

To my late mother, and paternal grandmother

NTOMBIZONKE

and

NOKUPHOFU BHENGU



DECLARATION

I declare that:

ROLE ENACTMENT OF RURAL WOMEN: A SOCIOLOGICAL -
EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ROLE BEHAVIOUR AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT,

is my own work. All the sources I have used, as quotations
or references have been indicated and acknowledged.

D SBONGILE NENE

December 1982

ROLE ENACTMENT OF RURAL WOMEN: A SOCIOLOGICAL -
EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ROLE BEHAVIOUR AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

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CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Statement of the problem

The present traditional role of rural African women does not offer them opportunities to participate in activities that fall beyond the immediate domestic and economic chores of a subsistence type.

The rigid cultural milieu within which women define their sphere of activity, develop their interpersonal relationships, and define goals for achievement has helped to sustain, over generations, a distinct rural female way of life, that has, on the one hand, found easy accommodation in traditionalism, and on the other helped to perpetuate the status quo.

Socialisation in the hands of other women of an older generation within a close-knit social system has encouraged self images of rural women that are not easily amenable to changing forces developing externally to their own community. Socialised to play a submissive role within the family as either daughters or wives, as well as in institutional relationships outside of the family, they fail to engage in meaningful decision-making that would serve to break the rigid socio-cultural pattern of their lifestyle.

The issue of their restricted status within their society, coupled with a limited role definition is further heightened by the relative social isolation of the rural environment from all kinds of external influences of a fast-changing developing society.

On account of this isolation they lack access to the cultural inputs or economic infrastructure that is necessary to stimulate new activities, attitudes and expectations, which would effectively and expeditiously cause existing ones to be adapted to demands of a developing community.

At all levels of their performance the rural women are still bound to engage in subsistence activities, whether these be in the area of domestic care or that of basic economic activities linked to a rural subsistence economy. Decision-making power, in traditional rural society, is mainly vested in the authority of the male role except in those areas of activity where taboo or role-activity excludes the males as normative patterns of behaviour demand.

Since there is a lack of facilities for various forms of personal achievement economically, rural women characteristically belong to a fairly homogeneous group in terms of class structure. The basic means to success i.e. land and labour, are within the reach of the majority of them, as the traditional land tenure system of communal holding secures both pastoral and agricultural rights to bona fide members of the society, whilst the family unit still shares responsibility over family (chores) tasks.

Geographic isolation can also limit the sphere of social contacts for the women, either by making it a costly and rare experience for them to leave the area for protracted periods at a time, (and thus be exposed to external influences), or because of the critical nature of their role activities, both within the family unit, (especially as mothers), as well as producers of food crops and services for their families.

Thus confined, socially and geographically, to a life which is insular women lack any degree of mobility sufficient to help them develop an urge for productive activities that will raise their standard of living, and lay a foundation for a viable rural community.

Due to critical pressures of keeping families together and producing household equipment on the one hand, while engaging in economic activities like agriculture and handicrafts, on the other, women find it difficult to extend their roles beyond these immediately-demanding pursuits - which, on their own, are not only arduous and time consuming, but are also necessary for survival. Thus activities that will interfere with their basic role of housewife and provisioner for family are kept to a

minimum as they are considered of secondary value, or unimportant.

The women's isolation is also entrenched through lack of educational facilities, a basic need to alleviate stress in their traditional role; while at the same time being exposed to socio-cultural experiences that will best prepare them for a developing community. As they rely on traditional knowledge and socialising agents, they are characteristically isolated from new ideas and experiences.

Without experiencing creative alternatives to their specifically female role as traditionally defined for them, they are further removed from access to areas which they come to regard as belonging to the sphere of men regardless of the realities of their life style.

Relinquishing political leadership to men, they further isolate themselves from externally-introduced development schemes like the extension service which is run by male agents. Women do not benefit greatly from such services as the rewards for their economic activities, in the fields and small market places, are minimal and unreliable. This contrasts with the labour input made by the women.

Traditional role definition at present offers rural women the main available outlet for self-expression and productivity, in the absence of new forces for change and development. Further isolation limits them from socio-cultural influences that will lead to more diversified role performance.

Being the major rural population group (in terms of numbers) remaining in their communities, at any one time, due to male migration to towns and cities, and because of the total number of years spent in the rural areas as compared to men, the women, given the opportunities would be best equipped to participate in rural change and development.

To what extent is the present role definition and role performance accepted by the rural women, and to what extent do they aspire to changes in the structuring of these roles and the introduction of new roles?

These questions will be partly answered by the findings of this study in respect of Kwa Mzimela women.

1.2 Selection of the research group

The study is concerned with the role of rural women in society. It focuses on a typically agricultural, grass-root community where the forces of traditional Zulu culture are still at work in family and clan relationships. This traditional way of life is retained and enforced through the most powerful institutions of religion and politics. Thus the authority structure and religious philosophy permeate interpersonal relationships giving them a character which is distinctively rural. Architecture, mode of dress, dietary habits and household settlement attest to the rurality of the community.

This is an exploratory case study of a small section of a larger community, and which section represents the overall general character of the community. Although typically rural in terms of value and normative system, nevertheless it is already being steadily exposed to elements of an industrial society e.g. a money economy, agricultural technology, formal schooling and outmigration of male workers. We therefore see in this microcosm two forces at work - traditional as well as modern. The research population is representative of a traditional community in transition.

The study focuses on role-behaviour of rural women and its implications for development. The research group is already partially exposed to the effects of rural development. To what extent their present role affords them meaningful participation and benefit from their community's changing status will be revealed with greater clarity as their particular role-behaviour, within their given environment, is analysed.

With respect to rationale for choosing this particular group, we can argue that they are the most suitable respondents on whom to do research

which focuses on rural behavioural patterns, on the one hand, and social change and development on the other. The population is neither totally isolated in its rural social system nor influenced by forces of modernisation to the extent that the basic cultural tradition is effaced.

1.3 Choice of research design

When the researcher was faced with an area of study that was relatively new as far as the subject is concerned, the immediate problem needing solution was that of the research design. Having no material resources on women in rural development in South Africa to refer to, necessitated collecting basic data on both the area and the women concerned.

The local Ongoye district magistrate's office supplied census data collated nearly a decade ago - this being the latest major census material available. Use of ethnographic information to build up a community profile of the area has been made.

In view of the abovementioned facts with respect to the subject of our research, an exploratory study appeared suitable at this stage. Exploratory study may be directed at formulating a problem in anticipation of more precise investigation or with a view to developing hypotheses or as seen by Sellitz and others, it may be directed at

"increasing the investigator's familiarity with the phenomenon he wishes to investigate in a subsequent more highly structured study, or with the setting in which he plans to carry out such a study; clarifying concepts establishing priorities for further research ..."

Sellitz et al (1951 : 51). This research exercise is in the nature of an exploratory study that is of a pioneering type. Where

"theory is often either too general or too specific to provide clear guidance for empirical research"

Sellitz et al(1951 : 51, 52), the researcher turns to exploratory

research in his search for experience that will ultimately lead to the formulation of relevant hypotheses.

Sellitz et al suggest a few methods that may be helpful in the search for meaningful variables and hypotheses viz :

"(1) a review of the related social science and other pertinent literature; (2) a survey of people who have had practical experience with the problem to be studied; and (3) an analysis of 'insight-stimulating' examples"

Sellitz et al 1951 : 53). A combination of these or some of these methods may be used at any one time depending on the nature of and circumstances surrounding the data-collecting process.

Four basic techniques have been used in the research viz. participant observation, time budgets, tape recordings of group and individual interviews, and finally a schedule.

Needless to say the application of different techniques was time-consuming. A decision had to be made between an intensive application of only one technique or instrument or an application of different possible instruments. The use of different instruments by one researcher, also taking into consideration the practical difficulties of field work in a relatively isolated area, raised the very real possibility that intensity of research or analysis would have to give way to some measure of superficiality for the simple reason that the scope of the field work is that much extended.

The second approach was preferred, mainly for reasons of identifying the value of these instruments in development research. Thus the research and its findings must be viewed as of an exploratory nature.

1.4 Participant observation

This technique was adopted throughout the field project whether in isolation or jointly undertaken with another technique.

The early stages of the field research involved consultations with the chief and his headmen, with a view to explaining the goals and content of the research project, the areas needing visiting and the possible number of women to be interviewed. It was important at this stage to mention the possible wider implications of this kind of study as the leaders were wary of being used for personal gain.

After initial official acceptance two subsequent meetings with groups of women were arranged at which leaders were identified. Activities women engaged in and problems women faced as a group in the community were briefly discussed.

It was at this early phase of the research that the hierarchical arrangements, the sex role division and the authority structure were discovered through participant observation as well as through discussion.

The technique during active field work involved being with the women throughout their daytime activities from 9.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs. The researcher shared the respondents' hours of work, recreation and worship, and in this way rapport was developed early in the research. The fact that the researcher was not a new face in the area, having been involved with some of the members in a women's movement before, made this positive relationship all the more easy. During this phase the researcher was able to listen to women talking among themselves as well as with her about themselves, their families, leaders and community.

Through this experience it was possible to understand the socio-cultural system and its behavioural expectations as they relate to the family, church, school, health and economic activities. The researcher was able to gain an understanding of the women as they engaged in formal as well as informal activities e.g. worship and family recreation with children involved, respectively.

Material recorded at this phase formed the basis for interviews using tape recordings (also used later, during the structuring of the schedule). Already having observed areas of concentrated activity helped to

eliminate trial and error probings into irrelevant areas during the pilot phase of the schedule.

A total of 120 women were the target group for this stage, either in isolation or in situations that involved other people

1.5 Time budgets

The second phase included time budgets on the women that covered all their working hours, excluding recreational and resting hours. These time budgets were aimed at recording time allocations by the women among a range of activities on a weekly basis. Out of the total range was extracted, for purposes of final analysis, what we have termed key or critical areas of activity. This categorisation arises from the views expressed by the women themselves and the urgency associated with the undertaking of these tasks.

These key areas are cooking, fetching of water and firewood, cleaning houses or huts, and finally agricultural activities. Marketing of foodcrops and marketing of handicrafts was overshadowed time-wise since it often took place either in the fields, (in the case of foodcrops), while women were out tilling or sowing, for instance, or at home, (in the case of handicrafts), while being busy with other tasks or relaxing. The result was that these last two tasks did not appear as outstanding preoccupations as did the former group of activities. The respondents did not as a matter of habit go out in search of markets, away from the local area, as this was considered to be bordering on immoral and undignified female conduct by the female members of the most influential church movement in the area, (who also happen to belong to the ruling Mzimela elite).

Each respondent's daily schedule was recorded for a week. This necessitated following the women to their agricultural fields, where the major part of the day hours was spent. Afternoon hours were spent visiting them in their homes, where they spent their time in a variety of activities ranging from food processing to minding livestock grazing nearby, while keep

an eye on the young children. Where the activity was jointly engaged in with some other member of the family, this was excluded from the record, e.g. nursing of the young where nursing was shared with mother-in-law or junior female members of the household.

Minor errors occurred during the process of counting where respondents were illiterate, as many were. As soon as such time-keys as, 'the time when the first bus passes the school' or 'as soon as the children start school' etc were used, the researcher familiarised herself with the timing device. This brought better communication and understanding. Another approach was for the researcher to keep with the women for as long as was possible, particularly where they worked in large groups in adjacent fields, and by setting up an interview 'camp' on the homeward bound route. As a last resort school going-children at higher primary level were used by the mothers to help with crude recordings of evening activities. This made for better recall by the women. The researcher would then re-assess these and relate them to the overall time allocation by the respondent, including rest periods. This was aimed at minimising over or under calculations.

The technique is a laborious one, but it has the advantage of being simple in basic data collection in unsophisticated areas of operation. It limits subjectivity on the part of the researcher, offers little emotional stress to someone not used to probings for purposes of research, and helps the researcher to build up rapport necessary for more intimate inquiry in future follow-up work.

Time-budgets were undertaken concurrently with participant observation as this technique could be applied at various stages of the research. As indicators of total hours spent in productive activity, time budgets were valuable in the sense that they enabled the researcher to study not only the manner of time-allocation, but also the women's awareness of the value of time for goal-achievement. The social environment within which they operated, the constraints of the total situation women found themselves in, and the social organisation of their families and

external groupings they were involved in, all came out to some appreciable degree, for the researcher to have guidelines for the formulation of the schedule. As indicators of total hours spent in different activities the budgets were of significance and also interest to the extent that they clearly revealed the nature of role division in this community; particularly showing the unshared nature of the critical areas of activities between the sexes.

The time budgetting covered a period of not less than eight months, using the services of a research assistant. The widely scattered fields, the haphazard distribution in the widely scattered fashion of Zulu households, and technical problems of the instrument itself, all added up to a delay.

Taking into consideration factors of geography, time and finance, the form of sampling adopted was accidental, covering a mixed age group of respondents, who, however, reflect in many respects a homogeneous culture.

1.6 The Schedule

Growing out of the first two techniques is a schedule that deals mainly with the following :

1. An analysis of the present role-performance and the identification of specific attitudes and values attached to these roles. The existing pattern of role-performance is thus identified.
2. An analysis of the respondents' aspirations in terms of their attitudes and values to present role-performance and to changes in this role-performance, and
3. An investigation of the adoption of new roles and the felt need for introducing such new roles.

The aim of the schedule has been to cover as many areas of activity as possible besides demographic data. Because of the indepth nature of the instrument and considerations of cost in terms of money and time, the instrument was applied on fifty women out of the original one hundred

and twenty. Two criteria were used viz. age and the possible participation in innovative programmes, the latter being arbitrarily based on the former. Thus only women considered to belong to what we termed the 'productive' years of 18-45 were included in the group.

A research assistant was given basic training on how to handle the schedule, attract and maintain the respondent's attention during hours of active work, and to be able to detect moments of stress in communication.

The pilot study was undertaken among ten respondents who represented a cross-section of the group, age-wise. The researcher aimed at conducting the interviews in privacy without the family or co-wives listening in, but this was not always easy in primary relationships of an extended and close-knit family group. The outcome of this social experience is a tendency to biased response where evaluation of present role, particularly in family relationships involving husbands and parents-in-law is concerned.

The application of the schedule took two months of concerted interviewing at home, in the fields and at church-women's gatherings.

Realising the limitations the schedule suffered from in the probing of qualitative data, the researcher finally used tape recorded interviews with a view to extending insight into the milieu within which the women live.

1.7 Tape recordings

The incomplete nature of some of the qualitative responses on the schedule failed to reveal, clearly, the normative and particularly the value aspects of the particular social system. This information is seen to be valuable in any study directed at development issues, social change and related aspirations. The tape recordings were then undertaken with the abovementioned objectives in view. They were made in order to probe further matters relating to aspirations as these develop out of the women's particular social role as defined and realised by and for

them in this community. Attitudes relating to values and norms may best be found in group discussions where different views are expressed, reacted to and cleared immediately.

That many of the respondents clearly failed to show introspective understanding of their particular role (without resorting to what one may call 'customary images') was noticeable during the time when the schedule was applied as well as during this latter phase.

Tape recordings of interviews conducted among a cross section of the original group of 120, in groups of not more than 20 and not less than 10, dealt with institutional arrangements and the place of women in these, the future possible developments in the area and the part the women may play, and finally the authority and political structure as they affect those areas of activity where women are mostly involved.

Interviews were conducted with church women's groups, local teachers, who gave individual views on the community, and also with women at work in the fields.

Out of this effort the researcher was able to gain to some extent the necessary insight into the institutional settings within which the women operated, the operating codes of conduct as guided and controlled by the system of values in the community.

The interviews where the groups are concerned would take up to an hour inclusive of preparatory remarks.

The open-ended type of questions opened up a flood of information as respondents argued among themselves over controversial matters or when they tended to diverge from the main theme of the discussion. Since the other techniques had already been applied it was not difficult for the interviews to be guided back to relevant questions.

CHAPTER 2

THE AREA AND ITS PEOPLE

2.1 Historical antecedents

The AbakwaMzimela belong to the historically renowned groups forming today part of the Zulus of South Africa. Originating from various sibbes, which during early martial and political conquests of King Shaka, came to be united under strong leaders of their own sibbal groups, they were finally incorporated into the Zulu political unit. Their political record begins with Njingili who lived prior to 1820, when Sihubela, his descendant, appears on record as the tribal chief. Since this early recorded period six chiefs have succeeded to the Mzimela political leadership; the present incumbent having assumed this role since 1946. (de Clercq 1975 : 43)

Prior to Shaka's rise to political power, the Mthethwas were the most influential group in what is now known as KwaZulu. One rival group, Ndwandwes, after having treacherously conquered the Mthethwas and killing Dingiswayo in 1818, were vanquished by Shaka who in his youth had sought refuge with the Mthethwas.

Bryant classifies the Zulu sibbe of Shaka under Ntungwa-Nguni, the Ndwandwes under Embo Nguni and the Mthethwas within the Thonga Nguni in de Clercq (1975 : 35). He also classifies the AbakwaMzimela as a section of the Ndwandwe group who were of the Embo section. The AbakwaMzimela belong to the Thekela-Nguni sub section of the Embo-Nguni group. As proof of this geneology, they tekela - (colloquial) - form of Zulu speech.

Inter sibbal strife among the Mzimela group, prior to King Shaka's unification era led to divisions among members of this group. Abakwa-Mzimela had formed part of the Ema Ncwangeni subsection of the Ndwandwe Kingdom. Prior to 1820 they occupied the Western side of St Lucia Lake north of the Umfolozi river. In all there were three closely

linked sibbes - the EmaNcwangeni, later called Mfekane; the Mzimelas and the Msanes.

Through a long period of shifting loyalties and wars, the Mzimela group formed part of Shaka's impis, among whom was Sihubela. According to de Clercq (1975 : 37) they settled themselves at this stage in the iVuna area which was the original home of the Ndwandwes. The area stretched from the Pongolo river in the North, until south of the Black Umfolozi, from the Ngome Forest in the west until St Lucia Lake. Here one of their chiefs, Sigodo, was born. From de Clercq's record, the Mzimelas were a warrior group, used to a spartan way of life, authoritarian therefore, and we can thus conclude that they were highly disciplined once leadership was established.

The first encounter with foreign White domination for the Mzimela group came with the arrival of the historically renowned English adventurer, John Dunn, who having attained power and influence through long contact with Zulus, and having been honoured by King Cetshwayo with a chieftainship over the Zulus of the area lying between Tugela and Umhlatuze rivers, which area is the present Mtunzini/Ongoye districts, ruled the AbakwaMzimela through their ancestor Manjanja and Zimema until his (Dunn's) death in 1895. According to de Clercq's record Dunn had one of his homesteads in the Ngoye area called Qwayinduku (1975 : 38-39). He put Manjanja Mzimela as his headman, over the inhabitants of the area surrounding this homestead. Dunn's period of control did not interfere with indigenous law as formerly practiced and later retained after his death. The AbakwaMzimela have a particular form of chieftainship - a hereditary one - which is only attributable to formerly outstanding clans among the Zulu society.

Being highly traditionalistic, this system retains near absolute power of the ruler over the ruled, being supported by historical lore and tradition. It supports a social system of relationships as described by Bryant (1949 : 2) which to some extent has been moderated by Western Christian influences. Accordingly he states,

"The basic unit in the Bantu social system is, not the individual nor yet, strictly speaking the family, but the family-head, Pater Familias, he being universally recognised as the lowest self-determining element within the body-politic-wives and offspring being simply his "property". The clan is however the basic political unit. The present-socio-political system of AbakwaMzimela having a historical foundation of this type displays elements of cohesion, authority and conservatism that are secured by family as well as religion.

2.2 Geographical location

The Mzimela area lies on the northern part of Mtunzini district in northern Natal, a coastal magisterial district that has been redemarcated to accommodate a KwaZulu homeland magisterial area called Ongoye. This latter district within which is located the Mzimela social political unit has a total of six such units, headed by chiefs: The Mzimela area is surrounded by four other units -the Mkhwanazis on the south eastern flank, the Nzuzas on the western flank; the Zulus on the western side, and northwards lie the Biyela group.

Geographical boundaries have not yet been stringently fixed where rivers and rivulets dissect the areas.

According to de Clercq (1975 : 44) it appears the AbakwaMzimela have occupied the area since the times of King Shaka. Due to internecine strife with adjoining groups, earliest attempts were made in 1897 to demarcate the area. In 1903-5 the Zululand Delimitation Commission approved of the AbakwaMzimela's land claims although admitting a lack of specifically well defined boundaries. In 1927 the Magistrate at Mtunzini was given instructions to clarify the boundary issue specifically with regard to that which lies between the Mzimelas and the Mkhwanazis. This effort did not meet the approval of either claimant group.

Beacons have been used to define boundaries where no natural physical form e.g. rivers, mountains, exist to give this outcome. The western and eastern sides were a great source of contention with the result that in July 31, 1942, the area was proclaimed in Government Notice 1512. A skirmish between the AbakwaMzimela and AbakwaMkhwanazi led to a third redefinition in 1952. With the establishment of the tribal authority in 1967 as outcome of the constitutional development of the then called Bantu areas, according to Bantu Authorities Act No.68/1951, this third redefinition has come to stay (deClercq 1975 : 45).

2.3 Physical Characteristics

The area has one distinctive feature that affects the natural cycle of the community with respect to agricultural activities, human ecology, animal husbandry and community development. The Ngoye mountain range is a belt that traverses the area from the south-western, cutting across towards the eastern end. The area is mainly granite with a combination of sandy topsoil, granular iron stones and pot clay. The lowest point is 200' above sea level with the highest at 600'. Rainfall in the Ngoye-Eshowe areas falls at between 1 200 - 1 400 millimetres. (Thorrington-Smith 1977 : 22)

The soil is chemically rich in potash, poor in phosphates and slightly acid.

(Thorrington Smith 1977 : 23) note that Natal, the region within which the Mzimela area lies, has a warm temperate and rainy climate - the rain falling mainly in the summer months. Although only 14% of South Africa and Transkei has an annual rainfall exceeding 760 millimetres, 95% of KwaZulu falls within this favoured area. The highest rainfall occurs close to the sea or along high mountain features. The Mzimela area combines both these features - proximity to the sea and lying adjacent to a high mountain range. Altitude dominates climatic conditions while latitude and distance from the sea are of little significant influence.

Dealing with vegetation Thorrington Smith (1977 : 30) also note that vegetation is determined by climate, aspect and distance from the sea. Mountains have a better rainfall than plains. The research area has a combination veld type in the sense that the south westerly rain-bearing winds are blocked by the mountain range with the result that the south westerly end is mainly wetlands benefitting from the heavy rainfall, while the northern end is dry thorn veld and Ngongoni grassland. Alongside the Mhlatuze river bed is found low-lying alluvial soils which are fertile and clayey. This latter area however has periodic setbacks in the form of flooding and subsequent crop losses. This is the main area in this community of food crop production by the women.

The area lying south-west of the mountain range is less hilly, cultivates easily, and is so far the part developed for the sugar cane industry. In 1980 a new sugar cane project with the aid of a white farmer got under way on the northern end of the range.

The mountain is traversed by streams that pour into the Umhlatuzana and Umhlatuze rivers.

The total area is suited to various forms of farming viz. food and sugar cane farming. With regard to the first, women utilise the soil to produce food under indigenous conditions without the modern agricultural inputs like chemical fertilisers and fungicides. They do however succeed to produce harvests that are able to afford them a reasonable day to day food supply when climatic conditions are normal. There are also vegetable plots run under the supervision of extension officers. These are even more productive as fertilisers are used. A commercial sugar cane project is being extended to the low lying north-eastern end of the mountain range.

(DeClercq 1975 : 47) recorded more than 322 hectare put under sugar cane that was grown on the southern side of the mountain range. Seventy

five farmers received their income annually from about 20588 tons, thus being able to earn an estimated average annual amount of 2050 rands each from this activity.

With the exception of both sugar cane and vegetable garden production which are organised under the supervision of extension officers, women in this area do farming mainly on their own. They "own" patches of fields scattered all over in unequal parts, thus giving an irregular land allocation and usage effect. Paths leading to the sugar cane fields are well laid out with the use of tractors, but the section tilled by women in their traditional fields is neglected, has no laid out paths, is overgrown with prickly hoe-resistant reed-like weeds and on the whole difficult to negotiate either on foot or by motor vehicle. The area is heavily trenched by the women themselves where it is marshy, thus making it impossible to negotiate a tractor in some areas.

Around homesteads are also found fields tilled mainly by women unless men have used these for sugar cane farming. These fields vary in size from about two hectares to about four for the more endowed ones. Where these exist women invariably put them under indigenous cultivation, if made available to them. Near and around these are patches of pasturage where livestock graze under the watchful eye of the women and herdboys.

Water, firewood and the low lying indigenous crop fields are a fair distance away from homesteads, varying between 1 km and 4 km walking distance for the majority of women. Access to domestic amenities like firewood, water, thatching grass, is by means of footpaths.

There is a bus route that links the area with two outward-bound roads, - one, a main national north-south highway leading to Natal's border with Swaziland on the far north, and giving a peripheral link to the Transvaal, South Africa's major industrial and commercial region. Alongside this highway lies eastwards two important areas, viz. the Richards Bay

industrial complex in which is located South Africa's modern and biggest port. The growing town of Empangeni lying between the research area and Richards Bay is a commercial centre that serves as an employment outlet as well. The town is linked at the northern boundary of the Mzimela area by a bus route, which serves also as the area's western outlet to Eshowe and Ulundi, the capital of KwaZulu. An inland southern bus route links the area with Esikhawini, one of KwaZulu's important growth points which has a fast-growing housing complex and a commercial sector belonging to Black enterprise. To this extent the people of the area cannot be considered as completely isolated geographically.

Movement within the area however is mainly by means of footpaths, with the exception of those sugar growing areas where tractors and transportation used by officials exist.

Land distribution among the households is irregular; the core clan of the Mzimelas having more expansive plots than those who do not belong or are newcomers. The polygynous nature of the marital unions makes for an ever increasing demand for land rights by men who set up separate households. The effect of this is that land and population distribution undergo changes all the time.

The total land area belonging to this socio-political group is estimated at 15 377 hectares.

2.4 Socio-demographic characteristics

The latest available census report was compiled in 1970 and a new census was taken in 1980. At the time of writing no latest data were available. The total population size of the whole area inclusive of the southern end where field work was not done was in 1970 recorded at 14 993 - 6 395 males and 8 598 females. The 1960 census totalled 6 252 - 2 692 males and 3 560 females, thus showing an overall percentage growth of more than 100%. (Ongoye Magistrate Office Report).

Using projected estimates for the decade ending 1980 we can conservatively estimate the total population size to be in the region of 25 986 by now. The area shows a fast growth rate with the total numbers more than doubling in a ten year period.

Various factors have influenced the demographic nature of the area, among others, improved public health services that offer immunisation to newly born babies and children of school going age, the presence of a long established former mission hospital which has now been taken over by the Department of Health, KwaZulu Government Service, the natural birth rate in a typically indigenous area where modern family planning techniques are not yet enjoying use and acceptance, improved community schools, the introduction of a money economy making it easy for young men and women to set up their own domestic units, and of major influence here, the proliferation to the exclusion of others of the sectarian traditionalistic Shembite and Zionist church groups.

There has been a steady increase in the overall school population since the time of de Clercq's study in 1975, specifically with respect to the area where this study was undertaken, as the data shows. The data for the years 1979 - 80 were supplied by the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture, Mehlesizwe Circuit based on quarterly returns.

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Nteneshane L P	734	662	758
Neekugne L P	220	211	207
Ntshidi H P	297	347	429
Mtunzini Sec.	<u>150</u>	<u>327</u>	<u>371</u>
Total	<u>1 401</u>	<u>1 547</u>	<u>1 765</u>

On the whole this area does not have a high rate of literacy, as data on family educational levels will readily show later. For the younger generation, however, the future looks brighter as there are in all ten schools in the area and more are still going to be built.

Basing our observation on Thorrington Smith's projected plan for health and welfare services in KwaZulu (1978:14) this rural area has long overgrown the need for additional health services, since according to the plan there should at least be 1 clinic per 10 000 of the population within a 7 km distance of one another. Nevertheless the area is auspiciously placed for purposes of developing the health aspect since Ngwelezane Hospital under which the local institution now serves, is within access by bus route.

There is no organised welfare service in the formal sense offering a variety of professional help, although the Department of Health and Welfare of KwaZulu runs an old age pension and disability grant scheme which makes payouts at two-monthly intervals. The local induna is responsible for the success of applications, as he is authorised to accompany applicants to the district magistrate's offices, and has to attest to their bona fides.

(Thorrington Smith 1978: 3) discusses the preponderant imbalance in the age and sex ratios of KwaZulu rural areas. According to local informants young men and women who have either dropped out of school or have not attended school at all are away at work in their large numbers. So is the case with able-bodied married men of this place. The sugar cane farms belonging to White enterprise are the key employment outlet for the mostly illiterate youth and men. Factories and commerce, and occasionally mining concerns, are the urban resources for employment of these local migrants. They leave homes for periods ranging from one month to about eleven months. This mass exodus of the able-bodied population is limited mainly by influx control regulations as administered by regional Administration Boards. The local area is typically one of subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry for the only innovative income-generating activity is in the nascent sugar cane enterprise. For the majority of the work-seeking population only migration out of the area can offer opportunities of earning an income. From the remarks of the women respondents an impression was gained that the indigenous core group has as much a 'culture' of urban migration in pursuit of paid jobs as that of being 'omahlalela' i.e. won't work.

2.5 Socio-Cultural Characteristics

The Mzimela group is a typical rural community found in all of South Africa's homelands - thriving on subsistence agriculture, indigenous animal husbandry and depends on its surrounding natural resources for food, fuel and basic home building and maintenance equipment. The nascent sugar cane production has not yet had an overall socio-cultural impact resulting in structural changes in family, politics, values and behavioural patterns.

The key institutions that give the area its typical character are the extended family which is mainly polygynous, the traditionalistic church movements - Shembite and Zionist, and superimposed on these is the hereditary chieftainship system under the control of the Mzimela group, dating back to the early 19th century.

Structurally the family is organised around the pater familias in an extended household of various 'houses' belonging to wives and their offspring. Though the original Zulu household arrangement no longer holds for some of the homesteads, the traditional family "three house" system of Indlunkulu (the chief house of the senior wife) the Iqadi (the house of the right flank) and the Ikhohlo (the house of the left flank) is still important here since it is only within the Indlunkulu house that the household heir who inherits the status and roles of the pater familias will be born. This house symbolises authority and leadership within the Zulu family system.

All the 'houses' however are entitled to their property share in the form of livestock, huts and personal effects inclusive of rights to agricultural land and its products. The 'houses' may break away from the 'nucleus' and set up their separate residences under the immediate control of married sons. The presence of the original family head however limits this authority as he is seen to be superior head and leader of the extended clan until such time that he dies and this status is inherited by the eldest son of the Indlunkulu.

The socio-economic changes that have been brought about by industrialisation in urban centres of South Africa and areas bordering on the homeland have resulted in the disturbance of this traditionalistic domestic arrangement. There are within this community households that are female headed, either because of migratory labour movements or because women are widows and the ties of an extended family have weakened, mainly for economic reasons.

Land is held in communal ownership under the control of the chief who subdivides it into wards under the control of sub chiefs or izinduna. The area has a total number of about 20 such izinduna. (Verbatim report by Chief). The land allocation occurs through family or household heads, who then have the responsibility of parcelling it out to their wives if they are polygynist, for purposes of food crop production. Each wife by virtue of her status is entitled to a share of this household land. Land is the central life resource in a community that is mainly agriculturalist and pastoralist. This is a livestock raising area in the form of cattle and goats.

Those women found in the community spend their lives in the fields daily except on their day of worship - Saturday. Various activities are coupled to this main agricultural activity e.g. firewood and water fetching and laundering of clothes. During peak periods of agricultural activity the women do these tasks on their way back from fields, having brought along 25 litre water drums and wood hatchets.

Life around the homesteads involves nursing young babies, cooking, cleaning huts, and preparing food for families. During harvest time women have to process reaped crops, grind maize and do seed selection for purposes of storage. A key role for wives who stay with parents-in-law or other such relatives is to look after their welfare.

Men of the area are not active in indigenous agriculture as this is seen to be women's chief domain of activities. They do however enjoy the prerogative of commercial enterprise in agriculture as they are the ones

that qualify for the commercial sugar cane quotas.

The total land area is subdivided into habitational spots that are scattered all over in no organised fashion, as homesteads ideally are isolated from one another. These are individually controlled sites that go together with allocated farming land. Such amenities as pastureland, indigenous forestry and open scrubland, wells and rivers are public resources available to everyone equally.

The political authority rests on the chief. Assisting him are the local izindunas who deal with political as well as administrative matters. The chief enjoys the services of a clerk who helps administer the area, keeps a record of minutes at meetings and court trials, relays messages to and from the chief, and acts also as liason between the chief and his people.

The money economy has altered many of the indigenous socio-political patterns of the area - the main one being the disturbance of the extended family unit headed by what Bryant has called the pater familias. Young men and women go out in search of paid employment on White farms and in towns and cities as already noted. New gadgets and new tastes relating to clothing, food, forms of entertainment e.g. radio, are brought into the area. There is an obvious generation gap in lifestyles. Young women of the area are not seen in as large numbers doing domestic tasks as well as agricultural tasks as is the case with older married women and young children of school going age. The young men are even more scarce.

We can make a final general observation regarding the people of this area - they are a society in definite socio-economic and cultural transition, a greater portion still remaining in the traditionalistic but all things being equal, a movement towards what certain students of social change call 'participant egalitarian lifeways' is evident here.

CHAPTER 3RELEVANT PERSPECTIVES FROM ROLE THEORY AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE3.1 Introduction

Although role theory does not present as yet a well unified and systematised theoretical perspective in modern sociology, it has contributed significantly to understanding overt behaviour of individuals and groups in micro settings.

Studies in culture, society and personality have all contributed to the development of that body of knowledge called 'role theory'. The concept of role is closely related to that of status. They may be conceived of as the dynamic and static aspects of culture and society respectively. Personality theory has developed the concept of 'self' which is an important aspect of socialisation - a cultural process. Position or status implies certain rights and role, certain obligations.

Writing on social change Rogers (1969 : 3) sees the structure of a social system as being provided by the various individual and group statuses, while the functioning element within such a structure of statuses is roles or behaviour of individuals in a given society.

Though role is used mainly in the study of social processes the individual is of value since through him overt behaviour is enacted and this behaviour sets a whole process of reaction and interaction. When such action is meaningfully patterned and habitually engaged in it becomes part of the cultural and social systems. Roles, like statuses, exist independently of the particular people they are associated with. Being cultural phenomena, they depend for their survival on the general stability experienced within the larger systems i.e. society and culture. The social structure as expressed through the totality of the statuses that obtain within a society, and social functions as seen in the patterned role performances of the members of society show such inter=

linkages that a shift in the one element will affect the nature of the other.

3.2 Problems of definition, theoretical assumptions and considerations

Many of the writers on role theory express divergent views on their subject. Questions of definition, use and evaluation of the concept for scientific purposes have not been finally resolved. The concept 'role' has been used as a basic sociological abstraction to analyse society, and its multiple interpersonal relationships.

Some writers, mostly of the deterministic school of thought have a linear approach to society's social processes versus the individual or groups. Few sociologists follow the dialectic approach. Social determinists view society as an all-embracing directive force, while those of the dialectic school see a reciprocal interrelationship between society on the one hand and the individual on the other.

McGee (1975 : 89) a social determinist views role as

"... particular collections of expectations for behaviour based on position in the group",

while Merton a determinist as quoted by Coulson in Jackson (1972 : 110) states that,

"All societies face the functional problem of articulating the components of numerous role-sets, the functional problem of managing somehow to organise these so that an appreciable degree of social regularity obtains sufficient to enable most people most of the time to go about their business of social life without encountering extreme conflict in their role sets as the normal rather than the exceptional state of affairs".

These deterministic viewpoints imply a one-way process or linkage of persons to society in their adjustment. The individual's identity has its source in group expectations and social definitions of the particular

status he holds. The question of individuality and personal expression is limited within the social boundaries of society's expectations and definitions of a given status-role.

Turner [1978 : 352] notes that

"Although this conceptualisation of self and role playing capacities offers the potential for visualising unique interpretations of expectations and for analysing spontaneous forms of role playing the opposite set of assumptions are more often connoted in role theory

Thus accordingly he observes further [1978 : 353]

"... the individual is assumed to be not so much a creative role entrepreneur who tries to change and alter social structure through varied and unique responses, but rather a pragmatic performer who attempts to cope with and adjust to the variety of expectations inhering in social structure".

Berger and Berger [1977 : 69] on the other hand, writing on socialisation view roles as realities external to the individual, initially, and as they become generalised they become objective realities that have to be internalised. A creative interchange between person and society takes place and accordingly,

"Internalisation not only allows the individual to participate in the outside world, but it also enables him to have a rich inner life of his own".

While determinists see the individual as being engaged in the fulfilment of reflective roles, the dialecticists highlight the fact that the individual in the interaction process will experience his role critically in a manner that is reflexive. Determinists are basically functionalist.

For them the social system is typically inimical to dissensus, as such a state of affairs is seen to be alien to the system. Thus notably Banton [in Jackson, 1972 : 110] states,

"For the time being it is necessary to assume in the examination of particular roles that there is agreement among all the parties affected as to the definition of the role in question".

Implied here is the notion that conflict should not exist as this is limiting to the view of a given role. Conflicts do exist and they may in themselves be generative of positive adaptive forces within the social system or group. Such may prevail and be necessary in situations calling for change and innovation. The deterministic view thus brings with it constraints to the social system, as not all dissent is in itself destructive. Conservative custom-bound societies with closely structured hierarchies of power may at one point in time be seen to be functional as role definitions and expectations are in mutual accord. A social system cannot afford to remain closed indefinitely in a world that is open to cross-cultural influences. Both internal and external forces lead to a redefinition of behavioural patterns, statuses and the accompanying roles. Egalitarian authority structures may develop, and these necessitate shifts in social organisation. These new forces may be necessary for the purposes of social change and development.

The problem of who has the ultimate power or influence to redefine the statuses and roles at any given time in a society is a crucial one. In some instances this duty of defining social 'boundaries' may be left in the hands of a small yet powerful clique of conservative and dominating leaders whose authority arises out of ascriptive roles. Thus conflict in a changing situation where rooted vested interests are at stake will of necessity arise. Social change and development imply a re-organisation in the age and sex, class and occupational structures, a redistribution of leadership, and a new definition of society.

One other consideration concerning confusion surrounding the use of the concept 'role' has been observed by Coulson in Jackson [1972 : 111] i.e. the

"tendency of conceiving existing patterns of behaviour associated in the mind of the author with particular social positions as inevitable".

Such has been noted in the Parsonian role division theory in its universalistic application.

With respect to definition, there still exists confusion as some authors refer to position when they define role, while others refer to behavioural patterns associated with a given status or position. Nieman and Hughes as quoted by Coulson [in Jackson 1972 : 108] after surveying the writings on the concept came to the conclusion that,

"The concept role is at present still rather vague, nebulous, and non-definitive. Frequently the concept is used without any attempt on the part of the writer to define or delimit the concept ..."

To show further the uncertainty that prevails in the use of the concept one may also refer to Biddle and Thomas's observation that

"The concept of role is the central idea in the language of most role analysts but, ironically, there is probably more disagreement concerning this concept than there is for any other in role theory."

[1966 : 29]. That the concept has found its way into the language of different disciplines has not helped to minimise controversy over its use and interpretation. For the sociologists at least it still remains one of the important analytical tools in the study of societal behaviour. Both determinists and those of the dialectic approach find its value in their effort at theoretical analysis of social relationships. Having accepted the limitations of the concept we find it nonetheless an important analytical tool for purposes of our broad basic study on rural women.

Although role theory has yet to become organised into a well articulated and unified theoretical perspective, role analysis abounds in sociological literature. The general approach of role analysis, which is also accepted in this exploratory study is based on the following assumption as observed by Turner [1978 : 349] : that social organisation is viewed "as a network of interrelated positions or statuses within which individuals enact roles" in response to various kinds of expectations about how status incumbents are to behave.

3.3 Role as unit of social systems

Basic to all social processes is the simple social fact of interaction. Interaction that takes place within the role framework necessarily becomes patterned and systematised. At the core of the social structure is the unit role, which is organised behaviour. Setting boundaries to interaction between and among individuals, it defines their participation within the social system. When roles are organised around socially acknowledged needs they become part of the social institutions. As such they are in agreement with the prevailing cultural pattern. These institutionalised needs are commonly shared, and their satisfaction is safeguarded by morally sanctioned patterns of behaviour.

People as a group share common expectations of conformity since society is so organised that

"For each position as well as for groups and classes of positions, various kinds of expectations about how incumbents are to behave can be discerned"

[Turner 1978 : 349]. In this way social organisation can be viewed as composed ultimately of different types of networks of statuses and expectations. Commonly the analysis of status networks has concerned itself with their formal properties such as size, degree of differentiation and dealing with different types of groupings and collectivities. Concomitant with the analysis of status networks is often that of types of expectations that accompany each since it is usually assumed that the behaviour shown by the people occupying these statuses is as much a function of the structure of such positions as it is of the expectations that inhere in these statuses.

Since no two individuals are completely identical, role behaviour will to some degree differ. Constraints in the personality adjustment as well as external means to achievement, exist. Role enactment as an overt expression of behaviour that is responsive to common expectations involves subjective assessment by individuals of the social world in which they live. Thus role theory conceptualises individuals who occupy positions and enact roles as expressing interrelated attributes which

Turner [1978 : 352] conceives of as (a) 'self related characteristics' - which commonly in role theory have to do with the impact of self conception on the manner individuals interpret the various kinds of expectations that guide ultimate conduct associated with a particular position and (b) "role-playing skills and capacities" which

... denote those capacities of individuals to perceive various types of expectations and then, with varying degrees of competence and with different role-playing styles, to follow a selected set of expectations".

Here we see culture as a mediating element since the degree to which individuals can exercise behavioural alternatives will be influenced by the dominant values, norms and beliefs prevailing in the society. Highly structured traditionalistic ascriptive social systems limit the scope for behavioural alternatives that are achievement oriented. What we may see then as ultimate role enactment in a traditional society may be an expression of homogeneous influences in the cultural pattern resulting in restricted social mobility. Thus role playing skills of individuals are also influenced by the character of the values and normative patterns.

Acknowledging the complexity of role networks within which a particular individual has to work, and the concomitant conflicts in the expectations from members of a particular role set, it is important to accept that no particular individual could on his own cope with this situation were it not for the fact that there must exist a type of structural relationship that reaches beyond the different social groups in which he operates. It is also necessary that this structural relationship must display an internal compatibility. A social system of role allocation exists that helps the individual as he matures to grow into a participating member of a group in a dialectical manner of both 'pupil' and 'teacher'.

Through socialisation an individual first as 'pupil' is helped to desire performing what his particular group, from whom he obtains role models, expects him to do. By means of social rewards he is made to identify

his society's goals and gradually commits himself, now as 'teacher' too to fostering the values, norms and beliefs which are supportive of particular statuses and roles.

At times socialisation also entails being deprived of the means of performing ill-fitting roles in a given culture by socialising agents. This may be expressed through psychological or social experiences of group identity or through ethnocentric practices. Material means to performance may be hampered or ultimately various forms and degrees of punishments may be applied.

Here we have problems of personality and social structure. The structure of a social system, and all the necessary functions to be performed for its survival involve problems of a different kind from those of personality. Personality factors are of secondary value for the survival of a social system, whilst roles and their adequate performance are fundamental.

The crucial problem lies in how the individual sees himself in relation to his role. The question of individual versus society and vice versa involves what has been seen as a predetermined type of relationship between the individual and his role. Popitz quoting Plessner [in Jackson 1972 : 13, 14] sees it as

"a structure in which every conception of self can be realised",

and accordingly

"The concept of social role is an analytical means of comprehending the coherence of social actions, and at the same time a means of construction for the representation of social structures".

Because in reality a certain degree of deviance is acceptable, sanctions against this deviance are not involved. Roles found within a given social system are directed at achieving goals that carry value alternatives. These values though directed at different roles are part of a single whole - the social system. As role requirements may not always be in full agreement with personality inclinations necessary for their

fulfilment societies have motivated individuals to strive for the general good or welfare. Gratification calls for requisite action. For society to be a functional success the degree of incompatibility of role within a given role matrix in the same action system has to be limited.

The fact that an individual engages in many roles at one and the same time is obviously fraught with chances for conflict. We are aware that with maturity develops a multiplicity of rights and obligations.

Society's goals are many and varied, and their achievement is pursued by different social groups. Divergence occurs within and among groups e.g. within a family as a social unit because of its age and sex structure.

Cottrell [1942 : 618] listed a number of hypotheses regarding the relationship between role expectations and adjustments. According to him

"... the degree of adjustment to roles which a society assigns its sex categories varies directly with the clarity which such studies are defined".

Problems of role conflict often occur. Studies in role conflict have revealed that conflicts occur when a person occupies two or more positions simultaneously when role expectations of the one do not agree with those of the other.

Conflict may also occur in times of innovations. A community faced with new and as yet unmastered role definitions and performances may develop reactions to alternatives brought about by change agents, mass media or structural developments within their community. New attitudes may develop among the various groups of the given society and these may be viewed in some quarters as threats to vested interests, needing immediate social control.

Changes brought about by development necessitate shifts in role definitions, a sharing of power and decision making, and a redistribution of sources of esteem. Relationships then become egalitarian, and accommodation along sex, age, and class lines is the usual result - not often without initial resistance and conflict - fraught social relationships.

Reaction to conflict may be in the form of compromise or deviation from complete conformity to the role. An ideal situation among divergent roles is when they reinforce one another.

3.4 Social elements and processes with reference to status and role

Linton [1936 : 114] in defining status and role showed how intertwined and closely related the two concepts were. For him a separate treatise of each was for academic purposes mainly. He viewed status as a collection of rights and duties, and role as the dynamic aspect of status. The individual performs his roles once he puts into effect these rights and duties.

Thus he observes that,

"Every individual has a series of roles deriving from various patterns (of relationships) in which he participates, and at the same time a role general which represents the sum total of these roles, and determines what he does for his society, and what it can expect of him". [Linton, 1936 : 114]

When analysing any social system, be it a village or a corporation, use may be made of a person's status and role within the given system, and a totality of interrelated networks of structure and function realised. Jones [1973 : 14] uses this approach in formulating a conceptual framework of rurality where she states,

"Status implies a position within a system which affects and is affected by an individual's prestige (gained from the position he occupies) and his esteem (enjoyed by virtue of his performance in one or more roles)".

Role implies a process in the form of behaviours to be expected from an individual in a particular relationship. Due to the obviously close connection between the concepts 'status and role' some authors following Linton's view prefer to use 'status-role' as one element of the social system. The stress here is not on the role as the behavioural aspect,

but rather it is on the reciprocal expectations that arise out of institutionalised social relationships. Thus according to Jones [1974 : 14],

"Status-role is thus the pattern of actions (and reactions) expected of an individual who occupies a given position, which attracts rewards or punishments from others in such a way that the individual's status position is reinforced or enhanced, or is weakened or reduced, according to how well he lives up to the expectations of others".

Davis views the organisation of statuses as a matter of limited resources within the individual which have to be directed at achieving ends in an integrated fashion. This integration extends to the entire social system within a group or society. Davis [in Biddle & Thomas 1966 : 68] states that,

"His personal efficiency, his mental stability and contentment depend to a large extent on the integration of his various social positions"

and

"Ordinarily the various statuses - occupational, familial, political, religious - are so bound together in terms of interlocking rights and obligations that their manifestation in behaviour gets things accomplished and the collectivity is perpetuated".

The concept (organic analogy) of social metabolism is sometimes used to describe the processes of ascription and achievement which take place as statuses, and roles are continually being filled and played respectively by new members. Socialisation, education and training in technical skills are continuously being used to accomplish this task.

Ascribed statuses and the resulting role behaviours are commonly obtained and performed by virtue of sex, age and class. Where status is ascribed through sex we have in many societies the basis for the cultural patterns of discrimination between the sexes using the physiological argument as justification. This pattern of human relationships is further fostered by the nature of the division of labour along sex lines. Because of their child-bearing capacities, and the prolonged domestic

responsibility of nursing the young and the aged, women have often been isolated from educational and training facilities that are necessary for successful role performance in a competitive occupational sphere away from the home. Thus positions of power and leadership, decision-making and policy have always been in the hands of the male members of their societies.

Age being a transitory experience for individuals is not a permanently handicapping element, as seniority particularly in traditional societies is linked with wisdom and leadership qualities. Kinship also gives status to those born into family and clan units through ascription. The family is seen as the basic social institution in all societies through which an individual may obtain his status, though the extent to which this accident of birth may ultimately influence role performance will vary greatly from society to society, and from time to time.

Traditionalistic and caste type social systems have a greater content of the ascriptive roles and statuses than achievement oriented and competitive systems. While achieved statuses and roles are not foreign to the so-called 'traditional' societies, the phenomenon is more characteristic of open and cosmopolitan social systems. Opportunities and normative mechanisms of achievement are constrained within a pervasive traditional belief and value system that influences ultimate role enactment which is often directed at perpetuating the status quo. Both ascribed and achieved statuses and their concomitant roles are interdependent in the sense that the former lays the foundation for the socialisation process of the young, preparing the individual for later achieved statuses. According to Cottrell [1942 : 618]

"Ascribed statuses lay the framework within which the transmission of the cultural heritage is to take place. They determine the general goals towards which training shall aim, and the initial persons who shall carry it out, while ascribed statuses also give a feeling of security that purely achieved can never give (while) the value of achieved status is that it not only places the right persons in the right place, but it stimulates effort".

3.5 Role behaviour in social change

Social organisation can be seen as emanating from role behaviour within the social system. That is, a social system can be viewed as consisting of role players or actors in interaction governed by normative conduct that entails rewards for compliance and penalties for non-compliance. The person therefore enacts roles within a framework of normative prescriptions existing within the social system.

Change is intrinsic to social systems and so are tensions and strains. When society is viewed as a tension-management system, this allows for considering both order and change not only as problematic but also as normal elements of the social system. Thus,

"Once the tensions (which are considered) characteristic of all or particular types of social systems are identified, they are predicted to be the probable sites of change"

[Moore 1974 : 11]. Just as there is no singular theory of social structure neither is there only one theory of social change. Each social system manifests for itself its particular characteristic internal organisation of related elements and degree of cohesiveness.

In his role enactment the individual is faced on the one hand with the problem of defining for himself his self-conception in relation to the status networks within which he operates and the normative expectations of his particular society, and on the other hand relating his personal goals as expressed in his aspirations to those goals as prescribed by the system.

Thus we can see here that the personality system may not always be in agreement with the social system, resulting in strains or conflict. Deducing from Moore's observation with regard to social systems undergoing tensions, this individual conflict situation may be seen then as 'the probable site for change'. Once individuals have aspirations that cannot be satisfied within the existing social system, social change may be a function of internal forces working within the given society as expressed through altered behavioural patterns.

Change that is introduced from outside of the society may often lead to tensions within the social systems. New demands on both individual and society are made that ultimately lead to a reorganisation of patterns of enacted behaviour, and normative expectations.

The concept 'social change' as used in the analysis of society is one of various social processes. It involves among other things the conception of society as a social system. The term 'system' implies interdependence of parts or units, that form a particular structure. There are within the system other subsystems that collectively make up the totality that can be distinctly recognised apart from other systems external to it. For this reason there are both internal as well as external relationships that are continuously at work among these micro and macro parts.

Social change involves a change over a period of time of both the structure of society as seen in the arrangements of its social institutions and the functional component as seen in the behavioural patterns or roles that are directed at meeting needs felt by the members of society.

Social change as a process that is capable of bringing alteration to society's social structures and their functioning operates at various levels. It expresses itself in the small social unit e.g. in family, neighbourhood or community when for instance through the natural processes of births and deaths, marriage, employment, society's membership is continually redefined together with roles associated with particular statuses. The total impact of this in a community necessarily alters the total image of this micro social setting. Here one may speak of micro social changes. When such changes are considered globally within larger societies and nations, new and more influential interpersonal relations come into the picture. These relations for instance have to do with large economic, or political relations. Such changes are of a macro nature on account of their extent.

There is an ongoing interplay between micro and macro changes as not only the same members belong to both spheres of social life, but the influences of the more powerful external world impinge directly on the smaller social

units. The social structures at local level function partly in response to pressures and demands that come from the superstructures and partly in response to internally induced change agents. There is a dialectic relationship however that goes on between micro and macro structures that can be defined as symbiotic.

A study of any social system looks at both the static as well as the dynamic elements that make up the social systems. Fundamentally all social systems undergo changes whether these changes be induced internally in an evolutionary natural manner or externally, consciously or by a process of cultural diffusion. [Johnson 1960 : 625] observes,

"... There are two kinds of process going on in a social system : processes that maintain or tend to maintain the structure of the system, and processes that tend to change it".

Social change, as a process may be described as follows, using MacDonald's views :

1. Constituent cultural elements are re-arranged in order that a certain level of society's functioning may be maintained or improved.
2. Certain cultural elements get lost in the process as new modes of socio-cultural arrangements take place.
3. Lastly new elements are introduced into the original cultural system; substituting those that already exist and adding new ones. This last type of social change has been called development or the modernisation process. [MacDonald, 1976 : 25-26].

One of the basic goals of any social system is that of survival, so that even where changes are manifest, i.e. intended and recognised or latent i.e. unrecognised and unintended, [Merton 1951 : 51] as often found in any societal systems; these changes may be necessitated by need for adaptation to new experiences, satisfaction of new goal - directed needs, and a redefinition of roles and role division in family and society generally.

The relativity of social change is seen in the fact that it need not be a disruptive process, bringing with it a totally new human experience or world, since a continuous structural base that is integrative and supportive of the social system may remain. This may express itself in the patterns of mores, values, beliefs and attitudes that influence the character of interpersonal relationships within society, and continue to give it a particular identity even during moments of accelerated social changes. Changes may occur in institutions when particular patterns that exist within the social system alter their form and social processes assume a new shape e.g. socialisation of the young may change from an authoritarian superordinate - subordinate parent - child relationship to a democratic form of relationship; or a society may show shifts from a preponderously polygynous marital lifestyle to a mostly monogamous type. The change is complete once formerly accepted values and forms of social institutions, role definitions and attitudes relating to these are considered to be anomalous or deviant requiring social control mechanisms to punish those who fail to conform to the new social order or for purposes of redress to those who are aggrieved by such misconduct. The outcome of such changes experienced within a social system may be positive or negative depending on whether the system is capable of retaining its functional role or not.

When changes originate from within the social unit due to recognised need for the new elements, we have independent imminent social change. Contact change occurs when the changes are induced from outside. The social unit's response may be a selective process once the members are aware of alternatives and are able to exercise choice among these.

The most common cause of accelerated social change is that of cultural diffusion, whether this takes the form of material inputs e.g. the introduction of a factory system among agrarian communities, or the introduction of a modern educational system that alters the informal socialisation of the young in rural society.

"Most of the social changes in all known societies have developed through diffusion, the spread of culture traits from group to group."

[Horton and Hunt 1976 : 445]. Viewed in a narrow sense, social change implies change in the structure of the social system. As Johnson [1960 : 626] observes in his study of various kinds of social change in any given social system,

"... of structural changes the most important are those that have consequences for the functioning of the system - for attaining its goals more (or less) efficiently or for fulfilling more (or less) efficiently the conditions that must be met if the system is to survive at all".

The concept of social change is closely related to that of modernisation, a process that started in highly developed countries more than five centuries ago. It has come to mean in classical thought a societal situation of, relatively high per capita income, high productivity per person, relatively high degree of commercialisation and industrialisation of the economy, an extensive and diversified network of mass communications, a high degree of urbanisation often coupled with concentrated urban migration and the depopulation of the rural hinterland, the separation of ownership from mechanisms of control of property and other means of achievement.

Such dynamic processes necessarily involve social groupings within society. Invariably the micro as well as the macro expressions of these processes have such an impact on various communities as to give them their particular character and development 'image'.

For this reason the tempo, nature and combination of elements that make up for social change that is leading to a form of modernisation in a rural environment need not take an immediate, rapid or extremely dynamic character as is the expected case in already industrialised countries with a well developed base in the nature of skills, infrastructure and egalitarian values.

Therefore what is modern and desirable of an advanced country need not necessarily be the same for an isolated underdeveloped community, e.g. the availability of healthy drinking water within easy access of the

villagers may be of such value to a rural community, which is considered opposed to modernisation practices, that new areas of communicating needs and aspirations, necessary for development action, may be opened once such basic human need has been satisfied.

Social change, then, in the context of rural development necessarily involves a certain degree of modernisation but not which slavishly follows the western model.

3.6 Conclusion

The theory on role as an analytical concept still suffers from internal discord among sociologists, among other things with regard to definition, content and perspective. Writings which use it as a fundamental tool for understanding behavioural patterns in society however abound. It has been used in various disciplines, particularly the humanities and social sciences. For this reason it suffers from a multiplicity of viewpoints, and a lack of general agreement as to its total components or elements as well as its boundaries.

Even among sociologists approaches differ, (and we have noted) a preponderance of the deterministic approach over the dialectic. The concept 'role' has been put to use by behaviouralists as well as those who stress transcendental determinism where the individual is seen as mainly an actor within an already predetermined role matrix. Society is seen as having done, through socialisation, the necessary education for her to internalise without great expense on her own, its values, norms and goals. There are structural supports in the form of rewards and punishment to help this internalisation of role expectations.

Conflict is viewed by determinists as dysfunctional to society's success, although we have noted that tensions arise during times of change and when aspirations cannot be satisfied within the prevailing system. Where it exists, there are internal mechanisms to defuse this situation or to control it sufficiently for the larger group of members to perform their

roles adequately.

Within the family as the basic social institution, roles are defined mainly in terms of age and sex structures. The instrumental-affective role division of the Parsonian type is a Western stereotype.

Problems have been experienced in role analysis where the view is one of unidimensionality, superimposition of society on the individual. Society is being reified and personified frequently in this type of analysis. The deterministic view tends to emphasise the idealistic situation-static in character, stressing consensus, whilst the dialectic approach acknowledges the existence of creative relationships between the individual and society.

Roles, as the dynamic aspect of statuses, depend for their performance on whether the latter are achieved or ascribed. The greater the prevalence of ascribed statuses, the greater the sense of individual security, a quality achieved status does not have to the same extent. The value of the latter however is that there is minimal role maladjustment as the right person for a particular task is qualified for the position. It also stimulates effort.

The different perspectives on the concept 'role' and the varying uses to which it is put in both humanities and social sciences, results in problems as to definition, theoretical assumptions and considerations. Notwithstanding such limitations the concept has come to form part of the conceptual framework in the study of sociology.

New aspirations lead to new expectations and this sets in motion forms of role enactment and normative structures that ultimately reshape the total social system or aspects of it. In modern theory of social change the most facilitating elements of this process in traditionalistic societies are products of planned or directive social change.

CHAPTER 4

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

The concepts development, social change and modernisation have been used over time by social scientists to refer to activities of communities and national groups which result in the alteration of social structures and processes. Such activities may be either directive or non-directive. The three concepts are often used interchangeably although in essence they do not mean one and the same thing. They are however closely related in meaning and content.

For sociology these processes are of historical significance since the study began to shape its field and scope during the vast socio-economic and political changes in 18th and 19th Century Europe at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Large scale movements of communities out of rural areas into close-knit settlements that gradually developed into towns and cities were necessitated by agrarian reforms. Among the social reformers were also students of society. This of necessity led to the linking of the study of sociology with social change, modernisation and development.

The modernisation that accompanied these social changes was urban in character, and the social institutions that developed assumed responsibilities that hitherto had been satisfied within the ambit of close-knit family units or clans. Such changes were felt within primary as well as secondary groupings.

4.2 Problems of the concept development in sociological analysis

Social scientists in trying to analyse societal change and development devised theories of social change and modernisation. Social evolutionists were among the pioneers in this area as they adopted analytical models

found in the natural sciences. They stressed the progressive development of societies from homogeneous simpler forms of organisation to heterogeneous complex and highly structured forms of arrangements. Thus human evolution meant improvement in man's conquest of his physical and social environment, as well as his ability to solve life's problems.

Classical theorists like Durkheim, Spencer, and Tonnies among others as observed by Hoogvelt [1976 : 11] stressed this characteristic feature of evolution, viz.

"... that quantitative growth of social life at some stage involves a qualitative change of the forms of social life".

Two distinct approaches developed - one concerned with qualitative aspects of society, and the other with descriptive aspects. At this stage also we note the development of dichotomous analyses of such men as Tonnies with his *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, and Durkheim's conceptions of the mechanical and organic forms of social organisation. These were used as theoretical constructs to typify societies at various stages of development and underdevelopment.

Such views had an impact on the anthropological writings during the colonial period as writers saw the foreign societies of today's Third World as occupying the extreme original pole in the evolutionary process with a few exceptions among societies that had already developed the art of the written word, for instance.

The theories of the evolutionists suffered from certain limitations. As Hoogvelt [1976 : 11-12] has pointed out they did not encompass the wide diversities in human social forms over a historical period, and also they suffered an ideological bias in the sense that humanity was seen to move continually and inevitably towards a betterment of life. Hoogvelt [1976 : 12] quotes Parsons as noting that Western culture and society had greater adaptive qualities than other societies, though Parsons was aware that

"... the adaptive capacity of a society is not necessarily the paramount object of human value. For many people certain aspects

of personality culture, and organic well-being or particular social patterns may be of greater value".

Of particular significance to the study of rural development is the fact that these theories had an impact on the question of modernisation of areas settled by colonialists. Being still at simplistic and homogeneous and adaptive levels of organisation, such areas were seen to be in a position to benefit from the successful programmes of development and modernisation based on achievements in Western Europe. Such programmes were erroneously assumed to need minimal adaptation for them to achieve socio-economic and political changes suited to progressive communities.

Experience in the field of development in Third World countries has proved that a lack of fuller understanding of the socio-cultural forces, that are inherent in such communities, has come to play its part in the resulting proliferation of divergent approaches to the problem of development and the attendant theoretical writings on the subject. Policy makers and so-called change agents are still faced with insuperable problems in many areas of the developing world, whether this has to do with material or human resources or whether it has to do with strategy for change.

4.3 Social change, modernisation and development as concepts

4.3.1 Social change

As a process social change affects the nature and organisation of many institutional arrangements. It involves alterations in the social structure of society's groups over a period of time. Such alterations do not in themselves imply positive experience in terms of progress or societal well-being. Both positive and negative elements in the form of organisation and disorganisation may occur in the character of social groups and social processes.

Briefly then, according to Rogers [1969 : 3] social change

"... is the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system".

In the discussion on role as a unit of social systems we concerned ourselves with two important components - those of social structure and personality as central elements in the analysis of role behaviour. The status represents the external objective experience on the one hand and the internal subjective experience on the other. The concept of social role involves an understanding of how individual subjective experiences as expressed through overt and covert behaviour respond to the external social environment in the form of norms, values, and expectations as found in the social structure (society) as well as the manner in which the external forces within society respond to influences emanating from the individual's subjective experience operating at the level of personality. To this extent we note in the analysis of our key concept a dialectic phenomenon, which dialectic situation finds expression in various forms in the manner social scientists conceive of the subjects - modernisation, social change and development. In analysing these concepts from various perspectives authors recognise the interplay between social structure and personality.

4.3.2 Modernisation

Historically modernisation has come to mean the process of change associated with socio-economic and political systems that developed after the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe and North America, and later spread to the colonies.

This phenomenon expressed itself in the democratic process of government, a rise in economic wealth, discoveries and inventions, commerce and capitalism. Modernisation is not a unidimensional process as many factors come into play to produce a state of being 'modern'.

Various authors express different views in their analysis of the concept. Those who define it in psychical terms hold the view that the basic elements of modernisation lie not so much in the character of the total society but rather in the character of its individuals. McClelland, in studying conditions for economic growth focusses on the interpersonal factors instead of external factors, as some of the explanatory variables for fast economic growth.

"Need for achievement" is, for McClelland an important motive that can be positively correlated with economic growth and seen as a causative variable. He conceives of two positive forces - personal and social - that take the form of what he calls an 'itch' or personal virtue on the one hand and a social virtue in the form of an interest in the welfare of the generalised other on the other hand (in Weiner 1966 : 36).

Inkeles also views modernisation in both subjective and objective terms when he recognises that modernisation occurs when, among other things people's attitudes undergo changes and man begins to internalise specific new ways of feeling, thinking and acting.

Inkeles [in Senekal 1980 : 14] however recognises concomitant changes within the environment. Thus according to him modern man is characterised by :

1. a tendency to accept new ideas and to experiment with new methods;
2. a large measure of being bound to time;
3. a greater level of anxiety concerning planning, organisation and effectiveness and;
4. a belief in science and technology (among other things).

Both McClelland and Inkeles incorporate in their views the concept of change and the ideological one of improvement.

Black's conception of modernisation is more balanced because although he sees it as an expression of individual capacities to understand nature's secrets and to apply such understanding to human affairs (with the result that modern society rests on specific human qualities rather than on qualities that pertain to society per se), he also sees it as

"a process that is simultaneously creative and destructive, providing opportunities and prospects at a high price in human dislocation and suffering"

Black [1966 : 27].

Notably Rogers sees modernisation as a synthesis of old and new forces within society, not necessarily calling for a replication of the character of the original source of influence. Critical of viewing modernisation as implying goodness, he shows that benefit, conflict, and pain may be part of the process. Rogers [1969 : 14] views modernisation as

"A process involving the interaction of many factors so that one aspect of an individual's behaviour must be measured in order to determine his status on the modernisation continuum, a process by which individuals change from a traditional way of life to a more complex technologically advanced and rapidly changing style of life".

Lerner as quoted in Rogers [1969 : 14] conceives of it as

"a secular trend unilateral in direction - from traditional to participant lifeways".

Characteristically modern societies in varying degrees are urbanised, stratified into classes and statuses mainly due to differentials in wealth, education and power structures. There is widespread literacy, high per capita incomes, mass communication and social mobility as compared to typical rural communities.

Moore, [1963 : 94] writing on 'Social Change' conceives of modernisation as

".. a total transformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated social

organization that characterised the 'advanced' economically prosperous, and relatively politically stable nations of the Western World"

To this extent Moore's conception encompasses economic social and political elements of modernisation.

In the above treatise we immediately notice that although writers are generally agreed on the concept modernisation, they invariably use their particular academic perspectives.

Sociologists are concerned with society as an interrelated social system, focusing their attention on wider institutional arrangements, with the result that their particular perspective overlaps with more specific ones. Levy observes,

"... the term 'social' is a more general term than terms like economic, political etc. The latter refers to different ways of looking at what we describe as social behaviour or social action"

[in Senekal, 1980 : 20].

Lerner and also Smelser use 'development' to refer to economic changes, while viewing 'modernisation' in terms of social change. So narrow is the distinction between the two concepts that some authors use them interchangeably, and others distinguish them mainly for analytical purposes [in Senekal, 1980]

Senekal, being aware of the various dimensions then defines modernisation as the process whereby the total system (viewed as the whole of society) changes to a condition of increased effective functioning, with the result that it moves closer to a condition where the full potential means available to the system are realised and utilised to the maximum. The final outcome of this experience is an attainment of a different level of existence which brings about an improvement on the previous level of existence. [Senekal, 1980]

It is obvious then that not all social processes are modernisation processes, and yet all modernisation processes are processes of social change. Effective functioning is one of the central goals of modern society and it is one of motivating forces behind societies that are moving from traditional lifeways to modernity. Effective functioning demands a re-organisation and a re-integration of the differentiated structures that proliferate through functional specialisation.

Modernisation then has two central elements to it :

- (a) an increase in the effective functioning of the physical, social, economic political etc. resources, and their utilisation, resulting in an increased degree of structural differentiation and specialisation. This ultimately leads to
- (b) an improvement in the standard of living and the quality of life in society. [Senekal 1980 : 23].

We shall accept this ideological approach, as propounded by such writers with reservations, being made aware that problems of a multifarious nature are still faced by technologically advanced and highly modern societies.

4.3.3 Development

The influence of evolutionary and neo-evolutionary theories led into the study of development. The ideal dichotomous typologies were used to analyse societies engaged in the processes of change and development, from the most traditional to the modern. Evolutionary concepts stressed the traditional - modern dichotomy of societies. Many writers stressed economic variables as determinants of change and development.

As the polar ideal types gained ground and popularity among writers, the path was set for sociology of development to become, as Bernstein [1971 : 144] observes

"... a question of identifying and analysing the social, cultural and psychological conditions, concomitants, and consequences of economic development",

(the option being either negative)

"... in terms of removing existing institutional obstacles to development, or with a positive emphasis in terms of creating the cultural environment necessary for development".

Both these approaches are complementary and emphasis at any one stage should be determined by situational factors rather than preconceived rigid strategy.

Writing on the historical setting for contemporary development, Rogers [1969 : 10-14] notes that Western countries, particularly after World War II, being encouraged by leaders in Third World countries were keen to share the technological skills and economic expertise with these impoverished countries of the underdeveloped world. The successes which were achieved during the redevelopment of the war - torn Europe in housing and industry, commerce and trade were to be used as motivators for generating development strategies and policies in the Third World. The notion of identifying modernisation with Europeanisation, encouraged further by both the evolutionist and functionalist schools of thought, resulted in development planners seeing their tasks as manageable and successes as transferable. As the Third World countries were mostly agricultural enclaves, this sector was evidently not as productive of development as was the industrial sector. To this extent development was tantamount to modernisation as this called for drastic changes in the socio-economic and political lifestyles of hitherto rural communities. Urbanisation, training for technical skills, migration into urban settlements, a proliferation of secondary group ties accompanied the developmental process. While key focus was on economically directed change, other institutional sectors were affected. Smelser [1967 : 718] notes that changes of a profound nature were taking place in the political sphere

as authority structures became more egalitarian, educational facilities increased, religious practices became more secularised and modernised, thus minimising the power of traditionalistic authorities and leaders, and as within the family the close knit kinship ties lost their pervasive power and control.

Pressing problems of glaring poverty, ignorance, illiteracy with concomitant problems in the sphere of high mortality and exploding populations in Third World countries highlighted the stress for economic solutions. Economists called for quantifiable data as the basis in developing theories of development. Job opportunities and a raised standard of living originally appeared as the necessary panacea for underdevelopment. Theorists at first concentrated on large scale national programmes and this influenced the pace of impact. Dalton appreciating the unbalanced approach states that there is insufficient theory of socio-economic change and development at village level. Social scientists notably economists concern themselves with development from above. 'Yet', Dalton [1971 : 30] notes,

"some of the most intractable problems of development exist at the rural community level : how to increase agricultural productivity, village literacy, and vocation skills".

He acknowledges problems of a peculiar kind where development, both economic and cultural, of village communities follows a natural and self-directing course, as lags in areas of personality formation of both individual and community may hinder adaptation to social changes. There may be a lack of capital formation which is necessary viable economics, and lastly an inability to reform political and social institutions, necessitated by new stratification arrangements and a need for a new infrastructure.

Rogers [1969 : 8] sees development as a process that has to bring about changes at both the individual as well as the social levels.

We have noted the influence of evolutionary theory and the analogies used to imply an unfolding of energies and potentialities

that lie latent in the organism i.e. society, or community in this case.

Contrary to natural or organic changes noted by Dalton most modern development programmes are directive, aimed at consciously achieving structural changes. Here development does not mean a spontaneous cultural evolution but rather a process of induced changes that involve the shaping of policies and implementation of goal directed programmes.

Development involves generating within given societies new forces as well as activating those already in existence. It calls for a restructuring of social institutions and social stratification.

Functionalist theory sees society as composed of interrelated units or parts, and this analysis has been adopted in development studies in such a manner as to show that there is a ripple effect in times of social changes and development if a particular segment of the social system is exposed to modernising influences. Thus economists talk of 'take off' points in the process.

Smelser as quoted in Dalton [1971 : 24] in dealing with the typical kinds of social change that accompany economic and technological development, clearly points out the various stages of socio-economic development that result from the change from subsistence farming to production of agricultural commodities for markets; from the use of simple tools and traditional techniques to the application of scientific knowledge and advanced technology.

This he calls structural differentiation. Thus Smelser observes,

"The concept of structural differentiation can be employed to analyse what is frequently termed the 'marked break in established patterns of social and economic life' in periods of development 'differentiation' is the evolution from a multi-functional role structure to several more specialised structures"

[in Dalton 1971 : 24]. The observed outcome of this structural differentiation is effective functioning which modern society increasingly experiences. To this extent it can be seen to serve

as the central element in the model of 'the modern society' and which traditional and modernising societies use as a reference in their striving towards modernity. Structural differentiation comes along with greater functional specialisation. In order to avoid chaotic conditions in life a process of re-integration of the differentiated structures must also happen.

Smelser views structural differentiation as a historical plan in society when a single role or organisation is differentiated into two or more such entities for purposes of more effective functioning.

It is this structural differentiation which results from social changes that for rural communities offers the greatest threat to an established way of life. The degree and level of success on the part of change agents and innovators will depend partly on their understanding and appreciation of these socio-cultural factors, that have held the community together over a long period of time, and partly on the community's assessment of the costs of whatever kind versus benefits for the group.

So full of impact on society and man is the phenomenon of development that Inkeles, assessing the means and ends involved states,

"Indeed, in the end, the idea of development requires the very transformation of the nature of man - a transformation that is both a means to the end of yet greater growth and at the same time one of the great ends itself of the development process"

[in Senekal, 1980 : 5].

4.4 Rural development

The majority of the world's population lives in areas which are by definition 'rural'. To this extent we can see the immense challenge lying ahead of those in the field of development. Planners or policy-makers are all faced with the crucial question of how to adapt rural institutions to the modernised developed world.

In order to grasp the nature of rural communities, sociologists have developed the noted term 'rural-urban continuum'. This attempts to demarcate characteristic features or ideal types of both rural and urban environments, but then as part of a single continuum. It is a compara-

tive concept used to study differences and discontinuities in both. In delineating an area as either rural or urban various criteria which differ from country to country are used. Population censuses, population densities per given area of residence or work, types of relationships are some of the most common variables used in this regard.

Jones [1973 : 6] notes that while the United Nations has adopted Kingsley Davis' estimation of urban settlements as those made up of 20 000 inhabitants and over, many other estimates put it at 10 000 and over. Whilst highly rural underdeveloped communities can clearly show their town and country settlements and ways of life, the opposite obtains with highly industrialised and mobile countries. Features of both impinge on one another, e.g. socio-economic, demographic, and political. Urbanisation is going on all the time.

Sorokin, Zimmerman & Galpin [1965 : 187] deal with what they term 'fundamental differences between the rural and urban worlds'. For the sake of this study we shall mainly concentrate on features of rural communities. In emphasising a compound definition of the country and the city they state

"... we must emphasise that the sociological definition of the country and the city worlds is not to be described in terms of one characteristic, whether this one be size of community, density of population, administrative nomenclature, occupational composition of the population." They note in particular some of the following variables :

1. Occupationally the rural community is mainly agrarian. Diversification may take place as an associated infrastructure develops to furnish services to the rural sector.
2. Because of the nature of agricultural work, the population is sparsely distributed over large tracts of land. Where growth takes place in population size, initially this may entail subdivision of agricultural plots until a surfeit point is reached when land can no longer support the inha=

bitants. Migration into towns may then take place or industrial development may help to absorb the surplus unemployed hands.

3. Primary group relations proliferate as specialisation in the field of occupations is kept at a minimum. There is minimal influx of foreign socio-cultural elements. Family and kinship activities are a noticeable part of the social structure.

4. Mobility occupationally and geographically within the rural area is limited due to limitations in occupational choice. There is often a higher incidence of rural-urban migration. Migrations that have an influence in the population growth rate of rural areas are outward, towards cities and towns. Characteristically there exists what economists call the 'urban pull'. Thus Sorokin et al [1965 : 231], note,

"Only when, owing to various causes, a whole country entered a disastrous and catastrophic period of economic, political, moral, mental and social decay and disorganisation has there been a termination of this exodus".

Societies that have labour migration from rural areas into towns may show an excessively high incidence of this phenomenon that perpetually negates any hope for the future development of rural areas. Such is the case in Southern Africa as is noted by Natrass [1977] and Maasdorp [1975] among others. In the case of these areas a great degree of underdevelopment or total neglect of the rural areas, makes them unable to offer their inhabitants viable living conditions. It is extractive of able-bodied males in their large numbers, leaving women and aged people to look after children and any livestock that is left in their care. It is characteristically lacking in vertical occupational mobility, as the mass of migrants form the ranks of unskilled, mostly untrained illiterate men. These men together with their families form the fringe of the urban culture, or continue to encapsulate themselves in groups that will serve for

purposes of recreation, social control, and security until such time that they gradually find their feet in the 'foreign' culture. Because of lack of skills resulting in low wages there is little in the form of contributions to the rural sector from such urban earnings. In South Africa and elsewhere lack of development programmes in rural areas, coupled with taxation, and new consumer needs, have all contributed to the phenomenal 'urban pull'.

4.5 The subculture of peasantry and development needs

Writing on the subculture of peasantry, Rogers [1969 : 26-39] notes the complex character of their subculture, what he calls the 'indecipherables' of the human society. He acknowledges the fact that very little is known of rural inhabitants who till the soil and eke a living from small, often disjointed agricultural plots, using the most basic implements and living under traditional conditions. Peasants are defined as farmers who are mainly involved in subsistence agriculture and production, consuming a major portion of their small yields. They are engaged in subsistence production which is characterised by a low degree of commercialisation. Investment is not a primary goal of the peasant's efforts since whatever little he earns as income, he often spends on consumption goods which he cannot himself produce. Caution must be addressed to the above observation as external factors and personality traits may be acting conjointly as constraints. Secondly what conceptually is seen as investment by the group of so-called peasants may not necessarily agree with that of the author's values or cultural way of life. In rural communities where livestock is seen as security for future acquisition of goods, and an increment in the number of such property is the aim of the owner, this property is seen as a form of investment. That this type of investment is not manipulated and controlled in the stock exchange is a different matter.

Writings on the Latin American peasantry abound, for instance as noted in Rogers [1969] but little besides anthropological works have come out to give a balanced perspective on the African situation. We have already

noted both Natrass's and Maasdorp's work. Of note too is Pausewang's [1973] Ethiopian study. The latter and Rogers using their original observations and other sources generally come to the conclusion that :

1. Peasants experience a general distrust among themselves; a fear of being different, innovative, lest social ostracism may occur.
2. There may be a lack of perceiving the common good which calls for cooperative effort on their part. Some of this tendency may stem from the familiness or clanness of their occupational and recreational activities; an incipient capitalistic spirit giving rise to individual competitiveness or a sense of insecurity in the unknown future.
3. Of particular significance is the dependency on, coupled with hostility towards government authority. This is characteristically a conflict situation where the role of innovators may arouse blocks to communication and meaningful contact. As people become aware of their poverty and lack of means for self-improvement, lack of ideas and a cultural base to control and direct immediately any innovative changes, the initial stages of contact may be characterised by both acceptance and rejection, dependency and simultaneous hostility towards authority. Risks exist as over-reliance may express itself in failure to adopt a patient experimental approach, and possible losses may result in total rejection of both programme and change agent. (Rogers 1969; Pausewang 1973)

Foster as quoted in Rogers [1969 : 29] accounts for this complex attitude when he notes that

"... the villager has been victimised by persons more knowledgeable than he since the beginning of time".

Pausewang [1973 : 61-65] in his Ethiopian research also remarks on the socio-political relationships that involve the mishandling of peasants which ultimately have a bearing on any other authority-related programme. This mishandling leads to negative feelings developing mental blocks to

future contact that is considered foreign and a threat to village security and stability.

Fatalism, familism and a lack of innovativeness are also some of the noticeable features. Owing to the realisation of helplessness in their inability to control their future and fate, peasants may often adopt an attitude of resignation. Resignation may be an expression of religious belief, coupled with an authoritarian family relationship. Some researchers have found this particularly among rural communities, whether this has to do with questions related to a development programme or with family planning. Lotter & van Tonder [1978 : 18] writing on rural men's ideas on fertility patterns found that in researching about family size, such questions were considered either ludicrous, beyond an individual's control or irreligious. This is confirmed by Freedman's findings as quoted by the abovementioned researchers.

Innovativeness is not a noted peasant characteristic. A life of insecurity, poor yearly returns on arduous labour, an unknown and unanticipated future may all add up to thwart an innovative spirit. Rogers [1969 : 31] notes that,

"It is often said that a lack of peasant innovativeness is a function of scarce economic resources or of technology inappropriate for village settings".

As a result of this awareness international development agencies are looking for solutions to this problem of inappropriate technology.

What we are really confronted with here is the realisation that for rural people, what are proposed as schemes for development and change by people more knowledgeable than they are, may be threatening challenges to the villagers, as they often lack the appropriate model of success in situations similar to their own on the one hand, (thus generating a sense of doubt), and on the other hand, the socio-cultural constraints may make the challenge initially appear insurmountable.

4.6 Critiques of theories of resistance

Hutton and Cohen [1975 : 105-128] offer a critique of the type of approach as characterised by Rogers' and other treatises on the subculture of peasantry . They distinguish three different approaches to the question of resistance to change by peasantry viz :

1. The structural functionalism and Parsonian sociology see peasant conservatism as a product of a particular type of traditional rural value system that impedes economic progress and modernisation.
2. Some empiricists see peasantry as being justified in their resistance to specific economic development not as a result of any primitive state of being traditional. Their economic judgements may relate more to socially desirable goods or rewards rather than material ones.
3. Some studies have recognised the profit motive among peasantry but the circumstances surrounding such activities are complex in themselves making it difficult to classify as either impeding or facilitating progress.

Accordingly Apthorpe as quoted in Oxaal [1975 : 106] notes that development studies in the 1960's in Africa :

"laid emphasis on a lopsided interchange, whether co-operation or competitive or both, between what in practice were regarded as two distinct sets of persons".

The one group were planners, initiators or change agents while the other were receivers.

Following Samir Amin's view what have come to be peripheral dependent societies in Africa have been a result of a,

"dialectic ... between the major colonial policies and the structures inherited from the past"

as quoted by Hutton and Cohen [1975 : 107]. The authors go on to criticise the ahistorical nature of functionalist sociology leading its proponents to overlook change over time within so-called traditional societies themselves thus coming up ultimately with dichotomous analyses of different types of societies.

Secondly to these sociologists tradition came to be a major cause of resistance. Accordingly some writers observe that,

"sociologists concentrated on social barriers to economic development while ignoring economic barriers to social development"

[Hutton and Cohen, 1975 : 108].

Where social costs to a culture and value system are seen to be so high in the event of an encroaching foreign system as to result in the disequilibrium of the total indigenous one, resistance may result in total rejection of the novel way of life or in the partial adoption of the foreign elements which may not incur threats, real or imagined. Such is the case with the pastoralist Masai of Kenya or the Arusha of Tanzania. Thus the harsher the circumstances surrounding a cultural way of life to which people have adapted their lives, the greater the awareness of possible threats in a yet unproved way of life leading to what has been seen as typically traditional peasant resistance to change.

As the African economies in pre-colonial contact were at various stages of development and of various types, so after contact,

"The process of development and underdevelopment in which peasants are entangled today are the results of the unequal interactions of economies over time".

Hutton and Cohen [1975 : 121]. The only common factor in these economic systems in relation to the world capitalist economy is their underdevelopment and peripheral nature.

For a clearer grasp of African economies it is necessary to grasp the interrelatedness between the economy, the value system and social structure. Thus Hutton and Cohen [1975 : 122] observe :

"The ways in which African economies have varied from each other and have come together to be incorporated in a world economy is a procedure quite sufficiently complicated for any social scientist to deal with, but these economies cannot be separated in reality from their accompanying social structures and value systems which are of particular relevance to the social organisation of production, the social control of surpluses and the alternative uses to which productive time and energy might be put."

4.7 Rural development in theory and process

Although there exist today various definitions of the concept, due to the focus of the writer, there are noticeable commonalities which, when operationalised, will show how multi-disciplinary the whole subject of development is. A unidimensional approach is rejected for its inadequacy.

McCallum [1977 : 248] conceives of it as a spatial concept i.e.

... it means the development of an area, a rural area. Equally clearly it involves activities in many (areas) sectors. Any rural development programme is a multi-sectoral programme involving developments in productive agriculture (interpreted in its broadest sense) and its related services (and industrial activities) in transportation, communication and infrastructure in health and education services - ... The objectives of rural development therefore, extend beyond any particular sector.

Mbithi [1972 : 18-22] not only stresses the social element in development as a total human experience, but he conceives of it also as a multi-sectorial, inter-ministerial set of coordinated programmes aimed at improving the incomes, welfare and employment opportunities of rural people.

Uma Lele [1975 : 20] highlights independence once a phase of take-off has been reached where external assistance has come to bear on programmes

when she states that,

"... rural development is defined as improving the living standards of the mass of the low income population residing in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining".

Three important features are intrinsically involved in the process, and she notes :

1. Improving the living standards of the subsistence population involves mobilization and allocation of resources so as to reach a desirable balance over time between the welfare and productive services available to the subsistence rural sector.
2. Mass participation requires that resources be allocated to low-income regions and classes and that the productive and social services actually reach them.
3. Making the process self-sustaining requires development of appropriate skills and implementing capacity and the presence of institutions ... to ensure the effective use of existing resources ...,

[1975 : 20]. Certain specific issues interplay to have impact on programmes viz. national policies, administrative systems and scope for institutional pluralism are key issues involved in the ultimate outcome of a particular programme.

To avert the initial tendency of automatically linking rural development with agricultural development, the experts in this area have thus constantly called for a wider approach as problems have continued to exist even in areas where agriculture is seen as a priority - problems which exist notwithstanding the existence of expensive programmes of agricultural animation.

Such problems have been seen to exist in the poor administrative structures, unequal access of different classes or groups of people within the community, a slow trickle effect from the top to the bottom of the

hierarchy, the helplessness of the rural poor in a highly dominated power structure, lack of proper channels for communication between those in actual need, and those controlling the resources for development.

Emphasis therefore is on an integrated programme from the start, an approach involving industrial, educational, welfare, commercial and agricultural sectors. It is through this diversity that surplus hands will be absorbed, and excessive rural - urban migration arrested.

Moody [1972 : D2-D16] suggests in her paper that it is necessary to select initially one or two key elements e.g. agriculture or small industries to concentrate on without necessarily losing sight of the overall programme. Here too the multifaceted approach is stressed, and yet the operational strategy must be so regulated as not to be cumbersome and unwieldy resulting in confusion and despair on the part of all parties concerned with the development process.

The embarrassing problem facing development planners has been the poor 'trickle effect' down to grassroots levels. The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN among others has remarked on it. Various kinds of strategies have been suggested as already noted in Moody. Martin [in Moody 1972 : D2] observes also that,

"It calls... for the modernisation of rural communities and villages, the development of small industries and crafts, the improvement of communications and the extension of educational and health services to (the) rural areas".

Noted here is a realisation for occupational as well as service infra-structural needs for any development in rural areas to take shape. The role of government as well as individual enterprise and group process at local level is stressed.

Clarity on some of the problems in development is made by Singer [in Moody 1972 : D15] where he shows the difference between 'seeds' and 'fruits' of development. According to him,

... a distinction must be made between the seeds of development such as capital accumulation, skilled labour formation, technological progress ... and the fruits of development, such as better nutrition, lower death rates, a broader consumption basket ...

One of the seeds of development has been found to be what is called 'appropriate technology'. Thus by applying technology that is appropriate to needs, level of socio-economic development and natural circumstances of the environment, this would have a take-off effect in the sense that the people concerned would participate and involve themselves at the early stage of changes in processes familiar to them. This would encourage creative genius on their part and also develop self sufficiency.

At a conference in Accra [in Moody 1972 : D16] on technology and the developmental process certain criteria were noted as following :

1. it should be relevant to the special needs of the vast majority of the people
2. it should encourage the use of indigenous ingenuity and skills
3. it should as far as possible use local resources
4. it should be geared to the level of the capacities of the people in each of these areas :
 - (a) technical skills,
 - (b) fundamental attitudes,
 - (c) manpower and capital resources.

In the case of rural communities this necessarily implies a grass - roots or basic-needs strategy, cautionary in the sense that development should not be applied to further isolate and deprive the vast masses, who would not have access if expensive and externally developed processes and skills

were grafted onto unprepared communities. Only the few already well-off members would further their already privileged positions, contrary to Uma Lele's suggestion of a mass access to development and change, if rural communities are to be viable and to become part of the world economy.

4.8 Summary

Concern with development theory has its beginnings in the industrial era in Europe and America where socio-economic and political problems necessitated urgent solutions to the human problems that were a result of the changes experienced.

Social change, modernisation and development are closely related concepts which have at times been used interchangeably by different authors. Though interrelated they refer to different processes.

Rural development is conceived of by sociologists of different schools of thought as one of the key areas of concern. Suffering from the Western orientated theory on the interpretations of society, rural development has, for the Third World countries at least, remained an unresolved dilemma. Policies and strategies fall under the control of outside agents and sponsors, and this is coupled with a misguided conception of traditional cultures for which development is being designed and guided.

Whilst economists have concentrated on macro and specialised development of the economies, sight has been lost of the micro subsystems that have a historical meaning for particular communities. A broader all embracing development policy is stressed by other students of society, notably sociologists and anthropologists. Values, norms and various forms of social organisation cannot be separated from the economy, policy or religion.

Development strategy that considers the realities of a particular community, and is based on the needs and goals of the members of such a community

holds greater hope for success than grandiose extensive schemes that are not 'people based'.

Education for the masses, a development directed at the largest mass of the needy, as against the 'progressive farmer' policies that end up giving preferential treatment to a few elite, is preferable. Such a discriminatory approach does not achieve the 'trickle effect', as, know how, skills and aspiration are kept among the elite who develop personal vested interests as men of power. National interests and goals may be easily clouded in such practices.

CHAPTER 5

THE ROLE OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN RURAL SOCIETY

5.1 Introduction

Writings on women in rural African life abound in anthropological works in so far as they deal with the women's position in the family and society. The authors generally record the inferior status of the women in the socio-political situation of their particular countries. Such conclusions are reached through studying such institutions as polygamy, lobolo (bogadi), and child betrothal. Also considered in this area are such behavioural patterns as ukuhlonipha (avoidance) custom as strictly observed by the women and betrothed young girls, the obviously arduous tasks which women engage in, and above all the absence of women's participation in the most powerful institutions of law and politics with a few exceptions, e.g. the Rain Queen among the Lovedu. Bryant, (1949); Krige (1957); Schapera, (1956).

An outstanding observation among the writings is the rigid role division along age and sex lines within the family unit, which expresses itself as a fundamental element in social organisation of the different societies. This phenomenon appears to be a universal experience, variations in form and expression notwithstanding. Boserup, (1976).

While Western society had gone through the Industrial Revolution which undermined rigid role division along age and sex lines, even among agricultural communities, as women and children left their domestic activities to engage in factory employment, such drastic role changes have not been observed by anthropologists in rural Africa, untouched as yet by technological developments.

The phase of political change that brought about decolonisation in Third World countries has resulted in a search for and interest in development research, policies, and strategies. What has come up is an evaluation

of these anthropological writings and administrative policies which existed during this colonial phase and immediately after, in so far as they had an impact in the natural development of these studied societies or intervened in the total organisation of these communities (Pala, 1976). We have already noted the problems encountered in the field of development in Third World countries, which were partly the result of misconception of the planners and change agents on the subjects of their concern, and partly unpreparedness for rapid changes on the part of the indigenous people.

Writers generally note the central and structural role women play in the domestic institutions of their societies, but with the exception of West African women, well known for their economic enterprise, other African women's economic activities have been interpreted as an extension of their domestic activities. (Schapera, 1956 ; Bryant 1949 ; Hunter 1933). Their output is chiefly used for domestic consumption. The economist sees the women's activities as peripheral while the women engage in petty trade, as this economic activity does not form part of calculable gross national product. This has had the effect that even for those developing countries which have paid considerable time, money and expertise over development issues, the position of women as a human resource is neglected or consciously limited through discriminatory educational systems, labour laws and policies, and the legal system. (Boserup 1976 ; Nkabinde 1978 ; Pala 1976).

5.2 Women within the rural family system

In order to grasp the role of women in its wider implications for purpose of development, it is necessary to appreciate, among other things, the interrelationship between elements of the social structure and the value system on the one hand, and these and the economy on the other.

Women in Africa form the majority of the rural inhabitants, in some communities accounting for the major important types of rural activities, e.g. in the area of agriculture. The migration into towns historically has been a male activity since the rise of industrial and administrative towns and settlements during the colonial period, as men were forced to pay taxes of various kinds. But these earlier movements of men have been followed by the outmigration of women into towns and cities as wives of migrants,

members of their families or on their own in search of a livelihood. (Little, 1973 ; Longmore 1959 ; Preston-Whyte 1973 ; Nkabinde 1978). Of concern here, however is the remaining mass of women whose whole life-span, or a greater part of it, is spent in rural areas. .

The family is generally extended, patrilocal and polygynous. In cases where matrilocality obtains, authority is still vested in the male relative of the woman over her children and her rights, e.g. the Ashantis. Where the family is polygynous, the dependency ratio increases as the co-wives increase in the household and start on their child-bearing cycle. Notably the woman's role responsibility encompasses on the one hand the affective tasks of child-bearing and rearing and on the other hand, the instrumental role of engaging in economic tasks aimed at supporting herself, her children and other dependants within her household.

The institution of polygyny, in particular, is resistant to changes because of the nature of the tasks women engage in, the level at which they work, and the rural form of social security that calls for numbers and strong family ties. Religion, notably Islam has furthered the status of polygynous unions. Boserup, (1970 : 4) writing on the economics of polygyny notes that the practice ranges between 63% and 11% of all existing marriages, with Nigeria the highest and the Congo the lowest. Not all countries of Africa are on her record however nor do we think all such unions are reflected in statistical records of these countries already noted.

What is important for our purposes however is to note that students of polygyny have recognised its economic value to both husband and wife. For Africa there is conclusive proof that there is a relationship between polygyny and economic conditions. Thus Boserup notes that one of the strongest appeals of polygyny to men in Africa is precisely its economic aspect, for a man with several wives commands more land, can produce more food for his household, and can achieve a higher status due to the wealth which he can command. Boserup, (1970 : 40). This practice is seen to exist irrespective of the farming system—cash or domestic. Even where what Boserup calls the 'hierachisation of the community' (hired labour,

mechanisation) takes place, the man still has choice of economic expansion. Little, studying the Mende of Sierra Leone, concludes that a plurality of wives makes it unnecessary for a man to employ much wage labour. In Boserup, (1970 : 39).

The above observations support the view that when dealing with development issues that relate to communities still at the elementary levels of technological development, and whose social institutions outwardly appear to be non-economic or inimical to modern socio-economic changes, a deeper understanding of such processes is called for, as these impinge on the role and status of women.

5.3 Division of labour and the women

The main differentiating factor in role division, where labour is concerned, is mainly along sex lines. Though this role division is strictly adhered to, the tasks are diffuse. Thus the occupations are in no way specialised.

"Every man is expected to be able to herd cattle, hunt and do all the work normally performed by men, and so too every woman is expected to be able to till the soil, cook, make beer and do all the other work normally done by women"

Schapera, (1956 : 150).

Socialisation of the young involves to a great degree early training in their respective roles. The young girls are soon introduced to their future domestic role and other activities where women participate because of their close contact with female members of their households and clan from a tender age. Young boys are only actively introduced to their future male tasks later than their female counterparts. In former times they often had to leave the home surroundings as animal herders and hunters. Krige (1936 : 50, 51) notes that

"... the sexes are clearly differentiated in every way. Men and women engage in different work and different spheres of activity.

From the time they are children boys go one way, and girls another, and this differentiation is carried to the minutest detail of life ..."

Because of her biological function of childbirth, the woman has become more housebound during the child-rearing stage. This domestic commitment acts as a constraint on her economic activities that demand movement away from home for protracted periods of time. Thus women will lean on their co-wives or other members of the extended family when they enter the area of active economic activity. Because of the nature of role division within the home, and the need to engage in money-earning activities, women have had to devise means of coping with these apparently contradictory demands.

Whilst on the one hand they have continued with their customary roles within the home as observed by Bryant, (1949 : 177) for instance among the Zulu "... every kraal was self-contained and self-supporting, and by tradition that bore the force of law the work of the home was clearly, though far from equally, apportioned between its female and male inmates. It was the peculiar province of the males to provide and preserve the fabric of the kraal and to tend cattle, and of the females to provide the family and to cultivate the fields. The men were the artisans and pastoralists, the women, the housekeepers and agriculturalists".

They have now also ventured beyond the original domestic sphere as noted above, and have reacted to the influences of a fast developing money economy, even to the extent of engaging in, former males roles of looking after livestock in the absence of men on migratory labour.

As adult members of their families, and as childbearers, women historically have played a vital role in rural social organisation. Their socio-economic position is safeguarded within the traditional systems in various ways. It is not difficult to see the relationship between the system of lobolo (bogadi), the ritualistic practices and taboos relating to women and their structurally strategic position within the social system. Pala (1976); Hunter (1933).

Communities that have to cope with movements of large numbers of their able-bodied family heads and young men, would suffer total collapse if all instrumental tasks and related decision-making was totally confined to the absent male population. That the women do perform their roles, and in addition engage in instrumental tasks, as viewed by Parsons, (1956), but fail to draw the attention of the law and policy-makers, is more a question of limited educational and technical opportunities, coupled with a lack of access to training facilities, than one of intent or cultural design. The legal status of being perpetual minors, coupled with the system of lobolo (bride-wealth), cause among other things, the isolation of the African women from the main stream of economic and industrial changes. The migratory labour system as it applies in Southern Africa leaves the woman burdened with the tasks of looking after the family while the husband is away at work. Her activities as co-breadwinner for the family are not similarly recognised as economic since her output does not fall under 'gross national product'. That, like the male, she has no choice but to go out and eke a living from the soil or to engage in petty trading for the family in order to obtain sustenance is justification enough for the view that for African women at least, the Parsonian division of labour along sex lines does not completely fit the real picture.

In her study of the Pondo women, Hunter (1933) deals with their status before and after colonisation and notes the disadvantages women suffered on contact. Prior to this phase women were agriculturalists and homemakers. There was division of labour along sex lines which did not deprive women of their economic independence and decision-making.

Writing on the impact of modernisation on the traditional division of work between the sexes Boserup (1976 : 4) notes that the hierachisation along sex lines with men occupying the senior managerial jobs in commerce and industry is not an inheritance from past traditions in primitive family production. In primitive family production no such hierachical division of labour exists with men as supervisors and women as the supervised. This phenomenon does exist along age lines, however, with the older age groups supervising the younger people. Therefore the hierachisation that has come to be accepted as African tradition expressing male supremacy is a foreign element, having its roots in Western colonisation policy.

Writings on the family have distinguished two main forms - nuclear and the extended family systems. One very differentiating criterion is that of role division within each family structure as already noted. Differences occur within each particular form, e.g. the nuclear family type is mainly found in Western culture, but even then one still finds elements of extendedness or degrees of being 'nuclear'. Even in the case of societies which are characterised by a high incidence of extendedness in the organisation of the family, the conjugal pair together with their offspring are not completely overshadowed, as is the case with the arrangement of the family unit into 'houses' with a wife and children making a separate sub-unit within a polygynous setting. Accordingly Murdock quoted by Zelditch in Parsons & Bales (1966 : 307) observes that,

"... it (the nuclear family) is a discernable functioning group in all societies ..."

with only a few exceptions.

Like all social systems the nuclear family has to satisfy certain conditions in order to exist. The age and sex structure of the family together with its primary biological function makes it an outstanding unit for the study of small group processes. Just like small experimental groups the nuclear family's roles are divided into the instrumental-affective polarity. Involved in this polarity are certain tasks and behaviours, attitudes and their expression, which are necessary for the proper sustenance of the group. Notably the age and sex structure also involves the distribution of these roles.

Typically in Western society the male head of the family engages in activities directed at providing his family materially, and forming a link between this small social system with the larger external systems; while the mother as the female head of the family engages in expressive roles, loving and integrating family members.

Where there is a reversal of these roles in Western society, and there exists a preponderance of female family heads, as is the case with the

Black American family, it is regarded by some sociologists as an expression of family disorganisation. Writing on matrifocality and arguing against the blanket rejection of female-headed families as structures showing disorganisation, Turner (1974 : 131)-concerns herself with two social constructs :

- (1) kinship systems in which (a) the role of the mother is 'structurally, culturally and affectively central', and (b) this multi dimensional centrality is legitimate; and
- (2) societies in which these features co-exist, where (a) the relationship between the sexes is relatively egalitarian, and (b) both men and women are important actors in the economic and ritual spheres.

In a situation where the mother is seen to have some degree of control over the kin-unit's resources, and is also involved in decision-making processes affecting the kin, Turner [1974 : 131] views such an arrangement as structurally central to the social system. This type of component has to do with economic and political power within the group. Cultural centrality has to do with the role images, and with the legitimacy of the particular mother's role within a given society.

Matrifocality expresses itself in divergent societies in familial groups, nuclear or extended, matrilineal or patrilineal. Turner [1974 : 130] quotes a few examples of such matrifocality among divergent communities, e.g. the Javanese, the Ibo of Nigeria, and Black Americans. To the extent that in some African societies, (no less those in South Africa)** women are within their own communities recognised as people having a definite economic as well as affective roles, and assume a degree of decision making in their households as well as the wider kinship group, one does appreciate Turner's conception of the status of the woman in so-called 'matrifocal' communities. The point is that such role playing is not stigmatised as indicative of 'social disorganisation' among the members of the particular social groups. It is part of the traditional division of labour among African communities, and is closely linked to the domestic role of the mother.

** Author's comment in parenthesis.

What we have to be aware of here is the existence of a duality in culture - real as against idealised experiences in cultural relationships. More research is needed into the roles that African women actually play in society generally.

While some authors, like Simmel, as quoted in Rosaldo, (1974 : 24) find the basis of the division of labour in the biological make-up of human beings, where he points out that the woman,

"... because of her peculiar functions was relegated to activities within the limits of her home confined to devote herself to a single individual and prevented from transcending the group relations established by marriage (and) family",

this does not completely give an answer to the diversity of cultural patterns as experienced around the world in societies of varying degrees of complexity, traditionality and modernisation. Mead's observation in Rosaldo (1974 : 18) is a clear statement of the situation where she remarks,

"If those temperamental attitudes which we have traditionally regarded as feminine - such as passivity, responsiveness, and a willingness to cherish children - can so easily be set up as the masculine pattern in, one tribe and, in another, be outlawed for the majority of women as for the majority of men, we no longer have any basis for regarding aspects of such behaviour as sex linked".

There is however in existence a recognisable asymmetrical evaluation or recognition of female and male roles. Mead as quoted by Rosaldo (1973 : 19) herself recognises this where she remarks ...

"whatever the arrangements in regard to descent or ownership of property, and even if these formal outward arrangements are reflected in the temperamental relations between the sexes, the prestige values always attach to the activities of the men".

Such asymmetrical evaluation of roles on the basis of sex is, according to Boserup (1976 : 4) foreign to traditional agrarian societies. As already noted in the original family enterprise the supervisory role was not sex linked but rather age linked. Older members of both sexes

played the role of overseer and educator in agrarian activities.

The biological basis argument for the division of labour is refuted by what obtains in the occupational area, as what is considered suitably female or male labour in one type of society is considered differently in another. One other phenomenon is the mechanisation of jobs formerly considered female while the tools were basic and the task arduous, and where the modernised setting is being monopolised by men. Such is the case in the field of agricultural activity in Africa. Once technical experts pursue policies of innovation and development, women are often overlooked in their natural sphere of activity. Thus Boserup, (1976 : 7) finally notes that

"This idea (of the physiological basis) is clearly revealed as false when we make a comparison between the labour markets in the different parts of the world".

Socio-cultural, e.g. socialisation patterns and the already noted lack of training facilities for vocational tasks are some of the causes that bring about the differential evaluation of the role division within the family and thus, society generally.

The instrumental-affective characterisation of the Western type division of labour is seen by writers like Parsons for instance to be all-pervasive even in cases where the family is engaged in farming activities. This is expressed in the form of attitudes that exist. Thus those attitudes associated with the instrumental role are conceived as being specific, tend to be effectively neutral; are directed at external relations; and are orientated towards achievement. This characterisation applies in all aspects aimed at group survival.

As has already been shown such role conception if linked with the sexual dimension in the Parsonian sense is Western ethno-centric, as there is conclusive proof that African women do engage in instrumental tasks - whether as working domestics in urban employment, or doing agricultural work in home-owned fields. They have to work to survive. Economic activity is their cultural role.

Murdock quoted by Zelditch in Parsons and Bales 1956 :307 has made observations on the extended family which show wider dimensions of the instrumental-affective role division. Having noted the generic character of the nuclear family, even within the extended family units, he goes on to show that this type of role division extends to the lineage members of each spouse, irrespective of sex i.e. relatives of the male assume the instrumental role in relation to child rearing, and those of the woman, the affective role. This phenomenon is noted in some cases in the system of nomenclature, e.g. among the Zulus where we have such a title as ubabekazi (female father) referring to the paternal aunt, which is indicative of her relationship to her brother's offspring.

We can therefore conclude that Western ethnocentric role expectations have coloured the observations of some anthropological writings on the role structure of foreign societies. This has had an impact on the work of some sociologists.

5.4 Land rights, ownership and usage

That African women are agriculturalists is a well documented fact, as we have already noted in this paper. Their livelihood depends for daily sustenance on the agricultural output they eke out of the soil, often using hoes or less suitable implements. Owing to the nature of small-sized plots, lack of training for use of intensive modern agricultural inputs and credit facilities, the periodic shifts in agricultural activities necessitating preparation of new patches, women on the whole have not been able to produce, on their own, much in excess of domestic needs and small-scale marketing. Realising their particular limitations, and the conflicting demands of family and fields, women sometimes form cooperative groups that exchange labour between groups of friends and neighbours (ilima).

Women are engaged in such activities as land preparation, weeding and hoeing, sowing, harvesting, storage and food preparation. Where activities like scrub-clearing and water-drainage suffer because of male migration into towns or because women cannot afford to pay hired labour, they do the work themselves.

In traditional patriarchal societies women do not enjoy rights of land ownership but they have usufructuary rights in areas set aside as women's fields for food crops, or in family fields belonging to their husband's household. These plots of fields are traditional allotment to households to which every bona fide married male member of the community is entitled. The land is held in trust by the chief who has the final responsibility of distributing it among households, after setting aside areas for pasturage, fishing, hunting, wood and fruit gathering. Normally this land is not alienable at will by the chief, unless a serious breach of communal law has been made, necessitating banishment or withdrawal of land use rights from the offender.

For as long as land is plentiful and there is no large scale commercialisation of farming activities, women's right to land use is assured. There is a clear division of labour and women have the critical task of food production for the entire household. This structurally important position has wider implications for social organisation as a whole. Thus during the ceremony of the First Fruits in some societies, notably the Swazis, women play an important role in the ritualistic practices that enhance the political authority of the King.

During times of technological change the balance in the division of labour is disturbed. There is either an out-migration of men into urban employment, with the result that women are left with a wider and heavier load - looking after families, livestock and fields; or, if modern agricultural programmes are introduced and result in commercialisation of this sector, what Boserup has called, 'hierarchisation' takes place. Men become owners of large-scale farms and employ women as cheap or unpaid family labour. Food production suffers for various reasons: less food crop land is made available; women lack modern agricultural skills to make intensive farming productive; less time is spent on women's fields as they form part of the husband's labour force.

It has been estimated that women's agricultural labour input ranges between 60 and 80% of the total in African agriculture either in domestic self employment or as plantation workers. Boserup, (1970 : 22).

(Pala in PAG 1977, III : 3) in Kenya observed that the women averaged between 4.5 hours a day during low labour demand and 6.9 hours a day during the peak seasons when weeding takes place.

The most critical period in women's activities is reached when land becomes scarce, either because of agricultural policies or because of a negative balance between land size and the size of the human population, as is the case in South African homelands, KwaZulu being a case in point. (Rand Daily Mail, 1979 : April 10).

As betterment schemes often lead to commercialisation of crops and live-stock, women suffer if extension programmes discriminate against them in the allocation of expertise, land, credit, and membership of cooperatives. Often what has become popularly seen as women's programmes are homecraft courses, and the historical fact of women's agricultural role is neglected or overlooked. As title to land rests with the male members of the community, it is often they who stand to gain from the new agricultural policies and schemes. Writers have noted the negative effects of the land tenure system whereby women enjoy only usufructuary rights. Coupled with this situation is the misconception that cash accrual on men's commercial activities necessarily goes to maintain the family unit.

Women also have no final say as to changes in land use policies. Often the husband alone has the necessary quotas to commercial products as is the case in KwaZulu with regard to the sugar industry.

- (Pala 1976 : 2) notes the central aims of rural development in brief as :
- (a) to increase per capita output and market orientation among the rural population;
 - (b) to increase food production commensurate with the rapid population growth;
 - (c) to insure equitable redistribution of aggregate income;
 - (d) to reduce regional inequalities in per capita income;
 - (e) to reduce the rate of rural-urban migration; and
 - (f) to gain a precise and scientific understanding of the social and ecological environment, in which rural change is to occur.

She then goes on to criticise the tendency to overlook social costs that social transformation brings. Like Boserup, among others, she is aware of the inequalities that women are subjected to once development policies and projects are introduced in underdeveloped areas, thus introducing a tradition of discrimination against women in the commercial sphere. Pala [1976 : 3] is sceptical of the view expressed by many researchers, and planners,

"... that the directing of services to the rural farm family, however defined, will guarantee equal benefits among all family members".

PAG [1977] reports on the changed position of women with regard to land rights once cash crop farming is introduced. Women lose their power of decision as to the allocation of land for the production of food and crops for sale. This practice has colonial links as families in former colonies were forced to turn their household farms, under a system of 'cultures obligatoires', into commercial enterprises to feed overseas markets. Under this system food production for home consumption deteriorated. Burn [in PAG : 1977 II : 5] however notes that,

"Money has always been more plentiful for cash crop than for food crop development. But there seems no good reason for perpetuating colonial-inspired distinction between food crops and cash crops. Nowadays every peasant farmer in Africa needs cash and food crops should be considered cash crops!"

Research undertaken by Boserup (1970 : 53-64) has led her to the conclusion that the status of African women was undermined as administrators and planners, ignored the farming systems of women, and replaced the latter's agricultural activities with those of men. In commercial enterprises women were thus by-passed by development changes.

New educational systems together with the policies have also aggravated the situation. For a considerable time technical schools have been the domain of male pupils, and the employers have given what-

ever is available in-service training of a technical nature to the male employees. In the agricultural sector the extension service is no less responsible for the negative socio-economic circumstances of women in rural areas. Thus Boserup [1970 : 55-56] notes that as a result of the attitude of the extension services, the gap between the labour productivity of men and women continues to widen. Men are taught to apply modern methods in the cultivation of a given crop while women continue to use the traditional methods in the cultivation of the same crop thus getting much less out of their efforts than men. The inevitable result is that women are discouraged from participating in agriculture and are glad to abandon cultivation whenever the increase in their husband's income makes it possible.

This neglect of women gives other results. In South African rural homelands where the communal land-tenure system exists, women have no real land rights, notwithstanding the well-noted value of their agricultural role. Past and present administrators have shown general neglect of rural areas for development purposes. (Rand Daily Mail, 1979).

The same reasons, for instance, that have driven men out of rural areas, (leaving these vast areas in the hands of women and the aged of their communities), have also led African women in rural South Africa to seek better incomes in urban employment as settlers in towns and cities or as migrants. Notwithstanding this socio-economic phenomenon, land rights are still vested in men even though they are in no position to use the land profitably. Because of this absentee 'ownership', coupled with the women's lack of judicial power', women have not been able to express, in a meaningful way, through the various levels of administrative authority, their needs and views with regard to development and change.

The migratory labour system, as it affects the situation of rural homelands has been well documented for instance by Maasdorp, (1974); Natrass, (1977); Butler, Rotberg & Adams, (1977). Because of the threat to human

survival and family unity, women have also followed suit, moving in large numbers to towns, following their menfolk, in search of jobs or 'illicit' money-making. Often they occupy the lowest rungs of the domestic service, as they come to the urban areas not equipped in any particular skill or profession. (Preston-Whyte, (1973); Longmore, (1959)

This general outmigration further retards development in rural areas as rural activities become more and more associated with backwardness, poverty or illiteracy. A concerted development programme that aims at raising the quality of all rural inhabitants, irrespective of sex and age will stem this tide.

5.5 Rural underdevelopment and women's role

The situation in the rural homelands, formerly called reserves, has long been recorded in South African commissions and reports, notably the Tomlinson Commission (1955), and recently two studies, (Thorrington-Smith, Rosenberg & McCrystal, (1978); Butler, Rotberg & Adams, 1977), have given us the most recent broad data on the situation in the homelands of KwaZulu and Bophuthatswana.

We can summarise some of their observations as follows :

- (1) a high sex ratio imbalance, with many more males than females in the 15-64 age groups absent from rural areas;
- (2) the consideration of agricultural work as 'woman's work', thus indicating the persistence of traditional values toward the division of labour;
- (3) the inability of rural areas to support an increasing number of young people (in need of jobs), due to underdevelopment or total neglect of the rural areas, resulting, as noted above, in outmigration.
- (4) the high drop-out rate at lower primary school level resulting in functional illiteracy and unskilled manpower;
- (5) an educational system that has highlighted academic rather than technical education;

- (6) a high birthrate, KwaZulu's being the highest projected rates at 3,10% for the period 1975-80, as against other group areas.

The 1970 census data as revealed in Thorrington-Smith et al [1977 : 63] is as follows :

	Zulu	Total Black	White
South African White areas	1,3	1,6	0,9
KwaZulu	2,7		

In relation to this the report states :

"The high dependency burden in KwaZulu is a serious barrier to the socio-economic development of the KwaZulu people. In economic terms it leads to a shift of resources away from saving and into consumption" [1977 : 63]

Nattrass [1977] writing on the migratory labour system and its implication for underdevelopment, shows the high dependence of the rural areas of KwaZulu on the remittances of migrants' earnings on the low total per capita income of R40, 60% of which in 1970 was provided from export labour, and 40% generated locally. Thus the subsistence output as shown by the 1970 figures compares poorly with the 1960 levels. Thorrington-Smith et. al. [1978] note that earnings within KwaZulu compare poorly with those of White areas, as a result of which people continue to desert areas associated with low incomes for towns or White-owned farms. Migrants spend their income in the areas where they work and stay, away from homelands. Little is remitted to the home areas, insufficient at any rate, to cover consumption, as well as savings.

It is clear from all these studies that the very low per capita income of the rural population reveals a state of abject poverty if this is seen in relation to the overall underdevelopment of these areas.

If one of the demanding challenges facing rural homelands is overpopulation, as notably remarked upon by Thorrington and others in their report,

then the role women play in polygynous union comes into play, (among other issues) and the social value of these unions within a developing Western-orientated society, must be seen as anomalous. Coupled with this is the problem of illegitimacy, from which rural areas also suffer.

The situation of women as dependants of working migrants or local farmers must be evaluated. We have already noted Pala's (1976 : 3) caution concerning assumed equitable sharing of men's incomes within families. This fact has implications for total human welfare, in family and society, particularly as men are seen characteristically as 'breadwinners', therefore fit to benefit directly from development programmes or changes, to the exclusion of women.

Changing lifestyles of working men involving new tastes, is shown by the increasing number of bicycles, cars, radios and the patronising of certain services which take a large slice of their incomes, regardless of their socio-economic level. Research is desperately needed to determine real expenditure patterns of rural family heads to establish what amount is allotted to domestic use for this will reveal the extent to which women and their children, as dependants, stand to gain in terms of nutritional levels, medical care, schooling, housing and welfare from this source.

5.6 Socio-cultural factors and women

Lengthy discourse has considered the question of cultural norms and values of underdeveloped societies as these affect or are affected by social changes and innovations. Some authors, among whom, notably, is Rogers (1969), associate resistance to modernisation with traditional societies. Failure to engage in modernisation is linked with traditionalism. Failure to engage in what economists call rational economic activity, regardless of exposure to urban and technological influences, has been seen as one of the "indecipherables" of peasant society.

The degree and extent of migrants' self encapsulation in socio-cultural

groups and activities in the urban environment within 'home boy' groups of homogeneous social units, has been observed in urban centres of South Africa. Vilakazi (1962 : 110) has done a study of the Nyuswa tribe wherein he categorises people into (a) the school-educated and progressive class (b) the conservative traditionalist-unprepared to adopt Western lifestyles notwithstanding a long period of contact, and (c) the amagxagxa - the marginal unstable mass of 'normless' people - dislodged from either of the two former cultural subgroups.

Anthropological comments on women as preservers of culture and tradition are well noted in writings by authors such as Krige (1936) and Schapera (1956). This continuous association of females with time-worn values and attitudes is inimical to change and modernisation. This often leads to their isolation.

Studies on fertility patterns based on both rural and urban settings and which deal with the role women play in family life reveal a preference by both men and women for larger families. In partriarchal societies much domestic control rests with the male, and coupled with this, a consideration of childbirth as a gracious act of God, ignorance of modern family planning techniques (seeing that the traditional controls have been neglected) and illiteracy all account for this family pattern and attitudes that favour it. (Lotter & van Tonder, 1978).

Children are also of value to African mothers, as from a tender age they engage in pastoral as well as household activities, as goatherds, nursemaids and cleaners of their mothers' homes. As messengers they run errands in lieu of the telephone that does not exist; they are sent on minor shopping sprees and in this may make life easier for mothers. To-day they also serve as petty traders at markets and bus stops. All these considerations, among others, mean that for African women and men at least, children are still as much of a household asset as they also entail costs in maintenance and education. Thus female children in particular and rural children generally have a higher drop-out rate from school on account of the responsibilities they face early in their lives.

Poverty and lack of proper schooling facilities versus the total rural population of schoolgoing age do not auger well for prolonged schooling. The often observed cultural bias in affording males in any community better skills than is the case with women, is clearly illustrated in the schooling patterns of KwaZulu children. Mdluli [1980 : 76] observes the discrepancy in female/male pupil ratios in KwaZulu with more males enrolled in schools than females for the years 1972-1978, notwithstanding the fact that KwaZulu had more females than males in 1970. To highlight this anomaly in KwaZulu, he cites the case of Bophuthatswana in 1970, where general population distribution in terms of females and males was reflected also in the school population with more females in both cases. Thus quoting Brazelle he notes

"In 1970 the Bophuthatswana population was composed of 53.14% females and 46,86% males, and accordingly the school population during the years 1969 to 1976 was composed of 3% more females than males. In the case of KwaZulu there are 3% more males than females."

To demonstrate this point further, he uses information in Table I as illustrative.

TABLE I : KWAZULU TOTAL PUPIL ENROLMENT ACCORDING TO SEX 1972-1978

<u>Year</u>	<u>Boys (Total)</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Girls (Total)</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Total</u>
1972	242934	51,4	229428	48,6	472362
1973	264716	51,5	249454	48,5	514170
1974	293049	51,6	275303	48,4	568352
1975	311398	51,4	294937	48,6	606335
1976	326732	51,4	308816	48,6	635548
1977	365744	51,2	349201	48,8	714945
1978	401586	51,1	384737	48,9	786323

The institution of polygyny and the prevalence of the extended family in rural areas are factors to be considered when socio-economic changes necessitate a total change in the tribal way of life, as [Thorrington-Smith et. als, 1978] report states. These cultural patterns of life may be seen either as strengths to build on or as extreme incumberances to be

done away with, as is noted in the abovementioned report. The hlonipha (avoidance) system is applied strictly in the case of women among the traditional Zulu. This is further extended to relationships beyond the husband's agnatic group where outsiders fictionally called, 'abantu basemzini' (the in-laws) have dealings with rural women. The latter are shown deference and respect accordingly whether they are male or female. Relationships with males are more reserved than is the case with female contacts.

Left to themselves in the rural areas, not much disturbed by male - imported goods from towns and cities - (as it has already been shown that behavioural patterns of traditional males don't easily change once in the rural home) - rural women continue to pursue their activities, much under the cloak of traditional male - female relationships where male vested interests enjoy priority. Thus the socio-cultural pattern further enhances discrimination against women, making it difficult for them to enter the modern sector, and all that it entails in terms of knowledge, decision making, access to credit facilities, and competitive resource use.

Political power is male dominated, and in the rural areas is symbolised by the institution of the chieftainship, the indunas and chief's police=men. Women do not become part of the decision making group at this community level and there are no well organised integrative organisations besides the 'vegetable garden' groups found in a few areas in KwaZulu for instance, that are a link with the total administrative machinery of the policy makers. Some writers have shown that women play a structurally valuable role in African communities as members of households and as provisioners [PAG IV I-IV 33] but for purposes of political power and decision-making at the level of national organisation, there are few exceptional cases.

A historical development in South Africa spearheaded by citizens of KwaZulu was the inauguration of the Women's Brigade of the Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement (1977) whose goals are encompassed within the movement's constitution. The constitution creates equality between

the sexes and does not discriminate according to class, age and creed. In 1974 a 'Commission of Inquiry into the Legal Status of Zulu women' was set up by the KwaZulu Homeland government to assess the views on the minority status of the women. There was overwhelming support for the removal of constraints and proposals for the attainment of majority status, at the age of 21, in line with South African Common law as it obtains in the rest of the country. According to the homeland government policy women have voting rights; and are eligible for election to the assembly (parliament). However inequalities do still exist in the case of Zulu women with regard to succession and property rights. Ultimately what these changes will mean, with regard to socio-economic development, is unknown.

Writings on the role of African church women's groups [Brandel-Syrier : 1962] noted the untapped potential of the powerful groups which proliferated in South Africa then, and still do. Isolationist in character and inward-looking, African women's church groups have not yet appreciated the potential involvement of the church in community development. No follow-up study on these groups has as yet been undertaken to produce a re-assessment of their role during the seventies and eighties.

These and other socio-cultural factors, which are seen as negative for purposes of development, can be removed only gradually through free and compulsory education, adult functional education, the use of mass media and the adoption of a human centred rather than a sexist approach to development policy and strategy. Until women can be seen as a potential resource for the transformation of the poor rural areas, and necessary training and expertise are made available to them, (considering their particular situation as experienced and expressed by the women themselves) the following observation that,

"The result is that although the masses of women continue to spend more than half of their working hours on various economic activities, their productivity is far from commensurate with their labour input. Their activities continue to remain tradition-bound because they receive little or no assistance from the official sources. Thus the transformation of the rural areas

continues to lag behind its potential for development" [UNECA 1972 : 359-370] will still be applicable in many parts of the world for the foreseeable future.

5.7 Women and non agricultural activities

The active spheres of women in rural areas include domestic agricultural work, food processing and marketing, paid agricultural labour in commercial enterprises, handicrafts, domestic service and migrant urban wage employment. In Lusaka, a co-sponsored conference was held to discuss activities of African women in the areas of handicrafts and trade, covering many sub-regions of Africa. The women are involved in various capacities - as individual entrepreneurs, partnerships, cooperatives, importers and exporters of raw and finished products. Some of the projects are government sponsored or subsidized, others are run by women with the assistance of foreign international agencies. Subjects dealt with are policy, training, marketing, international cooperation in the field of small scale industries, and cooperatives.

Jasleen Dhamija [ILO 1975 : 82] an I L O expert, expounds the sociological implications of such activities, and her observation is of relevance to this study:

"The most important factor in support of this sector is the sociological fact".

She then goes on to note that

"In contrast with the Western concept of man as promoted by the advocates of industrialisation ... as a creature motivated by self interest, in a competitive society ... in a traditional society, men and women are seen as an integral part of the tribe or community, with their rights and duties defined in a cooperative economic endeavour."

Such values need not be destroyed in developing communities but should be used as the basis of any strategy for rural development.

What is valuable in the report is its record of women's commitment to economic activities that broaden the scope of their enterprise beyond agriculture and animal husbandry.

West African women's economic activities are legendary. They engage in international trade as importers and exporters. Both Nigerian and Ghanaian women are outstanding in this field. The latter group have been known to form 80% of active traders. (Boserup 1970 : 87). However with the rise of big commerce and the institution of licencing and other controls, women as small traders are the first to suffer.

Women need other economic outlets in a fast changing society like Kwa-Zulu. Already we have a growing phenomenon of female petty trading in the area with its attendant problems. (Nene 1981; Lemmer, 1980). Research is called for to investigate the circumstances surrounding the economic activities of African women in petty trading, the extent of the practice and problems in the field of licencing, access to buying, selling and credit facilities. There is the likelihood that women as rural inhabitants run the risk of being elbowed out of their livelihood, albeit a meagre one, if such developments arrive at a time when women are not yet seen as worthy partners in training programmes and resources accessibility.

Thorrington-Smith et al (1978 : 93), reporting on the need for economic growth, clearly point to a need for a total change of Zulu socio-cultural life styles when they remark that

- (i) Change will have to take place to bring about a society which is capable of accepting and sustaining the forces which make for economic growth. There is an expressed need for change in traditional norms and values, in the interests of economic growth and rising living standards per head of population, and a substitution of another set of norms and values embracing the industrial ethic.

- (ii) The traditional attitude to cattle and land tenure "will ultimately have to go the same way as tribal society itself".

The above report is broad but male-orientated, typical of male-centred development policy and writings. The report in Butler et al (1977) also does not place women's role in development 'on the map'. Problems in this area i.e. the complex sphere of women's roles must be emphasised to initiate discourse and thought-provoking ideas for planners. Seeing that the report on KwaZulu deals with questions of modernization of the economy it is important for the country as a whole that women should be seen in their capacity as human resource full of potential for development which needs cultivation and support.

Very little beyond simple census records is available in South Africa on African women covering their activities as people employed within a whole spectrum of jobs. Such areas as vocational training, in-service training, employment policies, within both government and private sectors, are issues worth looking into.

Faced with the male dominated industrial and commercial sectors, and laws restricting freedom of movement and choice of employment, women (both black and white) as professionals have fallen into the caring fields, like teaching and nursing. They abound in urban employment as domestics and as agricultural workers on commercial farms in seasonal employment. On their own, they are found in petty trading, faith healing and handicrafts. Traditional educational policies have stressed women's roles that centre on the domestic sphere and have therefore resulted in fewer girls undergoing technical education in preparation for remunerative technical employment.

This tendency is observed in Africa and illuminates the same historical colonial influences in the overall schooling rate for female children. As a whole, illiteracy preponderates among African women all over the continent. Vocational training is for home economics thus preparing girls for their domestic role while training in agriculture, commerce or trade is minimal or non-existent.

"It is clear that the contemporary image of the tasks of the women in Africa is not true to the realities of her life, and that the scarcity of opportunities for vocational and technical training reflect this image. (Economic Commission for Africa, 1972 : 367)

According to the E.C.A. report on African women and development, (E.C.A. 1972 : 369) The Rabat Conference on Education Vocational Training and work opportunities for Girls and Women in African Countries held in Morocco in May 1977 called for "equal access to vocational training and retraining at all levels by both sexes (as) the goal should lead to achieving women's full participation in the economic and social life of the country". This observation can be extended to Southern Africa as well.

An ingenious programme could incorporate, under modern working conditions, traditional skills and thereby minimise the trauma, fear and threat to established life. Thus a policy of gradualism, beginning at the women's own level of skill, would assist in ultimately incorporating them into the wider market economy and is worth exploring for rural women.

The E.C.A. (1972 : 369) recognising the situation of African women within their countries as they become increasingly excluded from the modern sector calls for a probe and analysis of this trend and the attitudes attendant upon it. It advises study at micro and macro levels on how to integrate women into the modern sector of the economy. A five year programme on prevocational and vocational training of women toward their full participation in development (1972-1976) has been developed, based on recommendations of regional conferences and discussion with representatives of governments and women's organisations. The programme embraces five projects:

1. The impact of modernisation on the role of the rural women.
2. Women in wage employment.
3. Self-employed women in marketing, industry and the services.

4. Pre-vocational and vocational training of the school-leaver girl.
5. Planning for participation of women as human resources in national development.

This programme does not include South African women, yet its value and relevance cannot be overstressed. The exclusion of women in this part of Africa is regrettable and many lessons, pertinent to the under-developed population sector of South Africa and its homelands, can be learned from the African experiment.

5.8 Conclusion

The status of African women as depicted in some anthropological works is represented as inferior; this based on the prevalence of the institutions of polygamy, lobolo (bogadi) or bridewealth, child betrothal, inheritance of wives and the overt superiority of the male.

The inaccessibility of African women to male researchers, who until recently, have overrun the research field relating to the societies mentioned above, is a noted feature of this type of research. The outcome of their studies has not until lately succeeded in bringing out an explicit picture of women's roles in these societies. That the researchers were male and foreign to the cultures studied, complicated the results.

Development policies based on this type of research have overlooked the realistic position of African women in their communities as people who play a central and structurally important role, effectively as well as instrumentally.

Women in large numbers left at home on their own when men, as migrants, search for urban employment, have not been granted the technical know-how readily available to men. The agricultural role which women play remains family-centred, and unchanged through time. When commercial crops are brought into the farming system, women are the first to suffer;

work hours increase (for as wives they must till their husbands' commercial fields, often unpaid) and simultaneously retain their own fields in order to feed their families.

Women are not included in technical training programmes as farmers and traders. For as long as the concept of farmer as "he" persists, women in agricultural activity will not gain access to credit and training resources.

Socialisation from childhood, further fostered in the educational system, encourages subservient behaviour on the part of the women, in deference to men. This deprives them the challenge of learning to make decisions that fall beyond the family sphere. They lag in developing a competitive spirit necessary for the modern socio-economic conditions that exist in their countries.

In rural areas, the family, as the main focal point of women's activities is still extended. Though the existence of co-wives offers opportunity for cooperative effort within the household, thus opening possibilities for more profitable use of time, lack of knowledge and skills results in excessive manpower loss.

A change in the rural economy that overlooks cultural dimensions of development, may mean greater dependency for the rural women, who are not trained to cope successfully with the new demands.

What is called for is adult education, which according to Sheffield in Abbott (1975 : 179) is the chief tool "with which to achieve this rural transformation - as much the education of the adult farmer in new techniques and attitudes, as much training for cooperation and management of credit, as much the education of women as the education of children and adolescents in formal schools and universities."

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS IN TERMS OF TIME BUDGETS

6.1 Introduction

This analysis derives from active field work and concerns weekly time budgets of the respondents' activities together with group-based interviews relating to their attitudes. The activities, engaged in by the women during a specific period of research, were confirmed by the respondents, as being part of their yearly seasonal cycle in the agricultural field. These activities can therefore be considered as an integral part of the women's role pattern.

Activities were timed through the use of time budget records and also by relying on the respondents' reports to supplement participant observation.

The time budgets, covering a wide range of activities reported on by respondents as well as those observed by the researcher, were finally analysed into five key areas. These key areas have been labelled 'critical' areas by the researcher because:

1. these were reported as necessary and critical areas of role performance by the women themselves, offering no alternatives.
2. these were reported or repeatedly observed in the majority of cases, thus presenting a socio-cultural 'profile' of the women involved as a social group within the community.

In short, all the other activities with the exception of nursing of babies and young children, were peripheral. Activities that did not centre around the welfare of the home as a domestic unit, and agricultural work were never reported as having priority over these analysed areas of activity. Time budgets appear in the form of frequency tables.

6.2 Domestic Activities

6.2.1 Cooking

The process of cooking food cannot be seen in isolation from the total socio-cultural system relating to food handling, preparation and provisioning of the family. A study of the dietary supply in any week of the year, in a community that relies mainly on the agricultural labour of its members for survival, cannot reflect a realistic picture of the role of food suppliers.

The analysis is done with this awareness in mind.

The type and amount of food available for cooking are subject to seasonal, climatic and socio-cultural factors.

In a rural agricultural society where women are the agriculturalists, their domestic role of provisioning the family begins with agricultural tasks ranging from land preparation to all the activities done after the harvesting and processing of crops.

When questioned on their great dependence on land as a food source, the general response was "We cannot see our lives apart from the land, from which we obtain our daily livelihood".

The aim of respondents involved in the present research, was to achieve as much self-sufficiency as possible from their food-producing tasks. Where commercial food stuffs, and other household items, could not be produced locally, the women had no choice, depending on personal circumstances, but to buy these at the local shops or at the nearest town once or twice a month.

The scarcity of money however kept this commercial activity to a minimum. As one woman church leader remarked, "We are poor people here. We do not have a sufficient amount of money to spend on shop foods, which are very expensive in our community. Women have to work hard in the fields in order that families may obtain their daily meal".

Production of food for cooking suffers from serious limitations e.g.

1. the nature of the scattered fields found in different areas in bits and pieces;
2. the great reliance on manual labour, done by the woman alone unless she has a helper;
3. lack of technical skills and knowledge of intensive farming;
4. fatigue and hunger and a variety of illnesses;
5. losses of harvest through floods and pests during the hot summer season;
6. the cultural taboo that still holds in many families forbidding women from milking cows; and
7. the prevalence of certain kinds of food fads against the eating of protein-rich diets e.g. eggs, sour milk, in the case of young girls and nursing mothers, and fish, in the case of older women.

When questioned as to why women cultivated fields scattered throughout the agricultural area, and whether this could not be remedied for practical reasons, the general response from women for continuing with this practice included:

1. land is sometimes inherited from in-laws who traditionally have fields apart from those of the sons and daughters-in-law;
2. land is loaned from friends if there is a need for more agricultural land;
3. since women do not have financial means to buy fertiliser, they engage in shifting agriculture once the soil seems less productive. "This is the best we can do for ourselves though it makes it difficult for us to attend equally well to our plots all the time. Besides, it is often strenuous to move from field to field doing different pressing tasks during peak labour periods". The result of this practice is poor land use, and wasted resources.

Again the question of location of fields was also of importance in terms of harvested crop which suffers regularly from flooding in the river zone, an area allocated to women. Women's reliance on natural conditions

of soil and weather, however, determines the location of their fields. The rich alluvial soils are deposited onto their plots leaving the area extremely fertile for crop cultivation during the three seasons excluding severe winter months. Land cultivation of such fields is greatly valued by the women as can be seen by their common reply, "It is suited to our needs, is extremely fertile, and needs only hoeing labour for continual week growth. But we are compensated by the yield in our harvest."

Losses of food also occur due to lack of proper long-term storage facilities and lack of knowledge of modern food preserving techniques. The traditional way of storing grain in prepared cowdung smeared pits is no longer followed. Neither do they build the outside storage hutlets of twigs and grass for dry storage. "The younger generation has developed a dislike for the food we grew up on, as their taste is now for bread, cakes and such other modern things," they would remark. Commercial interests interfere in various ways. Women either barter their foodcrops for other marketable products like oranges that are grown away from the community in order to sell these exchanged goods which are scarce at the local village or market. In this way they are able to obtain other consumer goods and food items from shops.

Ultimately all these factors do influence the type of food women are in a position to cook for their families. The table in Figure I shows average weekly hours spent by women on cooking activities during a period of three summer months of interviews.

TABLE II
WEEKLY HOURS SPENT ON COOKING ACTIVITIES

HOURS	f
35 - 37	6
32 - 34	9
29 - 31	15
26 - 28	26
23 - 25	28
20 - 22	16
17 - 19	12
14 - 16	8

The average hours spent by the women on a weekly basis is 25. Of the 5 areas of activity analysed, cooking is the one area where women spend the longest period on a particular task. All the respondents engaged in this activity regardless of the presence of other female family members. This was one of their most demanding tasks. Asked about the possibility of sharing this domestic activity on a rota basis, where co-wives shared the same household unit, in order to provide time for other activities, the reply from the women was : "It is not a traditional way of running our 'houses' in accordance with Zulu custom. Each wife is entitled to her own cooking space. Each woman has to cook for her house everyday, to prepare food for a husband if he is present, as well as for any other visiting relatives or members of the "house unit". Friendly co-wives may share foodcrops and cooked food, but independence and self application is expected of everyone. "A lazy wife in our community starves her children and herself" they remarked.

A typical family diet consists of two heavy meals each day, midday and evening : breakfast is a quick light meal of bread and a beverage, mainly tea. This is eaten hurriedly by the children before they leave home for the day's tasks. Where the day's work takes the woman out to the fields that lie four kilometres or more away, (as was the case with many of them), the women take along food parcels of over-night left-overs or more often a brew of fermented maize porridge (mahewu).

The diet consists of the following :

- Carbohydrates - these are staples - maize and its products (mealie-meal, samp, maize rice, all of which are bought at the shops), sweet potatoes, madumbis (a tuberous, highly nutritious furry crop).
- Legumes - dry beans, cowpeas, peanuts.
- Dairy products - milk served in tea; sour milk in phuthu or crumbled dry maize porridge.
- Fruit - bananas and oranges.
- Garden vegetables -tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, pumpkins, pumpkin leaves, onion, wild imifino (imbuya).

Meat products - beef, goat meat, chicken and fish.
 Beverages - homemade Zulu beer, tea and mahewu.

Cooking begins at 5h30 am for the majority of women whose children have to leave on long journeys for school. Lunch falls between 13 and 16 hours, and supper between 19 and 21 hours.

Before preparing a meal for cooking in the morning, the woman routinely has to clean the hearth of previous day's ashes, sweep the kitchen floor and, using firewood (which has been collected a day or two before on her way from the fields, or on a special wood-gathering day), make the fire.

Foods like maize, sweet potatoes, madumbis, dry beans, if harvested for the purpose of cooking, have to be processed - gleaning maize off the cob, grinding it on a stone, peeling fur off the madumbis, and shelling beans. These tasks are time-consuming where the meal is for a large family.

"Children of school-going age are away by day and those girls, no longer at school, are often away at work in sugar cane fields and elsewhere. So we are often left to our 'own devices'", they would remark.

The technique commonly used for many of the traditional foods is boiling, whereas vegetables are fried to serve as a sauce for the staple. Where the food is boiled, it is often served cold, as a snack a day or hours after cooking.

Because the weather is hot, prolonged food storage is impossible once food has been cooked and the women lack skills and technique needed to prevent early decay of food. This results in food wastage and is further aggravated by the fact that even raw harvested food cannot be stored in substantial amounts at any time.

We have already noted constraints on food production and processing, and must here add that the pressure to dispose of the surplus, as soon

as possible, is a real one for the women fear losses due to causes beyond their control.

Respondents report that seasonal hunger sets in during the dry winter months when their staple maize is depleted and the pumpkins and their leaves have either been used or lost because they have dried up. (These are normally cooked together with maize - ground while still fresh - or as mealie meal, or served as a combination of fried leaves and mealie meal crumble porridge, (uphuthu), or with fresh maize, ground and steamed as bread).

Since summer weather is hot, pests invade vegetable and staple crop fields. Such food crops are then hurriedly harvested for both cooking and petty trading. Floods also cause this 'panic-harvesting' which affects the amount of food cooked as well as the total food intake for the summer.

Women roast maize on open fires in the fields during harvest time, and this serves to stave all hunger, thus lengthening hours spent in the fields.

"During summertime the pressure of work is so great that the best we can do is to stay in the fields till sunset. At that time each one of us may be doing two or more things in the fields, like sowing and hoeing alternatively on the same day", they reported.

From the late summer months, food crops begin to be depleted until the time of early winter after March, when legumes are planted. They need, at least three months to ripen before they are ready to cook and serve for the family. They often accompany a carbohydrate staple dish, unless they are served alone as a snack, e.g. boiled cowpeas.

It is during this time, when food crops grown by women dwindle, that women rely on buying their groceries, particularly maize meal, samp, maize rice, beans and fish from shops. There is a small quantity of fruit

available because bananas are grown in this area, although citrus is well suited to the region. These banana crops are found in a number of the fields serving as hedges between individual fields. As such they cannot be grown in large quantities by the women. They are eaten by the family but are also a stable source of income for those women who have them in excess quantities. Very few of the women reported cooking meat during a week; this was once a typical dish among them. Often meat cooking coincided with the husband's presence. Women did not keep fowl runs though they kept a few free-roaming fowls which nested in the open. Threats to this type of animal husbandry exist in the form of wild animals and lack of commercial or even family use on a regular basis.

Preparation and cooking of food takes up to three hours per meal where harvested crops are used.

Food serving needs skilful knowledge of the social etiquette; allocation of amount, which part of the cooked food to give to whom - particularly in an extended family with parents-in-law, male and female siblings and young children.

Having a man staying at home or in-laws, who are aged, is most demanding as the wife has to take special care of them, and often this interferes with the time spent on agricultural work. This was borne out by the anxiety often expressed when requested to spare time on their way home for the interviews. Their attitude to their domestic activity is one of great commitment, a responsibility they are finding more difficult to share with their children during the course of the week. Nor are the unemployed men who remain at home, whilst women are working on food production, seen as available to share the sex-linked responsibility of preparing a family meal. Preparing and cooking food for husbands and parents-in-law calls for extra care. These members of the family get the choicest cuts and the largest share. The utensils used are the best available. The woman and her children share meal times as a social unit.

Accommodating such arrangements in cooking often entails cooking separate pots of the same thing or a more special sophisticated dish for a husband and parents-in-law.

Households in the area keep goats but these are not for normal domestic use. Though they belong to women (in some cases) they are not valued commercially so that women could raise cash for buying food, neither do they serve for domestic food as meat. They are also not used for milking purposes as it is not a cultural practice. Only in times of severe need could a woman alienate her livestock for sale e.g. to raise schoolfees for her children or to pay heavy debts for a husband. Otherwise goat meat is mainly eaten during festivities and rituals e.g. betrothals and weddings.

In conclusion, what women cooked was determined by various factors, climatic, seasonal and socio-cultural.

6.2.2 Fetching Water

This is one of the major areas of critical activity women engage in twice or more times a day for use in cleaning the house and household utensils, cooking food and for laundry purposes.

It is an activity that is done during the early morning or afternoon hours and may also be coupled with other activities at the time when women are on their way home e.g. after working in the fields; cutting thatching grass or cutting twigs for building.

Use of 25 litre plastic drums is common, and the source of drinking water lies at a distance of 1 to 2 kilometres away for women who occupy homes on hill tops. The river which is the chief source of water used for consumption and cooking purposes is subject to two extreme weather conditions that cause murkiness. During the seasonal summer rains, there is flooding and the river is filled with debris. In winter the river bed is dry causing the people to concentrate on one small spot

for both drinking and laundry purposes. The task of fetching water is a shared one as women engage the services of their female children during afternoons and weekends.

Because of the nature of their domestic tasks, the long hours involved in doing their activities, use of water is critical for family health and hygiene. Use of unhygienic water for drinking and cooking is common for the majority of the women.

Asked to comment on their particular needs in relation to the use of water, the typical reply was, "We older women are finding it difficult to walk long distances in search of water after a hard day's work in the fields. The condition of the water is poor and is not suited to human consumption. Only those women with grown up daughters are able to cope better. It would be better for all of us to have proper water wells near our homes".

"There is little else we can do on a daily basis as our working day is so full of activity away from the home. When we come back from the far away fields we are already tired, needing some rest before we begin on other work, cooking, nursing babies and doing our crafts".

Asked on the possibility of having better amenities for use in running homes, women do not see this as a possibility in the near future. "We depend on the menfolk for so many things that it is difficult to ask for more. They are poorly paid and we cannot afford something better than this"; "There are co-wives and he cannot do it for me alone", are some of the remarks women made. There is a general attitude of resignation to their situation, particularly in the case of older women. "We are hoping that our children will have a better life since this type is killing our health", they would remark.

Scarcity also means that there is less water available for washing clothes and their bodies. With the growing number of young children, the nursing mother may find it increasingly difficult to make frequent trips to the

water well to fetch water for domestic use. So she often goes to fetch water for drinking purposes, does her laundry by the river side and nurses the young baby she carries along to the riverside or alternatively she carries along a water drum on her way to the fields in which to bear water on her return journey.

The following table shows the average total number of hours and their frequencies:

TABLE III
WEEKLY HOURS SPENT FETCHING WATER

Hours	f
18 - 20	6
15 - 17	4
12 - 14	15
9 - 11	13
6 - 8	44
3 - 5	26
0 - 2	8
Zero	4
Total	120

The total average hours spent by women in this activity is 8 hours. Where zero is recorded, use of preserved water in iron drums was made and this had served for the weekly domestic use. The low ratings in the majority of the cases results from the shared nature of the task through use of child labour and the concurrent engagement in different activities as shown, thus making it difficult to allocate time for any specific activity that is seen as supplementary.

6.2.3 Cleaning Home

The majority of the homes are of the mud and thatch variety, with a ground smoothed floor.

Maintenance and cleaning entail seasonal rethatching of the roofs by men folk, women having cut the grass and carried it home in bundles; having prepared a mud pack for the walls which they will smear onto the old wall to renew it and lastly finely smearing the walls on both the inside and the outside, completes the work. The floor is smeared with cowdung periodically (at least once a week). What remains for the women to do after these activities are complete is daily sweeping of the floors.

In addition, the yard surrounding the huts has to be cleaned - sweeping to remove domestic refuse; animal droppings, (as these animals roam around the yard); periodic hoeing of weeds, and clearing of the hedges. During early mornings before making fires for cooking, the hearth ashes have to be cleared.

Tidying of the house will involve doing laundry in open river streams and ironing this laundry using a hand iron heated on an open fire. Few women have cemented homes, or own paraffin stoves. This makes house work laborious, e.g. cleaning floors and results in a condition of general neglect. Lack of time and lack of proper cleaning agents accounted for this.

Generally the women reported lack of sufficient time to engage in this activity properly, on a daily basis, as their days are predominantly spent doing work in fields, or selling crops. Many of the respondents expressed a need for extra time to engage in this activity.

As the following Table IV shows, women spent few hours on this task. It is engaged in briefly during early mornings prior to leaving for fields and also during afternoons after agricultural work, if time can be spared.

TABLE IVWEEKLY HOURS SPENT CLEANING HOME

Hours	f
12 - 14	8
9 - 11	33
6 - 8	49
3 - 5	30
0 - 2	0

The average hours spent by women in this activity is 8 hours. Before leaving the home she has to pack up her sleeping equipment together with that of the children. The majority sleep on grass mats.

Because the daily activities in this area are light, mothers use female children as domestic helpers. Children sweep floors, wash dishes and pots, and over weekends do the weekly cowdung-smear on the floors.

For the majority of the women, the busiest day of the week, in the home, is Friday, as they belong to the Shembite group. For them, strict rules apply to Saturday as a day of worship and rest.

Cleaning the huts and surrounding areas does not, on the whole, appear to be a pre-occupation, as the table shows. This was expressed by the respondents themselves as they considered it secondary to the other more pressing activities of cooking and agricultural work.

6.2.4 Fetching Firewood

As fetching firewood links directly with the critical task of cooking, it is important both for this reason as well as for ecological ones. The area is covered with natural thorny scrub bush in open pasturage, lying adjacent to the women's fields on their homeward bound paths. This makes it easier for them to collect firewood on their way back from fields. Each woman cuts a number of green scrub trees leaving them to dry for future collection. As the fuel used for cooking purposes

is mainly wood and as more and more of the open pasturage is turned into sugar cane fields belonging to men, women's wood-collecting is threatened. The total weekly average number of hours spent in this activity is small being only 4. Older school-going children collect firewood over weekends and women themselves couple agricultural work with wood gathering at the end of the working day at the fields, so that they may at times be carrying harvested crops together with bundles or firewood on a stretch of not less than 4 km for most of them.

Because wood is dry, used on open fire, it burns out quickly causing women to repeat the process twice or thrice in a week. Questioned on the possibility of time saving with respect to this activity they replied, "There is no other way we can lessen the task as we do not have draught animals and the sleighs to carry the wood for us. Besides, our men folk are not used to helping us with such a task. We rely on our school-going children to help over weekends".

The method of collecting firewood, involving the cutting down of bushes, is a threat to the ecological balance when commercialised sugar-cane farming, which involves an extensive method of land use, is present.

Asked on the possibilities of alternative fuel, the women see changes in the lifestyle of the younger married members. "They are better able to afford the stoves and modern houses which we older women could not afford. Our men folk did not believe in these modern things but our sons are now working away in towns and they bring these with them for their wives to use at home." The cost of modern fuel use is becoming increasingly prohibitive and the need for technology appropriate to rural community needs, exists.

The women's attitude to their way of life does not extend to conservation. They lack both knowledge and the means at this stage. Besides women do not have the final say to the land question as they only enjoy usufructuary rights through being wives to male members of the community.

6.3 Agricultural Activities

Agricultural activities occupy the greatest amount of time allocated for both domestic and external use. The basic motivating factor is a need to obtain daily food to be consumed in families (as appeared in the dietary survey). The main source of their daily food comes from agricultural products harvested by the women themselves with the exception of fish, mealie meal and related products, e.g. bread, oil or fats used in cooking.

The women's attitude to agricultural work is one of total commitment. "It is our life blood, without our work in the fields, families would starve", they will generally comment.

Agricultural work involves the following - scrub clearing, hoeing, tilling, sowing, trenching, harvesting of beans, gleaning of maize - (grain off cobs in preparation for sowing), and sorting of seeds for future use.

As the seasonal cycle of the crops varies at any one time, women are involved in two or more activities in their different fields. Scrub clearing and trenching are normally jobs assigned to men in the family as hired male labour. But the position, within this group, is different in that only a small percentage of the women reported ever having the assistance of male labour in their fields and during participant observation this absence of male labour was revealed to the researcher. Women were always on their own doing the clearing and trenching. The absence of young able-bodied men willing to do the work for their mothers, together with the general lack of financial resources to hire expensive male labour, serve as constraints in this area.

Agricultural work done throughout the year is a way of life for the women. They reported that there was no period of seasonal rest as all seasons are suited to some form of agricultural activity; autumn being

a period of legume sowing and scrub clearing for summer crops, winter is a season of legume harvest, and cutting of reeds from fields to be used later for thatching.

The seasonal calendar may be drawn as follows :

- January/February/March - Harvesting of summer crops, clearing of fields of maize stalks.
Vegetable garden clearing.
Making of seed beds for winter crops.
Sowing of early winter vegetables, legumes.
- April/May/June/July - Harvesting of madumbis, processing marketing.
Hoeing and tending of winter crops.
Harvesting of early winter crops.
Planting of late winter vegetables.
Planting of tuberous crops e.g. potatoes, sweet potatoes.
- August/September/
October - Tilling of fields in preparation for summer rain season.
Harvesting of late winter vegetables/crops.
Sowing of maize, pumpkin, madumbis, peanuts.
- November/December - Harvesting of vegetables, maize, imifino.
Processing for cooking and selling.

The following table shows the average weekly hours spent on three agricultural activities which were commonly engaged in during a specific period of research viz. hoeing, sowing, reaping. On the average the majority of women spent 26 - 28 hours on these three activities alone. The data was collected during a period spanning 3 seasonal cycles.

TABLE V

WEEKLY HOURS SPENT ON THREE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Hours	f
38 - 40	1
35 - 37	3
32 - 34	7
29 - 31	16
23 - 25	23
20 - 22	17
17 - 19	9
14 - 16	8
Zero	5

The total average hours spent by the women in this activity is 23 weekly hours. Of the total group of respondents, 5 had not engaged in any agricultural activity during a particular week of recordings for various reasons e.g. illness, child birth and absence from the area.

Hours spent travelling to and from the field and which total 12 hours weekly, are in many cases utilised for the carrying of different types of weights in the form of manure, seed, implements, harvested crops, firewood and water. A brief analysis of some of the activities will show the nature of the tasks involved.

6.3.1 Scrub Clearing

Where fields are new or in the fertile, low-lying fields next to river beds, the areas are overgrown with reedlike plants that need clearing before ploughing, tractor and hoe tilling can be done. Use of hatchets, sickle or bush knife is made. Roots have to be dug, dried out and burnt. Where reeds are mature, women bind these and preserve them for thatching. The reed plants are resistant and they appear every year. They are valuable where they serve as boundary markers.

Asked to comment on their execution of tasks traditionally allocated to

men, they reported two constraining factors: "It is either that men are away in towns working, or are around taking no interest in agricultural work as we have no financial resources to hire men". The women no longer rely on the 'ilima' or co-operative work groups organised with men to help women in the fields. "That has long fallen into disuse, it is now money that gets things done by men here".

6.3.2 Trenching

Women have no choice but to trench in low lying land though it is arduous and time consuming and both rain and flooding threaten the summer crops when they ripen for harvesting. Women prefer marshy land for the tilling of madumbi fields (a tuberous hairy plant most relished by them). The madumbi is also of economic value as it is sought after and therefore sells well. Though it spans a 9 month period to harvest time, it is popular. It needs trenching periodically. It is more nutritious than sweet potatoes. The disadvantage of trenching for women is that it increases manual labour for them as neither oxen-drawn plough nor tractor can manoeuvre corners once the fields are over trenched.

6.3.3 Sowing

Women follow two types of sowing methods: 'scatter and hoe-row' methods. Scattering involves spreading, over a prepared ground, a variety of seeds, usually legumes and maize, then hoeing over them. As the ground-crop seedlings begin to show women prick them out, if overclustered, during the weeding period. Various crops may be planted in one field, interspersed among another. A typical field may contain:

Madumbis	9 months sewn in spring
Maize	3 to 6 months sewn in spring
Beans	3 months sewn end of spring.

There are variations on this type of sowing, the ripening cycle of these crops is staggered so that at no time in the agricultural cycle will a field lie empty if still under this form of sowing pattern. Some of the remaining husks, stubbs and dried stems are left lying in the field to rot

and turn into humus. One disadvantage here is that weeding by hoes is rendered difficult owing to the irregular arrangements of crops. Plant diseases are easily spread. Row cultivation is used for a few crops like vegetables in the gardens supervised by extension workers or in potato planting. Intercropping is not practised here. Single row planting is not popular, for women regard it as uneconomical, not producing sufficient ingredients for cooking purposes.

"Good land is becoming scarce and we need more room to follow this modern method in all our fields".

They undertake this in the vegetable gardens which are closely supervised by the extension worker whenever he is available.

6.3.4 Weeding

Though an easy task to do, it is time consuming and monotonous in an area of regular spring and summer rainfall. There is a continual growth of weeds which also grow fast. As a result, women prefer intercropping since weeding at any time benefits a number of crops. Using hoes and hands they remove the weeds and heap soil around plants. Weeding long term crops is repeated twice - during early spring and late summer. Winter crops such as legumes need one cycle of weeding as they take three months to grow.

"No sooner have we turned our backs on the weeded area than fresh weeds start growing. The soil is fertile in most areas and it is a demanding task. Our school-going children are of little use as these fields are far from home, and they cannot help us during the week".

6.3.5 Harvesting

Harvesting may be for domestic purposes in which case it is done periodically in fairly small quantities. It entails skill, choosing the right variety of crop since the good quality one must be reserved for

seed or marketing. Women do their harvesting at the end of the working day in the fields for it is their responsibility to provide the daily meal. Where their fields lie adjacent to one another it is an easy task to reap simultaneously staples and vegetables required for a complete family meal. Harvesting in bulk is done in preparation for marketing or storage. Some of the harvest keeps for a prolonged period e.g. pumpkin, maize, beans, potatoes, peanuts. The lack of proper storage facilities makes it difficult to preserve harvested crops in bulk. As a result, women continually return to the fields to collect food for cooking purposes. Women carry the harvested crops themselves, at times helped by female relatives or their children. Harvested crops may also be sold at the fields to those who as yet do not have them or to outsiders who come looking for them.

6.3.6 Storage

Before some crops can be stored, women have to prepare them. Dried maize has to be gleaned from cobs, legumes shelled by thrashing in the yard, peanuts shelled by hand. Winnowing and seed selection follows. To preserve some seeds, these are cooking areas, above hearths to smoke them and thus keep away weevils and other pests. It is obvious that no large quantities of any kind can be preserved in this way as there is not enough space. A need was expressed by the respondents for marketing of crops in order to raise money, much needed for buying oil, beverages, medical services, to pay for school and church fees, and clothing. The level of their subsistence agriculture entails a lot of human effort during an entire annual agricultural cycle with marginal returns. Where there is a large surplus of vegetables, they lack marketing outlets with the result that crops go bad in the fields. Lack of modern homecraft techniques deprives them of knowledge required to process food crops as preserves for future use.

6.4 Conclusion

Rural women's role activities entail a varied number of responsibilities

that centre around certain daily tasks. In the study case, cooking and food preparation, on the one hand, and agricultural activities on the other, are the role-pivots around which centre a number of domestic and agriculturally linked activities e.g. nursing and care of the young on the one hand and petty trading in food crops on the other. Women engage in these activities as they consider them necessary for their families' daily livelihood.

Both economic and cultural factors intervene in their activities. The subsistence level of lifestyle for the majority of the women causes them to spend the largest share of their time throughout the year in food production, as the climate permits them to do so. Inability to process food for storage means living under the continuous threat of hunger which they are constantly aware of.

Agricultural activity is culturally defined as the women's task - women are home provisioners. This role definition is well supported and expressed in the case of women who have substantial family resources as wives of commercial farmers or shopkeepers. Where provisioning of the family is concerned, they nevertheless defined their role as women in this community in terms similar to those of the poorer section of the female community. Seasonal, climatic, and cultural influences, determine the nature of domestic as well as agricultural cycles, in time-usage spent at each activity and choice of priorities. During winter months, there is less pressure in the sphere of agriculture, but women have to undertake long term activities like thatching of huts, preparing floors of huts, plastering (both rough and smooth) of walls with bare hands and other winter-related activities. This is a season of low rainfall. Spring and summer are heavily loaded with agricultural activities, which will vary from field to field, so that a woman may, at any stage be engaged in scrub clearing, tilling, and sowing of three fields. Family activities, with the exception of the critical ones of cooking, water fetching and firewood gathering, become neglected. Lack of technical skills, 'ownership' of scattered patches of land and lack of money to purchase labour saving devices e.g. the plough or to hire such services,

all limit the amount and variety of cropping in the fields, in an area which is suitable for legumes, greens, citrus, grain, sugar cane and possibly other types of agricultural products. Livestock farming is practiced haphazardly, and yet this is a potential area of activity for the women, if properly practiced. Mixed-crop farming is popularly engaged in as women consider it necessary to have a mixed harvest at any one time, for cooking purposes. The limited size of many of their plots, and their inability to put more hectareage under crops, due to lack of mechanisation, further governs the necessary choice of mixed crops. Child labour is used more frequently in activities that centre around the home, than in agricultural work.

Commercial activity, such as petty trading, is seen as necessary to supplement family income and to offer the women a degree of financial independence from husbands, (the majority of whom are either unskilled migrants or unemployed men of the village).

Because of the sub-economic and technically-unaided level at which women work, tasks are repetitive, arduous and offer little reward.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE

7.1 Introduction

In attempting a role analysis of the family in the context of my research, certain typical relationship dyads and relationship sets may be isolated and examined.

- (a) the wife - husband dyad
- (b) the co-wife dyad
- (c) mother-child dyad and, lastly
- (d) the wife-in-law subsystem

These relationships centre around certain needs and are in many ways determined by the nature of statuses and roles found in the particular domestic social system. Values as "preferences about the way things should be ... " (Roger Emblem : 43) are intricately expressed in normative ways of behaviour which ultimately give the particular community its characteristic social system. Deeply influencing these relationships are, what the people conceive of as custom or tradition (isiko) and religion.

As Zulu society is undergoing varying degrees of social change, these relationships are neither static nor original. Certain interventions, material and non-material, have penetrated the local community causing the community to adapt and develop behavioural patterns in conjunction with the new norms and value system. For purposes of analysis, however, we shall extract the most commonly expressed behaviour patterns. It must be remembered that what we observe is that both the structural and functional aspects of the social system are subject to two kinds of processes continually present within any social system. As Johnson has observed (1968 : 625) there are "processes that maintain or tend to maintain the structure of the system and processes that tend to change it".

Within the families investigated the first set of processes may be identified, as the already mentioned tradition or custom that institutionalises the authority of the male as head of the partriarchal family, the passing of inheritance through the male line; the reckoning of the lineage through the male line and the tendency to partrilocality in residence after marriage. Also important is the retention and perpetuation of the polygynous system; accompanying this is the authority of the senior wife over the younger and junior wives and also the control of the mother-in-law over the wives (makotis) and children of her sons.

The processes making for change in the social system in general and, within the family in particular, are urbanisation, urban migration of men, formal schooling, the influence of Christianity and a money economy.

7.2 Interpersonal relationships

7.2.1 Wife-husband dyad

There is a rigidly controlled form of co-operation in role behaviour regarding the execution of tasks whether domestic or economic where such behaviour demands co-operation between spouses. There is a clear stereotyped form of behaviour for the wife. Interviewees agree that a married woman's domestic tasks are binding - they have to till the husband's fields, look after his livestock, clean his clothes, take care of his children; as well as the husband's parents, siblings and other relations if they are present in the household. No husband was reported as 'having to do' any particular set of tasks. It therefore appears that role definition is clearer in the case of women than is the case with men, e.g. husbands did not 'have to' maintain families, till the fields, and clothe the wife and children. An attitude bordering on shame was associated with a lazy woman who did not look after her home properly or who failed to attend church regularly.

When respondents were asked to mention three main activities, considered

(within the community) to be associated with the role of wife, the following three (listed in order of preference) were mentioned as necessary for the well-being of their spouses

- a) preparation of husband's meals - 94%
- b) cleaning of his clothes - 38%
- c) entertaining of husband's guests and friends - 38%.

Contrary to popular economic-role definitions, as found in modern Western society, husbands of this community do not, and are not, expected to support their wives financially as a matter of moral and legal obligation.

Although there is this lack of apparent social pressure for husbands to maintain their wives and children with financial contributions, the respondents clearly indicated that they were in favour of such male responsibility. In a traditional setting, the man in a household would allocate what is called 'house property', in the form of livestock and basic agricultural implements, together with land for food production. This still holds. New needs and social change have led to men migrating to towns to earn cash. It is this last aspect of the man's property which does not fall within the culturally and socially recognised control of the community. Women, however, have developed new tastes in dietary habits and lifestyle and have children who attend school. They therefore need money at their disposal, and this resource comes mainly from men's earnings. Conflicting interests develop as men remain conservative, do not divulge to wives their financial circumstances and control the manner of spending by buying the groceries and clothing themselves with their earnings. As one Christian interviewee remarked, 'Wives here are poorly treated by husbands. The Christian church is labelled lawless, it undermines male authority and develops in women a desire to be supported financially by husbands'.

68% of the respondents were satisfied with their position as wives; only 32% were dissatisfied. The main reason given for satisfaction was a positive husband-wife relationship. This relationship developed through fulfilling traditional obligations, like, maintaining the sexual tie, allotting house property fairly among co-wives and constructive male

leadership in both the family and the community. That a man was not in full-time, paid employment did little to minimise this sense of respect and close family bond. Women did however appreciate the financial contributions men made to the family as this made life easier for everyone. Women whose husbands worked and in addition fulfilled the traditional obligations, were the most satisfied. Dissatisfaction developed among women who suffered domestic stress, had husbands who were unemployed and had little house property to share among co-wives.

Another difference between modern Western husband - wife relationships and those of the research group, was the lack of what this researcher would call an 'inward' person to person relationship. There were few positive responses to the question 'do you act as counsellor/confidante of your husband's?'. It must be stressed that the absence of 'inward' person to person relationship does not in any way imply a potentially broken family tie. On the contrary the researchers discovered strong commitment to the concept of household, clan, and tribe (isizwe). It is in the nature of polygynous unions that co-wife jealousy interferes with interpersonal relationships even destroying intimate husband-wife interaction at times. The husband, as a source of meagre supply, has to be shared by several wives, as equitably as possible, failing which there is extreme discontent.

Traditional Zulu society has, in addition, definite expectations of role performance with regard to its members, both as individuals and as members of households and clans. The use of household cattle as lobolo commits the young wife not directly to her husband, but to his household and clan. Her chief responsibility as a spouse is to see that her husband enjoys a positive image within the clan, and that his economic interests (in the form of fields and livestock) are preserved. Her self-image therefore, and self realisation as a value, centre around this larger group membership's success.

In a traditional setting, such as is the case with the Mzimelas the role played by early childhood socialisation and puberty rites is a crucial one.

Often the growing girl comes from an extended polygynous family where her mother was one of a number of co-wives. She is trained in the internal domestic hierarchy where the wives are assigned definite statuses within the household, the senior wife, often the eldest, having closer and more authoritative access to the husband than the other co-wives.

A form of self effacement in this relationship takes place. It is the performed role of a creative and industrious wife that is of paramount value. The person is replaceable through further unions formed by the husband by means of either the sororate system or by the formation of a new tie with a new wife.

Thus the wife enters a union with obligations not only to her husband but also to the clan, as a lobolo'd person. Her main focus is on proper role performance in order to justify the honour. If the fact of having a husband is important, it is however no more important than being married to someone else's son, her in-laws or someone else's brother. Puberty rites highlight the girl's future role as a mother to her husband's children.

We therefore see that her attitude towards motherhood is one of duty to her husband to bear his children. Often enough women will speak of "abantwana baka Mzimela" 'Mzimela's children' (Mzimela being the wife's formal way of addressing her husband and by using his surname).

Women value greatly their wifely status. Husband's children are looked after both as a duty to the husband and clan, as well as a gesture of love for husbands and children.

As spouses wives never address their husbands by the first name; they would use either the surname or the age grade title e.g. uDlokwana. This shows the formal, restrained husband-wife relationship. Neither do husbands use their wives' first names in public. They are addressed as e.g. MaMthembu - meaning 'daughter of Mthembu'. This symbolises both respect for the status of married women as well as formal ties.

Although the researcher did not discover clear-cut role definition for men (with respect to tasks due to the wife) nevertheless, that the man had a well-defined role in the begetting of children, by his wife, throughout her childbearing years, was noted.

The wife's relationship with her husband is one of subordination, respect and duty. At no time was this publicly questioned or criticised. Women adopted a resigned attitude to this type of relationship, and where they were already mothers-in-law, they instilled this same sense of deference for men among the young brides. Thus the younger women dared not talk negatively of husbands who failed to treat them kindly or were not supporting their families financially wherever interviews were conducted with the mother-in-law or other in-law relative being present. Under such circumstances, they were openly wary in answering certain questions. Young women did however confide such internal conflicts (to the researcher).

To enhance this dutiful loyalty to the spouse and his clan, the wife's moral behaviour is one of the major preoccupations of all women, young or old. The process begins in early socialisation. Women would strongly criticise immoral girls and women. As girls they have their father's name to protect, and therefore the clan's as well. As wives they have to protect the husband's name and that of his clan. They are duty bound as wives not to expose their husband's 'nakedness' by being seen in 'bad' company, having extra marital affairs or engaging in urban street trading i.e. out of the local area (a region of \pm 10km in circumference) which exposes them to the vices of the world.

As senior wives or mothers-in-law they render service to their husband and his clan with regard to socialisation of the newly married or younger wives by teaching them the moral tenets of life; the social and ethical expectations of husbands in relation to their wives. In this manner these older women are, on the whole, a stabilising influence in the family.

In summary, we may say that encompassing the wife-husband dyad there is a strong value system that expresses itself through well-ordered ties of superordination - subordination, mutual respect and trust, duty and honour,

a binding duty to look after the husband's economic interests, preservation and enhancement of his social prestige and that of his lineage, accepted moral and child-bearing in his name.

Incorporated into this social system is a whole pattern of positive sanctions. A wife who is able to cope with these marital and domestic demands and expectations is well regarded: her self-image is enhanced through accolades from both husband and clan; her status is socially enhanced through her gradually assuming a supervisory role over younger wives or by having other members of the household stay with her; her parents-in-law may rely on her for help in their old age; sojourners are directed to her household for help.

She thus achieves both the Zulu and the old biblical image of a good wife who toils for her family's welfare and is submissive; and the value of being humane (Zulu-unobuntu) underlies some of the motivations that compel women in this community to be preoccupied with ascribed female roles of motherhood, housekeeper-wife, family nurse and caretaker, agriculturalist and loyal believer of the religious teachings.

7.2.2 Co-wife dyad

There is often open mistrust between co-wives, the basic reason being economic. Having no stable and reliable source of income, the husband's paypacket, which is often meagre or non-existent, is a scarce resource shared by women belonging to 'houses' whose interests may be divergent.

Cooperation among them is, however, a cultural expectation. The interests of family and clan are above those of the individual. They share tasks, food and services - nursing babies, doing agricultural work together, assisting with children on errands, sharing the burdens of entertainment in times of feasts and ritual and sharing emotional stress in times of bereavement.

Sexual jealousy accompanies the relationship of a co-wife. There is fear among women that husbands may show favouritism towards one among many women.

Childlessness is seen as a great risk in domestic ties. A woman who is childless among co-wives (who are mothers) leads a tortuous life. The experience of menopause is also crudely seen as being 'man like', thus terminating the female - male sexual tie. To maintain the husband's attention towards the wife, there is an urge to bear children "for as long as nature or God permits".

The co-wife dyad is structured around ascribed roles. But as already observed, achieved statuses and roles are not completely foreign. So, in the case of the Mzimela women, wives who are enterprising and creative achieve an independent personal image and relationship in their role performance versus the co-wife. There is, however, a preponderance of ascribed roles which is bound to continue in the foreseeable future as there are internal pattern maintenance forces in the form of domestic ritual, traditionalist religion, power of the aged and the internal social control maintained by wives among themselves.

There are a few situations where co-wives are friends, sharing duties, social activities and participating in joint petty trading.

7.2.3 Mother-child dyad

The respondents' self images centre around motherhood. Interviewed on "What is a newly wedded bride expected to do on entering the new household?" the standard reply, "To bear children" was uttered unwaveringly. Ritual accompanies child bearing, the achievement being highlighted by the building of a new 'labour hut' in which mother and child are to be confined, in seclusion from males and visitors, for a week or more.

Thus, when questioned as to what were considered to be the three main activities for women as mothers, 94% mentioned child-bearing; 84% child-feeding; and 70% child-washing.

The researcher came to the conclusion that maternal responsibility is the driving force that keeps women working long hours at home, in the fields and at the roadside market. Questioned on their daily toil and reason

for this they characteristically replied: "If we do not till fields everyday our children will starve" or, "we shall die of starvation with our children".

The central role played by child-bearing is important when viewed in terms of development policy. Within this cultural system, women continue to bear children because custom demands this of them. In addition to this are situational domestic factors: of being wives in a polygynous household structured into 'houses' and which separates human resources into different units producing both labour and human lives. By its very structuring, the compound family is competitive. Women therefore spend a considerable period of their productive years bearing children and nursing babies. They have little time for personal creative activities which might incorporate 'outside' experiences such as adult education, training in skills or health care.

Although they are aware that another lifestyle exists for women in other societies, they nevertheless see their children as an investment for their old age. Operating in a traditional society, they can only liberate their young ones by offering them present-day opportunities in the form of school education which hopefully will result in better paid jobs. Indeed, the school teachers reported that the women of this community are keener than their men to afford children basic education. They attend meetings, pay the fees, and plead the child's case should misconduct, or failure to pay fees, lead to expulsion. Had they the money, the women would attempt to build a local school whereas the men are reported to be apathetic or outwardly aggressive to such a project.

Circumstances have not allowed the women to develop values such as thrift, independence, the idea of investment or material provision for old age. They see their security in essentially human terms and therefore are fatalistic in attitude and action regarding their own immediate self-improvement. In addition the convenience of child labour makes it not only attractive but also necessary: to have one's own children to run errands, help with domestic chores, look after livestock, and nurse babies. This strong functional tie continues even when the child is no longer physically

engaged within the family. He/she augments family income or resources by supplying food and clothes for the mother's house. Where the women are widowed, society expects sons to assume the responsibility of supplementing the mother's economic and food resources. In short the women expect their children to render services to parents for having brought them up. If married, the dependance still continues in exchange for the extended role of grandmother-nurse for the grandchildren. Since this community is undergoing transition, values are unstable. Conflicts and omissions do often occur. Many sons do not assume this responsibility as the table on sources of income indicates.

Tasks associated with the 'motherhood' role, were regarded positively by 74% of the women, whilst only 26% were dissatisfied or were childless. Satisfied respondents had children who were obedient helpers around the house and fields, were schoolgoing and were in good health; whilst the dissatisfied group often expressed inability to send children to school because of lack of money, had children who were often ill and experienced poor parent-child relationships.

7.2.4 Wife-in-law relationship

A binding duty to look after her parents-in-law rests with the wife. So restricting is this duty that she may not leave her in-laws to follow her husband to town. "Who is going to look after the in-laws?" is the common reply. That the wife has been lobola'd out of household livestock, creates a binding tie with the parents-in-law, and the unmarried young men and women of the household. She has to maintain the food crop farm belonging to her parents-in-law, make it productive in addition to her own and that of the husband's, if he owns one. She engages in agricultural tasks with her mother-in-law, giving primary attention to her in-laws, then her husband's, and lastly her own fields, throughout the agricultural cycle.

Operating within this relationship is the customary 'avoidance' (hlonipha), which keeps the relationship socially distant although the wife lives within walking distance of her parents-in-law. For them ukuhlonipha (respect) expresses decency and good manners, and is symbolised by proper

dress; is expressed through fear of the father-in-law, and deference to all his kin.

Husband-wife relationships may suffer from the fact that young wives use mothers-in-law as allies in settling disputes, and in communicating a family problem that needs the husband's immediate attention, especially if the latter is away. A case in point was a depressed young mother whose baby was dying of kwashiokor. She did not have the 60c needed to take the baby for hospitalization. It was the mother-in-law who appealed to the researcher for help. It transpired that the son, a matriculant being the fortunate son of the chief did not believe in giving his wife money at any time, despite the fact that he is fully employed.

The overall relationship here is one of control, supervision, psychological support and socialization for the young wife, by her parents-in-law; and that of deference, avoidance and service on the part of the young wife in her relationship with her parents-in-law.

Relationships with husband's siblings are less formal with the exception of the husband's eldest brother, who is a potential household or clan head if the father-in-law dies. The young wife may be a confidante of the other younger siblings and counsellor, particularly in heterosexual relationships.

That the parents-in-law are aged people, are more localised in their activity and value system than the young bride is a confining experience to the younger generation of wives who have to render services that are part of the ascribed roles of married women with respect to husband's lineages. Thus younger wives must live close to the parents-in-law or to those of the lineage who need their care e.g. younger siblings to husbands and relatives in an extended family-setting.

The negative attitude expressed towards women, who market their products away from local areas in urban centres, is partially a product of this close in-law/wife tie since such liberating practices would cause a social upheaval in the community if many more women opened up urban connections

on a regular basis. The mother-in-law would find it increasingly difficult to manipulate the son/daughter-in-law relationship, and the authority of the father-in-law as overseer would be minimised. There are thus clearly vested interests involved in the desire of parents-in-law to have their daughters-in-law locally confined, and any novel ideas must involve activities that can be shared within the community, and to which the older generation of women can have access, and if necessary some control.

7.3 Family patterns

Form of marriage

TABLE VI

	N	%
Customary	44	88
Civil	2	4
Christian	3	6
Unmarried	1	2
Total	50	100

The traditional nature of family relationships is reflected clearly in the form marriage takes. As is shown in Table VI there are an overwhelming number of customary unions in the Kwa-Mzimela area. This marital pattern is related to other sociological factors which influence the character of family relationships within the community.

Number of wives

TABLE VII

N	f	%
1	27	54
2	14	28
3	7	14
4	1	2
5	-	-
6	1	2
Total	50	100

There was a slight majority of monogamous unions in the sample, but once the total of polygynous unions is computed the difference in numbers is narrowed. Considering that the majority of the unions contracted is customary there are various reasons, why only 54% were single women e.g.

- (a) economic constraints which make it difficult for men to raise lobolo cattle and money on their own to give to the wife's family;
- (b) the break down of the traditional economic ties whereby agnatic relatives could pool their assets to raise lobolo for a male relative.

Number of live children

TABLE VIII

No of children	f	%
10 - 12	2	4
7 - 9	5	10
4 - 6	20	40
1 - 3	21	42
Zero	2	4
Total	50	100

A high percentage, 82% of the women, had up to 6 living children. Notably, however, 14% of the total sample had between 7 - 12 children, indicating a general pattern of high fertility.

Number of deceased children

TABLE IX

No of children	f	%
6 - 4	10	20
3 - 1	28	56
None	12	24
Total	50	100

The majority of the respondents reported the periodic loss of children although the specific ages at which the offspring died, is not indicated. 76% of the wives had lost children. The total mean number of children deceased is 2.1. The 24% is inclusive of the 4% of childless women. There is thus a high frequency incidence of infant and child mortality in the area.

Table X is indicative of the extended family structure consisting of the core nuclear family of husband and wife/wives including the agnatic kin who are parents, as well as siblings, together with their offspring, within single households. The total group functions on a day to day basis as a single social unit, sharing the same geographical locality and material facilities; they enjoy close-knit social contacts, and have one senior family-head who enjoys ultimate political power within the group. There is a greater incidence of absent fathers-in-law than mothers-in-law. There are various reasons for this, natural and cultural. There is a higher numerical female representation in the total population as the census reflects. A higher male mortality rate is suggested although there is no research data to confirm this. Secondly, due to the polygynous extended family structure, the parents-in-law can only be part of one household, their own or that of the youngest son, if he has reached marital status, i.e. where parents are old and destitute or where domestic arrangements allot parental care to him. Where the family is extended, and remains together, unmarried agnatic kin and their offspring are found under the domestic authority of a father or eldest brother. Total family size is made up of the children born of the respondent; her co-wife's family unit where such a unit is still attached domestically, and has not yet established its own separate 'house'; agnatic relatives and their children; and other relatives, who may include the wife's own relatives, and husband.

Total family size

TABLE XI

N	f	%
3 - 5	8	16
6 - 8	12	24
9 - 11	11	22
12 - 14	10	20
15 - 17	5	10
18 - 20	8	16

There is a general tendency towards large families as 68% of households have a membership that ranges between 9 - 20.

'Family' often includes membership beyond the spouse, his wife and offspring. It is actually a conglomeration of 'families' - of parents and offspring. The outsized nature of the household is characteristic of the extended household. Polygyny loads the household with relatives as each wife often has her own assistant from her home, or a relative may be visiting for an unspecified period of time.

Age distribution of respondents

TABLE XII

Age of respondent	No	%
20 - 29	17	34
30 - 39	14	28
40 - 49	19	38
50 - 59	-	-
Total	50	100

Age distribution of respondents' children

TABLE XIII

Age of children	No	%
0 - 9	84	41
10 - 19	66	32
20 - 29	50	24
30 - 39	7	3
Total	207	100

Attempts at estimating the age composition of husbands was abandoned for two reasons:

1. The majority of respondents did not know their spouse's exact age.
2. In some cases co-wives gave different estimations of a husband's age, leading to confusion.

The youthful age of many mothers, in relation to that of their children, suggests that these respondents will continue to bear children for some time in the future. Young women have an average of 4 children.

Age distribution of youngest child

TABLE XIV

Age of child	No of children	%
N/A	2	4
0 - 4	22	44
5 - 9	15	30
10 - 14	4	8
15 - 19	6	12
20 - 25	1	2
Total	50	100

Of the total number of 50 youngest living children, 84% fall within the age group 0 - 14, and indicates a high dependency ratio in the child/adult relationships, when considered in relation to data on the age of children noted in Table XIII. The rural environment further aggravates the dependency situation as job opportunities for the young, unskilled teenage population is scarce in an underdeveloped environment. The major employment outlet is the sugar-cane industry on White owned farms. This demographic fact of preponderant dependency has wider implications which confirm the observations made by Thorrington-Smith et. al. on KwaZulu (1978).

Ideal number of childrenTABLE XV

N	F	%
0	0	0
1 - 3	2	4
4 - 6	30	60
7 - 9	6	12
10 +	12	24
Total	50	100

In view of the influence of cultural values on personal behaviour and attitudes, it was found necessary to ask two closely related questions, viz. what was considered the ideal number of children, as a cultural value, in the area, as well as what the respondent's own expectations, with regard to the matter, were.

Number of children respondent would like to haveTABLE XVI

N	F	%
N/A	1	2
1 - 3	1	2
4 - 6	30	60
7 - 9	6	12
10+	12	24
Total	50	100

Here there is a response pattern which to a certain extent confirms the observation on past fertility patterns. The close tie that exists between the responses in Tables XV and XVI may simply be indicative of the changing attitudes of younger women, who generally regard 6 children as ideal.

The overall pattern is one of declining fertility rate if the expressed attitudes are representative. Where the response is "not applicable" the respondent was beyond child bearing age and had had no children of her own.

7.4 Geographical movement

7.4.1 Mobility

It is necessary to understand the mobility-patterns of the women in order to assess their degree of 'openness' to influences emanating from outside their socio-cultural setting, and to the internal reactions to these external forces.

Questions relating to movement in and out of area, length of stay in community and birth place were asked.

Table XVII deals with term of residence, in the community, in years. The following pattern is shown.

TABLE XVII

Residence in local area in years since birth and since marriage

(a) <u>Since Birth</u>			(b) <u>Since Marriage</u>		
N	f	Z	N	f	Z
N/A	18	36	N/A	32	64
1 - 7	-	-	1 - 7	3	6
8 - 13	-	-	8 - 13	6	12
14 - 19	-	-	14 - 19	5	10
20 - 25	5	10	20 - 25	4	8
26 - 31	7	14	26 - 31	0	0
32 - 37	6	12	32 - 37	0	0
38 - 43	5	10	38 - 43	0	0
44 - 49	9	18	44 - 49	0	0
Total	50	100	Total	50	100

An analysis of Table XVII (a) and (b) reveals the following patterns:

1. Most women are born locally, or are accepted as such in the area, and form 64% of the total population. This indicates that there is a fair amount of intermarriage, at the local level, among the clans. Very few women belonged to new families; this would have excluded them from either category.
2. Many 'indigenous' women belong to what may be called the active years i.e. 20 - 43 years: 46%, in comparison to 8%, who only arrived after marriage. This preponderance, of locally-born women, has an impact on the nature of social organisation, values and attitudes of the respondents with regard to their position in the community and their role in development programmes.

This possibly limits their ability to act as change-agents, but as they are the influential "abengade", or people of the soil, (as they call themselves) their position within the community must be recognised and considered in any planned change.

7.4.2 Movement and frequency of movement out of area

With regard to movement out of area, and frequency of movement, out of their area the respondents gave the following responses as shown in Table XVIII.

Number of times away from area

TABLE XVIII

(a) Generally			(b) During ending year		
f	No	%	f	No	%
Regularly	22	44	Never	12	24
Seldom	18	36	1 - 3	10	20
Never	10	20	4 - 6	8	16
Total	50	100	7 - 9	7	14
			10 +	13	26
			Total	50	100

Shopping is the main reason for leaving the area. Shopping, beyond the immediate vicinity is done at the nearest town, Empangeni, (by the majority of the respondents) no more than once a month. Empangeni is a white growth point which thrives on commercial consumer activities. It has superior merchandise and sales techniques and bustles with the social activity of Black consumers who come from all the surrounding outlying districts, some of which stretch beyond a 40km radius. This is the closest urban centre to which the Kwa-Mzimela women have accessibility by bus.

'Visiting friends', out of the area, is not indulged in - this indicates the parochial nature of the 'in-group' relationships of the respondents. Personal relationships are therefore of the 'gemeinschaft' type where contact is of a face to face type, intimate and centered around local-area activity and experience.

'Church outings' are a traditional activity among the Shembite group as twice a year they go on pilgrimage to holy shrines away from their home areas. The shrines are at Inanda in the Ndwedwe district. Distances of more than 150km have to be travelled by both old and young members of the church. At the time of research such an outing by the women had not yet taken place for the year since many could not afford to leave their homes for periods extending over a month. Thus only 4% of the total sample had gone on church outings to Durban, near Inanda and Empangeni.

'Marketing' out of the area of residence again indicates how localised members of this community are in their commercial activities. As already indicated, the church controls women's activities to such an extent that women view it as immoral for them to be found in unprotected situations, away from home. They are free to engage in this activity locally as this does not lead to any impeachment of their moral integrity.

'Visiting family' is another reason for leaving the area; however considering that the majority of the women are born locally, it is not a pressing need. These outings are rare as they entail travelling long distances ranging from about 350km to 25km in a single journey. Two

noted excursions of the respondents were: a visit to members of their family in Newcastle, a midlands' town; a visit to Durban and Umlazi (the latter lying on the outskirts of the former) these accounted for 18% of visits. These visits were reported to be made in order to meet husbands, who are migrants in these towns. Women reported rarely visiting families of origin away from area. Again this highlights the parochial character of the respondents.

7.5 Living and economic conditions

The daily lives of the women centre around work at home and in the fields; a few of them engage in roadside trading in food crops and handicrafts. 92% of the respondents stated that a wife is expected to make a contribution towards the maintenance of her family, and the following responses were noted as generally applicable to the community.

Analysis of contribution towards family maintenance

TABLE XX

Activity	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Earn wages	1	2	49	98	50	100
Produce food crops	50	100	0	0	50	100
Sell food crops	20	40	30	60	50	100
Produce handicrafts	29	58	21	42	50	100
Sell handicrafts	28	56	22	44	50	100
Other	0	0	50	100	50	100

Wage employment is minimal amongst women of this community, only two of the respondents having mentioned it among the rest of their activities. There is overwhelming agreement on the need for women in their food-producing role. This is followed in importance by commercial activities relating to food crops and the preparation of food. Handicrafts of various kinds, like food, are not only produced for home consumption, but are also

used in marketing activities. Women do engage in a wide variety of local activities but it is routine; this resulting in a homogeneous community of women.

The respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they themselves participate in the maintenance of their families:

Respondents' contribution to family maintenance

TABLE XXI

Activity	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Earn wages	1	2	49	98	100
Produce foodcrops	48	96	2	4	100
Sell foodcrops	17	34	33	66	100
Produce handicrafts	29	58	21	42	100
Sell handicrafts	26	52	24	48	100

Wage-earning is the least pursued activity. In one case the woman was engaged part time only, and irregularly, in sugarcane fields (within the vicinity) as a paid helper rather than regular employee. The chief activity is food crop production; The marketing of such surplus crops occurs after families have been fed in order to earn money to supplement food-crops with commercial goods and services. Husbands who own sugarcane plantations do, however, use wives as unpaid labour.

Occupational constraints exist in this very rural area. As has been pointed out, women bound by domestic responsibilities, socio-cultural conservatism, and deprived of any technical or literacy skills cannot venture beyond their immediate community in search of paid employment. Religious beliefs do not encourage such outside activity, since these married women, as expected by community leaders, may not infringe ethical codes of conduct by engaging in job seeking activities that threaten their morality. To seek work and markets outside the vicinity, or in towns,

is to border on the indecent. We can however conclude, from data shown, that women in this area are already market-orientated if we take into consideration the 34% and 52% engaged in selling foodcrops and handicrafts, respectively.

The economic role of men (husbands) as it affects women's activities is also pertinent here. Questions relating to place and type of work, and the husbands' movements to and from work were asked. 68% of the respondents reported that husbands were working; 12% were widowed; the rest said their husbands were staying at home unemployed, one was jailed, another was mentally ill.

Employed husbands are mainly in unskilled work. These unskilled men are employed in positions that need no particular training or literacy, (most of them are illiterate). Skilled and semi-skilled work entails technical training for clerical positions, or driving lessons for positions in the industrial and commercial sectors. The following table shows the structure of husbands' occupations.

Husbands' employment pattern

TABLE XXII

Husband dead		Skilled		Semi-skilled		Unskilled		Unemployed		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
6	12	5	10	12	24	17	34	10	20	50	100

A preponderance of women are married to men in the lowest grades of occupations, or are married to unemployed men. When these facts include widowed women the total of 66% represents a subsistence, or near subsistence level of living. In fact, it suggests poverty when seen in relation to total family size; the unpaid occupational status of these women; and the meagre resources of those, whose husbands are employed. 48% of the respondents reported their husbands to be away in towns and

cities, mostly in Natal and KwaZulu. This situation further confirms Natrass's (1977), and Thorrington-Smith's (1978) observations on KwaZulu's economic structure and circumstances with regard to the preponderance of unskilled migrant labour.

Table XXIII reveals data covering the migratory patterns of the husbands, revealed in response to the question:

How often does he come home?

Pattern of migration of husbands

TABLE XXIII

Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Yearly		Dead		Unemployed		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
12	24	8	16	12	24	2	4	6	12	10	20	50	100

68% of the women reported that their husbands left home in the course of employment, staying away for periods varying from daily to yearly, 24% of these were commuters.

44% of the women have husbands at home every day; this is inclusive of those who come home daily in addition to the unemployed. 28% of the women have husbands away for protracted periods of one month to a year.

The total number of years of husband's absence is reflected in Table XXIV.

Total number of years absent from homeTABLE XXIV

Years	N	%
Below 1	1	8
1 - 3	6	12
4 - 6	5	12
7 - 9	2	4
10 - 12	4	8
13 - 15+	5	10
Husband dead	6	12
Husband not away	18	36
Total	50	100

The average number of years husbands stay away is 6. Overall there is a preponderance of younger women, in the group whose husbands will possibly have to embark on longer periods of migration. This fact is precipitated by the lack of employment opportunities in the surrounding area, and even where growth points exist they are unable to absorb the yearly increasing in demand for work. Taking into consideration the fact that this is a rural area, devoted to agricultural activities, the pattern of out-migration of men is likely to continue and increase with the rise in the level of school education, in conjunction with increasing material aspirations. Extensive sugarcane farming cannot accommodate the fast growing population. This phenomenon then has to be taken into consideration when studying the present role of women in rural development.

Consideration has to be given to the actual monthly household income at the disposal of the woman as wife, mother and housekeeper. Various possible sources of income, (as the following table shows), have been considered.

Possible sources of incomeTABLE XXX

AMOUNT IN RANDS	SOURCES							
	Husband		Own		Children		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nothing	12	24	14	28	39	78	43	86
0 - 9	5	10	6	12	4	8	5	10
10 - 19	9	18	21	42	3	6	2	4
20 - 29	11	22	8	16	3	6	-	-
30 - 39	3	6	1	2	-	-	-	-
40 - 49	5	10	-	-	1	2	-	-
50 - 59	4	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
60 and over	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100

A preponderance of respondents do not obtain financial support from one or more of the sources, as indicated; but nonetheless do have a certain amount of cash at their disposal, as the other data shows. The sums given are rough estimates based on irregular payments as it was discovered that in two cases only the income was regular. The balance of the figures given are the largest sums that the women in question have received at any one time. They could not indicate clearly the sum received and spent during a period of, say, three months nor could they estimate with certainty that the sum in question would become a regular commitment.

Those who engage in handicraft sales could only give estimates based on finished products, yet to be sold. A sizeable number of respondents reported that husbands bought groceries, or a part of such groceries and other household items, as the table on decision-making will indicate.

TABLE XXVI

5.7 Decision-Making Patterns

	Clothes		Food		School Fees		Medical Care		Home utensils		Church dues		Others	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	0	0	0	0	6	12	6	12	3	6	6	12	36	72
Self	24	48	31	62	29	58	30	60	41	82	30	60	13	26
Both	6	12	5	10	3	6	3	6	0	0	2	4	0	0
Husband	20	40	14	28	12	24	11	22	6	12	12	24	1	2
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100

From the data on decision-making patterns relating to financial spending there are outstanding features:

1. There is a remarkable level of female decision-making in households when we take into consideration 'self' and 'both' as indicators of involvement in decision-making.
2. Working husbands do make decisions relating to domestic matters closely associated with women e.g. food handling and buying of clothes for wives and children.
3. There is a very low level of joint decision-making which confirms previous observations, on the husband-wife dyad i.e. there is lack of 'inward' person-to-person contact that entails intimate confidential equalitarian relationships. In general, role-enactment is separated along sex lines.

Within the family the degree of satisfaction concerning the manner in which money is handled is high, as 84% of the respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied; only 16 expressed uncertainty or dissatisfaction. The following table indicates this response pattern.

Attitudes to decision-making

TABLE XXVII

	N	%
N/A	0	0
Very satisfied	5	10
Satisfied	37	74
Uncertain	3	6
Dissatisfied	2	4
Very dissatisfied	3	6
Total	50	100

The main reason given for satisfaction with the method of decision-making is that women enjoy independent control of their own earnings from craft or crop sales or cooperation with spouses, whilst dissatisfaction is associated with insecure husband-wife relationships or strained in-law relationships, the husband's interference in the manner a wife spent earnings, resulting in frustration on the part of the young wife.

In close relationship with these attitudes towards decision-making are the expectations and aspirations of the respondents. 98% of the respondents aspired towards a better quality of life either for themselves or for their children, this latter point referring particularly to older women. This was borne out by repeated expressions as to how arduous their life is, dominated by poverty, ignorance and inability to organize self-help. A willingness and desire to cooperate with enlightened leadership led to awareness of the limitations of the female role in the community.

Lack of amenities like water, schools, farming equipment, storage facilities for crops, markets and training facilities for adults were mentioned by respondents time and time again, as factors that limited development. There was a call for organised groups and enlightened leaders to assist the community.

Though typically rural, this community is exposed to other lifestyles and human groupings. These they encounter when their menfolk return from urban employment and relate their experiences; when they go out on shopping trips to towns or go visiting, and when the Shembites go on their annual one-month pilgrimage to holy shrines and other places of worship, away from home. Although the women are still bound to ascriptive role-performance, as people living within a traditional environment, they evince a desire for achievement in areas hitherto unknown to the community. Although they cannot verbalise clearly what they specifically want to do, they are now desirous of a better quality of life for themselves, particularly the younger age groups.

In response to questions relating to the degree of satisfaction with income the data revealed the following:

Degree of satisfaction with incomeTABLE XXVIII

Resources	N/A		Very Satis.		Satis.		Unc.		Diss.		Very Diss.		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Own earnings	8	16	5	10	18	36	1	2	15	30	3	6	50	100
Husbands	18	36	4	8	17	34	3	6	6	12	2	4	50	100
Children	43	86	0	0	3	6	2	4	2	4	0	0	50	100
Other	47	94	0	0	2	4	0	0	1	2	0	0	50	100

Respondents were on the whole dissatisfied with earnings from their own sources as only 46% of them reported satisfaction; 54% either had no earnings of their own or were dissatisfied with what was given to them. In the former case husbands supplemented such incomes, or agricultural yield was adequate for domestic consumption; whilst in the latter case there was evidence of stress from a variety of sources, e.g. widowhood, unemployment of spouses or inadequacy of overall domestic resources on account of large families.

With respect to husband's earnings 42% of the respondents expressed satisfaction, 36% did not reply as these were either widowed or had husbands who were not earning any steady income, while 22% were dissatisfied or uncertain. 86% of the respondents did not obtain any financial support from their own children. 6% indicated satisfaction while 8% were either satisfied or were unable to comment. Dependence on other resources is so rare that 94% of the respondents did not obtain anything besides that from the immediate nuclear family; 4% were satisfied and 2% expressed dissatisfaction.

The general pattern here is one of limited resources.

Contrary to writings in anthropology, assertions of a cooperating supportive extended family system is not clearly evident among abakwa-Mzimela particularly with regard to financial or material support. There is a limited supply of money circulating in the community as husbands make up a large section of the unemployed, or poorly-paid unskilled workers. The main reason given by the respondents for dissatisfaction was the poverty in the community.

Most noticeable is the presence of female-headed families - 30% of respondents reported themselves as "heads" of families. These women were wives to migrants, widows or unmarried mothers who had established independent households under the care of male relatives.

Family head during husband's absence

TABLE XXIX

	N	%
Self	15	30
Father-in-law	5	10
Brother-in-law	1	2
Mother-in-law	8	16
Husband at home	21	42
Total	50	100

Inclusive of 'husband at home' are daily commuters to work and the unemployed. This female-headed family pattern is indicative of social change in the Zulu cultural pattern at the social level where one would least expect it i.e. among rural traditionalists. Various reasons were given for this:

- (a) Women's own self confidence.
- (b) Break-down of the extended closeknit clan settlement.
- (c) The often cited unreliability of clansmen, particularly in times of need and distress; and

- (d) Economic reasons - the responsibilities in an extended household often entail financial costs to the acting head; fewer kinsmen are prepared to accept this economic burden nowadays.

7.6 Cultural activities

As already indicated the community is not isolated from the outside world. Communication links exist in the form of radio programmes, only of useful amenities at home. 62% of the women had radios at home although they complained of lack of time to enjoy programmes. Their day was always filled with work at home, in the fields, or at the market place. The radio was seen predominantly as a facility for use by husbands, and for the enjoyment of youths. The male members of households have greater leisure-time when they are at home, as most of the daily domestic activity is engaged in by women.

Preferences in programme choice are indicated in the following tables.

(a) Ownership of radios

TABLE XXX

	Yes	No	Total
N	31	19	50
%	62	38	100

(b) Programmes enjoyedTABLE XXX

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
News	20	40	30	60	50	100
Religious	17	34	33	66	50	100
Homecraft	18	36	32	64	50	100
Agricultural	25	50	25	50	50	100
Health	15	30	35	70	50	100
Music	16	32	34	68	50	100
Cookery	8	16	42	84	50	100
Other	1	2	49	98	50	100

The overall pattern indicates minimal enjoyment of programmes listened to with the exception of the agricultural programme which received a balanced rating. Radio entertainment was reported as an irregular feature in the women's daily lives, occurring "whenever possible" at night when the household is ready to sleep. There is a general lack of awareness of the value of adult education programmes. Respondents reported that their daily routine was performed according to traditional methods, exclusive of innovation, in what they called their own fields i.e. the traditionally filled fields as opposed to the vegetable gardens supervised by the extension officer (amasimu onlimi) the radio is regarded as a source of mere entertainment.

The radio, as an instrument of change is undoubtedly superior to other mass media in any situation, such as occurs in this community, where large numbers of adult group are illiterate. The SABC Zulu programme has stimulating educational discussions of various issues, including agriculture. This latter programme in particular, is not only informative but it also gives brief 'case studies' presented through interviews and reports of problems and achievements of actual projects carried out by various groups.

Any development project undertaken in conjunction with reporting via an oral mass media will undoubtedly have an effective impact on a community that relies heavily on oral history and communication.

The high rate of illiteracy, together with the lack of adult educational facilities in the area results in an absence of reading as a pastime amongst the adults. Asked to indicate literature read, the following responses were shown:

Type of reading material

TABLE XXXI

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bible	12	24	38	76	50	100
Newspaper	14	28	36	72	50	100
Religious Pamphlet	1	2	49	98	50	100
Literature (Books)	0	0	50	100	50	100
Other	1	2	49	98	50	100

The local shops do not sell any form of reading material, not even the Zulu national paper, ILANGA.

The overall impression is therefore one of poor use of reading material (where available), whether for religious or entertainment purposes. This situation calls for a functional literacy programme, aimed at solving the reading and writing problems, of the community and related to its immediate needs.

7.7 Educational pattern

The respondents were requested to give information on the educational levels of their families, inclusive of themselves. The following tables based on information given by the 50 respondents, show data that must not, however, be regarded as static.

Children are not only continuing with their education, but aspire (encouraged by their mothers) to higher education, and the results of this will present, in the future, a changed pattern in the data.

Educational level of respondents

TABLE XXXII

No education		Lower Primary		Higher Primary		Secondary		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
29	58	14	28	6	12	1	2	50	100

There is a high percentage of uneducated, and semi-educated among the respondents, as the data shows. The fact that the majority of the respondents are born locally and are all under 50 years of age indicate the generally low rate of literacy in the area. This fact is not altered by the inclusion of spouses; 70% of respondents reported that their spouses were illiterate and semi-literate i.e. only 2% had husbands with a lower primary education; 10% with a higher primary education; 8% with a secondary and high school education.

Educational levels of children

TABLE XXXIII

Pre-School		No Education		Lower Primary		Higher Primary		Secondary		High School		University		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
53	26	15	7	85	42	42	21	6	3	2	1	1	,5	204	100

In this table we immediately notice the preponderance of young pre-school children who form 26% of the total population; while only 7% of the children have no educational qualifications (and are apparently going to remain so). Their mothers reported that they were no longer at school.

and were away working on White-owned farms or were betrothed. We concluded that there was no possibility of this group attending elementary school. However, the fact that more than 67% of the children were school going, and which percentage included levels beyond the lower primary school level, is important in terms of social mobility. Most noticeable, however, was a lack of technical education in the group due to the absence of such facilities in KwaZulu. Parents would need to send their children away to boarding schools, an uncommon phenomenon in the area at this time. Some children will continue their education if aspirations, expressed by the respondents with regard to their offspring, are fulfilled. This conclusion arises from the following responses to the question: "What level of education would you like your children to reach, according to their sex.?"

Preferred level of education for children

TABLE XXXIV

	Lower Prim.		Higher Prim.		Sec. School		Trade School		Profession		University		No Response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Boys	1	2	1	2	6	12	11	22	13	26	15	30	3	6
Girls	1	2	4	8	7	14	1	2	25	50	9	18	3	6

The above data is indicative of social-change reflected in attitudes towards the future careers of children. It also reveals an awareness of the possible socio-economic benefits that result from educational achievement. The table further reveals the equalitarian attitude in relation to sex of offspring held by the women.

The respondents clearly expressed a sense of inadequacy, created by their lack of technical and literacy skills in the areas where they were most active i.e. homecraft and agriculture. The younger women, in particular, nursed aspirations, which they realised could only be achieved by higher education e.g. the organisation of a business or marketing service which entails negotiations with authorities and controllers of credit facilities. For these reasons the majority responded positively to the question:

"Is education necessary for women?" 90% agreed, the balance were uncertain or negative. These latter were invariably older women who found the question irrelevant because they personalised the situation, placing it beyond their reach. The main reason given for the positive response was that times had changed; women need a cash income to assist with the feeding, clothing and schooling of children. Their attitudes to adult educational programmes were positive, since 82% welcomed the idea, whilst of the 18% of negative responses, age, work and lack of interest were cited the main reasons for this reaction. This positive response is an ideal, however, as it is no guarantee of actual behaviour. Nevertheless, it creates a positive atmosphere for a development programme that highlights functional literacy. The respondents view education as a means to obtaining financial resources and to acquiring a better livelihood. They are women who are expected by their society to be self supporting; thus for them self-application for economic independence, is a value they have been socialised in to accepting. This attitude is stressed in their view regarding the notion of better education for men than women: 48% of them agreed whilst 52% disagreed. The fact that the husband in a polygynous society had responsibilities as family head, increases his socio-economic responsibility. The women saw him as head of the family or household, but who nevertheless could not cope with economic responsibilities.

The women are devoted to their domestic responsibility regarding children, who look to them for maintenance. The fathers, being polygynists, have many dependants, and the mothers are the nearest alternative resource for daily needs. Thus, there is as much demand on these women to shoulder responsibilities, to feed and clothe their families, as there is on the men. That they are mothers gives these respondents no choice. For this reason, education as a means to economic well-being is as necessary for females as it is for men. There is a clear indication that primary school education only is considered inadequate for both boys and girls. There is a realisation that trade schools are open to menfolk only, whilst professions like teaching and nursing are seen as the domain of girls. Greater opportunity for university education would be given to boys, as this is regarded as the best arrangement, the women having been influenced by an example of a local male graduate in the area. There is conclusive

proof in the data that the socio-cultural pattern relating to education is in no way a static one, and that age has affected the respondents' aspirations. Most remarkable here is the readiness of most illiterate women to send their children to school in order to obtain, what they call, 'bread' or to gain qualifications for a better quality of life. Education is thus seen to have the immediate practical outcome of improved monetary gain. Women see this as being beneficial not only to the children but also to themselves as future dependants of their children. They are fully aware that the community cannot offer activities suited to the educated classes, at this stage they accept the fact of out-mitigation of educated offspring to urban areas. This acceptance has serious bearings on development programmes since the innovative process will often depend on foreign agents-of-change working with a community of unskilled people.

7.8 Church affiliation

The area as defined by the respondents, and as noted from its political leadership belongs mainly to the Shembite sect, a traditionalistic movement that has many followers at grass roots level. The respondents reported that the majority of the community belonged to a religious group, and non affiliation was exceptional. There is a general lack in the area of outward religious expression in the form of church buildings except for the Swedish hospital-linked mission station which had no members among the interviewed groups; the small Lutheran Church building, and of course, the Shembite shrine. Church membership of respondents was as follows:

Church affiliation of respondentsTABLE XXXV

Church affiliation	N	%
Roman Catholic	-	-
Anglican	-	-
D.R.C.	-	-
Methodist	-	-
Presbyterian	1	2
Zionist	16	32
African Congregation	2	4
Salvation Army	1	2
Shembite	17	34
Lutheran	3	6
None	10	20
Total	50	100

The total percentage of people belonging to the Shembite group far outweighs others, as respondents with co-wives reported that out of a total of 36 co-wives for the group, 23 belonged to the movement, while 10 belonged to the Zionist group and 3 were not linked with any church group. 34% of the respondents reported that husbands were Shembite; 18% had Zionist husbands, while they themselves formed 32% of the total research group. A combination of Shembite and Zionist groups outweighs those belonging to the orthodox Christian churches who form only 12% of the total group. The fact that the second largest group is the Zionist sect, who are also traditionalistic, although more inclined to Christianity, is indicative of a socio-cultural life that reinforces the values of the society as will be discussed later.

The church plays a key role in the lives of the women of KwaMzimela. The traditionalistic Shembite group, who are in the majority, and whose sect may be regarded as the tribal church of the area, conceive of their religious institution as the ultimate binding force in the community. Its

moral values are based on the Old Testament together with Zulu cultural norms.

Its authority is symbolised by the institution of hereditary chieftainship of the area. It teaches familiness, decency, cleanliness, self discipline, hospitality, humaneness, respect for age, male supremacy, non-violence of husbands towards their wives and children, industriousness on the part of the woman and men, the ethic being that 'each must eat the sweat of his brow', and good neighbourliness. It was reported that women more than men have clung to these principles as most of them do not clash with the cultural philosophy of the African people. Women from childhood have been over-socialised to co-operate with their socialising agents.

Polygyny is encouraged by the prevalence of customary marriages as ethically approved by the religious beliefs of both groups. Non-believers also adhere to traditional Zulu culture which, in reality acknowledges the existence of the Great One or God. However, the deceased spirit-life exists in perpetuity, to protect, or harm the living.

The belief in the existence of living spirits of the deceased leads to a conservative way of life directed by values of past generations. Conflict situations arise between the young educated groups and the church-orientated illiterate, adult groups, e.g. according to Zulu custom children should be self-effacing, adopt submissive and near non-communicative attitudes towards adults. At school children are taught to greet adults and take initiative. With regard to women, need drives them from their homes to market products in order to obtain cash. The ideal situation, in terms of church ideology, is that they should not move out of the area frequently. Though polygyny is a practice encouraged by church dogma, the respondents spoke openly against the practice, quoting finance, jealousy, cruelty of husband and favouritism as the main causes of suffering amongst women in the polygynous household. The church, as an institution in the community, can be seen both as a protective stabilising force, and as an agency retarding change.

The church reinforces the 'domestic' image of women through the institution of polygyny since it indirectly encourages familiness and attitudes favouring a high birth rate.

7.9 Government and politics

Kwa-Mzimela women are vaguely aware of what 'national government' stands for. They associate 'government' with controls, administration, and not necessarily development. They do not relate it functionally to their possible development, even though they have had an agricultural adviser amongst them and are aware of the sugar-cane project under development on behalf of the men.

The local chief is a member of the Legislative Assembly and there is a local Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement branch, which is responsible for political as well as community development, as part of its cultural programme. The branch is not yet active in this respect, and women have not participated actively, although a number of them have joined, voluntarily, or have been signed on by husbands.

Involvement of women in affairs of the local chief's council takes the form of 'listening-in' on behalf of husbands who are in urban employment or, if widowed and acting as the head of the family then on their own behalf.

Their political awareness is minimal, leaving such "men's affairs", to their husbands. As yet they have not exercised the vote, although the policy of the homeland government permits them to do so. The local representative had an uncontested nomination as an Inkatha official in the 1978 elections.

When asked to indicate to what extent women would participate at local-, and homeland government-level (in various selected areas where the policy affecting community affairs would be determined) they gave the following responses:

Level of women's political involvementTABLE XXXVI

	No response		Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Chief's meetings	1	2	38	76	11	22	50	100
Church meetings	0	0	42	84	8	16	50	100
School meetings	0	0	43	86	7	14	50	100
Affairs of Home-land Government	7	14	0	0	43	86	50	100

There is a general presence of participation of women in affairs at local level for various reasons as indicated by the 76%, 84% and 86%, respectively. Although their involvement at the local chief's council meetings is one of listening in, on behalf of migrant husbands, this creates awareness of community politics and social changes to some degree. The church is a very influential institution in the area as already indicated; women participate in a supportive way not as church leaders, except in isolated women's movements within the church. Equally central to the life of the community is the local school as women have to ensure that their children attend their daily classes. Thus they are very aware of the needs of the pupils and the school and, as parents, they feel responsible for the welfare of their community school. They displayed a positive attitude towards participation on school committees and church councils as they have to raise funds and entertain visitors and dignitaries during festivities. The level of decision-making in these institutions, however, cannot be compared with that exercised in domestic life which is more positive and well-defined. With regard to homeland politics, the lack of awareness of a possible future role for themselves is indicated by the negative response of 86% which displays an ignorance of outside political matters.

7.10 Health and welfare

Respondents were very conscious of the poor state of physical health among their members. They associated their illnesses with stress, age, child-bearing and arduous work in the fields that also lie long distances away from their homes. On account of their being alone with their children for protracted periods of the year, many women have learnt to act independently (in certain respects) of their husbands, particularly in matters of health. When asked if the women of the area were free to seek medical care for themselves and their children, 68% responded positively, 26% responded negatively, and 6% gave no clear response. The influence of the church movement can be seen in the sources referred to for medical care. Being spiritualists the Shembite group, in particular, are discouraged from using the services of traditional healers like witchdoctors and diviners (izangoma); they make use of hospital and clinic facilities besides faith healing. Indicative of the response-to-illness pattern is the following table:

Sources of health careTABLE XXXVII

	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Hospital	44	88	6	12
Clinic	29	58	21	42
Herbalist	5	10	45	90
Faith Healer	16	32	34	68
Sangoma	0	0	50	100
Friends	0	0	50	100

56% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with medical services at the local hospital as these were within easy reach; 30% were dissatisfied because of the shortage of doctors and nurses and the costs involved in

getting to the nearest state hospital - Ngwelezane, whilst 4% were unsure.

Family planning issues must be taken into consideration by anyone involved in social development and change. The problems of poverty, women's fertility and women's status are closely interlinked and deserve a separate study. Family planning becomes a pertinent subject in any case study of a general nature. Questions relating to respondents' expressed aspirations for a better quality of life, and a desire to achieve in areas hitherto considered unattainable because of their socio-cultural and political role in the community were asked.

In response to a question as to whether the respondents knew what a family-planning clinic was, 46% answered positively and 54% negatively. Replying to the question as to whether women in the Kwa-Mzimela area were free to go to a family-planning clinic the following responses were given:

Use of family planning services

TABLE XXXVIII

	N	%
No information	7	14
On their own	1	2
With husbands approval	5	10
Not at all	37	74
With mother-in-law's approval	0	0
Total	50	100

The data indicates a high level of non-participation of local women in family-planning programmes. They are however aware of the existence of family-planning through mass media campaigns, although local values are against such practices. As these women belong to a traditionalistic, polygynous society, whose religious ethic reinforces and sanctions such 'pronatalistic' attitudes, they consider the bearing of children to be

their primary duty. Such responses as seen in the above table are not unexpected. Polygyny encourages high productivity among co-wives as this is used as proof in a competitive domestic situation, of the husband's sexual interest in the wife. Remarkably the role played by a woman's age thwarts such family-planning practices, as none of the respondents ever reported the approval of the mother-in-law to such practices. In conjunction with the fact that women are not known to visit such a clinic even on their own, leads to the conclusion that in the Kwa-Mzimela area women's fecundity still takes its natural course. Such factors as illness, male migration, lack of male interest in wives are the limiting factors. Protracted lactation coupled with abstinence by the wife is an important cultural practice that limits the natural capacity to bear children.

7.11 Agricultural activities

In the area researched, agricultural work is regarded as typically women's work in the sense that it is the women who engage in the pursuit, as a daily routine, at all times of the year, unaided by any external agent. They are also responsible for supplying their families with food tilled in fields and small gardens, as this is traditionally seen, by their society, as the lot of woman.

Women engage in all types of agricultural work, even those that are traditionally considered 'men's' work, e.g. clearing of scrubland and land drainage. The factor most limiting of development in this area, was the absence of ox-drawn ploughs and tractors; the women mainly relied on hand hoes for field tillage and hoeing. Not all women of the area would be permitted to use the plough, however, for it is not a cultural norm for them to handle such an implement, an exception being made in the case of the immigrant amaChunu. Being a settler group, in smaller numbers than the indigenous influential groups, their skill has not been passed on to the Mzimelas.

The range of activities which women engaged in with respect to agriculture is a fairly wide one, as partially shown in pages 128 - 129. On account of the socio-economic factors that lead men to migrate from this community, women have assumed pastoral duties on behalf of their husbands and sons. They look after the cattle and other small animals like goats, whilst they tend their fields, or with the assistance of school children in the afternoon nearer their homesteads.

The absence of men from food-cropping was observed throughout the agricultural cycle. The few who engaged in agriculture were in commercial sugar-cane farming. They relied heavily on their wives and female relatives to do the seeding and hoeing of the fields. The effect of this was to divert women's energies into time-consuming, extensive work at the expense of food-cropping and harvesting, during peak periods.

An analysis of the table on the division of labour in agriculture shows that the chief activity of men is that of seasonal tilling of the soil with ox-drawn ploughs, and tractor-work, which is quick and less tedious or burdensome than the women's lot. There is a low level of 'joint' activity, as 26% women and 34% men, were traditionally associated with the task of clearing scrub; buying of fertiliser is done by both men and women, as the 58% and 30% respectively, indicate. Control of financial resources, rather than cultural values, is responsible for the latter.

In terms of role definition there can be no doubt that Kwa-Mzimela women are agriculturalists, handling the enterprise at all levels, within the means of the community. Constraints regarding sugar-cane farming are legally, economically and politically, caused. As legal minors in the eyes of the law, these women may not qualify for quotas, loans and payouts, at the sugar mill as happens in the case of men. Lack of finances excludes them from any extensive, capital-demanding enterprise. Politically they are a peripheral force on the local and national levels of decision-making and policy-formation. As already indicated, their attendance at the local chief's council meetings is one of 'listening in' on behalf of absent husbands. Women of the area lack the political awareness needed to pressure for and mobilise better opportunities for their community.

On the whole women expressed satisfaction with the tasks that they had to do in their fields and gardens, as Table XXXIX shows, (with respect to their attitudes towards agricultural work).

Attitudes towards agricultural work

TABLE XXXIX

No Response		Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Uncertain		Dis-satisfied		Very Satisfied	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	2	3	12	34	68	0	0	7	14	2	4

They expressed satisfaction mainly because they were independent of outside control. This was repeatedly expressed as a common sentiment. They had a free hand to plan the agricultural cycle, to choose seeds and organise fields. Because the yield from their fields was the main source of daily sustenance for the families, the women had developed emotional attachment to their work and fields. Their self-image (of a successful woman), included an industrious and conscientious tiller and producer of food for the family, regardless of the husband's station in life. The chief's wives went to the fields daily along with the rest of the womenfolk. Women did not render any particular services towards these senior wives. They carried and fetched loads of seeds and harvested crops like the rest of the group.

Activities shown in Table XXXX indicate that women in the area are in general agreement as to the different types of work they have to do. Their traditional role of engaging in light yet monotonous tasks of hoeing is complicated by the lack of machinery e.g. tractors. They have to till virgin land, clear scrub, dig and break sods, using basic hoes.

Not all activities were engaged in at the time of the study since seasonal changes determined the type of work at any point in time.

TABLE XXXX

Scope of agricultural activities engaged in by women

	No answer		W		Both		M		Total			No answer		W		Both		M		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clearing Scrub	2	4	13	26	18	36	17	34	50	100	Storing grain	1	2	49	98	0	0	0	0	50	100
Hoeing	1	2	47	94	2	4	0	0	50	100	Buying Fertiliser	1	2	29	58	5	10	15	30	50	100
Breaking Sods	1	2	48	96	0	0	1	2	50	100	Looking after live- stock	2	4	35	50	9	18	14	28	50	100
											Keeping fowlrun	1	2	49	98	0	0	0	0	50	100
Sowing	1	2	47	94	2	4	0	0	50	100	Marketing foodcrops	1	2	39	78	0	0	10	20	50	100
Reaping	2	4	48	96	0	0	0	0	50	100	Tilling with plough/ tractor	1	2	2	4	0	0	47	94	50	100
Choosing/ Sorting Seeds	1	2	49	98	0	0	0	0	50	100											
											Other	50	100							50	100

Women of this area considered those of their group who did not work hard in the fields as social outcasts. Those women who expressed any dissatisfaction, (18%) gave as their main reasons, repeated poor yield, lack of sufficient land, old age or illness, whereas, younger women had other ambitions such as opening a market, a business to sell food crops or handicraft.

Women enjoyed a remarkable amount of decision-making with regard to their work in crop farming. If the respondent was not making major decisions, often the mother-in-law undertook this role. There is a very low level of joint-decision making by spouses in this area, which further indicates a clear role division in the household. Husbands also do not make any decisions on their own with regard to food cropping.

The majority of the women take decisions on the type of crops to be sown, or the rotation of crops in the fields. This is indicated by the fact that ⁺ 80% of the women took decisions with regard to matters relating to food-cropping, seed selection, storage, marketing as noted in following table:

Decision-making with regard to agricultural activity

TABLE XXXXI

	No Response		Self		Both		Husband		Mother-in-law		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Time to sow	0	0	41	82	3	6	0	0	6	12	50	100
Place where to plant	0	0	41	82	3	6	0	0	6	12	50	100
Types of crops	0	0	42	84	2	4	0	0	6	12	50	100
When to harvest	0	0	42	84	2	4	0	0	6	12	50	100
How much for food	0	0	42	84	2	4	0	0	6	12	50	100
How much to store	0	0	42	84	2	4	0	0	6	12	50	100
How much to sell	2	4	40	80	2	4	0	0	6	12	50	100

Respondents expressed satisfaction with regard to decision-making as far as agricultural activities are concerned. To them it is normal for women to decide and plan for crop production - an activity engaged in by their female forebears, for generations past. They never questioned this role, although they clearly indicated a need for improved techniques to minimise stress and to increase yields. They did not consider that their role could ever change. They jealously guarded their fields against male interference unlike their attitude to those gardens tilled with the agricultural adviser's assistance, or the men's sugar-cane fields. Free to exploit their traditional fields, they were assured of future security. Even the chief could not threaten them if they failed to co-operate with extension workers to rationalise the use of their traditional fields, in the manner he had done with regard to the vegetable plots. Often these fields would lie unused when the extension worker left the area.

Women were aware that there was greater yield-potential for their crops if the fields were put to better and more efficient tillage and fertilisation. They were aware that their form of land-use could be improved with better facilities and skills. Being limited by lack of access to skilled people, (acceptable to the women) who could make needed resources available, offer marketing and organisational skills; offer training in functional literacy to open up communication with others; made these respondents apathetic as to their capability in making a breakthrough on their own.

They were also aware of conditions on White-owned (neighbouring) farms where they had worked as single girls or where some of their families were still in employment. Positive attitudes towards changes in agricultural practice that would nevertheless continue to produce a 'mixed basket', throughout the cycle, were often expressed in support of a desire for a better quality of life for themselves and their children. They were not keen to change their system of inter-cropping as this assured them of a mixed harvest and distributed yield risks.

Some of the respondents were participating in the already-mentioned 'vegetable project', which gave yields superior to the traditional fields; but this participation entailed longer hours, greater supervision by the male officer, and was located far away from their 'own' fields. This therefore necessitated continuous motivation on the part of the officer, caused great frustration for yield could not be marketed away from area, and led to regret on the part of the participants. Women did not identify with this project. They referred to it as 'Amasimu oMlimi' ('fields of the agricultural - officer').

Changes were favourably anticipated by respondents with regard to agricultural work and related matters; 78% of them expressed a wish to learn improved farming systems, whilst 22% rejected the idea, or were non-committal. This latter group were older women, or those who expressed a dislike for the stressful work. Their reaction had nothing to do with financial resources, as most of these respondents were poor peasants. They were apathetic towards the research project generally, and had no views to express regarding self-improvement. The changes that respondents wish to see happening in their area, with regard to agriculture, have already been dealt with.

The land question is a sensitive one amongst the respondents. Although they have fields scattered all over the farming area, the local senior extension officer reported that they were not keen to see the area re-organised. There are various reasons for this apparently negative attitude, already dealt with in relation to the women's limited power, and isolation from the mainstream of local politics, decision-making and policy formulation for the area. Insecurity and lack of trust in officialdom, dominate their attitude. They however, repeatedly communicated their sentiments in favour of change to the researcher.

7.12 Conclusion

Women are aware of ecological factors as these affect different kinds of crops. They have special fields for various types of crops and any changes that threatened a time-worn agricultural system is bound to be met with by resistance. Fear, ignorance about the future are operative factors here.

The role matrix of the Mzimela women, viewed as a totality, shows a high degree of internal coherence and a minimum of role conflict. This occurs with respect to the women as actors, and the socio-cultural medium through which they operate. At the present stage of socio-cultural developments within the area, there is little cause for role conflict, since the women operate in an extended-family structure where both the social and economic burden is shared to a considerable degree by co-wives, particularly those of the junior ranks. Domestic stress is common, on account of factors beyond the immediate control of the women - i.e. the overall underdevelopment of the area. The work load is heavy but the women's attitude to it is near fatalistic. It is a task to be done while no other remedy exists to lighten the burden.

The role of 'agriculturalist' complements that of the 'householder' as provisioner of food; the role of 'mother' complements that of 'wife'; for these role-combinations are inter-dependent, e.g. as a wife the woman can obtain fulfilment as a mother, for by bearing children her status as a wife is enhanced.

Male out-migration to towns and cities creates new responsibilities for wives as they assume pastoral activities. The positive aspect of this is the indirect undermining of taboos that dictate that women should not come into contact with livestock, particularly cattle, during 'unclean' periods when they menstruate or are pregnant. As these taboos keeps women away from milk and other dairy products, to nutritional levels of both nursing mothers and the young are affected in the end.

We have already seen how proper moral behaviour elevates the women to a respectable status within her household and clan.

The Mzimela women are not involved in any urban employment that would remove them from their immediate home environment, and result in possible neglect of children and other dependants.

Thus seen they still enjoy a satisfactory role integration as noted by Davis (1966:68) where he states that 'His (the individual's) personal efficiency, his mental stability and contentment depend to a large extent on the integration of his various social positions'.

The analysis of the domestic lifestyle of the Mzimela women as wives, housekeeper-provisioners and mothers, reveals statuses, which, borrowing Davis' view (1966:68) "are so bound together in terms of interlocking rights and obligations that their manifestation in behaviour gets things accomplished and the collectivity is perpetuated."

CHAPTER 8ROLE ENACTMENT WITHIN SELECTED SUBSYSTEMSSOME REMARKS ON ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNED CHANGE8.1 Introduction

This study has concerned itself with three main concepts - role, development and modernisation - as theoretical constructs as well as social processes. They have been viewed within a particular situational context - a rural community whose women, as an integral part of this community, lead lifestyles that are indicators of both the material and non-material aspects of culture, as well as, the level of societal structure and function. We have been studying a traditional society in the typical sense as defined by Sorokin et al (1965 : 185) - mainly agrarian with sparsely distributed population, proliferation of primary group relations, limited occupational and geographical mobility. This rural agrarian community does however display a certain degree of dynamism towards modernisation and development.

Rogers (1969 : 3) has defined social change as 'the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system'. Our interest has been focused on both structure and function of a particular society undergoing changes, in so far as these changes have an impact on women's lifestyles. The three main aspects of any social system as units to which may be attributed any change, i.e. actors, forms or patterns of interaction and functions, (as intended or unintended consequences of action) are of concern here. Key aspects of both the outwardly static and dynamic aspects of culture have been analysed in order to assess the level at which the women function within the total social system. We have also determined within acknowledged theories of development and modernisation whether this community enjoys any potential for an improved standard of living as it is reflected in the women's role aspirations.

Accepting Turner's argument that in some societies women play roles that are structurally, culturally and affectively central (Turner 1974 : 131) this study has revealed that such a thesis holds true of the community in question with regard to its women. This observation justifies focusing on women as an important point of entry into the study of a traditional society in transition. Turner holds that a role is structurally central when 'the mother has some degree of control over the kin units' economic resources, and is critically involved in kin-related decision-making processes. "The structural component of matrifocality relates to economic and political power within the kin group". (1974 : 131) Cultural centrality is also concerned with the evaluation of self images and legitimacy of the 'role'. Affective centrality occurs where it is culturally valued and patterned and is used as a motivating force in role behaviour.

We have already noted Dalton's concern over the neglect of rural development issues where he remarks on the insufficiency of theory on socio-economic change and development at village level, and yet according to him '... some of the most intractable problems of development exist at the rural community level : how to increase agricultural productivity, village literacy and vocational skills'. (Dalton 1971 : 30)

Concomitant with this are problems of change in other spheres which may be characterised as intellectual, economic, ethico-religious, demographic and political. Modernisation has been seen as involving many factors which result in the individual's change from a traditional way of life to a more complex, technologically advanced lifestyle. Modernisation as a process involving individuals can take place within a particular socio-cultural milieu where social change and development will imply a re-organisation in the age and sex, class and occupational structures, a redistribution of leadership and a new organisation of society generally.

Given the fact that the Mzimela community is not totally static and that there are already forces at work, at various levels, making for social change, this study interests itself with both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this change. Being aware of Bernstein's observation

that the path of sociology of development has been "a question of identifying and analysing social, cultural and psychological conditions, concomitants and consequences of economic development the option being either negative in terms of removing existing institutional obstacles, or positive in the sense of creating the cultural environment needed for development" (Bernstein 1971 : 144), we shall address ourselves to factors that facilitate social change, modernisation and development, thus needing supportive systems of organisation and direction, as well as those issues, (seen within the context of the study as constraints), which need removal or redirection.

By focusing our attention on the social structure as it is reflected in the social system, specifically in terms of role enactment, patterns of interaction and the manifest and latent consequences of this action, (functions), we shall endeavour to indicate how the modernisation process is reflected in a specific rural community. That is, given the present status and role of the Mzimela women as it is primarily expressed in their role enactment and patterns of interaction, is there evidence that these women experience change or aspire to specific goals which expedite change in terms of modernisation and development? If so, can we identify the prevalent facilitators or constraints to their total role performance?

We shall employ the interpreted data, as reflected in Chapter VII, in our attempt to answer the above questions. By focusing on selected subsystems - the economic, educational, family, political and religious, which research has revealed to be the most influential in this community, we mean to bring forward ideas and issues that would play a vital part in any development strategy involving women as important participants.

8.2 Institutional subsystems in social change

8.2.1 The Economy

In the previous chapter three typical economic activities were basic to an understanding of the Mzimela area's particular socio-economic structure.

Basic to this system is the indigenous agrarian communal land tenure system.

Also of importance are :

1. the massive dependence for income generation on the outmigration of men into towns and cities coupled with the agricultural employment of young unmarried women and men on White-owned plantations;
2. the traditional attachment to a pastoral economy;
3. women's central agricultural role in food crop production and, lastly,
4. a nascent male dominated commercial sugar cane sector.

The agricultural economy is basic to a community's survival. Various behavioural forces are at work within this rural community to sustain and perpetuate its type of economy as well as its other subsystems

It is important to evaluate and put into perspective these above-mentioned factors in order to understand how they relate to one another and what total impact they may have on the rural social system, its modernisation and development.

Male outmigration and the absence of able-bodied youths in any rural community has been the subject of various writings (Nattrass (1977); Maasdorp (1974); Thorrington-Smith et al (1978); Butler et al (1977)). Its major implications are that the rural areas lose both human resources as well as reliable economic remittances from urban employment. The migrant spends the major portion of his income in urban centres and family remittals are very low, according to Nattrass (1977 : 14), for instance, the 1970 KwaZulu migrants' remittances, 60% of which came from export labour, averaged R40 as total per capita income. This figure compared poorly with the 1960 levels.

What are the implications for the Mzimela community in this respect? Tables XXII - XXIV together with the analysis, reflect the typical economic pattern and status found in rural KwaZulu and other poor countries. Men

in this community are mainly in unskilled positions away from home or unemployed (54%). The female-headed families of widows raise the level of economic stress to 66%. The lack of employment outlets within the community develops a discernible mental attitude or role behaviour that perpetuates outmigration of males as a cultural expectation. Women, being aware of economic pressures since the money economy has gradually become part of the traditional economic system, and appreciating the absence of local alternatives, have grown to accept this outmigration as a cultural phenomenon of modern times, or what they call impilo yesimanje (literally meaning 'life nowadays'). Their attitude to the question of outmigration is pragmatic since they are aware of the plight to be faced by their families should their menfolk be unemployed.

Men, as people traditionally removed from agriculture become a redundant human resource in a community like this. Women pursue their agricultural activities with little or even no assistance from men. So in terms of domestic economic needs in an agrarian society, whose food crop production is female dominated, women see themselves as better off without the interference of men. As the data on 'decision making' in matters relating to this area of activity shows, women operate independently of the men throughout the agricultural cycle. The pattern of migrancy and outside employment is demonstrated by the following figures :

68% of the women reported that their husbands left home, for reasons of employment, for periods varying from daily to yearly. One fifth of the sample interviewed had unemployed husbands. 44% of the women had husbands who were migrants for periods between 1 and 15 years.

The pattern of wage remittances from husbands' employment appears on Table XXIV, where family sources of income are revealed. These figures are rough estimates since in only two cases did the respondents report regular income.

Three figures may be singled out as outstanding in this table with respect to husband's remittances :-

Nothing - 24%; R0 - R9 - 10%; R20 - R29 - 22%.

These figures indicate the critically low economic level of the community. The fact that some men were reported as supplying food, clothing and other household goods in no way limits the overall observation of low level economic standards. A study of external expressions of economic standards in the form of housing, including that of the traditional mud and daub type, household equipment and mode of dress, confirm the above observation.

8.2.2. The traditional attachment to a pastoral economy

Outmigration of men has interfered with traditional Zulu sex role division in this regard. Men were associated with the role of pastoral care and many taboos developed in this sector with regard to women's involvement to preserve this male domain. Out of this cultural practice developed habits that cut across ritual and socialization patterns, among other things.

Although what may be termed 'real' culture with respect to pastoral activity allots new responsibility to women, as 50% of the women reported looking after livestock as one of their occupations, none of the respondents reported their caretaker activities as already changing the cultural norm. They reported that this was done on behalf of husbands. Nowhere did women express aspirations towards owning the family cattle kraal. Cattle are still identified with men, although a woman with lobola'd daughters could own progeny from the inqquthu beast among the husband's own cattle. According to traditional values, ownership of cattle and final control of household property are still the prerogative of males in the household.

Women have voiced concern over this added responsibility as they realised how it interferes with an already loaded work pattern. Nowhere did they conceive of this as an acceptable or desirable state of affairs; only circumstances left them without any alternatives. Male children have now begun to attend school whilst still young, and as soon as they leave

school or are in their mid-teens, they prefer to be in paid employment. This is repeatedly demonstrated in migration patterns.

Threats to nature conservation, soil care and animal husbandry are aggravated by circumstances such as experienced by the Mzimelas; here role behaviour, which has developed through generations of practice cannot change for the better (in order to accommodate a new lifestyle), without conscientious education. Thorrington-Smith et al (1978 : 93) acknowledging this traditional attachment to livestock, (for reasons other than simply economic), and difficulties associated with attempts at quality control and commercialisation concludes. The traditional attitude to cattle and land tenure "will ultimately have to go the same way as traditional society itself".

An analysis of time budgets covering women's activities in the four main areas of cooking, fetching water, cleaning home and agricultural work, during 'peak' periods, averages 64 hours weekly. We have to bear in mind the uncovered domestic and economic activities to realise any additional work load stretches their physical and mental responsibilities to a considerable degree. Thus, the removal of men from their traditional pastoral role without the replacement of time and labour-saving techniques (in respect of women's activities), will ultimately lead to role malfunctioning in one or more of their role spheres.

8.2.3 Women's central agricultural role in food crop production

This role is termed central, or in Turner's view culturally central, in the sense that it is here that Mzimela women display their greatest socio-economic power and supportive task in the total social system - from the family to the community generally. We have already noted before, in the study of time budgets, that their social activities centre mainly on family roles as purely social responsibilities, as well as agricultural activities which combine elements both social and economic. Women spend on the average 23 hours weekly in the fields, the most significant time allocations being 20 - 31 hours in the instance of 56%.

These hours are spent in the women's own fields where the study of time budgets was undertaken. This does not take care of the hours women have to spend at peak commercial periods in the cane fields which belong to their husbands. A breakdown of the tasks done during the agricultural cycle, coupled with related activities of animal husbandry and marketing, showed that with the exception of tractor tilling and fertiliser buying, women feature in food crop farming throughout the agricultural cycle. Their activities now include hitherto known male roles of scrub-clearing and trenching. One can view this change in role behaviour negatively or positively - negatively in terms of stress and added responsibility in a community that does not accord its womenfolk the needed infrastructural inputs; and positively as women's ability to cope alone, no matter how poorly. It is possible that this could develop positive self images, and therefore create fertile ground for future motivation in innovative agricultural experiments.

Women have been shown to be jealous of their traditional agricultural fields. Ritualistic associations operate here, and the need to be assured of a mixed 'nutritional basket' simultaneously affects women's resistance to single cropping as against intercropping. Land allocated to women's agricultural activities is a scarce commodity. Any increased demand on it, as now happens with the increase in population, results in uncertainty and insecurity. Plant ecology also dictates, under natural conditions which still apply here, that each woman should have a mixed soil base for different kinds of crops. Any re-organisation, into single unit plots, may deprive some of them of this equitable distribution.

Noticeable in Table XXXX on scope of agricultural activities, is the almost total lack of joint activities done by men and women of households. Thus Mzimela women continue the already long acknowledged role of African women in foodcrop production (Hunter 1933; Pala 1976), and their high level of independent decision-making in agriculture. (See Table XXXXI)

Women themselves, with minimal assistance from any other member of the household, decide on the agricultural cycle; between 80-84% of them decide on location, types of crops, timing of the cycle and the use to which

agricultural produce should be put. These activities indicate, without any doubt, a clear sex role division with regard to food cropping.

8.2.4 The nascent sugar cane agricultural project

De Clercq (1975 : 47) reported on the growing sugar cane industry in the Mzimela area, which was being developed on the southern side, generating an average amount of R2 050 per annum for each of the seventy five farmers. By 1977 the project had developed across the Ngoye mountain range into the northern end of the area wherein an estimated 75% of the land was going to be put under cane. This study is not aimed at assessing the project but the wider implications of the project on food cropping and women's economic activities is obvious.

We here reiterate previous observations on the changed position of women with regard to land rights once cash crop farming is introduced - women lose their power of decision with regard to land allocation for the production of food and other crops for sale.

Contained in the discriminatory policy of sugar-quota allocation to men, economic hierachisation is introduced into a community where traditionally women have enjoyed a considerable level of independence through their food producing activities. Men who are polygynous benefit mainly from the sugar production. There is already an observed need for free labour among women, and as noted by Boserup (1970 : 4), polygyny for African men is of economic benefit since a polygynist can, either by amassing more land with more unions entered into, or, by free usage of 'wife-labour', accumulate more wealth for his particular household, over which he has final control.

There are serious demographic implications here if we take into consideration the rate of population growth in the area, as reported in Chapter I, where we estimated that in a decade population size had more than doubled.

Economic development that is not coupled with a changing value system,

operating at the level of interpersonal relationships, may yield the observed incongruities e.g. inequitable and diminishing access to resources for economic well-being between men and women.

Pala's scepticism on the general view noted above by planners and researchers that '... the directing of services to the rural farm family, however defined, will guarantee equal benefits among all family members' (Pala 1976 : 3) deserves noting here too.

The rural character of the area displays a lack of overall development needed to build up infra-structural networks required to facilitate communication, commerce, mobility (social and geographical), and a profit-oriented value system. Peasants produce goods and services predominantly for consumption purposes and there is a general lack of capital investment on which to generate further economic resources and employment opportunities. There is a vital need for productive manpower in rural areas, yet in the present circumstances of underdevelopment, these areas cannot support the burden of surplus lands in need of food, shelter and other services, e.g. health.

Excessive unskilled and uncreative manpower in an underdeveloped area is inimical to stable community relations, and proper use of available resources.

The neglect of women in the commercial sector in a community that adheres to rigid sex-role division, where traditional women's activities are concerned, further undermines development. Half the population (and this half being the most localised section of the community) is not put to productive activity in terms of modernisation and development. The failure to view food production activities in commercial and modern terms, means that women are by-passed when new techniques, equipment, systems of production and related activities are taught to men whose work in agriculture is market-orientated.

Land holding rights affect the pattern of land distribution. Women, who have only usufructuary rights through their husbands' families, cannot,

independently, without the men's assistance, acquire such rights. Communal land tenure in a society that is polygynous means that the man with the greatest number of wives obtains more land for his own household use free of charge, and prejudices land distribution to monogamous families. The Mzimelas typically enjoy this privilege, as reported by the Mzimela women themselves.

The diversion of women's labour into non-remunerative (i.e. as wife-labour) sugar cane plantations dissipates energies needed for any future possible programme of education intended to improve women's skills in housecraft, community work or marketing activities. We have already noted the low level of literacy among Mzimela women; 58% have no literacy skills; 40% have reached primary level. (p.156). Their concern over this state of affairs was expressed throughout the field study. Women felt that their inadequate knowledge of homecraft, marketing and agricultural skills retarded their attainment of a better quality of life for themselves and for their families. We have also noted that the younger women had more pronounced aspirations for the improvement of their circumstances through access to knowledge and means of production e.g. in order "to open up a business of my own" (ibhizinisi lami) (p.170). To substantiate their awareness of education as a liberalising force, we note that they saw education as overwhelmingly necessary for women - 90% of them responded positively to the question 'Is education necessary for women?' We also note the 82% positive response to the idea of adult education programmes. (p.158)

There are, however, positive factors that counteract the above-mentioned constraints (or constraining elements). The level of women's decision-making in agricultural work, in respect of food production, has been appraised, and this seen as a positive element in any development programme, must be utilised as a motivator for women's participation.

The central role that women play in family care creates an awareness in them of human needs and suffering, and develops a sensitivity to demands for changes in the lifestyles of their families. Thus the women in the study group called for improved standards of living for their families.

They needed markets for their produce, better yields and labour-saving devices, even if not clearly defined. They enjoyed decision-making in their work; 80% were either satisfied with agricultural work as a source of livelihood, or where they enjoyed a high level of decision-making.

The conclusion one reaches with regard to the economic sphere in this community and its potential for development is that the greatest challenge lies not only in the material aspects of economic development, such as lack of proper resources or unequal access to these, but also in (a) the unbalanced resources development, (b) a value system which is burdensome to women with respect to sex-role activities, and (c) the lack of co-operation between men and women as future agents of change. All these operate within the traditional socio-political milieu.

8.2.5 The Family

As a society's basic institution the family is outstanding for its socialisation and supportive role for both the individual and the household group. In conjunction with these two social responsibilities are others which vary from society to society. The family as an institution is a barometer of social change and its organisation and functioning show their effect on society to a considerable degree. It is through the family as a primary unit of socialisation that values, beliefs, and early knowledge of the world are acquired by the young. There is an ongoing dialectical relationship between family and society. On the one hand the young are brought up within the family to learn, accept and value their society's traditions, material and non-material culture and to develop concepts of 'self-in-society'. On the other hand society is influenced by the type of family structure and organisation, the values related to marriage and interpersonal relations and the manner in which authority patterns are structured. The greater the conservatism in family structure and functioning the greater the likelihood of delayed changes in society generally with regard to modernisation and development.

Socialisation in family and society is an ongoing process that reaches into adulthood, and forces are constantly at work preparing the individual for different social roles. With modernisation has come a diversification of domestic tasks and at the same time a relocation of various former domestic tasks, to an ever increasing extent, in specialised institutions such as formal education, industry and the church.

Such changes affect the formation of political and social hierarchies within households. Outside pressures in a fast-changing world also alter the character of the family as an institution. The family finds itself faced with the challenge, noted by Black (1966 : 4) with regard to changing societies

"... to keep the delicate balance required for survival between; the maintenance of the traditional pattern of values that serves as the basis for social cohesion and the adaptation to new knowledge that requires the revision of the traditional value system".

The Mzimela tribe is presently undergoing conflicting pressures, or as Johnson puts it,

"processes that maintain or tend to maintain the structure of the system and processes that tend to change it" (Johnson 1960 : 625).

Within the family the former processes are concerned with the institutionalised authority of the male as the dominant decision-maker within the household, the retention and perpetuation of the patriarchal and patrilocal domestic arrangement, the reckoning of descent through the male line and the perpetuation of polygynous unions. Undermining these forces are the processes of urbanization, outmigration of able-bodied men and unmarried women, schooling and the growing dependence on the money economy, as already outlined,

Whilst in fast changing societies, specialisation in institutional arrangements is pursued to a greater degree, so that we may speak of a clearly secular and religious sphere in family relations, such patent delineation is not greatly expressed in traditional communities, such as the Mzimelas. Religion, politics and the economy all have a

significant bearing on domestic arrangements so that what may superficially appear as a matter of simple domestic ties and behavioural patterns may in actual fact be an expression of a number of these forces. For example to a demographer the fast growing population that has doubled in a span of ten years may be a question of sex ratios and marital rate whereas religion, the economics of polygyny (as already noted), belief in ancestral ritual and lifestyle may all in fact be impinging on the birth rate. However problems ensue when the balance between resources, human needs and skills has to be maintained and constraining inequalities develop within the social system.

The data on family, as already revealed in Tables VI-XVI coupled with information on domestic interpersonal relationships, show how central the household is in this community, that it is here that we are most able to assess change processes as well as system-maintenance processes that maintain the traditional system. It is also within the domestic sphere that we are able to notice the interplay of internal and external forces emanating from the other institutional sub-systems; their effect and implications for modernisation and development.

Women play significant roles as householders, mothers, and wives within households in the total social system regardless of the status they hold. The roles they play can be seen as important in terms of development. To work for purposeful development and change, we have to assess the total input made by women into family and society, and the nature of such input, its effect on the social system, how such input can be utilized for constructive change, what aspects of its nature need to be altered or adjusted in order to minimise social trauma.

Through time budgets we have tried to answer the question of the nature and amount of input women are making within the family and society and have seen that by studying, what we termed critical areas of role activity, women were bound to household chores had minimal alternative strategies with which to change their roles and were burdened with domestic responsibilities. These responsibilities had increased and been aggravated with male outmigration and unemployment. The women operated

mainly through a traditional socio-economic system, which has operated over a number of generations. Innovations to the agricultural system have come mainly from outside agencies, viz. support given to KwaZulu sugar cane farmers by the South African Sugar Association through funds and the setting up of training centres; the KwaZulu Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and lately, a private concern supplies machinery and technical infrastructure. This has all been directed at men as recipients of the sugar quota.

To this extent the community is becoming ever more achievement-orientated; an attitude already long established in the outmigration of males into urban areas, and the subsequent individual remittals to households. Women have been left behind to continue in their traditional tasks, and this activity has been greatly influenced by the activities of the menfolk. We have already noted that this community owns radios, and that women do enjoy programmes relating to their particular interest i.e. agriculture. The programmes encourage community development, individual achievement and nutritional aspects of farming. Already young women of the group are aware that individual success is possible and have demonstrated this by their participation in outside commercial activity. Older women see the improvement of their future through the education of their children. 82% of them showed a positive response to adult education notwithstanding the fact that it would weight their already heavy schedule; so keen are they to attain a different level of socio-economic life.

In short, women in this community do aspire to socio-economic changes both as individuals as well as members of families and community, perhaps due to the nascent sugar cane project which is already acting indirectly as an incentive to women. As secondary participants on behalf of husbands at the chief's court through numbers of years, in discussions concerning the potential economic change promised for their menfolk i.e. not as members of particular clans or a conglomerate of households but as individuals and heads of independent households - women as a peripheral

group in their community, in terms of such economic change, are nevertheless aware of their central role as agriculturalists in making such a project viable. Already we have noticed their involvement in cane farming.

Sugar cane farming undermines traditional labour allocation and role division practices as both female labour and land are utilised in an extensive manner. It also creates a threat to family welfare since wives participate jointly as husband's helpers. Each wife sacrifices her time away from her particular home fields, where she would be producing food for domestic consumption.

Traditional attitudes that are strongly in favour of large families, co-wife pressures and husbands' expectations result in extended child-bearing years, so that women spend a great part of their most energetic and active years bearing and rearing children. Women have little time to themselves in relation to their total role played in this community. They see themselves mainly as child bearers, wives and householders who must spend their lives looking after the interests of the family. Such attitudes and practices limit self-development and broader community involvement. Traditional domestic help has been removed seeing that nowadays young girls are at school and nearly all women in this community are involved in agricultural work throughout the year. Coupled with the large degree of illiteracy or near illiteracy in the area are geographical isolation. The lack of amenities of an educational and cultural nature which should be readily available to the adult population, aggravates the situation. The women's conservatism with regard to family planning also indicates a continuation, for the time being, of such attitudes and practices.

Within the family then, there exist conflicting forces: those that work towards change and those that maintain the traditional social system. Viewed separately, that is, apart from other social institutions, the family is unable to release women to participate fully and profitably in activities that demand protracted outside involvement. The heavy

reliance on women for day to day survival coupled with a lack of labour saving devices, e.g. readily available water and fuel, and the generally prevalent economic depression of the area, make it difficult to see how the family, structured and organised as it is, in this community, can allow the women the vital time needed to develop attitudes and behaviour most favourable to development without some concerted external 'push'.

8.2.6 Education

We have already remarked on the restricting forces within the family posed by women's roles, should it be possible for them to participate in a modernisation or development process. We recognise a need for some external influence to counteract or, moderate constraints within the domestic sphere that keep women housebound and without any visible resources or amenities with which to improve their status or minimise their strenuous way of life.

If education, viewed in its broadest sense, results in the ability of people to understand and control the environment in which they live, it can be argued likewise that intellectual development is basic to any process of change in a rapidly moving world. Through cultivation of the intellect, man's rational being develops and he is able to enjoy independent and objective thinking. The arresting impact of tradition has already been noted and in this study particularly regarding education, where there is a preponderant illiteracy among the adult population, a high school dropout rate, a general lack of technical knowledge and skills, and a lack of facilities sufficient for the size of population and type of educational needs.

A development of what Weiner in Senekal (1980: 14) has noted as characteristic of modern man i.e.

"a tendency to accept new ideas and to experiment with new methods",

is called for among the Mzimela's if modernisation and development are to take place.

Women, more than men, play demanding roles in family and the community life and are therefore more aware of the need to alter the community's way of life. Most revealing of their changed attitudes was their near total positive response, (90%), to the question "Is education necessary for women?" Education, however, for these women has an economic value; and this is not surprising. As human beings still pre-occupied with basic human needs - food, shelter, clothing and health services, they have not reached a level of modern cultural sophistication which involves the desire for knowledge for its own sake, a value remote to the peasantry of any country. They require better housing, food, transportation, water, mechanical tillers in their fields and a stable income. For them education must be economically functional to be meaningful.

Illiteracy among the adult population acts as a major constraint in nearly all respects related to development. The near absence of reading skills, the lack of reading material in the area in the form of newspapers and other forms of literature minimise intellectual stimulation and this is aggravated by the inability timewise to organise themselves so as to gain the information most needed in order to develop their community. The radio was reported as the main source of entertainment, and lack of recreational time limited its enjoyment.

Although women entertain aspirations for a better future for their children, they lack the needed means for costly education. This is further complicated by the lack of income-generating opportunities in the area. As mothers they have been recognised as being more motivated towards child education than the fathers of the area. Most

noticeable is the choice of level of education women aspire to for their children, both male and female, in relation to actual achieved levels. (Tables XXXIII and XXXIV). While 20% of the respondents had children who were illiterate and held no hope of their ever going to school (because they were already beyond school going age or because the family was poor), 58% of the respondents had children in both lower and higher primary levels. Only 1 child was at high school and 1 at university. Preferred levels show a remarkable change : women's aspirations for both male and female children are as follows :

trades - 22% (boys) and 2% (girls); profession - 26% (boys) and 50% (girls); while university education is preferred by 30% (boys) and 18% (girls).

The above observation clearly shows the positive role women play in the education of their children. By having definite goals in mind, they would be more responsive to changes brought to the community once convinced that such changes would be beneficial for the welfare of their families. In short, we can say that the 'school ethic' has gradually become part of the women's value system; even if at the present moment, due to the prevailing situation, only children are afforded schooling facilities.

As wives of unskilled migrants and unemployed men, women are keen on education. 50% of the respondents had husbands who had no education at all while 12% were widowed or deserted; 30% had husbands with lower and higher primary education. It is clear therefore that among the adult population, education has had little influence in community functioning and socio-economic welfare. It cannot therefore be left completely to this adult community to spearhead development, as part of a broader national programme, without external agency inputs.

8.2.7 Politics

There are four areas in community affairs where significant power is wielded politically outside of the family i.e. the chief's and church councils, and the school committee and affairs of the homeland government. We discovered during the study that women's role in this respect is either peripheral and insignificant or simply supportive. It is peripheral and insignificant in regard to the decisive chief's council's deliberations on local government and administration, and non-existent with respect to homeland politics.

Women play a supportive role in church and school politics. Here again their members have not participated actively in leadership roles affecting community welfare to the same extent that their involvement as members of the church and as parents of children would demand.

Decisions that ultimately affect women are taken without their involvement - the sugar cane project being one typical example. By allotting very large tracts of land to this commercial enterprise, under the sole control of men, women's food producing activities are ultimately being threatened. There are no clear cut safeguards in this respect; there is no guarantee of a continuous process of land allocation to women's food crop production. Already older women were complaining about being squeezed out by the increased demand for food crop land as more and more young wives need allotments from traditional family fields. To add to the problem young men were reported as having lost interest in the soil once they migrated to towns, leaving their mothers to share with the newly married brides, their food crop lands.

Land is a sensitive issue among peasantry, no less among the Mzimelas. Though women verbalised complaints on the land question and refused to cooperate with the extension officers where effort was being made to re-organise traditional family holdings, (thus indicating some insecurity on their part), they had not at that stage reached any consensus as to what possible action could be taken. In fact they saw the problem

affecting them as individual families, not as a politically powerless sector of the community.

Thus the same problem existed with the question of schooling facilities for children. They clearly indicated a need for these although they realised the inconvenience children suffered by having to walk very long distances to attend higher primary school and the costs involved if they travelled by bus. They nevertheless left decision-making to their menfolk who were reported to be less sensitive to schooling needs.

Being members of the Inkatha Women's Brigade, and therefore being gradually exposed to women's leadership roles in the political sphere, does hold promise for these women. This will however take a considerable time unless there is concerted exposure of these women's activities through mass media, lectures and active participation. We have noted the parochial nature of the women's lives, the limited geographical and non-existent occupational mobility. There are constraints to modernisation and development that need to be removed for any successful social change that would make the community part of the mainstream of national development.

In our characterisation of the Mzimelas, earlier in the study, we noted that the society is a typical traditional rural community that is patriarchal and patrilocal, where the lineage is reckoned through the male line. This already indicates the location of political power through-out the social system. Women are outsiders in households into which they marry, this being an exogamous marital society.

A society whose patrimonial rights are male-centred and controlled renders its women folk powerless if we consider that through property a person can acquire further property, power and certain other rights and positions. Payment of lobolo by men to other menfolk in exchange for women, with the exception of one beast to the mother of the girl (who is culturally expected to put the products of this beast either to enriching her household or to helping her youngest son to lobola a bride),

confines whatever power she may gain through this, within her household. Nowhere in this community do we learn of women of means being so socially and politically respected because of their material well-being and self application that they are elected into religious or political office as counsellors. In women-only associations, however, such women gain leadership roles. We noted earlier that even the chief's wives, like the rest of the women, spent their days in daily toil in the fields.

The family, the church, and the 'state', have been shown to perpetuate the peripheral position of women within the community where political decision-making is involved. Women are so pre-occupied with immediate female-linked tasks that what is not seen as of immediate socio-economic benefit to their lives is best left to the men. Nowhere during the research did we find the respondents desirous of undermining the men who frustrated what they termed 'progress' e.g. the building of schools for their children; nor did they verbalise their concern at the chief's court about the extensive sugar cane project which they feared would encroach on their crop fields. This concern was however clearly indicated to the researcher, although no strategy was devised to clarify the issue with the relevant authorities.

That women also spend a major part of their active lives bearing and rearing children is another limiting and time-consuming factor, highlighting domesticity.

Again we conclude that unless there is an outside intervening factor, women will act resignedly towards their lack of political power within the community. Notably the Bill tabled in KwaZulu Government Assembly which aims at altering the minority status of Zulu women, making them majors at 21, and giving them patrimonial rights, (up to now denied them in the Natal Code of Bantu Law), will ultimately counteract this fatalism towards their political powerlessness. (Daily News May 20, 1981). We are however aware that laws alone are not sufficient agents of change - sociological factors have to alter and

attitudes change in order to achieve effective results.

8.2.8 Religion

This community, that has been described as traditional and conservative, but which is now being exposed to external processes and pressures finds itself vulnerable to accelerated change emanating from without. We have already noted the part played by religious belief in the lives of the women. Little outside influence has penetrated religious beliefs of the area, as the traditionalist and politically-linked church movement upholds and reinforces the values of an agrarian pastoral peasantry.

It is within the church organisation that we find the greatest forces that tend to maintain the total system and to uphold values related to the past. But it is also to be recognised that the church teaches its adherents values that stabilise family life, protect women from irrational abuse by husbands and idealises the status of married womanhood. Thus respondents found the church unpeachable since it offered them the needed psychological support in a rather harsh environment.

The church encourages 'familiness' which, as we have seen tends to cut women off from the rest of the community. It was evident during the research phase that women co-operated efficiently in matters relating to church activity, but where community activity, which cut across the various sectors, was involved, there was near total lack of sustained and enthusiastic support e.g. the local Zenzele club had a poor membership, and the local Inkatha Women's Brigade branch was also not as strongly supported as the church women's day activities that fell on the 14th day of every month. There could be some historical reasons involved since the bulk of the women grew up belonging to the Shembite sect, and had developed deep attachment to it.

As a great proponent of polygyny, the local church slows down the necessary changes in the status of women in the area, and unwittingly supports men's exploitation of female labour. There are also other wider implications which undermine development. In a society with the kind of communal land tenure, which obtains here, land-holding by men is a preponderant political issue - the powerful man acquires more wives and therefore more land.

The census record of the decade 1960 - 1970 is indicative of the threatening demographic crisis encroaching upon this community. The now extensive sugar cane industry is critically restricting living room for livestock and human beings. Already the dependance ratio of KwaZulu households, as illustrated within this community, is high.

The preponderance of illiteracy in the adult population, together with the fact that political leadership and authority are not of necessity associated with achieved roles, (in church and 'state'), undermines the possibility of a balanced transitional process towards modernisation and development. In short, education is not essential for the men of the community to gain valuable power and decision-making status. The hereditary nature of church leadership reinforces traditionalism and slows down innovation.

There is no doubt that there is an urgent need for money but as women reported their plight, it is obvious that inequalities in domestic use of such financial resources are experienced in a polygynous society. Men control the wages they earn independently of wives.

The church then, being the most respected and influential institution in the community, holds the greatest possibility for assisting the community members to view women differently, and more-over for helping the women to develop a different self image. We noted before how the Christian church is unacceptable on account of its attitude to women. It is seen as threatening to undermine male supremacy and to create new expectations in women. Thus it is obvious that the church is the most retarding factor in women's liberation and for more egalitarian, achievement-orientated roles, which come with modernisation and development.

The Shembites believe in work or, as they put it, 'A man must live by the sweat of his brow' as the biblical injunction dictates. This philosophical outlook has found deep roots in women's lives in particular, as all of them, barring the sick and weak, spend their lives in daily toil. This outlook caused anxiety if the researcher requested interviews at home during working hours. In the end the respondents had to be followed to the fields daily and back to the homesteads where other daily tasks could be undertaken during the course of the interview.

A community that has scarce resources will tend to preserve whatever values exist if these values have proved, over time, to be stabilising elements in the culture. Breaking through an untested life-terrain is a trying experience. The most authoritative institutions and the most conservative will tend to display cultural lags during times of transition. This is shown by the church in its attitude to women and their special responsibility in family and community life. Though men can venture out into urban life away from traditional ties and control, women as the staying power of the tribe must perpetuate and preserve whatever vestiges of Mzimela traditional culture still exist. So intertwined are the values within this community, as expressed by the women, that it is difficult to separate the religious from the secular. Even the organisation of the household is such that if rights and obligations are infringed or if certain taboos are infringed, not only are living members of the household offended, but even the departed spirits are displeased. This necessitates cleansing ceremonies or what are called inhlambuluko. This may take a few forms e.g. a household indaba or discussion; a slaughtering of a beast, all aimed at spiritual and emotional reconciliation or redress, in a material way.

That the church and politics are male-dominated and headed, and both retain the traditionalist elements in structure and function, (where power is ascriptive and hereditary), is a factor that cannot be underestimated. We have already noted the patriarchal character of the family, the position of women within the household and their commitment to the church.

Viewed independently of external influences these abovementioned institutions, within the Mzimela community, are closely interrelated, supportive of one another through a whole network of beliefs, values and behaviours. To this extent we should look to external agencies for any profound and sustained modernisation and development policies and practice. The socio-cultural system itself is so self-sustaining that left to its own, little innovative process can be expected to take place.

8.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has concerned itself with the role activities of a group of women in a typically rural community. Its frame of reference has been theoretical works on role, modernisation and development. Being aware of the need for rural development and taking into consideration the human factor in this regard, we have been directed by one basic reality of rural life - that women in this country community are the most rural in terms of numbers, forming the largest effective proportion of rural inhabitants. Secondly, they are more closely tied to the basic economy of rural areas which is agrarian. Thirdly, they have assumed greater responsibilities and are now involved in traditionally male-linked agricultural and pastoral roles.

We base our argument for rural development, notably, on Pala's observance that its aims should be among other things :

1. 'to increase per capita output and market orientation among rural population and
2. to increase food production commensurate with the rapid population growth.' (1976 : 2)

We have assessed the culturally central role of women in the Mzimela society and have come to conclude that no programme of modernisation and development can succeed if it overlooks half the human population that is traditionally involved in the most salient sphere of production, i.e. agriculture.

Without attempting to tie down rural communities to a single activity,

it is believed through observation of local activities that this is the key area that holds possibilities for increased per capita output. Its proper development would lead to development in other sectors of the economy. By developing the food-producing sector, where women are most active, nutritional conditions would be sustained at a high level.

We have noted the part culture plays in shaping women's status and the tendency to retain traditional values with respect to women's roles. Women become victims as well as perpetrators of self-denying behavioural patterns. The rigid isolation of women into female related tasks in a community, such as the Mzimelas, has led to a form of hierachisation of roles, since regardless of the critical tasks women do, and the cultural centrality of their roles, men's activities and input no matter how limited, are defined as more important and prestigious. The prevalence of ascribed roles and a division of labour along sex lines closes doors to egalitarian values and behavioural patterns. Thus it is not the human input but sexual stereotypes that determine relevant levels of decision-making that cut across society.

Development policies that reinforce this pattern, as is the case with the present community, overlook the internal conflicts that are created within the social system when modern economic strategy is grafted inconsiderately onto a value system. Internal cultural-lags become prevalent. Where inequalities already exist in the political distribution of power and decision-making, there is a likelihood of misuse of human resources as is already evident in this community (and elsewhere). Women's tasks increase without any accompanying improvement in their status.

Modernisation, therefore, under such policies, does imply greater dependance by women on the husband's limited financial resources. We have seen how women enjoyed considerable status and independence prior to colonisation and industrialisation. To create a condition of total or near total dependance for half of the adult population, besides that of the children, cannot in practical terms be considered developmental.

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It is important, therefore, to look into the legal status of Zulu women before proposing changes. Also of importance is the land-tenure policy of the homeland which needs to be changed or adapted to the demands of present-day society. The economics of polygyny need to be studied and understood and the practice evaluated anew. Development must be 'people-directed' and not discriminatory on the basis of sex.

Our concern here is with rural development and as we agree with Uma Lele that it has to do with "... improving the living standards of the mass of the low income population residing in rural areas, and making the process of their development self-sustaining". (1975 : 20). This process demands an equitable allocation of available resources to a cross-sectional mass of people, and an increase in the training of various skills in order to widen the scope of activities. In this way development will be seen by the community as their concern, and will not be associated with a distant authority.

8.4 Evaluation of Research Design

As the area of research was unfamiliar and the subject of rural women in sociology in the South African context still new, the research design called for gathering of basic data. Various techniques were used viz. participant observation, time budgets, a schedule and tape recordings of group interviews.

Uncertainty about efficiency of one particular technique in gathering satisfactory data, a keenness to test the applicability of a new technique - time budgets - and the incomplete responses among some respondents where matters relating particularly to values and individual attitudes motivated the application of four different but complementary research techniques.

Part of the requirements of this research is to evaluate the outcome of such choice of approach. By dealing with the techniques individually we can endeavour to arrive at an assessment of the research design.

8.4.1 Participant observation

This was an all pervasive experience, beginning with the first encounter at a women's day meetings where matters affecting women's interests were discussed. It was adopted throughout the field project whether in isolation or jointly undertaken with another technique. It took the form of being with the women for most of their waking time throughout the week for a period of 18 months.

Since participant observation aims at recording the day to day experiences of people observed one must 'adopt the perspectives of those studied by sharing in their day to day experiences' [Denzin in Simon 1978 : 208] There were two contending principles at work all the time which caused some degree of discomfiture at times viz.

1. A need to be objective, scientifically distant yet interested and involved.
2. A temptation to be absorbed and be part of the group, and by doing this unconsciously developing a subjectivity in approach and evaluation.

Often group needs for personal and community development led the respondents to expect the researcher as an 'enlightened' woman to give solutions or views, to justify acts which in their particular situation were controversial, e.g. women had collected funds, as demanded by chief, to sink wells over a long period. No borehole had been sunk. There was drought and women needed the water desperately. On their own 'none had taken the initiative to 'bell' the cat' over what they considered a delicate issue. The researcher was requested to intervene. Both circumspection and help had to be exercised.

The researcher belonged to a somewhat distant value system from that of the respondents in terms of occupational role definition for women versus the men, conjugal and in-law interpersonal relationships. These areas of family life were most profoundly influential in the respondents' lives and values. It was therefore important for the researcher to be on her guard during informal discussions and group activity not to infringe the

rules of both rural society and science. Denzin in Simon [1978 : 208] again notes that 'Carving out a role in the group is difficult and treacherous from a scientific standpoint'.

Notwithstanding the stresses and limitations of participant observation, a lot of trial and error exercise in the formulation of the schedule was obviated after time budgets coupled with participant observation had been conducted. In this way essential insight was gained which otherwise would not have been possible.

8.4.2 Time budgets

The interest in time budgets developed after the researcher had observed a research proposal prepared by a team of women scholars at the International center for Research on women in Washington D.C., U.S.A. This proposal was on a three country study in Nicaragua. To quote the project director

"*The problem of data there seems similar to your difficulties in South Africa : there are no data on women. Like this research team, who wanted to take the broad view as opposed to a specific problem-oriented approach to the generation of data"

and therefore resorting to time budgets as 'the best tool or instrument', the researcher resorted to this approach for various reasons viz :

- (1) curiosity at testing an apparently uncomplicated yet possibly objective instrument;
- (2) the cost-benefit analysis exercise promised short as well as long term benefits - short term, in so far as one could immediately have an overview of areas of activity and identify value orientation for purposes of structuring the schedule; long term, in so far as building up rapport for any possible further long term stay for purposes of research was concerned, by using at the early stage an instrument that does not probe into subjective and emotive areas.

Recording of time usage patterns involved being with the respondents while they were at work at the fields as well as at home

* Communication to researcher by letter.

and noting down the manner of time allocation. Within a week of this follow-up a woman's weekly cycle could be determined. This phase spanned three seasons, spring - winter and was undertaken among 120 respondents;

- (3) one of the Key aims of the Nicaraguan study had been to devise an instrument that did not need university graduates to apply, the argument being that

'... the actual task of field observation can be done by persons who are not well-educated themselves (like the respondents)* such as Form II leavers, women's leaders or anyone who is reasonably intelligent and literate. We believe that these people can be trained by someone with an academic social science background who understands research, but that one don't need to put university students into the field as data collectors'

[Programme director]. Matters of financial cost, interviews, close contact with the rural community and problems of identity make time budgets attractive.

Though time consuming and costly in that only one Form II research assistant was used, and both researcher and assistant were learning together, the final assessment would be that it was an exercise worth doing in an area where women are mostly illiterate and unused to probings from outsiders. The exercise gave both parties time to establish rapport seeing that the research team had to stay with the women where they were, throughout the varying temperatures of the day and 'suffer' with them long distances on foot as the car could not negotiate footpaths.

- (4) One major benefit of time budgets is that it forms part and parcel of participant observation, and can therefore be viewed as an integral part of this technique.

Fatigue and boredom could periodically set in on the part of the research where women's activities or occupations are generally

* (my remarks)

similar and routine.

8.4.3 The Schedule

The schedule was designed to collect broad data viz. demographic, interpersonal relations, and socio-cultural factors. On account of its in-depth nature, numbers were reduced to 50 women from the original group who fitted the two criteria viz. age and possible future participation in innovative programmes. Only women who fell within the productive years 18-45 were included in the group.

The schedule did not pose great difficulties at the formulation stage since it was based on both participant observation and the time budgets. There were no technical obstacles of a major type in its application.

There were problems however which necessitated a further technique viz:

1. Women were not as a group verbalising personal reasons or evaluations on some questions relating to their images or values. The general response on critical issues was 'It is a custom, it is never done, it cannot be done'.
2. The schedule was over extended. Strain, boredom and interruption by friends, children and in-laws made interviewing difficult. Often the respondents pleaded lack of time to sit and hold a protracted conversation on subjects which to them sometimes sounded ridiculous, petty or as givens that did not necessarily need questioning. Older women would question the value of this time consuming exercise, young women would be restless, eager to leave fields and go back home to other duties. Afternoons were too short for the researcher to move from one distant settlement to another as Zulu households are scattered all over the valley in an irrational way. It took a lot of footwork and was uncomfortable.

Not all possible respondents were cooperative even at this stage while some were too keen to be interviewed and yet were not part

of the selected 50. Reasons were called for, and it was difficult for the researcher to explain that the older generation, who in a rural community are the most powerful were left out because they possibly would not be innovative. The researcher used lack of time as the answer.

That the research team had to fill the schedule themselves on so broad a scope was time consuming and trying. Flooding of the river meant that the team had to take a far longer route to and from the area thus interrupting the rhythm of visits.

8.4.4 Tape Recordings

Problems in obtaining data on qualitative questions on the schedule resulted in failure to reveal clearly the normative and value aspects of the particular social system in so far as it impinged on women's role performance. It was then decided that by organising the original group of 120 into informal group discussions on matters relating to their particular society, the researcher would obtain a mere global picture - 'an explanatory note' - to qualitative material and certain individual responses.

These groups were sometimes already structured by the women themselves e.g. the women's prayer groups that gathered once a month at the church or school buildings, the agricultural group and also those that were organised by the researcher herself through some contacts.

The researcher would throw in a question on some issue that had appeared puzzling or controversial during the application of the schedule e.g. the question of cowives and the institution of polygyny. At no stage did the women state categorically that they needed or enjoyed, their presence but, they would say 'Men needed them for purely subjective reasons'. Such would clarify to the researcher real as against ideal cultural aspects; women's position on domestic or public decision making and self images, among other things.

Once a series of answer and question sessions on any topic appeared exhausted, by all groups, data would be correlated and a general picture would appear. Occasionally there would be 'social mavericks' of all ages but these were important for research purposes for they indicated that these women, given the chance of using innovative strategies would make good use of it with the needed confidence or would act as 'social conscience' in group situations.

Using this format of gathering data was challenging in that group discussions had to be focussed and redirected. Time was limited to an hour and there would be sessions where more time would have served better.

The researcher came to the conclusion that tape recordings stimulate communication. The respondents would either actively verbalise, quibble among themselves or show genuine interest by facial expressions. Most noticeable however, is that since the women were not age-graded, the older women dominated the conversation more often than the younger women.

The benefits obtained at this stage was that women as organised groups voiced their views and opinions about their community and about their particular position within the community.

As a technique of research tape recordings on groups can yield useful results if within a reasonable time when considering cost, where the researcher has had time to acquaint herself first with the field and has established a degree of rapport with informants.

To summarise :

1. Rural field work for sociologists who are used to urban research or have been schooled in that tradition is a 'cultural shock'.
2. Language, body composure and physical appearance count, let alone one's state of health.
3. The researcher must be prepared to 'wait' for the local induna or

chief or religious leader to unwind. This may take weeks or months.

4. The respondents' values and attitudes to life, their lifestyle and interpersonal relationships deserve respect.
5. The researcher needs to go to the field with an open mind, and will be surprised at the amount of questionable stereotypes found in written works about rural women's role in society.
6. With regard to the total field experience, the use of the various techniques yielded a more rounded picture of the particular women-in-society. The cost however in terms of time and money was heavy. But it was in the nature of a general broad approach for basic data gathering that such costs had to be borne.

CHAPTER 9SUMMARY

This thesis examines the role of rural women living in an agrarian, pastoral, patriarchal society in the oNgoye district of KwaZulu.

On the theoretical level use was made of the concepts: role, development, social change and modernisation. These concepts facilitated a study of the role of the Kwa-Mzimela women in their present socio-cultural context, while at the same time accommodating awareness that this community, like many rural communities in developing societies, is changing its nature in the face of both external, as well as, internal forces of social change and modernisation. It was discovered, during the study that the women's cultural role not only affects but is also affected by the institutional setting within which they operate. The family was focused on as the core societal unit within which women were found to play central roles as domestic provisioners. An examination of the women's daily activities facilitated the development of a sociological image of their lifestyle.

The study found that:

In this community women spend the major part of their daily lives in agricultural and domestic activity, relying at times on female child labour. The five main activities viz. subsistence farming, cleaning of homes, wood-fetching, cooking and fetching of water were termed 'critical' for the purpose of the study in these daily input activities. The women being under pressure to perform these activities, their self image depended on the successful performance of these roles as housewives, mothers and family provisioners. Owing to the wide-spread presence of commercial sugar-cane farming on White owned farms where most of the local post-school females and males are employed, the traditional large social group of women and girls within households has broken down resulting in fewer available hands for necessary tasks. Coupled with this is the fact that schoolgoing children too are unavailable. There are no labour-saving devices within the home nor mechanisation in agricultural work to improve agricultural output.

The economy is mainly subsistence, with a recently introduced, but steadily increasing cash-crop, sugar-cane venture. This enterprise is male-owned; however, women's free labour, as wives, is utilised, thus distracting them from food-crop production. As sugar-cane farming is an extensive project, it is gradually taking an increasingly large portion of farm lands, thus creating a critical situation with regard to food production. The latter lacks similar external and officially-recognised inputs, such as technical skills, marketing systems and credit facilities. As petty traders, women lack the needed ease to move from place to place within the local area because of few internal transport routes. Their local church ethics do not permit them to be 'women on the loose' who sit at open urban market places where they could successfully ply their trade.

A large proportion of the men is away in towns and cities as unskilled manpower. Readily conspicuous however, are unemployed men, in sizeable numbers, labelled by the women as 'omahlalela' (won't works).

Religion is the vital stabilizing and conservative force in this society, being closely linked to political authority. It pervades normative behaviour and the value system.

Through a rigid socio-cultural system within which women operate, roles are mainly ascriptive. Females are born into a social system wherein their activities centre around the domestic environment. Being in general locally-born women, who are isolated geographically from the mainstream of cosmopolitan society, the outcome of their traditional socialisation is a family and social system, that, for women at least, is for the time being parochial.

The authoritarian political administration of the hereditary chief and that of the Shembite religious movement is translated within the families into the near absolute powers of the husbands as family heads.

Lack of education for the majority of women, discriminatory development policies, geographical isolation and a rigid patriarchal social system have all contributed to the Kwa-Mzimela women's peripheral role in public matters, determining the nature and pace of development and modernisation of their society.

Schooling is a growing phenomenon among the younger generation. To this extent foreign agents of socialisation and social change are brought into a hitherto, close-knit socio-cultural system. This influence, coupled with that of male out-migration and the commercialisation of agriculture are the main catalysts for modernisation.

HOOFSTUK 9SAMEVATTING

Die doel van hierdie tesis is om die rol van die plattelandse vrou, woonagtig in 'n landelike, patriargale gemeenskap in die oNgoye-distrik van KwaZulu te ondersoek.

Op teoretiese vlak is gebruik gemaak van die volgende konsepte: rol, ontwikkeling, maatskaplike verandering en modernisasie.

Hierdie uitgangspunte is gebruik in die studie van die rol van die Kwa-Mzimela vrou in haar huidige sosio-kulturele konteks terwyl daar terselfdertyd in gedagte gehou is dat hierdie gemeenskap, soos talle ander landelike gemeenskappe in ontwikkelende gebiede sy geaardheid as gevolg van interne sowel as eksterne kragte van sosiale verandering en modernisering wysig.

Tydens die studie het dit geblyk dat die kulturele rol van die vroue nie alleenlik die institusionele opset waarin hul fungeer beïnvloed nie, maar dat hulle ook daardeur beïnvloed word. Die fokus het geval op die gesin as die kerngemeenskapseenheid waarin die vrou 'n sentrale rol as huishoudelike voorsiener speel.

'n Ondersoek na die vroue se daaglikse aktiwiteite het dit moontlik gemaak om 'n sosiologiese beeld van hul lewenspatroon te ontwikkel.

Die bevindinge van die studie is as volg:

Landboukundige en huishoudelike aktiwiteite vul die grootste deel van die vroue in hierdie gemeenskap se lewens en hulle moet soms selfs staatmaak op vroulike kinderarbeid.

Vir die doel van hierdie studie word die vyf hoofaktiwiteite van die vroue, naamlik broodwinning, boerdery, die skoonmaak van huise, houtversameling, water aandra en koskook as van kritieke belang beskou.

Vir die vroue is voormelde pligte van kardinale belang omdat hul selfbeeld afhang van die mate van sukses waarmee hulle hierdie take as huisvroue, moeders en gesinsvoorsieners kan uitvoer. As gevolg van werksgeleenthede wat deur Blanke boere op die groot kommersiële suikerplantasies aangebied word, is meeste van die naskoolse jeug, manlik sowel as vroulik, aldaar werksaam. Hierdie situasie word vererger deur die feit dat skoolgaande kinders ook nie behulpsaam kan wees met die uitvoering van daaglikse pligte nie. Daar is ook geen arbeidsbesparende apparate in die huis of gemeganiseerde hulpmiddels wat die landbouwerk kan verlig nie.

Die ekonomie is hoofsaaklik geskoei op broodwinning met die onlangse toevoeging van suikerverbouing wat toenemend veld wen omdat dit lowend is. Omdat dié ondernemings aan die mans behoort en dit van hul vrouens verwag word om gratis arbeid te verrig, kan die vroue nie meer die nodige aandag aan voedselproduksie skenk nie. Aangesien suikerrietboerdery 'n uitgebreide projek is neem dit al hoe meer grond wat vir voedselproduksie gebruik kan word, in beslag en veroorsaak sodoende 'n kritieke situasie. Voedselproduksie verg nie erkende eksterne faktore soos tegniese vaardigheid, 'n gesofistikeerde bemarkingsstelsel en kredietfasiliteite wat met suikerverbouing gepaard gaan nie.

Weens die gebrek aan interne vervoer roetes geniet die vroue nie die voorreg om as kleinskaalse handelaars in hul plaaslike omgewing rond te reis ten einde hul produkte te verkoop nie. Plaaslike kerketiek laat vroue ook nie toe om hul produkte op openbare dorpsmarkte te verkoop nie omdat hulle dan as "los vroue" beskou sal word.

'n Groot aantal mans in die gebied werk as ongeskoolde arbeiders in plattelandse dorpe en in die stede. 'n Opvallende verskynsel is die relatiewe groot aantal mans wat werkloos is en deur die vroue as 'omahlalela' (wil-nie-werk-nies) bestempel word.

Godsdienst, wat nou gekoppel word aan politiese outoriteit, vorm die noodsaaklike stabiliserende en konserwatiewe krag in hierdie maatskappy. Dit beïnvloed normatiewe gedrag sowel as die waardesistelsel. In die rigoristiese sosio-kulturele stelsel waarin hierdie vroue moet fungeer speel hulle 'n relatiewe onbeduidende rol. Aangesien hulle meesal in hierdie omgewing

gebore is en dus geografies geïsoleerd is van die hoofstroom van die kosmopolitiese samelewing, is die produk van veral die vroue se tradisionele sosiolisasie, provinsialisme.

Die outoritêre politiese administrasie soos beoefen deur die erfhoof en deur die Sembitiese beweging word herlei na die gesin en vind gestaltnis in die man se amper-onbeperkte mag as gesinshoof.

Faktore wat bygedra het tot die onbeduidende rol wat die Kwa-Mzimela vroue in die openbare lewe speel en wat die aard en pas van hul ontwikkeling modernisasiepeil bepaal is die volgende: 'n lae opvoedingspeil onder die meerderheid van hul geledere, 'n diskriminerende ontwikkelingsbeleid, geografiese isolasie en 'n rigoristiese patriargale maatskaplike sisteem.

Daar is 'n toename aan skoolbywoning by die jonger geslag. In dieselfde mate word eksterne sosialiseringsmiddele en sosiale veranderinge ingevoer in 'n sosio-kulturele sisteem wat tot onlangs uiters beperkend was. Hierdie invloed, sowel as die manlike sektor se beweging na buite en kommersialisasie van die landbou, vorm die hoofkatalisators in die moderniseringsproses.

SCHEDULE ON THE ROLE OF KWA-NZIMELA WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENTI. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS:1.1 Is your husband still alive?

Yes	1
No	2

1.2 How many children do you have that are alive?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12+
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	-----

1.3 How many children are deceased?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

1.4 Age distribution of members of the family

Age Group		00-04-99	05-09-99	10-14-99	15-19-99	20-24-99	25-29-99	30-34-99	35-39-99	40-44-99	45-49-99	50-54-99	55+	N/A	
Husband	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Wife	B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Children	1	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	2	D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	3	E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	4	F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	5	G	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	6	H	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	7	I	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	8	J	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	9	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	10	L	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	11	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

1.5 Form of marriage

customary	1
magistrate civil	2
christian	3
as man and wife	4

1.6 How many wives does your husband have?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
---	---	---	---	---	---	----

1.7 Which other relatives stay with you sharing meals?

Category		Number					
father-in-law	AO	1	2	3	4	5	6
mother-in-law	BO	1	2	3	4	5	6
brother's-in-law	CO	1	2	3	4	5	6
sister-in-law	DO	1	2	3	4	5	6
nephew(s)	EO	1	2	3	4	5	6
nieces	FO	1	2	3	4	5	6
other	GO	1	2	3	4	5	6

1.8 To which church group do you belong?

		Roman Catholic	Anglican	D.R.C.	Methodist	Presbyter	Zionist	African Congreg.	Salvation Army	Shembite	Lutheran	Specify Other	None	N/A	
A.	Husband	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
B.	Wife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
C.		2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
D.		3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
E.		4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
F.		5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
G.		6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

1.9 Educational levels of family members.

		No Education	Lower Primary	Higher Primary	Secondary	High School	Training College	University	Pre-school
A.	Husband	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
B.	Wife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
C.	Children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
D.	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
E.	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
F.	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
G.	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
H.	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I.	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
J.	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
K.	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L.	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
M.	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
N.	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
O.	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

1.10 For how long have you stayed in this community?

		Under 3	5-7	8-10	11-13	14-16	17-19	20-22	23-25	26-28	29-31	32-34	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49
Since birth	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Since marriage	B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

1.11 Where is your original place of birth?

Local

1

Not local

2

1.12 Communication:

(a) Do you have a radio in your house?

Yes

1

No

2

(b) Indicate programmes you most enjoy.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
News	Reli=gi-ous	Home=craft	Agric	Health	Music	Cookery	Sport	Other

(c) Do you ever go on visits away from this area?

1	2	3
Regularly	Seldom	Never

(d) Indicate place and reason.

Place	Reason
	Church
	Shopping
	Marketing
	Family
	Friends
	Other

(e) How many times have you been away this year?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

(f) Indicate types of literature that you ever need if any.

1	2	3	4	5
Bible	Newspaper	Religious pamphlets	Literature	Other

II. ROLE ANALYSIS

A. FAMILY STRUCTURE

2.1 What are considered the three main activities of a woman in a household in this community, according to the main roles?

(a) as a wife	A. Preparing husbands meals	1
	B. Cleaning his clothes	2
	C. Entertaining friends/guests	3
	D. Looking after his parents	4
	E. Looking after his siblings	5
	F. Acting as counsellor/confidant	6
	G. Other (specify)	7

(b) as a mother	A. Bearing children	1
	B. Feeding children	2
	C. Washing children	3
	D. Educating children	4
	E. Supporting children	5
	F. Sewing for children	6
	G. Nursing children	7
	H. Other (specify)	8

(e) as house keeper	A. Cooking for family	1
	B. Collecting firewood	2
	C. Collecting water	3
	D. Cleaning utensils	4
	E. Cleaning house	5
	F. Washing family clothes	6
	G. Milking cattle	7
	H. Minding livestock	8
	I. Feeding domestic animals	9
	J. Thatching huts	10
	K. Hoeing yard	11
	L. Other specify	12

2.2 What changes would you like to see in your life?

(a) as a wife:

.....

.....

.....

.....

(b) as a mother:

.....

.....

.....

.....

(c) as a housekeeper:

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.3 Are you satisfied with your tasks?

(a) as a wife

very satisfied	satisfied	don't know	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	6

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

(b) as a mother

very satisfied	satisfied	don't know	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	6

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

(c) as a housekeeper

very satisfied	satisfied	don't know	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.4 What do you think is the ideal number of children in a family?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 and over
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

2.5 How many would you like to have yourself?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 and over
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

B. ECONOMIC

3.1 Is a wife expected in this community to take part in maintaining her family?

Yes

1

No

2

3.2 If yes, how is she expected to do this?

A. Earn wages

1

B. Produce foodcrops

2

C. Sell foodcrops

3

D. Produce handicrafts

4

E. Sell handicrafts

5

F. Other (specify)

6

3.3 How do you contribute to the maintenance of your own family?

A. Earn wages

1

B. Produce foodcrops

2

C. Sell foodcrops

3

D. Produce handicrafts

4

E. Sell handicrafts

5

F. Other (specify)

6

3.4 How much do you have per month in Rands to run household?

From husband	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
From own resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
From own children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
From other (specify)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

3.5 Is husband employed?

Yes	1
No	2
N/A	3

3.6 Specify type of job.

--

3.7 Where is he employed?

At home	In town	In city	N/A
1	2	3	4

3.8 How often does he come home?

Daily	Weekly	Never	Monthly	Once a Year	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	6

3.9 If he works away from home how many years has he been away from you since you were married?

YEARS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15+over	N/A
-------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	---------	-----

3.10 Who is head of the family whilst husband is away?

Self	Father-in-law	Son	Brother-in-law	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4	5

3.11 Are you satisfied with earnings from sources?

		very satisfied	Satisfied	Don't know	Dissatisfied	very satisfied
From own	A	1	2	3	4	5
From husband	B	1	2	3	4	5
From own children	C	1	2	3	4	5
Other	D	1	2	3	4	5

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.12 Who decides in your household how much money is spent on?;

		Self	Both	Husband
Clothes	A	1	2	3
Food	B	1	2	3
School fees	C	1	2	3
Medical care	D	1	2	3
House utensils	E	1	2	3
Church dues	F	1	2	3
Other (specify)	G	1	2	3

3.13 Are you satisfied with the manner in which decisions are taken regarding the handling of money?

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Don't know	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.14 Would you like to have a better standard of living?

Yes

1

No

2

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.15 If yes, what must be done?

.....

4. (C) AGRICULTURAL

4.1 What types of activities are considered to be mainly woman's and mainly man's work in agriculture?

1=	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2=	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

4.2 Are you satisfied with the tasks that you do in agriculture?

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Don't know	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.3 Who decides on?

		Self	Both	Husband
Time when to sow	A	1	2	3
Place where to plant	B	1	2	3
Types of crops	C	1	2	3
When to harvest	D	1	2	3
How much for food	E	1	2	3
How much to store	F	1	2	3
How much to sell	G	1	2	3

4.4 Are you satisfied with decision-making as far as agricultural activities are concerned?

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Don't know	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.5 Are changes necessary in order that women can make the soil more productive?

Yes

1

No

2

What type of changes?

.....

.....

.....

5. (D) GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

5.1 Are women considered here to be people who can participate:

(a) In chief's council affairs

Yes	1
No	2

5.2 What type of participation?

.....

.....

.....

5.3 Why?

.....

.....

.....

5.4 (b) In church council affairs

Yes	1
No	2

5.5 What type of participation?

.....

.....

.....

5.6 Why?

.....

.....

.....

(c) In School committee

Yes

1

No

2

5.7 What type of participation?
.....
.....
.....
.....

5.8 Why?
.....
.....
.....
.....

5.9 (c) In the affairs of government

Yes

1

No

2

5.10 What type of participation?
.....
.....
.....
.....

5.11 Why?
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. (E) HEALTH AND WELFARE

6.1 Are women here free to seek medical care for themselves and their children without the prior approval of their husband?

Yes	1
No	2

6.2 Where do you seek medical care?

Hospital	A	1
Clinic	B	2
Herbalist	C	3
Faith-healer	D	4
Sangoma	E	5
Friends	F	6

6.3 Do you know what a family planning clinic is?

Yes	1
No	2

6.4 Are women here free to go to family planning clinics?

Yes	1
No	2

With husband's approval

On their own

With mother-in-law's approval

Not at all

1
2
3
4

6.5 Are you satisfied with the present health services?

Yes	1
No	2

6.6 Why?
.....
.....

6.7 What do you think women should to to benefit from health and welfare services?
.....
.....
.....

6.8 What improvements in these services are necessary?
.....
.....
.....

7. (F) EDUCATION

7.1 Is education considered necessary for women?

Yes	1
No	2

Why?
.....
.....
.....
.....

7.2 If you have means, what level of education would you want for your children to reach?

	Lower Primary	Higher Primary	Secondary School	Trade School	Professional	University	Other (specify)
Boys A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Girls B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7.3 Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

7.4 Must the man be better educated than the women?

Yes

1

No

2

7.5 Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

7.6 If adult classes are available, will you attend to improve on your formal education?

Yes

1

No

2

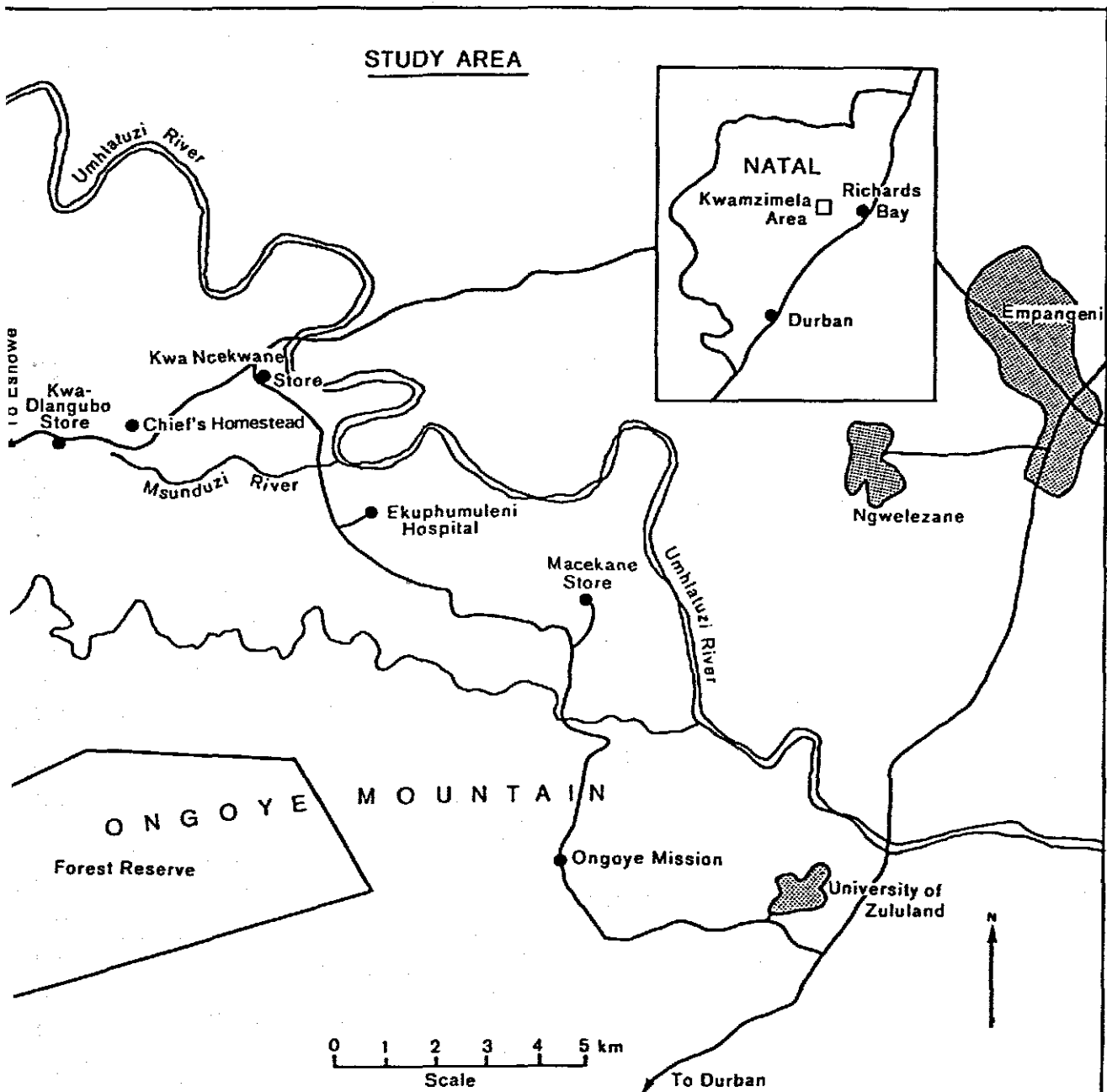
7.7 What other types of lessons or discussions should be organised so that you can learn more about how to cope with your activities?

.....

.....

7.8 Why?
.....
.....
.....
.....

Comment on value, normative and institutional factors as reflected
in inter'vieulee's remarks.



Source S.A. 1 : 50 000 Topo Maps
Government Printer

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