

**THE EFFECTS OF KENTE AND ADINKRA INDUSTRIES IN KWABRE
DISTRICT OF ASHANTI: A STUDY IN INDUSTRIAL SOCIOLOGY**

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Introduction

This is a study in sociology of industry. Its main concern does not include the historical development of Kente and Adinkra industry or the origin of the industry. This has been dealt with by Rattray (1927); Danquah (1968) etc. It is an investigation into a traditional rural industry to find out the net-work of relationship which exists between the industry and the communities in which it operates.

One of the major reasons for movement of labour from rural areas to the urban centres is the lack of employment avenues. It is generally believed that the rural areas are suited to agriculture so there is the call for people to go back to the land instead of roaming about in the cities in search of jobs which do not exist. We seem to lose sight of the fact that agriculture does not offer full solution to the problem of underemployment and unemployment in the rural areas and the fact that it is not everyone who can undertake farming venture. Corollary to this is the fact that, it is not everyone who wants to go into farming that has access to land because of the complicated nature of the land tenure system. It is therefore necessary to look for alternative sources for earning a living in rural areas and to increase social productivity.

One of the important ways of providing job openings for the rural labour is through the expansion of non-agricultural employment opportunities in rural areas. This brings to fore the importance we have to attach to rural small-scale industries such as the Adinkra and Kente manufacturing industries. Industries result in industrialism and can transform rural social structure from stagnation and technological regression to one of social change and development. The question of change is crucial since to some degree change creates strains and tension that stimulate or provoke further changes or open up new perspectives that encourage innovation and a drift from conventional practices and established relationships.

This study seeks to investigate the social consequences of the Kente and Adinkra industries of the Kwabre District of Ashanti and their impact on the individuals and the social structures of the villages concerned.

The Problem

It is regrettable that indigenous rural industries are not given much attention by the planners of many developing countries. The result is the brake on the expansion or development of such industries. In this scenario the existing technology suffers stagnation and in some cases actual regression. This state of affairs has affected, to a large extent, the industrial development of such countries.

Why should the traditional Kente and Adinkra industries engage the attention of a sociologist? What are the physical effects of the industries on the communities in which they operate? Do the communities feel the effects of what is happening in the industries? If so, will the

fortunes of the industries determine the prosperity or decline of the villages? These pertinent questions constitute the embodiment of the problem.

The Fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out from November, 1990 to March, 1991 in the Kwabre area of Ashanti Region in Ghana, an area which lies north of Kumasi, the regional capital. The villages covered in the study, were Ntonso, Bonwire and Sakora Wono. Each of the village had a population less than five thousand inhabitants. To delineate the sample units and to get acquainted with the problems that were likely to be met, it was decided that a pilot survey be undertaken. The villages under study were visited to identify the target groups. The random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. At Ntonso, eighty-two Adinkra makers were selected. At Bonwire and Sakora Wono, fifty-five and fifty-nine Kente weavers respectively were selected. In addition the Headteachers and some elders in the villages were also identified for discussion.

It is obvious that in indigenous rural industries, most of the workers are illiterates or semi-literates. In view of this, it was found necessary to use the interview method as the major tool for data-gathering. However, the observational method became an indispensable tool for data-gathering to supplement the interview method.

The fieldwork went through some interruptions as a result of funerals which took place in the locality. In all one hundred and sixty-eight out of the one hundred and ninety-six people identified, were interviewed. The remaining twenty-eight were not available for interview.

The Study in its Theoretical Perspective

The primarily agricultural character of the rural areas leads some scholars and technical advisors to seek developmental change solely within an agricultural context. Much as it would be improper to deny the importance of improved agricultural technology and productivity it should be recognized that industrial activity is equally important in the life of the rural inhabitants and should therefore be developed since industry plays a supportive role to agriculture.

Why is it important to have the indigenous rural industries improved? It can be recognised that the indigenous rural industries evolved over a period of time and were moulded by the environment. They are not alien industries and are not financed by foreign capital. According to Hoogvert (1976: 74) export of capital from the 'centre' to the 'periphery' which was much a dominant feature of the colonial period, and one which helped to tie the colonial economy to that of the mother country continues today. Walter Rodney (1974: 112) points out that in the fifteenth century European technology was not totally superior to that of other parts of the world. Europeans relied heavily on Indian cloth for resale in Africa, and they also purchased cloths from several parts of the West African coast for resale elsewhere. In essence they were not manufacturers but primarily long distance traders. Yet by the time Africa was ushered into the colonial era, Europe was concentrating almost entirely on the export of manufactured cotton cloths. This remarkable reversal is tied to technology advance in Europe and to stagnation of technology in Africa owing to the very trade with Europe. Rodney argues that cloth manufacture in the world went through a stage of handlooms and small-scale craft production. Up to the sixteenth century, that was the general pattern in Africa, Asia and Europe. European traders eventually, succeeded in putting an end to the expansion of African cloth manufacture.

Developing countries must free themselves from technological arrest or stagnation and look back to their past technologies and make frantic effort to develop them. As rightly pointed out by the Five Year Development Plan (1975/76 - 1979/80) of Ghana, the concentration of indus-

tries in the urban areas tends to encourage the drift of population especially the youth, from the rural to the urban centres and thereby exerting unnecessary pressure on the physical infrastructure and social facilities in the urban centres as well as contributing to some of the economic and social problems like unemployment, crime, destitution and child delinquency. However, the Five Year Development Plan which appeared promising, voted 4.3 percent of the total budget to the promotion of manufacturing industries in the urban centres and there was no mention of the indigenous rural industries.

The emphasis here on the indigenous rural industries stems from the fact that their encouragement will foster development and the use of indigenous systems of knowledge. This will lead to the promotion of self-reliance through the utilizations of local talent and leadership which will generally bring about promotion of economic well being through employment, income generation, income distribution, use of local resources and the provision of social amenities.

In studying the Kente and Adinkra industries, we are interested in their social organization of production. It is a fact that industrialism contributes to change in a community. It is in this light that Miller and Form (1964: 83 - 84) hold that industry and community, like all segments of the society, are interdependent and that a basic axiom of industrial sociology is that the workplant, community and society, as social organization, cannot be understood without reference to each other, for changes in one area facilitate changes in another. It is in the light of this that the traditional rural industries must be seen.

Again that industry shapes the growth patterns of the community, affects the total land-use pattern and influences community character cannot be disputed. In short, industry has many wide and pervasive effects in moulding the form and function of the community. The products of industry become part of the impetus to change in the daily activities and styles of life of the people. The moot point, however, is: to what extent can industrialism, resulting from traditional rural industry modify the social structure of the rural areas?

Among the Asantes, one can identify a number of indigenous industries like Adinkra cloth making, Kente weaving, soap making, wood carving, pottery, sculpture, basketry etc. but for the purpose of this study we wish to isolate the Adinkra cloth making and the Kente weaving industries for an analytical study.

Social Characteristics of the Industrial Workers

The Adinkra and Kente industries are mainly the monopoly of males. Little room is given to women in this indigenous industry. The exclusion of one sex from some particular economic activities is characteristic of most Ghanaian indigenous or traditional rural industries.

In the Adinkra and Kente industries, women suffer some disabilities which are embodied in the taboos associated with the industries, (Rattray 1927).

Age Composition And Religion of Workers

The Adinkra and Kente industries are woven into the community life of those settlements and that every male, aged five years and above, is more or less connected with the work. As

table 1 indicates, the concentration of the labour force lies within the 15 - 34 age group.

Table 1 : Religion of Workers by Age Groups

Religion	Christianity		Islam		Trad. Afr. Religion		How Affiliated			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			Abs	%
10-14	4	2.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2.3
15-19	20	12.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	12.0
20-24	44	26.3	-	-	4	2.3	4	2.3	52	30.9
25-29	24	14.4	2	1.2	4	2.3	-	-	30	17.9
30-34	18	10.9	2	1.2	2	1.2	2	1.2	24	14.5
35-39	10	6.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	6.0
40-44	-	-	-	-	2	1.2	6	3.6	8	4.8
45-49	4	2.3	-	-	4	2.3	-	-	8	4.6
50-54	4	2.3	-	-	-	-	2	1.2	6	3.5
55-59	4	2.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2.3
60-64	-	-	-	-	2	1.2	-	-	2	1.2
Total	132	78.8	4	2.4	18	10.5	14	8.3	168	100

The age structure is broad at the 20 - 24 age group, and tapers towards the top. Out of the one hundred and sixty eight workers those between the ages 5 - 14 constitute 2.3 percent. The small number of workers in this category was due to the fact that the group was made up of elementary school pupils, and at the time of the fieldwork they were at school. The pupils provide active wage labour force during holidays. Those in the age group 15 - 19 formed 12 percent of the respondents. The highest concentration of the labour force (30.9 percent) lay within the 20 - 24 age group. From this point the number declines for the subsequent age groups. Those in the 25 to 29 age group formed 17.9 percent. It dropped to 14.5 percent for the age group 30 - 34. The trend continued to its lowest point (2.3 percent) at the age group 60 and above.

Like all industries throughout the world, the majority of the workers in the Kente and Adinkra industries are drawn from the labour force between 20 to 34 years (this is the period when men are most active in labour).

This trend, coupled with the fact that the average age of the workers was 38.9, indicates that it is the younger population of the community which plays active role in the traditional rural industries under study.

Marital Status And Educational Attainment of Workers

Table 2 shows the marital status and educational attainments of the industrial workers.

Education	Single		Married		Divorced		Separated		Widowed		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Abs	%
None	4	2.4	22	13.1	2	1.2	-	-			28	16
Primary	4	2.4	6	3.6	-	-	-	-			10	6.0
Middle	34	20.2	52	30.9	2	1.2	-	-			88	52.3
Secondary	20	11.9	10	5.9	-	-	-	-			30	17.8
Comm/Tech	-	-	2	1.2	-	-	-	-			2	1.2
Teacher/ Training	2	1.2	4	2.4	-	-	-	-			6	3.6
University	4	12.4	-	-	-	-	-	-			4	2.4

Early marriages were very common among the traditional industrial workers. Out of the one hundred and sixty-eight workers, 40.5 percent were single whilst 57.1 percent were married with children, 2.4 percent were divorced. Most of the marriages stemmed from premarital sexual relationships which are not frowned upon these days among the Asante in the locality under study. There is room for permissiveness and premarital intercourse is not treated as dark secret among the people.

With regard to workers educational attainments, 16.7 percent did not receive any formal education. Six percent had primary school education and did not go further. The largest number of workers (52.3 percent) fell into the category of middle school level. The high concentration of workers in this groups was partly due to the fact that the youth after middle school, were motivated by monetary incentives the industry offered and therefore did not have the urge to further their education.

The self-employment opportunity which the local industries offered, the middle school leavers, there was no need for them to migrate to the urban areas for the purpose of finding jobs. Usually, there had been the tendency for the youth in the villages around Kumasi to migrate to the city; however the industrial villages under study had relatively a high concentration of people since the middle school leavers who formed the bulk of the migrant labour force found instant employment in the villages.

Seventeen percent of the respondents were students and past students of secondary schools. (At the time of fieldwork, second cycle institutions and above were on holidays). Apart from the secondary school level where some workers were full-time workers, the remaining groups of workers could be described as part-time workers. They were students from Commercial/Technical institutes, Teacher Training Colleges and the University. They constituted 4.8 percent of the workers. The rural industry is a source of income for the students during holidays. One interesting feature about the student workers is that some were married. Students involvement in marriage re-inforces the fact that in these industrial villages there is a high propensity to marriage among the youth.

Child-Parent Relationship And Attitudes to Marriage

In the first place an aspect of social change worth considering can be seen in the child-parent relationship in the Kwabre Kente and Adinkra industrial areas. In these areas, the Ghanaian maxim, that a child should be seen and not heard is hardly tenable. The respondents were very firm on the grounds that children's participation in the industry has affected parent-child relationship to a large extent. To them children are rude, disobedient, self-reliant and disrespectful because they are financially self-sufficient. Almost everybody claimed that with money in the hands of children parents have lost control over their children. The elders and teachers contacted confirmed this state of affairs. To them the children in the Kwabre District have deviated from their traditional role and are behaving like adults. This pattern of changes are making the elders unhappy since it is their belief that the society is getting rotten.

The elders complain that the youth have acquired wealth and with their economic power, they do not accept what the elders say without questioning, criticising and attacking - situation denied by *gemeinschaft*-like society. It is in this light that the elders see the youth as disobedient and disrespectful. What is happening in the indigenous industrial villages is that the society is becoming more and more differentiated. It is moving from *gemeinschaft*-like society to *gesellschaft*-like society in which knowledge is validated by rational and empirical testing. The rational validation requires questioning, criticising, attacking and substituting. In every social system, there is an institutionalized range of toleration, so that conformity does not need to mean absolute uniformity of behaviour - along with prescriptions and prohibitions, there are also permissions. This process of rationalization is the general directional factor in the change of social system, especially on belief system. Permissive measures are now espoused by many parents yielding the child or the youth a good deal of freedom. This is misconstrued by some elders as rudeness, disobedience and disrespect to parents and the aged. They regard this sort of freedom as a departure from conformity to the normative standards which have come to be set up as the common culture.

The youth are becoming self-reliant and self-sufficient because they began to work earlier, worked harder and achieved earlier economic maturity and independence. The trend in the locality has been that children contribute financially to the running of the home and the maintenance of the family, and in some cases to pay for their school expenses themselves. With acquisition of wealth, the youth have assumed important adult responsibilities in the home. This element of "flexibility" points to the fact that there is no one set of role-expectations which every individual who starts at a given status-point must conform to.

Many parents confirmed that their children make financial contributions towards the maintenance of the family. Such contributions include: payment of basic rates for their mothers and aged fathers, purchase of clothes for mothers and siblings, payment of school fees, purchase of some food items and funeral donations.

As a result of the new roles the youth play, the relationship that exists between parents and children is one of peer group. Children are allowed participation in decision making on some important issues. This situation is just a reversal of the authoritarian role over children which parents perform in the traditional societies. Children are now encouraged to develop their initiative, to express their own interest and personalities. Hence less stress is placed on the obedience of children who are required to do fewer domestic tasks so as to enable them to pursue their economic activities without undue interruptions.

One other area where changes are taking place is the marriage institution. There is an increasing tendency to marry at an early age among the industrial workers. Since marriage is

an important social institution whether it takes place early or late, is a subject of sociological interest because age at the time of marriage usually affects family size. Besides, marriage provides the young industrial worker not only with a wife as an assistant, but also with children, especially boys who provide an unpaid labour force to the father. It is a known fact that fertility is more closely related to age than to any other demographic factor.

In an answer to the question 'What are the attitudes of boys towards marriage?', all the respondents claimed that boys in the area have great interest in marriage and emphasized the tendency to marry at an early age among the youth. It is commonly said that the elders in the area married later but now the reverse is the truth. Generally, it is a social fact in the country that high cost of living these days has compelled a lot of men either to postpone marriage or to give it a little consideration. It is against this background that the desire among the youth in the industrial villages to marry at an early age makes an interesting study. It is interesting also to note that the normal procedure laid down by custom to contract marriages is being ignored by the aspiring young men. The elders who were interviewed on this issue expressed great concern about this deviation from the normative pattern and described the situation as moral degeneration. According to them, premarital sexual relationship is the order of the day and is practised without receiving the full rigour of the traditional sanctions that characterized such behaviours in the past.

There is a strong urge for marriage among the youth in the area owing to their economic status, parents and elders complain that girls are impregnated at an early age which affects their education. Out of the twenty elderly women selected for interview on this subject, seventy-five percent confirmed that their daughters did not complete middle school before they became impregnated and therefore had to abandon their course. Asked whether or not the situation emanates from improper socialization, one woman complained bitterly that "Ntonso township in particular, is not a good place to bring up girls. The boys will not allow them to grow, they are too aggressive". This breakdown of sex taboos without payment for the cost of deviance in sanctions, leads to more sexual intercourses before marriage and this, in turn, may increase the incidence of teenage pregnancies and early marriages since most of the marriages were the result of premarital sexual intercourses.

It is not only the question of increasing tendency to marry at an early age that we are concerned with but there is also the tendency to marry more than one wife. Out of the ninety-six married workers, a third were cohabiting with other women. Though some of the workers did not regard such partners in cohabitation as wives, they were spending money on them; the girls in turn were rendering services like preparing meals and washing of clothes etc. for the men.

When respondents were asked to assign causes for such attitudes, the leading facts regarding the extent of early marriage that emerged were: increased income, lack of interest in formal education among the youth and low rate migration of the boys to the urban areas where urbanization and its associated problems delay marriages. The commonest answer to the question 'What do you think are the causes of such attitudes?' was that 'Because they have money and think they can do whatever they like'. The available data show that children begin to work for money in the early stages of their lives because the Kente and Adinkra industries do not require any long apprenticeship and high cost of training. This opportunity enables the youth to achieve earlier economic maturity which results in accumulation of wealth. It is only natural to think that an increase in income would encourage earlier marriages, for many young men are deterred from marrying because they will not be able to support wives. Hence if income are increased, it is expected that more will get married. In a similar vein, an unemployed male is not likely to marry as one who has a job. Consequently, if incomes are increasing and unemployment is diminishing, as in the case of the Kente and Adinkra industrial areas, we should

expect more young persons to marry.

The second factor which encourages early marriages among the youth is lack of interest in formal education. It can be stated categorically that the more formal schooling a man or a woman has, the greater the chance of his/her not marrying early since schooling postpones marriages. The reverse of this statement is true in the case of people who do not show interest in education. Turning back to the educational attainments of the workers we notice that fifty-eight percent had formal education ranging from middle school to primary. The bulk of the workers did not pursue further education owing essentially to lack of interest. As to the influence of education on the age at which the people marry it is clear from the foregoing evidence that lack of interest in education has its roots in the indigenous rural industry.

The third factor worth considering is the low rate of migration to the urban areas. Urbanization with its associated social problems such as unemployment, underemployment and anonymity, does not encourage marriages. In the industrial villages the number of boys who show interest in migration to the urban areas is very small. Most of the youth do not show any desire to change their occupations. To the question 'Do you intend to stop this job and take another job in the city?' only twenty-five percent answered in the affirmative but this group was made up of people with secondary or higher education. Owing partly to low-educational attainments, the youth do not show the desire to migrate to the urban areas to seek white collar jobs. Moreover, since the cottage industries provide them employment facilities, and relatively good income and high social status, the desire to move away to search for jobs elsewhere is greatly minimised.

The Industry Versus Formal Education

A large proportion of the Government's budget is devoted to formal education. The importance attached to education makes it a right instead of a privilege. It is not necessarily desirable that everybody acquires the highest educational standard but it is quite important that every one is sufficiently educated to eradicate illiteracy and its attendant problems from the society. It is against this background that child education should be given all the due attention in the Kwabre area where the rural industry exerts great influence upon the lives of both children and adults.

Despite the high rate of illiteracy among the adult population the people appear to be particular and enthusiastic about elementary school education. Through communal labour and a special levy, the villages have been able to provide for themselves formal educational facilities ranging from Day Nurseries and Kindergarten to Junior Secondary School. At the time of fieldwork the people of Ntonso, for example, were seriously constructing a senior secondary school block to cater for the educational needs of the increasing number of children in the locality.

In view of this the elders and parents of the village expressed great concern about the shift of emphasis from formal education to work among the children in the villages. To the question 'some people believe that the traditional industry has affected the formal education of the people in this area, is this assertion true?' Most of the respondents confirmed that the traditional industry has had many effects on the education of the children. Almost ninety-two percent expressed the view that the industry has had adverse effects on the education of children in the area, whilst 8.3 percent did not see any bad effect on it. The latter group based their arguments on monetary benefits and claimed that "without money one cannot go to school and that by means of the industry, children obtain funds for their educational purposes or as a supplement to their parents' efforts." On the other hand, most of the respondents pointed out the ill-effect of the industry vis-a-vis formal education as follows: truancy, lateness and absentecism, low aca-

ademic performance and falling of standards, lack of interest in school, semi-literacy, money mindedness and insubordination to teachers.

Truancy and absenteeisms were well pronounced among the school children in the industrial villages. Because of the immediate material benefits derived from work, children sometimes ran away from school and engaged in work at the expense of school. Sometimes they did not report for school at all. It is not uncommon for children to work in the morning before going to school. They become so absorbed in work that very often they go to school late. The headteachers in the villages confirmed the existence of the problems pertaining to truancy, absenteeism and lateness. Asked whether the problems were not common to both boys and girls, the teachers exonerated the girls from the deviant behaviour.

Asked what the school were doing to control these problems, the teachers claimed they were imposing sanctions on culprits but all were proving futile since the children's interest in work and money surpassed their interest in school. They felt; punishing children with the view to correcting their truant behaviour served as an excuse for some to stay away from school entirely and this aggravated the situation. They had, therefore, appealed to the chiefs the elders and the Village Development Committees and the District Assembly to help find solution to the problem.

Parents, teachers and community involvement could bring a lasting solution to the problem. The headteachers reported that formerly the primary school children were not allowed to participate in the industries during school days. But today, because of the increasing demand for weavers and *Adinkra* makers, the convention has been broken with the connivance of some parents. This situation, according to the school authorities, has led to low academic performance and lowering of educational standards among the children whilst some of them abandon schooling in favour of work, a situation which has led to an increasing number of semi-literates in the villages.

Another problem confronting the school is that of insubordination. Teachers attributed the cause of insubordination to the economic power the children have achieved. They felt that even primary school pupils had ample money to do whatever they liked. One teacher concluded with a biblical quotation: "The love for money is the root of all evil".

Notwithstanding the fact that some parents have lost full control over their children because of the economic roles the boys play in the family, and their acquiescence of the situation, new waves of ideas are moving through the workers; they have begun thinking about other avenues for their children in the future. To the question: "Do you want your children to take *kente* and *adinkra* making as their main occupation in the future"? respondents' answers as to what careers they want their children to take are interesting. About 36 percent of the respondents would like their children to participate in the indigenous rural industry. However, the majority of them 64.3 percent would like a change. This idea seems to be a threat to the future of the indigenous industries since the attention of most of the youth may be diverted from these rural industries. Most (67 percent) of the respondents were definite about the professional career they would like their children to take: lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers, soldiers, electricians and fitters. 17 percent could not be definite but said that they would like their children to work in the office that is to engage in white collar jobs. While 8 percent wanted their children to be farmers, 6 percent claimed that they would give their children the option to pursue occupation of their own choice other than any of the rural industries. Lastly, 2 percent wanted their children to be church pastors, (especially at Ntonso where the Seventh Day Adventist Church is so entrenched in the community).

Asked how they could achieve such laudable aims or transform their ideas into actualities, the general opinion was that they would encourage and support their children to study hard at

school so that their dreams could be realized. This means that most of the present workers would not allow their children the permissiveness they obtained from their parents. This calls into focus a new social value orientation in order to achieve the role-expectation pattern. Parents are going to exercise control over their children to take definite directions. In this regard, children will have to change their attitude towards the indigenous rural industry and concentrate on their education. Should parents succeed in this task, education could be a 'brake' on the development of the cottage industries under discussion.

Craft Industries

At the outset the art of weaving *kente* and *adinkra* making were almost a hobby. Since the craftsmen used the money from these craft industries to supplement their incomes. Gradually, the products became commercialized and widespread all over the country. The products from these craft industries got a booster when tourists became interested in them. Realizing the commercial value of the products, people began to relax their hold on farming and the emphasis began to shift from farming to the weaving of *kente* (Bonwire and Wonoo) and *Adinkra* making (at Ntonso).

Agriculture can be a strong base for the development of industrialization since it could provide the necessary capital for the establishment of industries and food for the industrial area. It is therefore necessary that after the springing up of these industries agriculture should continue to receive all the necessary attention to provide the needed raw materials for the industry and food for the people. But today, in spite of the extensive arable land in the area, farming has given way to the industries as the major economic activities in the villages. Owing to this shift of emphasis food production has been seriously affected. Only few women take some active interest in food production. Consequently, a small quantity of food is produced which cannot meet the requirement of the increasing population. They have to rely on food supplies from the outlying areas. When there is interruption in the supply due to transportation difficulties or other factors, the villages suffer from food shortages.

These two industries have diverted a lot of people's attention from the land and have influenced the community character. They have affected the moulding of the form and function of the communities which used to be predominantly farming communities. In effect these industries have alienated the people from the land.

The Industries and Village Development

One of the strategies for rural development is the encouragement and development of rural industries to provide jobs for the increasing rural population so as to improve their living conditions and to reduce the phenomenon of rural-urban migration. Since the greatest asset of every society is its people, the development of the village which depends upon the inhabitants themselves, must aim at improving the quality of their lives.

One of the greatest achievements of these indigenous rural industries is that they have contributed significantly to the reduction of rural-urban migration. The youth who give impetus to development stay in the villages and contribute their quota towards the development of the villages instead of migrating to the towns and cities in search of non-existing jobs. Although there is no magic wand which can stop the phenomenon of rural-urban migration entirely, a meaningful development of rural industries can contribute immensely to the reduction of this social canker.

To the question 'do you intend to stop this job and take another job in the city?' seventy percent of the respondents answered in the negative. They claimed that they did not have in mind the idea of abandoning their present jobs and taking another job elsewhere. Some claimed that the income they derived from their work was more than what a lot of people received in the cities.

Others argued that people move to the cities mainly for economic reasons and they felt they did not have any problem with work and income while a good number felt they were so used to the rural industry and the village life that they did not consider the need to live in the city. Only thirty percent declared their intention to migrate to the cities with the aim of finding more lucrative jobs and to enjoy the facilities like pipe-borne water, electricity, medical care etc. provided for city dwellers. Out of this number, twenty five percent were secondary school leavers and students who, by their training, felt that they had to find more lucrative and more 'decent' jobs in the cities; this indicates how formal education can be a threat to the rural industries and encourage rural-urban migration. It is therefore imperative to evolve an appropriate educational system which would take cognisance of indigenous rural industries and develop them to be more attractive and competitive to both literates and illiterates. With this innovation indigenous rural industries could not be crippled by formal education in the future.

However, the bulk of the people continued to show interest in the traditional industries and would not leave their villages. The idea of self-help projects in the villages can only be realized if the youth stay in the villages, undertake communal labour and play a leading role in the development of the villages. In the Kwabre industrial villages, the building of school blocks, construction of latrines and street drains, provision of good drinking water and other amenities like post office, community centre, football fields etc. have depended upon communal labour provided by the youth.

Besides, the workers make voluntary donation in cash and in kind during Easter harvests organized by the chiefs and the Village Development Committees for the well being of the villages. Workers attributed their ability to do this to the income from the indigenous industries.

Some respondents by means of these industries, have invested in commercial vehicles, housing and large scale farming in Brong-Ahafo and Western Regions. One interesting thing is that workers enjoy a standard of living comparable to that of city dwellers in the country. In their work places, one could observe radio sets, record players and changers providing music whilst they worked. This demonstrates the effects of cottage industries on the rural life of the people and how the development of cottage industries can improve the quality of life of the rural dwellers. Indeed with the funds accruing from the industries they are able to sustain their economic development.

The Impact of the Local Industry on Women's Work Roles

Characteristically, the workers engaged in Adinkra and Kente industries are invariably men. Reasons for excluding women from active participation of these industries can be seen from the taboos associated with the making of Adinkra and Kente, (Rattray, *ibid.*)

The Adinkra and Kente industries have prohibitions which cut women away. Apart from the supporting services they render to the industry, women are forbidden to take part in the actual job. According to tradition, if they do so, they will lose their ability to reproduce. Women, unlike men, have menstrual periods and menses is considered to be sacrilegious. Their involvement in the industry, therefore, will desecrate it.

In the Asante traditional system a woman in the course of her menstrual period should not touch food meant for men in general and the husband in particular. If she happens to reside in a house where 'black stools' are kept, she has to stay outside the house for the period. In the light of this a woman in her period should not touch a loom (a sacred object), if she does, her reproductive organ will be rendered unproductive, (Rattray *ibid.*).

Behind the veil of every taboo is a hidden fact which brought the taboo into being. In the Asante traditional system the rule of 'division of labour' is strictly adhered to. "Women sell garden-eggs but not gunpowder", so goes the wise saying. The reverse is a state of anarchy and confusion.

Since the establishment of the industries in the Kwabre area, men have not been taking active role in farming which they leave to women. However, farming in this area is to a large extent, at the subsistence level. The men must work hard to earn money to keep their families going. They therefore stay at home and concentrate on their industrial activities, whilst the women take to farming to maintain the balance. Normally, the men do the clearing of the bush and the felling of the undesirable trees and leave the women to do the rest so that the men can concentrate on their jobs to bring in the much needed money. This division of labour is necessary because if both men and women were to devote all their time on the industry food production would be seriously affected. Hence the need for a taboo to maintain the equilibrium. (This idea is not to negate the spiritual aspect of this taboo).

Secondly, the elders believed that to have their women sitting in a loom with their legs in the 'pulley' making alternate movements would result in indecent exposure of their private parts since women would not put on pair of shorts or trousers like men.

Though women of today can remain 'neat' during their menstrual period using up-to-date sanitary materials, and can put on pair of shorts or jeans to avoid exposing their private parts, they continue to be debarred from active involvement in the act of making **Kente** and **Adinkra**. In the light of this, one can say that the underlying reasons for the taboo is the maintenance of the traditional system of 'division of labour' which is still cherished. Women would not use looms because weaving is considered to be men's job, and they believe that using the loom would render them infertile. (In spite of these there are women weavers in the North and Ewe land. These women use broad looms).

In order to get the Ghanaian woman to develop her personality to the full and to take an active part in adult social and economic life within the limits of the individual interest and ability, traditional religious beliefs and institutions need to be critically examined.

Summary and Conclusion

It may be said that the encouragement and promotion of indigenous rural industries should form part of any package deal which is aimed at the development of the rural areas.

The significance of the **Kente** and **Adinkra** industries in the lives of the rural people cannot be over-emphasised. In the industrial area, one's success in the industry determines one's social power in the community. In view of this laziness and lack of interest in work are features despised by the people. The people are so much absorbed in the industry that farming which used to be a major economic activity of the people has been relegated to a lower position in spite of the extensive arable land in the locality. This situation has seriously affected food production in the area resulting in dependence on food supplies from the outlying areas.

Some striking features of the rural industry are its indigenous use of materials from the immediate environment and the gentle nature of the technologies on the environment. Nothing is exhaustively depleted - everything is at hand - little is required to be sorted - all of it is hand

made. It can truly be said to be village technologies in that the technologies and methods of production are appropriate to the conditions of the people, i.e. they are cheap enough for jobs to be provided and simple enough to be used and maintained by the rural population without sophisticated technical or organizational skills.

The industry does not require a long period of training. Learning takes place in the normal processes of socialization and, therefore, does not involve the expenditure of huge sums of money. If one considers the fact that the technologies do not require any high educational attainment, one will appreciate the fact that the industries can provide jobs for a good number of people irrespective of their educational background. However, the new mode of thinking among majority of the industrial workers seem to shift the emphasis to the attainment of higher education for their children to enable them to take up professional appointments in the future.

One of the pressing social problems in the country can be seen in the phenomenon of rural-urban migration, and in this area the industries have recorded a notable achievement. They have contributed in no small measure to the reduction of rural-urban migration. With full employment and substantial incomes offered by the industry, the youth stay in their villages to contribute their quota towards the village development.

Another area of great sociological interest in respect of the social consequences of the industries in the community is child-parent relationship. Early involvement in work has enabled the youth to achieve early economic maturity and independence. This has resulted in self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Thus the youth have assumed some of the important roles of parents in the home.

One can anticipate a serious situation in the Kwabre community where the industry forms the basis of almost their entire living. Since the industry provides the bulk of employment, its principal products may fluctuate with the exigencies of the time and the fluctuations will have repercussions throughout the entire community.

In spite of this, the indigenous rural industry has immense potentials for contributing to the growth of industrial output and employment. It must, therefore, be accorded the priority attention it deserves. Such an industry must have easy access to institutional credit and other facilities which will enable it to experience economic growth.

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