, it was when cocoa came that it became a town” (IDI/Farmer/Female/Osun/2018).

The work of Solaja and Adetola (2017) on sustainability of green practices brings to fore the import of a framework of generational development that marries ecology, sustainability and development. As findings have shown, modernity tends to support the withdrawal of young population from cocoa farming, leaving older generations and the aging plantations behind. This reality thrives because of not only expansion of the urban space (Akpan, 201), but because these younger generations are finding better survival chances outside the rural space.

“Cocoa d’owo, mob’oko mi rero, iseti mob a se, iseti mob a se, l’omomi a jogun” – meaning cocoa yields money, I bought a machine for my husband, it is the work I do; it is the work I do that my child would inherit. This song is deep in meaning. It tells of the passion, love, energy, and

promise with wish farmers cultivate cocoa to leave an inheritance their posterity; this is because cocoa yield economic gain. These farmers further claimed that when they sing happy songs like that, culture is related to. Similarly, other farmers tried attributing cocoa plantation to culture by arguing that many of the Yoruba ceremonies and festivals are conducted during periods of harvesting of cocoa. The major interpretative meaning attached to cocoa production is its economic value. For example, cocoa production was seen as their best choice of income; people are pushed into cocoa production because of the absence of alternatives. Also, the older youngsters say that a lack of alternatives is the reason for being involved in cocoa production “we are engaged in the cocoa farming because we have no other alternatives in life” (IDI, male, 35 years).

Interpreting Sara Berry (1974), Kofi (1977:337) stated that “we can build our traditional institutions to aid the process of development”. Development here entails both economic and non-economic aspects of life of the people, which are often interpretable in cultural terms. Thus, in a broad sense of interpretation, it is important to ask whether or not the traditional values and institutions of the people of southwestern Nigeria have impacted or are being impacted by changes of cocoa production in the area. Also, some farmers stated that the proceeds from cocoa are also used in training children in school and meeting other family wants and needs. Cocoa farming is also a source of affluence since cocoa farmers are treated with more respect than other farmers. More so, the people in South West Nigeria are into the cultivation of other food crops like yams and cassava for family consumption. When the issue of importance of cocoa kept reoccurring, some of the respondents stated that:

the importance of cocoa for us is for use to plant it, harvest it and keep for potential buyers to come and buy from us and take to factories around. Cocoa industry in Ede do buy from us and also foreigners buy from our bosses (FGD/Farmers/Osun/2018)

This position connects to the fact that many farmers do not know the use of cocoa as stated by some farmers who said it was those bought the cocoa that knew its importance. Some of the farmers stated that they heard that it is use in making Beverages while others felt it might possibly be a waste product after the manufacturing of cocoa butter. Other farmers stated that of all the farm produces that farmers cultivate in southwest Nigeria; it is only cocoa that readily has available market unlike others like cassava and yam. Thus, the fear of want of buyers is already allayed.

There are both formal and informal social structures in cocoa production. The chain of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria is woven such that there are farmers on one side and the facilitators of the industry on the other hand. The former is usually clustered in the downstream of cocoa sector where they are mostly functional as peasant producers. While this groups are core to the survival of cocoa sectors (and chocolate industry), their contribution is largely extractive and requires value-addition to be rewarded appropriately. Because cocoa is not planted by farmers for its own sake, uptakers and the processors are the crucial link through which cocoa beans are bought and sold from the farmers. The activities of government and government agencies are, thus, very concomitant in ensuring that farmers are protected from possible extortion and exploitation.

From all indications, it apparent from the finding that cocoa production has not been properly harnessed as a potential source of economic diversification for Nigeria. Even though there have been studies that depict cocoa as the leading source of foreign earning for Nigeria (PWC, 2018), the current state of affairs in rural space where the cocoa is produced reflect existing neglect for the farming population which in turns leads to demotivation, apathy and reduced productivity on the part of the farmers. This view was reiterated by a participant thus:

We even have graduates as children among these okada operators. Even those that are in the farm do not do it well

like we used to in those days because they are not motivated; that is why we employ labourers because most of our children are now into okada-riding (IDI/Male/Ondo/2018)

Views about the regulation of cocoa productions are generally stilted and polarised. As unravelled in the study, some people are of the notion that regimes of regulation would have helped in the development of the sector but was not well managed. It is believed that until the surge of production in the oil sector, government had been fully involved in the planning, planting, replanting and the future planning of cocoa under the marketing board. They went to a lot of places, a lot of locations for the productions and they planned for the improvement, they supplied inputs, chemicals, and watched over the farmers as well as over the produce – it was well planned. Because of this development, people were encouraged to actively involved in cocoa production; but at the same time, government also used part of the money in making developmental programmes in the country like education, industries and others from the proceeds from agriculture because they paid the farmers certain amounts lower than the international price and then the rest was used by the government (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

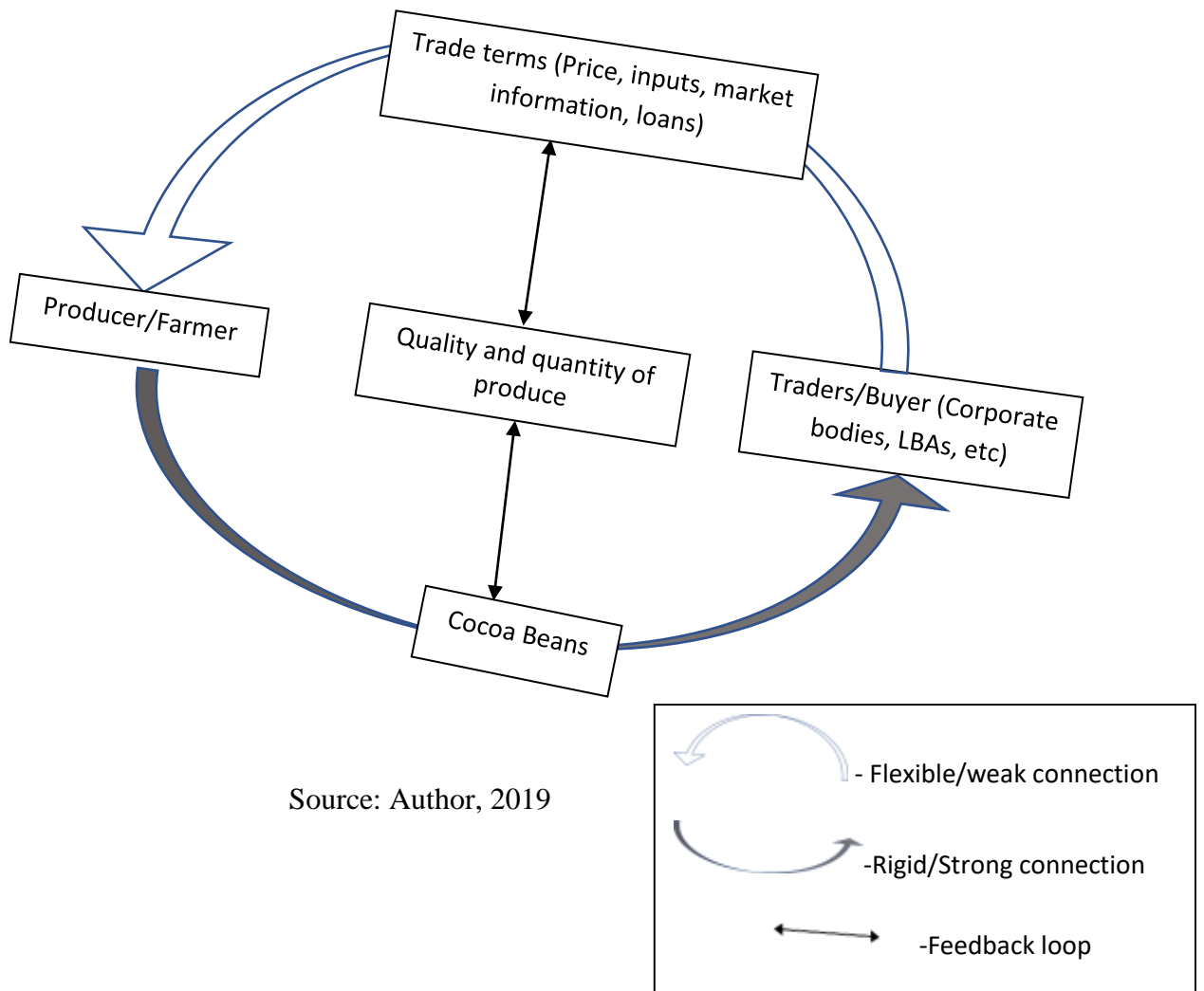
The pricing of cocoa mostly exists in a context shrouded in secrecy for most traditional cocoa farmers. Farmgate buyers of cocoa usually quote different prices to buyers. In line with the responses from most of the respondents, there are a number of factors that make the masking, or as farmers would say: *under-pricing*, of cocoa possible. Chief among these factors is inaccessibility of farmers to current market information about cocoa. A middle age cocoa farmer captured the dilemma about pricing this way:

Unlike most of my fellow cocoa farmers, I use an android phone and usually go online to check the current price of cocoa on the internet. That way, I have an opportunity to negotiate with buyers when they come. This is not the situation with most of the other farmers here. They are always at the mercy of whatever price is offered by the local buyers. These [local] buyers claim that the price they offer

is given to them by *oyinbo* and as such, the farmers tend to believe whatever they are told (FDG/Farmers/Oyo/2018)

Significantly, figure 15 below represents the cyclical relational flow between the producer and buyer of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria. In the cycle, the big opaque circular arrow links the producer or farmer from the trader or buyer in such a way that the terms of trade are one-sidedly passed from the buyer to the producer while the farmer on the other hand supply her produce (cocoa beans) to the buyers or traders. To the extent that the terms given by the buyer may not always be favourable to the seller or the farmer, the quality and quantity of the produce hands between the terms of trade offered and the actual produce supplied in form of cocoa beans, as the two-edged line arrows show in the illustrated pattern. With this pattern perpetuated overtime, whether during regulated or deregulated regimes, even though it appears that the farmers are at the receiving end, it can be seen that they are capable of destroying the cycle by failing to supply cocoa beans in good quality volume. Again, while this patterned relationship has remained for a long time, it must be constantly interrogated to not only uncover the externalities of this nexus but also to sustain the production of cocoa with implications for sustainable, comprehensive, and inclusive development at the level of the state and that of the individual actors in the cocoa sector.

Figure 15: Endogenous relational cycle of cocoa exchange



Source: Author, 2019

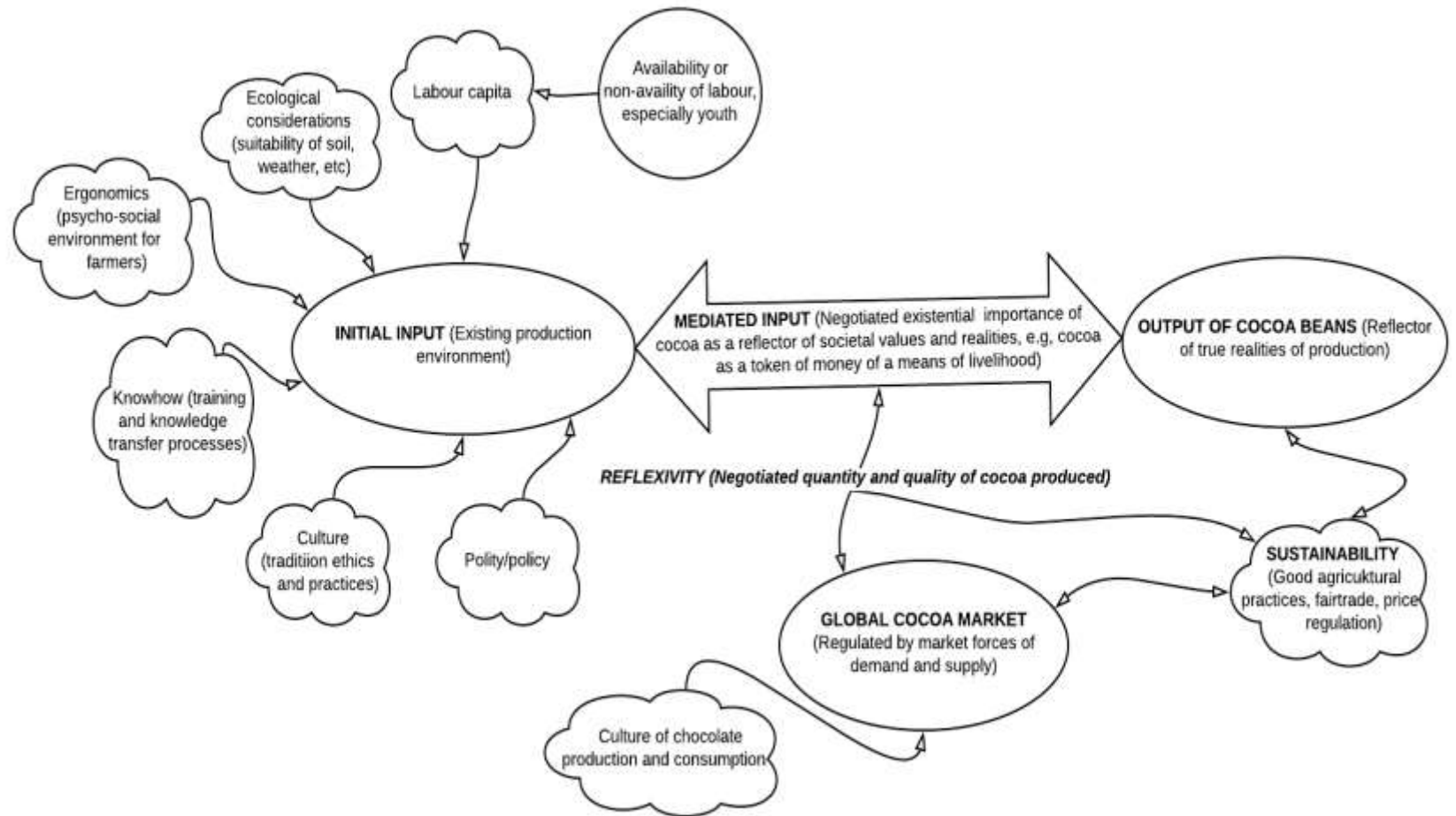
Now, apart from that, there was a neglect in the cocoa industry, and again, there were lots of other issues in terms of Land Use Decree: The Land Use was not well organised in such a way that would encourage people to have large farms and have economy of scale. Parents who had lands and planted cocoa with their new generation children had to divide, hence fragmentation and absenteeism. Even though this situation is not the same with the picture painted by Aderinto (2013) stating that conflict over land in Southwestern Nigeria often ensued because of the economic value of cocoa planted on land, it must be added that both land and cocoa have attracted non-composite values such that while land becomes scarcer, cocoa is no longer the determinant and the reverse is also true.

In order to achieve sustainable cocoa production system, all the stakeholders must come together and agree to resuscitate the cocoa board. The cocoa marketing board should actually be a private sector initiative as it is being done in London because it is London Cocoa Association that is controlling the board over there and the practice of the protection of the necessary things that they need to do: the protection of farmers, the protection of traders, the kind of quality that they require. The board organizes it and controls it, and when they know that the level of the demand is low, they know how to come to the producers and give them support. Now in this country, if there are organized stakeholders, such that all hands are on deck, everybody comes into the picture. If the farmers are having problems, the private sector, comes in to help them and then they can also help the research institute who will also use their own input to help the farmers. This is the way we can have a sustainable ecosystem. We would do the technology, the industry will support us, and the farmers will produce and then sell to the industry. It is a circle, helping me to help you (KII/Expert/Male/Oyo/2018)

In figure 16, the analytical framework of cocoa sustainability is pictured. It shows the interconnectedness of various stages and various enablers of cocoa production. Whereas attention is usually given to the

‘initial input’ component of the processes, with emphases on edaphic and ecological factors like the soil type and atmospheric conditions (Ayanlaja, 1983; Fagbami and Folarin, 2009), there are salient issues of sustainability hanging somewhere in-between negotiated realities of consumption and production – within the larger concern for food sustainability lies the mediated input of reflexive realities which, according to Gilbert (2008), are rarely captured in global value chain analysis because local realities are not often reflected.

Figure 16: Analytical framework of cocoa sustainability



Source: Author, 2019

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter wraps up the thesis. It focuses on essential findings drawn from the objectives set in chapter one. On the basis of these findings, a conclusion to the study was drawn and valid recommendations made.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study intended to investigate the social relations of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria. With this intention in mind, the background history of cocoa production was explored. As such, the history of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria revealed that the production of cocoa was both alien and coincidental to the phase of industrial development which characterised late 1800s and early 1900s. It was found that Farmers undergo a lot of rigorous activities before cocoa beans are produced to be sold into the market, which later transform into other refined end-products especially chocolate. Be that as it may, the cocoa beans that are produced as the end product of these activities would mean nothing if the proceed that comes from its sales is not rewarding enough to these farmers, since they do not see cocoa as a food crop that they produce to consume.

To the farmers, without the process of value addition: turning the product into money, since that is what cocoa means to most of the farmers interviewed. This process entails going through the agency of buyers and government as the immediate actors with which the farmers relate. In doing so, meanings are constantly constructed between and among these social actors, but the meaning constructed by farmers are more consequential for sustaining the production of cocoa. This, as results have shown, is because the actions and/or inactions of these farmers go a long way in influencing the traditional values that drive cocoa production. Many of them seem to be disinterested in influencing younger generation from getting involved in farming cocoa.

In the same vein, young people were found not to be paying attention to cocoa production. Many farmers connected this to the stress involved in farm work particularly if it was manually done. As a result of the poverty conundrum, many of the young people were found to mostly engage in transportation business which brings quicker cash than farming in order to cater for family's immediate needs. The interviewed farmers and other stakeholders in the cocoa production chain in South West Nigeria hold financial issues as the biggest constraint in the cocoa sector. In addition to the problems mentioned above, the participants also highlighted other issues. One of the issues is the lack of financial investments which is caused by poor financial management of farms. Farmers often receive the returns from their farms in a short period and spend it instead of saving it to invest back in the farm later.

If research is not being supported as it should, the technology for improvement would be absent and then the farmers would be doing business as usual. They will be farming with hoes and cutlasses and the kind of work that can be done manually will be limited compared to what machine can do. The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who also have impacts from different areas have knowledge because of their initiatives. They can also come in to assist the farmers in improving their livelihood. Even the NGOs

can set up schools within the locality and set up a lot of infrastructures that are not there and help the farmers and encourage the youth who are not staying in the farm anymore because some of these social amenities are not. The industries are there to process what the farmers are taking, if the exports are not taking, if most of the things cannot go for export to develop our local industries, the processing companies are supposed to process more, as we are currently processing about 10 to 12% of cocoa and exporting over 80% of what we produce as raw cocoa and that is not helping the economy (IDI/Processing industry staff). Whereas more value can be added internally to get other products and develop more industries– the chocolate industries, the bread industries, the confectionary and a lot of other industries will spring up.

Consequently, the unemployment rate will go down; more people will be employed. It can thus be seen that everybody has a role – the transporters, the warehouse agents, the banks, the insurance company, everybody has a role in improving the cocoa industry. For instance, if the money is in the bank now but farmers are not able to access it, it is of no use. A scenario that explains this better is the fact that “Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) has about 80 billion naira that farmers ought to access but how many people are accessing it, even for youth, how many people! If any, they are very few” (KII/Expert/Male/Oyo). Farming insurance is important for protecting against weather situations, but these cocoa farmers are either unaware or negligent about it because the people are not educated enough (KII/Oyo/Expert/Male/2018).

Finally, cocoa farming is a risk-inherent business; investments need to be made upfront and the proceeds can only be obtained after harvest. A variety of factors (ecological issues) can cause low returns on investments due to low yields making investments risky were also some of the problems identified by interviewers which is likely to affect the prospect of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

The contexts of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria are not only multilayered but also deeply rooted in global capitalism. It can, thus, be concluded that unless farmers are properly integrated both in the chain of production and distribution, cocoa production may never reach its full potential in the country. Given proper social condition necessary for producing cocoa, the sector can do better, and this would involve a lot of hard work. But it is achievable like it is in Ghana, Cote 'devoir and Indonesia which are now the leading countries in the production of cocoa while Nigeria is still far behind in number seven. This shows definitely we have been doing a lot of things wrongly over the years and are still not getting it right – we have the landmass, labour force, yet the production still remains below the carrying capacity. There is need to consider the way meanings are constantly constructed and reconstructed in social, economic and political terms which is consequential for its sustainable production and profitability both to individuals and the country at large. Simply put, if farmers, young population, women and men alike and industries place premium value on cocoa, its production and consumption would be boosted locally while attracting premium prices from global market.

5.3 Recommendations

- One way by which cocoa production can be enhanced sustainably in southwestern Nigeria is to put the interest of cocoa producers, farmers, first – putting the economic gain that comes from the production of cocoa first would lead to poor transmission of the sustainable norms, values, practices that can be transmitted from one generation to another.
- As it has been found that farmers operate within a define social network that implicate on their productivity and economy, a community can come together to decide on what they have with the necessary network in place and attract premium price.
- Today, what brings premium price is highest standard of practice but farmers in southwestern Nigeria are yet to get there. But if pilot schemes can commence to get close to that through cocoa certification approach and cocoa sustainability programme, things would change for the better.
- There is apparent need to properly integrate young people into the production of cocoa. This can be done through intensive sensitisation on value reorientation by government and other stakeholders, stressing that cocoa offers a long-term gain and as such should not be seen as a short-term means for survival.
- A lot has to be done on transforming the cocoa sector to value-adding sector rather than surviving as an extractive industry where cocoa beans are only produced to be exported to other countries for value-addition; only to be re-imported as chocolate that is rather considered *too luxurious* for its actual producers, the farmers.
- Even though chocolate consuming culture is alien to Nigeria, it can be promoted in the country to encourage production, enhance local retention of profits, and attract more investment.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study explored a mix of history, theory, and method of sociological tradition to interrogate the past, present and future prospects of cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria. This approach is not only uncommon but also useful for forging useful academic and policy interests. Also, that the production of cocoa is social is evident in the study. The study, therefore, addresses a gap in sociological investigation by drawing attention to the importance of proper integration of the lived experiences of cocoa farmers to upscale productivity in the cocoa sector and facilitate diversification in Nigeria. It differs from other studies by foregrounding the potential fallouts of the interactions and negotiated meanings that underlie cocoa production in southwestern Nigeria. Significantly, the study expands the scope of possible ways by which sustainable and profitable production of cocoa can be achieved in Nigeria and beyond. Finally, the study brings to fore the import of centring research focus on the human agency of production and sustainability of agriculture.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Preamble: The researcher ensures that the section takes place at preferred natural setting of the participant/s. Also, time will be taken to explain the objective of the study to the participant/s and assure them of utmost adherence to ethical safety.

Objective 1: To examine how the production of cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has changed over time. This is essentially devoted to historicising cocoa production cum attendant social change in southwestern Nigeria. Probe for:

- i. Pre-cocoa social interaction patterns
- ii. Emergence of cocoa and its attendant changes in the erstwhile social relations of the people
- iii. Periodic events/policies/structures shaping dynamism in cocoa production.
- iv. The current status of cocoa
- v. Foresight/insights

Objective 2: To explore the network of cocoa farmers in southwestern Nigeria. The following should be interrogated:

- i. Who are the actors involved in the production of cocoa?
- ii. What is current architecture of labour relations looking like?
- iii. What has been the role of the family in cocoa production?
- iv. The nexus of power relations embedded in the production processes.
- v. The significance of cocoa to the sustainability of kins' interrelationship
- vi. The role of government agencies
- vii. Other (foreign) regulatory bodies/policies for cocoa farmers/producers

Objective 3: To interrogate some Yoruba cultural practices associated with the production of cocoa. Probe for:

- i. How cocoa is cultivating in Yorubaland.
- ii. How cocoa production interfaces the people's belief system
- iii. Importance of cocoa to communal leaving
- iv. Various practices (systems) involved in planting, harvesting, storage, marketing and consumption of cocoa.
- v. Events associated with cocoa farming.

Objective 4: To examine how the meanings constructed by farmers may affect the production of cocoa. Probe for:

- i. What cocoa means to the people
- ii. How the meanings people give cocoa motivate them to produce or not to produce more of it.
- iii. How the interpret what others think about them.
- iv. Meanings are passed down from one generation to another.

Objective 5: To explore sustainable ways of producing in southwestern Nigeria. Probe for:

- i. How cocoa is being sold (in terms of various agents/agencies involved)
- ii. How cocoa has contributed to the general well-being of individuals (ask for possible evidence)
- iii. Contribution of cocoa to community development (show evidence where possible)
- iv. Perceptions about cocoa for sustainable development

Epilogue: The researcher shows deep appreciation to the life historian for the audience and promises to debrief him/her, as much as possible, on the study outcome.

APPENDIX II
PICTURES FROM FIELDWORK

A farmer in his cocoa plantation



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

A group discussion session



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Unraised (traditional) method of sun-drying cocoa



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Traditional method for drying cocoa beans



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Packaged cocoa beans in a warehouse.



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Typical method of drying cocoa beans in villages



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The urban look of cocoa business



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Cocoa store of a buyer interviewed.



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Typical bagging process of cocoa beans



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Scale for weighing cocoa beans



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

In situ during the fieldwork



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

APPENDIX III

RETRIEVED ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

B. Min Agric / 437

Continuation Sheet No.

Gen 21

Extract from the West African Pilot
of 31st October, 1944 - Editorial

Purchase Of West African Cocoa

TWO cardinal principles mark the demarcation line between capitalist and socialist approach to trade. Whilst the former aims principally at profit-making and draws production like a magnet after demand, the latter aims at mass production in order to place goods on the market at stabilised prices and within the reach of all pockets. It is therefore not surprising that the British Government, in posing as a good Samaritan to the West African cocoa producer, should introduce into the transaction an element of business principles as will leave it with the better side of the bargain.

The report from our London correspondent, which appears elsewhere in this issue, is an eye opener. It gives the other side of the cocoa transaction and shows a high display of diplomacy. Up to December last, the British Government, under the plea of safeguarding the farmer against war-time set-backs, begged a profit of £3 million on control of West African cocoa. Divided among the 20 million population of Nigeria, this works out at three shillings per head of the population, against one penny per head, derivable under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act and leaves the British Government with a profit of 2/11d per head — a good business proposition.

But that is not all. The British Government, apparently realising that the West African peoples are not likely to regard this one way profit deal with favour, gave it out that the profit so realised is to be distributed among the producers. Now we are being told a different story. Instead of the producers getting back the profit which has been wrongly denied them, a committee has been set up to utilise the £3 million as capital with which to purchase more cocoa.

Nigerians have thus supplied the capital with which to start the second phase of her economic exploitation. In the meantime, control of cocoa is to continue after the war and the Nigerian producer is to continue to receive paltry prices for his products in the face of increased cost of maintenance and production. To this misfortune has been added the weight of increased taxation. And yet we are being told of a new social order and the creation of a seventh heaven on earth. Is this democracy? Oh, this civilization!

S.W.P.

Pp. 21 + 22 H.H. marked these columns of the W.A. Pilot for extraction. If the editor had read the white paper, which is at 8th corner, — it is possible that he had not seen it — he obviously made no effort to understand it. I think you ought to make a statement as to what is intended & involved. May I draft?

(Rev W.)

7/20/44

Mr Wickes.

I could not get the Pilot yesterday, but I think you said that they had a final letter home?

7/21/44

Extract from the West African Review
31st October, 1944.

Continuation Sheet No.

Gen 52

British White Paper Reveals Huge Profits Made On West African Cocoa And New Plans For Control After War Head Of Chocolate Firm Is Chairman Of Control Board

By GEORGE PADMORE, Our London Correspondent

LONDON (By Air Mail).—For the first time the British Colonial Office has presented an official report to the House of Commons in which the full story is told of the methods adopted in exploiting the indigenous cocoa producers in West Africa and the fabulous profits derived therefrom.

The report released in London in the form of a government White Paper has caused a sensation, revealing that the British Government made a profit of £3,676,253 from 1939 to 1943.

To fully understand how this has been achieved, it is necessary to review briefly the method of cocoa production in West Africa and the struggles of the African farmers against the British chocolate manufacturers and other monopoly combines known as "the pool."

WORLD'S A1 PRODUCER

The first thing to understand is that West Africa, especially the Gold Coast and Nigeria, produces the world's greatest output of cocoa.

America is the largest consumer

but Britain gets the greatest share of these profits, as Colonel Oliver Stanley's report shows.

Unlike the land policy in East and South Africa, where the system of white-owned plantations exist, worked by cheap African labour, West African cocoa is produced by the Africans themselves on the basis of peasant production.

Small cocoa farms are worked by African households.

There are over 500,000 such family farms.

While production is in the hands of the Africans, the marketing of cocoa in England, America and other countries is entirely in the hands of British merchants.

All of the leading English chocolate manufacturers, as well as big monopolies like Unilever's operating through its subsidiary, the United Africa Company, have united into a sort of merchants' chamber of commerce known among the Africans as the "Cocoa Pool."

At the beginning of each harvest season the representatives of the

"Cocoa Pool" fix the price to be paid to the African producers.

By eliminating competition among themselves as the only buyers in the market, they force the Africans to accept the lowest price for their cocoa.

After gathering up the year's crop, the members of the "Cocoa Pool" distribute the cocoa among their various firms according to their needs and then sell the balance to American and other foreign chocolate manufacturers at greatly inflated prices.

By establishing a British monopoly
Continued on page 3

West African Cocoa Continued from page 1

over the market and preventing foreign dealers buying directly from the Africans, the "Cocoa Pool" made tremendous profits annually.

NATION WIDE BOYCOTT

Gradually, the Africans began to realise how they were being squeezed by the "Pool," and in 1937-38, the farmers of the Gold Coast refused to sell their crop, and at the same time declared a boycott of British manufactured goods, especially Lancashire cotton goods and other textiles.

This move so frightened the British government, that a commission was dispatched post haste to enquire into all the trouble.

The Nowell Commission returned in 1938 and just after it presented its report to the Colonial Office, Britain found herself at war with Germany.

The recommendations of the commission were duly shelved.

The African farmers had demanded the right to form producers' co-operatives so as to market their cocoa themselves, thereby doing away with the "Pool."

Disregarding this popular demand of the Africans to free themselves from the stranglehold of the "Pool," the British government taking advantage of the new war-time

THE POST WAR COCOA TRADE
AND THE DISPOSAL OF THE PROFITS EARNED BY
THE WEST AFRICAN PRODUCE CONTROL BOARD.

By the Director of Supplies

In this article I wish to explain and elaborate the proposals for the regulation of the cocoa trade after the war which were described briefly in a recent Government White Paper presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament by command of His Majesty the King and I also wish to deal with the disposal of the profits earned under the war time control scheme.

1. Let me say at the outset that the proposals for the post war regulation of the trade have been framed with one object and one object alone - to give the maximum benefit to the Nigerian cocoa producer - and under these proposals the producer can rely on two things, namely (1) the maintenance of a steady price for his cocoa throughout each season and (2) the maximum possible proportion of the sales proceeds of his cocoa on the markets of the world.

2. The first will be effected in the following way: at the beginning of each season after the war (i.e. when it is expected that the United Kingdom and the United States Governments will cease to buy cocoa and control distribution) the Nigerian Government will obtain all possible advice as to the probable trend of world market prices and will fix the price to the Nigerian producer and guarantee it for the whole season; the Government of Nigeria will purchase the whole crop at the guaranteed price and sell it on the world's markets at the best prices obtainable. Supposing the view taken by the Nigerian Government of the price which would be obtained for the cocoa crop in any one season proved to be wrong and a higher price were realised, the profit would be credited to a reserve fund held in trust for Nigerian Cocoa Producers and the fund would be used for financing the purchase of the Nigerian crop in subsequent years and subsidising or increasing prices in those years. If on the other hand the prices realised in world markets proved less than was expected and a loss resulted on the year's working, the deficit would be made up from the accumulated surplus in the fund but there would be no question of the prices guaranteed in any one season being reduced in that season.

3. Over a period of years, therefore, the profits made will either be returned to the cocoa producer, expended for his benefit or used for financing the sale of his cocoa, and the only deductions which will be made from the proceeds received on the world's markets will be the actual expenses incurred in purchasing, shipping and selling the cocoa.

4. The purchase of the cocoa crop in Nigeria will be effected by buyers licensed by the Nigerian Government; minimum prices to the producer will be fixed by law at all stations and prices payable by the Nigerian Government to the licensed buyers will be fixed at the same time. There will be a margin between the prices which the licensed buyers have to pay to the producer and the prices which they will receive from the Nigerian Government. This margin is likely to be less than it has been during the past few years. Since the prices to the producer will be minima there will be no objection to licensed buyers paying more to the producer than the prices prescribed.

5. Quotas will be dispensed with and, as far as the licensed buyers are concerned there will be no limit to the amount that each will be allowed to buy. The buyers will therefore be in competition with each other and those buyers whose buying expenses can be cut to the lowest figure are likely to obtain the major portion of the crop.

/Government.

7. Government will appoint all licensed buyers, their numbers will be limited and the criterion for appointment will be capacity to purchase the crop efficiently and cheaply and thus furnish the best service to the cocoa farmer.

8. At the same time Government wishes to give the maximum encouragement to Cocoa Cooperative Marketing Unions and will purchase cocoa produced by member societies directly from any Union without the intervention of licensed buyers, provided the Union can operate efficiently and economically. In the current year the Ibadan and Ife Cocoa Cooperative Unions are selling cocoa direct to the West African Produce Control Board for the first time.

9. The shipment of the cocoa crop will be effected by the Nigerian Government and the expenses incurred in shipment will be governed by rates of Export Duty, Harbour Dues, Shipping Freights, etc.

10. The placing of the Nigerian cocoa crop on world markets after the war will be effected by a selling organisation in London which will act on the direct instructions of the Nigerian Government.

11. I should like to emphasize this point - the selling organisation will operate on the instructions of the Nigerian Government, it will have no connection with any trading interests and will make no profit out of its operations; consequently the only charges which will be debited to cocoa in respect of selling it on the world markets will be the expenses actually incurred by the organisation.

12. All profits accruing from the sale of Nigerian cocoa will either go directly into the pockets of the cocoa farmer or will be paid to a reserve fund which will be held in trust for him.

13. Thus the element of speculation in the cocoa trade and the profits of trading interests will be eliminated and the farmer can have confidence that if he plants cocoa he will get the benefit from it.

14. I venture to say that this new departure in cocoa buying in Nigeria will be regarded by future historians as the most important milestone in the history of the Nigerian produce trade.

15. I will turn now to the disposal of the profits of the West African Produce Control Board. Reference to the White Paper will elicit the fact that the profits accruing from the sale of Nigerian cocoa from 1939 to 1943 amounted to £1,169,906. Of this amount it has been decided to allocate to cocoa research a sum of £378,045. This money will be spent in investigating cocoa diseases and preventing the spread of the dreaded swollen shoot disease which has played such havoc with the Gold Coast crop. This expenditure is therefore in the nature of an insurance and the results of the research will we hope enable the Agricultural Department to ensure that diseases of cocoa, which can have such disastrous effects on the crop and consequently the farmer's prosperity, will be controlled, eliminated or avoided altogether.

16. The balance which amounts to £782,861 will be used for financing the purchase of cocoa by the Nigerian Government. At first sight this sum seems very large but it must be looked at in proper perspective. At the present price of £22.10s.0d. per ton it will cost the Nigerian Government approximately £35 a ton to place cocoa on the world's markets; if we take the Nigerian crop at 100,000 tons the amount of money required to purchase and place on the world's markets a whole year's crop will be about £3,500,000. It will be clear therefore that the amount available from past profits to finance the scheme (£782,861) is not likely to be sufficient and if it proved insufficient it would be necessary to borrow money at current interest rates. The payment of interest would of course be added to the expenses of buying and selling Nigerian cocoa and consequently would be a direct charge on the producer;

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8.5/160

issd 20/12

10 December, 1945.

The Honourable
The Chief Secretary to the Government,
L A G O S.

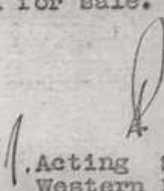
Cocoa Hold-Up.

150
With reference to your Savingram No. E. 36148/8.132/122 of the 14th of December, I am directed by the Chief Commissioner to say that enquiries were made regarding the Meeting of the so-called Farmers Council at Ibadan and the Press reports which followed this Meeting.

2. It appears that the Meeting was attended by some forty persons, representing about 15 Farmers Unions principally from the Abeokuta and Ijebu Provinces. There were also present a few prominent middlemen from the Ibadan Area and representatives of one Cocoa Co-operative Society. The total attendance was small and it was in no sense a mass meeting. The Farmers Societies represented at this meeting are institutions which have existed for some time, principally in the Abeokuta and Ijebu Provinces. In the rural areas they are probably genuinely representative of the producers but these purely Rural Unions have very little influence upon the policy of the larger Urban bodies, like the so-called Egba Farmers Union, which are managed by persons whose interest in agricultural produce is purely commercial or political. The so-called Egba Farmers' Union is controlled by a schoolmaster, the Rev. Ransome Kuti and a journalist, Mr. Showande. The small rural Societies in the Abeokuta Province have in the past refused to accept leadership of the parent Egba Farmers' Union, e.g. in 1944 when the latter staged an agitation to hold up Rice production.

3. His Honour, while realising that any agitation to increase Cocoa prices would naturally receive the support of all Cocoa farmers, is satisfied that the meeting held at Ibadan was in no sense representative of any interests other than those of the middlemen, or of persons interested in making political capital out of the attempt to organise a hold up in Cocoa production. His Honour is informed that, although there were signs of a "go slow" campaign in Cocoa sales in some areas immediately before the meeting of the Legislative Council, sales are now at normal volume and Firms are purchasing and grading as quickly as they can deal with the amounts offered for sale.

AWO.


Acting Secretary,
Western Provinces.

PA

WHITE PAPER ON COCOA MARKETING.

The long-awaited "Statement on Future Marketing of West African Cocoa" (Command Paper No. 6950) was published on November 20th. The importance of this document to the cocoa farmer would be difficult to over-estimate; it is a landmark to which he will always look back with interest and, it is hoped, with satisfaction.

What does the white Paper propose? It would, perhaps, be simpler in the first place to say what it aims at preventing. Its first aim and object is to remedy the conditions that existed at the time of the Cocoa Commission in 1938, conditions that prevented the cocoa farmer, from obtaining a fair price for his crop. In the words of paragraph 6 of the White Paper "the experience of the war years has shown that Government can achieve a stabilisation of seasonal prices to the West African cocoa producer, despite heavy fluctuations in supply and demand".

What is now proposed is a marketing system that will not only secure to the producer a stable price throughout each season but will also ensure that there is minimum variation between the price in one season and the next. It will give him a security he has never had in the past and will enable him to arrange his planting programme safe from the fear that the bottom will suddenly drop out of the market and that the cocoa he has tended with such care will suddenly lose half its value. It is most important to remember that in order to maintain a comparatively stable price from season to season it is essential to put aside money when the world market price is high in order to build up a reserve with which to maintain the price when world market prices fall. Remember, therefore, that the guaranteed local seasonal prices to the producer bear no direct relation to the world price at any one time. They may be substantially higher or lower, over a period however the producer will get the full averaged benefit of world prices.

It is not proposed to continue the present system by which West African cocoa is marketed through an organisation set up by the Imperial Government and centred in London. In its place both the Gold Coast and Nigeria will have Cocoa Marketing Boards. In Nigeria the Board will consist of not less than three and not more than five members appointed by the Governor and the Board will be assisted by an Advisory Committee consisting of a Chairman and not less than six members including representatives of the producer and of the commercial interests.

The main functions of the Board will be:-

- (a) to fix the guaranteed seasonal price to the producer;
- (b) to make purchase arrangements and issue licences to approved buyers, and
- (c) to make all necessary arrangements for buying, shipping and selling cocoa.

The Board will be the only buyer of cocoa for export and this they will purchase through licenced buying agents from whom they will take over the cocoa at port. Buying licences will be issued seasonally to applicants who can establish their

/ability

ability to carry out all functions required and to deliver such minimum quantities as are prescribed by the Board. This is a matter of importance to many of those interested in the cocoa trade since it means that with the opening of the 1947/48 cocoa season participation in the buying scheme will be open to all who possess the necessary qualifications. The functions of buying agents are clearly set out in paragraph 18 of the White Paper and need no explanation or elaboration.

Special mention is made in the White Paper of the policy that will be adopted of providing special forms of assistance to deserving and efficient Co-operative Societies to enable them to play their full part in the cocoa trade.

It is the declared aim of the present proposals to see that the producer gets a fair and stable price and that the buying agent's remuneration is limited to his expenses plus a reasonable margin of profit.

CS.

19.1.45

Colonial Office,
Downing Street, S.W.1.

23

12th January, 1945.

My Dear Richards,

You will not, I think, be surprised to know that Tansley and I are a bit concerned again about the size of the cocoa crops, both in Nigeria and in the Gold Coast. The latest information we have both from you and from Burns suggests that the crops are going to be disappointing, in spite of the substantial increases ~~of~~ the prices paid this season, and we may be shot at, quite unfairly of course, by the Combined Food Board, or, in other words, the Americans and the Ministry of Food.

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In Nigeria we purchased last year about 70,000 tons, against a normal crop of, say, 90,000 tons. I do not think that the Department of Agriculture issued any estimate of the crop before the season commenced, but rumours were certainly going around in commercial circles here that the crop was likely to be between 85,000 and 90,000 tons. In your telegram ~~No. 2420~~ you have now told us, however, that the latest estimate is 70,000 tons, the same as last year.

Tansley is quite sure that in the Gold Coast the drop has been caused by disease, and by the lack of

SIR ARTHUR RICHARDS, G.C.M.G.

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Colonial Office,
Downing Street, S.W.1.

12th January, 1948.

of new planting before the war, but he is frankly puzzled by the position in Nigeria. When we were with you a year ago he felt quite confident that it was just a matter of price, but he now wonders whether he was right. He has suggested to me that the decline may have been caused by one or several of the following factors:-

- (a) Disease which has so far not been thought to be very serious.
- (b) Neglect of trees during the last few years, causing temporary set-back in production.
- (c) Lack of new planting before the war.
- (d) Lack of consumer goods.
- (e) Lack of labour.
- (f) Price still too low compared with food crops, etc.

I wonder whether you could get Mackie to put up a note containing his considered views as to the cause of the fall in production, as compared with a normal year. That would be very useful to us in dealing with any sniping that may be directed at us here.

Yours ever
James Murray

No. 2061/331 26

17 February, 1945.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

I B A D A N,

NIGERIA.

The Honourable
The Chief Secretary to the Government,
Nigerian Secretariat,
L a g o s.

Fall in Production of Main Crop Cocoa.

In reply to your endorsement No. E36148/S.109/25 of 26th January, 1945, in my opinion the main cause of the serious fall in production during the last two years has been neglect of plantations during the last few years owing to low prices and particularly to the low Mid Crop price. Evidence shows that with the low Mid Crop price, farmers did not harvest their cocoa; pods became diseased with Black Pod, and the disease affected the cushions and consequently development of the following Main Crop. Production from well tended Departmental plots for the 1944-45 season is slightly higher than for the 1943-44 season and approximately the same as compared with the 1941-42 and 1942-43 seasons. The lowered yields from native farms therefore, was not due to seasonal variation, but to the effects of accumulated neglect. A recent rough survey of the main cocoa areas showed that approximately 50% of the farms are either completely neglected or improperly cleaned. It is notable that the fall in production concerns all areas and is not markedly severe in any particular area.

2. Sahlbergella damage has been severe in certain areas this season amounting to 10% in the wetter areas. Results from departmental cocoa plots this season show that severe Sahlbergella attack will reduce the crop by 50%.

3. If the Mid Crop price for 1945 is raised to £17 as recommended and main crop price is not less than at present I think that matters will gradually improve, but there is a lot of leeway to make up and it seems certain that thousands of trees will never recover from past neglect.]

A. S. Beattie.

for DIRECTOR.

JRM/Odu'

(Drafted by Capt. Mackie).

Cs.

26 with 23-4.

2. I submit a draft d/o reply to

JRM
21/2
Mr. Creech.

36148/B.109/28

22 February, 1945.

My dear Creasy,

23

I was not altogether surprised to receive your letter of the 12th of January expressing the concern which you and Tansley felt on learning that the revised estimate of the main cocoa crop was no higher than 70,000 tons. I am glad to say that production in subsequent weeks has shown that our mid-season forecast erred considerably on the side of pessimism. Total purchases to the 15th of February were 31,443 tons and with three weeks still to go we may yet top the 85,000 ton mark; if we do it will show that commercial estimates before the season opened were not far wrong, though we shall still be short of the average.

26

To the extent, therefore, that results have exceeded expectations there is less need for an explanation of what at one time promised to be a disappointing crop but I append a note by Mackie which sets out what he considers are the causes of the recent drop in production:-

"..... in my opinion the main cause of the serious fall in production during the last two years has been neglect of plantations during the last few years owing to low prices and particularly to the low Mid Crop price. Evidence shows that with the low Mid Crop price, farmers did not harvest their cocoa; pods became diseased with Black Pod, and the disease affected the cushions and consequently development of the following Main Crop. Production from well tended departmental plots for the 1944-45 season is slightly higher than for the 1943-44 season and approximately the same as compared with the 1941-42 and 1942-43 seasons. The lowered

/yields

Gerald Creasy, Esq., C.M.G., C.B.E.,
Colonial Office,
Downing Street,
London.

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yields from native farms therefore were not due to seasonal variation, but to the effects of accumulated neglect. A recent rough survey of the main cocoa areas showed that approximately 50% of the farms are either completely neglected or improperly cleared. It is notable that the fall in production concerns all areas and is not markedly severe in any particular area.

Sahlbergella damage has been severe in certain areas this season amounting to 10% in the wetter areas. Results from departmental cocoa plots this season show that severe Sahlbergella attack will reduce the crop by 50%.

If the Mid Crop price for 1945 is raised to £17 as recommended and main crop price is not less than at present I think that matters will gradually improve, but there is a lot of leeway to make up and it seems certain that thousands of trees will never recover from past neglect."

As regards the last paragraph of Mackie's note you will already have received my saving telegram No. 372 of the 19th of February recommending a price of £17 per ton for the 1945 Light Crop, and as regards the Main Crop price recommendations will be made as soon as possible.

Yours ever

A. F. RICHARDS

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E/145/
S-108

PK

COCOA CONSUMERS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 9th Meeting of the Cocoa Consumers Consultative Committee held at the Colonial Office, Church House, Great Smith Street, S.W.1., on the 27th July, 1950, at 11 a.m.

Present:-

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Mr. C.G. Eastwood | (in the Chair) |
| Mr. H. Afford | |
| Mr. E.H. Greene | |
| Mr. W.M. Hood | |
| Mr. M.A. Mayes | |
| Mr. Lloyd Owen | |
| Mr. R.H. Percy | |

Also present:-

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Mr. L.H. Cornsuh | { Colonial Office } |
| Mr. T.B. Williamson | |
| Mr. S.J.E. Southgate | |
| Mr. P.J. Kitcatt | |
| Mr. A.T. Rogers | Secretary |

For items 5 and 6 only:-

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Mr. E.C. Tansley | (Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing and Nigerian Produce Marketing Company Limited) |
|------------------|---|

The Chairman explained that the Minister of State had been unavoidably prevented from taking the Chair at this meeting owing to pressure of other business.

1. Approval of minutes of 8th meeting. The minutes of the 8th meeting of the Committee were approved.
2. Business arising out of the 8th meeting. With reference to paragraph 5 of the minutes of the 8th meeting, the Chairman explained that the Governors of the Gold Coast and Nigeria had decided to distribute Dr. Voelcker's report on W.A.C.R.I. for 1944-49 on a large scale to cocoa farmers. 28,500 copies of the report were accordingly being printed, of which 20,000 would go to the Gold Coast, 6,000 to Nigeria, 2,000 to W.A.C.R.I. and 500 to the Cocoa Chocolate and Confectionery Alliance.
3. Cocoa Marketing Prospects and Producer Prices for 1950-51 crops.
 - (a) Crops. The total 1949-50 crop was now expected to be approximately 345,000 tons. Mr. Williamson stated that it was too early to forecast 1950-51 crops but in view of the increased price of 70/- per load fixed by the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board for the coming season it was to be expected that every possible ounce of cocoa would

/bo

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be harvested. Mr. Hood and Mr. Lloyd Owen said that reports from their representatives in the Gold Coast and Nigeria suggested that crop prospects were very good.

- (b) Marketing prospects. The Chairman invited the views of the Committee on the demand for cocoa in present world conditions. Members stated that at the moment countries appeared to be hoarding a little but they did not think that there had yet been much stockpiling in the United States. Mr. Greene said Germany was an unknown factor; it appeared likely that her stocks would be exhausted about November, in which case she would probably be keen to buy early next season. Mr. Lloyd Owen said that he thought there was still room for expansion in the consumption of cocoa and that further production should be encouraged.
- (c) Producer Prices 1950-1951. The Chairman stated that, as the Committee knew, the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board had fixed the price of 70/- per load for the 1950-51 season. The Nigeria Cocoa Marketing Board was meeting that day and the price fixed would probably be not less than in the Gold Coast.

4. Cocoa Disease and Rehabilitation Measures in West Africa. An account of the latest developments in progress against swollen shoot disease in the Gold Coast and Nigeria had been circulated to the Committee as C.C.C. (50)1. The Chairman asked if Members had any comments on this memorandum. The Committee agreed that the report on the Gold Coast was encouraging and showed that successful results were being attained. Mr. Gorsuch spoke further about the recruiting position; he stated that more Agricultural Survey Officers had left for the Gold Coast since the 3rd June (the effective date of the figures quoted in the memorandum) and the present number on the strength probably exceeded 100.

X With regard to Nigeria Mr. Lloyd Owen said that the response from farmers in Nigeria to the high price of cocoa, e.g. in replanting etc., did not seem so encouraging as in the Gold Coast and losses from swollen shoot did not appear to be being replaced to the same extent. He suggested that the importance of urging farmers to replant and to plant new areas in Nigeria should be stressed to the Nigerian Government. The Chairman agreed that this should be done.

5. Marketing Policy of the Cocoa Marketing Boards. (At the request of the Committee Mr. Tansley attended for discussion of this and the subsequent item).

Mr. Lloyd Owen explained that he was anxious to see the cocoa market in the United Kingdom operate as well as possible, but he thought the existence of a single shipper of cocoa might give rise to difficulties which had not occurred when there were several shippers. In pre-war days shippers had sold forward, but the Marketing Boards had adopted a different policy and did not do this. Since the Nigeria Board had made a profit of £378,000 in 1948-49 (as compared with a net loss of £134,000 by the Gold Coast Board) giving as a reason that they had sold cocoa early, he wondered whether the adoption of a policy of forward selling would not be beneficial. He also considered that the maintenance by the Boards of stocks in this country might be of benefit. He asked

/Mr.

Mr. Tansley what the policy would be in these respects if and when there were again a free market in cocoa in this country.

Mr. Tansley explained that before the war there was not the shortage of cocoa which existed today. Some forward sales had been made at that time but very often as hedges against stocks of old crop cocoa. The question of selling some new main crop cocoa forward was now under active consideration, but it must be remembered that the Marketing Boards were concerned to sell cocoa for the maximum benefit of the producers. Boards could not accumulate stocks as demand was so great, and he was doubtful in any case whether this was good policy; he would prefer to sell to the trade and let them carry the stocks. Mr. Greene suggested that financial considerations would probably prohibit the carrying of large stocks by firms. Mr. Lloyd Owen agreed; the price of cocoa in terms of sterling was now nine or ten times the pre-war price and the market had not enough money to carry big stocks. Mr. Tansley stated that the Boards had done their best to encourage a good market in London and he thought that if the market were freed a good market would now be established.

Mr. Lloyd Owen said that he was also rather concerned about the premium in the sterling over the dollar price which he understood was being asked in the United Kingdom and certainly was on the Continent. He appreciated that there was foreign competition to sell in New York but he believed that had there not been only a single seller in the United Kingdom the premium would not have been so great. Mr. Tansley said he did not like the position but he could not help circumstances. The Boards had tried to bring markets into line but it was quite impracticable; it was the natural tendency for prices to be different and it could not be avoided. They could not obtain as high a price for cocoa in the United States as was possible on the Continent, and at the same time they could not refuse to sell to the United States - they must keep up their United States connections.

6. Grading of Cocoa. Mr. Hood recalled for the Committee the history of cocoa grading in West Africa. The Committee were anxious to preserve the quality of Gold Coast cocoa and they had suggested since 1947 that grading with a price differential should be introduced in the Gold Coast. Each year since then there had been talk of introducing grading with a price differential but now the Gold Coast Board had decided once again that this would not be done in respect of the 1950-51 crop. The very successful results achieved by grading in Nigeria had been demonstrated in the spectacular increase of grade I cocoa marketed, but in the Gold Coast the position was not improving, and if farmers were not given an incentive to prepare grade I cocoa he thought that it would get worse. Nigerian cocoa was now a safer purchase than Gold Coast cocoa. Mr. Tansley said that while he recognised the very great improvement in the quality of Nigeria cocoa, he doubted whether it was now better than Gold Coast cocoa; he thought that Gold Coast cocoa was at least as good. In further discussion it was agreed that the great bulk of Gold Coast cocoa was of very good quality, but its reputation was being prejudiced by the existence among it of a small percentage of inferior cocoa which was not differentiated in price as being of inferior grade. It would be very much in the interests of the Gold Coast, and certainly also to the convenience of manufacturers, if grading with a price differential could be introduced. The amount of cocoa that would be graded lower than grade I should not be important. The Committee took note of the unanimous view of the British manufacturers represented on the Committee that it was most important that a system of grading of

/cocoa

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cocoa with a price differential should be introduced in the Gold Coast as soon as possible.

The Chairman said that steps would be taken to bring this view to the notice of the authorities in the Gold Coast.

7. Date of next meeting. It was agreed that the next meeting should be held in about three months time, possibly on the morning of Thursday the 12th October.

COLONIAL OFFICE.

9th August, 1950.

CSO 26
36388/e.1

TELEGRAMS,
FALANTOMSO, FEN, LONDON.

TELEPHONE NOS. :
ROYAL 1682 & 4507.

F. A. THOMPSON,
IMPORT AND EXPORT.

21, MINCING LANE,
LONDON, E.C.3.

CABLES
FALANTOMSO, LONDON.

CODES
SUTLEYE,
A.S.O. 5TH DIVISION
LAGOS,
NIGERIA.

REFERENCE :

9th June 1931.

His Excellency Sir Donald Cameron,
Governor of Nigeria,
LAGOS.
Nigeria.

Handwritten initials and numbers: "145" and "10".

3-7

Sir,

I take the liberty of enclosing copy of a letter addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, by my correspondents Messrs. W. Bartholomew & Co. Ltd. of Accra.

The letter gives the broad lines of the scheme, and details are being worked out and will be sent you in due course.

Meanwhile, as it is primarily for the benefit of Cocoa Farmers, it is sincerely hoped that it will have your active support and goodwill.

The advantages of the scheme are many.

It would guarantee the farmer a living proposition.

To a limited extent, it would encourage trade in the Gold Coast Colony and in Nigeria.

It would encourage and make possible local co-operation amongst farmers.

Native farmers, no matter where they are situated, would know the minimum price they should receive for their Cocoa.

The whole of the price would go to the native farmer, whereas today, middlemen are probably taking too large a share for the services they render.

At the present time, it would not take one penny

Handwritten signature and date: "24/11"

9th June 1931.

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piece out of the farmer's pocket. It gives him a higher price than he would be able to get by his own efforts, whether co-operative or otherwise.

It would eliminate a lot of the present abuses incidental to the local marketing of Cocoa in West Africa.

It need not disturb the present marketing arrangements of Crops through merchants.

It would not require any Government loan or finance.

It would provide the necessary finance for any Government scheme for the inspection and grading of Cocoa, likewise for any scheme for improving the Cocoa industry generally.

Manufacturers throughout the world could have no objection. On the other hand, they should support it, as it would stabilise their supplies at a fixed minimum, and encourage them to get all the supplies they can at that minimum.

Roughly, the minimum world prices would be :-

- Ex Dock New York.....7.35 cents per lb.
- C.I.F. Continental Ports.....32/- per 50 Kilos.
- Delivered ex Wharf London.....£33. 10. 0. per ton.
- Delivered ex Quay Liverpool.....£33. per ton.

These prices are roughly 25% cheaper than the lowest price ruling before the War, and consequently they would be low enough to encourage consumption, and it would not be necessary for manufacturers to increase the price of Cocoa products to consumers.

Appreciating you have at heart the welfare of Nigeria, and particularly the native farmer, I am encouraged to hope that you will do all in your power for the adoption of the scheme.

I have the honour to be, Your Excellency.
Your obedient servant,

[Handwritten signature]

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THE COCOA COMMISSION

The Questions to be settled by the Commission are of the greatest possible importance, involving as they do the future well-being of the Colony, its Farmers, Chiefs and People and every phase of its activities, including social and health services of all kinds.

For all practical purposes, the problem can be reduced to a single word - "PRICE".

It is more than likely that the Commission will consider proposals for forming a Marketing Board, and the question arises - is it possible to devise a scheme by way of a Marketing Board or such like, that can guarantee a fair price to the Grower, without machinery for controlling that price? It is the writer's submission that such is quite impossible, and that any marketing scheme without price control must prove illusory.

What is a fair price for Cocoa, and is the controlling of that price a practical proposition, having of course, well in mind the repercussions of such control on a long term view of the Cocoa producing and consuming situation, and interests.

The findings of the Commission will have effect not only on conditions of like and trade in the Gold Coast Colony, but also on other British territories, including Nigeria and notably the West Indian Island.

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It is common knowledge that uneconomically low prices during the recent years have brought the most severe hardships to the West Indian Cocoa growers. In about the year 1932 when the West Indian Planters were tottering on the brink of extinction, a Delegation from Trinidad and Grenada brought a petition to London for the considering of a world Cocoa price, and presented a proposed scheme. The proposal - known as the "Z" Scheme, had behind it the most sound reasoning and had been prepared in a most able manner. So far as is known, beyond referring the scheme to some mythical League of Nations Committee, nothing was done, but surely the present Commission will give the "Z" Scheme the most careful consideration.

Another scheme that has been considerably "cussed and discussed" is known as the BARTHOLOMEW PLAN.

The basis of this Plan is price control, such price being a figure that will be sufficient to give a fair return to the grower without being high enough to encourage abnormal production or to restrict consumption. The machinery of the Plan is such that its adoption must lead to the growth of co-operation among the Africans, and to the control of marketing by the Africans, in the interest of the Africans.

The "B" Plan is and will be, strenuously opposed by those interests who see in the handling of vast amounts of Cocoa the possibility of huge profits, but it is the suggestion of the author of the Plan that

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everybody's long term interest will be best served by a price scheme that ensures the steady provision of purchasing power at a prosperity level, in the hands of the African - than whom, by the way, there is no freer spender, and who is ever ready to exchange his Cocoa money for the goods of the trader.

Apart from the fact that the "B" Plan leads to the control of the produce by the African, the machinery of the Plan is simpler than that of the "Z" Plan, the control of the scheme being centralised in the Gold Coast, where any surplus would accumulate to be dealt with by the export duties subscribed by the various Governments concerned.

Cocoa price is at the same time, the most susceptible to attack and the easiest to defend, - susceptible to attack because the produce comes from weak holders in bulk on to the market during a short season, presenting an easy target to market manipulations. Easy to defend because it is produced at a few sources. Of the total world crop -

British Empire Countries produce.....	aprox.	58%
Brazil	"	17%
French Colonies	"	13%
		—
		88%
		—

For the purpose of price control, the balance of 12% need not be considered.

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It is believed that Cocoa product manufacturers would not object to a reasonable price level for the raw product and that they would welcome stability. Indeed, it is difficult to see why they should object to a price of £40, when the price level covering -

20 years to 1937 was.....	approx.	£45. 10. 0. per ton.
10 years " " "	"	£35. 10. 0. " "

As some of the most colossal fortunes both in England and America, indeed throughout the world, have been made by Cocoa product manufacturers paying above ~~the~~ average prices, it is obvious that the price has provided no resistance to sales.

It is difficult to see therefore, how or why Cocoa manufacturers can fail to welcome either the "Z" Plan or the "B" Plan which suggests as price £30. to £35. for the "Z" Plan, and £40. for the "B" Plan.

If the interest of the ultimate consumer is considered, as indeed it must be, it is certain that the suggested raw product price could not have the effect of increasing retail prices above those that have been ruling in recent years, and which have proved so acceptable to the public as to make the vast sales and manufacturers profits possible.

In considering the Cocoa price, the Commission will doubtless realise that not only is the well-being and happiness of millions of loyal

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subjects of the Empire at stake, but that Cocoa price has a very close relation to English exports, especially to Lancashire cottons. It has been said by the country's leaders, and it is obviously true, that never was it more essential in national interests to encourage export business than at the present time. The Commission will doubtless take that into consideration.

At this time, when it is difficult to mention a product that is not under some sort of direct or indirect price control, it is astonishing that there should exist a body of opinion that finds, or pretends to find, something inherently wrong with Cocoa price control. Surely the only guide need be - is such a scheme fair to all interests - from the grower to the ultimate consumer, and is it practical? To both those questions, the answer is emphatically YES.

J. P. Robinson

P.S. In connection with Clove Industry of Zanzibar, a recent declaration by Government reads as follows:-

"The maintenance of Government control of exports is justified on the grounds of the Government's moral obligation to protect the interests of Producers etc."

If that applies to the few producers of Zanzibar Cloves, why should it not apply with greater force to the far more important Cocoa Industry and its producers, numbering hundreds of thousands?

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KEPPLER & KEPPLER
COUNSELORS AT LAW

TOBIAS A. KEPPLER
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BRYANT 9-6131

4445
NIGERIAN SECRETARIAT
15 AUG 1939
Registration Branch
21/8

July 27th, 1939

Chief Secretary
Lagos, Nigeria

Dear Sir:

I am writing you at the suggestion of the Hon. Undersecretary of State for Mr. Secretary MacDonald.

With the co-operation of the English government I know I can very greatly improve conditions for your cocoa growers, I think permanently.

You undoubtedly know that the warehouses in this country (and as far as I know throughout the world) are loaded with cocoa. The cocoa of Africa would not be missed during the coming season, with the cocoa in warehouses plus the cocoa Brazil will produce. Hence, the outlook for this, and it would appear for other seasons, for the growers in your territory is bad. Anything that prejudices them will hurt all business in the mandated territory and England.

Because of the system of the thirteen big buyers controlling the purchases of foreign shipments plus the abuses affecting loans, gathering and all conditions relating to payments to growers, there can be no solution for the cocoa growers, unless the government will to some extent duplicate the English Milk Marketing Board, and apply it to cocoa. However, it requires much more than that, because it would even then have no monopoly in world markets.

Your agricultural marketing must be highly prejudicial to growers unless there will be a central clearing house having, what I will call, a unit control of the cocoa, so that the growers instead of the buyers will be able, with government assistance, to make and maintain the price. That will be impossible except along a plan I have worked out.

I could write a big volume on the abuses connected with the sale of cocoa and price control after it leaves Africa.

You surely have read the Cocoa Commission's report and are otherwise familiar with conditions relating to African cocoa.

21/8

Chief Secretary
Lagos, Nigeria
July 27th, 1939
Page 2.

Under your sponsorship I feel certain I can conclude proposed arrangements with bankers to float an issue, to furnish the capital to do everything necessary to bring the cocoa from the growers to be ready for shipping documents, provided that the government will co-operate so as to control sales of African cocoa.

I believe that the school teachers, ministers of religion, newspaper publishers and others who are not directly in the cocoa business, and have a social as well as a selfish desire to see their country prosperous, would under government sponsorship be willing to propagandize growers upon a plan to be able to insure a profitable sale of African cocoa year after year, and thus enable the people of Nigeria to live upon higher standards. Among other things they will be able to buy English merchandise.

May I submit a plan to have that worked out, under the sponsorship of the government, so that the government will know that the matter is legitimately conducted in every possible way to thus completely safeguard the interests of the growers, and incidentally of all people whose prosperity depends upon growers' prosperity.

The crux of my plan is that not a pound of cocoa would leave Africa unless it is known in advance what it will bring, and that it will be sold. Under my plan it would have to bring a price that would insure cost of production (to be efficiently ascertained) and a fair profit to the growers.

Among other details my plan contemplates selling the cocoa direct from the growers to the users and manufacturers, in the various countries, so as to cut out all middlemen and all exploitation of the growers, in future.

Because of cut throat competitive conditions, old enmities and a passionate hope among manufacturers that they may be able to buy and sell so as to prejudice the others so as to get great volumes of sales and hoped for profits at the expense of competitors, there are, what appear to be insuperable obstacles to get their co-operation, but I can solve them, if I know your government will help me to help your people control the sale of cocoa through one source, so as to be sure that no cocoa can be sold except pursuant to government approval.

Chief Secretary
Lagos, Nigeria
Page 3.
July 27th, 1939

As far as I can see bad world economic conditions create a discouraging outlook for African growers.

The prosperity of many hundreds of thousands of people is far more important than profits of a handful of dealers.

Will you kindly let me know your re-actions, so that we may take up this matter further.

In view of the fact that the crop will come in in a few months, time is of the essence.

I submit my plan upon the understanding that if it will be accepted that I will get an exclusive contract to act as the sales agent for West African cocoa throughout the world and that my compensation would be a small commission on sales when made and paid for, but which would have to be sufficient to pay all my bona fide operating expenses subject to checking and verification, plus an assurance that the percentage will be sufficient to give me a small net-percentage on all cocoa sold, with no compensation except for success.

I would expect a corporation to be formed of a character that would protect the growers and would also protect my income.

In view of the fact that I can get nothing unless I can assure cost of production plus a reasonable profit to the growers it is common sense that my proposition would have to be legitimate and I would have to be continuously successful for the growers before I can earn a profit.

I would expect this contract to run for a period of five years with an option for either party, if successful, to renew it ^{an} for additional five years, with the further proviso that if my plans would not work at any time, that a reasonable option would be given to the farmers to dismiss me.

My proposition is sincere. There is nothing sinister about it. It probably sounds like a madman's dream but having the right solution, with government co-operation it is not at all complicated.

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Chief Secretary
Lagos, Nigeria
July 27th, 1939
Page 4.

Among other things the plan would include the creation of a cocoa institute to teach the growers maximum efficiency and economy relating to every element of their business. Awaiting the courtesy of your reply,

Very truly yours,

Tobias A. Keppler
Tobias A. Keppler

tak/mh

28604 ✓
26298/57 ✓
34883 conf ✓
attach 34883 conf ✓
Clerk
Clan

GERMAN SECRETARIAT
32 12
9 OCT 1939
Registration Branch



No.

5918/1305

26 October, 1939

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT,

Ibadan,

NIGERIA.

Marketing of Cocon.

The Honourable
The Chief Secretary to the Govt.,
Nigerian Secretariat,
Lagos.

23
Reference your endorsement No. 30078/5 of 21st August, 1939, I give below a note by the Chief Inspector of Produce, who has discussed this question with the American Consul and with Mr. Singer of Messrs. Rockwood and Company :-

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" From inquiries made (Mr. Wasson, American Consul, Lagos, Mr. Singer of Rockwood & Co.) I gathered that in the U.S.A. many "wild cat" schemes are propounded by individuals or small companies. These schemes originate usually through irresponsible natives of West Africa visiting the States - Prince Eket is such a one - making direct contact with consumers of West African produce and stating that they are in a position with their West African connections to supply many thousands of tons of produce. The figure stated is always so high that even if they could fulfil one tenth of what they say they can do a very satisfactory business would result.

Consumers in the States have been "bitten" in the past and they now fight shy of such offers to do business. Having completed the round of those actively interested in the various products without meeting with success these individuals contact financiers with a view to floating companies to undertake what those companies already established

in

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in the trade are not prepared to do. This more apparently meets with some success, but is usually short lived.

The last step is to approach individuals or companies in no way connected with the produce trade and through them endeavour to get other parties interested in their schemes while hiding their own identity.

Kepler's letter is most likely part of such an effort.

As a result of the above discussions I am of the opinion that Mr. Kepler's proposition should not be entertained.

W. J. ...
DIRECTOR.

CLAF.

CL. From page 20

As letter for signature if appd.

34/10

You may be interested to read the opinions at 20-23.

31/10

W. J. ...
31/10/35

Seen 31/10

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NIGERIAN COCOA SURVEY.
NINETEENTH QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT:
JULY - SEPTEMBER, 1949.

PART I.

COCOA SURVEY.

The resurvey of cocoa farms was continued in all Provinces throughout July and August. 10,000 acres of cocoa were surveyed during this period which brings the total since February up to 70,000 acres. This includes 753 acres of new plantings and 400 acres of abandoned farms. The month of September was devoted to propaganda work on the improvement of quality and cleanliness of cocoa. In the Swollen Shoot areas the survey of farms on the perimeter of the known centres of infection has been considerably intensified and several Survey Assistants have been withdrawn from other parts of Oyo Province to assist with this work. The progress of the survey in Oyo Province as a whole is, in consequence, somewhat behind schedule.

2. Maintenance and General Condition of Farms: Although there has been a very marked improvement in the standard of maintenance of cocoa farms throughout the Western Provinces the attention given to farms consists mainly in outlassing the ground cover. There is still considerable scope for increased effort on the part of the farmers to remove mistletoe, black pods, and to restore breaks in the canopy by chupon regeneration or the planting of new seedlings.

3. Observation Plots: The period under review has generally been favourable for the spread of black pod disease and very promising results are expected from the treatment given (i.e. regular removal of infected pods) on plots under Departmental management. These plots are now beginning to attract the attention of farmers and it is hoped that they will be used to a steadily increasing extent as demonstration centres for improved methods of management and black pod disease control.

4. Black Pod Disease: Frequent rains during August and September have resulted in an increase in black pod disease. Incidence has been particularly severe in Ondo Province and in the Ife district of Oyo Province. It is anticipated that the total crop of the Western Provinces will be below average in consequence.

5. Improvement in Quality of Cocoa: The campaign has been organised on the same lines as last year. The whole of the Cocoa Survey staff with the exception of those engaged on Swollen Shoot eradication toured the villages in the cocoa producing areas to give propaganda talks and demonstrations throughout the month of September. The Produce Inspection branch of the Department of Marketing and Exports renewed their propaganda amongst buyers and middlemen at all Gazetted grading stations and a team of fermentation demonstrators has been engaged to teach fermentation throughout the period of the main crop harvesting season. A cinema film entitled "It pays to take Care" which was specially taken under the direction of the Agricultural Department to illustrate the essential features of harvesting, fermenting, and drying cocoa, has been released by the Cinema Section of the Public Relations office for showing in villages throughout the cocoa producing areas of the Western Provinces.

6. Staff Matters: Mr. J.M. Roberts proceeded on leave in August and Messrs C.A. Parkinson and W.M. Phillips have resumed duty from absence on leave. Mr. J.A. Ayorinde has been promoted on trial to the Senior Service and has been carrying out the duties of Cocoa Survey Officer at Ilesha.

PART II.

SWOLLEN SHOOT.

Reference was made in the previous quarterly report to the need for additional staff to deal more effectively with the eradication and control of Swollen Shoot disease. The necessary financial provision has been approved by the Nigeria Cocoa Marketing Board and in July, the Officer-in-charge of Swollen Shoot operations made a special visit to the United Kingdom to assist in the recruitment of twelve temporary Emergency Disease Control Officers. By the end of September all twelve officers had been appointed and were at work in Nigeria. Temporary houses to accommodate this additional staff are being erected at suitable centres within the affected areas and are nearly ready for occupation.

with.....

10/3/54
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With the approach of the main crop harvesting season it has been necessary to suspend the cutting of trees which are bearing a crop if the farmer expresses a wish to have cutting deferred until he has completed his harvest, but the marking of trees is proceeding with all possible speed wherever possible.

Cutting out Statistics.

Number of trees cut during the period July - September	257,064
Total number of trees cut since commencement of Campaign	1,061,553
Total compensation paid up to 30th September 1949	£127,735

Intensive Black Survey: An intensive re-survey of all farms on the perimeter of the known area of infection was started in August and by the end of September some 5,000 acres of cocoa had been re-inspected. The object of this survey is to delineate the extremities of the diseased area in order that the full extent of infection can be more accurately assessed.

Rehabilitation Experiments: The season has been very favourable for the growth of cocoa on the plots selected for replanting trials on cut out farms and if the plants survive the coming dry season they should afford a useful demonstration of the methods to be employed in the rehabilitation of cut out farms. It seems fairly certain that there is little chance of re-establishing cocoa under these circumstances by the customary method of planting seed at stakes. Only plants raised in baskets or pots are likely to survive the first year of establishment and as soon as areas have been cleared of infection, provision will be made for the supply of planting material in this form for farmers to rehabilitate their cut out farms.

Robert Johns

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE (COCOA).

JBA+

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NIGERIA COCOA MARKETING BOARD AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES.
FIRST HALF-YEARLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
OCTOBER 1949 - MARCH 1950.

The following Agricultural schemes have been approved by the Board :-

- (a) Nigerian Cocoa Survey.
- (b) Cocoa Soil Survey.
- (c) Investigations into the Economics of the Cocoa Industry.
- (d) Improvement of Quality of Cocoa.
- (e) Long-term Rehabilitation and New Plantings of Cocoa.
- (f) Botanical and Entomological Research.
- (g) Swollen Shoot Emergency Scheme.

In addition, the Board provides funds on application for the payment of compensation for trees cut out in connection with the Swollen Shoot Campaign and expenses incurred therewith.

(a) NIGERIAN COCOA SURVEY.

Re-survey.

The resurvey of cocoa farms has continued in all Provinces and no new outbreaks of Swollen Shoot disease outside the endemic area around Ibadan have been discovered. During the period under review 88,000 acres of cocoa have been resurveyed of which 2,300 acres were previously unrecorded and 930 acres are new plantings.

Intensive Block Survey.

A new system of surveying farms in the Swollen Shoot areas near Ibadan has recently been introduced. It is known as a Block Survey and the principle involved is for survey assistants to work in groups instead of individually. It has been devised to meet the peculiar difficulties encountered where the disease is present in an endemic form as it enables a more thorough and regular contact to be maintained with the working parties in the field by the officer-in-charge as well as permitting the ground to be covered more frequently. It naturally requires additional staff and in December, all field assistants from Ilesha and Ondo were temporarily transferred to Ibadan Division to enable an intensive Block Survey to be carried out. The system has worked extremely well and as the necessary additional staff have been recruited the Ilesha and Ondo assistants have returned to their normal duties. Some 55,000 acres of cocoa have already been surveyed by the new method and a very much more complete and up to date picture of the extent of the diseased areas is now available. The teams are organised on a basis which will enable farms to be inspected at least once every six months. All outbreaks under treatment are inspected and retreated where necessary at three monthly intervals as has been the practice in the past.

Observation Plots.

Observation plots are maintained in all the principal cocoa growing Provinces of the Western Region with the object of studying the growth and yield of cocoa under varying conditions of soil and climate. Normally, the plots are two acres in size and are divided into two, one plot being managed by the farmer and the other by the Department. This affords a valuable means for comparing methods recommended by the Department for maintenance and disease control with the native farmer's practice. Records for 1949/50 season are now available and are summarised in Appendix II.

The.....

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The records show that Departmental management resulted in :-

- (a) Increase in yield of cocoa.
- (b) Decrease in the incidence of Black Pod disease.
- (c) That a profit was recorded in the majority of cases.

The plots are scattered throughout the cocoa areas and are considered to be representative of all cocoa stands growing under the varying soil and climatic conditions of the Region. The following interesting points emerge from these initial records.

During the 1949-50 crop season a high incidence of Black Pod was recorded throughout the entire cocoa areas. The records on Departmental plots show that 50% of the crop was lost in the Ondo Province and 26% in both the Ilesha Division and Abeokuta Province through Black Pod attack. Benin with the highest recorded rainfall returned a low figure of 9% loss. The Ekiti plots in the Ondo Province were selected primarily for Black Pod control, as the farmers in the area had complained that cocoa growing had become uneconomic owing to the losses incurred by Black Pod attack. At the time of taking over, almost every pod was infected and the crop prospects were accordingly extremely poor. The plots were harvested 27 times and the resulting crop only met the cost of control. It is anticipated that this heavy rate of destruction of the fungus will reduce the incidence in subsequent years.

The average loss on the Departmental plots on a Nigerian crop of 80,000 tons represents 27,200 tons of cocoa valued at £2,720,000. The farmer's losses are much greater and the indications are that crop losses through Black Pod attack range between three and four million pounds in the 1949-50 crop.

The yield figures are of particular interest in that they show a wide variation in the different age classes and in the different localities. Further records over a number of years are, however, required before reliable conclusions can be made.

Farmers are showing a greater interest in these plots and it is hoped that with further demonstration that they will adopt the recommended practices for Black Pod control.

The full time services of a Plant Pathologist are now being devoted to a thorough study of the disease under Nigerian conditions and investigations are being carried out with a view to determining more effective means of control.

Swollen Shoot.

All of the twelve temporary Cocoa Survey Officers recruited last September have been engaged on cutting out during the period under review. Farmers were allowed the option to defer cutting until the main crop was harvested and many naturally took advantage of this concession. Marking of diseased trees continued wherever possible, but opposition was repeatedly encountered either from individuals or organised bodies which necessitated frequent withdrawals of disease control staff from the districts in which they were working.

During November the Maiyegun League (an offshoot of the Maiyegun Society) was responsible for a demonstration at Olojuero village threatening the survey party with violence. This village and others nearby have not yet been inspected. Other "Maiyegun League" villages further afield have successfully been entered and farms inspected. This has been largely due to the propaganda and personal contacts of the Cocoa Survey Officers ably assisted by the Olubadan's representatives. There is no doubt that the field staff by exercising restraint, patience, and by holding propaganda meetings in the village, have done more than anything else to regain the confidence of the farmers. To date 1,700 villages have been visited and meetings held in all of them.

It.....

It is particularly regrettable that opposition to cutting out frequently originates not from farmers but from outside agencies and the campaign has undoubtedly been used as a means of enlisting popular support for motives which are quite unconnected with cocoa industry and against the interests of the farmers which they claim to represent.

Total trees cut to March 31st, 1950	1,416,923
" compensation paid up to 31st. March, 1950	£180,366

Buildings.

Ten temporary houses have been erected for the temporary Emergency Cocoa Survey Officers and are now occupied. Water has been a problem during the dry season, but it is hoped that with the installation of a pumping engine at Oahun River, guttering on houses, water storage tanks, and the purchase of two water carts, that the next dry season will not present such a problem. Houses have also been built at Ibadan and Abeokuta, and the house at Akure is nearing completion. Offices have also been built at Ibadan and Abeokuta.


(b) SOIL SURVEY.

It is likely that a team of soil scientists may be available through the office of E.C.A. and it is hoped that this work will commence in the near future. No expenditure has been incurred to date. This work is of vital importance to the whole problem of regeneration, and rehabilitation of the Swollen Shoot areas as it is necessary to locate the good cocoa soils before a comprehensive programme can be drawn up. Where conditions are considered to be unsuitable for rehabilitation with cocoa, alternative crops must be offered if the economy of the Western Region as a whole is to be preserved.

(c) ECONOMIC SURVEY.

A controlling committee for the Economic Survey of the cocoa industry has been set up under the chairmanship of Professor A.W.Ashby, Principal of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Oxford University and Professor S.H.Frankel, a member of the committee made a visit to Nigeria in 1949 for preliminary discussions. With the formation of this committee it is assumed that financial control and direction of the survey will be undertaken from Oxford and that no further action is required by the Department of Agriculture other than to assist the survey parties in Nigeria.

(d) IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY.

It is gratifying to be able to record an even further improvement in the quality of cocoa graded during the past main crop season. The percentage of Grade I cocoa has now risen to 93%. 

In addition to the propaganda drive carried out by all the field staff of the Cocoa Survey, the Ibadan Produce Traders Association appointed a number of propagandists who travelled round the bush markets in Ibadan Division of Oyo Province to contact the small middlemen buyers, who, have up to the present, proved to be most obturate in conforming to the advice given to them to produce cleaner cocom.

The Ibadan Native Administration passed regulations under the Native Authority Ordinance regulating the drying, fencing, and storage of cocoa. As in previous years a number of chiefs were engaged to tour the villages throughout the cocoa growing areas and renew the propaganda drive for cleaner and better quality cocoa. There is no doubt that the combined effort of the Cocoa Survey staff and these other agencies is very largely responsible for the very satisfactory improvement in the standard of quality of cocoa purchased by the Board.

Comparative.....

240

4.

Comparative figures for the current season and for 1948/49 as supplied by the Department of Marketing and Exports are as follows :-

Main Crop Gradings.

Grade	Sept. 1948 - Feb. 1949.		Sept. 1949 - Feb. 1950.	
	Tonnage Graded	Percentage of total	Tonnage Graded	Percentage of total
I	76,348	82.9	71,734	93.6
II	13,801	15.0	4,892	6.4
III	1,134	1.2	41	-
IV	789	.9	-	-

(e) & (f) REHABILITATION AND RESEARCH.

An assessment has been made of the nature and extent of the rehabilitation problems in the Western Provinces. Schemes of work are in progress or in the course of preparation directed towards the following objectives.

- (1) The restoration of the earning capacity of cut out areas.
- (2) The provision of improved planting material for planting in new areas and for the regeneration of old farms.
- (3) The maintenance of production of cocoa areas other than those affected by Swollen Shoot disease whose productivity is declining as a result of old age and other causes.
- (4) Establishment and cultural experiments to determine the best technique for replanting cocoa in areas of low rainfall.
- (5) Improved methods of production to increase productivity.

The Endemic Area.

The total number of trees cut out under the Swollen Shoot campaign up to the end of March is 1,416,923. This is equivalent to 2,800 acres of cocoa calculated on the basis of 500 trees per acre. On individual farms the number of trees cut out varies from a few trees only to several thousand. In many cases the farms have been established under a mixed cropping system comprising kola and wild oil palms and their productivity has not necessarily been completely lost. The first task in the rehabilitation programme will be to restore as far as possible the earning capacity of the cut out farms. For the time being this will have to be achieved through the use of alternative crops since the replanting of cocoa within the endemic area involves a serious risk of re-infection. In addition, it is believed that many of the farms are unsuitable for replanting with cocoa a second time owing to modified soil and climatic conditions which have occurred since the farms were originally planted. Various methods for the re-establishment of cocoa will be tried with the object of determining a suitable technique for general adoption. As soon as the cocoa soil survey has been completed a comprehensive cocoa replanting plan will be prepared.

A site for a nursery has been acquired on the Osun river in the centre of the endemic area and work has begun on the propagation of kolos, oil palms and oranges. A Pioneer mill is in the course of erection and a proposal to establish a citrus processing factory is under consideration.

Improved.....

Improved Planting Material.

Many cocoa farms in the Western Provinces have been planted on soils which are marginal for cocoa. Considerable areas have already died out owing to the unsuitability of the soil; others will do so in the course of time. The future productivity of the region will ultimately depend on the use of improved planting material, involving better methods of production which aim at increased productivity on a restricted area.

A cocoa propagation unit has been constructed at Ibadan and arrangements made for the establishment of seed tree blocks of selected clonal material at the I.N.A. cocoa farm and on the Departmental farm at Akure.

Regeneration of Old Farms.

A further problem which must also come up for early investigation is the regeneration of old cocoa farms. In Oyo Province, which produces 60% of the Western Provinces crop, it is estimated that there are approximately 130,000 acres of cocoa over 20 years of age, which, in the course of the next twenty years will pass out of production or cease to yield an economic return. There has been little, if any, attempt on the part of the farmers to regenerate their old cocoa farms, nevertheless, if the cocoa industry is to survive in the Western Provinces it is clear that where soil conditions are suitable cocoa must be replanted. At the same time every effort must be made to avoid the mistakes of the past by the use of improved planting material and employing more orderly methods of production which will facilitate the control of diseases and pests. As soon as the cocoa soil survey has been completed a comprehensive plan for cocoa regeneration on the better soil types can be prepared. In the meantime investigations will be made into suitable methods of regenerating old cocoa farms.

Rehabilitation Staff.

Two Senior Service officers are at present engaged full time on Cocoa Rehabilitation work and additional junior field staff are being recruited and trained.

Finance.

Work up to the end of March has been financed under Long Term Rehabilitation and New Planting but a revised comprehensive scheme will become operative with effect from April 1st.

(g) POLITICAL.

During the last six months there has been little opposition from farmers except where false propaganda has been spread by the Maiyegun League. This opposition has been usually overcome but only after considerable delay and waste of man power as the administrative difficulties of moving staff from area to area are considerable.

The only kernel of real opposition is at Oyedeji where the riot occurred in 1948 but where, incidentally there is little infection. This opposition has been directed mainly against the normal survey and has hampered the achievement of an accurate appreciation of the extent of the disease.

The Campaign is still carried out under Rules made under the Native Authority Ordinance and although official support was given by the Council, some of the members have not given their personal support. It has been evident at several meetings which have been held between members of the Council and the Department that their official support of the campaign has been a reluctant one.

£180,366.....

5028
37540

3 #
A.D. 46

NIGERIAN RAILWAY.



Memorandum.

No G.M.5617.

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE.
EBUTE METTA.

To The Chief Secretary
to the Government,
Lagos, NIGERIA.

1st February 1928.

H.P.—A.001—507-8-27

Referring to

of

Outturn of Cocoa
shipped from Apapa.

[With reference to your letter No.01904/16 of the 23rd January 1928,] The Chairman of the Niger Co: Ltd: does not state that cocoa shipped by Woermann Linie was all rail-borne and handled at Apapa, but from the inference he draws he implies that this is the case, I cannot prove how much tonnage was exported from Apapa by particular ships unless I have further data to work upon, but I can prove that a large tonnage of cocoa exported from Lagos is never handled by the Railway.

2. The following figures have been taken from "Trade Gazette" "Railway Annual Reports" and from other sources available:-

COCOA EXPORTS	January to December 1926.	
Lagos	21,429 tons	54.8%
Iddo	13,817 "	35.3%
Other Ports	<u>3,855</u> "	9.9%
Total	39,101	

COCOA EXPORTS	January to December 1927.	
Lagos	16,658 tons	42.5%
Iddo & Apapa	18,676 "	47.7%
(Iddo 1,478 tons Jan:1927)		
Other Ports	<u>3,818</u> "	9.8%
Total	39,152	

Cocoa shipped from other ports need not be considered in this memorandum, the combined tonnage of cocoa exported

BC.2.WCB.

from

16. Min. Agric 1/439

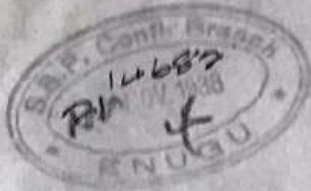
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CONFIDENTIAL



PROVINCIAL OFFICE,
IJEBU-ODE, NIGERIA,

16 November, 1938.



The Honourable the Secretary,
Southern Provinces,
E n u g u .

Cocoa Commissioners' Findings:
Reaction to in Ijebu Ode.

With reference to your telegram No. 5291/14682 of the 15th of November, calling for a report on the reactions in this Province to the Cocoa Commissioners' findings, the Acting Resident is at present touring the Waterside District and cannot easily be reached by messenger. In order to save time, I have therefore consulted the Inspector of Produce who informs me as follows.

2. The general attitude is one of satisfaction towards those sections of the Report which condemn the Pool; the middlemen are indignant at the recommendations put forward for their own elimination and propose to enquire whether Government intends to make these recommendations part of its policy. In this connection, I would refer you to the report on a mass meeting held here on the 10th of November contained in column 3 of page 6 of the Nigerian Daily Times of the 15th of November, 1938.

See p. 304

3. A few farmers express satisfaction with the report as a whole and would be glad to see the middlemen eliminated; the majority, however, are in sympathy with the middlemen, on whom they are, under present conditions, dependent for advances on their crops.

f

Amul...
Acting Resident,
Ijebu Province.

4

from Lagos and Apapa in 1926 & 1927 is as under:-

Lagos	38,087 tons	54.34%
Apapa	<u>32,493</u> "	45.66%
Total	70,580	

It can safely be assumed that 54% of the tonnage exported during the last two years was never handled by the Railway, and unless the poor outturn compared with Accra is solely confined to railborne cocoa there does not appear to be any case to answer.

3. Cocoa being much more valuable than Groundnuts, or Palm Kernels, is shipped in better quality bags, the sacks are not filled to fullest capacity, that is they are not stretched to the same extent as Groundnut sacks, and it is seldom that a broken or burst sack is seen. During two years when 32,490 tons were handled by the Railway cocoa swept up from the wharf and sheds filled 17 sacks only, giving a percentage loss on the total of .0035% only.

4. I cannot explain the large difference in outturn between the ports of Lagos and Accra unless it is due to conditions over which the Railway has no control, it is obvious from figures produced in the previous paragraphs that the loss is not due to poor quality sacks or careless handling at Apapa. Practically all cocoa loaded at up country stations is done by the owners, we accept their weights for payment of freight, and reserve the right to check total weight over weighbridges as occasion arises, a small percentage of wagons are thus weighed. I do not like to suggest it, but it is possible that weighment by owners at stations may be inaccurate, and a further possible cause is that a good deal of Accra cocoa is shipped

5-19

- 3 -

shipped wet, that is the bags are saturated with sea water and that the cocoa absorbs some of this moisture which does not dry out during the ensuing voyage.

Ed Brame Nesbitt
for General Manager.

BC.2.WCB.

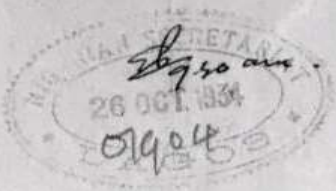
8
No. 4397/DA/360

20 October, 1934,

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT,

Ibadan,

NIGERIA.



The Cocoa Association of London :
July Report No. 47.

The Honourable
The Chief Secretary to the Government,
Nigerian Secretariat,
Lagos.

In envelope

I enclose for your information and return in due course a copy of the July report of the Cocoa Association of London, No. 47, containing on pages 3, 4 and 5, a report by Mr. McFall of the United Africa Company upon the quality of British West African cocoa, which may be of interest.

2. I have corrected one slight error by marginal note; and I have written to the Association, calling their attention to this error.

O. Mullens
DIRECTOR.

C.S. 8
248. For information with report
in envelope -

Kennedy
30/10

G.C.W.
31.10.34.

FAA.

80 27/10

Mc. Iban
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G.M.F.

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No 1222/01/193

MEMORANDUM.

20 MARCH, 1922.

THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE,

To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT,
NIGERIAN SECRETARIAT,

I H A D A N.

L A G O S.

General Form No. 16
H.P.D., Lagos. (S.P.D. 200000) (3)

Grading of Cocoa.

*Bank not received
has till 14th March.*

*W
W*

In reply to your memorandum No. 02157/6 dated 11th March, 1922:- as you suggest in paragraph 3, I had not seen the correspondence in 1912 to which you refer. And one of the letters referred to viz. No. 1353/136/1912 of 20th July 1912 I have not yet been able to find. From the other letters in my file of that year it appears that the question then was mainly that of the means of teaching the natives to ferment their cocoa. The question of a grading system, so far as I can see from my file, dropped because my predecessors gave little support to it and protested strenuously against the proposed levy of \$2 per lb. to cover the cost of the system. Had some grading system, even on a small scale, been introduced then, I believe that the export of cocoa from Nigeria to day would not only consist of a very different quality of cocoa, but would also be much greater in volume.

2. The statement in your paragraph 3 comes as a very great surprise to me for the following reasons:-

(a) In, so far as I know, every country with any important export of a raw agricultural staple product, the grading of produce is regarded as a matter of first rate importance, and has in some form or other been initiated or assisted by Government. It is true that in some countries the Governments have been able to work up a co-operative associations, whose operations are governed by legislation and controlled by Government officials. But where such arrangements are not possible, the Governments have had to use direct agents.

*W
W*
1922

* An article with the
corn in ...
As instances of such grading systems I might mention the
following:- wheat in Canada, maize in South Africa, hemp in
Philippines, cotton in India (the most important part of the
work of the Indian Cotton Committee related to this question).
Innumerable other instances might be quoted. In many cases
the introduction of such grading systems has been the means
of resuscitating industries on the verge of collapse.
(b) Such a grading system is entirely in the
interest of the native producers.
(c) I have studied the file of correspondence on
this subject in 1918; in that case the correspondence
apparently arose from a suggestion by the Secretary of State,
at the instance of one of the firms. The attitude of
Government throughout appeared to be favourable to some such
action as I am now recommending; but the matter was closed by
a representative of the exporting firms stating at a meeting
that they no longer considered that any action was necessary.
(My predecessor was then strongly in favour of the proposal
and disagreed with the statement made at the meeting).
3. Under these circumstances I naturally thought that
the correct action for me to take now, was to approach the
firms and endeavour to come to some understanding with them,
so that I could be able to put to Government suggestions to
which the firms would not be antagonistic; or at least to
ascertain definitely their attitude before doing anything
further. Had I realized that the policy of Government is
such as you state it to be, I should, of course, have
approached you in the first instance.
4. In regard to your paragraph 4, I think that I can
understand and appreciate the grounds on which the attitude
you describe is adopted, and welcome the opportunity of
explaining the reasons ^{for} my own opinions, in replying to
this paragraph.
(a)

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following:- wheat in Canada, maize in South Africa, hemp in
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understand and appreciate the grounds on which the attitude
you describe is adopted, and welcome the opportunity of
explaining the reasons ^{for} my own opinions, in replying to
this paragraph.

(a)

*In practice, it is
 supposed that this operation
 is approved -
 to be done properly.
 a sufficient quantity
 of specially selected
 prepared at the
 as inherent price
 to the quantity
 sufficient for
 a high quality
 as very rarely
 obtainable here
 a high product*

29.3.22

(a) The introduction of such a grading system is suggested purely in the interest of the producer, to enable him to get a higher price for his produce if he prepares it properly. Provided that the condition of the market is such that even low grade produce can be exported, it is a matter of little importance to the ordinary exporting firm's representative whether he handles a high grade or a low grade product. In fact I might go further and say that frequently when the demand is strong, then, taking a narrow view, such as is often taken by a local representative, it actually appears to be preferable to handle a low grade product, and not to differentiate between good and bad. The exporters are neither producers nor consumers; their business is to buy and sell. Provided that the low grade product is saleable at a price which enables them to buy and export freely, then they turn the same profit on it as on higher grades. And there is less risk through bad judgement by subordinates; and less money needed to finance the buying of low grade products. When the market, however, is in a depressed condition, then it becomes increasingly difficult to export a low grade product on a large scale, and import trade also suffers; then the exporters are anxious for something to be done to enable them to buy better qualities of produce.

(b) Although I have frequently been told by traders that some of their junior staff know little about quality in cocoa, I do not regard this as being in any way a serious factor in the matter. The reason that the grading system is necessary is that its absence works in the following extremely vicious circle:- without such a system only small quantities of superior grade are brought in to each buyer, and it is not really worth their while, for the reasons stated in (a) above, to deal with these small quantities separately, and give the full value for them. On the other hand, large quantities of superior grade will not

17

6. The Chamber of Commerce have appointed a special committee to go into the matter, and I was arranging to meet them very shortly. In case you wish me not to do so, I should be obliged if you will inform me by wire. In any case I will call at the Secretariat before meeting them.

O. Paulk
DIRECTOR.

20/1/20

EAS.

Chamber of Commerce.

Lagos,
NIGERIA,
WEST AFRICA.

April 11th, 1922.

Sir:-

In conformity with the meeting of the Cocoa Committee of this Chamber held on Saturday, the 1st instant, at which you were good enough to be present, I am now requested to put on record the general decisions then arrived at, and which have now been submitted to the Chamber.

It was agreed:-

- (1). That the transfer of the entire produce inspection system to the Agricultural Department would be welcomed.
- (2). That the point of cardinal importance was the securing of a really efficient service.
- (3). That with regard to Cocoa, grading is desirable and bags so graded should be sealed indicating the grade and date of grading.
- (4). That the grading should take place at the point of railment for export.
- (5). That there should be four grades, viz:-
 1. F.F.
 2. F.A.Q.
 3. Good Nigerian Old Crop.
 4. Rejects (Cocoa not conforming to above grades).
- (6). That at every railway station a native inspector should be placed, excepting at such stations where the volume of produce traffic would not justify same.
- (7). That an adequate staff of trained European Inspectors, probably numbering twelve, should be appointed for the supervision of the service.
- (8). To secure the maximum efficiency for the European supervisory service, it is suggested that the Director of Agriculture should arrange for private railway coaches for the European Inspectors.
- (9). That legislation should provide that no cocoa be accepted for railment except after inspection and grading, or to a grading station from a non-grading station.
- (10). That an Advisory Board be constituted consisting of the Director of Agriculture and such of his Officers as he may appoint and three representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, such Board to meet regularly for dealing with difficulties which might rise and for the exchange of views as between Government and the chamber.
- (11). Special importance is attached to the point that such
pro

produce grading and inspection service should be financially autonomous, all fees derived therefrom being expended on the development of the service.

(12). That the Director of Agriculture be asked to prepare a detailed scheme on the lines agreed upon, estimating the cost per annum of such a service, and the probable cost per ton, so that the Chamber may communicate same to the home Chambers for the expression of their views.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd) G. F. Hannah
Secretary.

THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE,

I B A D A N.

JLM/RW.

The Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool.
Liverpool.

35

August 30th, 1922.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that the Representatives of the African Trade Section of the Liverpool and Manchester Chambers of Commerce recently had an opportunity of conferring with Dr. Faulkner of the Agricultural Department of Nigeria on the question of the inspection of produce generally and grading of cocoa. The Representatives of the two Chambers concerned were unanimously of opinion:-

- (1) THAT the present system of inspecting produce in Nigeria is not satisfactorily and efficiently carried out.
- (2) THAT they are strongly in favour of the continuance of the inspection of produce provided that it is efficiently carried out, and that in their opinion this can only be attained by the Duty being transferred from the Customs Department to the Department of Agriculture.
- (3) THAT whatever revenue is derived from the fees levied for the inspection of produce should be placed at the disposal of the Department of Agriculture for inspection purposes.
- (4) THAT the details of any scheme for the inspection of produce should be settled only after consultation with the Merchants.

Ac. 1
2.9.22

An endeavour will be made to arrange a further conference with Dr. Faulkner before his return to West Africa, when the Committee hope to be in a position to submit detailed suggestions regarding fees which should be charged to cover the cost of an efficient inspection of

His Excellency Sir Hugh Clifford, G.C.M.G.
Governor of Nigeria,
Government House,
Lagos,
Nigeria.



*See next page for copy sent
2.9.22*

100

**Draft Regulations for the Adulteration of Produce Ordinance
proposed by the Advisory Committee of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce.**

- Appointments.** 1. (a) The Director of Agriculture shall be responsible to the Governor for the conduct of the Produce Examination Department.
(b) The Director of Agriculture may, with the approval of the Governor, appoint such number of suitable persons to be Inspectors and Examiners as may be required.
- Scope of Ordinance.** 2. (a) The Ordinance and Regulations shall apply to Palm Oil, Palm Kernels and Cocoa (hereinafter referred to as Produce).
(b) The Regulations shall apply only to the areas and places for which Produce examiners are appointed as given in the Schedule appended. The Schedule may be amended from time to time by notification in the Gazette.
- Exportation of Produce.** 3. (a) No produce shall be exported unless covered by an Inspection Certificate. Inspection Certificates shall be in quadruplicate, one copy to be retained by the Inspection Department, three copies to be handed to the Merchant, of which one must be handed to the Customs Department, and two for the use of the Merchant.
(b) Palm Kernels which after being examined and bought have deteriorated either from long storage or any other cause so that the cost of bringing them up to the prescribed standard of purity would be out of all proportion to the value of such Palm Kernels may be exported without further examination, but only under the written authority of the Director of Agriculture. Bags containing such inferior Produce shall not be marked or sealed.
- Rating of Produce.** 4. (a) No Produce shall be railed from any place within the prescribed area unless an Inspection Certificate covering the number of packages consigned has been exhibited to the Railway at the sending station, and the Waybill endorsed by the Railway Booking clerk with the reference number and date of the Inspection Certificate.
(b) This Regulation shall not apply to Palm Oil intended for local consumption.
- Examination of Produce offered for sale for Exports.** 5. (a) For convenience of export merchants the Produce Examiners shall be requested to attend at merchants recognised buying premises for inspecting Produce offered for sale for export.
(b) When arrangements are made for the examination of such Produce at the premises of an export merchant, the merchant shall provide scales and weights, trays, triers, tarpaulins, measures, sieves and other implements necessary for examining produce.
(c) When an examiner finds that any Produce offered for sale is adulterated or does not comply with the prescribed standard of purity, but is satisfied that the defect in the produce was not known to the intending seller, he may permit him to clean the produce if the defect can be remedied.
- Procedure after Inspection.** 6. (a) All Palm Kernels and Cocoa found to comply with the prescribed standard of purity shall be bagged and the bags sewn up in the presence of the examiner, who shall then affix a mark or seal to each bag in a manner approved by the Director of Agriculture. As soon as produce has been examined, all shell and extraneous matter shall be destroyed by the Inspection Dept.
(b) The examiner shall issue a certificate for all produce which is found after examination to be of the standard prescribed by these regulations. In the case of cocoa this certificate shall state whether grade 1 or grade 2, as provided in regulation 15.(c).
(c) Provided that there is no evidence that the bags have been opened after examination, the certificates will be regarded by the Customs and Railway Authorities as evidence that the produce has been examined and passed as fit for export. But the produce shall still be liable to subsequent examination in accordance with the terms of the Produce Adulteration Ordinance.
(d) In case any produce in stamped or sealed bags and covered by a certificate is found to be inferior to the standard hereafter prescribed the produce shall be dealt with in accordance with the ordinance and these regulations. But in case the inferiority of such produce is due to the substitution of inferior produce or introduction of any foreign matter subsequent to examination, this shall be deemed to be a fraudulent proceeding and a criminal offence. The onus of proof that the inferiority is due to deterioration and not to any fraudulent act shall rest upon the owner of the produce.
(e) A register shall be kept by the owner of each approved produce store into which, after being marked or sealed, the number of bags and weight of all palm kernels and cocoa bought shall be entered, and each entry shall be signed by the examiner.
The number of casks and weight of palm oil bought shall also be entered in a register and each entry shall be signed by the examiner.

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Protection of Produce in Transit.

7. The bottoms of boats and canoes used in the transport of produce shall be covered with dunnage in such a way as to prevent the contact of Produce with water in the boat or canoe, and suitable coverings shall be available to protect Produce from the weather.

8. Receptacles containing Palm Oil must be kept closed in transit between the markets and the export stores.

Storing of Produce.

9. Produce intended for export shall be stored in dry well ventilated buildings, suitably floored and kept clean. The Examiner must see that Palm Kernels and Cocoa, as soon as sold, are bagged in clean dry bags and stored on a wooden platform or other suitable surface, in a manner approved by the Superintending Inspector.

Standard of Purity For Produce.

10. (a) Palm Kernels shall not contain more than 4% of shell, fibre, rotten or decayed kernels, fluff, sand or other extraneous matter, and must be thoroughly dry and hard.

(b) Palm Oil shall not contain more than 2% of water or extraneous substances.

(c) Cocoa shall be thoroughly dry, and shall not contain more than 1% of shell, dust or other extraneous matter.

Dues.

11. The following dues shall be collected on Produce exported to defray the cost of examination.

PORT OF LAGOS.			OTHER PORT.		
Palm Kernels	9d.	per. ton	Palm Kernels	6d.	per ton
Palm Oil	1/-	" "	Palm Oil	6d.	" "
Cocoa	2/6	" "	Cocoa	1/8d.	" "

Examination and Tests.

12. PALM KERNELS. (a) Not less than a third of the quantity of Palm Kernels offered for sale shall be selected by the Examiner and spread on a tarpaulin or other suitable clean surface for testing purposes. The whole of the Palm Kernels shall be inspected if required by the buyer.

(b) From the quantity selected, 25 oz. avoirdupois shall be taken indiscriminately, and all shell and other impurities carefully separated from the Kernels and any shell adhering to the kernels shall be removed. The separating of the extraneous matter from the produce shall be done on trays or other suitable clean surface, not on a sack or on the ground. If the extraneous matter so collected exceeds 1 oz., the produce shall be cleaned by the owner before again offered for sale.

(c) The use of suitable mesh sieves shall be enforced in all cases before bagging, whether the Produce shows an excess of extraneous matter or substance or not, to ensure a uniform quality and the removal of all sand, fluff, small shell etc.

13. PALM OIL. (a) For testing purposes a sample not less than 1 pint shall be taken from the bottom of each receptacle by means of an approved testing rod or tube.

(b) The Oil thus obtained shall be heated in the trypan slowly and when sufficiently liquefied, carefully run off, the extraneous matter remaining in the trypan.

(c) The extraneous matter shall then be measured and if it exceeds 2% the Oil shall be deemed not to comply with the prescribed standard of purity.

(d) When the examination is made on the premises or at the request of an intending purchaser and the Oil is found to comply with the prescribed standard of purity the intending purchaser shall provide the labour necessary for carrying out the test. If the Oil is found not to comply with the prescribed standard of purity it shall be cleansed by the owner before again being offered for sale.

14. COCOA. (a) Cocoa shall be spread out on a tarpaulin or other suitable clean surface so that all the beans are accessible for examination purposes.

(b) As many samples as may be deemed necessary, each not less than 25 oz., shall be selected by the Examiner, and if extraneous matter (which shall not include defective beans) is found in excess of 1% the Cocoa shall be cleaned by the owner before again being offered for sale.

(c) For grading purposes a sample of 100 beans of Cocoa shall be taken and cut, and the Cocoa shall be classed as Grade 1 if it does not contain more than 20% of defective beans, and as Grade 2 if the defective beans exceed 20%.

THE LAGOS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

[Signature]

Secretary

CS026/4
37468

NIGERIA
NO 123

Downing Street,
24 January, 1922.



Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter from the Board of Trade with regard to the present and probable future state of the cocoa market which you will no doubt find of interest.

7th January.

This letter was written in reply to a request to the Board of Trade for information as to the probable course of prices of cocoa in the future, in view of the serious situation in the Trinidad cocoa industry.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
humble servant,

*A copy of the letter
sent to the Board of Trade
1st. inst. - see the
enclosed G.O. file.*

Kristen Churchill

GOVERNOR

SIR HUGH CLIFFORD, G.C.M.G.,

etc., etc., etc.

S.895/21.

BOARD OF TRADE,
STATISTICAL DEPARTMENT,
Great George Street,

ENCLASURE TO DESPATCH, London, S.W.1.
No. 123 OF 24 January 22 7th January, 1922.

Sir,

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Davis's letter 61510/21 of 24th December last on the subject of the cocoa industry of Trinidad and the future course of the cocoa market, and to offer the following observations thereon for the information of Mr. Secretary Churchill.

1. The following table shows the imports of Raw Cocoa into the United Kingdom:-

Imports.	1913.	1920	1921 (11 months).
	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.
From Foreign Countries	328,772.	316,452.	
From British Possessions.	370,868	1,744,852.	
Total Imports.....	699,640	2,061,304	1,067,116.
Re-exports.....	135,559	874,737	530,969.
Retained in United Kingdom	564,081.	1,186,567.	536,147.

Separate particulars regarding the imports from Trinidad are not shown in the trade statistics of the United Kingdom but the imports from the British West India Islands as a whole were about 10% greater in the first eleven months of 1921 than in the corresponding period of 1913, though they were about 39% less than the imports for the first eleven months of 1920.

The Under Secretary of State
Colonial Office,

S.W.1.

2.

2. The following table shows the exports of Raw Cocoa from those British Possessions which are the leading producers.

	1913.	1919.	1920.
	million lbs.		
Ceylon	7.7.	6.6.	6.3.
Nigeria.....	8.1.	57.6.	38.4.
Gold Coast	113.2.	394.6.	279.5.
Jamaica....	5.2.	7.9.	x
St. Lucia....	1.6.	1.8.	x
Grenada.....	11.8.	11.1.	9.2.
Leeward Is.	1.1.	0.3.	x
Trinidad and Tobago.	48.1.	60.7.	62.7.

Handwritten notes:
 In 1913
 One quantity
 all was
 returned to
 Gov.
 J.C.
 11-2-22

x Information not available.

The dominant feature of the cocoa industry in the last ten years has been the great development of production in is mostly of inferior grade and its cost of production West Africa. As West African cocoa is low, the very large growth in production must have seriously affected all other producing areas (except those whose cocoa was of a specially desirable quality), particularly when the fall in selling prices became pronounced.

Handwritten notes:
 S. G. Trinidad
 export M. 1
 11
 11-2-22

3. The consumption of cocoa in the United Kingdom is much greater than it was before the war, as is shown by the following figures of imported Raw Cocoa entered for home consumption

	cwts.
First eleven months of 1913 ..	503,087.
" " " " 1920 ..	941,207.
" " " " 1921 ..	855,486.

The decrease in 1921 may be due to the fact that entries for home consumption include not only cocoa consumed in the period but also that put into stock at inland distribution points

points, and the probably correct deduction from these figures is that there was some over-stocking in 1920.

*from the fact
S.W. Africa
is a very
large
quantity
in the
market*

4. Consideration of the import figures for the United Kingdom and of the exports from British producing countries would lead to the conclusion that in 1920 there was considerable over production and that much more was imported into the United Kingdom than could be consumed. This is confirmed by the quantities in bonded warehouses which on the following dates

were:-

	cwts.
30th November 1913 ...	177,000
" " 1920 ...	1,050,000
" " 1921. ...	618,000

*A quantity
of 1,050,000
is a
large
quantity*

*1/2
11.2.20*

Whereas in 1913 only about a third of a year's entries for consumption in the United Kingdom was held in bond, in 1920 there was the equivalent of about a whole year's entries for consumption. The requirements of other countries in 1920 for cocoa re-exported from the United Kingdom appear also to have been exaggerated. The natural result was a drastic curtailment of imports and re-exports in 1921, and at the same time there was a heavy fall in prices, as is shown by the following illustrative quotations (the prices are ex-duty):-

	July, 1914.	April 1920.	Dec. 1921.
	per cwt.	per cwt.	per cwt.
Guayaquil (best quality)	66/-	180/-	15/-
Trinidad (middle)	58/-	137/-	50/-
West African (lowest)	53/6	105/-	35/-

5. It does not appear possible to forecast the course of prices of cocoa even in the immediate future. It would seem not unreasonable

5

unreasonable to conclude that prices cannot fall seriously
below the present level, especially since bonded stocks have
been reduced by 40%. On the other hand, these stocks are still
very large and may continue to depress the market, and it is
quite uncertain whether West Africa with its low costs might
not reap the advantage of any improvement in prices, rather
than countries producing higher quality cocoas.

I have etc.,

(Sgd) A.W.Flux.

②

8.

ENDORSEMENT SHEET.

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE.
LAGOS.

No. C1904/8

Date 23rd February, 1922.

To The Director of Agriculture,
I b a d a n.

The annexed document - Colonial Office Despatch No. 123 dated the 24th January with 5 attachments regarding the future status of cocoa market is forwarded for YOUR information.

Please return it with your reply typed below at your earliest convenience.

For Director
DIRECTOR OF
AGRICULTURE, S.P.
RECEIVED 27 FEB 1922

J.S. Thomas
for Chief Secretary.

C.P.O., Lagos. No. 21 400 000

REPLY.

H. C. B.,

Perused with interest and returned with thanks. A comparison of the first and third columns of the table of prices on page 4, shows how much more Nigerian could gain now by an improvement in the quality of her cocoa than was the case in 1914. The general level of prices (as is shown by this table) is much the same now as then. But in 1914 West African was worth only 12/6 a cwt. less than Guayaquil (i.e. it was worth over 80% of the price of the latter); it now fetches 40/- a cwt. less than Guayaquil (i.e. is not worth half as much).

RECEIVED
27 FEB 1922

J.S.
To see. The question of
improving the quality of cocoa is being
pursued elsewhere
A 15.3.22

D of A.
11.3.22



ALL COMMUNICATIONS
 TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE
 CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES,
 THE ABOVE REFERENCE AND THE
 DATE OF THIS LETTER BEING QUOTED.

TELEGRAMS, "CROWN, LONDON."
 TELEPHONE, 7780 VICTORIA.

4, MILLBANK,
 WESTMINSTER,
 LONDON. S.W. 1.

21st March 1922.

Sir,

I have the honour to state that at a recent interview with Mr. F. J. Evans and Mr. Cameron, who is, we understand sailing this week to take charge of the Cameroons Plantations during Mr. Evans' stay in this country, it was proposed that the Plantations Dept. should in future be kept in closer touch with the world's markets in order that suitable times and destinations may be selected for shipments of cocoa. It has been arranged that Messrs. Frame & Co. who will sell as our agents outside the United Kingdom, will advise us, whenever they think a shipment advisable, of the conditions of the various markets, and that we shall cable this information to the Cameroons, using the A. B. C. code, 6th Edition, two copies of which we have ordered at the request of Mr. Evans; one of these Mr. Cameron takes with him and the other will be retained for use in this office. It is proposed, in addition to the special advices sent on the suggestion of Messrs. Frame & Co., to send regular monthly cables quoting the latest prices in the principal markets and based on figures given by them and by Messrs. Figgis and Co., who will continue to sell for us in London.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. Williams

for Crown Agents.

The Chief Secretary,
 Lagos,
 Nigeria.



P.E.
 CA

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12

JOHN HOLT & COMPANY (LIVERPOOL) LTD.

DISTRICT OFFICE,

LAGOS.

17th. October, 1933.

The Superintending Inspector of Produce,
Old Golf Course, Lagos.

Dear Sir,

MID CROP COCOA.

In accordance with your request, we asked our Head Office to give their reasons for instructing us to stop buying midcrop cocoa on August 30th. and give herewith an extract from their reply: -

" Now that dealing have started in Main Crop - no one will look at midcrop of even Grade 2 quality, whereas Grade 3, which is shut out of the American market becomes an impossible proposition.

We are afraid that, next season, if the growers do not market their midcrop at the proper time they will find none of the Merchants will deal in this article after June".

2. We would suggest that this information is of sufficient importance to warrant being passed on to the Farmers through your Department and their various associations

Yours faithfully,

JOHN HOLT & CO. (LIVERPOOL) LTD.

(Sgd) R. Lindsay-Lees

DISTRICT AGENT.

No. 285/437.

19th October, 1933.

The Principal Assistant Secretary, (Head)
General Office,
Nigerian Secretariat,
Lagos.

To you for information, reference our conversation of yesterday's date on the telephone.



C.S. We may hear from S.A. on this, but in the meantime I submit this for information flow.
Lindsay 23.10.33 G.C.W.

Suptg. Inspector of Produce.
SUPTG. INSPECTOR OF PRODUCE.

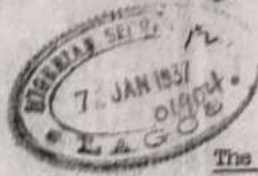
No. 59/1A/162

6 January, 1937.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT,

I B A D A N,

NIGERIA.



The Cocoa Association of London,
November Monthly Report -
Extract from.

The Honourable
The Chief Secretary to the Govt.,
Nigerian Secretariat,
Lagos.

I herewith forward for your information an extract
from the November monthly report of the Cocoa Association
of London.

M. S. Soyemba
for DIRECTOR.

(Drafted by Capt. Mackie)

Continued Expansion in Cocoa
Consumption.

The consistent increase in Cocoa consumption which has been noticeable throughout the current year, following on top of record consumption in the previous year, is reflected in the "duty paid" figures for the third quarter of 1936. The three countries which publish official returns of the deliveries upon which duty has been paid - United Kingdom, France and Germany - show increases of 20.18 per cent., 12.82 per cent. and 6.63 per cent. respectively, for the period January to September. In U. S. A., where "deliveries for consumption" are calculated to be very closely in line with actual consumption, the increase is equal to 7.42 per cent. The average of these four countries shows an increase of 36,715 tons, or 11.36 per cent., over January-September 1935.

The average monthly consumption in these four major markets, U. S. A., U. K., Germany and France, is, in the current year, at the rate of 39,960 tons, representing in a complete year 479,520 tons, a very big proportion of the world's production and absorption. In 1934 the combined consumption was only 415,592 tons.

Comparisons when made with consumption in the same period of 1934, two years ago, are even more striking, in the case of U. K., U. S. A., and France. Germany's peak year was 1934, but restriction of imports and currency set imports sharply back in 1935, from which, as has been noted, some recovery has been made during this year. The increase

of

15

of "duty paid" quantity in U.K. during January-September 1936, as compared with the same period of 1934, is no less than 40.7 per cent., the increase in terms of volume being 22,275 tons. The tonnage increase for the same comparative periods in deliveries to consumption in U.S.A. was 41,027 tons, or 27.22 per cent., and the increase in "duty paid" in France, in the same comparative periods, was 4,860 tons, or 15.81 per cent.

Returning to the figures of 1936 compared with 1935: actual consumption in most European countries, or even of "duty paid," are not available, and it is necessary to rely upon records of imports as a guide to the expansion or contraction of consumption.

The eighteen European countries (including U.K., Germany and France) record a combined total of imports during January to September (in some cases figures are only available to July and August) of 285,491 tons, against 249,318 tons for the identical periods of 1935, an increase of 36,173 tons, or 14½ per cent.

Several countries show a decrease in imports, but there appear to be reasons other than popular taste in such cases as Spain and Italy. Quotas and currency troubles are no doubt responsible for smaller or delayed imports into Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Russia leads the increase of imports with over 150 per cent., Irish Free State makes a good showing with 43 per cent. increase, but because of volume involved, Holland's increase of nearly 11 per cent. is more important, imports January-September being 51,446 tons against 46,497 tons in the same period of 1935.

Switzerland shows a small increase, which is against recent trend, and Belgium shows an increase of imports of about 6½ per cent., with 5,729 tons against 5,384 tons.

Turning from Europe, the most striking increase of imports is into Australia, where in January to July, the latest figures available, the imports are 8,246 tons against 4,851 tons in the same period of 1935, an increase of nearly 70 per cent. The consumption of chocolate products seems to thrive under the Union Jack, as Canada increased her imports in January to July by about 14 per cent., the figure being 8,305 tons this year against 7,297 tons last year.

x

x

x

JOK.

ca YE

4-5 submitted for 97

11/1/37
 17/1/37

13.1.37

G.W.
 14.1.37

p.a.
 20 30/3/40
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14/1/37