

# Psychological Implications of the Use of Indigenous Knowledge in Aiding Agricultural Production among the Yorùbá of South Western Nigeria

by

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## Abstract

This paper is based on the interview of ten herbalists, ten Babaláwo and twenty farmers and thus asks can one conclude that the love of money, material gain, poverty or yet to be identified via indigenous knowledge enhance farm produce for a better yield; what are some of the factors responsible for this act; what are the psychological implications on the farmer, his/her family and safety on the path of the consumers of such produce; and what is the position of Ifá towards the use of this indigenous intelligence in food production? Hence, it was revealed that there is no place where Ifá recommended the use of magic to enhance crop production, and to a large extent, the love of money, greed and material gain contribute a lot to the reason people indulge in such an act. The paper concludes that the outcome or end product of many of these methods is that it is not advisable to indulge in such an act of planting crops with magic.

**Keywords:** Psychology, Religion, Indigenous knowledge, Yorùbá and Farm produce

## Introduction

To a large extent, since science and technology came into existence, they have contributed immensely toward agriculture and crop production in the world. They have made tremendous efforts to improve the life of humanity and have provided food to cater for the large number of the people living in the world through concerted efforts and research work in different directions. Today, there are high breed crops and livestock to further boost food production.

They are done not only for the love of humanity but also for economic gains by the nations, groups, companies and individuals involved in the production of these crops. In the same way, African people, particularly the Yorùbá, have had their own ways of boosting their economic power through crop productions in agricultural setting even before the advent of white people on the soil of the Black nations. One of such means is the indigenous knowledge through the use of magic and medicine otherwise known as indigenous intelligence. They are called different names by different localities. In some parts of the Yorùbáland, it is known as *akó*, *èdà*, *oko sísá* and *asanko*. It is known and called *kádòko* in Yorùbá speaking areas of Kogi State where this research work extended to. Despite the fact that the knowledge usually involves the spiritual and rituals which normally have negative implications on the farmers that used the system and the fact that there are other scientific means like fertilizer of different categories of crops and soil that can be applied in this modern time, some farmers still continue in the old tradition. To know the reason why the act is still on, ten herbalists, ten Babaláwo and twenty farmers were interviewed. Their responses were content analyzed. The paper is divided into six major sections. The first section traces the origin of agriculture as a profession in Yorùbáland from picker of fruits to a more settled life. The second section looked at the disposition of *Ifá* toward the use of indigenous knowledge to aid the production of food for people. Application and the use of the knowledge to produce crops occupied section three. Here, some crops were selected and discussed extensively in the areas of two crops that are available in the country which is the food and cash crops. The positive and negative implications of these crops planted through this knowledge was also discussed in the next segment followed by the psychological implications that await the users and the consumers; at the same time, there is a discussion of the implications for the person his/her spirits were used in for the cases of the ones involving human parts or spirits. The concluding part discussed the findings, which included greed, poverty, social status, peer influence, and material gain, and the opinion of the writer on the issue.

## **Origin of Agriculture as a Profession in Yorùbáland**

The Yorùbá, like other nations around the world in creation at the beginning, relied on nations, fruits and animals for their survival when life started (Adeoye, 1979). In their creation myths, nothing much was said about agriculture besides the fact that *Ogún* was limiting games which was his profession. Humankind was moving from place to place in search of food. Therefore, there was no real settlement then. It was when the knowledge of agriculture started that humankind began to settle at places that brought about formation of communal life on earth today. *Ifá* in *Odù Òbàrà Méjì* (Abimbola, 1968) explained that *Òbòlèbòrògùn*, one of the numerous sons of *Òrúnmìla*, started agriculture at *Otùu'fẹ̀*, a place where the Yorùbá believed the world started. In the *Odù*, *Ifá* says:

*Apá nlá nigi àjé  
Oṣè abigi rereṣe,  
A dífá fún Òrúnmìlà  
Ifá nlọ lèé gbé Òrọ̀  
Tíí ṣe ọmọ Olówu níyàwó  
Wón ní ó sáká ki mọlẹ̀  
Ó jàrẹ ẹbọ ni ó ṣe  
Ó ní apáború é e kú*

*Ló bá rú idáji odidi eran  
Tí wón ní ó fi rúbo  
Ni Òrúnmìlà bá múra  
Ó gbé Òrọ̀, ọmọ Olówu, níyàwó*

*Nijó tí àwọn ẹgbé iyàwó ó túkà,  
Tí ó yẹ kí Òrúnmìlà ó sùnti obìnrin rẹ̀*

*Ni wón ránṣẹ wá láti òde Òyán  
Wón ní Òde Òyán ti dàrú tán pátápátá báyi  
Kí Òrúnmìlà ó máa sáre bọ o.  
Ni Òrúnmìlà bá múra.  
Ó kọri sóde Òyán  
Ó sì mú Òrọ̀, obìnrin rẹ̀ lówó lọ  
Lálẹ̀ ojọ̀ tí wón d'òde Òyán  
Òrúnmìlà sùn ti obìnrin rẹ̀  
Obìnrin náà sì lóyún  
Kí ó tó di wípé wón kúrò lódè Òyán  
Obìnrin Òrúnmìlà ti bímọ  
Wón ní orúkọ wo ni àwọn ó sọ ọmọ náà*

*Òrúnmìlà ní kí wón ó sọ̀ ó ní Amúkanlódèòyán.*

*Làìpé, wón kúrò lódè Òyán  
Ìgbà tí Òrọ̀ wo ọmọ náà wón,  
Njé kí Òrúnmìlà ó tún sùn tọ̀*

*Ni wón bá tún ránṣẹ pe Òrúnmìlà pé lódè Ònkò  
Ibè ni Òrọ̀ tún bí ọmọ rẹ̀ kẹ̀jì sí*

Afzelia bella is the tree of the witches  
Baobab tree spreads widely  
Casts divination for Orunmila  
Ifa was going marry Oro  
The daughter of Olowu  
He was asked to greet the gods  
He should please offer sacrifice  
He said he who offer sacrifice in part would not die  
He then offered half of a goat  
Prescribed for the sacrifice  
Then Orunmila prepared  
He went ahead to married Oro the daughter of Olowu  
On the day Oro friends left her place,  
That Orunmila supposed to sleep with his wife  
A message came from Oyan town  
That Oyan town is in disorder  
That Orunmila should come quickly  
Orunmila then prepared  
He went ahead to Oyan town  
He took Oro his wife along with him  
On the night of their arrival at Oyan town,  
Orunmila slept with his wife  
The woman became pregnant.  
Before they left the town,  
The wife of Orunmila gave birth  
He was asked, what name would they call the child?  
Orunmila said the child should be called Amukanlodeoya  
Not quite long they left Oyan town  
When Oro wean the child  
Orunmila was making attempt to sleep with her again,  
A message came from Onko city  
It was there that Oro gave birth to the second child

*Wón ní orúkọ wo ni àwọn ó sọ ọmọ náà,  
 Òrúnmilà ní kí wọn ó sọ́ ní Amósunlónkòègi.  
 Ìgbà tí Ọrò wo ọmọ náà tán,  
 Ní wọn bá tún ránṣẹ́ pẹ Ọrúnmilà lótuú'fẹ́  
 Ìgbà tí wọn dé otúú'fẹ́ tán,  
 Ọrò tún lóyún  
 Ó sì tún bímọ  
 Wón ní orúkọ wo ni àwọn ó sọ ọmọ náà  
 Òrúnmilà ní kí wọn ó sọ́ ní Ọbọlẹ̀bọ̀gùn  
 Ọ̀un ló ṣẹ́ ìran àgbẹ́ sílẹ́...*

They asked what name shall the child be called?  
 Orunmila said they should name him Amosunlonkoegi  
 When Oro wean the child again,  
 Orunmila was sent for at Otuu'fe  
 When they got to Otuu'fe,  
 Oro became pregnant again  
 She gave birth  
 They asked what name the child be called,  
 Orunmila said the child should be named Oboleboogun  
 He was the one that started farming...

This is an indication that there was nothing like farming before he started it despite the fact that there had been settlement of people at that time.

There are basically two types of farming. The traditional system of agriculture involved planting of food and cash crops while mechanized farming, though it involves food and cash crops, includes other types of farming. These are live stocks farming, like fowl, turkey, pig, goat, and cow among others. There is also fish farming in mechanized farming. The scope of this paper is limited to the traditional method of farming due to the fact that it is on this that the use of magic to enhance planting for bountiful harvest is common, and also since in mechanized farming, the use of fertilizer to enhance crops is a common practice.

In the traditional system of farming, there are two types of crops as earlier discussed. These are cash crops like cocoa, kola nut, cashew, rubber, palm tree, and coconut. There are also food crops such as yam, cassava maize, potato, melon pepper, okra, cotton, garden egg and groundnut among others. All these crops are what magic or indigenous knowledge can be used to enhance their production. Cash crops are planted in thick forest areas and are always permanent crops that can be there for many years and that will produce fruits on yearly basis. Some of the crops can outlive the people that planted them. Such crops like palm tree, bitter kola, kola nut, coconut, and rubber tree are found in this category.

Food crops are planted for a few months before the crops are harvested and ready for consumption. These types of crops are usually planted on rotational basis. This gives room for shifting cultivation of the land for a better yield. Besides the shifting cultivation mentioned, there are other means of improving the crops to do well for a better profit by the farm. This includes the use of magical and medicinal preparations that would be applied to the crops or the soil on which the crops are planted. However, this is not limited to the food crops alone; rather, it cuts across both cash and food crops.

## The Position of *Ifá* on the Use of Indigenous Knowledge to Aid Food Production

*Ifá* is the mouthpiece of both the divinities and humankind, particularly, the Yorùbá. It is *Ifá* that tells a devotee of any of these gods to offer sacrifice to the gods whenever the gods are offended. Although there is no place where *Ifá* actually mentioned that medicine should be used to enhance planting of the crops, it is the usual practice of the Yorùbá not to venture into any business without due consultation of *Ifá* with prompt and adequate offering of sacrifice. As said earlier, *Ifá* talked much about crops and agricultural production, but there was never a place where he encouraged the use of indigenous knowledge to aid its production. Rather, *Ifá* lays much emphasis on the use of sacrifice to attain good yield. This is evidenced in *Odù Òwónrín méjì* (Abimbola, 1968) where *Ifá* says:

*Agbóngbón ní sawo wón lóde Ìloòrèé*  
*Agbà yàngìdì awo òde Ìjèsà*  
*Òkúnrin yàngìdì yangìdì*  
*Ni wón dī ní àtípá*  
*A difá fún Olóoyimèfún*  
*Yóó bulè Olówu roko*  
*Wón ní kó bọ eégún ilé,*  
  
*Awo rẹ̀ ò fín...*

Agbongbon is the priest of Ilooree  
Agba yangidi, the priest of Ijesa  
A hefty man  
Is the one that was taken hostage  
Casts divination for Olooyemefun  
Who wanted to farm in Owu land  
He was asked to offer sacrifice to the masquerade of  
the house  
His sacrifice was not accepted...

Also *Ifá* in *Òsé méjì* explained how Onibadan advised his *Awo- Ifá* priest, Ológoṣé that in addition to his priesthood profession, he should engage in farming business which later turned out to be good and profitable for him when he had bountiful harvest from his farm business as explained in the *Odù Ifá* below.

*Aṣégé sègè mòsun*  
*Aṣégè sègè mòsun*  
*Òsé lóṭún ún*  
*Ìbàdàn lósi*  
*A difá fún Ológoṣé*  
*Tí sawo ròde Ìbàdàn,*  
*Bí babaláwo bá kì fún ni,*  
*A máa kì fáwo*  
*A difá fún Onibàdàn*  
*Tí yíó kifá fún Ológoṣé awo rẹ̀...*  
(Ifalere, 2014)

Aṣégé sègè mòsun (name of an Ifa priest)  
Aṣégè sègè mòsun (name of an Ifa priest)  
Òsé on the right  
Ibadan on the left  
Casts divination for Ologose  
Who was going to Ibadan for divination purpose  
If a diviner divined for someone,  
Someone can also divine for a diviner  
Casts divination for Onibadan  
Who was going to divine for Ologose his diviner...

Again, Èjìòbàrà (Abimbola, 1968), too, engaged in farming and became rich without using any form of medicine. One would not be surprised about this because *Ifá* will not concern himself with dishonest or illicit affairs. Again, a critical look at the issue of sacrifice in *Ifá* divination revealed that it is a common practice to offer sacrifice on every event, good and bad occurrences.

## **Application and the Use of Indigenous Knowledge in the Production of Crops**

Since it would be an almost impossible task to explain how indigenous intelligence is used to enhance production of all the crops existing in Yorùbáland in a short paper like this, efforts are made to concentrate on a few crops to establish the fact that indigenous knowledge, in the name of magic and medicine, can be used to achieve this aim. As a result, yam, beans, melon and maize were treated under food crops, while cocoa and kola nut were treated under cash crops. Efforts were now made to explain how this is done on each crop beginning from food crops and then the cash crops as listed.

The first method that would be discussed here is a general method that can be used for all crops, particularly food crops. All the informants interviewed refused to explain in details what and how crops are gathered together to do the medicine. This is due to the risks it involved. According to Eluwole (Interview respondent), Olowookere (Interview respondent), and Yombo (Interview respondent), it is the method that *àgbè aládá nlá*- big time famers in those days were using to farm and make their own money. According to them, the person involved usually does the charm double. He would keep one in his farm and bring the second one home. He would then look for able-bodied men and women that he knows can work very well. He would use the one he brought home to touch the person. The person would be sick and die under mysterious circumstances. The dead persons would then go to the man's farm to look for the other charm he kept in the farm. Then the farmer too will go and meet the spirit of the dead persons in his farm with cutlass and hoes and instruct the dead people on what to do in the farm henceforth. Thus, the dead people are turned into zombies that obey the words and take instructions from the farmer only. In addition to the charm he made, he must have made a pot of *àgbo*-concoction that he would place at the edge of his farm. This is the *àgbo* he would be using to wash his face for him to be able to see the spirit of the dead people for instructions and for feeding. Perpetually, these dead people work for the farmer day and night from planting to harvesting. This method is very common among farmers in Yorùbá speaking areas of Kogi State. It is called *Kádòko* in their language while it is called *Èdà* or *Akó* in Èkìtì State that shares a boundary with them. One should also note that the farmers involved in this act work in collaboration with one another. Therefore, when any of them dies, the child may continue using the spirits if he makes the secret known to him. Alternatively, other farmers may come and move the spirits to his own farm to continue working there. Otherwise, the spirits become wandering spirits that would be disturbing the peace of the community until series of sacrifices are offered to disperse the spirits.

## **Iṣu-Yam**

Yam is one of the staple foods in Yorùbáland. As the saying goes in Yorùbá, “*Iyán loúnjẹ, ọkà loògùn, àìrì rárá làúnjẹkò, kẹnu má dilẹ ni ti gúgúrú*” – pounded yam is the major food, oka (Amala) is a substitute, lack of food makes one eat solid pap, popcorn is just an appetizer –, and this practically shows how important yam is to the Yorùbá. It can be converted to so many forms. On the one hand, it can be pounded and eaten with different kinds of soup such as *ègúsi-melon*, okra, and other vegetables. It can also be converted to *èlùbó*-flour; it can be roasted, fried, or boiled and eaten with oil, pepper and garden egg. It can be used for porridge or *òjòjò*-soft cake made of *ewùrà*-water yam. According to the research carried out, there are two types of yam. There is *Akọ iṣu*. This belongs to every yam that can be used for pounded yam such as *Ọkùnmodò, Ilesú, Mádúródòjò, Ìgángánrán, Apépe, Ọdọ, Aréyìngbakùmò, Sẹbẹ* and so on. *Abo iṣu* belongs to the category of *Ewùrà*-water yam. Though water yam is not good for pounding, it is useful for other purposes such as *Ìkókọrẹ*, a kind of food common among Ìjẹbú speaking area of the Yorùbá. It is also good for *Ọjòjò*-fried yam that is peculiar with all the Yorùbá. Apart from pounded yam, *ewùrà* can be used for all other things that *Akọ iṣu* can be used for.

As a result of the many functions and usefulness of yam, it is cultivated by all the Yorùbá and other ethnic groups in Nigeria. Again, the importance of the product necessitated the enhancement through the use of indigenous knowledge by some farmers who know the secret of doing so for a bumper harvest. In the research carried out, six out of many methods of planting yam with indigenous knowledge were revealed to the researcher. This includes the use of *Àgbo*-concoction, *Omọ pándòrò Ọbẹ*-the use of special knife soaked in a concoction, *tùràrí*-incense and *Èdó*-stake making. One should also note here that the magical methods that can be used are not limited to the four methods mentioned here. Rather, these are the methods the researcher was exposed to during the research study.

- (i) **Àgbo-potion:** To make the *àgbo*, the farmer will gather the root of *Okunole* (unidentified), *iru*-locust beans in small quantity, *ata olúigbó*-pleiocarpa pycnantha, elephant bone and *eèpo oṣẹ*-*Adansonia Digitata*. Everything would be pounded together and soaked in an unidentified water in an indigenous pot. The *àgbo* would be stirred together and sprinkled on the yam seedling, and the seedling would be allowed to be there till the following day before planting. The pot of the *àgbo* is always placed under a tree at the middle of the farm.
- (ii) **Ọbẹ-Knife:** The knife is soaked into *àgbo* made with different ingredients, usually from the *àgbo* mentioned, for certain days that vary from three to seven days (The *àgbo* is suspected to have been made with the water used in bathing a dead body). The knife is used in cutting the seedlings. Sometimes the yam is washed in the same water.

- (iii) ***Omọ pándòrò-Kigelia Africana***: These materials are included in some of the prepared ingredients for the above method. Other ingredients are *òrí*-shea butter, *oyin*-honey, and a native egg. A hole would be dug at the middle of the farm. Some quantity of unidentified water would be poured in the hole, and some shea butter and some quantity of the honey would be added. This will be followed by placing the indigenous egg in the hole. Then, the *omọ pándòrò*, which is always long and big and symbolically means the yam will be big and long like the *pandoro*, would be placed on the egg in the hole. The remaining honey would then be added on it with the remaining shea butter before covering it with sand. The shea butter melts when it gets in contact with the sun and symbolically indicates that it will be easy for the yam to grow deep into the ground whenever the sun shines.
- (iv) In another method, the *pándòrò* will be marked round with *osùn pupa-pterocarpus* Osun Craib and *ẹfun Sàngó*-white chalk. The *pándòrò* is then placed under yam at the middle of the farm after soaking the *pándòrò* in the water used for the method for a few days from between three to seven days.
- (v) **Stake making**: With this method, sticks are staked at the centre and four corners of the farm. The sticks are made or cut from *ẹmi* (shear butter tree). Five *Èkọ tító*-solid cold pap and *òrí*-shear butter are placed in the hole dug for the sticks. When the yam begins to germinate, the farmer will start hitting the stick on the head everyday little by little. As the stick is going down into the ground, so also it is believed that the yam tubers will be growing in size and penetrate the ground. The *èkọ* and *òrí* are symbolically meant of soften the ground to make it easy for the yam to penetrate the ground. The more the sticks enter the ground, the more the yams also grow.
- (vi) ***Tùràrí-Incense***: This method includes the bark of a big *osẹ*-*Adansonia Digitata* and *òrá ẹlédẹ ibílẹ*-fat of a local pig (plenty). Pound the two together and sundry it. A branch stick of *ẹmi* tree that has dried on its trunk is collected and pounded with the above. Then, the fresh of this same *ẹmi* tree is also cut. It is on this that the incense will be burnt once a week for seven times.



## **Egusi-Melon**

*Ègú sí* is one of the ingredients that is used in Yorùbáland for cooking delicious soup. A saying in Yorùbá that *kò si lówó ẹni j'àmàlà tí ò ẹsanwó, ẹni fẹgú sí se námọ̀n la rí báwí* – it is not the fault of someone that eats *àmàlà* without washing his hand, it is the person that cook soup with melon that should be blame – attests to this fact. There are different methods of cooking melon depending on the locality. The Ijebu people will grind egusi and pepper together to cook their own *egusi* soup. While Ibadan or Oyo State people in general where *ewédú* is a special delicacy will mix *ègú sí* with *ewédú*. The mixture of *ìşápá* (a kind of seed grouped under vegetable), *ẹfó*-vegetable and fried *ègú sí* is common among Èkiti people where the combination is prepared in a soup form to eat pounded yam. There are basically two major types of *egusi* (melon) in Yorùbáland. They are *ègú sí bàrà* and *Ìtóò*. They are both melons. However, *ègú sí bàrà* crawls on the ground while *Ìtóò* is a climbing type. Without attaching itself to trees, it cannot do well. This is the reason why it only fructifies well in regions where there are trees. Again, *ègú sí bàrà* is the common type that is frequently planted by the farmers for commercial purpose.

*Ègú sí* (melon) is always planted in the early months of the year, around February/March when the rains have just started (In some parts of Yorùbáland of Kogi State where part of this study was carried out, it can be planted twice in a year because rain fall is not usually heavy). By May/June, the melon is ready for harvest. The seeds in the fruits of melon are what is planted during planting season. However, in the case of the melon where indigenous knowledge is involved, the method of planting is quite different. In that case, the melon is peeled like the type to be used for cooking soup and mixed with *àgbo*-concoction prepared with *Omi oku*-water used to bathe a dead body. The melon is planted at midnight. The farmer must be naked. After planting, the farmer must not go to the farm until all planted melon germinate and begins sprawling. Another method that can be used is to get one big unripe pawpaw, cut into pieces, add the *ègú sí* to be planted to it and leave till the following day before planting.

## **Èwà-Beans**

Beans are called *erèé* or *ẹwà* in Yorùbá society. Some people are of the opinion that calling beans *ẹwà* is not accurate, arguing that raw beans is *erèé* while the cooked type is *ẹwà*. However, the basis of the argument is not clear because in Yorùbáland today, only very few people refer to beans as *erèé* (Adeoye, 1979). According to the nutritionists, it is one of the foods that supplies protein that the body needs to grow and look healthy. There are various types of beans, but the commons types today are the brown (of different speeches like *Olóyin*, drum and so on) and the white. As a result of its nutritious values, beans are used in variety of ways. It can be used to make *móinmóin*, *àkàrà*, *gbegiri* soup, *àdàlú*, and *ègbo* among others. It can also be cooked and eaten by adding pepper, salt, *irú*-locust beans and palm oil.

To plant beans with medicinal herbs, the seeds of *èékáná èkùn-aremone Mexicana L. Papaveraceae* (Pierre Fatumbi Verger, 1995) is used together with other ingredients like *ewé jinwinni*-a whole alligator pepper by burning them together, adding dew of cocoyam leaf and mixing the beans with the medicine before planting it.

### **Àgbàdo-Maize**

According to history, maize was first domesticated in southern Mexico around 4000 BC. Reports put maize cultivation in the Americas at between 6000-10,000 years ago. It is a cereal plant that produces grains that can be cooked, roasted, fried, ground, pounded or crushed to prepare various food items in Yorùbáland such as *èkọ* and *ògì* (especially for nursing mothers for weaning babies). In some places like Ogbomoso, Iwo, Ila, and Oyo State in general, it is a special food for the indigenes, e.g., *ipékeré* and *ègbo* among others. Maize grain is used for three main purposes. It is used as staple food, as feed for livestock/poultry, and as a raw material for many industrial products (<http://www.ethnoleaflets.com>). The name maize is derived from the South American Amerindian Arawak-Carib word mahiz. When the Europeans arrived in the Americas, maize had already spread from Chile to Canada. Maize was reported for the first time in West Africa in 1498, six years after Columbus disembarked in the West Indies.

Maize has an extremely wide distribution. It is grown in all countries of Africa, from the coast through savanna regions to the semi-arid regions of West Africa, and from sea-level to the mid- and high-altitudes of East and Central Africa. It was introduced into Nigeria probably in the 16th century by the Portuguese. In Nigeria, particularly among the Yorùbá, maize is known and called by different names depending on the locality by such names like *àgbàdo*, *ìgbàdo* or *yangan* (<https://www.britanica.com>). As a result of its importance as one of the crops with many usages, the indigenous intelligence system was introduced to the cultivation. Here four methods by which this indigenous intelligence is being used for the crops shall be discussed.

- (i) *Irun òyà*-hair of grass cutter, whole alligator pepper; everything would be burned together and mixed with the corn before planting.
- (ii) *Epo ose*-*Adansonia Digitata*, whole alligator pepper; burn everything together, mix with the corn and plant.
- (iii) *Eyín òókán imòdò kan*-one front tooth of a bush pig, whole alligator pepper; burn everything together, mix with the corn and plant.
- (iv) *Epo ose*- *Adansonia Digitata*, drop it inside fire and allow it to burn for a while, then complete the burning in a pot with a whole alligator pepper. Add some to the corn in the pot and keep the rest for another planting.

## Cocoa

Cocoa belongs to the family of cash crops that bring huge cash on investment. The Latin name for cocoa—Theobroma—literally means “Food of the gods.” This valuable crop played an important role in many ancient South American cultures. In the beginning, the Mayans used cocoa to create a ritual beverage that was a good drink in times of engagement and marriage ceremonies, which provided one of the first known links between chocolate and romance in ancient times. From Spain, it spread to other parts of Europe and from there to other parts of the world. The major food produced from cocoa is chocolate, and one thing that has remained constant is that chocolate has never lacked people who love the “food of the gods” (<http://www.worldcocoaafoundation.com>).

According to F.N. Howes (<http://www.afraf.oxfordjournals.org>), the date of the first introduction of the cocoa tree to the British West African possessions are uncertain. However, the credit of having first brought the cocoa tree from the New World to the African tropics undoubtedly goes to the Portuguese who planted cocoa on the island of Sao Tome, now Sao Tome and Principe (off French Gabon) in 1822, then in the Gold Coast, now Ghana in 1868. In Nigeria, cocoa was first introduced in 1874 by the Portuguese from Fernando Po who introduced the same commodity to the Gold Coast. Through cocoa, the then government of Awolowo in Western Nigeria derived money from its sales to provide amenities for the Yorùbá, part of which can still be seen today. The success recorded in the sales of cocoa possibly encouraged the farmers to aid the production of the crop. These are some of the ways its production can be enhanced.

- (i) *Eyélé kan*-one pigeon, one indigneous egg, cotton leaf, finger nails (both hands and legs), *ewe jinwinnin*-Acalypha Ciliata Forssk, *ewé isu funfun*-white yam leaf; burn everything together, mix it with *èkuru funfun*-white bean cake sprinkled in the farm before cultivation.
- (ii) *Ewe bombom*-Calotropis Prosera the four legs of a dog, *ewé etí erin*-Unidentified, *igbe adie*-fowl faeces, *odidi òdògba*-one agama lizard, *ewé ejìnrìn*-Momodica Balsamina; pound everything together and put it inside snail shell. Cover the shell with white cloth and bury it in the middle of the farm.
- (iii) *Ewe iya*-Daniellia oliveri, pigeon head, a whole alligator pepper, one scorpion, *ewé igbá òrìṣà* or *òpá òrìṣà*-Unidentified; burn everything together and mix it with black soap. This soap would be used to wash both the hoes and the cutlasses used in the farm.
- (iv) *Ewé gbégbé*-(17)Icacina Trichantha that have no holes, 9 pieces of alligator pepper, *ewé bàrà*-Citrullus Colocynthis, *irumarúgbó*-Unidentified, *Irúnlá gbígbe*-dried okra; burn everything together, tie it into 7 notches in new white cloth. Smear the cloth with the blood of a cock. Put the cloth in a guard, and bury it at the entrance to the farm.

- (v) *Àtòrìn*-*Glyphaea Brevis* tree should be planted on the guard. When the *àtòrìn* has germinated, white *èkuru* must be sprayed on it once in a month. Thus, it becomes a ritual for the farmer to do this on a monthly basis.

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- (vi) *Ewé jinwinnin*-*Acalypha Ciliata* Forssk, *Èso pándòrò tó ẹ̀ẹ̀ẹ̀ ọ̀*-*Kigelia Africana*, *lìlì-kiwi*, *adiẹ aṣa kékeré*-small *Aṣa*; burn everything together, mix it with *èkuru élépo*-bean cake mixed with stew, and spray it in the farm.

### **Kola nut:**

In Africa in general and for the Yorùbá in particular, kola nut is regarded as a sacred nut, which is used to communicate with the gods. Kola nut is the seed kernel of a large African tree grown commercially around the world, particularly in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Brazil and other parts of South America ([www.AfroStyleMag.com](http://www.AfroStyleMag.com)). According to reports, kola nut originated in tropical West Africa, but it can also be found in Brazil and the West Indies, where it was taken to by the European transoceanic violation of African humanity as a part of an economically exploitative and international human trafficking enterprise.

Its usefulness is found in its symbolism among the Igbo in Nigeria where it is used to grace social occasions and as a welcome offering to guests. The Yorùbá used it for various purposes. It is used for divination to communicate with the gods. This is evident in all the shrines and temples of the gods except in *Ẓàngó* worship. It is useful in naming, wedding and burial ceremonies, and it is also medicinal. Research has revealed that kola nut is high in caffeine as well as a number of other phyto-chemical compounds including betaine (a natural red pigment), kola red, phenolics, tannins, theobromine and theophylline. Its bitter astringent flavour is used as a digestive aid prior to meals to stimulate gastric juice and bile production, while its caffeine and theobromine content make it a potent neuro-stimulant that is used to combat fatigue ([www.AfroStyleMag.com](http://www.AfroStyleMag.com)). According to Ogunleye (Interview respondent), kola nut is a very good remedy for asthma, blood clotting, malaria, low sperm count, infertility, hypertension, love potion, toothache, headache and whooping cough. Ogunleye gave no details or scientific explanations. However, there is a scientific proof for some of these claims.

One often finds West African manual workers, labourers and farm workers chewing kola as work progresses on a daily basis and as a pep-me-up between meals, although the practice is said to be dwindling amongst the younger generation. Nonetheless, the kola nut is still used as a type of aperitif prior to meals to enhance the taste of the food to follow, as its astringency cleanses the palate and stimulates saliva production.

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Nutritionally, it is a source of some B-vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin) as well as proteins, starch and sugar. Muslims in Africa often substitute it for alcohol as their religion forbids them to drink, and although it contains 1-3.5% caffeine, it is not addictive. It is the distinctive source of flavor for colas and certain soft drinks and tonics.

Medical science has proved that kola nut contains nicotine, which is injurious to the body chemistry, and that regular consumption of it can lead to insomnia, high blood pressure, high heartbeat, high-level toxicity, over stimulations and adverse locomotive effects (www.AfroStyleMag.com). To some of the problems mentioned, the Yorùbá, through their alternative means of medical system, are able to take care of them. For instance, mistletoe (*àfòmó*) - *Tapinanthus Truncatus* (parasite plant) obtained from the kola nut tree works better to care for high blood pressure, high heartbeat and high-level toxicity more than from other trees (Anslem, 2013). However, despite some of these negative medical reports, kola nut is still a cherished commodity with a huge economic prospect in terms of exportation to distant counties like China, the United States of America and India, where it is largely used for the production of cola drinks and pharmaceutical products. These are the reasons kola nut is a valuable product among cash crops in Yorùbáland, and every farmer will do everything possible to aid its growth. These are some of the indigeneous intelligence used in enhancing kola nut to produce abundant fruits.

- (i) *Èso ògìrìsákó*-seeds of *Anchomanes Difformis*, *èso jinwinnin*-seeds of *Acalypha Ciliata* Forssk, *èso Èyìnolobe*-seeds of unidentified, *èso Asofèyeje*-seeds of *Rauvolfia Vomitoria*, *egungun òkú*-bone of a dead person; burn everything together, mix with *èkuru funfun*-white bean cake and spray it in the farm for ants to spread it.
- (ii) *Okùn olùso*-hanging rope, *Ewé Jinwinnin*-*Acalypha Ciliata* Forssk, *okó ògèdè anùkàn sogba*-unidentified; pound and burn together. Divide everything into two, add one part to palm kernel oil, and soak the knife that would be used to cut the kola nut trees till the following day. The knife can then be used to make a slight cut on the trees. On the use of the second part, all the soil covering the roots of the kola nut trees would be removed and the medicine would be sprinkled around the roots before covering it back with the soil (Interview despondent).

Here, one should note that any of the knowledge used for cocoa is equally good for kola nut, coffee, palm tree, cashew and any other cash crops. Therefore, all the methods mentioned for coca are also good for kola nut.

## **Positive and Negative Implications of Using Indigenous Knowledge to Aid Crop Production**

The yam planted with these aids is always big and long to attract people's attention. So also will it attract big sales for the farmers that engage in the act. However, there are negative implications for such aids. One, such yam are not good for pounded yam because the pounded yam will turn black after a few hours. Two, it changes colour when the yam is cut in raw form. Again, the farmer and his household must not eat from the yam; otherwise, sickness and death await them.

The melon, according to information gathered, will produce multiple fruits that would be enough for the farmer after sales to fulfill what he/she pledged to use the money for at the beginning before planting the melon—thus, a happy moment for the farmer that gets big rewards from his/her labour. This will allow the farmer to meet his/her financial obligations like building houses, buying motors, sending their children to schools and other financial comforts that he/she might have desired or pledged to use the money for once it was realised from the sales of the produce. But the negative effects of this are that the farmer must not use his hands to remove those ones that rested on one another. Rather, he must use legs to do so. Otherwise, the person will run mad or die. If the farmer or planter does contrary, he will either run mad or die mysteriously. The melon will bring out many fruits that will rest on top of each other. Before planting, he must pledge what he wants to use the proceeds of the melon to do that ranges from a house to buying motors or some other things. He would get the money from the cultivation. He must not plant it every year, for if he does, he or his children will die, and whatever he uses the money from the proceeds of the melon for will collapse. However, he must use the money for that purpose. Otherwise, he will run mad. The beans also will germinate and do well. The same is applicable to the maize that will germinate and do well. Here, there are no side effects for the consumers of these crops as claimed by one of the informants (Interview despondent).

On the part of the cash crops, information gathered revealed that though such a farmer will get huge money from the produce, if the crop was supposed to produce fruits for, say, twenty years, it will shorten it to about seven years or, at most, ten years. Also, all the nearby farms of similar crops will not do well because all that these nearby crops were supposed to produce have been acquired by the one enhanced. Though those nearby farms are not going to die off or have their life span cut short like the one magic is used on, the crops are not going to produce seeds for the period that the one enhanced is still functioning and producing (Interview despondent).

## **Psychological Implications of the Use of Indigenous Knowledge to Aid Agricultural Production for the Consumers and the Farmers**

As said earlier, there are not any side effects or implications on the part of the consumers that eat such crops, but a yam planted with magic and medicine is usually not good for pounded yam because after a few hours of pounding, it will turn black. The same thing is applicable to the yam that will turn brownish when cut and black after a few minutes even before boiling the yam. Such is enough to discourage the consumers from purchasing such yam.

Also, the farmer who uses indigenous knowledge to plant crops will experience some negative effects. One example of such is as follows: the knife he uses for cutting yam seedling must not be used for any other purpose. If he does, it will spell trouble for him. He or his family won't have an opportunity to eat from his labour. If he tries to eat from such product, he will fall sick and may die in the process, or one of his family members will die. Therefore, his household members are strictly warned not to go near the farm. Not only that, whatever he uses the money to do, whether he uses the money realised to build houses or purchase motors, will collapse before his face like a pack of cards before he dies. As a result of this, the farmers who do such an act are not psychologically stable because of the fear that a mistake could come from any of the members of his family who may eat such produce ignorantly. This is the reason why such produce are taken to distant lands for sale.

Besides, the money realised from the sales of such crops are not spent the way they like. Before planting, the farmer must make a vow or pledge, particularly, the melon on what he would use the money realised from its sales on. He dare not use the money no matter how small on something else. If he does, he would run mad without cure. And whatever he uses the money realised to purchase will become a history before he dies.

Again, the use of indigenous knowledge for aiding agricultural production is an act that is not exposed to the understanding of the community to see because of what it involves. Anybody that engages in it does it with utmost secrecy because of some things like human parts that are involved in preparing the medicine for the crops which must not be known by the public. Therefore, if and when such secret is known, the tendency that people will disassociate themselves from such a farmer and his crops is always there. At the end, such a farmer will also be sent away from his community because he has deviated from the norms of his society. The fact that such a farmer won't be able to display his affluence and be able to stay in his community for the rest of his life is enough trauma for him to bear for the rest of his life if the secret is blown open to the society. Furthermore, the spirits of the persons that are working like zombies in the farm or whose parts were used for the magic will neither rest nor go to heaven and will not allow the farmer to be at peace.

Finally, the belief of many individuals on earth, particularly the Yorùbá, is that human sojourn on earth is a temporary one and that heaven is the ultimate for everyone. They believe that the aim and objective of every individual, therefore, is to go to heaven. But with a life of blemish here on earth, it will be difficult to make *òrun baba ẹni* as the Yorùbá would say or believe (Interview despondent). For many of the religions in the world preach that any human with blemish will not get the favour of the Creator.

Research findings have revealed that to a large extent, the love of money, greed and material gain contribute a lot to the reason why people indulge in such an act. Also, peer influence contributes in no small measure to this issue. According to some of the key informants, a majority of those who go for the method that involve the use of human spirits are influenced by their friends to boost their social status in the society that will form part of the pressure groups in their communities. As a result, such farmers influence a lot of decisions with their money on matters affecting their communities, thereby placing them in important roles in the society.

## Conclusion

Considering some of the implications involved, outcome or end product of many of these methods, one would conclude that it is not advisable to indulge in such an act of planting crops with magic. It is a good thing to be rich in order for one to be able to care for his family but not to the detriment of depriving others from living or allowing their spirits to rest in peace. If we so much believe in destiny as emphasised by nearly all the religions in the world, then one should know that regardless of the business one ventures into, if one is destined to be rich, the money would surely come. This is evident in *Ìrosùn Ogbè* (Salami, 2002):

*Òde tá ní kó má hu gbégi*

The open space that we detest its growing stubborn grass

*Òde ẹ bẹ òde hu gbégi*

It grew stubborn grass

*A difá fún Gúnngún ọmọ olóréé*

Casts divination for the Gunnungun the child of Oloreé

*Tètè tá ní kómá hù láàtàn*

The Tete vegetable that we detest of growing on a refuse dump site

*Tètè ẹ bẹ tètè hù láàtàn*

It grew on the refuse dump

*A difá fún Kòlikòlì ọmọ olóréé*

Casts divination for Kolikoli the child of Oloreé

*Ohùn Awo nìbà*

A priest's voice is in reverence

*Ohùn Awo làşẹ*

A priest's voice is the command

*A difá fún Èlúlú tí şomọ Olóréé Àgbon...*

Casts divination for Eluulu the child of Oloreé Agbon



*Gúnnungún* was disliked, and as a result he was deprived on two occasions to be crowned as king. But because he had been destined to be king, the two younger brothers made mistakes that made him become the last option. Contrary to people's hope that he would not live long, he was on the throne for many years with peaceful reign. What would be would surely be. Therefore, we should desist from doing evil.

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