

## ETHNIC CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA: A CASE OF IFE-MODAKEKE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

Observation from the literature shows that the role of ethnicity as a mobilizing agent is among the most important questions of this century as conflicts linked to ethnicity have led to significant loss of life and injuries in many cities, and become major elements in impoverishment, undermining human security and sustainable urban development. Hitherto, the literature on this issue in Africa is relatively weak in terms of systematically providing empirical evidence to substantiate its claims. The paper present preliminary report of a survey study carried out on urban ethno-communal conflict in Nigeria: the case of Ife-Modakeke. The study shows that given the circumstance that led to the birth of Modakeke; the status of Modakeke and that of its people has always been a source of dispute and conflict due to issues relating to landlord/tenant relationship or indigene/non-indigene issues. In both communities ethnic attachment is high, and, inter-personal relationship among the people of the two communities is not that very cordial. Significant relationship is found between inter-personal relationship and age, age of the youngest child, land ownership, if most important organization belonged to is ethnic organization, and having relative in the other community. Negative relationship is found between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities. This result suggest that for sustainable peace to be attained there is the need to pursue policies that encourages social integration, as well as policies that discourages strong ethnic attachment and the spread of ethnically related organizations in the two communities.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity; Conflicts; Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity refers to a group of people with a common socio/cultural identity such as language, common worldview, religion and common cultural traits (Boaten, 2000). Thus ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character (such as language and culture) of their boundaries (Nnoli, 1980). In other words, ethnic groups represent categories of people characterized by cultural symbols including language, value systems and normative behaviour, and whose members are anchored

in a particular territory (Otite, 1990). Actually, the word ethnic is derived from the Greek word *ethnos* which means a group of people who share a common and distinctive culture. In its classical meaning, ethnic relates to a member of a particular *ethnos* (Imobighe, 2003). Hence ethnicity according to Imobighe should be seen as the feeling of belonging to a distinctive cultural or linguistic group, or a manifestation of ethnic consciousness in relation to other groups.

Conflicts arise from the pursuit of divergent

interests, goals and aspirations by individuals and or groups in defined social and physical environments (Otite, 1999). As observed in the literature, ethnic conflict derives their rationale and configuration from perceived socio/cultural differences. In fact, Otite (1990) presents a picture of ethnicity as the contextual discrimination by members of one group against others on the basis of differentiated system of socio-cultural symbols. He affirms that ethnicity has the properties of common group consciousness and identity and also group exclusiveness on the basis of which social discriminations are made. This in most case as Nigerian experience have shown resulted to violent intractable conflicts.

Nigeria is a large multi-ethnic country, where ethnic cleavages remain a critical problem and where ethnic violence has erupted periodically. In recent years, Nigeria had witnessed the outbreak of several violent communal or ethnic conflicts, while some old ones had gained additional potency (Imobighe, 2003). Among the prominent recent ones are: Yoruba-Hausa community in Shagamu, Ogun State; Eleme-Okrika in Rivers State; the intermittent clashes in Kano, Kano State; Zango-Kataf in Kaduna State; Tiv-Jukun in Wukari, Taraba State; Ogoni-Adoni in Rivers State; Chamba-Kuteb in Taraba State; Itsekiri-Ijaw/Urhobo in Delta State; Aguleri-Umuleri in Anambra State; Ijaw-Ilaje conflict in Ondo State; Basa-Egbura in Nassarawa State; Hausa/Fulani-Sawaya in Bauchi State; Fulani-Irigwe and Yelwa-Shendam, both in Plateau State; Hausa-Yoruba clashes in Idi-Araba in Lagos State, and Ife-Modakeke in Osun State (Ubi, 2001; Imobighe, 2003; Omotayo, 2005).

The oldest intra-ethnic conflict in Nigeria,

however, is Ife-Modakeke crisis. It has been going on for more than a century (Aguda, 1994; Albert, 1999; Agbe, 2001; Toriola, 2001). The conflict has become its own *raison d'être*, its own self-empowered, and self-fulfilling, as it had since detached from its original cause (Augsburger, 1992; Omotayo, 2005).

The paper is divided into nine sections. Following this introduction in section one, is a brief account of Ife-Modakeke crisis and methodology of the study in sections two and three respectively. This is followed by an examination of the ethnic identity, intensification of ethnic consciousness, ethnic attachment and ethnic relation in the study area in sections four, five, six and seven respectively. Test of the stated hypothesis and the summary, policy implications and conclusion are contained in sections eight and nine respectively.

#### **IFE-MODAKEKE CRISIS – A BRIEF ACCOUNT**

Ife-Modakeke, is situated in Osun State in the South – West Zone of Nigeria. The south –West Zone is made up of six States, namely, Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun Ondo, Osun and Oyo States. The Zone is traditionally inhabited by one of Nigeria's three largest ethnic groups, the Yoruba. Historical accounts have it that Ifes and Modakekes are sons and daughters of the same parents. As Yorubas, their ancestry is traced to Oduduwa the progenitor of Yoruba race. It was the collapse of Old Oyo Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which caused a flood of refugees down south. Most of these refugees headed towards Ile-Ife. They must have been attracted to Ile-Ife by the historic image of the city as the aboriginal home of the Yoruba people [*Orisun Yoruba*] (Albert, 1999:143). The Ooni gladly welcomed the refugees as they relocated to

Ile-Ife (Akinjogbin, 1992) and subsequently formed a community known today as Modakeke on a separate settlement created for them. The relationship between the Ifes and these Oyo refugees was very cordial at the initial stage. The Ooni and his Chiefs found them to be good allies in moments of warfare and good hands in farm work. The Oyos provided military support to the Ifes during the Owu War of 1825 and various Ijesha invasions (Albert, 1999:144). This encouraged Ife Chiefs to throw their doors open to more Oyo refugees as they came in greater numbers. Land was given to them and several of them worked for Ife farmers.

The first Ife-Modakeke crisis occurred between 1835 and 1849 (Albert, 1999; Oladoyin, 2001). This marked the beginning of an age-long communal violence between the Modakeke and the aboriginal communities in Ile-Ife. Historical account of the origin of Ife-Modakeke crisis as stated by Albert, (1999:144-145) is that an Ife Chief, Okunade, the *Maye*, who was the leader of the Yoruba warriors and settled in Ibadan in the early nineteenth century was a brave warrior, and was an autocrat. He wielded so much influence in Ibadan politics that the Ifes started to see Ibadan as an extension town. In 1835, Okunade's autocracy was challenged by some Oyo citizens in Ibadan; he was consequently expelled from the town. He attempted to recapture the city during the Gbanamu battle. He was killed and the Oyos thus took over the political leadership of Ibadan to the utter exclusion of their Ife allies. The Ifes responded by venting their anger on the Oyo refugees in their town (Akitoye, 1970; Ajayi and Akitoye 1980). The refugees therefore were getting ill-treated and were sold into slavery. Around this same 1835 when the Ife hostility commenced against the Oyo refugees in

their midst, rumours were circulating that the Fulani jihadists were preparing to invade some parts of Yorubaland from their Ilorin base. The surrounding Ife territories of Ikire, Iwata, Gbongan, Ipetumodu and Origbo became evacuated and the refugees came to settle in Ile-Ife. But the attitude of the Ifes to strangers had changed. Ooni Abeweila, who ascended the throne in 1839, had to send some of the refugees back to Ipetumodu, Gbongan and Ikire in 1847 following the defeat of the Fulani invaders at Osogbo in 1840. By the same year, the Ooni created a separate settlement for those Oyo refugees who had no home to rerun to. The settlement was named Modakeke after the cry of a nest of storks on a large tree near the site. The leader of the Oyo refugees was given the title *Ogunsua* (Johnson 1973; Akinjogbin 1992).

Till date, there had been seven major wars – 1835-1849, 1882-1909, 1946-1949, 1981, 1983, 1997-1998 and 2000. The conflict is depicted as a conflict between the Ife "landlords" and the Modakeke "strangers/tenants". The recent crisis has caused over 2000 deaths and several more injuries. Several hundreds of people were shot, slaughtered or lynched; several houses and properties were destroyed.

Various studies have examined Ife-Modakeke crisis. Such studies include Albert (1999), Aguda, (2001); Oladoyin (2001), Agbe (2001), Toriola (2001), and Babajimi (2003). These studies have examined the history, causes and consequences of Ife-Modakeke crisis. The causes of the conflicts between Ifes and Modakekes are many and varied and are partly economic and party political and identity issues revolving around land ownership issues, payment of land rent (*Isakole*), status of Modakeke community,

local government creation and location of local government headquarters. In addition, the crisis, since the post-colonial period, has been a veritable weapon in the hands of those interested in creating political tensions in Yoruba land.

There have been various studies on African peace and conflict which have provided novel theoretical perspectives and to a larger degree manages to capture the core issues explaining turmoil and violence in the continent. However, when assessed jointly, the publications are relatively weak in terms of systematically providing empirical evidence to substantiate its claims. The literature does not consist of any statistical study trying to substantiate claims of general patterns. The intention in this study is to present a preliminary report on ethnicity and urban landlords/tenants relationship and conflicts with a view to have a better understanding of the challenges facing local peoples and those on the outside who seek to interact with the group through business, humanitarian/development and political spheres. Among the issues that are examined are the construction of identity, and inter-personal relationship in the two communities. The research questions that the study addresses are: How is identity constructed? How is ethnic consciousness intensified? How is ethnic attachment among the people of the two communities? How is the inter-personal relationship in the two communities? Is there relationship between socio-economic characteristics and the inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities? Is there relationship between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities? The null hypotheses tested in the study are that (i) there is no relationship between the inter-personal rela-

tionships among the people of the two communities and their socio-economic characteristics; and (ii) there is no relationship between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities.

## METHODOLOGY

The data base for the study was obtained from a larger household survey on "Gender and urban ethno-communal conflicts: a study of women's perception, aspiration and role in the case of Ife-Modakeke in Nigeria". The household survey was implemented using the method of face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on the role of women and men in sustaining, or mitigating Ife-Modakeke conflict, women's and men's perception of the conflict, attitude towards violence/conflict/use of weapons, recollection of past violence conflict, and the socio-demographic characteristics information such as income, age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, etc

In the two communities a total of 390 households were interviewed. Exact population figures of the two communities was not known as at the time of the field survey. The result of National Population census conducted in March 2006 was not yet released as at the time of the field survey. Therefore, in Ife community 195 households were interviewed, and in Modakeke community 195 households were interviewed. The choice of the sample size is based on the considerations of many factors including cost, time, accuracy, and the fact that information relating to ethno-communal conflict is still very sensitive in the two communities.

Comprehensive list of households/dwellings in Ife and Modakeke communities is not

available. Therefore, with the aid of an updated map of the two communities, Ife community is divided into 28 localities and Modakeke community is divided into 15 localities after blocking off localities that are badly affected by the conflict. By locality, I mean population clusters grouped together based on the local name of the area and the presence of notable boundaries such as stream or road. All the accessible 15 localities in Modakeke community were selected, while in Ife, table of random number was used to select 15 localities. Thirteen (13) questionnaires each were administered in each of the localities selected. The households were randomly selected. Heads of households who were above 30 years in age and/or the spouse, preferably first wife in a polygamous household were interviewed. In order to ensure equal representation of women and men in the survey, the interview was conducted in alternate manner as survey proceeds, male/female head of household or wife preferably first wife in a polygamous household.

The survey was carried out in July and August, 2006. For some reasons including security and safety, 20 field assistants were employed – 10 field assistants who are familiar with Ife community for Ife community survey, and 10 field assistants who are familiar with Modakeke community for Modakeke community survey. The field assistants are students of Obafemi Awolowo University. Training programme was conducted for these 20 field assistants on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2006, at the Department of Geography, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. I also engaged the service of a colleague Lecturer in the Department of Geography at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in the training programme and the field work.

The secondary sources of data that were used include published and unpublished materials, technical reports, and publications. The data collected was analysed using simple frequencies, and percentages. Correlation statistical technique was used to test the stated hypothesis.

### **ETHNIC IDENTITY IN THE STUDY AREA**

Identity is defined as a flexible and manipulative force employed by individual(s) to gain recognition over others in a particular space. It is a powerful force constructed by individual or group of people based on the consciousness of what they are as against what others are. Identities are constructed on the basis of various traits and experiences. Many of those characteristics are open to different interpretations. Collective identity is derived from the belonging to or affiliation to precise categories such as social groups, socio-professional categories, ethnic groups, religion, nationals etc, with which individuals identify themselves and which generate a group of internal attributions and external attributions that define the make up of this identity. The constituents of identity include ethnic consciousness and traditional customs attach to individuals and group of individuals.

Although the Yoruba claim to have all descended from Oduduwa with Ile-Ife as their spiritual home, hitherto, Ife and Modakeke people see themselves as a different social group. The major factors that have helped in the construction of different social identity are their historical background and Yoruba language pronunciation.

Historical evidence shows that the Modakekes are Oyo refugees who migrated at

one point in time or the other to Ile-Ife from different locations of Yoruba Kingdom at the end of the Yoruba inter-tribal wars. They took refuge in Ile-Ife. They were initially well-received by their Ife hosts. Given the circumstance that led to the birth of Modakeke, and despite the fact that Ile-Ife City has the historic image as the aboriginal home of the Yoruba people, the status of Modakeke and that of its people has always been a source of dispute and conflict. First, is the issue of landlord/tenant relationship and second, is the issue of indigene/non-indigene and by extension the problem of citizenship. The first point to note is the fact that both the Ife and Modakeke are Yorubas who claim a common lineage from Oduduwa. In other words, as Olunloyo rightly points out, they are kith, kin and kindred (Olunloyo, 1997). But, Ife being the cradle of the Yorubas is older. Modakeke being a creation of the many wars the Yorubas waged amongst themselves in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is, therefore, much younger (Babajimi, 2003). However, as Chief Awolowo explains in his autobiography, "the Yorubas paid lip-service to a spiritual union and affinity in a common ancestor Oduduwa. But in all their long history they had waged war against one another...the mutual hatred and acerbity which was attendant upon them lingered..." (Olunloyo, 1997). Robert Smith corroborates this when he wrote that Yoruba land: "never constituted single political entity; their very name was one not used originally by themselves but by their Hausa neighbours with reference to the northern group among them, the Oyo (from whose name it perhaps derives), and then given wider applications by the Christian missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century" (Babajimi, 2003).

Traditional customs of the two communities are similar, though, not exactly the same. For instance, traditional religion is practiced in the two communities. However, while in Ife community, in almost everyday of the year sacrifices is made to one deity or the other, this is not so in Modakeke community. Even though, traditional customs are similar, their Yoruba language pronunciation is clearly different. From the way Yoruba language is spoken, one can clearly demarcate the Ifes from the Modakekes.

### **INTENSIFICATION OF ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE STUDY AREA**

Intensification of ethnic consciousness is examined through the aspect of the recollection of past violence crisis in the study area. The question answered in this section is how is past violence crisis recollected and passed on to the next generation? In other words, in this section, I try to examine inter-generational transfer of knowledge of Ifes and Modakekes crisis which of course deepened ethnic consciousness which is a constituent of socio/cultural identity.

In the survey, various questions relating to the recollection of past violence were asked. These are shown in Box 1. The result of the frequency analysis is shown in Table 1. The Table shows that majority of the respondents (90.3%) witnessed Ife-Modakeke violent conflict. Majority of the respondents (86.4%) witnessed between one to four Ife-Modakeke violent conflicts. Also, majority of the respondents (85.6%), including majority of their spouses (69.7%) and their families (77.4%) are living within the community of residence, that is, Ife community or Modakeke community, during the recent violent conflict in Ife-Modakeke. Most of the re-

spondents said that they first heard the story of Ife-Modakeke crisis during their childhood age period (38.7%), followed by those who said that they first heard during their adolescent age period (22.1%) and those who said that they first heard during youthful age period (18.7%). This result shows that majority (79.5%) have heard the story before their adulthood age. This implies that before the adulthood age period majority of the people are already conscious of the relationship of similarity and dissimilarity/crisis between the two communities. Most of the respondents (58.5%) said that their parent told them the story of Ife-Modakeke crisis. While 32.6% said that both parents told them, 14.6% and 11.3% said that their father and mother respectively told them. However, 23.6% of the respondents said that their father told them first while 9.0% said that their mother first told them. Most (55.6%) said that they heard the story from their parents before their adulthood age, that is, during their childhood age period (29.5%), during their adolescent age period (18.2%), and during youthful age period (7.9%). Most of the re-

spondents (47.2%) said that they have also related the story to their children. Most of the respondents told the story to their children during childhood age period (28.7%), followed by those who told their children during their adolescent age period (12.3%), and during youthful age period (4.9%).

### **ETHNIC ATTACHMENT IN THE STUDY AREA**

Ethnic attachment or patriotism in the study area is examined in this section. Ethnic attachment or patriotism is viewed in the paper from the perspective of the attitudes of the people towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons. In the survey various questions relating to attitudes towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons were asked. Table 2 shows indicators of attitudes towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons which were asked in the questionnaire forms administered.

#### **Box 1: Various questions relating to the recollection of past violence that were asked**

1. Did you witness any of the Ife/Modakeke violent conflict?
2. If yes, how many?
3. Where were you, your spouse and your family during the recent violent crisis?
4. When did you first hear the story of Ife/Modakeke crisis?
5. Did your parents ever tell you the story of Ife/Modakeke conflict?
6. If yes, which of them told you?
7. If both, which of them first told you?
8. When did you hear the story from your parent?
9. Have you also told/related the story to your children?
10. If yes, when did you first tell your children?

**Table 1: Showing the response to the questions on the recollection of past violence that were asked**

S/N	Questions	Response	Ife % (n = 195)	Modakeke % (n = 195)	Total % (n = 390)
1	Did you witness any of the Ife/Modakeke violent conflict?	Yes	90.8	89.7	90.3
		No	9.2	10.3	9.7
2	If yes, how many?	1	13.8	9.2	11.5
		2	22.1	19.5	20.8
		3	27.3	23.1	25.1
		4	24.6	33.3	29.0
		5	3.1	4.1	3.6
		>5	0.0	0.5	0.3
3A	Where were you during the recent violent crisis?	Within the community of residence	88.7	82.6	85.6
		Neighboring rural areas to the community within the state	2.1	2.6	2.3
		Neighboring community within the state	2.6	4.6	3.6
		Outside the state	5.1	7.7	6.4
3B	Where was your spouse during the recent violent crisis?	1. Within the community of residence	73.8	65.6	69.7
		Neighboring rural areas to the community within the state	5.6	3.1	4.4
		Neighboring community within the state	2.6	5.6	4.1
		Outside the state	6.7	7.2	6.9
3C	Where were your family during the recent violent crisis?	Within the community of residence	82.1	72.8	77.4
		Neighboring rural areas to the community within the state	2.6	2.6	2.6
		Neighboring community within the state	5.6	6.7	6.4
		Outside the state	4.1	8.7	7.4
4	When did you first hear the story of Ife/Modakeke crisis?	1. During childhood age period	34.9	42.6	38.7
		2. During adolescent age period	21.5	22.6	22.1
		3. During youthful age period	21.5	15.9	18.7
		4. During adulthood age period	22.1	19.0	2.5
5	Did your parents ever tell you the story of Ife/Modakeke conflict?	Yes	52.3	64.6	58.5
		No	47.7	35.4	37.7
6	If yes, which of them told you?	Father	14.9	14.4	14.6
		Mother	15.9	6.7	11.3
		Both	21.5	43.6	32.6
7	If both, which of them first told you?	Father	15.4	31.8	23.6
		Mother	6.2	11.8	9.0
8	When did you hear the story from your parent?	1. During childhood age period	26.2	32.8	29.5
		2. During adolescent age period	16.4	20.0	18.2
		3. During youthful age period	5.1	10.8	7.9
		4. During adulthood age period	2.6	3.1	2.8
9	Have you also told/related the story to your children?	Yes	44.6	49.7	47.2
		No	55.4	50.3	52.6
10	If yes, when did you first tell your children?	1. During childhood age period	26.2	31.3	28.7
		2. During adolescent age period	10.8	13.8	12.3
		3. During youthful age period	5.6	4.1	4.9
		4. During adulthood age period	1.5	1.0	1.3



**Table 2: Attitudes towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons**

S/N	Attitude towards violence/conflict/use of weapons
1	If respondent is opposed to the idea of people carrying weapons
2	If respondent would encourages others to carry weapons and fight
3	If respondent think that violence is the best way of expressing dissatisfaction
4	If respondent think that violent fighting between the two community is necessary
5	If respondent is making financial contributions to the community
6	If respondent encouraged their children to make financial contributions to the community
7	If respondent encouraged their spouse to make financial contributions to the community
8	If respondent encouraged their relative to make financial contributions to the community
9	If respondent encouraged women to make financial contributions to the community
10	If respondent attends community meetings
11	If respondent encouraged their spouse to attend community meetings
12	If respondent encouraged their children to attend community meetings
13	If respondent encouraged their female children to attend community meetings
14	If respondent encouraged other women to attend community meetings

The result of the frequency analysis is shown in Table 3. The Table shows that 36.7% of the respondents said that they are not opposed to the idea of people carrying weapons, 12.3% said that they would encourage others to carry weapons and fight, 9.2% said that they think that violence is the best way of expressing dissatisfaction, while 11.8% said that they think that violent fighting between the two community is necessary. In the two communities, organized violence is usually planned through community group meetings. Those who have flare for violence/conflicts/use of weapons will not miss community group meetings and will also make contributions to the community. Thus community group meetings attendance and making contributions to the

community is used as an indicator of attitude towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons. Therefore, questions relating to community group meetings attendance and making contributions to the community are asked in the questionnaire. Most of the respondents (51.5%) said that they make financial contributions to the community, 28.7%, 39.7%, 45.1%, and 46.9% said that they encouraged their children, spouse, relatives and other women to make financial contribution to the community respectively. Also, most of the respondents (53.8%) said that they attend community meetings, 48.5, 33.1, 28.5, and 46.7% said that they encourage their spouse, children, female children, and other women to attend community meetings.

**Table 3: Attitudes towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons**

S/N	Attitude towards violence/ conflict/use of weapons	Response	Ife % (n = 195)	Modakeke % (n = 195)	Total % (n = 390)
1	If respondent is opposed to the idea of people carrying weapons	Yes	64.1	60.6	62.3
		No	35.4	37.9	36.7
2	If respondent would encourages others to carry weapons and fight	Yes	8.7	16.9	12.3
		No	90.8	81.1	85.9
3	If respondent think that violence is the best way of expressing dissatisfaction	Yes	6.2	12.3	9.2
		No	92.9	86.2	89.5
4	If respondent think that violent fighting between the two community is necessary	Yes	8.8	14.9	11.8
		No	89.8	82.1	85.9
5	If respondent is making financial contributions to the community	Yes	46.7	56.4	51.5
		No	51.8	43.7	47.7
6	If respondent encouraged their children to make financial contributions to the community	Yes	26.2	31.3	28.7
		No	69.7	57.5	63.6
7	If respondent encouraged their spouse to make financial contributions to the community	Yes	37.5	42.0	39.7
		No	56.5	46.7	51.5
8	If respondent encouraged their relative to make financial contributions to the community	Yes	42.1	48.2	45.1
		No	54.9	51.8	53.3
9	If respondent encouraged women to make financial contributions to the community	Yes	42.6	51.3	46.9
		No	57.4	48.7	53.1
10	If respondent attends community meetings	Yes	54.9	52.8	53.8
		No	45.1	47.2	45.4
11	If respondent encouraged their spouse to attend community meetings	Yes	47.7	49.2	48.5
		No	52.3	50.8	42.3
12	If respondent encouraged their children to attend community meetings	Yes	28.7	37.4	33.1
		No	71.3	62.6	66.9
13	If respondent encouraged their female children to attend community meetings	Yes	27.2	29.7	28.5
		No	72.8	70.3	71.5
14	If respondent encouraged other women to attend community meetings	Yes	40.5	52.8	46.7
		No	59.5	47.2	51.8

Field survey, 2006

## ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE STUDY AREA

This section examines inter-personal relationship among the people in the two communities as a reflection of social interaction in the study area. The indicators of inter-personal relationship among the people in the two communities used in the analysis are the views of the people about inter-marriage among the people in the two communities. In the survey, various questions relating to the views of the people about inter-marriage among the people in the two communities were asked. This is shown in Box 2.

### Box 2: Showing various questions relating to inter-personal relationship among the two communities that were asked

1. Do people in this community marry from Ife/Modakeke community?
2. How do you see women from Ife/Modakeke that is married to the people of this community?
3. Can you encourage your children to marry from Ife/Modakeke community?
4. Can you encourage your relations to marry from Ife/Modakeke community?
5. Can you as a person marry Ife/Modakeke person?
6. How do you see the children of the women from Ife/Modakeke that are married to the people of this community?

The result of the frequency analysis is shown in Table 4. Majority of the respondents (92.3%) said that there are inter-marriages among the people in the two communities. While 63.3% sees women that are married to the other community as kinsmen, 2.1% sees them as strangers, 12.6% sees them as enemy and 12.6% are indiffer-

ent. Also, while 63.8% said that they can encourage their children to marry from the other community, 36.2% said that they cannot encourage their children to marry from the other community. The result of the analysis also shows that 62.8% said that they can encourage their relations to marry from the other community, while 34.4% said that they cannot encourage their relations to marry from the other community. As a person, 54.4% of the respondents said that they can marry from the other community, while 40.3% said that they cannot marry from the other community. The result further reveals that children of women married to the people of the other community are seen as kinsmen (60.0%), strangers (3.3%), enemy (13.6%), while 21.3% of the respondents said that they are indifferent. This result suggest that women that are married to the other community and particularly their children have identity crisis in the sense that some sees them as strangers and enemy, although quiet a percentage of the respondents sees them as kinsmen.

## TEST OF HYPOTHESES

The null hypotheses tested in the study are that (i) there is no relationship between the inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities and their socio-economic characteristics; and (ii) there is no relationship between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities. Correlation statistical technique is used to test these hypotheses. Table 5 shows how inter-personal relationships indicators are measured. Table 6 shows how the socio-economic variables are measured and Table 7 shows how ethnic attachment as reflected by the attitudes of people towards violence/conflicts/use of weapons is measured.

**Table 4: Showing the response to the questions on inter-personal relationship among the two communities that were asked**

S/ N	Questions	Response	Ife % (n = 195)	Modakeke % (n = 195)	Total % (n = 390)
1	Do people in this community marry from Ife/Modakeke community?	Yes	89.2	96.4	92.8
		No	10.8	3.1	6.4
2	How do you see women from Ife/Modakeke that is married to the people of this community?	(1) Kinsmen	56.4	70.3	63.3
		(2) Stranger	3.1	1.0	2.1
		(3) Enemy	17.4	7.7	12.6
		(4) Indifferent	22.6	20.5	21.5
3	Can you encourage your children to marry from Ife/Modakeke community?	Yes	53.8	73.8	63.8
		No	46.2	26.2	36.2
4	Can you encourage your relations to marry from Ife/Modakeke community?	Yes	51.8	73.8	62.8
		No	44.1	24.6	34.4
5	Can you as a person marry Ife/Modakeke person?	Yes	46.2	62.6	54.4
		No	47.7	32.8	40.3
6	How do you see the children of the women from Ife/Modakeke that are married to the people of this community?	(1) Kinsmen	55.4	64.6	60.0
		(2) Stranger	4.1	2.6	3.3
		(3) Enemy	16.9	10.3	13.6
		(4) Indifferent	21.5	21.0	21.3

Field survey, 2006

**Table 5: How Inter-personal relationship indicators are measured**

Inter-personal relationship indicators	How measured
If people in this community marry from Ife/Modakeke community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
The way women from Ife/Modakeke that are married to the people of this community are seen	1 if they are seen as kinsmen, 0 otherwise
If you encourage your children to marry from Ife/Modakeke community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
If you encourage your relations to marry from Ife/Modakeke community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
If you as a person marry Ife/Modakeke person	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
The way children of the women from Ife/Modakeke that are married to the people of this community are seen	1 if they are seen as kinsmen, 0 otherwise

**Table 6: How Socio-economic characteristics variables are measured**

Socio-economic characteristics variables	How measured
Age	Total number in years
Marital status	1 if married, 0 otherwise
Educational level	1 if post secondary education, 0 otherwise
Employment status	1 if employed or self employed , 0 otherwise
Location of place of work	1 if within the community of residence, 0 otherwise
Income	Total in Naira
Household size	Total in numbers
Number of children in the household	Total in numbers
Age of the youngest child	Total in years
Land ownership	1 if having plot(s) of land, 0 otherwise
Most important organization belonged to	1 if most important organization belonged to is ethnic organization
Length of stay in the community	Total in years
Having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke)	1 if having relative in the other community, 0 otherwise

**Table 7: Measure of ethnic attachment as reflected from peoples' attitude towards violence/conflict/use of weapons**

S/N	Attitude towards violence/conflict/use of weapons	How measured
1	If opposed to the idea of people carrying weapons	1 if No, 0 otherwise
2	If would encourage others to carry weapons and fight	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
3	If think that violence is the best way of expressing dissatisfaction	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
4	If think that violent fighting between the two community is necessary	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
5	If making financial contribution to the community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
6	If the respondent encouraged their children to make financial contribution to the community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
7	If the respondent encouraged their spouse to make financial contribution to the community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
8	If the respondent encouraged their relative to make financial contribution to the community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
9	If the respondent encouraged women to make financial contribution to the community	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
10	If attend community meetings	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
11	If respondent encouraged their spouse to attend community meetings	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
12	If respondent encouraged their children to attend community meetings	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
13	If respondent encouraged their female children to attend community meetings	1 if yes, 0 otherwise
14	If respondent encouraged other women to attend community meetings	1 if yes, 0 otherwise

The result of the correlation analysis between the inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities and their socio-economic characteristics is shown in Table 8. The Table shows that there is significant relationship between inter-personal relationship among Ife and Modakeke people and age, age of the youngest child, land ownership, if most important organization belonged to is ethnic organization, and having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke). Also, the result shows a negative relationship between interpersonal relationships among Ife and Modakeke people and age, educational level, employment status, location of the place of work, income, age of the youngest child, most important organization belonged to and length of stay in the community. This result implies that inter-personal relationship decreases with increasing age, educational level, employment status, income, age of the youngest child and length of stay in the community. Also, the result implies that inter-personal relationship decreases with increasing location of the place of work within the community of residence and increasing belonging to ethnic organization.

The result of the correlation analysis between inter-personal relationship and age which shows negative relationship implies that there is less inter-personal relationship among the people of the two communities as people grow older. This result underscored the importance of the role of the elderly and the leaders of the two communities who of course are elderly people in the construction of different ethnic identities. This is in line with the observation in the literature that ethnic leaders help in the creation of ethnic identities (Short, 1996).

The result of the correlation analysis between inter-personal relationship and location of the place of work and length of stay in the community which shows negative relationship implies that the more people stay in their community of residence, the less is their involvement in inter-personal relationship with the people of the other community. This result suggests that segregated residence of Ife and Modakeke communities facilitates the construction of different identity. Observation from the literature shows that segregation hardly solves the problem of a plural society; it rather compounds it (Albert, 1999). According to Albert (1999), had the Modakekes been allowed to integrate into the Ife society rather than be segregated in a particular settlement, they would have by now mixed so much with the Ife population that it would be difficult for them to lay claims to any separatist identity. The ownership of buildings in the city would have been mixed in the area that now constitutes "Ife" or "Modakeke"; and more Ifes and Modakekes would have inter-married. Albert cited the example of Ibadan as a typical example of a Yoruba city in which all migrant groups, including those from Ife and Oyo, have now integrated. The physical development of the city, as well as, its traditional political system left no room for any group to allege discrimination against it.

The result further shows a positive relationship between interpersonal relationships among Ife and Modakeke people and marital status, household size, number of children in the household, land ownership and having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke). This result implies that inter-personal relationship among Ife and Modakeke people increases with increasing number of married people, household size, number of children in the household, land

ownership, and having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke). shows a negative relationship between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities. The result of the correlation analysis between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities is shown in Table 9. From the Table the result of the correlation analysis This result implies that the more there is ethnic attachment, the less is interpersonal relationship among the people of the two communities.

**Table 8: Result of the correlation analysis between socio-economic characteristics and inter-personal relationship among Ife-Modakeke people**

Socio-economic characteristics	Inter-personal relationship among Ife-Modakeke people (Spearman Correlation) 'r'
Age	-.122*
Marital status	.004
Educational level	-.041
Employment status	-.050
Location of place of work	-.019
Income	-.077
Household size	.011
Number of children in the household	.014
Age of the youngest child	
Age of the youngest child	-.123*
Land ownership	.229*
Most important organization belonged to	-.157**
Length of stay in the community	-.049
Having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke)	.118*

\*Significant at  $p < .05$   
Field survey, 2006

\*\*Significant at  $p < .01$

**Table 9: Result of the correlation analysis between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities**

	Ethnic attachment
	Ife-Modakeke (Spearman correlation) 'r'
Inter-personal relationship	
	-.091

\*Significant at  $p < .05$   
Field survey, 2006

\*\*Significant at  $p < .01$

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## **SUMMARY, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

The paper presents a preliminary report on ethnicity and urban landlords/tenants relationship and conflicts in Nigeria: the case of Ife-Modakeke. Historical accounts have it that Ifes and Modakekes are sons and daughters of the same parents. As Yorubas, their ancestry is traced to Oduduwa the progenitor of Yoruba race nevertheless, Ife and Modakeke people sees themselves as a different social group. The major factors that have helped in the construction of different social identity are their historical background and Yoruba language pronunciation. Observation from the literature shows that given the circumstance that led to the birth of Modakeke, and despite the fact that Ile-Ife city has the historic image as the aboriginal home of the Yoruba people, the status of Modakeke and that of its people has always been a source of dispute and conflict due to issues relating to landlord/tenant relationship or indigene/non-indigene and by extension the problem of citizenship issue. The study reveals that ethnic attachment is high and inter-personal relationship among the people in the two communities is not that very cordial. The result reveal that women that are married to the other community and particularly their children have identity crisis in the sense that some sees them as strangers and enemy, although quiet a percentage of the respondents sees them as kinsmen.

The result of the correlation analysis shows that there is significant relationship between inter-personal relationship among Ife and Modakeke people and age, age of the youngest child, land ownership, if most important organization belonged to is ethnic organisation, and having relative in the

other community (Ife or Modakeke). The result also shows a negative relationship between interpersonal relationships among Ife and Modakeke people and age, educational level, employment status, location of the place of work, income, age of the youngest child, most important organization belonged to and length of stay in the community. This implies that inter-personal relationship decreases with increasing age, educational level, employment status, income, age of the youngest child and length of stay in the community. Also, the result implies that inter-personal relationship decreases with increasing location of the place of work within the community of residence and increasing belonging to ethnic organization. The result further shows a positive relationship between interpersonal relationships among Ife and Modakeke people and marital status, household size, number of children in the household, land ownership and having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke). This implies that inter-personal relationship among Ife and Modakeke people increases with increasing number of married people, household size, number of children in the household, land ownership, and having relative in the other community (Ife or Modakeke). The result of the correlation analysis between inter-personal relationship and age which shows negative relationship implies that there is less inter-personal relationship among the people of the two communities as people grow older. This result underscored the importance of the elderly in the construction of different identities. The result of the correlation analysis between inter-personal relationship and location of the place of work and length of stay in the community which shows negative relationship implies that the more people stay in their community of residence, the less is their involvement in inter-personal relationship with



the people of the other community. The result of the correlation analysis between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities though found not to be significant shows a negative relationship between ethnic attachment and inter-personal relationships among the people of the two communities. This result implies that the more there is ethnic attachment, the less is interpersonal relationship among the people of the two communities.

This result suggest that for sustainable peace to be attained there is the need to pursue policies that encourages social integration, as well as policies that discourages strong ethnic attachment and the spread of ethnically related organizations in the two communities. As observed in the literature and as suggested by P. van den Berghe (1987) that the government is best which pays least attention to ethnicity. Also Oladoyin (2001) notes that nationalism will crumble if ethnicity is promoted as a virtue, over the national interest. However, in order to discourage strong ethnic attachment, much work has to be done in area of psycho-social work which aims at both psycho-social healing and psychological transformation.

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