

CHAPTER 2 LOCAL GEOGRAPHY

Objectives

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

- (i) identify physical and cultural features of their town and village.
- (ii) describe the influence physical and cultural features have on human activities.

Local Geography is the study of the physical and cultural features found in our locality. Locality refers to the place you live in, its surroundings and Local Government area. It is important to study our locality so that we can interact with the environment in a sustainable manner. Features and activities in our locality include: i. Physical features are natural things such as mountains, valleys, rivers, vegetation, *etc.*

ii. Cultural features are man-made features like settlements, roads, farms, factories, *etc.*

iii. Human activities such as farming, mining, trading manufacturing, *etc.*

iv. Resources like farm products, timber, minerals, water, *etc.*

Village

A village is a form of rural settlement with many homesteads. It is compact, dispersed or nucleated with a population of several thousands.

Characteristics of a village

- a) The people engage in primary activities like fishing, farming and mining.
- b) Population is homogenous, that is, it consists of one main ethnic group.
- c) Facilities in the village include schools, post office and markets.
- d) Villages in developing countries like Nigeria are not planned so the buildings do not have a distinct pattern.
- e) It has a small areal size.

Functions of a village

- i. Residential Function: Houses in villages perform residential function to the residents.
- ii. Marketing Function; markets are important sites for the sale of crops and manufactured items.
- iii. Food supply: A village is a source of food supply to towns since agricultural activities are more dominant.
- iv. Religious centers such as church, mosque and traditional centers provide religious services to residents.
- v. Social function such as festivals enhance human relations.

Town

A town is a large nucleated urban settlement with thousands or millions of people.

Characteristics of a town

- 1. The people engage in secondary, tertiary, and quaternary activities.
- 2. It has a large areal size.
- 3. Facilities such as universities, teaching hospitals, schools are provided.
- 4. Population is heterogeneous, that is, population consists of several ethnic groups.
- 5. Buildings are compact and the area is well built-up and planned.

Functions

1. Towns provide administrative functions such as local government headquarters.
2. They perform residential function.
3. Towns have large commercial centers such as supermarkets, markets *etc.*
4. Institutions such as universities, schools and research centers provide educational services.
5. Cinema houses, clubs etc provide social functions.
6. Industrial function

It is important to note that some functions are common to both villages and towns such as residential, religious, marketing, agricultural and social functions.

Influence of Physical Features on Human Activities include:

1. Mining activities are carried out where mineral resources are found in rocks.
2. Fishing is done in rivers and seas.
3. Industries are usually located where raw materials such as minerals and agricultural products are in abundance.
4. Areas with fertile soil attract farming activities.
5. The type of soil found in a place influences the type of crop that can be cultivated.

Influence of Human Features on Human Activities

1. Construction of buildings involves the activities of town planners, surveyors, bricklayers, architects, *etc.*
2. Plantation agriculture is carried out by government agencies, private companies and individuals.

Direction and Distance

Distance and direction are important concepts that help us to explain the location of physical and cultural features in a village, town, local government area, state and country. The distance between two features helps us to know how far apart they are from each other. This can be determined by using a measuring tape. For example, the distance between your school and the next building can be measured using a tape. Direction on the other hand refers to the location or position of a feature relative to other features in the area. The direction of a feature from a specific point of observation can be determined using the four cardinal points shown in fig 2.1 and the intermediate position within these points.

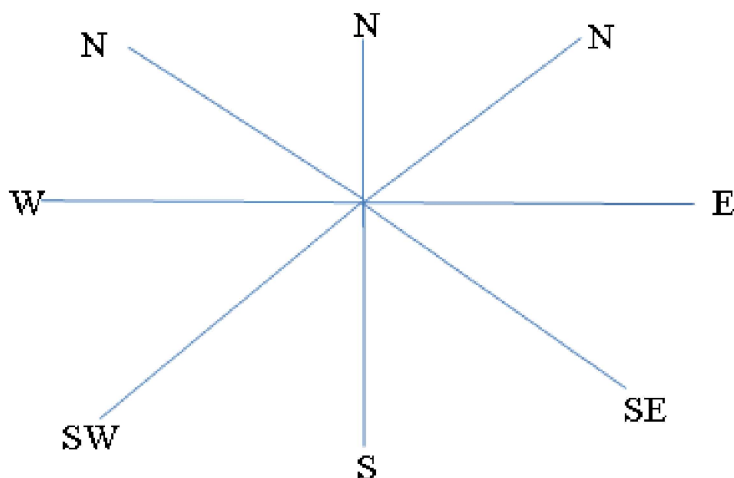


Fig. 2.1: The cardinal points.

Local Government Area

A local government area (LGA) is a geopolitical unit that consists of towns and villages which interact together. A large town can be divided into several LGAs. A LGA is usually named after the largest settlement, physical feature, cardinal direction, ethnic group, *etc.* As the third-tier of government, LGA has specific responsibilities it performs to the communities. Each LGA has specific physical and cultural features and administrative center. Human activities in LGAs include agriculture, mining, fishing, trading, craft *etc.* Nigeria has 774 local government areas.



Fig. 2.1: Local government area

State

A State is the second tier of government and it is made up of several LGAs. Each State has a capital which is located in the large city in the State. The number of local government areas in each State in Nigeria varies from one State to another. Table 2.1 shows the States in Nigeria and their capitals.

Table 2.1: States in Nigeria

States	Capital	No of Local Government Area
Abia	Umuahia	17
Adamawa	Yola	21
AkwaiBom	Uyo	31
Anambra	Awka	21
Bauchi	Bauchi	20
Bayelsa	Yenogoa	8
Benue	Makurdi	23
Borno	Maiduguri	27
Cross River	Calabar	18
Delta	Asaba	13
Ebonyi	Abakaliki	5
Edo	Benin	11
Ekiti	Ado Ekiti	16
Enugu	Enugu	
Gombe	Gombe	11
Imo	Owerri	18
Jigawa	Dutse	27

Kaduna	Kaduna	23
Kano	Kano	44
Katsina	Katsina	34
Kebbi	BirninKebbi	21
Kogi	Lokoja	21
Kwara	Ilorin	16
Lagos	Ikeja	20
Nassarawa	Lafia	13
Niger	Minna	25
Ogun	Abeokuta	20
Ondo	Akure	18
Osun	Osogbo	30
Oyo	Ibadan	33
Plateau	Jos	17
Rivers	Port Harcourt	23
Sokoto	Sokoto	23
Taraba	Jalingo	16
Yobe	Damaturu	17
Zamfara	Gusau	14
FCT (Abuja)	Abuja	6

The number of States in Nigeria has increased gradually since her independence. Today, there are thirty-six States and the Federal Capital Territory. States are created to enhance the development of various parts of the country, and to make administration easier.

Summary

- The study of features in our locality is referred to as Local Geography.
- Our locality consists of physical and cultural features, human activities and resources.
- The direction of each feature can be determined through the cardinal points while the distance of the feature from a particular point can be measured using a tape.
- A village is a rural settlement that performs various functions.
- A town is a large urban settlement with higher number of people and facilities than a village.
- Some functions are performed by both a village and town such as residential and marketing function whereas only a town can perform administrative function. A village and town depend on each other for the provision of services.
- A local government area comprises villages and towns which interact together. Each local government area has its own distinct physical and cultural features and human activities.
- A State is a large area made up by several local government areas.

Revision Questions

Objective Questions

1. The study of our locality is called

- a. Physical Geography.
 - b. Human Geography.
 - c. Map Reading.
 - d. Local Geography.
2. Which of these is not a cultural feature found in our locality?
- a. Mountain b. School c. Markets d. Hospital
3. Which of these functions is not performed by both a village and a town?
- A. Educational B. Residential C. Marketing D. Administrative
4. A village can be differentiated from a town in terms of
- A. population size.
 - B. agricultural activities.
 - C. presence of facilities.
 - D. climate.
5. The direction of a feature relative to other features can be determined by
- a. measurement with a tape.
 - b. cardinal points.
 - c. using a ruler.
 - d. looking up in the sky.
6. Which of these is not a characteristic of a village?
- A. Homogenous population
 - B. Mostly primary activities are carried out
 - C. Heterogeneous population
 - D. Small area size
7. Which of these is not a function of a village?
- A. Residual function B. Marketing function C. Religion function D. Administrative function
8. Which of these can be found in a village?
- A. University
 - B. Supermarket
 - C. Research Institution
 - D. Market
9. Which of these functions is performed by both village and town?
- A. Residential function
 - B. Administrative function
 - C. Research
 - D. Industrial function
10. Which of these do not influence agricultural activities?
- A. Fertile soil
 - B. Settlement
 - C. Topography
 - D. Rainfall

Essay Questions

1. Give five examples each of physical and cultural features in your locality.
2. State three uses of the resources in your area.
3. Describe four human activities practised in your area.
4. State five differences between a town and a village.

5. State four functions each of a town and a village.

Answers

1. D 2. A 3. D 4. A 5. B 6. C 7. D 8. D 9. A 10. B