

# Competitive Conversion and Its Implications for Modernization (Nigeria)

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## 1. Introduction

Competitive conversion exists when two or more proselytizing agencies seek to recruit members from the same population and membership in one organization mutually excludes that in any of the others. Competitive conversion logically can range from almost zero competition, where one agency successfully forbids and persecutes its competitors, to a situation of equality in competition. The practical effect of the competition is to increase the potential, or at least promised, benefits available to new members. Several factors help both to clarify any given situation and to construct a paradigm of competitive conversion situations.

Among these are: techniques of conversion, agents, types of converts, occasions of conversion, and changes in behavior of converts.

In studying conversion sociologically, I follow SHIBUTANI and KWAN (1965) who hold that true conversion is rare and that people convert in order to obtain perceived advantages.