

Inter-group Relations between the Igbo Migrants and their Host Community in Agaka Quarters of Ilorin Metropolis, 1950-2015

Akanbi Shola Ahmed

Department of History and International Studies
University of Ilorin
Email: akanbiahmed66@gmail.com
Phone no: 08133457160

Ajayi Ayobami Olutayo

History Department,
Alayande University of Education,
Oyo, Oyo State.
Email: ayobamijy@yahoo.com
Phone no: 08035030012

&

Yahaya Adebayo Yusuf

Department of History FCT College of Education Zuba Abuja.
Email: yusufadearamu@gmail.com
Phone no: 08111008427

Abstract

Since the beginning of creation, humans have always involved themselves in movement activities. This has been the major features of human beings all over the world. The Igbo ethnic group is among the major ethnic groups in Nigeria and is known for its migratory prowess. Over the years, the Igbo have migrated from their original home in south-eastern Nigeria to other parts of the country for different reasons. Their impacts economically, socially and politically wherever they migrated to cannot be overemphasized. Using both documented and undocumented sources, the study unravels the relations between Igbos and their host community in Agaka quarters of Ilorin metropolis (north central Nigeria). The study reveals that the Igbo migrated to the area in about 1950 and since then the migrants and their hosts have demonstrated a sense of tolerance, cordiality, good will, cooperation, consensus building and harmonious inter-group relations between them. These attributes by both have catapulted the area economically into what it is today. The study concluded that such relations between them had positively impacted on the development of the quarters over time.

Keywords: Ilorin, Agaka, Migration, Inter-group relations, Cooperation.

Introduction

Migration is a universal phenomenon. Indeed, migrations have characterized human groups and societies since the evolution of

mankind and as such almost all societies have been shaped by migration.¹ Historians however view most migrations over the years as either voluntary or forced. According to this interpretation people migrate for many reasons. Among the most often cited are: to search for better employment opportunities, to secure better educational opportunities for their children, to escape persecution or adverse natural disasters such as crop failures or famines and the love for adventure.² All of these reasons feature prominently in the second half of the nineteenth century. World-wide migrations have affected such migrant communities as the Jews in America, the Chinese in south-east Asia, the Japanese in Brazil, the Indians in east Africa and the Lebanese in West Africa.³

Like many of these aforementioned groups, the Igbo, also referred to as Ibo, Ebo, Eboans or Heebo, are also known for their migratory prowess and are found in many Nigeria cities. The massive migration of the Igbo to other parts of Nigeria started in about the beginning of the twentieth century. Basically speaking, the Igbo ethnic group can be found in south eastern part of Nigeria, that is Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states. However, it also extends to parts of Delta State of Nigeria.

It is significant to note that since 1920, the Igbo ethnic group has continued to look for areas to migrate to in other parts of the country. It must be stressed that the quest for survival in an increasingly monetizing economy coupled with sparse land resources

is responsible for high rate of migration among the Igbo. Limited availability of land in Igbo communities is largely a function of high population density driven by prenatalist ethos that is sustained by multiple socio-cultural beliefs and practices.⁴ It has been revealed that the Ewu-Ukwu custom, which is celebrated in parts of Igbo land to honour a woman after her tenth child, is not only perceived as an index of accomplishment but also a motivator for prolific childbearing.⁵

Nwokocha has identified male child preference, which is variant of patriarchy, as a phenomenon that not only contributes disproportionately to high fertility but also polygyny and by implication larger size.⁶ Clearly high population density is mainly responsible for high migration experience in Igbo communities. However, as earlier emphasized the migration of the Igbo to other parts of the country started in about 1920. This time however, the migration of the Igbo was to western Nigeria where they were found in major towns of Ibadan, Lagos, Ekiti and Abeokuta.⁷

Subsequently, they started settling in places like Kano and other northern parts of the country in about 1930s.⁸ Put differently, the massive migration of the Igbo into places like Sabo-Gari (Kano) and other cities in northern Nigeria, did not therefore start until after the completion of eastern route railway line in 1932 when the Markurdi rail bridge (which for some years was the longest in Africa) was completed. Soon after the rail line from Port-Harcourt was linked with Kano, the Igbo secured direct access to Kano.⁹

It was the improved means of transportation at the disposal of Igbo traders that Kaduna, Zaria, and Kano became focal points for their activities. Ilorin around this time also experienced the massive movement of the Igbo to the north. It is interesting to note that the strong evidence of Igbo presence in Agaka quarters of Ilorin metropolis can be dated back to 1950,¹⁰ when the first set of Igbo business men, usually traders or shopkeepers migrated to the area to contribute economically, socially and politically. These contributions were possible due to realistic,

organic and fruitful relations the Igbo had with their hosts in Agaka quarters overtime. Thus, the study examines the Igbo migration to Agaka quarters, the relations between them and their host community in Agaka, and how such inter-group relation transformed the area over time.

Formation of Ilorin Emirate

The town, Ilorin lies some three hundred (300) kilometer North of Lagos, on latitude north 8⁰30 and longitude east 4⁰35¹¹. At present, it is the capital of Kwara state and the headquarters of Ilorin Emirate established within the Sokoto caliphate in the third decade of the nineteenth century.¹² Until then, Ilorin which is Yoruba origin and etymology, was part of the old Oyo Empire, headed by the Alaafin.¹³

Ilorin came into limelight as a result of the role played by Afonja, the Are-Ona Kakanfo (that is “generalissimo”), in the disintegration of Oyo empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Following the rift between Afonja and Alaafin Aole, the former chose to establish Ilorin as the headquarters of a new state. Prior to this period, Ilorin was a small village under the provincial authority of Ikoyi. The village was inhabited by the Yoruba, the Hausa, the Fulani and some other groups. The Yoruba constituted the dominant ethnic group in Ilorin at that time.¹⁴

Afonja was appointed as Bale of Ilorin following the dethronement of his father, Alugbin, by Alaafin Abiodun.¹⁵ Based on his military prowess Afonja subsequently secured the (controversial) appointment as Are-Ona-Kakanfo. Afonja imperial schemings in favour of Ilorin soon provoked the old Oyo authority and from this period, his relations with the Alaafin became strained. The raging face-off between Afonja and the old Oyo authority soon created in the former the urge to secure allies who would assisted in the realization of his political ambition. Thus, in his bid to secure the independence of Ilorin from old Oyo, Afonja sought the spiritual assistance of a Fulani Muslim clerics, Shaykh Salihu Alimi Ibn Janta, who helped Afonja to

fulfil his mission of subverting the authority of the Alaafin.

However, the joy was short-lived as Alimi and his followers equally became interested in the control of Ilorin. Thus, the relationship between Afonja and the Fulani group, later led by Alimi's son, Abdulsalam, became characterized by intrigues.¹⁶ The result was the establishment of the Ilorin emirate which excluded Afonja.

With the establishment of Ilorin emirate in 1823, the Fulani were quick to visualize the long-term implication of exclusive political control. Hence, they began to work out strategies that would bring political stability to the polity. With these strategies Ilorin assumes a peculiarity in which minority ethnic group rules over the vast majority and which attracted a wide measure of acceptability. One of such strategies was the initiative to divide Ilorin metropolis into major wards, along lines with each ward headed by a chief called Balogun. The office of the Balogun was created to pacify the displeased groups, particularly the Yoruba. Also, Islam has been the unifying factor which has sustained the spirit of tolerance, accommodation and sacrifice in the Emirate.

Agaka quarters in the making of Ilorin Emirate

Geographically, the quarters are divided into two sections namely, Agaka Oke (*Upper Agaka*) and Agaka Isale (*lower Agaka*). The neighboring communities of Agaka quarter are, Baboko, Alanamu, Emir's Palace and Gegele community. The quarter is endowed with one of the most strategic roads in Ilorin metropolis and this is the Lagos road that stems from Gerin-Alimi up to Oga-oba (Emir's market).¹⁷ This has made the quarters accessible for people coming from Lagos, Ibadan and other parts of south-western Nigeria.

Historically, Agaka area was sparsely populated, just like every other place in Ilorin before 1823, around this time the area was heavily deposited with plutonic igneous rocks, it was as a result of this feature of the area at that time that the name "Agaka"

(meaning a place dominated by plutonic igneous rocks) was coined.¹⁸ It must be noted that the quarters is dominated by different groups, these groups are the Ajia Sakasaka group which is of Yoruba origin; there were also Ajia Ogbonde group, Alkali Sokoto group, Ile-Abojumeji group, Ile Oloomoba group and Ile Aloba group, all of which are of Fulani origin. There are also less prominent compounds such as Okin compound, Olowo compound, Onibata compound, Atagisoro compound, Hanafi compound, Agogo compound, Asileke compound and Alagbede compound. Though all these later groups settled subsequently after the first six groups had already settled, the history of Agaka quarters is the history of the first six groups.¹⁹

For example, the Ajia Sakasaka group was among the first groups that settled in the quarter, according to oral tradition, Ajia Sakasaka is said to have come from Oyo Ile (the capital of old Oyo empire), it is from here that the first Ajia went to the north before he finally migrated to Ilorin Emirate during the reign of Shehu Zubair, also known as Ayelabowo who was the third Emir of Ilorin (1860-1868).²⁰ The then Adifa (Isiaka Omoetumeji) was his best friend and to whom the Emir directed to accommodate him. During their interactions the then Adifa discovered that Ajia Sakasaka was a warrior who subsequently partook in war with his spear and arrow. The Emir was impressed and he directed him to stay in Agaka which is very close to the Emir's palace.²¹

The Ajia Ogbonde was another prominent group among the early six groups that settled in the area. Unlike the Ajia Sakasaka, the Ajia Ogbonde were of Fulani extraction who came from Sokoto to Ilorin before 1823.²² Their progenitors were cattle herders who first settled at Gaa-Aremu along Garage Offa road in Ilorin metropolis, where they breed cattle for sale. They were also warriors who had fought along with Sheik Alimi to install the Fulani dynasty in Ilorin.²³ This commitment towards the establishment of Fulani dynasty in Ilorin had earned them the title of Ajia Ogbonde, which means the one in charge of amulet and charms during war.²⁴

Subsequently they had earned the title of Sugan ban Fulani of Ilorin (*head of Fulani in Ilorin*).²⁵

The Alkali Sokoto of Agaka was another prominent group among the six early settlers of the quarters. The progenitors of Alkali Sokoto were Islamic scholars, who were committed to the propagation of Islam. Like the Ajia Ogbonde, they were of Fulani extraction who came to Ilorin when the Fulani dynasty had finally been installed.²⁶ The first Alakali Sokoto was known as Alfa Oni sharia. This is because during those days when the verses of the Quran were scattered, the Alkali had some verses of the Quran with him, and the combination of these verses were what was referred to as *Jalalailu* which means combined sharia.²⁷ It was as a result of this that they were given the title Alkali(judge) Dan sharia, and they held this title until the coming of the British colonialists to Ilorin in 1897 who, through the introduction of the Native Court system made the Emir to change their title from Dan sharia to Magaji Alkali Sokoto.²⁸

Also, the Ile Abojumeji group was among the six early groups that settled in the quarters. They were of Fulani extraction and hold the title of Daudu (meaning they have the right to the Emir ship of Ilorin),²⁹ L.A.K Jimoh has however mentioned their forerunner as one of the children left behind by Emir Abdulsalam (1816-1842) who was by name Abubakar Daniyan Aridegbe, who settled in Agaka quarter after the death of his father in 1842.³⁰

The Ile Oloomoba group was also among the six early groups. Like the Ile Agbojumeji group the Oloomoba which holds the title of Daudu, the Ile Oloomoba group hold the title of Daudu Agaka. However, their progenitors were sons of Emir Abdulsalam, known as Yusuf and Buhari. It was Emir Abdulsalam that gave them some pieces of land in Agaka Oke (upper Agaka) to settle their permanently.³¹

The Ile Aloba group was also among the first six settlers of the quarters, and they were also of Fulani extraction from Gwandu in Sokoto.³² Their forefathers were warriors who

had also fought along Sheikh Alimi to consolidate Fulani dynasty in Ilorin. They used to praise themselves as “*Jagun-Jagun ni Alobaje*” which means Aloba are warriors.³³

Migration and Inter-Group Relations in Agaka Quarters Before 1950

From the above one will discover that the area was sparsely populated before 1823. It is important to note that the Fulani grip on power in 1823, stimulated the massive movement of people to the quarter. However, the quarter was one of the historic places in Ilorin emirates and the role its early settlers played in the consolidation of the Fulani dynasty is also pointer to its significance in the emirate. As stated above, some of the early settlers were warriors who had fought along the Fulani to consolidate the Fulani dynasty in Ilorin, for example Ajia Sakasaka, Ajia Ogbonde and Aloba groups. Also some were Islamic scholars that promoted Islam in the Emirate for example the Alkali Sokoto group and so on.

In categorizing inter-group relations among the early settlers of Agaka quarters before the coming of the Igbo migrants, it is important to note that the factor of Islam came first. Because virtually all the settlers were Muslims, it pushed the family groups in the area to freely associate with one another. Congregational daily prayers were observed together in the Mosque. The Mosque at this period was a demarcated area surrounded by stones and or roofed with thatch suspended from pillar posts. The Alkali Sokoto Mosque, which was established in 1861, continued to play an important role in this process.³⁴ Other Islamic rites like the celebration of the eid ceremonies and funeral rites were also observed together by the inhabitants.³⁵ This, naturally cemented their relations.

Secondly, before the coming of the Igbo migrants to the area, tradition among the different family groups encouraged the contracting of marriages within the community than outside it. This means that as a result of the fact that the community was just evolving, men preferred to marry their wives near home, their terrain, from which they

could have easy and full knowledge of the kind of women they would make the mothers of their children. The same applied to the women. However, this was the case of the present Magaji Aloba, (Alhaji Saidu Ore Jokotola), whose mother was from nearby Alkali Sokoto compound.³⁶ This further cemented the inter-group relations in the area before the coming of the Igbo's in the middle of 20th century

Economic activities and transaction also attracted the people to one another, although there were no formal market centres in the area at that particular time, trade and exchange of goods and services were carried out. This took place in non-market institutions and situations that allowed goods to be distributed and services to be rendered. For example, in the Daudu Agaka compound there were goat, sheep and ram sellers, and they sold them to the other group in the area.³⁷ The Idi-Agbede compound were blacksmiths who provided farm implements to farmers living in most of the compounds in the area.³⁸ The Ajia Sakasaka compound were not also left out as they also used needles and thread to design local clothes.³⁹ The Ile Aloba compound were also farmers who sold farm produce to different compounds in the area,⁴⁰ Ile Oniyo also made salt available for sale to the people in the area.⁴¹

Economic relation was further invigorated in 1897 with the conquest of Ilorin by the British colonial master. From the evidence available, there was influx of another set of immigrants to the area and this period saw the coming of groups like the Ijebu, Ijesha who introduced some unique article of trade to the quarter.⁴² For example the Ijebu always brought palm oil and Garri to the area for sale, and in return they bought goods like ram, goat and sheep from Daudu Agaka's compound. However, the Ijebu always stayed for long time when they came for trading activities in Agaka, and in view of this a lodge was given to them in Daudu Agaka's compound called 'Sasa Ijebu' where they stayed during the course of trading in the quarters.⁴³ Subsequently, a large portion of land was allotted to them, where they later built their permanent quarters. This

Ijebu quarters is today located at the back of barter shop opposite kudi market. The Ijesha also brought clothes for sale in the quarters but unlike the Ijebu the Ijesha did not settle in the area.⁴⁴

The above inter-group relations among the people of Agaka were their major areas of their interactions before the coming of the Igbos to the area in the 1950s. Indeed, there was peaceful co-existence among the people that dominated the area before 1950, which heralded the arrival of the Igbo migrants to the quarters. The early settlers had a peaceful socio-cultural interaction and this factor had a great impact on the quarter's subsequent inhabitants. The nature of relations among the early settlers thus laid the foundation for inter-group relations which occurred after the migration of the Igbo in 1950.

Inter-group Relations between the Igbo Migrants and their Host in Agaka Quarters of Ilorin Metropolis

The Igbo ethnic group is one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. They are big players in the economic sphere and can be found in virtually all regions of Nigeria. The Igbo are naturally enterprising as a result of their ingenuity and economic interests. Buttressing this fact, Onwuka asserted that "inherent in any Igbo irrespective of sub-culture area is the spirit to achieve and excel, the Igbo continue to look for spheres or areas of influence".⁴⁵

The Igbo either educated or uneducated always exhibits the "I can do attitude" and the will to succeed in any given task. The true nature of an average Igbo was captured by foremost writer, Chinua Achebe in his 1958 classic book "Things Fall Apart". Achebe described Okonkwo the main character of the book as a warrior, a great wrestler, a wealthy farmer and a highly revered personality.⁴⁶

By the 1920s the Igbo had started migrating to other parts of the country. The reason as earlier emphasized in this study included, but not limited to, non-availability of land in Igbo communities, which was a

function of high population density and the fact that the soil in several parts of Igbo land could only support subsistence agriculture. Limited social and economic opportunities led many Igbo to quest for alternative sources and means of livelihood outside their home. By the 1920s many of them had settled in Western Nigeria, most especially in the major cities like Ibadan and Lagos. But unlike in western Nigeria, they settled in places like Kano and other major cities in northern Nigeria in about the 1930s.⁴⁷

Commenting on the migration and settlement of the Igbo in northern Nigeria, Edley writes:

Even though the Igbo migration to Sabon Gari (Kano) and other northern Nigeria cities began before the eastern railway was opened.....it was the improved means of transportation at the disposal of (Igbo) traders, that Kaduna, Zaria, and Kano became new focal points for their activities.⁴⁸

Ostensibly, Ilorin during this time also benefited from the massive migration of the Igbo to the northern part of the country. By the 1950s, there had been presence of many Igbo groups in Agaka and Ilorin in general. Among them were Chukwuamaka Chukuma who migrated precisely in 1950, Emmanuel Okeke, Udeh Muritala, George Opela, Christian Agus migrated subsequently.⁴⁹ The last two were the first set of Igbo leaders in Ilorin. But majority of the early settlers of the Igbo did not engage in any form of businesses, they were rather contractors who had constructed some major roads like Taiwo Road and G.R.A (Government Residential Area) roads in Ilorin metropolis. However, they settled around Gada in Taiwo Isale of Ilorin metropolis.⁵⁰ Also, around this time some groups of business like minded Igbo were also settling in Agaka and these were people like B.O. Ibe, A.D Okafor, Per Thomas, Chukuma Okonkwo, Per jinn and many others. They have dealt mainly in car spare parts, tires and engine oil.⁵¹ Many of these early crop of the Igbo in Agaka started their businesses there before they expanded to

other places such as Oja-oba, Baboko, Surulere, Saw-mill and Taiwo of Ilorin metropolis.

It is important to note that, relationship between the Igbo and their host in Agaka at this early period was strained, due to the sharp differences in the religion, language and culture of the Igbo and their host in Agaka. For instance, majority of the host were Muslim and spoke Yoruba language, while the migrants were Christian and spoke the Igbo language. In other words, socio-political and economic relationship at this period was slow as there was little cordiality between the two.

Subsequently in 1960, Nigeria gained her independence. It must be acknowledged however, that the development in the country during this time consolidated relations between groups in the country and also improved the movement of people from one place to another. This was as a result of improvement in the means of transportation, including constructions of more roads, improvement in the rail transport and many others.

However, after Nigeria's independence, the country's first republic was characterized by the "we and they" feelings which was as a result of the regional system practiced, by the founding fathers (Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello, Nnamdi Azikwe, Tafawa Balewa and others) to promote their regional interests in place of the national interests. This further degenerated into suspicion, tension, hatred, conflict and hostility between the various ethnic groups and the early crops of Nigerian leaders. By the early hours of January 15, 1966, the military took over power and this led to the first Igbo leadership in Nigeria (Aguiyi Ironsi). By June of the same year, another coup was also orchestrated which led to the government of Yakub Gowon. These events had effect on the socio-political and economic intercourse between the Igbo and their host in Agaka, as the coup of January and counter the coup of the same year were part of the factors that contributed to the

outbreak of the Nigeria civil war in 1967, resulting in many Igbo in Agaka migrating back to their homeland.

The 1967 to 1970 civil war in Nigeria, also known as Biafra war, had a very bad economic and political effect on the easterners. It must be noted that though the Igbo are known for their migratory prowess, believing that travelling bestows more knowledge on an individual than old age, the tendency increased by the devastating effect of the civil war, and the attendant loss of sources of livelihood within the region.⁵² By the 1970s many of them returned in large numbers to reclaim and reestablish their former remarkable presence, and Agaka during this time was home and place of business to many of them, especially the new comers who had not been to Ilorin before. Thus, many of them that returned to Agaka continued the business of the spare parts, tyre and engine oil and ever since this has been their traditional business in the place. At this juncture it becomes imperative to emphasize the inter-group relations between the Igbo immigrants and their hosts in Agaka quarters. The reality of the fact is that the Igbo became settlers in Agaka area and this necessitated their first contacts.

Therefore, interactions between the Igbo and their hosts in Agaka gradually evolved in politics, socio-cultural and economic spheres. At the level political relations, it will be imperative for one to emphasize the political relationship between this two. Firstly, during the Nigeria civil war, when the killings of the Igbo began in the north, many Igbo felt uncomfortable and they started fleeing to their homes in the eastern part of the country. However, to the Igbo in Ilorin during this time, the then Emir Sulu Gambari (1959-1992) of Ilorin called on them and told them not to flee, that Ilorin Emirate would protect them from whatever, that Ilorin people were peace loving who don't attack strangers unless strangers attack them.⁵³ For those who fled and left their properties, Ilorin emirate made a special arrangement for them through the then Native Authority that was headed by Alhaji Saka Opobiyi, Alhaji Baba

Akanbi Shuib as the secretary and Alhaji Usman Mustapha as the treasurer. Through this authority, Ilorin help the Igbo's who flee and left their properties, to collect the rented fee on behalf of the owners and save the money for them on till many of them returned after war, furthermore, many of them received their money immediately they returned.⁵⁴ It must be acknowledged, that this further strengthened the relationship between the Igbos and their host community in Agaka.

What further invigorated their relations politically was the registration of voters, because many of the Igbo registered in Agaka quarters. In other words, they used to cast their votes in Agaka, which has been the practice since 1979 election. Though during this time many of them were not politically involved but subsequently they started seeing Agaka more as their home. By 1999 general election, there was massive voter registration among the Igbos in Agaka, this promoted a lot of interaction between them especially on Election Days when they were expected to participate in the electioneering process.⁵⁵ Although since 1979 none of them has contested for any political position, they have participated most as electorate. This political attribute of the Igbo is not only happening in Agaka but in the whole of Ilorin emirate's.⁵⁶

At the level of socio-cultural relation, the two groups have registered low interactions. This can be due to religious difference. However, there have been inter-marriages between the Igbos and Agaka indigenes. This has come mainly with some Yoruba who had also settled there since 1970s as business men and women. This group of Yoruba came from places like Ogun, Osun, Ekiti, Ibadan and Ondo. It must be acknowledged however, that, the Igbo have inter-married these groups than their host in Agaka. For instance, A.D. Okafor, an Igbo man, married a Yoruba woman called Abosede from Ibadan whose family has settled in Agaka since the 1960s.⁵⁷

Another factor that has further improved their social relations is the environmental sanitation that they collectively observe every last Saturday of

every month. In addition to this, money is always being contributed by both groups for the maintenance of drainages in the area. also, their cultural relations reflect in their everyday dressing. In this manner, some Igbo sometimes dress like their hosts, especially on Fridays. Some of them on this day wear the Guinea or Ankara and a cap just like the typical dresses of Ilorin, which is sometimes similar to that of the Hausa.

Each time any member of the quarters dies, either an Igbo or a member of the host community, they both close their shops for either two or three days to mourn the dead person depending on how important that person is among them.⁵⁸ At the same time when there is celebration, they both celebrate together. For example, on the coronation ceremony of 11th Ajia Sakasaka, which was held at the Emir's palace in 2015, this ceremony saw the presence of many Igbo dignitaries of Agaka community. The Igbo performed the Igbo cultural dance to celebrate with the Ajia.⁵⁹ Another very important cultural relation is in the area of language, as many Igbo in Agaka can speak Yoruba fluently. One sometimes mistakes some of them as Yoruba because of the level of their fluency of the language. Though majority of the host community cannot speak the Igbo language fluently but some of them understand to some extent.

The economic activities of the quarters also contributed to the relationship between the Igbo and their host in Agaka, because before the coming of the Igbo to the area in the 1950s, majority of the indigenes engaged in petty trading, like the selling of *Ose okoto* or *Ose konta* (local soap) selling of palm oil, selling of goats and repairing of bicycles. The later was carried out by the Ijebu who had earlier settled in the area.⁶⁰ However, with the coming of the Igbos in the 1950s new business ideas were introduced to the area, including trade in spare parts, car tyre and engine oil. Many of the Igbo rented shops from the indigenes and subsequently, many indigenes also work under Igbo immigrants as apprentice.⁶¹ This however, further strengthened their relationship with their hosts since the various economic transactions

between them also invigorated the relationship between the.

Conclusion

The study has been able to examine the inter-group relations between the Igbo migrants and Agaka quarters of Ilorin metropolis. The study emphasize that the area was sparsely populated before 1823 just like any other quarters of Ilorin metropolis. The Fulani grip on power in Ilorin emirate in 1823 subsequently stimulated the movement of people to the quarters. Despite the multi-ethnic character of the quarters, the earlier settlers of the quarters were peace loving people who had demonstrated a sense of collaboration, cooperation, consensus building, and harmonious inter-group relations before the coming of the Igbo migrants in 1950. The peaceful nature of the quarters strongly helped the Igbo migrants to settle down well as they subsequently emulated and demonstrated such harmonious relations with their hosts in Agaka quarters, which thus, impacted positively on the socio-economic and political development of the quarters. The impacts of the Igbo migrants on the quarters since their arrival in 1950 were: Introduction of unprecedented business ideas to the quarters like car spare parts business, acculturation of the indigenes into the Igbo business ideas, the attraction of traders to the quarters from far and near which had contributed to the population growth of the quarters. The quarters have also been a source of revenue to the state government among others.

Endnotes and References

- 1 A. Peter, , Migration and the Growth of Lebanese Immigrant Community in Colonial Lagos, 1890-1960, *Mandyeng Journal of Central Nigeria*, (2019), 94-120
- 2 Krishna Ahooja-Patel, *Regulations Governing the Employment of Non-Nationals on West Africa* (London: Routledge, 1974) cited in Peter 'Migration and the Growth', 94-120
- 3 Peter, 'Migration and the Growth', 94-120
- 4 U.C. Isiugbo-Abanihe and E.E. Nkokocha Prevalence, 'Consequences of

- Ewu-Ukwu Custom in Mbaise, Imo-State', *Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 6(1), (2008), 53-70. DOI: 10.36108/NJSA/8002/60(0170)
- 5 E. E. Nwokocha, 'Male Child Syndrome and the Agony of Motherhood among the Igbo of Nigeria', *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 8(3), (2009), 219-234
- 6 Nwokocha, 219-234
- S.A. Akanbi, 'Inter-Group Relations between the Igbo Migrants and Agaka Community of Ilorin Metropolis, 1950-2015' (Unplished M.A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of History and International Studies, University of Ilorin), 68.
- 8 A. F. Usman, 'Implication of Colonial Settlements on Inter-Ethnic Relations: A Case of Sabo Garri', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(10), (2015), 164-169.
- 9 Usman, 164-169
- 10 Boniface Okeke, (Igbo Chief resident in Ajaka, Ilorin), interview with author, 2018
- 11 S.A. Balogun, 'Historical Significance of Ilorin: A Preliminary Survey' *Confluence*, 1(1), (1978), 18
- 12 S. Y. Omoiya, 'The Location of Economic Potentials of a Frontier Community in Nigeria: An Exploit on Ilorin in the 20th century', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Invention*, 11 (1), (2013), 2319-7714
- 13 R. C. C. Law, *The Oyo Empire, c. 1600-1836* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 103
- 14 S. Jimba, *A Short History of Ilorin* (Ilorin: Jimba Book Productions Company, 1981), 103.
- 15 Law, *The Oyo Empire*, 103
- 16 Samuel Johnson, *History of the Yorubas*, (Lagos C.S.S. Bookshops, 1960), 197.
- 17 Aliyu Adebayo, interview with author, 2018
- 18 Ajia Sakasaka, interview with author, 2018
- Akanbi 'Inter-Group Relations', 68. See also S.A. Akanbi and M. O. Oyedokun, 'Impacts of Igbo Migrants on the Socio-Economic Development of Agaka Quarters of Ilorin Metropolis, 1950-2015', *Edo Journal of Arts, Management and Social Sciences*, 2(1), (2020), 246-258.
- 19 Hassan Ajia, interview with author, 2018
- 20 Ajia Sakasaka, interview with author, 2018
- 21 Aliyu Adebayo, interview with author, 2018
- 22 Adebayo
- 23 Adebayo
- 24 Adebayo,
- 25 Akanbi and Oyedokun, 'Impacts of Igbo Migrants'
- 26 Yusuf Abdulqudir, interview with author, 2018
- 27 Abdulqudir
- 28 L.A.K. Jimoh, *Ilorin Journey so Far* (Ilorin: Atoto Press, 1994), 56
- 29 Jimoh, 136
- 30 Tosho Kawu, interview with author, 2018
- 31 Saidu Ore Jokotola, interview with author, 2018
- 32 Jokotola
- 33 Akanbi, 'Inter-Group Relations', 59.
- 34 Akanbi, 60
- 35 Akanbi and Oyedokun, 'Impacts of Igbo Migrants', 246-258.
- 36 Akanbi and Oyedokun, 246-258.
- 37 Akanbi and Oyedokun, 246-258.
- 38 Yahaya Olayiwola Kuranga Ajia, interview with author, 2018
- 39 Saidu Ore Jokotola, interview with author, 2018
- 40 Babatunde Lawal (Baba Aribi), interview with author, 2018
- 41 Lawal
- 42 Tosho Kawu, interview with author, 2018
- Kawu
- 43 R. I. Onwuka, 'The Political Economy of the Igbo: Igbo Economics', *a Paper Presented at the 1989 Ahiajoku Lecture Colloquim*, 16
- O. I. Olowojolu and S. Oshewolo, 'Indigene-Settlers Relationship in Nigeria: a Case Study of the Igbo Community in Lagos', *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences* 7(7), (2016), 1-15
- 47 Usman, 'Implication of Colonial Settlements', 164-169
- 48 A. D. Edley, *the Sabon Garri System in Northern Nigeria* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977). Cited in A. F. Usman, 'Implications of Colonial Settlements on Inter-Ethnic Relations: A Case of Sabo Garri' *International Journal of*

- Humanities and Social Sciences* 5 (10), (2015), 164-169
- 49 Usman Mustapha, interview with author, 2019
- 50 Boniface Okeke, interview with author, 2018
- 51 Usman Mustapha, interview with author, 2019
- 52 E. E Nwokocha, 'Engaging The Burden of Rural-Urban Migration in a non-regulatory system: The Case of Nigeria', *A Paper Presented at the Enghth Berlin Roundtables on Migration into Cities*, October 25-27, (Berlin: Imgard Coninx Stiftung, 2007), 37.
- 53 L.A.K Jimoh, interview with author, 2018
- 54 Usman Mustapha, interview with author, 2019
- 55 Babatunde Lawal (Baba Aribi), interview with author, 2018
- 56 Boniface Okeke, interview with author, 2018
- 57 Tosho Kawu, interview with author, 2018
- 58 Yahaya Olayiwola Kuranga Ajia, interview with author, 2018
- 59 Tosho Kawu, interview with author, 2018
- 60 Saidu Ore Jokotola, interview with author, 2018
- 61 Babatunde Lawal (Baba Aribi), interview with author, 2018