Introduction
1.1 Definition
Etymologically, archaeology is originated from two Greek words; Archaeos which means “ancient” or “past” and Logos which means “study”

Functionally, archaeology is the systematic study of past human societies primarily through the recovering and analysis of material culture and environmental data which they have left behind, these includes artifacts, ecofacts and features. Because archaeology employs a wide range of different procedures, it can be considered to be both science and humanity. In America archaeology is considered to be a branch of Anthropology while in Europe is taken as independent discipline.

Archaeology studies human history from the development of the first stone tools in eastern Africa around 2.5 million years ago up until recent decades. It is of most importance for learning about prehistoric societies, when there are no written records for historians to study. Archaeology is unique among sciences in its ability to study changes in human societies over long period of time. It provides a way of studying the collective heritage of humankind.

Artifacts
Artifacts are portable objects made or modified by humans. Examples of artifacts include stone tools, pottery, metal implements and bone points. Archaeologists therefore, study all these artifacts and come up with appropriate history of the early people. Artifacts like hammer-stone and pottery retain their form and appearance after the archaeologist takes them from the ground.

Ecofacts
Ecofacts are non-artifactual material remains that are not directly created or modified by humans but have cultural relevance. Examples of ecofacts include remnants of both wild and domesticated animals and plant species i.e. bones and seeds. Although they are neither
directly created nor significantly modified by human activity, ecofacts provide appropriate information about past human activities. These and other ecofacts such as soils contribute to our understanding of the past because they reflect ancient environmental conditions, diet, and resource exploitation. Sometimes the line between ecofacts and artifacts is a bit ambiguous. For example, bones with cut marks from butchering might be considered artifact (reflecting human technology) as well as ecofacts (yielding clues to the ancient environment).

**Features**

Features are non-portable structures made or modified by humans. Examples include buildings, pits, post holes and burials. These features cannot be removed from their place of discovery without destroying their original form.

**Goals of archaeology**

Modern archaeology has five broad goals including conserving and managing archaeological sites; studying cultural history; reconstructing past life ways; explaining cultural processes and understanding the archaeological records. By no means would every archaeologist agree that all five of these objectives are equally valid or, indeed, that they should coexist. In practice, however, each objective usually complements the other, especially when archaeologists design their research to answer specific questions rather than merely dig as a precursor to describing rows of excavated objects.

**Conserving and managing archaeological sites**

- Is the fundamental responsibility of all archaeologists to ensure the conservation and survival of the finite archaeological materials and sites. i.e. CHM.

**Reconstruction of Culture History**

- This involves the description of human cultures extending thousands of years into the past. An archaeologist working on the culture history of an area describes the prehistoric cultures of that region. Culture history is normally derived from the study of sites and the artifacts and structures in a temporal and spatial context.

By investigating groups of prehistoric sites and the many artefacts in them, archaeologists can erect local and regional sequences of human cultures that extend over centuries even millennia. Most of the activity is descriptive, accumulating minute chronological and spatial frameworks of archaeological data as a basis for observing how particular cultures evolved and changed through prehistoric times. Culture history is an essential preliminary to any work on lifeways or cultural process.
Past Lifeways

- The study of past lifeways – the ways in which people made their living in changing environments of the past – has developed into a major goal in recent years. This involves the reconstruction of how people lived in the past and how their societies were organized.

Studying past lifeways is a multidisciplinary enterprise, which enables the reconstruction of ancient subsistence patterns from animal bones, carbonized seeds, and other remains recovered through careful excavation. Archaeologists, pollen analysts, osteologists, and botanists cooperate in looking at archaeological sites in a much wider perspective. The aim is to look on changing patterns of human settlement, subsistence strategies, and ancient environments.

Culture Process

A third archaeological goal seeks to explain the processes of culture change in the past. The ultimate goal is to explain why human cultures in all parts of the world reached their various stages of cultural evolution. Human tools are seen as part of a system of related phenomena that include both culture and natural environment. Archaeologists design their research work within a framework of testable propositions that may be supported, modified or rejected when they review all of the excavated and analysed archaeological data.

This processual approach to archaeology is based on an assumption that the past is inherently knowable, provided that rigorous research methods and designs are used and that field methods are impeccable. It follows that archaeology is more than a descriptive science and that archaeologists can explain cultural change in the past.

Understanding the archaeological record

- The archaeological record is made up of material things and arrangements of material objects in the soil. The only way we can understand this record is by knowing something about how the individual finds came into being. Binford relate archaeological data to a kind of untranslated language that has to be decoded if we are to make statements about human behaviour in the past. Therefore, the aim of archaeologists is to unlock people’s knowledge of the past people through the interpretation of material remains.
Scope of archaeology

- Scope refers to time (temporal scope) and themes (thematic scope) within which archaeology as a discipline swings.
- Temporal scope – from 2.5 million years ago (the beginning of human culture) to present.
- Temporal scope can be divided into Prehistoric archaeology (2.5 mill. years ago to 3000 BC) and Historical archaeology (3000 BC to present).

Thematic scope / specialization refer to different themes in archaeology.

Example:

- Historical archaeology
- Prehistoric archaeology
- Environmental archaeology
- Classical archaeology
- Industrial archaeology
- Underwater archaeology

- Prehistoric archaeology studies prehistoric times from the time of the earliest human beings up to the frontiers of documentary history. That is to say 2.5 m.y.a to 3000 BC.
- Historical archaeology refers to archaeological investigation carried out in conjunction with analyses of written records. It covers the period from 3000 BC up to present.
- Underwater archaeology is the study of sites and ancient shipwrecks on the seafloor and lake bottoms. There is a tendency to think of underwater archaeology as something different, but in fact it is not. The objective of such archaeology remain the same: the reconstruction and interpretation of past cultures and the scientific study, through material remains of ancient human endeavour, in this case, seafaring.
- Industrial archaeology is the study of buildings and other structures dating to the Industrial Revolution or later, such as Victorian railway stations, old cotton plantations, windmills, and even slum housing in England. Anyone entering the field needs at least some training as an architectural historian.
- Classical archaeology is the study of the remains of the great classical civilizations of Greece and Rome.