

**PEACE RESEARCH IN NON-VIOLENCE CONTEXTS**

**A CASE STUDY AMONG THE SOUTHWEST**

**NIGERIAN YORÙBÁ**

BY

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## Abstract

I analyse the abilities of peaceful communities to maintain harmony by making a case study of the Southwest Nigerian Yorùbá in this research. I examine the potential of Yorùbá Christians and Muslims to manage their disputes, crises, and conflicts to avoid violence and maintain peace within their host Yorùbá culture, religion, and values. The qualitative method of inquiry used here involved focus groups and interviews to generate primary data, which I analysed with thick description.

One of the main findings showed that the existing *Èbí* (family) theory among the Yorùbá played a significant role in sustaining peace. This theory focuses on the idea of family as the means to keep the Yorùbá in harmony during conflicts. This study, however, further found that the idea of the family alone was insufficient for dealing with the complexity of conflict situations. In addition to the family theory, the Yorùbá Muslims and Christians use other features within the Yorùbá culture, religion, and social life in creative and positive ways to maintain harmony. Such abilities do not exonerate the Yorùbá from occasional conflicts as in many human societies, but they are positive illustrations of their potential to keep the peace. Could these abilities of the Yorùbá meet the requirements of peaceful societies and be given recognition by scholars?

This work, although being a research in peace studies also has relevance for anthropology, Christian-Muslim relations, cultural and African studies. Future studies can focus more communities for a better understanding of peace as a contribution to peace and conflict studies.

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IN NON-VIOLENCE CONTEXTS:  
A CASE STUDY AMONG THE SOUTHWEST NIGERIAN  
YORÙBÁ**

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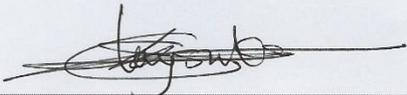
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## Declarations

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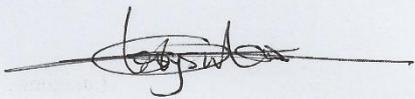
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### STATEMENT 1

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## **Dedication**

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To my mother Mrs. Alice and late father, Mr. Joseph Adedeji Olayinka

---

‘To the work! To the work! We are servants of God, Let us follow the path that our Master has trod; With the balm of His counsel our strength to renew, Let us do with our might what our hands find to do.’ (Fanny J Crosby 1820-1915), Baptist Hymnal 1991 number 615.

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‘Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with Thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not. As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.’ Thomas Chisholm (1866–1960)

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Many studies have looked at conflict resolution within peace and conflict studies in a broader sense with a focus on how to bring about peace in conflict or war situations and have developed many theories (Barsky, 2014; Deutsch, 1991; Galtung, 1969). There is also a growing interest in peaceful or harmonious communities vis-a-vis their potential to retain peace (Bonta, 1996; Briggs, 1970; Kemp, 2004), yet the former has been researched more than the latter (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). The existing works on human potential for peacefulness mostly in anthropology cover some societies in the North, East and Central/South Africa; Asia, and North America that Bonta describes as ‘24 peaceful peoples [colonies or groups]’ (1996, p. 403). In this study, I want to join the debate about human potential for peacefulness by exploring the abilities of some communities within a language group (the Yorùbá) in southwestern Nigeria to manage conflict, de-escalate tension and keep the peace.

My motivation originated from my experience while living in Maiduguri, a major northeastern Nigeria city, from 2003 to 2006 as I made many friends with Christians and Muslims alike. It was amazing how friendly the people were across religions in a neutral and non-political social setting. No segregation was visible in the public domain; rather, there were expressions of mutual kindness. My first Muslim neighbour was friendly and sociable. Garuba, as I will call him, is an indigenous northern Muslim whilst I am a Yorùbá southwest Nigerian Christian. Both of us lived in the northeastern Muslim populated Nigerian city of Maiduguri before the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency. Garuba knew me as a Christian yet was pleased to associate with me and his

outlook did not change after I introduced the Christian evangelical gospel to him.<sup>1</sup> Garuba and I exhibited tolerance and understanding of each other's values despite the differences in our beliefs. Furthermore, I was driving within the campus of a federal government university in the same northeast region and found two men dressed in *kaftan* (a local attire) and stopped to give them a lift in the direction of my journey.<sup>2</sup> These two gentlemen were thankful and asked me to let them out at their destination, close to their mosque. On waving to bid me goodbye, one of them whispered that I was being kind to them – a Christian offering them a lift! I did not understand the reason for their feelings, whether they had a different experience before they met me or had been told something contrary to receiving help from a non-Muslim. On another occasion in the same city, I received a lift from a Muslim gentleman when my car developed a fault on a sunny day; he took me to the entrance of our church building, having found out that I was going to church. This kind of mutual support builds trust within a community and is indispensable for a thriving human society.

However, in an institutionalized religious and political arena, the interactions between Christians and Muslims do not seem to be that simple as illustrated in the above narratives. A Nigerian Christian daughter of a family friend was declined an offer of a place at a government-owned primary school in Maiduguri town, the reason given being her non-Muslim English name. This I consider as institutionalized violence against the minor. The young girl's parents had to seek a place for their daughter at a non-governmental fee-paying school. It is unclear whether that was the norm or just a one-off incident against a non-Muslim resident in northeast Nigeria, which is beyond the scope

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<sup>1</sup> Christian evangelistic gospel presentation is the process by which an evangelical Christian introduces his/her faith (religion) to a non-Christian, which sometimes results in the conversion of the friend to Christianity.

<sup>2</sup> It is regarded as an act of kindness by the local community to pick people up in their cars, especially during unfavourable weather like heavy rainfall or a hot sunny day.

of this study. Still, these examples of interactions across religions suggest that Muslims and Christians have the capacity to interact with one another in a friendly manner at a local community level, particularly when institutionalized discriminatory politics are not involved. With the contemporary world plagued with suspicion, division, greed, and corruption, how can qualities that enhance love, peace (or harmony), co-operation and human dignity be identified and promoted to support peace initiatives in human society? This question bothers me.

The cordial inter-religious relations at the grassroots level displayed in my interaction with Garuba and the offer of a lift in the above narratives could be similar to what Watt (1990) suggests was seen among Christians and Muslims during the early days of Islam, probably referring to Abyssinia. Marshall noted how the Abyssinian Christians [and ruler/leadership] kept Muslims safe during the opposition which the early Muslims faced from the Meccan indigenous people (2001). Some Muslims reciprocated this in Nigeria [possibly unknowingly]; as I can recall the reports of some Muslims keeping their Christian neighbours safe during the fanatical Muslims' attacks on Christians in some parts of northern Nigeria recently (Abu, 2018). Going by the past positive history of the two religions, Thomas calls our attention to John of Damascus, a notable Christian apologist during the reign of Muslim Umayyad Caliph around 725 CE [Samir, 1996, cited in (Thomas, 2001)], implying that Christian worship and co-ordinated dialogues existed within the Muslim-led community. So, there are historical records of mutual relationships between Christians and Muslims over the ages, despite the conflicts they had at many points in their history. Christians and Muslims have had occasions of interactions and peaceful co-existence as against the often-projected hostility and violence between the two religions.

The Western approach to Muslims and Islam either for dialogue or Christian mission

seems to be different from some of those who had been living with Muslims for centuries like in Africa. The World Council of Churches suggests, ‘the attitudes of Christians in Europe and North America, living until very recently at a distance from Muslims, have differed from those of Christians who lived historically amidst or in proximity to Muslims’ (WCC, 1992). Thus, Mbillah strongly argues for Africa as a good model of Christian-Muslim interaction:

Africa provides many examples of harmonious interreligious living ... of these two great missionary faiths, rooted in the everyday life of communities... A moment’s reflection on the religious history of Europe makes clear the extent of this achievement. (Mbillah, 2018)

A study of religious Europe has both intra- and inter-religious and community wars, like many other human communities as Mbillah implied, yet there are examples of peace activities, trying to make the ends meet. Despite the notions and writings about the Crusades of the Middle Ages between the Christians and Muslims (Tolan, 2008), Moynihan (2020) argues for the various negotiations that were carried out during the period, showing the humane side of the war. All are examples of human potential to restrain from violence and seek peace.

So far, Mbillah’s point is noted that there are exemplary relationships between Christians and Muslims in some African communities. Considering the African cultural setting, some scholars have suggested that acts of kindness and love were common phenomena in sub-Saharan Africa, including what is now Nigeria, prior to European colonization. Ajisafe (2003) mentions some African customs that point in this direction despite the differences in their local religions and some inter or intra-ethnic conflicts. One of the reasons for this mutual engagement could not be farfetched as Mbillah suggests:

In Africa, where, in many societies, especially at the grass-roots, families live together in the same households, with intra-faith and interfaith differences. They eat together, work

together, celebrate the diverse religious festivals together, share in the joys of birth and the sadness of death, and jointly work towards the development of the community... Will it survive recent changes in the religious landscape of Africa...? (Mbillah, 2018)

Sadly, as Mbillah noted, the interactions and the ongoing struggle to retain harmony among the religious African people, violent conflicts are becoming more common in some Nigerian communities. Osaghae and Suberu (2005) enumerated some of the conflicts. I am aware that Maiduguri used to be peaceful, where local community harmony has gone through some complex conflict scenarios including terrorist insurgency. There are constant struggles between the Islamist Boko Haram and the Nigerian military as discussed in Chapter 2.6. Other initially peaceful communities within the northern region like the Chibok (Kwatra, 2014) are also becoming unsettled while others like the Plateau State (News-Nigeria, 2018) have experienced guerrilla attacks over the years and used violence to further complicate their conflicts.

As some communities are turning to violence, humanitarian crises are on the rise according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who stated that there are 1.9 million internally displaced people (IDP) in Nigeria (UNHCR, 2018). A former seemingly peaceful community like Maiduguri, and the Chibok community that was not in the media until the schoolgirls were kidnapped are, therefore, not immune to violence or conflict, whether physical, psychological or economic. With the contemporary world plagued with suspicion, greed, corruption and war, how can qualities that enhance love, peace and human dignity be identified and promoted in human societies? This question justifies the need for research in peace studies to continue to explore the human potential for peacefulness, to sustain the peace a community might already possess, without necessarily neglecting the quest for the resolution of disputes

among those in conflict. These thoughts led to my main research question.

## **1.1 Research Question**

Nigeria has witnessed violent conflicts in various forms ranging from the regional and ethnic to the religious and political since its independence in 1960 (Mu’azzam & Ibrahim, 2000; Ukiwo, 2003). In his recent research with a focus on two northern cities in Nigeria, Mavalla explored the roles churches played in supporting victims of violent conflicts in Jos and Kaduna, (2012, p. 5); an example of research on conflict resolution and transformation. However, when a once-peaceful community began to experience tension which ended in conflict and war, one can affirm that peace is dynamic and can be lost, remembering Bond’s use of the ‘sustainable, positive peace’, (2014, p. 165). The peacefulness of a community describes how it maintains or retains its peace and is much studied in anthropology (Fry, 2007, p. 215) and is now becoming an integral part of peace research, (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). I want to join scholars in this adventure of studying the idea of peacefulness in human societies.

### **1.1.1 Main Research Question**

Some studies have been carried out on peaceful societies (PS) with relevant questions to societies’ peacefulness. Some questions raised in those already identified PS are:

Why are some societies highly opposed to both aggressive behavior within the community and warfare with external enemies, while most other peoples tolerate or even encourage such violence? How are these peaceful societies able to maintain their pro-social values and their nonviolence even when challenged by aggressive outside forces? (Peaceful-Societies, 2019)

Seeing how some initially peaceful communities in Nigeria are finding themselves in violent situations, and borrowing a leaf from the above inquiries with my motivation

stated earlier, I present my main research question as: ‘How do the Yorùbá manage their disputes, crises, and conflicts that have the potential for violence and still retain their peace (or harmonious society), especially on religious grounds?’ The question begins by paying attention to conflict management - exploring how they handle disputes whenever they had one, then explores peace sustainability in general among the Yorùbá. In answering this question from the perspective of peace studies, I hope to better understand the religious landscape of Yorùbáland in its broader conflict-ridden Nigerian context.

### **1.1.2 Subsidiary Questions**

Subsidiary questions that guided me in this study are:

- Can peace be sustained in a community?
- How do Yorùbá Christians and Muslims sustain peace in their community?
- How comprehensive is the currently proffered family (*Ebí*) theory to foster peace among the Yorùbá in general?

This research revolves around these questions; yet, the field participants could illustrate or support their ideas with examples and extend the discussion further as expected of an open inquiry with my focus on thick description, (Berg & Lune, 2012; Bryman, 2012).

### **1.1.3 Problem and Hypothesis**

There are ongoing debates on the causes of conflicts that result in violence in Nigeria. Some attribute these conflicts to ethnic differences, politics, power, resource control and greed, while others blame religious intolerance, (Amiara, Agwu, & Nwobi, 2020; E. Osaghae, 2000). Idowu (1999) identifies citizenship disorientation as fundamental to the Nigerian crisis in general. The Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria have had political conflicts (mostly during the elections), but a very few instances of inter-religious conflicts have

either been resolved or being resolved while some claimed not to have any record of inter-religious violence in recent times. This is the problematic of this study. What reasons could be deduced for the differences between the few Yorùbá communities that experienced religious related conflicts and resolved it, and those that often are able to retain their peace?

In the same way, I developed a hypothesis in consonant with above problem to further support my focus around the main research question as shown below:

Conflicts leading to physical violence on religious grounds are rare among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria and when it occurs, the Yorùbá people can prevent the situation from escalating, to retain harmony in their community.

This inquiry, I propose, should be able to reveal the approach the Yorùbá have adopted to keep their society in harmony.

## **1.2 Theoretical Framework**

Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) have observed that the Yorùbáland in southwest Nigeria is less prone to religious violence and, where it has occurred, its people often seem capable of managing it. Thus, inter-religious peace and tolerance are good areas to study among the Yorùbá, as religion plays a significant role in either binding or causing divisions, depending on how it is managed. Yorùbáland's supposed ability to keep the peace is suggested in the *Ebí* (or family) commonwealth theory rooted in the Yorùbá culture, which describes the Yorùbá as a family (Akinjogbin, 1996; Laitin, 1986).

The *Ebí* theory, however, is too generic and does not function well in many conflicts, as will be discussed in this study. This calls for empirical research on how to keep the peace in human society, in this case with attention on the Yorùbá people of the same language

but different religions. This study, therefore, investigates how the Yorùbá of different religions- Christians and Muslims in particular – manage disputes, crises, and conflicts that have the potential for violence and how they retain their harmony or peace within the indigenous Yorùbá (African) cultural context.

### **1.2.1 Peaceful Societies**

Many societies (communities of people) have been identified as being peaceful across the globe based on the assessments of some anthropologists (Fry, 2007).<sup>3</sup> Bonta identifies 40 of them (1996), while Melko, Hord and Weigel (1983) identified 52 (Melko, 1972b); the differences in the figures based on the dates covered in the study. Similarly, dates are important as some that used to be peaceful have changed due to some circumstances surrounding them and would require a new assessment for peacefulness. A close study of the current peaceful societies (as enlisted on the webpage of the Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama, United States of America) shows that many of them are farmers, fruit -gatherers, fishermen and hunters, sometimes migrating within the forests while some have settled to cultivate farms (Draper, 1975; Howell, 1989; Lutz, 1990; Saraswati, 1995; Thomas, 1989). A few of them are open to modern education but often return to their settlement to practise their valued culture (Gardner, 2000; Howell, 1989). Some of them, like Ju'hoansi or Bushmen wear minimal clothing, (Thomas, 1989), while some others cherish attire they have for social contact (Briggs, 1970). The studies cover North and South America, Canada, Asia, Europe, and North and East/Central Africa. Yet, there are no examples of peaceful societies from West Africa on the list.

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<sup>3</sup> 25 of them are discussed on the peaceful societies' webpage of the Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama, United States of America. Among the list are the Nubians, Amish, Semai, Batek, Birhor, Hutterites, Ju'hoansi, Ladakhi, Lepchas, Malapandaram, Mbuti, Paliyans, see <<https://cas.uab.edu/peacefulsocieties/>>, accessed 27/08/2019, updated 09/05/2020.

It has been observed that these societies often avoid anger, greed, and ostracize any deviants from their communities to retain their peacefulness (Briggs, 1994; Briggs, 1970; Fry, 2007). They recognize greed as among the causes of rivalry that lead to resentment and violence and some have a hierarchy of leadership to disseminate information, wisdom and resolve conflicts (Fry, 2007).

Although some of the groups or colonies sometimes show a level of deviant behaviour like homicide (Briggs, 1994; Peaceful-Societies, 2019), they feel disappointed about such and seek to project their strategies to further enhance harmony, tolerance, devalue competition and disputes from leading to further violence (Howell, 1989). Some themes come out clearly under peaceful societies (PS) like peaceful components, leadership and social relations, childhood informal education, control or management of aggression, and the fear of strangers (outsiders). Melko discusses the vital roles the PS leadership (or government) play in maintaining peace in their societies, (1972a). Melke describes the features such governments use as:

Workable distribution of power, establishing one of two religious policies (sic), and form some sort of flexible, permanent government... peace can be maintained for many decades despite (or possibly because) of mediocre leadership. (Melke, 1972, p. 1)

The PS may not be offended by Melke's use of mediocre here, if their goal to keep the peace and have their children living in safety is met.

What are the mechanisms of peacefulness? Considering examples of peacefulness, the Semai are well recognized as peaceful people who are not known for physical violence, fighting, or beating their spouses (Robarchek & Robarchek, 1998). When recruited by the British army in a fight against the communist insurgency, the Semai still returned to their peacefulness after the war (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). They cherish their culture, like the people of Tristan da Cunha, when initially displaced due to volcanic eruption in 1961

demanded to return to their island later, showing their commitment to their non-violence and self-assertion, (Munch, 1964). Willis's study of the Ufipa (Fipa) southwest of Tanzania shows that the Ufipa people were known to be peaceful (even as early as 1880). They became aggressive because of wars at some point preceding the arrival of the Europeans but returned to the peacefulness they had been known for later (Willis, 1989). Their worldview of what it takes to be human is relevant to their return to peacefulness. The Ufipa, Batek and !Kung treat their men and women equally compared to male leadership or hierarchy in some other places, (Endicott, 1981; Willis, 1989). Many !Kung women exercise some freedom by working, distinguishing edible food from other desert produces, while the Batek husband and wife make joint decisions while in some others, the structure makes male authority dominant (Endicott, 1981). Similarly, although the Chewong recognize their boys and girls as being different physiologically, they treat their young equally with no value-related prejudices, (Howell, 1989). Also, according to Lutz, the Ifaluk have learnt to control their anger but permit righteous indignation for correcting an erring member as justifiable, yet without violence, (1990). As among the Paliyan foragers, Gardner writes, 'Paliyans have a system of institutions that bear upon the avoiding of violence. In the forest and now in settled villages, too, they are able to remain relatively nonviolent,' (Gardner, 2000, p. 232). What constitutes peacefulness among these societies, therefore, ranges from the management of their innate ideas to the valued and promoted culture of the people concerned.

What correlations can one obtain between the PS and a community within a developing nation like the Yorùbá in this study? In as much as various conflict theories like conflict resolution and transformation have caught the attention of many peace scholars and practitioners, more recent works in anthropology like PS are also ongoing underscoring how communities keep their peace. An inquiry into more communities to explore their

potential for peacefulness to contribute to peace and conflict studies is worth doing. This is to verify what variants of peace can be found in such communities, as a guide to reducing conflict occurrences in human societies.

### **1.2.2 Peace Negotiations and Beyond**

Bringing about peace is one of the main goals of peace research. It considers negotiation techniques employed for resolving conflicts such as resolution versus dominance, compromise, positional strategy with bargaining, negotiations, and alternative dispute resolution, all of which have strengths and weaknesses (Barash & Webel, 2009; Barsky, 2014). Non-violence protest and civil disobedience are among the other approaches but Ellul (1970) suggests these sometimes end in violence, when the police or military are called in to disperse protesters as in the case of the Arab Spring in Cairo (Anderson, 2011). The Hong Kong protests is another example where the police interventions ended in violence against the protesters (Asia-Pacific, 2014). The authorities often justify their use of force or brutality by claiming to be stopping protesters from jeopardizing other citizens' freedom of movement and from paralyzing state functions (Berlinger, 2019). Regrettably, most of the victims of violence are the poor of the nations and communities concerned. Barash and Webel (2009) argue that those responsible for initiating wars or conflict are often the wealthy individuals and politicians, while the populace suffers in the aftermath. Humanitarian aid in some conflict-ridden nations is slow (Marriage, 2006), while the positive desired outcome of peace studies is not yet in reach. Despite all the resources – human and financial – put into peace research and the United Nations' (UN) peacekeeping efforts, wars, protests, corruption, and injustices have not ceased; in fact, more are commencing. Barash and Webel lament that:

We also assume, with regret, that there are no simple solutions to the problems of war. Most aspects of the war-peace dilemma are

complex, interconnected and, even when well understood, difficult to move from theory to practice. On the other hand, much can be gained by exploring the various dimensions of war and peace, including the possibility of achieving a more just and sustainable world – a way of living that can nurture life and of which all humans can be proud. (2009, p. 4)

The authors worry that the peacemaker's job is becoming more urgent, while success is doubtful in many instances (2009, p. 222). The second half of the quotation sums up what peace studies seek to develop or maintain. The various dimensions of peace should include, I suggest, the appraisal of positive virtues in human society and the de-escalation of tension to keep the peace in a harmonious society.

Thus, there are values or virtues that some communities have used to de-escalate conflict thereby becoming relevant approaches to initiating and maintaining peace as found among some identified PS like the Nubians, Semai, Paliyan, and Mbuti, (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). Local community negotiation skills through informal teaching and persuasion to avoid greed and separating the aggrieved persons in conflict are positive ways these communities have kept the peace for many years. Are there other methods of keeping the peace or are there other communities that use similar approaches for keeping the peace? These are relevant questions to support further inquiries in this study.

### **1.2.3 Background to the Study in the Nigerian Context**

Many communities comprising Christians, Muslims, and the worshippers within the indigenous religion of the Africans (Awolalu, 1976; Ogunade, 2017) or [Yorùbá indigenous religion]<sup>4</sup> I henceforth refer to as IAR live together relatively peacefully across West Africa despite the differences in their religious practices (Kenny, 1996)). For instance, in Nigeria, Muslims are predominant among the butchers and Christians buy

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<sup>4</sup> African Traditional Religion (ATR) has been known in scholarship for years while scholars like Awolalu, Falola and Ogunade use *the indigenous religion of the Africans* instead to describe the religions that are indigenous to the Africans. They use *Yoruba indigenous religion* for the religion indigenous to Yoruba people.

their meat without questioning the Islamic mode of slaughtering (*halal*). Muslims attend Christian ceremonies such as weddings and the naming of the new-born. This shows that on many occasions, the religions get along with each other.

Conversely, some places in Nigeria have witnessed violence based on religious identity and differences. Religion was implicated in those incidences where the victims, perpetrators and reprisal attackers claimed religion as the basis of their violence and religious centres were specifically targeted and vandalized (Asthana, 2006; Boer, 2003; Bolaji, 2013; Ukiwo, 2003). Osaghae and Suberu illustrate this argument by citing the Kafanchan crisis in northern Nigeria, (2005).

There are examples of conflicts and violence not specifically associated with religions such as the Ifè-Modákéké (war over land among the Yorùbá), Niger-Delta militancy and the Benue crises (Adebayo, 2010; Ibrahim, 1991; Osinubi & Osinubi, 2006; Toriola, 2001). Some violent acts have political motivations and the Yorùbá were not exempted here (Cole, 2004). In all the various forms of conflict across Nigeria, thousands of people have either been killed or maimed and many more displaced, mostly in the northern and middle areas (middle-belt) of the country. The violence that led to killings in Yorùbáland has often been described as political, occultic and recently the herders' attacks.

In general, the interactions between the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims have been peaceful in southwest Nigeria (Goddard, 2001; Peel, 2016). Although there have been a few occasions of religious conflicts in some Yorùbá communities such as in Sèpètèrì in Òyó State and Èjìgbò in Òsun State,<sup>5</sup> those cases have been resolved, becoming illustrations of strength to keep away from violence. How the Yorùbá handle conflicts and

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<sup>5</sup> There have been conflicts in some places in Ilorin, Kwara State too.

keep them from escalating, especially in the religious sphere, is thus important to uncover the nature, trends, connections, and effects on society.

#### **1.2.4 Positive and Negative Peace**

Galtung (1969), one of the pioneers of peace studies, coined the terms positive and negative peace, describing positive peace in association with social justice and an absence of structural violence. Positive peace takes place in the absence of both personal and structural violence but in the presence of social justice. Therefore, a community that lacks social justice is far from having a holistic peace or ‘positive peace’, (Galtung, 1969, p. 183). Bond also describes positive peace as a situation when there is understanding and harmony among the people ‘to generate conditions free of violence’ at the local and the global level, (Bond, 2014, p. 165). This calls for a move beyond the prevention of personal or physical violence to a sustainable peace, which should be realizable when certain harmonious features of the community are supported to enhance peace.

In contrast, negative peace is the suppression or forceful eradication of personal violence. Galtung describes the violence as taking personal and structural forms; physical, psychological, cultural and the inability to reach one’s potential due to withheld opportunities in human society. The peace enforced with an instrument of violence, like in the military, is described as negative peace.

Grewal adds: ‘[i]t seems that had Galtung not kept on pressing the concept of positive peace, it would have been superseded by the negative peace idea as the central idea of peace research’ (2003, p. 5). Positive peace, therefore, is eradicating structural violence, supporting social justice, and seeking to maintain a harmonious society and is crucial to any peace endeavour in our global society. Grewal, suggests:

The field of peace research is an attempt to reach towards a world which is peaceful or at least free of violence [...] The role of peace

studies is to study [...] both the conditions for the absence of violence and the conditions for peace. (2003, p. 1)

A world free of violence should have the potential to develop or maintain any peace structure it already has both locally and at the international level.

While the goal of peace research is to pursue peace in the global community, attention has largely been given to scenes of conflict to consider resolution and violence prevention. Thus, scholars often pay attention to the resolution of fully blown conflicts in big cities. Are there no other areas to explore for possibilities to keep the peace? Some scholars were not fully satisfied with the progress in peace research. Fetherston and Kelly (2007), for instance, were concerned about the relevance of the undergraduate peace and conflict studies curriculum to the demands students face after their graduation from the university. The duo thus used the grounded theory method to review the teaching of peace and conflict studies with the attention to transform conflict resolution among academics and practitioners. Similarly, in a study on educating people for positive peace, Brock-Utne (1995) identifies the re-introduction of tuition fees in developing countries and a lack of cooperation with local curriculum development and textbook publishing as aggravating structural violence in some African homes and countries. Such a lack of cooperation has a negative effect on the local economy and constitutes economic violence on poor families who would be under pressure to seek extra income to pay for the tuition of their children.

Granted, resolving conflict is vital for pursuing peace, but maintaining peace by making life comfortable for local people is also vital to understanding the positive nature of peace.

On this, Galtung writes:

We may summarize by saying that too much research emphasis on one aspect of peace tends to rationalize extremism to the right or extremism to the left, depending on whether one sided emphasis is

put on 'absence of personal violence' or on 'social justice'. (1969, p. 184)

As Galtung stresses above, it is important to balance the emphasis of peace research without neglecting the resolution of conflict as well as attaining and sustaining positive peace in human society. Galtung further writes:

The task is to transform the conflict, upwards, positively, finding positive goals for all parties, imaginative ways of combining them and all of this without violence. It is the failure to transform conflicts that lead to violence. Each act of violence can be seen as a monument of that human failure. (2000, p. 15 of 178)

In the same way, attempting to rectify some of the 'human failures' among the multinational companies and holding them responsible, Bond (2014, p. 60) challenges them to take responsibility for maintaining peace and supporting 'the conditions of peace' in the workplace. Bond suggests that the multinational mining enterprises should harness corporate social responsibility (CSR) to contribute to positive peace between the mining companies and the local resident communities. For Bond: '[a] feature of positive peace is that it has the potential to reframe conflict as a constructive opportunity for positive change' (*ibid*, p. 60). This description of positive peace sounds akin to conflict transformation. That is, using certain potentials to provide support for a society to maintain their peace, rather than waiting for the conflict to emerge before rendering a helping hand.

Sponsel argues that not much attention is placed on researching nonviolence and peace. According to Sponsel, '[t]he deficiency lies in the research [...] and not in human nature.' (1996, p. 114). Sponsel's work convers the prehistory, pre-state societies, and animal behaviour like the chimpanzee with reference to Goodall (1986), tracing innate peacefulness in humans. Sponsel suggests chimpanzees are more peaceful than often perceived, threatening more than fighting and wounding each other very rarely (citing

Goodall 1986, p. 357), (Sponsel, 1996). Sponsel further suggests ‘[o]ne necessary condition for achieving greater progress toward the realization of a more nonviolent and peaceful world is to consider nonviolence and peace directly and systematically’ (Sponsel, 1996, p. 96), rather than studying conflict.

Although, Barash and Webel (2009) consider conflict transformation and resolution as a matter of semantics because conflict resolution can achieve the positive changes that conflict transformation is designed to accomplish, the central point is to retain peace in human society. Gillie’s Global Cease Fire Day, initially called Peace One Day (Gillie, 2002, p. 16; Justino, 2008) comes to mind. In modern times, the Olympic Games are supposedly meant to provide the opportunity for a month-long boycott of wars, among other things (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 225), although this is not often respected or observed by warring nations. The question of how communities in modern society [not limiting it to the agrarian societies] managed disputes, crises and conflicts that have the potential for violence whilst retaining their peace can be a potentially fruitful approach to peace work. This approach offers the peace lens to investigate the interactions within a relatively peaceful community and to understand how it sustains its harmony. There is, therefore, a need to research further to determine what aspect of a community life works well to reduce conflict, avoid violence and better still – retain peace, a step towards attaining a more positive peaceful society.

### **1.2.5 Peace as the Main Goal**

The main anticipation of the pioneers of peace research is the attainment of harmony within human society. Galtung (2007) describes peace as the opposite of violence, and health as the opposite of disease. He views conflict [in general] as inevitable but must seek to transform it. He uses three terms to reinforce his point: diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy (ibid, p. 14). He suggests:

We need insight in the past for diagnosis and the future for prognosis and therapy. We need a description for diagnosis and prognosis and a prescription for therapy. (2007, p. 15)

His suggestions are consistent with the one he made a decade earlier, when he argued saying, '[p]eace studies are so similar to health studies that the triangle diagnosis-prognosis-therapy can be applied' (Galtung, 1996, p. 1). Galtung describes conflict as a condition of disease and the need to provide a cure is what conflict resolution or transformation do in a conflict situation.

However, another dimension Galtung did not clearly consider is how health is to be maintained. Galtung's diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy in his health template are valuable, but to maintain a good health and prevent disease setting in, we must do more. For instance, if health is the opposite of illness, we must determine where to place preventive medicine. So, if conflict is the opposite of peace as Galtung suggests, we must determine where to categorize a community that has demonstrated the ability to de-escalate or prevent conflict. To realize an enduring peace in human society, we must sustain the peace in communities that have achieved a certain level of peace just as good health must be maintained to stay healthy. This other dimension is what I suggest PS can achieve, sustaining their peace.

Galtung's health metaphor and his diagnosis-prognosis-therapy analogy can serve to move conflict transformation forward if health maintenance and disease prevention are included, just as a peaceful community must stay vigilant to keep their peace. Similarly, preventive medicine can be categorized under therapy in which immunisation, exercise, and good nutrition are essential to human's wellbeing. Cassens describes preventive medicine as:

The branch of medicine that concentrates on keeping people well [...] consists of disease prevention and health promotion. [...] techniques that prevent the occurrence of disease (physical, mental, or emotional) or leads to an early diagnosis where therapy may cure, prevent, or modify the progression of disease. (1992, p. 1)

Could this be an illustration of what certain social interactions do to harmonize and prevent conflict as demonstrated among the PS?

Just as there is no one immunization for all forms of illnesses; one may not expect a one-word solution to neutralize all forms of conflicts. A community must be investigated for what it does to strengthen its harmony, relevant to its own situation. A human community could be able to maintain a relatively peaceful status (having certain peaceful features) in the same way that a vaccination can protect the human body against a type of disease. If a peaceful community is not looked after and peace research focuses only on conflict zones, the relatively peaceful areas could fall into a violent conflict, just as a healthy person who does not look after him/herself can fall ill. We have seen this frequently in past decades, with Maiduguri, Kaduna, and the Plateau State in Nigeria being examples, where once-peaceful places fallen into the hands of aggressive invaders and intolerant individuals.

Galtung's illustration of therapy is relevant to human community, whether peaceful or in a conflict situation. However, sustenance (or preventive medicine) is required for the therapeutic component to become holistic. The role of preventive medicine in facilitating and maintaining good health is crucial to the well-being of any individual and community. Similarly, the assessment of a community by peace researchers for the presence of violence – physical, structural, psychological, and cultural – is not irrelevant, but the consideration of sustenance of the peace is equally important.

Galtung is close to my idea here, saying: '[t]wo types of therapies have been indicated above: curative and preventive, aiming at negative and positive respectively' (1996, p. 2).

Galtung mentions prevention briefly but does not seem to go deeper into the discussion to consider preventive medicine as equivalent to peace sustenance in relatively peaceful communities. However, I suggest that researching peaceful communities both to raise awareness and to strengthen those aspects that help to promote or maintain harmony in the structure of the local community must go further.

Peace research has focused more on the inadequate and inappropriate conditions and situations with the need for a remedy. As a result, I want to explore PS (see section 1.4.1) that is the examination of a community at the point that it is still healthy, supporting itself to keep the peace, remaining alert to changes in the equilibrium and seeking to rectify any imbalances whenever necessary. Matyok says that peace research is forward-looking and suggests:

Peace and conflict studies deal with both scientific and humanistic. It focuses what it is, why it is and what it can be that is considering the future too. 'Present in the here-and-now, peace and conflict studies is essentially a future-centred discipline. Not content with the what and why of conflict, the field orients on what the future can be, it designs a path forward. (2011, pp. xxv - xxvi)

In line with the future of peace research, some scholarship attempts to expand the work from the research-oriented into the industries of oil, gas, and mining. While Ikelegbe (2005) and Oluwaniyi (2010) base their works on the oil-rich Niger Delta in Nigeria, Bond (2014) suggests the need to examine positive peace in the context of mining, going beyond the 'triple bottom line' (TBL) of economic, environmental and social factors. Bond, with reference to large international corporations' contributions to peace studies in the areas of oil and timber, adds the mining industry to the discourse of non-physical violence (Bond, 2014, p. 164). In that same work, Bond discusses 'how sustainability and sustainable, positive peace can be co-configured through processes of conflict transformation, to reduce conflict between mining companies and their communities'

(ibid, p. 164). Bond's target was to see if peace could be encouraged by the mining company and how 'mining companies can benefit from the growing international emphasis on businesses as contributors to local level peace' (ibid, p. 166). This further widens the scope of peace studies, justifying Galtung's advocacy for all fields making contributions to peace research. Bond writes:

The method for this research were chosen for their ability to demonstrate whether or not it is possible to look at mining company-community relationships through the lens of peace and conflict theory and distil examples of practice relevant to achieving TBL outcomes. (2014, p. 166)

What interests me is Bond's attention to sustaining the peace among the professionals and the community in which they work, with her claim that '[p]eace is not an end goal; it is an ongoing condition requiring attentive maintenance to be actively sustained' (2014, p. 165). The constant need to sustain peace in human community points to the need for my research. This is based on a relatively peaceful community and questioning how it can or has been sustaining its peace. Research on the sustenance of peace in relatively peaceful communities is important to the overall global peace ventures. I tried looking inwards to assess the situation among the Yorùbá in Nigeria.

### **1.2.6 Yorùbá Religion and Culture**

In this sub-section and to put this peace discourse in perspective, I provide the Yorùbá religion as the background in which Islam and Christianity took their root among the Yorùbá people. I know the Yorùbá religion is well developed and possesses the idea of the sacred and moral, (Awolalu, 1976; Ogunade & Zaccheaus, 2018), and the creator known variously as the *Olùdá*, *Aṣẹ̀dá*, *Èlẹ̀dǎ*, *Olódùmarè*, *Ọlórún* or the Almighty God. This God is holy, transcendent, and invisible (*Àìrì*). He is the divine who is worshipped and offered prayers and songs. The Yorùbá also believe in God's judgement, nemesis (as in *ẹ̀san ñkẹ̀*), love and in the morality demanded from humans. Olupona describes the

religion as originating from Africa as ‘the indigenous religious traditions’, (1993, p. 241). Olupona provides some of the Yorùbá religion’s features with religious and social functions. These include the arts and practices like the belief in life after death, Ògbóni, witchcraft and Egúngún masquerades, which are also found outside of the Yorùbá homelands in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States of America. Olupona describes those countries as the New World under the Yorùbá cultural and religious influence (Olupona, 1993).

It is common knowledge among the Yorùbá that the *Babaláwo* (the indigenous Yorùbá priest) offers sacrifice, leads in divination, is skilled in guiding his people as a priest through the Ifá-Oracle and sometimes performs the duties of a healer (*Oníṣègùn*) (Awolalu, 1973; Awolalu, 1976). The two new religions (Islam and Christianity) sought to provide alternatives to the roles and activities of the Yorùbá priests, and using Olupona’s idea, often demonizing the host religion. Olupona refers to the Christian apologetics against the Yorùbá indigenous priesthood, (Olupona, 1993). The Yorùbá Ifá-Oracle provided guidance for many centuries and its artefacts are still found and preserved in many museums across the globe (Olupona, 1993, p. 252). Similarly, Curry discusses the Yorùbá religion among the African American group in New York City and attributes its growth to Cuban immigration to the US (2001). Peel provides three definitions of the Yorùbá religion:

Yorùbá religion practiced by the Yorùbá in their homeland, or what is conventionally called Yorùbá traditional religion (YTR), to which the cult of [O]risa [sic] was central. (2016, p. 214)

This is the conventional definition of the Yorùbá African religion. The other definitions Peel provides are what I call situational definitions, as in his second definition:

[A] religion practiced by the overwhelming majority of Yorùbá people today, not of Yorùbá origin but consisting of various forms of Islam and Christianity. (2016, p. 215)

I will take this second definition only as a working definition for his discourse because the Yorùbá religion(s) referred to here, [Islam and Christianity] have foreign origins, although the Yorùbá practitioners might have modified or added to them. Peel's third definition is: '[A] religion of Yorùbá origin practiced in the world today, overwhelmingly outside Africa by people who are not Yorùbá.' (2016, p. 215). This third definition is relevant to the first one, in that it shows how the religion originated from among the African Yorùbá, although it is also practised by non-Yorùbá outside Yorùbáland. Peel wonders how the third definition has come about but would not dwell much on it as it does not fall within the scope he planned to cover in his study, and neither does it fall within my own.

Considering Peel's second definition of the religion of the Yorùbá, one can wonder how Islam and Christianity have taken root within the Yorùbá African religion and culture and the Yorùbá have retained the tolerance so much spoken of by scholars. Parrinder also describes West African religious life in terms of tolerance and harmony. The three religions (Islam, Christianity and the IAR) are still practised within many large Yorùbá extended families nowadays, about sixty years after Parrinder's publication. Parrinder (1959) and Peel (2016) also note the difference between the tolerance in southwest Nigeria compared with northern Nigeria, which Parrinder describes as 'hardening of attitude as one goes north' that is also reflected in the 'poorer educational standards of the north', (1959, p. 134). The idea of greater tolerance in Yorùbá southwest Nigeria has attracted interest among academics.

In his recent work, Peel suggests, '[t]he Yorùbá have a sense of themselves as being exceptionally tolerant of religious difference [...] and having harmonious relations

between Islam and Christianity' (2016, p. 125). Peel cites some examples of local community meetings involving Yorùbá Muslims and Christians where prayers in both religions were offered to start and end their meetings (2016, p. 125). I have witnessed this in the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings as a pupil and as a parent among the southwest Nigerian Yorùbá.

Peel also explains the patterns of the Yorùbá's conversion into the world religions: Christianity through western missionary education and identification with empowerment and Islam as a form of resistance to the colonial power (2016, p. 127). Could the understanding of the pattern illustrated here be one of the reasons why each Yorùbá convert might not ordinarily see the other Yorùbá as an enemy, but as a relation at the other side of the world religious and political divide? If not, it begs the question of why tolerance is so pronounced among the Yorùbá.

The scholars' argument for the Yorùbá's tolerance does not mean there were never disputes or conflicts among the Yorùbá, as Peel expresses the opposition the Yorùbá traditional religion suffered at the hands of Christianity and Islam to the extent that it retains very little relevance among its people. Yet, according to Peel, the Yorùbá religion has followers among the non-Yorùbá people in lands foreign to the religion, (2016, p. 215). Both Ogunade (2017) and Awolalu (1976) argue for the uniqueness of the Yorùbá religion as having dynamic worship through the use of oral traditions, art, crafts, pithy sayings, proverbs, stories, songs and liturgies; but without a specific founder or membership drives yet winning new members from outside the culture and even across the continents. This is a very large area that will require volumes of work to explore, yet tolerance found its way into the disharmony the three religions experienced in their initial meeting in Nigeria.

The Yorùbá live a community life in association with their invisible ancestors and a moral duty to both the visible and the invisible communities of humans and spirits. A life within the culture but outside of religion is not possible among the Yorùbá. Awolalu (1976) addresses this with reference to sin against a person as also against the community as well as the divine; the visible and the invisible world. Alamu (2015) identifies a belief in the metaphysical and its influence on their community life. Olupona argues for a link between the religion of the Yorùbá and their culture:

In Yorùbá society and culture, as in many other African societies, religion and culture are linked so much that there cannot be a pure history of religions (*Religionswissenschaft*) approach or perspective without due consideration to cognate disciplines in the humanities and social sciences [contributing...] to our understanding of Yorùbá religious worldview and its relations to the Yorùbá culture and society as much as those within the regular religious studies fields. (1993, p. 241)

A study of the Yorùbá indigenous religion without its culture seems as impossible as a study of the culture without mentioning the religion. Similarly, any attempt to isolate the Yorùbá cultural influence from the new religions (Christianity and Islam) is also a difficult task. In this peace discourse, therefore, I want to use the Yorùbá indigenous religion loosely in the context of the non-ritual moral values that possibly provided fertile ground for the new religions' hermeneutics, like tolerance, love, and kindness. I do not have the intention to discuss worship or rituals in the two new religions too, but to pay attention to their beliefs and practices as it affects peace and togetherness.

In this theoretical framework, I have provided a discussion of conflicts in some parts of Nigeria, the vandalizing of property, the destruction of life, and the cost of the United Nations' response to the humanitarian crisis. This calls for the need for more research on the possible ways of maintaining peace in a relatively peaceful community as observed

among the identified PS. Similarly, the study can be beneficial by providing a better understanding of the human potential for peacefulness.

Furthermore, there is less attention to peace maintenance amongst modern societies and the developing countries like Nigeria when compared with the list of PS globally. A study among the Yorùbá for academic literature on their tolerance is a good place to start exploring this idea of peace maintenance through empirical means, bearing in mind that a few other formerly peaceful places are already having some troubling times. Thus, I rely on the evidence from the available literature within peace studies, anthropology, Nigerian and Yorùbá history, and the empirical findings from amongst the Yorùbá to answer my research question and build my theory.

### **1.3 Method**

Research of this type requires primary data to access the nature of the relationship between a people of the same language (the Yorùbá) but different religions and their idea of peace within their community. I employed thick description as a methodology to study their concept of peace while I used multiple methods of data collection.

I started my data collection with a specialized electronic survey (ES), then progressed to the focus group discussions (FGD) and face-to-face interviews (FI). I adopted a multiple method approach to doing this research with reference to Berg (2012), Bloor (2006), Bouma & Atkinson (1995) and Bryman (2012), on the various research methods. A qualitative method is relevant to a study like this, but I began with a survey (Baker, 1999), due to the vastness of the Yorùbá population under study. The questions in the ES were generated from a review of the literature, all tailored towards the main research question. The responses to the ES questions provided information on the causes of conflicts and the

sources of support available to keep the peace among the Yorùbá. My ES provides space for the participants' personalized written scripts of their own views, which makes the survey open research. The ES participants' written scripts were analysed using NVivo and the findings provided the direction for the subsequent FGD data collections.

Further data collection was done through the FGD in Ògbómòşó (FGD1), the town identified from the ES as being peaceful, followed by Sèpètèrì (FGD2) noted from the ES to have experienced violent conflicts. The last FGD took place in Ilorin (FGD3), identified from the literature review as having had conflicts that were resolved. The last section of the data collection was FI with some selected Yorùbá personalities from places known to be the depository of knowledge of the Yorùbá culture and the meeting points of the people, such as a family house, radio stations and the palace.

The findings at each stage of the data collection were helpful guides to the subsequent data collections. The data at each stage of the FGDs and the FI were also analysed using NVivo. The summary of my findings is provided in the cumulative NVivo chart and discussed in the appropriate chapters and sections of this study.

### **1.3.1 Research Ethics and Risk Assessment**

I adhered to the Research Ethics Committee's and Research Ethics Sub-Committee's guidelines for fieldwork. The field research involved more than minimal risks and therefore required an ethical statement and safeguarding of both the researcher and participants. I thought that my research participants at the FGD might not have been fully convinced of my motives at the initial stages of the fieldwork. So, adhering to Berg & Lune and Burns's suggestions (Berg & Lune, 2012; Burns, 2000), I appointed research assistants from the Islamic and Christian communities who liaised with the participants and supported me in building trust in the process. I followed my link from the FGD1 to access the traditional king's palace for the indigenous religious contribution to my data.

There were no risks in my interviews in the Yorùbá local homes. I kept all the information confidential as required by the Research Ethics Committee and Research Ethics Sub-Committee guidelines.

### **1.3.2 Scope**

This study on southwest Nigerian Yorùbá focuses on intra-ethnic religious peacefulness. The ES covered a range of the Yorùbá communities in southwest Nigeria as presented in the ES NVivo chart. This ES coverage does not, however, imply a complete representation of all ideas obtainable in this subject but provides a starting point for this research. Afterwards I embarked on the FGD and FI.

The participants were expected to cast their minds back for a period of about forty years where possible. The study data covers the Yorùbá's idea of peace and how they have resolved disputes, crises or conflicts up until 2016 during the fieldwork (around 1976 to 2016). I was a resident in Yorùbáland during most of the period and should be able to assess what the participants would be talking about, as an inside researcher. Nigeria gained its independence from Great Britain in 1960. Thus, the Yorùbá worldview should not be under the direct influence of colonialism. The Nigerian Civil War had ended, and a war situation should not be confused with the Yorùbá identity and value system. The four decades of narrative should be a good reflection of the Yorùbá values and worldview.

This study excludes the non-Yorùbá from being research participants. However, going by secondary ethnic identity, a non-Yorùbá who has lived in Yorùbáland as the spouse of a Yorùbá or descendant of the settlers can participate in the study. This is necessary as such secondary *ethnic* exclusion in peace studies cannot be justified as their understanding of the Yorùbá invariably has direct or indirect effects on their peaceful co-existence with their Yorùbá hosts and families. Nevertheless, such secondary ethnic non-Yorùbá families

or descendants must be able to speak Yorùbá and have their livelihood among the Yorùbá to be a participant. I relied on the participants' ability to speak Yorùbá fluently and the testimonies of neighbours to validate the secondary ethnics participating in this study.

### **1.3.3 Sources**

The sources I used in providing my empirical data are the ES, the FGDs and the FI. The available literature was helpful in the designing of the questionnaire for the ES while the data from the ES was instrumental in the formation of the questions used in the FGD. The findings from the FGD aided the direction of the subsequent FI<sup>6</sup>. I also attended some social events to observe the interactions between some Yorùbá Christians and Muslims and visited elderly persons in their traditional local compound housing and a palace for the indigenous religions and cultural input for this study.

Other resources I used were the electronic media (such as audio music and videos), hard copies (such as newspapers and signboards with pictures and posters) and radio stations (interviews and radio programmes). Most of the newspapers and music are available online and were helpful for retrieving past newspapers and relevant Yorùbá music already uploaded to YouTube.

The data was taken with pen and paper, photographs and video recordings where permitted. Manual translation and transcriptions were done as soon as possible followed by the coding and theme formation with the aid of NVivo.

Also, as a home researcher among the Yorùbá, I relied on my knowledge and experience within the Yorùbá culture and religions as a source of information for this research. In the final chapters, I provide my reflection about the research findings and cross-referenced

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<sup>6</sup> Although, there were a few overlaps between the FGD and some interviews when I had the opportunity to interview some people, the full interview continued after the FGD.

with relevant secondary sources to see any correlations, deviations, and harmony with the existing PS.

## **1.4 Clarifications of Terms**

Certain terms used in this study need clarification, such as violence, peaceful community, and peace. The definitions will help to streamline the ideas being developed in this research.

### **1.4.1 Violence**

Violent, an adjective of violence is defined as ‘forceful’ or ‘infuriate’ (Cassell, 1994, p. 1468). All forms of violence are painful, either emotionally or physically. Violent conflict in this study is an expression of disagreement or dispute in a way to cause physical harm or injury to one or more of the parties involved in a conflict, or the innocent third party, with or without damage to their property.

The Programme for Christian Muslim Relations (PROCMURA), a non-governmental organization in Africa defines conflicts as: ‘When we talk about conflicts we refer to violent conflicts or conflicts that can lead to violence.’ (PROCMURA, n.d.). My use of conflict in this study is more on the physical violence arising from a religious context among the Yorùbá people.

### **1.4.2 Peaceful Community**

These are communities where the people can manage their disputes, so their conflicts do not often deteriorate into physical violence. Such communities are described as peaceful in this study, being able to cope with or manage their stress. According to Melko and others:

The criteria for listing the [peaceful] societies was (sic) an absence of violent war or revolution for a period of a century or more for a geographically distinguishable area ... If a peace were terminated by violence followed by another century of peace in the same area, the whole was counted as one interrupted peace. (1983, p. 39)

Peacefulness in such communities implies they have structures to handle day to day activities that have potential for disputes and crisis, and with that understanding usually support themselves to maintain the peace. I want to explore what structures are in place and how such communities facilitate harmony.

### **1.4.3 Peace**

Peace, as used in this study, therefore, is an absence of inter-religious violence. A peaceful community implies an absence of violence due to disputes or conflicts and where such occurs, the people often manage it to reduce the stress to a minimal and their community return to normality. Bonta identifies the bases of this societal peacefulness:

While the strategies for managing conflicts employed by these peoples are comparable to those used in many other small-scale societies, their worldviews of peacefulness and the structures they use to reinforce those worldviews do distinguish them from other societies. (1996, p. 403)

The emphases here are the societal worldviews and the structures that are in place.

This implies that being peaceful does not always mean a complete absence of dispute or conflict, as also suggested in the PS (Peaceful-Societies, 2019), but an ability to manage the differences and normalize again to retain their serenity. The peacefulness reflects the ability retain the peace or quickly return to stability before reaching a violent or uncontrollable state.

## 1.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This research uses a ‘peace lens’ rather than the conflict dimension to explore a peaceful community to see how they sustain their peace as a contribution to PS debate. The study provides a comprehensive finding on the harmony that exists within the ‘Yorùbá nation’<sup>7</sup> with attention on Christians and Muslims, by bringing together the social, cultural, religious and communal life and the multi-faceted causes of conflicts among the Yorùbá into one study. These edifices, when well-maintained, are responsible for sustaining the peace among the Yorùbá. This study, therefore, contributes to peace theories from religious, anthropological, cultural, and African perspectives.

Peacefulness can be explored and possibly be attainable in a modern or civilized society rather than focusing only on the smaller agrarian communities explored in the current PS list. The currently identified PS are isolated from modern civilization, whereas, the Yorùbá are exposed to modern civilization with their first university in Nigeria founded in Ibadan in 1948 (The-University-of-Ibadan, 2019) and several developmental projects including Africa's first television station launched in 1959 in Ibadan (Editor, 03 April 2019),<sup>8</sup> newspapers in their own language, beyond most of the already identified PS.

Much has been written on Yorùbá tolerance, which is often attributed to the *Èbí* or family commonwealth theory (Akinjogbin, 1966). This study further suggests that the source of harmony among the Yorùbá goes beyond the commonly projected *Èbí* to other features identifying the contents of the social, cultural, religious, and communal lifestyle as relevant here. The dynamism in the use of the term *Èbí*, discussed in this study further provides an insight into the evolution of other related concepts sustaining harmony within

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<sup>7</sup> Yoruba nation is used here to represent the Yorùbá speaking people of southwest Nigeria.

<sup>8</sup> This is known as the Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) Ibadan.

the Yorùbá community in connection with the idea of *Èbí* theory. Those concepts are in the form of community connections, co-operation and identity formation which affirm the previous scholars' works in anthropology. Beyond this, however, despite some like Akinade (in his summer class lecture) and Lateju (published works) have identified culture as relevant to the harmony among the Yorùbá, a thicker description of the concept of culture contributing to harmony is brought out more elaborately in this study. That is the components of the Yorùbá culture responsible for their peacefulness include the use of the Yorùbá language in day-to-day living, music, storytelling, their literature and the hermeneutics and version of the religions taught by their leaders are assets to the harmony among the Yorùbá within their cultural milieu. These go beyond their idea of family connections.

Some of the findings here could be aligned with the features associated with peacefulness among the PS globally. For instance, songs are found to be useful among the Ifaluk,<sup>9</sup> Mbuti,<sup>10</sup> and the Netsilik Inuit (Fry, 2007, p. 154), but in addition, the Yorùbá use the media like the radio to air their songs and YouTube to educate and inspire their community to peacefulness. The Inuit also use the radio for propagating peacefulness among the PS, (Briggs, 2000, p. 122) and thus the closest to the Yorùbá in the use of media identified in this study. This implies that the use of the media to propagate peacefulness through songs among civilized people is a possibility. PROCURA conferences also acknowledged the use of the media for education to peacefulness (Dogbé & Mwanyumba, 2010). Certain ideas like social interactions and values are among the concepts uniting the already identified PS, which are further affirmed among the Yorùbá in this study. These are potent peace features to strengthen the theory of the sustainability of peace in human society globally and this study is a contribution to peaceful societies.

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<sup>9</sup> See 'Ifaluk' <https://cas.uab.edu/peacefulsocieties/societies/ifaluk/>, accessed 30/08/2019.

<sup>10</sup> See 'Mbuti', <https://cas.uab.edu/peacefulsocieties/societies/mbuti/>, accessed 31/08/2019.

## **1.6 Summary and the Thesis Structure**

In this Chapter 1, I have presented my motivation, the research questions, the theoretical basis, the method of carrying out the study and the sources of my data. I proceed to present a discourse from some of the existing literature to situate the Yorùbá's peacefulness in the Nigerian context in Chapter 2 and the methodology in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 is my data presentation from the ES, FGDs and FI showing relevant themes developing from the study. Chapter 5 is about the Yorùbá culture as a means of de-escalating conflicts and maintaining their peace. Chapter 6 presents a discourse on the Yorùbá communal life and leadership roles in peace maintenance in their communities. In Chapter 7, I discuss the inevitability of community interaction among the Yorùbá's diverse religious persuasions. Chapter 8 is on the religious understanding vis a vis the hermeneutics and practices of religions among the Yorùbá as another theme relevant to the maintenance of peace among the Yorùbá. The final Chapter 9 is my conclusion.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents a review of literature on the relevance of peace studies to the situation on the ground in southwest Nigeria. The first part of the review gives a brief discussion about peace and conflict studies as it is developed in the West followed by an outline of conflicts in Nigeria and amongst the Yorùbá to identify a gap to justify further inquiries.

#### **2.1 Peace Studies**

Peace studies developed through the activities of scholars and peace practitioners from the 1900s and became an academic study around the late 1950s (Alkana, 1984; Dungen & Wittner, 2003.; Harris, Fisk, & Rank, 1998). Some of the early forerunners include Quiney Wright in the 1920s, Lewis F. Richardson in the 1930s, and Ted Lentz in 1952 (Kelman, 1981). During its early stage, professional bodies like the Committee on Psychology of War and Peace, and Peace Research Movement (between the First and Second World Wars) emerged (Kelman, 1981). Notably among the pioneers to establish its credentials as academic pursuit are Galtung (1969) and Boulding (1978).

Chaudhri (1968) traces its origin to the mid-1900s attributing it to a misunderstanding between powerful nations and the anxiety over the use of weapons of mass destruction. Forcey (1991, p. 331) also writes on women as role models in peace-making, in her article 'Women as Peacemakers' where she discusses women's potential for peace-making. O'Reilly affirms women's roles in peacemaking especially when involved in decision-making during conflicts in certain contexts (O'Reilly, 2016). Alkana (1984) writes a

review of Amy Swerdlow's 1960s 'Women Strike for Peace'<sup>1</sup> with their slogan 'End the Arms Race – Not the Human Race' (Alkana, 1984, p. 7).<sup>2</sup> Betts (1997) provides a review under Strategic and Intelligent Studies and its role in arms control when studies were being restricted to universities in the 1960s, while the 1970s witnessed a further study of the United States versus the Soviet Union in negotiations. There was also a kind of 'dominance of strategic studies over [...] international relations', while strategic intelligence became prominent in the 1970s (Betts, 1997, p. 17). These researchers and observers saw the need to study peace to foster understanding and resolve conflicts between world powers. In the 1980s, further studies were carried out on the 'comparative analysis of historical cases', with attention on 'International Security and Studies in Security Affairs, (Betts, 1997, p. 20). Betts recaps, with reference to Brian:

The end of the Cold War turned security studies back to basics: questions about causes of war and peace, effects of the general distribution of power in international relations, economic and ideological influences on patterns of conflict and cooperation, nationalism and so forth. (1997, p. 21)

The need to study the causes of war and peace is helpful to me in linking the study to my area of interest, where I want to examine the 'causes of peace' within peaceful communities, for what they can offer peace research.

Franke (2002) cites President George H. W. Bush of United States addressing the United Nations (UN) in October 1990 in which he viewed the end of the Cold War as a great achievement and the fulfillment of the UN founders' vision. Bush (senior) made this speech before the terrorist attack on the United States, which marked the beginning of

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<sup>1</sup> Notable among the women's group is the International Women's Congress of 1915 chaired by Jane Addams to 'protest the war and discuss principles for a peace settlement'. Adams' group was instrumental to the establishment of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF), established in 1919 (Dungen and Wittner 2003, p. 369 cited in Alkana 1989, p. 7).

<sup>2</sup> WSP was a movement 'in opposition to nuclear testing', so influential to have brought about 'the Atmospheric Test Ban Treaty in 1962', after which it also turned its attention to oppose the Vietnam War.

another series of wars, this time on global terrorism. Peace research kept attracting papers and conferences where both practitioners and academics made contributions, while its goal was to achieve peace in potentially conflict-ridden communities and nations.

Various works have also been written, attempting to manage conflicts and bring about 'peace' (Alkana, 1984; Boulding, 1978; Dungen & Wittner, 2003.; Galtung, 1984; Harris et al., 1998). Many theories have emerged, ranging from conflict resolution, non-violent protests, civil disobedience, conflict transformation and the realist approach (Barash & Webel, 2009; Barsky, 2014; Galtung, 2000, 2007; Sriram, Martin-Ortega, & Herman, 2010). More works are still ongoing to seek to bring a lasting peace to human society.

Projecting outside the West and writing on gender-based violence in Asia, Groves and others have argued that peacekeeping by the United Nations to protect the nation-state has failed to address the gender violence prevalent in the Timor-Leste new state (Groves, Resurrection, & Doneys, 2009). Marriage (2006) mentions the multinational aid providers and NGOs contributing to the economic hardship of the deprived people they were meant to help in Africa. Marriage further argues on the un-investigated failures of the agencies to reach out to those in the Sierra Leone interior, while the assistance provided to the Congo and South Sudan was dreadfully inadequate. Thus, providing solutions to conflict situations is yet an unfinished task.

As peace research continues to advance, it keeps seeking innovative approaches for in-depth studies to ameliorate any identified deficiencies. While Harris (1998) and Montiel (2006) argue for a multidisciplinary approach to research peace, Galtung suggests a trans-disciplinary approach for the study (2010). The contributions from different fields would further enhance the relevance of peace studies, both locally and internationally. To this end, Mulimbi and Dryden-Peteron (2018) suggest a need for a multi-culturalist approach

across about 20 ethnic groups in Botswana (southern part of Africa), where an assimilation approach (around the dominant ethnic group, culture, and language) has been used in the education policies and curriculum to foster unity and avoid armed conflicts. Although the assimilation approach helped somewhat, the minority ethnic groups experienced low education benefits, meaning ‘negative peace’, to secure unity with dreadful structural problems in their minority group. A multi-culturalist approach can help sustain the ‘condition of positive peace’ in the region (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, 2018, p. 142). The methodology they used involves examining the curriculum, the contents of teaching, cultural heritage, language, and social studies textbooks (2018, p. 146).

Rodríguez-Martínez and Calvo ‘propose the capability approach as an instrument for promoting positive social interaction and the culture of peace in education’ (2014, p. 107).

Peachey and others write on the challenges regarding peace in inter-organizational sports partnerships (Welty Peachey, Cohen, Shin, & Fusaro, 2018). According to Rodríguez-Martínez and Calvo:

All types of violence have their origins in inequalities that have become embedded in the customs and traditions of our culture and society... social, personal, origin and gender differences that form part of our symbolic world and the beliefs in which we are socialised. (2014, p. 108)

Thus, what must be considered as an acceptable peace culture should promote opportunity for the wholeness of being; that is: ‘development which ensures the maximum well-being of societies and which are fully consistent with the proposals of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Human Rights’ (*ibid*, p. 108). The idea of a peace culture in relation to sustainable peace, not necessarily as an aftermath of a war, is relevant to further peace initiatives.

Recent works on Africa include Zhou and Machenjera on under-development with a focus on the role colonial leaders’ and their activities played on the continent, in politics,

economic and social-cultural basis (2017). Oyewole discusses the way violence and war have ravaged the continent of Africa over many years, (2017). Falola describes the various contacts of the African continent with the western world in the form of the slave trade, voluntary migrations as well as the use of unwholesome terminologies or what he calls negative images to describe Africa, and the mutiny of the Amistad rebellion of 1839, (Falola, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d). Mawere also enumerates various problems associated with Africa (Mawere, 2017).

Religions are also being made part of the debate. Scholars in religion (Abu-Nimer, 2001, 2008; Paden, 2006) have also made contributions with the rise in terrorism and heavy losses to human life and property through violent propaganda. Peace studies in association with religion have hence become inevitable and a religious approach to peace research has begun to expand. For instance, Abu-Nimer focuses on peace in Islam and interreligious conflict resolution, dialogue and peacebuilding in the Middle East, North Ireland, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines. Azumah (2012) and Huff (2004) write on Christian-Muslim relations and dialogue while Griggs (2013) writes on Christian-Muslim relations with a focus on religious polemics and dialogue. Montiel and Macapagal (2006) researched Christian-Muslim relations in Marawi in the Philippines. Research on religions such as these, especially on dialogue, has the potential to serve a purpose in peace and conflict studies. These are some of the areas of multidisciplinary study the earlier researchers have suggested. Further attention to Africa reveals how contemporary scholars are beginning to research in religion around peace and conflict studies. Akanji (2011) and Mavalla (2012), for instance, did their PhD on conflict transformation using religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria as variables for their research. Osuigwe (2010) and Kalu (2017) studied the Baptist and Pentecostals, and the Presbyterian churches in

Nigeria respectively in their PhD, seeking understanding and contributions to peace talks, theological relevance, and conflict transformation in the oil-rich southern part of Nigeria.

Akinade gave a lecture focusing on the Nigerian Yorùbá, suggesting a broad cultural context for understanding Christian-Muslim relations in Nigeria (2002). He states: ‘Nigeria provides a rich context for understanding the cultural, social, economic and political issues that are involved in the Christian-Muslim encounter’, in what he describes as the ‘dialogue of life’ (Akinade, 2002, p. 1). The terms Akinade employs – cultural, social, and political – require further analysis as they could be interpreted broadly in different parts of Nigeria and globally.

Studies have also begun on ‘Knowing Each Other’ (KEO) in southwest Nigeria. This is a joint project by the European Research Council (ERC), Birmingham University, Osun State University Nigeria and the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding. KEO has done several surveys in southwest Nigeria in Lagos, Ogun, Ekiti and Ondo States (Nolte, Rebecca Jones, and, & Occhiali, 2016). Though KEO’s survey has discovered the slow growth of Christianity in southwest Nigeria Yorùbáland (*ibid*, p. 542), there is much work to be done in this region to examine and understand how they handle or manage conflicts and retain their peace. In this study among the Yorùbá, I avoided duplication, as KEO had surveyed Osun (Irewole, Ede North and Ede South), Òyó (Ibadan North) and the Kwara States (Offa). I used some locations in Òyó, Osun and Kwara States, but took my samples from different sites: namely Ògbómòṣó, Ibadan (a radio station); Sèpètèrì in Òyó; Ilorin in Kwara; and Ejigbo, Iwo and Ila-Orangun in Osun (states). While I recognize KEO’s landmark and extensive survey, my study dwelled on the qualitative method to obtain its findings.

Since the goal of the peace and conflict research pioneers, according to Galtung was ‘to draft a research program[me] in the field of peace studies’ (1985, p. 141), this suggests

their aim was to achieve peace and involving the wholeness of life. This peace must ensure a violence free life, be it physical, psychological, economical, and structural. The Yorùbá have been identified by some scholars (Akinade, 1996; Akinjogbin, 1966; Lateju, 2012) as being peaceful, but to what extent could that be generalized or over-simplified? In this study, I want to examine the Yorùbá people of two different religions (Islam and Christianity), how they manage their inter-religious crises and how they are able to retain their peace within their Yorùbá religion and host culture.

Having examined the origin of peace and conflict studies in the West and the emerging research interest with relevance to a few other countries, I now provide in the following section a brief history of the Yorùbá and the pre-independence Nigeria, beginning from the late 1800s before peace studies emerged in the West.

## **2.2 Yorùbá: A Brief History in the Nigerian Context**

The Yorùbá are a large ethnic group with a distinctive language and culture that are found in southwest Nigeria, some other parts of West Africa, and Cuba. While Falola & Heaton suggest Ilé-Ifè and Benin<sup>3</sup> as central to the Yorùbá history before 1500 CE (2008), Eltis and Roberts add that the Yorùbá are also found in the Americas as a result of the movement to the New World during the slave trade (2004; 2004). Historically, the Yorùbáland included the Tsekiri people (Law, 1991b, p. 5) and extended to the west in Dahomey (Law, 1991b, p. 130) and also to the east in Benin<sup>4</sup> (Law, 1991b, pp. 4, 130). Other scholars support the idea of the extension westward to the Republic of Togo, Benin,

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<sup>3</sup> Edo people from Benin are known to originate from the Oba of Benin, one of the sons of Odùduwà, the Yorùbá's progenitor.

<sup>4</sup> Edo people of Nigeria, different from Dahomey which is in the Republic of Benin.

Ghana and some parts of Sierra Leone (Atanda, 1996, p. 4; Eltis, 2004, p. 232; Falola, 2006; London; Parrinder, 1947, p. 122).

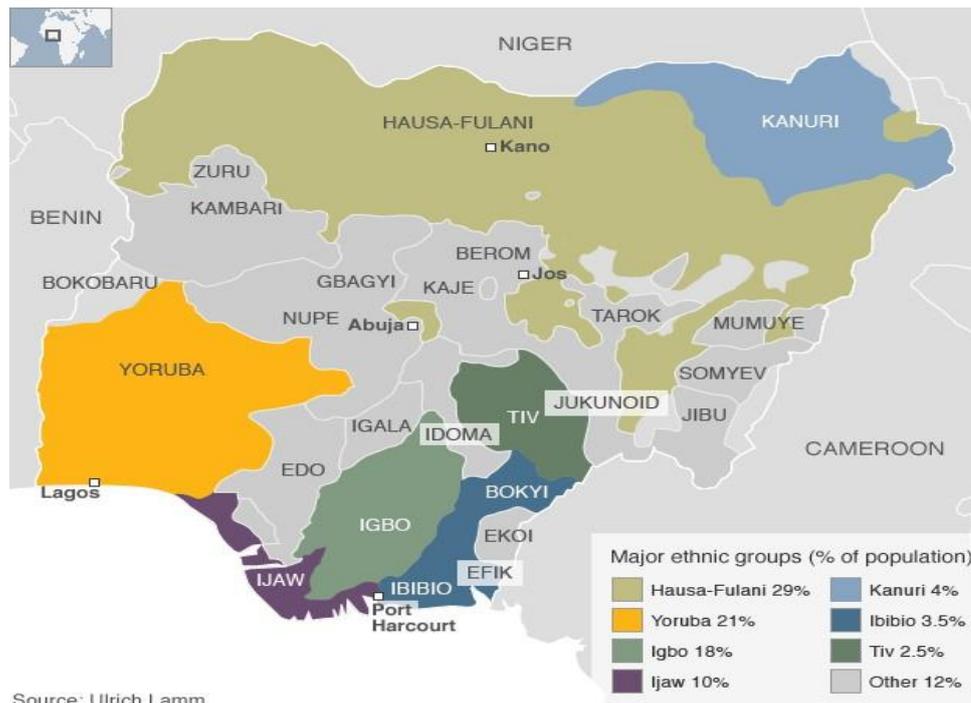
Olupona further suggests that the Yorùbá inhabiting southwest Nigeria, Togo and Benin are more than 30 million (Olupona, 1993, p. 241), while Abiodun puts the figure at twenty-five million (Abiodun, 2001, p. 16). This figure probably represents the Yorùbá in Nigeria. By comparison with the figures of the World Population Review, the population of Nigeria in 2015 was an estimated 183.5 million. With a Yorùbá population 21% (2012), the 2015 southwest Nigerian Yorùbá population would be close to 37 million. However, the total figure for all people with a common historical and linguistic connection to Yorùbá ancestry is far higher and difficult to ascertain.

For instance, Parrinder (1959) earlier discussed the difficulties in obtaining accurate figures of religious population among the Yorùbá in west Nigeria. He argued that the researchers obtained their inaccurate figures from the interviews of the family heads, while churches that keep correct records only focus the baptized members and those under religious instruction to be baptized. Additionally, Parrinder suggests the indigenous religious practitioners did not want to be counted as animists or pagan, which the researchers and government often put on their list for the census (1959, p. 133). Similarly, Ogen lately noted the Akoko-Ikale people are grouped among the Edo-Benin but has maintained the Akoko-Ikale are among the Yorùbá mainstream (2007). This implies the figure the earlier researchers and/or commentators have provided were smaller than the population of the Yorùbá. The difficulty in getting accurate figures has not abated.

In general, however, the southwest Nigeria region is home to the Yorùbá people. Scholars and commentators also vary on how many states in the Nigeria federation have a sizable Yorùbá population or have ancestral roots in Yorùbá culture and tradition. While some

claim that this accounts for seven of the total 36 states of Nigeria, others, including Lateju (2012), claim eight. However, from the world population review, one can gather that the Yorùbá have strong ancestral roots in ten states namely: Òyó, Òsun, Ògùn, Lagos, Oṅdó, Èkìtì, Kwara with (sizable Yorùbá in some parts of) Èdó, Kogí, and Niger (WPR, 2015). Along with the Yorùbá spread across West Africa and beyond, they are popularly referred to as the Yorùbá nation (Falola, 1999, p. 1). The Yorùbá had an empire (the Òyó Empire) in West Africa between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries AD. The Yorùbá's unique binding force is the language and their common historical and/or mythical connection is Odùduwà (Oodua) their progenitor (Ademakinwa, 1950, p. 13; Atanda, 1996, p. 4).

Law, recognizing the extent of the Yorùbá's presence in Nigeria, lists some of the various Yorùbá dialects such as the Ìgbóminà, Ìjèsà, Ìjèbù, and Sábě (Law, 1991b, p. 4), spoken within southwest Nigeria. Focusing on Nigeria, the Yorùbá people occupy the major part of the current southwest Nigeria, which is the area I intend to cover in this study. Yorùbá is one of the three widely spoken languages in Nigeria along with the Hausa and Igbo. Significant to them is their oral history, in which information was passed down from one generation to another.



Source: Ulrich Lamm

Figure 1. Map of Nigeria showing ethnic groups

[Source: Ulrich Lamm] (UCL)

The historical documents about the Yorùbá were gathered through oral historians, palace drummers, singers, the memorizers (Aròkin or Oníràrà) and the *oriki* (cognomen) of prominent members of the community (Fabunmi, 1975). According to Barber (1991), *oriki* (culturally personalized praise rhyme) needs additional information to be properly interpreted. While some *oriki* can provide information about the individual brutality or efficiency at battles, some are made for ‘self-aggrandizement’ (1991, pp. 31, 36). Abiodun opines that there are *oriki* for humans, god, and things, all expressing their identities, beauty, and peculiarities, (2001, pp. 21, 22). Other oral literature influential in the Yorùbá religion are *Èsè Ifá* (Ifá divination), *Ìjálá Ode* (this is sung by hunters) and *Ofo* (for magical purposes), (Olupona, 1993, pp. 247, 248). Many older women, such as *Asán rárà* and *Ìjálá Ode* (hunting-singers), are good memorizers of the contents rich in information about family history, professions and exploits for which they were known in the community. Some of their values are expressed in songs by artists like Ògùndé and

Fóyánmu, which are nowadays made available on the local radio in Yorùbáland and on home stereos, cassettes, CDs, DVDs, television, and the YouTube.<sup>5</sup>

The major power in the early history of southwest Nigeria, the former Òyó Empire, collapsed because of its vastness and wars (Eltis, 2004, p. 18). This was followed by the period between the late 1800s and early 1900s that witnessed the British arrival in West Africa and colonization (Falola & Heaton, 2008, p. 17). Law describes the early history of the Yorùbá as being relevant to African historiography, while some consider the collapse of the Òyó Empire as a nemesis for their leaders' brutality. Law also attributes the decline and collapse of the empire to internal struggles with the chiefs and the external opposition from Ilorin (1991b, p. vii. viii) after Àfònjá was overthrown (in the current Kwara State) around 1823–36 (Law, 1991b, p. 278). Eighmy provides a comprehensive reason for the collapse of the Òyó Empire due to Dahomean raids, the civil war, and the Fulani jihads (1968, p. 152). Peel affirms Ilorin as the part of the Yorùbáland conquered by the Fulani Jihad, an extension to the Sokoto emirate in southern Nigeria since 1820 (2016, p. 128). Parrinder provides information about some Muslim activities in West Africa led by the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya with interest in politics, rituals and *puritanical* (morals) initiatives (1959, p. 137). Parrinder adds that some Pakistani Muslims introduced the Ahmadiyya Islamic group to Nigeria later with their base in Lagos around 1916 and spread to Ghana and Sierra Leone over time (1959, p. 137).

The British abolished the slave trade and established other forms of trade around 1861 from their base in Lagos, Nigeria (Sklar, 2004, p. 16).<sup>6</sup> As peace studies were taking root in America and Europe during the twentieth century (Boulding, 1978; Kelman, 1981),

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<sup>5</sup> A further discussion on music is presented in chapter five.

<sup>6</sup> See Sklar 2004, p. 16 on the role of the King of Benin and the West in the slave trade. Slavery itself was brutal, a complete absence of positive peace and often the presence of negative peace.

some states in West Africa began to struggle for self-determination and independence from colonialism. By the 1900s, Nigeria was already born as a nation (Coleman, 1958, 1960, p. 4), described as the amalgamation of the northern and southern areas of the Niger in 1914, headed by Lord Lugard (Adamolekun, 2013; Sklar, 2004, p. 18).

By the mid-1900s, some eminent Nigerians began to form nationalist movements, calling for the independence of Nigeria and forming political parties, which ended in ethnic segregation. Sklar suggests that this started in 1946 (2004), Coleman claims it began in 1952 (1958, 1960), while Peel puts the events between 1945 and 1951 (2000, p. 966).<sup>7</sup> The identity of Nigeria as a nation, therefore, evolved over a period of time and was defined by ethnicity, culture, and language before independence (Falola, 1998; Falola & Heaton, 2008). Otite put the number of ethnic linguistic groups in Nigeria at a range of 200-250, while the dialects will even be more than this figure, (Otite, 1991, p. 16). The Nigerian leaders of the first republic that received independence in 1960 did not rule for very long, due to the 1966 *coup d'état*, followed by two and a half years of civil war from 1967 to 1970 (Falola, 1998).<sup>8</sup>

Peel (2000) argues that the use of 'Yorùbá' as a collective description of those in southwest Nigeria became prominent for political purposes in the 1900s, as only the Òyó people (a Yorùbá dialect that had an empire) were initially going by the name Yorùbá. Some of the freed slaves in Freetown were also identified by the Yorùbá language through the way they greeted one another like: '*Aku, Oku, or Eku, Eku ile, Eku ijoko, Eku idide* (sic)', (Biobaku, 1960; Cole, 2004).

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<sup>7</sup> See also Coleman 1958, 1960, p. 1 on the struggle for national identity and independence around 1920s in Asia and the Arab world, calling for independence from their 'colonial status'.

<sup>8</sup> See Osaghae and Suberu (2005, p. 4).

*E kú ilé* is a greeting for the people you meet in the house on your returning home. *E kú àbò* (meaning welcome), *E kú ijókǒ* (a greeting for the people you meet sitting down on your return from anywhere) and *E kú idìde* is a greeting for the people who have come to visit you from a distance. I know that the starting alphabet in the prefix (whether a, e or o often before *kú*) is determined by the context before the suffix is added during a greeting. ‘*A- kú*’ prefix is used when the person greeting includes him or herself in the greetings. ‘*O- kú*’ is used for mates or someone younger than themselves along with the suffix, while ‘*E- kú*’ is either used for an older person, or to greet more than one person along with the suffix. The prefix is gender neutral.

Ademakinwa explains the greetings as congratulatory greetings for passing the danger at every point, in any suffix attached to ‘*e-kú*’: ‘I congratulate you for the fortune which has enabled you to see this particular period, after passing through the previous surrounding dangers’ (1950, p. 47). Ademakinwa’s reference to danger may apply depending on the suffix attached to the appropriate *e-kú*, *a- kú*, or *o- kú*. For instance, *E kú ewu omọ, Olórun yó wòó*, meaning congratulations on the danger attached to pregnancy and the delivery of a new-born you have escaped, and may God look after the child. There is, certainly, a linguistic and cultural connection between the Yorùbá across the sub-Saharan Africa especially with their use of certain words and terminologies. Falola adds:

The Yorùbá in the southwest constitutes the second largest (language) group (in Nigeria) [...] They speak many dialects of the Yorùbá language and they regard Odùduwà as their ancestor and Ilé-Ifè city as their ancestral homeland. (2001, p. 5)

There are also comprehensive works available on the various mythological and historical discourses regarding the origin of the Yorùbá people (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Sklar, 2004).

The Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria are located where human archaeological remains have been traced to around 900 BCE (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Yet, some hold that the Yorùbá originated from Egypt (Olupona, 1993, p. 243). Recent linguistic studies reveal that somewhere around the confluence of the River Niger and Benue is the original home of the Yorùbá before they migrated southwest to Ilé-Ifè (Atanda, 1996). Thus, there are multiple sources of historical traditions of origin, archaeological and mythological discourses of the Yorùbá nation. More significantly, nonetheless:

Ilé-Ifè became the center of Yorùbá (accent sign added) identity, the political and cultural base from which Yorùbá communities derived their religious sensibilities, political institutions, and cultural reference points. (Falola & Heaton, 2008, p. 24)

The Yorùbá often maintained their cultural practices and good interpersonal relationships without prejudice to religious differences, even in other parts of West Africa outside Nigeria (Cole, 2004; Peel, 2003; Roberts, 2004).

Looking at Nigeria as a whole, Falola and Heaton (2008) describe pre-colonial Nigeria as being significant, including ‘hundreds of ethnic groups’ living as neighbours ‘without boundaries’ (Falola & Heaton, 2008, p. 19) while religion was ‘integral to the state’ (Falola, 1998, pp. 1, 2). While I agree that religion is important to the Nigerian way of life, I must redefine ‘without boundaries’ in Falola and Heaton’s work as meaning without *long-term* boundaries. There were boundaries and boundary disputes often resulting in inter- and intra-tribal wars. Osaghae and Suberu discuss how disputes over land use, as in the case of Ilé-Ifè and Modákéké towns, have led to war, even in recent times (2005, p. 20).

The Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria are among the best-educated Africans and include those whom Falola described as ‘prominent Yorùbá intelligentsia outside of the academy’

(Falola, 1999, p. i). Referring to the Yorùbá, Olupona (1993) and Abiodun, (2001) mention the Yorùbá as the most studied ethnic group in Africa. Olupona further adds:

Indeed, the prominence of Yorùbá Studies in scholarly work is understood by the prominence of their arts, music, religion and oral literature, all on which have received adequate scholarly investigation. (1993, p. 241)

They were enthusiastic about literacy, translation, mathematics, and publications in the Yorùbá language, even in resistance to British colonial authority by winning the support of the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) for their publications (Adetunji, 1999; Akinjogbin, 1996; Atanda, 1996). Ajiboye suggests that, although many languages including the Yorùbá have the additive and multiplicative methods, Yorùbá's subtractive mechanism is a unique contribution to the numeral system (Ajiboye, 2016). What Abioye means is this: while eleven is called *mókànlá*, it literally means (10 and 1), *méjilá* means (10 and 2). However, sixteen is called *mérìndínlógún* meaning 20 minus 4, and seventeen is *mètàdínlógún* (20 minus 3). This counting goes on to multiple of tens and multiple of hundreds.

With their wealth of history, enthusiasm, and exposure to the outside world, how have the Yorùbá kept their harmony or handled disputes over the years? The claim of good interpersonal relationships and tolerance mentioned above should be taken further in this study as it sounds distinct from the religious violence often reported in northern Nigeria and other parts of the world. This research should also make inquiries about conflict management strategies among this seemingly peaceful community.

### **2.3 Conflicts in Nigeria**

There have been repeated occurrences of violent conflicts in Nigeria since its

independence in 1960. These are often attributed to politics, economic/poverty, ethnicity, religion or a combination of these factors (Adamolekun, 2013; Adele & Oloruntele, 2001; Alabi, 2002; Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000; Lyons & Reinermann, 2003). Ethnoreligious conflicts, for instance, occur when people of two or more ethnic groups have disputes over religion-related issues. Osaghae and Suberu mention some examples of ethno-religious conflicts that claimed many lives and properties in northern Nigeria:

The Kafanchan-Kaduna crises in 1987 and 1999, Zangon-Kataf riots of 1992, Tafawa Balewa clashes in 1991, 1995 and 2000, the Kaduna Sharia riots of 2000, and the Jos riots of 2001. (2005, p. 19)

Ibrahim (1991) and Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) describe the Kafanchan crisis as an example of ethno-religious conflict. It polarized the Nigerian election of December 1987 through religious sentiments. Adegoke (2012) also describes various episodes of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria; mainly in northern Nigeria, while Sodipo (2013) considers Boko Haram exploiting it for their own insurgency.

The intra-religious conflicts, according to Osaghae and Suberu, are the Maitatsine and the Quadriyya and Tijanniyya conflicts among Muslims in the north (2005). I am aware of intra-religious disputes among Christians that did not result in physical violence but ended in separation and the planting of another worship centre as in the case of Qjà Oba Baptist Church emerging from Ìjèrù Baptist Church Ògbómòşó.

The inter-group conflicts were predominant among the Fulani herdsmen and local farmers in the middle-belt, southwest, and southern Nigeria, while the Niger Delta militancy against the government is found in the southern oil fields (2005, p. 20). Most conflicts generated communally often had impacts on national politics, leading the way to ethno-political crises and conflicts, (Ibrahim, 1991).

Adegoke (2012) presents religious conflicts in Nigeria from an Islamic perspective. He describes Nigeria as a multi-religious state rather than a secular one and that the religious crises have posed a threat to Nigeria from around 1978 (2012, p. 91). The unwelcome critiques by the new converts of the faith they have left often cause distress for the group they left. Similarly, Lateju from the Christian perspective describes Nigeria as a multi-religious society but not a monolithic religious state. Lateju argues that Nigeria enjoyed peaceful religious relations since it emerged as a nation until after its independence when the relationship became tense at some point in the 1970s (2012, p. 62). Lateju traces the reasons for the conflicts in Nigeria to differences in the perspectives of each Nigeria region regarding religion and culture, (2012).

According to Lateju, the Hausa/Fulani in northern states of Nigeria place much value on Arabic culture and values as a model for the way Islam is practised: 'The Hausa/Fulani sees both religion and culture as one entity, inseparable. To them, the best culture is the Arab's, from where the Islamic religion emerged' (2012, pp. 64, 65). However, the southerners (the Yorùbá and Igbo) separate religion from cultural practices. They keep friendships across religions through their culture of mutual togetherness and understanding, be it Islam, Christianity, or the indigenous religion. Lateju further suggests:

Religion and culture are two different concepts to the people living in the southern part of Nigeria... The Yorùbá of Southwest Nigeria takes religion as an individual matter that should help the people to build a better and congenial relationship in their various communities, a unifying force for a virile society. Brotherhood among the Igbo is a very strong concept that always makes them accommodate one another wherever they meet as *Ondi Igbo* irrespective of their religious belief. (2012, p. 65)

To the northern Muslims, their culture is Islam and Arabic while the southerners complement their culture with religion. However, I observed that the aspects of the

Yorùbá culture that help unite are not well spelt out in their discourses, which could be explored in this study.

According to Sklar, the complexity of some of the conflicts in Nigeria is difficult to figure out as they ‘masked a more complex struggle between interests that were non-ethnic in nature’ (2004, p. xiii). In contrast, ethnic-related violence in Nigeria as described by Osaghae and Suberu is found in both northern and southern Nigeria and among the major ethnic and minority groups. In addition to the Ifè-Modákéké conflict, they mention the intra-ethnic (non-religious) conflicts between the Aguleri and Umuleri in Anambra Igbo-land southern Nigeria (2005, p. 20). The Ifè-Modákéké conflict among the Yorùbá implies that the Yorùbá are not immune to conflicts contrary to the supposed *Èbí* theory believed to help the Yorùbá to live harmoniously when subjected to the current peace and conflict debates.

There were agitations and conflicts leading to the 1966 coup, the civil war and the oil boom which aligned Nigeria with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Islamic world. Osaghae (2000) observes that many factors like religions and class, often influence the functionality of the ethnic grouping<sup>9</sup> while considering the role ethnicity plays in a larger human community. Nonetheless, the conflict identified with Yorùbá relates to land disputes, but not often religion unlike the northern ethno-religious conflicts. How the Yorùbá community interact across religions to maintain harmony could, therefore, be examined further since my focus is to seek how a peaceful community works to retain its harmony.

Connecting peace studies with regional economic protests in Nigeria, there have been ethnic and economic related protests and riots in some parts of the country. Welch (2008)

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<sup>9</sup> Osaghae also mentions some other factors like politics, economic and state policies as having significant effects on each group, which in turn have a great impact on the management of ethnic problems.

discusses how the military government headed by General Sani Abacha crushed any protest attempts, and executed the leaders, including Ken Saro-Wiwa in Ogoniland southern Nigeria. Saro-Wiwa, a graduate of the University of Ibadan, led protests on the environmental degradation of Ogoniland but was arrested, prosecuted by a military tribunal, and executed along with the eight others in his group despite international intervention.

There were allegations that Saro-Wiwa and the other eight activists had incited the Ogoni youth to attack and murder certain four Ogoni elders so that the military government approved their execution in 1995 (2008). Ken Saro-Wiwa denied the allegation, claiming that he and the rest of the activists were being accused to silence them from protesting against the occupation of the Ogoniland by the Shell/Dutch oil companies, with the resultant devastating pollution and poverty in the Ogoniland (BBC, 2005; Ibrahim, 2000, p. 56).

Shell was caught in the argument, as their leader, Anderson, claimed to be able to help in the release of Saro-Wiwa from military custody before his execution, on condition that Ken Saro-Wiwa's brother, Owen, stopped protesting about the oil companies, which Owen did not agree to (Doyle, 2009). So, when summoned to court in the United States, Shell decided to pay a sum of £9.7 million to settle the case out of court just a week before the hearing (BBC, 2005). Protests by Nigerian activists, students and workers have not been well received by the Nigerian government. Protests have neither brought significant changes nor respected by the Nigerian leadership, as protesters often run the risk of being killed rather than being heard.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> A recent protest in August 2019 in Nigeria resulted in the arrest and prosecution of the protest leader, Omowole Sowore.

Injustice, a form of violence in the oil-rich southern Nigeria, has led to the destruction of the ecology of the place – water, fishing, and the little available land – and the people’s feelings, spiritual and intellectual wellbeing. The oil-rich southern region has experienced violence of all sorts despite the protests, which ended in the death of many, including activists. Peaceful protests are not currently a panacea to the resolution of the Nigerian conflicts. Industrial action had not helped either, as workers were not paid for their days of absence from work.

In pursuing peace research, Mavalla suggests conflict transformation has as its goal:

To minimize the destructive effects of social conflict and unlock the potential for well-being and growth in the person as an individual human being at the physical, spiritual, emotional and perceptual (intellectual) levels. (2012, p. 5)

This description of conflict transformation fulfils the goal of positive peace: to get rid of both personal and structural violence and maintain social justice among the people. So, the victims of violence needed to be released from the burden imposed by both the institution and the negative circumstances which are often beyond their control. I suggest that if people like Saro-Wiwa had not protested, the Ogoni people’s voices would not have been heard and would have remained under such government-imposed violence. Consequently, neither passive response nor activists’ protests helped the situation, but at least they initiated the process of negotiation.

Unemployment is also high (a form of economic and social violence) as Nigerian workers are not paid regularly, and pensioners suffer due to the government’s failure to pay their pensions. This is the condition in which many average Nigerians find themselves, either leading to protesting the injustices or remaining silent under structural and economic violence. The possibility of achieving positive peace in the overwhelming structural and economic violence in Nigeria is remote.

The presence of economic violence among the Yorùbá also is undeniable, mostly through the political leaders. There are also arguments from social media about the role of prosperity preachers alleging them to be rendering the masses less equipped for skilled jobs but rather raising their expectations for a divine intervention. Mpigi argues that although prosperity theology undeniably has misrepresented the true biblical teaching, it has also helped meet the social, economic, and spiritual needs of members (2017). Furthermore, there are police reports of cases of occultic violent practices among the Yorùbá like the ritual killing of people (Agency-Report, 2020; BBC-News, 2014). Such violence is not accepted by the larger community but considered as a deviant from the societal norm or act of *omòlúàbí*.

Fabbro lists some criteria for assessing a community for its peacefulness as shown below:

- ‘1) The society has no wars fought on its territory;
- 2) The society is not involved in any external wars;
- 3) There are no civil wars or internal collective violence;
- 4) There is no standing military-police organization;
- 5) There is little or no inter-personal physical violence;
- 6) There is little or no structural violence;
- 7) The society has the capacity to undergo change peacefully; and,
- 8) There is opportunity for idiosyncratic development.’ (Fabbro, 1978, p. 67).

This does not necessarily mean all the PS met all the criteria, but some must have shown the strength to display many of them. While Fabbro critiqued Melko for using only the first criteria for his study of the Semai, Fabbro used only the first five in his work. This implies the study of PS is a continuation and scholars look forward to more analysis and verifications in their future research. Do the Yorùbá meet some of these criteria, especially 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8?

This study can present the potential to evaluate the Yorùbá’s peacefulness when placed by other PS. The Yorùbá have not fought a collective war since the end of their civil war around the 1800s, signing their treaty in 1886 (Balogun, 1985; Law, 1991b). A hundred

years after a major war is recommended for a community to be reconsidered as peaceful if they retain their harmony (Melko et al., 1983).

The police and army are controlled by the federal government, whilst, recently, the southwest governors constituted a local *Àmòtẹ̀kùn* force to complement the efforts of the police in providing security for their people. In response to criterion 3, although the Yorùbá have not had internal collective wars on its territory since the 1800s, two towns, Ilé-Ifẹ̀ and Modákẹ́kẹ́ fought for many years in the 1990s which was resolved later without the involvement of the international community. Some communities also had disputes over land and the selection of leaders like chieftaincy. Criteria 5 and 6 are areas that affected the Yorùbá most. There are reports and evidence of physical violence among the Yorùbá like fighting within homes, quarrel between some spouses, and extreme violence of occultic practices reported to the police. Another kind of physical violence observed among the Yorùbá is associated with national politics during the elections. These are not acceptable within the norms of the larger society but occur periodically during the political campaigns and at election time.

Structural violence is also common but when its cause is beyond the control of the individual, it usually receives the support of the society as they come together to socialize and support one another to ameliorate the negative effects of such structural violence. Examples are the use of co-operative societies to cater for the needs of a group or society members.

Peace is, therefore, difficult to achieve in the current Nigeria situation, bearing in mind the contributions of the political actors and leaders, but where do we place the Yorùbá or some selected towns that meet more of the PS criteria in West Africa? How the people cope under structural violence, especially in southwest Nigeria, and retain some level of harmony or peace is addressed in this study.

Besides, on ethno-economic conflicts, like Nbeta (2012, p. 50), Ibrahim argues:

Central to their current politics is the argument that they are the major providers of Nigeria's oil wealth and the major victims of pollution due to oil spillage and gas flaring. Their movement took a radical politically organised form with the declaration of the Ogoni Bill of Rights demanding political autonomy in 1990 and the uprising that has since been going on. [...] Indeed, struggles over access to oil wealth and protection from pollution have been rapidly spreading to the other oil producing communities. (2000, p. 56)

Although scholars have identified ethno-religious and ethno-regional conflicts in Nigeria's situation, Ogoniland can be described as an ethno-economic conflict tantamount to economic violence on the people. Nbeta (2012) suggests that the exploitation of the oil-producing south to feed the north falls under the theory of internal colonization. Osaghae (1995) describes it as injustice and 'killing the goose that lays the golden egg' despite the debates of the 1950s and 1960s and the Minorities Commission set up in 1956 in regard of the minority rights. These facts suggest that the southern minority's conflict with the Nigerian authority is ethno-economic in nature.

The origin of Nigerian conflict has also been attributed by some scholars to British colonialism. They argue that, instead of promoting a single national identity, Nigerians were left with a platform to think of themselves in terms of ethnicity and religion (Ibrahim, 1991; Lenshie, 2014; Ojie, 2006; Turaki, 2000). Ibrahim (2000) argues that the Hausa-Fulani were favoured by the British colonial regime to lead the country. Falola (1998) attributes some of these conflicts to political instability, ethnic diversity, poverty (frustration), modernization (identity formation), foreign affairs (outside religious influences from the United States and Saudi Arabia) and political militancy. Ibrahim (2000) and Paden (2005) suggest that despite the diversity of the people's makeup, Nigerians were all forced to exist as one national entity. Ibrahim argues:

In Nigeria, the Hausa-Fulani oligarchy were maintained in power by the British during colonial rule through the Indirect Rule system of Native Authority administration... Since then, most succeeding regimes, civilian and military, have been monopolised by the Hausa-Fulani, and there have been serious concerns in the country about the perpetuation of Hausa-Fulani domination. (Ibrahim, 2000, p. 52)

The middle-belt minority group and those in the Niger Delta have also voiced their opinions on the need for representation in national politics, which they were denied up until vice president Goodluck Jonathan became Nigerian president after President Yar'Adua died in office.

Ibrahim (2000) opines that prolonged military rule and its brutality contributed to the identity formation of Nigerian people, causing ethno-regional conflicts and political and economic hardship. The military might have further contributed to the divisions between the ethnic groups, but the potential for segregation had always been there during the nationalist movements in the mid-twentieth-century and subsequent post-independence civil war, as suggested by other scholars like Coleman and Sklar (1958, 1960; 2004) respectively.

In terms of religious activism, however, both Islam and Christianity experienced a religious revival in the early 1970s. Mu'azzam and Ibrahim report 'the growth of Islamic and Christian fundamentalism' (2000, p. 62), during the economic hardships of Ibrahim Babangida as President. This hardship has produced a corresponding rise in religiosity and extremism among some Christians and Muslims, as each became dependent on their faith for support. Often behind these extremisms lie different ethnic and cultural differences and political interests that militate against potential co-operation and joint efforts for national unity and development (Ojie, 2006). Ojo and Lateju (2007; 2010) also suggest religious revivalism among Christians in the west and Muslims in northern Nigeria as a cause of the unstable peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, especially while seeking to entice or convert the other. Ibrahim (2000) describes

religious revivalism as the vigour to remain true to one's faith and at the same time reaching out to people outside of one's faith with the intent to convert. This sometimes leads to conflicts in each religious social grouping so creating a negative influence on the entire nation.

*Shari'ah* implementation in Nigeria is another area of focus in peace talks. *Shari'ah* is the Islamic law followed by Muslims, comprising of the Quran, the Hadith or *sunna* (the saying – *sunna quoliyyah* and deed – *sunnah filiyyah* of the Prophet of Islam), while the secondary sources of *Shari'ah* are *Ijma'* (the consensus of Muslim scholars of Ijtihad rank), Qiyas (analogy) and *Istishab* (legal presumption) (Oba, 2002). Oba argues for the necessity of the *shari'ah* as a recognised law as the customary and common law in Nigeria. Ibrahim (1991) suggests that the *Shari'a* debate has been hijacked by national politicians against the wishes of the Muslims who advocated for it. Akinade describes the *Shari'ah* debates of 1999 as politically motivated, which resulted in riots in 2000 and suggests it led to the formation of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to counter the pressure from Islam (Akinade, 2002). Idoko and Addi suggest a marginalization of Christians in Nigerian politics, (Idoko & Addi, 2020) complementing Turaki's argument on a lack of fairness to Christian Nigerian citizens. Recently, a CAN leader in north-eastern Nigeria was abducted and killed by the Boko Haram terrorist group (Barnabas-Fund, 2020), showing the level of insecurity and ferocity the citizens experience daily.

However, Adegoke (2012) describes the opposition to the *Sharia* implementation as religious intolerance. Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000, pp. 64, 65, 66)<sup>11</sup> also present heated arguments on the Muslims' demand for *Shari'ah* as their legitimate right while some Christians dispute such claims as unconstitutional and a threat to non-Muslims.

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<sup>11</sup> See also the arguments on Nigeria's attempt to join the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) on p. 66.

According to Hamischfeger (2004), the Hausa-Fulani Muslim settlers (from the north) called for the institutionalization of *Shari'ah* in the middle-belt of Nigeria which led to a major conflict in the region. The Nigerian middle-belters saw the demand for *Shari'ah* as a religious and ethnic intrusion, while the Muslim settlers saw it as their religious mandate.

I have observed that the *Shari'ah* debates have caused anxiety for some non-Muslims who worry about *Shari'ah*'s possible negative consequences on their life and livelihood, not necessarily in an Islamophobic context. The worry is based on the severe persecution evidenced in some places where non-Muslims, especially Christians, are in the minority, and the Christians' social and economic lives have been affected badly, coupled with the restrictions on their freedom of worship, (Zandt, 2011). The 'Open Door', a Christian magazine periodically reports and calls for prayer against the severe treatment and persecution of Christians globally, including Nigeria (Open Door, 2016). Each faction (for or against the implementation of the *Shari'ah* in Nigeria) has reasons for its anxieties.

Ludwig (2008), writing on Christian-Muslim relations in the context of the *Shari'ah* debate in Nigeria, suggests that some crises had other non-religious causes. He also argues that there have been co-operative efforts by both Christians and Muslims at the grassroots level to embark on developmental and social work together.

In my interview, Anike (2016), who also provided copies of the minutes taken in a community meeting<sup>12</sup> in Ògbómòṣó, describes the way the Yorùbá co-operate regardless of religious differences to provide social support for their extended families and neighbours in times of need. There, they call for celebration during their children's progress which falls in the idea of *aárěmísé*, a venture for providing financial and social

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix D for the area committee meeting minutes.

support for one another in times of need. *Aárěmisé* literally means we shall be alive to reciprocate this celebration [as friends, family and/or neighbours].

There have been debates and arguments in relation to the implementation of *Shari'ah* in Nigeria and efforts made to educate people on the pros and cons of the code. The debates have resulted in intense arguments and protests in some parts of Nigeria (Nmehielle, 2004), but no *Shari'ah*-related violence was recorded in Yorùbáland during that period. Of late, the *hijab*-related disputes came up in some places in Ilorin, Shaki (Makinde, 2014; Olarinoye, 2014) and most recently in Ejigbo and Iwo (the Osun State of Nigeria). It is interesting to note that the Yorùbá women had traditional headgear (*gèlè*) and neck scarves (*ìborùn*) before the advent of Islam and Christianity. However, the two religions still had occasions for dispute, although at the institutional level, on the disparity between the Islamic *hijab* and the western beret without a neck scarf among school children. Schoolgirls often use the beret if assigned as a part of their school uniform.

The disputes about the difference between the Yorùbá headgear and the *hijab*, however, do not end in violence or loss of life, but are settled amicably or occasionally in court as in the case of the Ejigbo and Iwo school situations examined during my fieldwork. The Yorùbá seem to have separated the *Shari'ah* into its component parts for intelligent discussion as it applies to the head covering by women, *halal* food, divorce, and intermarriage.

Whatever the purpose of the *Shari'ah* debate was, it has ended in conflicts in northern Nigeria through which many lives were lost. The question is how the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims manage the relationship as they practise their faith. A reference to other mixed communities in West Africa will be helpful to analyse this study. Looking at the complex nature of Nigeria, it is not free of conflicts and different kinds of conflict are

seen in different regions of the country. However, religious-related conflicts with fully blown violence are less common among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria. This is not to justify the Yorùbá as being most peaceful, but to identify a reasonably harmonious community to explore how they manage their concerns or disputes and to retain their peace.

### **2.3.1 Yorùbáland compared with Other Regions of Nigeria**

There are published data on the global peace index, Nigerian mineral resources, population, and Nigerian policing that I want to engage with in this discourse. The materials speak on the Nigerian situation regarding peacefulness and violence.

#### **2.3.1.1 Nigerian Peace Index and Violence Levels**

The Global Peace Index (GPI) ‘measures peacefulness across the domains of safety and security, ongoing conflict, and militarisation’ (Editorial, 2019). Nigeria ranks 148<sup>th</sup> out of the 163 countries in the GPI indicators in 2019. In the GPI where 5 is the worst score, Nigeria is rated worst – 5 in the perception of criminality, 5 in political terror, 4.4 in terrorism impact, 4.5 in death from internal conflict, 5 in internal conflicts fought, 4.6 in United Nations peacekeeping funding, 3.1 in external conflicts fought, 2 in militarization, 3.3 in Safety & Security, and 3.1 in domestic and international conflict, (Global-Peace-Index, n.d.). This means Nigeria is not a peaceful nation when compared with many other countries across the globe. From the same source above (GPI), by comparison with another West African country, Senegal, although smaller in size and population, it was 58<sup>th</sup> while Nigeria ranks 148<sup>th</sup> out of the 163 countries on the list. Iceland has been the most peaceful country in the entire universe since 2008 followed by New Zealand, Austria, Portugal, and Denmark.

It has also been observed, '[o]ver the last ten years, the average level of global peacefulness has deteriorated by 3.78%.'(Statistic-Times). A Nigerian Newspaper editorial has this on the Nigeria score:

Not only are citizens afraid to travel through some Nigerian roads, many can no longer visit their farms where several men and women had been hacked down, killed or raped. (Editorial)

The general situation of Nigeria security is alarming as it has begun to affect the local agricultural productivity when people are scared of going to farm in the west, the north is affected by terrorism, the south with armed agitators for resources control and all the three regions subjected to kidnappers.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, '7.1 million people in Nigeria need urgent, life-saving humanitarian assistance in 2019 and 6.2 million are targeted to receive aid.' (OCHA). Going by the intensity of the violence and instability in Nigeria, the situation does not seem to be abating just as UNOCHA reports:

As of 2019, 1.8 million Nigerians have fled from their homes and are internally displaced, the majority in Borno State – the epicentre of the crisis. 80 per cent of internally displaced people are women and children. (OCHA)

Also, the peace often associated with western Nigeria by some academics is not absolute as it has also experienced some harrowing situations recently. The Nigerian editorial corroborated the UN's reports including western Nigeria:

The highways have also been taken over by kidnappers. The Ibadan – Ife Expressway, Okenne – Lokoja road and Kaduna-Abuja road as well as the forests of Ondo and Ekiti States, kidnapping has reached a crescendo [...] killer herdsmen are being fingered with all the dire implications for peace and security in the country. (Editorial, 2019)

The Ìbàdàn, Ifẹ̀, Oṅdó, and Èkìtì mentioned above are within Yorùbáland and have had their own share of the traumatic experience of abductions among other forms of violence. The editorial adds that Nigeria is being ranked amongst the failed states in the world (Editorial).

Nigeria as a country, therefore, is far from being grouped among the global PS. However, are there local communities working hard to keep the peace waiting to be identified? I want to examine below, the claim of a lack of resources the Yorùbá could fight to protect, hence have been relatively peaceful.

### **2.3.1.2 Southwest Nigeria Mineral Resources**

The scholarly debate on violence and insecurity in Nigeria has a soft spot for the Yorùbá southwest Nigeria (see chapter 2.5). They found some level of peacefulness and suggested a lack of mineral resources that the Nigeria Federal government can exploit as a reason for the absence of serious agitation and community generated violence among the Yorùbá. Such arguments do not go far as Yorùbáland has many natural resources. Going by the major mineral resources in Nigeria west, Òyó State is listed as having ‘Aquamarine, cassiterite, clay, dolomite, gemstone, gold, kaolin, marble, silimonite, talc and tantalite’ (Government-Agency). The state also has tantalum, quartz, iron ore and laterite, (Oyo-State) to mention but a few.

Similar resources are found in Èkìtì, Ògùn [Bitumen and etc], Oṅdó [bitumen, limestone & oil/gas etc.], and Òsun [Columbite, Gold, and etc/] (Government-Agency). All the western states have families raising livestock and growing both food and cash crops like yam, beans, soya-bean, kolanut, cocoa etc. (Osun-State). Arguments for a lack of mineral resources the Yorùbá can fight to protect cannot, therefore, be sustained. Yet, one can ask

for the reason why the federal government seems not to have an interest in such minerals now.

### **2.3.1.3 Structural Violence**

The infrastructural development that has slowed down for many decades in Nigeria is attributed to uncoordinated military and political leadership of the country, which has led to serious structural violence on its citizens. The world population review put the percentage of people having access to clean water at 68.5% (Nigeria-Population, 2019) while the Federal Ministry of Water Resource put access to basic water at 67.9% in 2018 (Federal-Ministry, 2018). The first put the figure of those struggling to get clean drinking water at 31.5%, while the latter put it at 26.7% (which I think is more than that). However, I agree that as much as 71% are struggling to have ‘improved sanitation’ (Nigeria-Population, 2019). Only about 42% have personal household sanitation not shared with non- residents or outsiders, 19.2% used safely managed sanitation services and 24.4% do not have toilet facilities but practise open defecation, and it is estimated that half of the Northern Central Nigeria zone practice open defecation, (Federal-Ministry, 2018, p. 2, 2019; Obiezu, 2019).

There are agitations in the country on the need to increase the minimum wage from 18,000 naira (about £41) to 30,000 naira (about £68) a month. One can imagine the level of structural violence being imposed on the ordinary citizens as they struggle to provide food, social amenities and maintain good health for themselves and their families in such conditions. Thus, structural violence in Nigeria does not exclude the Yorùbá, but how they manage the situation to reduce its effects on their lives is an area that can be further examined.

### 2.3.1.4 Policing

Police records obtained from the Nigeria Crime Statistics on reported offences in 2017 shows a little lower level of crimes among the Yorùbá west Nigeria when compared with those in the north, but significantly lower when compared with the south/east. I examine here, the level of violence recoded by the police in six states from southwest Nigeria [excluding Lagos],<sup>13</sup> and six states from each of the other two regions, north and south/east Nigeria. The crime in Lagos state alone amounts to 37.85% of the national record, (The-National-Bureau-of-Statistics, 2018). So, for a better examination of the crime distribution as reported within the regions, I dwelt on the selected eighteen (6 x 3) states below excluding Lagos:

- Yorùbá western Nigeria: Ondo 2.76%, Òyó 2.2%, Ogun 1.19%, Ekiti 1.02%, Osun 0.66%, and Kwara 0.62% (Total = 8.45%)
- Northern region of Nigeria: Kano 4.24%, Niger 1.98%, Plateau 1.94%, Borno 1.18%, Kaduna 0.8% and Zamfara 0.39% (Total = 10.53)
- South/eastern Nigeria: Abia 9.21% Cross Rivers 9.17%, Delta 5.31%, Ebonyi 3.13%, Anambra 1.4% and Rivers 1.17% (Total = 29.39%).

Some states which are projected by the media as experiencing violence, arson, murder, retaliatory attacks and displacement of people in the north such as Kaduna, Borno and Zamfara invariably have lower police crime reports documented, which possesses the question of what reportable conflicts to the police are, even in the northern states.

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<sup>13</sup>I left out Lagos, as all the three regions of the country are represented there, although it is within the Yorùbáland and the Yorùbá host language is used as the dominant language of communication with some speaking pidgin English. Lagos has mixed cultural influence of both Nigerians and non-nationals and may not truly represent the pristine Yorùbá culture just as Abuja capital city cannot truly represent the Gbagyi (Gwari), Hausa, and Fulani people.

Regardless, the cumulative records for each six selected states among the Yorùbá (8.45%) show a lower crime rate than the Hausa/Fulani north (10.53%), while the south/east has the highest reported crimes (29.39%) in the nation. The weakness of this figure, however, is based on the states not the population of the residents in each state. That weakness notwithstanding, the crime record in each state provide material to make a representation for an informed verdict on the spread of violence within the selected states.

Going by serious violence leading to death, Campbell, through the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST), presents research suggesting a higher death record in the northeast, while the least occurrences are in western Nigeria:

The Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) tracks violence that is both causal and symptomatic of Nigeria's political instability and citizen alienation. The data are based on weekly surveys of Nigerian and international media. (Campbell, 2020)

The cumulative death records from 2011 to 2020 are classified as originating from Boko Haram (17,115), Boko Haram and the State Actor (19, 096), Sectarian Actor (10, 591), State Actor (9,173) and other Armed Actor (5,489) (Campbell, 2020). I decided to add up the number of recorded deaths in Campbell's research from the six states per region I already used above. The cumulative number of deaths in the north (if I exclude Borno which is exceptionally high 30, 269) is 10, 410. The number of recorded deaths in the southeast within the same period is 2, 849, while the death record in the west is 1,152. If I choose to add Lagos (that has the highest record of police recorded violence) to the death record in the west, the total will be 1,816 that is still the lowest of all the three regions I mapped out here. Could evidence from the published literature on disputes and conflicts among the Yorùbá provide further clues for this investigation?

### 2.3.2 Some Local Religious Disputes

There are reports of occasional religious conflicts among the Yorùbá that have been resolved amicably. Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) noted a conflict among Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in Òyó State when the Christians held a religious event on government-funded school property and objections were raised by some Yorùbá Muslims. A Muslim organization, the National Council of Muslim Youths Organization, disrupted the event and its leader was arrested by the police. Another Muslim group intervened to stop the conflict from escalating and pleaded with the Christians for Sanni's release from police custody (Mu'azzam & Ibrahim, 2000, pp. 76, 77)<sup>14</sup> The crisis did not escalate further and the Christians and Muslims in the town are still able to manage their concerns to keep the existing harmony. This is evidence of dispute resolution on display among the Yorùbá (an alternative dispute resolution ADR).

In 2013, the Òsun State Government mandated the use of the *hijab* by Muslim female students in the State, which some schools pioneered by Christians raised an objection to. In 2014, both Makinde and Olarinoye reported how this led to some Muslims protesting at the Baptist High School in Èjìgbò for banning Muslim girls from wearing the *hijab* to the school. They said this resulted in attacks on some of the teachers and the school principal in November 2013. During that same period, a similar conflict occurred among Òsun State students in Ìwó and the Christian students protested by putting on their church choir robes, while some indigenous worshipers put on their masquerades to their schools

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<sup>14</sup> See Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) pp. 76, 77, for details of the events that led to the crisis and the intervention of another Muslim group; 'What came to be labelled as the "Northern virus", that is religious sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians activists, is said to have also gripped Oyo State in South-western Nigeria. It particularly centred on the question of representation in the Executive Council in a state where each of the contending religious groups is claiming a majority. Other issues included the opening of morning assemblies with Christian prayers in secondary schools, use of classrooms for church services, teaching of Bible Knowledge in all schools with less than half of the schools teaching Islamic Religious Knowledge. (TSM, May 8, 1994)

(Makinde, 2014; Olarinoye, 2014). The community leaders had to come in to manage the situation (Niyi, 2014).

The former Lagos State governor, Tinumbu, during the time of the crises, visited the Òsun State Government House to meet Christian leaders to discuss the crises with them (Makinde, 2014; Olarinoye, 2014) for the purpose of reconciliation. The process of settling the Ìwó conflict was still ongoing (in court) during the writing up of this thesis. The Òsun State government's meddling in the religious matter led to the crises in the state and the party leadership from Lagos also played a role in managing the crises. Thus, the Yorùbá intra-ethnic religious conflicts and the way they are handled provide a contribution to conflict management and the conflict de-escalation process in their community. In that light, how peace is sustained in the Yorùbá community is worth studying for any contribution to peace and conflict studies.

Sklar examines the ratio of Christians and Muslim Yorùbá in southwest Nigeria prior to independence and highlights the 'amicable rivalry' (2004, p. 13) among them due to the difference in the type and educational status prior to independence, yet the three religions were practised in their communities and sometimes in their large families. In this kind of interaction, the Yorùbá manage their crises from escalation especially in the religious sphere, which could provide a template for sustaining peace among a religious community in general.

### **2.3.3 Yorùbá Christians and Muslims: Conflicts and Tolerance**

Some scholars have studied the harmonious interactions in the Yorùbá community and pronounced them exemplary. Laitin expresses his amazement at the way Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in Ilorin (west Nigeria) remain a cohesive ethnic group despite differences in their religious affiliations. Laitin refers to a Muslim leader's testimony:

The Yorùbá people are divided religiously. As Alhaji Paiko intimated, Muslim Yorùbás had done far less well economically than their Christian counterparts. Here was an opportunity for the Muslim Yorùbás to join in an alliance with northern Muslims to counter, in Paiko's terminology, Christian domination. Yet the Christian–Muslim divide in Yorùbá land, far from fanning the flames of religious conflict in Nigeria, actually built the foundation for compromise. From the outside, this looks to be a case of unnatural toleration. (Laitin, 1986, p. 9)

What Laitin calls 'unnatural toleration' is a key point here that requires empirical analysis.

Ibrahim identifies a similar point while writing about the Yorùbá in Nigerian national politics:

The members of that ethnic group are influenced much more by communal ties than by religious alignment. Although there are about as many Muslims as there are Christians in Yorùbá land – and both are to be found in many extended families – inter confessional conflicts are rare. (Ibrahim, 1991, p. 132)

Laitin's 'unnatural toleration' is like Ibrahim's 'communal ties' used in describing the Yorùbá intra-ethnic relations, which remain intact irrespective of religious affiliations.

In the broader context of conflicts in other parts of Nigeria, the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims appear to be an exceptional example, and this may be due to how culture changes. Cohen classifies people's approaches to culture flexibility into two types, detribalization, and retribalization. In the first, 'an ethnic group adjusts to the new social realities by adopting customs from other groups or by developing new customs which are shared with the other groups' (Cohen, 2004; 1969, p. 1). This is common in cities as the old (or host) culture diffuses into the new, becoming suppressed or even becoming extinct. Both concepts are found thriving among African people (Cohen, 2004; 1969). How much detribalization and retribalization are influencing Nigerian people in the context of religion is a question to give some thought to in an ethno-religious conflict situation.

Unlike Laitin's suggestion of Yorùbá people's 'unnatural toleration', many scholars have observed that ethnic conflicts often leave ordinary Nigerians vulnerable (Abdu, 2010;

Adele & Oloruntele, 2001; Bolaji, 2013; Osinubi & Osinubi; Salawu, 2009). Others suggest that *Sharia* debates nearly tore Nigeria apart as each citizen gave their allegiance to the political leaders in their different religions locally (Falola, 1998; Ibrahim, 1991). Like Falola (1998), Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) also quoted a northern Nigerian Islamic scholar, Abubakar Gumi, as follows:

Abubakar Mahmud Gumi, a renowned Islamic scholar, had on several occasions in interviews and in his preaching stated a classical Islamic jurist position that “a Muslim cannot accept or choose a non-Muslim as a leader”, especially in a situation where there is a contest for leadership between a Muslim and non-Muslim. (Mu'azzam & Ibrahim, 2000, p. 66)

Gumi's position here raises a concern for non-Muslim Nigerians. With time, however, the same Gumi who was very instrumental in the campaign for a Muslim, Muhammadu Buhari to become Nigerian elected president in 2015 later regretted Buhari's poor performance (Isenyo, 2018).

It is interesting to know that the Yorùbá people, regardless of their religions, were not often moved when it comes to electing their kinsmen to power. The 1993 national election saw Basorun M. K. O. Abiola, a Yorùbá Muslim, receiving most votes of Nigerians (Hountondji, 1995). Yorùbá Christians were among the electorates that voted massively for Abiola, which very few had imagined could happen, even though the incumbent leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, and the successors (Shonekan, Sani Abacha and Abdusalami Abubakar) did not hand over power to Abiola (Lewis, 1994). This case is another unusual incidence portraying the dynamism of the intra-ethnic relations between the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. In general, notwithstanding, Nigerians are careful in the selection of a political aspirant, as most often a Muslim and a Christian share the leadership and the deputy's positions in many of the major elections wherever tenable.

Despite the number of practising Christians and Muslims in Yorùbáland being nearly equal (Falola, 1998; Goddard, 2001; Sklar, 2004), ethno-religious violence is rare. Goddard points out that the Anglican Bishop of Ibadan<sup>15</sup> says his own Muslim uncle attended his consecration and was delighted to witness it despite their religious differences. To this, Goddard suggests ‘family loyalty and identity seem to outweigh religious loyalty and identity’ (Goddard, 2001, p. 237) amongst the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims. This supports the idea of Yorùbá values for family unity, known as *Èbí*. Many scholars have argued in support of the Akinjogbin’s (1966) ‘*Èbí*’ theory as playing a vital role in the peaceful relations among Yorùbá people (Brandon, 1997; Ogunremi & Adediran, 1998; Westermann, Smith, & Forde, 1969, 2008). Sholagbade argues for a similar concept of ‘*Omọ ìyá kanná*’, (n.d., pp. 12, 23) where the Yorùbá Muslims and Christians in Èpé, Lagos State, see themselves as ‘children of the same mother’. This concept facilitates love and tolerance by addressing the consciousness of Yorùbá Christians and Muslims and could be more explanation to the relevance of the term among the Yorùbá. So, what is *Èbí* theory?

## **2.4 *Èbí* as a Cultural Uniting Front**

*Èbí* literally means blood relations or kindred. Akinjogbin (1966) suggests the *Èbí* Commonwealth Theory as a uniting force in Yorùbáland. According to him, *Èbí* theory is from the idea of family, where a Yorùbá king must look after his people, while the community also must respect their king (and the elders). This theory is illustrated with the Yorùbá progenitor (known as Odùduwà) having his seat in Ilé-Ifè while his youngest

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<sup>15</sup> Ibadan is a major city in Yorùbáland, the former capital of the old western region of Nigeria.

son, Ọrànyàn, founded the Ọyó Empire with his strong military force.<sup>16</sup> Ọyó had a stronger military might than Ilé-Ifẹ̀ the seat of Odùduwà, and the palace of the firstborn. However, Ọrànyàn (the founder of Ọyó), being younger than the firstborn, would not look at his older brother with disdain<sup>17</sup> (Akinjogbin, 1963, 1966), respecting the hierarchy and being siblings. As a result, the Yorùbá leaders and their people are relatives and must also live together as a united family.

Some scholars have argued that *Ebí* has a significant role to play in the peaceful relations among the Yorùbá. Ogunremi and Adediran (1998) argue that blood relations are significant to the cohesion of the Yorùbá people, especially as the monarchs are responsible for looking after the community in the Yorùbá *Ebí* social commonwealth theory. Brandon and Westermann (1997; 1969, 2008) also present a similar argument.

To find a clue to the harmony among the Yorùbá, especially the Christians and Muslims, Lateju (2012) argues for the *Ebí* commonwealth theory as the basis for their peaceful coexistence. Lateju explains that Yorùbá elders use *Ebí* uniting force among themselves to resolve their conflicts including those originating from religious differences, competition for chieftaincy, and politics.

However, the *Ebí* theory does not prevent political violence among the Yorùbá, while some other forms of conflict are also present. Yet, the clue for the existing kindness and good neighbourliness among the Yorùbá is due their idea of *Ebí*. According to Lateju:

The Yorùbá people uphold very strong “*Ebí* Commonwealth Social Theory” a theory that [...] Yorùbá belong to the same ancestor [...] that they are one ethnic group. (2012, p. 65)

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<sup>16</sup> Akinjogbin wonders what term is appropriate to describe Ọyó during its expansion whether empire, a country or kingdom. The Ọyó King is now called the Alaafin of Ọyó.

<sup>17</sup> The successor of Odùduwà at the seat of power in Ile-Ife is known as the Ọ̀nìni of Ifẹ̀.

Akinjogbin explains the reason for a strong family tie among the Yorùbá, which Lateju further expands on:

This feeling of “belonging together” does not come from an imposition through the use of arms; rather, it comes through a common acceptance of being related by blood. In other words, for the average Yorùbá man, he is first a “Yorùbá” then a Muslim or Christian. *Ẹbí* is regarded as the basis of Yorùbá societal organizational structure. This strengthens social and religious ties in southwest Nigeria. As a result of the *Ẹbí* theory, the Yorùbá in every community joins hands in local ventures ... both groups participate in social functions of each other, such as naming, marriage, funeral ceremonies. (2012, p. 65)

The coming together in cultural and social functions is what I describe as *áárěmisé*. In the *Ẹbí* theory, Lateju (2012) noted that the Yorùbá still have conflicts especially when parents or families are upset at their children's conversion to another religion or when their children marry someone from another religion. So far, inter-religious interaction according to Lateju is inevitable in a Yorùbá community (2009) but how they cope during provocations is a major issue to research.

## **2.5 Militant Groups in Nigeria**

Scholarly debates surrounding violence in the Nigeria three regions, namely, the north, southeast and southwest have led to many suggestions (Casey, 2010). Some like Mähler (2010) and Iyekekpolo (2016) raised concerns about the exploitation of the southeast oil producing area by the federal government. Likewise, Oluwaniyi (2010), Anugwom (2005), and Gore and Prattern (2003) describe the instability, vigilantes, and area boys' activities in the southeast as originating from a struggle for resource control. On the other hand, Agbibo (2013) suggests that the north see themselves as economically deprived while the Christians [supposedly the southwest] are wealthier. In Agbibo's discourse, the

north plays the victim to poverty that is one of the reasons for the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency.

However, Bouchat noted an alliance between the north and the southeast against the western cocoa producing region to share their revenue with the entire country, but the alliance changed to the north and southwest against the southeast when oil was being produced in the southeast after the independence, (2013, pp. 25, 26). Thus, the claim that the southeast agitates over the oil, the north about poverty while the southwest no longer has much cocoa or other resources which the federal government can exploit emerged, is the reason suggested for the Yorùbá's peacefulness. This implies that, according to these theorists, the Yorùbá has nothing substantial to defend with force. This claim has been examined under the southwest mineral resources [2.3.1.2].

The three main regions in Nigeria have militant groups that emerged for different reasons. These groups have their goals set in line with the needs of the regions they represent, some with extremist ideologies. Each militant group has its antecedents and issues they agitate for or against like economic exploitation, government corruption, political imbalance, neglect of the minority and religious ideology. Suleiman and Nuruddeen (2015), writing on the Nigerian government, trace militancy to the government's poor performance over decades and the corruption that has now become endemic in the nation.

Other issues that made some people feel threatened and take to militancy are:

Social gaps between the rich and the poor... The result has been a continued level of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment within the ranks of average Nigerians, thus creating the perfect arena for breeding violent militancy in Nigeria. (Suleiman & Nuruddeen, 2015, p. 1)

No community is immune to agitation when subjected to physical, structural, and/or economic violence. The propensity for anxiety is high when people are exposed to

poverty, degradation of the essential social amenities and unemployment, which can result in the formation of militant groups.

Thus, Aghedo and Osumah suggest some ethnic militant groups in western and southern Nigeria from the 1990s as:

The Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in the southwest, the Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Bakassi Boys in the southeast, and the Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), among several others, in the Niger Delta. These groups pursue different ethnopolitical agendas with violent means arising from what they perceive as the state's exclusion of their ethnic groups from public goods. (2012, p. 857)

There is more than one militant group in each region of Nigeria but sometimes they regroup for ease of discussion. For instance, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) is a militant group local to the Yorùbá led by Gani Adams who is also the current Ààare Ònà Kakañfò of the Yorùbáland, installed by the Aláàfin of Òyó (Oodua-People's-Congress, 2018). The position allows the leader to represent the Yorùbá as a powerful force like a traditional military representation of the rulers. The post was previously held by the winner of the 1993 presidential election, Basorun M. K. O. Abiola (Nwachukwu, 2017).

Nolte (2007) suggests that the OPC was founded in Yorùbáland after the annulment of the acclaimed free and fair election in 1993, where Abiola became the president-elect. After Abiola's death, lectures were given in his memory (Opadokun, 2013) as advocacy for democracy. The OPC's role was to stand for the rights of the Yorùbá in Nigeria's political arena. Going by its tolerance, although a militant group, the OPC accommodates or at least would not fight a non-Yorùbá person just in the name of being an ethnic militant group. So, the OPC is more humane in its activities than other militant groups in Nigeria.

In contrast, Oluwaniyi (2010) highlights the Niger Delta militancy, arguing that the youths' violent activities are to protest the socio-economic exploitation and the political

segregation of the region. The Delta's unrest is therefore linked to the economy as the residents see the resources produced in their land siphoned to other regions and outside the country, while the residents are left with the polluted ecosystem and poverty. The militants often resort to kidnapping wealthy locals and foreigners in exchange for money, which the OPC is not known for. Writing about Sri Lanka, Coyne, Dempster, and Isaacs suggest that:

If peace is not sustainable, meaning that conflict will continue in the future, investors will change their expectations regarding institutional stability leading to a fall in long-term asset prices. Similarly, if peace prospects are viewed as sustainable, indicating continued peace and institutional stability, this will increase long-term asset prices. Since long-term financial asset prices can be used to predict the sustainability of peace, they can play an important role in informing policies toward conflict-torn areas. (2010, p. 147)

A lack of the guarantee of the safety of the oil workers, therefore, has caused a great setback to the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. Being fair to the Niger Delta people in this assessment, the most disheartening thing is that, instead of the government helping the locals to correct the deplorable situation, it uses what some have described as ‘carrot and stick’ (Oluwaniyi, 2010, pp. 320, 321), where sticks were used more often than the carrot.

## **2.6 Boko Haram Metamorphosis: Aftermath of Political Malpractices**

Khan (2015) describes the emergence of Boko Haram as having a religious basis with agitation for the establishment of *Shari'ah* and the campaign against bribery and poverty. Boko Haram first clashed with the government in 2009, followed by the unlawful killing of its leader, Mohammad Yusuf, which led to the escalation of violence against government officials and the populace. Iyekekpolo (2016) corroborates this, describing the group as initially emerging as nonviolent but hating western culture, and later became a violent sect pledging allegiance to ‘al-Qaeda and the Islamic State’ (*ibid*, p. 2211).

Iyekekpolo's description of the Boko Haram insurgency is comprehensive, changing faces and operations over time. Riches and Palmowski also describe the group as:

A radical Islamist group established in Maiduguri northern-eastern Nigeria in 2002. Its full name is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda' awatiwal-Jihad, but it was called Boko Haram ('Western education is forbidden') by locals, as a quick summary of its initial campaign... The leadership was taken over by Abubakar Shekau. (2016)

Boko Haram instigated an Islamic revolution after the death of Yusuf in police custody (Agbiboa, 2013; Voll, 2015).

How this initial Qur'anic study group metamorphosed into an insurgency is traced to the disputes with the state politicians and the murder of its leader leading to an increase in violence, as Yusuf's followers embarked on attacks on the police, army, churches and the general population (Khan & Hamidu, 2015; Verini, 2013) and the mosques that preached against their activities (Hendrix, 2016). It emerged as a local Qur'anic teaching group that transformed into a state political machinery for electioneering, and later into an internationally known insurgency. Without the state politicians' support during the electioneering that went wrong, Boko Haram would have probably not metamorphosed into an insurgency. For instance, the Nigerian government stopped the activities of another militant group called the *Maitatsine* in the 1980s (Adesoji, 2011) when the government did not nurture them for electioneering as the subsequent government did with the Boko Haram. Also, if poverty were the core argument of Boko Haram's third phase of the insurgency, they would have demanded money as the oil-rich southern militants received an amnesty from the Nigerian Federal Government under President Yar'Adua. Poverty, therefore, was not the main cause of the Boko Haram insurgency and not a viable argument to downplay the relative peace in other poverty-stricken places in Nigeria. Their operations have become unpredictable and continue at the time of writing five years into President Buhari's administration who campaigned to stop Boko Haram's activities if voted into power.

Adamolekun (2012, 2013) provides an overview of Nigeria embedded in conflicts involving Muslims and Christians from its early days, and Falola (1998) argues that it was only by the late 1970s that religion became a factor for disunity among Nigerians. The use of religion became glaringly obvious as Osaghae and Suberu (2005) describe Christian-Muslim conflicts as being part of the complexity of Nigeria. As I consider a religiously tolerant community like the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria, Wiberg (1981, p. 113) comes to mind calling for a multi-layered inquiry on peaceful cultures by asking:

- What characteristics do they have in common that seem to make for their peaceful qualities?
- In what dimensions do they differ, hence demonstrating that a given variable value is not a necessary condition for peace?
- To what extent do they contain forms of structural violence?

A supposedly religious peaceful community like the Yorùbá, which does not necessarily lack structural violence, is a promising area of inquiry. This is not just for a better understanding of what keeps conflicts at bay, but also of what sustains peace in human communities and what could be missing in other communities that have experienced violence.

## **2.7 Summary**

The goal of peace and conflict studies is to resolve conflicts and maintain peace in human society. Although the first has been researched for many decades, not much attention is placed on the second especially in modern societies as well as in West Africa. Research

on how a community seeks to sustain peace among its people is, therefore, an area that can be further explored.

There has been an extensive study of conflicts of various kinds in Nigeria, including ethnic, political, and religious. An examination of the three regions (north, southeast, and west) in Nigeria has shown that there is relative peace in the west among the Yorùbá, especially in the religious and cultural sphere. The Yorùbá have been seen to seek peace through the role that *Èbí* (family) plays in their culture, which can be studied further in the context of the global peace discourse or phenomenon. So, how can discourse around the Yorùbá communities contribute to works in PS and peace studies? Simply put, the above literature addresses:

- The gap in peace and conflict studies regarding the sustainability of peace in the human community with a possible contribution to societal peacefulness.
- How the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims sustain the peace in their community when compared with the northern part of Nigeria.
- How comprehensive is the *Èbí* theory to foster peace among the Yorùbá? This examines the already available *Èbí* theory.

With this area of inquiry in mind, I now progress to examine how the research was carried out and under which methodology in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

To investigate the sustainability of peace in human society further, as identified in the previous two chapters, the research method must look closely at the qualitative nature of the community under investigation. In the first instance, a qualitative method in social science is based on human experience (Babbie, 2005; Baker, 1999; Bouma & Atkinson, 1995). As a result, Baker argues that qualitative research is done with a concrete interaction between the researcher and the subjects or participants. The identity of researchers that is what they are bringing to the field is, therefore, crucial to doing a good research.

#### **3.1 Researcher's Background**

It has been observed that a researcher's value, personal biases, and personality can dominate research to influence the outcome or result, (Bryman, 2012). On a positive note, a local or indigenous researcher can have an advantage of access to the available data, having the knowledge of the area, the facilities available and a good command of the local language (Gail, 2010). Notwithstanding I must ensure provisions are made to limit my influence or biases on my data and the research outcome. To address the possible weaknesses, I need to identify myself.

I am a Yorùbá man who grew up and lived for more than 30 years among the Yorùbá in southwest Nigeria. During that time, I lived among the Yorùbá people, Christians, Muslims, and a few indigenous religion practitioners, and was privileged to have observed their harmony and a few tensions during their festivals when they crossed one another's paths. These observations were instinctive as I did not have any intention of

doing research in peace studies then. I speak Yorùbá fluently and use their idioms and proverbs well. These are some of the positives that can strengthen my evaluation of my data.

However, I am a third generation Baptist (evangelical) Christian from southwest Nigeria. I studied theology in a Baptist seminary with American missionary lecturers while in Nigeria. Hitherto, I also studied at secular universities like the University of Ibadan Nigeria and the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom. I have lived in the UK for about twelve years, hence, there are tendencies my assessment of the data may be judgemental or possibly influenced by Western or Christian tendencies. These imply I must be prepared to handle my research data to reduce to a minimum any unreasoning interpretations of data that negate my belief or tradition. I must also try to represent the Yorùbá host cultural values as best as I can.

While reviewing the literature and handling my data that involved other religions like Islam and the IAR (the indigenous African religion), I rely on my knowledge of Yorùbá culture, my education in Islam and philosophy to the Master's level, and my interaction with religious practitioners (IAR inclusive) from my childhood. Similarly, I involved Muslim practitioners and Christians in my data collection and involved the elderly people from a local family housing that has a masquerade,<sup>1</sup> the Òsálágbèdè compound where I grew up as a child. I interviewed palace officials to balance my views on the African culture and the Yorùbá religion. Equally, I taught 'African Traditional Religion' (ATR/IAR) at the undergraduate level and supervised long essays in the area (from 2000 to 2002),<sup>2</sup> hence I rely on my knowledge of the subject and some relevant literature to provide my assessment and the indigenous religion's cultural flavour to this study.

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<sup>1</sup> A traditional festival about the ancestors.

<sup>2</sup> I taught some courses at the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomoso, a degree programme awarded by the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

One of the benefits of being an insider researcher was that I could liaise with both Christian and Muslim participants during FGDs and the FIs. On a positive note, Berg writes on the invaluable roles of local persons in qualitative research:

Naturally, indigenous ethnographers – persons who already are members of the group to be studied – possess certain strategic advantages...In some instances, researchers may be able to gain entry more quickly because of their indigenous status. (1998, p. 132)

I intended using this value of being an insider to put other relevant factors in place including handling the study professionally and relating to the participants in a socially acceptable manner. Bloor describes these qualities extensively (2006). Equally, the expert knowledge of researchers is essential to understand and evaluate the participants' contributions in their context. Akinloye (1994) discusses these essential roles and the ability to liaise with local leaders to gain their support for the inquiry. The selection of the research site also requires the knowledge of how and if the places have had any incidences of religious-related violent conflicts.

I attempted to be mindful of the limitations of an expert to avoid my personal values dominating the research process and findings by giving a listening ear to the participants in the fieldwork. The ability to co-ordinate the research, using the strength of being a local researcher and putting a boundary around any demerits such as too much familiarity of unique strategies, must be well managed. I should, therefore, be careful to avoid being intrusive. As a Yorùbá researcher among the Yorùbá people, I hope to limit the negatives of a local researcher in the research process as much as possible to prevent such influences impairing my findings.

### **3.2 Qualitative Data Collection and Sampling Strategy**

Qualitative research engages the researcher in an in-depth study through observation, interviews and other relevant approaches and is like phenomenological research about understanding people in a social context (Baker, 1999, p. 241). Considering data collection using interviews, observation, or documents, Punch suggests four steps required for ‘maximiz[ing] the quality of the data’ (Punch, 1998, p. 192), which I quote below:

- One, ‘Anticipate and simulate the data collection procedures; this will show the value of pilot testing any instruments (if appropriate) and the procedures for using them’, (Punch, 1998, p. 192)
- Two, ‘When approaching people for data collection, ensure that the approach is both ethical and professional’. (Punch, 1998, p. 192)
- Three, ‘Appreciate the role of training in preparing for data collection, both for ourselves and others [...] undertaking activities designed to develop skills involved’. (Punch, 1998, p. 192)
- Four, ‘If special equipment is involved (for example for recording), we should ensure that the appropriate skills have been mastered’. (Punch, 1998, p. 192)

From the above quotation, I gather words like procedures, ethical and professional training, and skills. I considered and applied these terms in the process of my data collection as shown in the subsequent section.

A lot of work has been done in peace studies using the qualitative research method. Mavalla (2012) used qualitative research to examine the role Christians play in the peace process in northern Nigeria. In his research, he explores three violent conflict episodes

which occurred in Kaduna and Jos, to engage more scholars and practitioners in conflict transformation. The scope of the work covers three Christian denominations in the two cities over the period 1992 to 2001. He carried out three major fieldwork expeditions on different occasions: one archival study and two sets of interviews with a total of 57 people. He presented the rationale for the selection of the locations and respondents. Other completed Ph.D. research on the topic within peace studies include Akanji (2011), Nkem (2010), Kalu (2017), all with fieldwork in Nigeria using the qualitative method in one form or the other. The qualitative research method is not, therefore, new for researching peace studies.

Further, Mavalla's research took place in the same country as mine but in a different region: his in the north and mine in southwest Nigeria. In my case, I want to examine how conflicts are de-escalated and peace sustained among the Yorùbá seemingly peaceful religious community, which requires a qualitative study using a thick description method.

### **3.2.1 Target Population**

The Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria are the target population for this study. To begin with, I did a simple survey among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria. Marshall and Rossman (2006) describe surveys as a viable instrument useful for analysing the views of large populations of people. This was achieved very carefully, with selected Yorùbá samples (or participants). Mason writes: '[s]ampling and selection are principles and procedures used to identify, choose and gain access to relevant units which will be used for data generation by any method' (1997, p. 83). Furthermore, Mason (1997) adds that the selection of samples means having representation from each category (1997). Mason poses a question for the researcher to ask:

What relationship do I want to establish or do I assume exists, between the sample or selection I am making and a wider population or universe? (1997, p. 90)

For this reason, I ensured that the samples covered a variety of people in the Yorùbá communities like youth, religious leaders, local men and women and elites who could make relevant contributions to this study. Schofield defines the importance of sampling as: ‘to save time and effort, but also to obtain consistent and unbiased estimates of the population status in terms of whatever is being researched’ (Schofield, 2006, p. 26). Flower identifies the characteristics of samples which researchers must consider as comprehensiveness, or, ‘how completely it covers the target population’, and efficiency, or, ‘the rate at which members of the target population can be found among those in the frame’ (2009, p. 21). In this study, the ES covers a varied range of Christians and Muslim adults from various settings and backgrounds with variables like women, men, clergies, elites (scholars) and local family house residents, complying with Scofield’s definition. Most ES participants turned in their responses in the first three months of the survey’s launch, April to June 2015. The month of May saw the largest contribution, with 25 returns. I made the survey available again in March of the following year (2016), with seven participants before I embarked on the FGD and the FI later in August and September 2016.

Owing to the vast size of the Yorùbá population, the use of ES is only relevant for providing some representations of the population. There were some unintentional exclusions of those who do not have access to the internet or mobile data and would not enlist for the ES. Similarly, the ES was not planned to cover so many like hundreds or thousands of respondents, so the ES does not represent the entire Yorùbá population. Such limitations were to be partly catered for when FGD and FI are incorporated into the study. Thus, a limitation of the ES is that it does not cover the entire Yorùbá population and must be augmented with other methods of data collection for more robust findings.

With FGD and FI incorporated to provide the cumulative data, the study was more comprehensive to discover how the Yorùbá people manage conflict and the sort of features that support them to seek peace or keep the conflict from escalating. This will, however, still not be fully completed until I contrast the findings with the existing literature on the subject to present an academic study on peace maintenance among the Yorùbá.

My knowledge of the local population and cultural milieu was useful to identify the appropriate persons and sites for the ES, FGD and FI during the field inquiry. I have chosen the qualitative inquiry as the principal method with thick description as an approach for this study.

### **3.2.2 Survey (ES – Electronic Survey for a Qualitative Study)**

While thinking through the logistics of the ES, I designed a survey on Survey Monkey, which I administered via email to some selected Yorùbá participants. This ES was designed based on my findings from the literature review. The subsidiary questions were expanded in the ES questionnaires to contain semi-structured and open questions expected to provide clues on the views of the selected samples regarding conflict management strategies and maintenance of peace among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria.

I sent out a total of 171 invitations to the selected participants and obtained 45 responses (23.3%) of whom 27 were residents in southwest Nigeria while the rest (including those who participated in the pre-testing of the questionnaire) are from the diaspora, mainly the United Kingdom. I discussed the general survey and subjected only the qualitative data from the 27 southwest Nigerian Yorùbá participants to the NVivo and provided my findings in the subsequent chapter.

Surveying is a good way of starting a research of this nature in that it has the potential for wide coverage and can identify people who may have good ideas to contribute. ES provided an incredible opportunity to obtain the views of some Yorùbá people on the subject being discussed and to identify some relevant people and sites for further inquiries in the subsequent FGD and FI. The ES also helped to provide a background for the subsequent FGD and FI. Marshall and Rossman (2006), when describing survey, state that relying on the honesty of the samples is vital (2006, p. 125). I planned to scrutinize and pursue the individuals and sites that I identified in the initial survey further in the FGD and FI for more credibility.

The uniqueness of this survey is the space I provided for the participants to write in their own words any further explanations regarding peaceful relations among the Yorùbá. This is a step forward to release the popular survey method from its known ‘closed question’ to become open with space for participants to make their own open contributions for a qualitative inquiry.

The ES findings helped in the subsequent data collection the following year in the form of FGD meetings in three and FI in seven Yorùbá towns. The findings from the ES raised some questions that were investigated through the FGD, and the findings from the FGD were helpful during the FI. The results I obtained from each approach were first discussed and then subjected to NVivo coding from where I got my cumulative NVivo findings.

### **3.2.2.1 ES Explained**

ES here is an instrument used to provide a point of view of the Yorùbá regarding peaceful relations in their communities. The mandatory requirement for participation was either being Yorùbá by birth who have been living among the Yorùbá in the Yorùbáland or being

a secondary *ethnie*<sup>3</sup> living in Yorùbáland. A secondary *ethnie* could also be related by marriage, while all secondary *ethnies* must have lived in a Yorùbá community for about 20 years. The whole survey apparatus provided a picture of the Yorùbá's ideas of peacefulness and conflict management strategies.

I enquired from the participants of the questionnaire pre-testing (in the UK) whether they knew any person who might be willing and able to contribute to a study on peace among the Yorùbá in Nigeria. I also selected some participants through phone calls and an electronic search of relevant institutions in southwest Nigeria. The selected individuals for the ES were mostly from Ibadan, Sèpètèrì, and Ògbómòṣó in Òyó state; Ilorin in Kwara state and Ila-Orangun and Ilé-Ifè in Osun state Nigeria.

I obtained the participants' email addresses for the delivery of the questionnaires. Their contacts were kept securely within the Survey Monkey cloud and later in NVivo of the Middlesex University London (out of reach of the public) where I used the data for thematization.

### **3.2.2.2 Ideas for Questions Formulation**

The validation of the questions to be asked is essential in all empirical studies. Marshall and Rossman (2006) discuss the quality and validity of research questions, and Akinloye (1994) compares the use of open and closed questions in research. He justifies the use of pre-test questionnaires in a stipulated time with a group like the one with which the test is to be conducted in the field, to identify any misconceptions and misinterpretations. In line with this suggestion, I tested my main research question among the Merseyside Yorùbá Community Association (MYCA) in Liverpool, United Kingdom. Some of the

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<sup>3</sup> A descendant of non-Yorùbá parents or grandparents living among the Yorùbá.

MYCA members were not so distant from Nigeria while living in the UK, as they often travel to Nigeria to socialize and participate in Nigeria's social, cultural, and political events. I considered pre-testing my research question among the MYCA members to serve as a guide to what I may expect in southwest Nigeria later during my fieldwork.

While presenting the main research question to address how the Yorùbá manage their conflicts to retain their peace, the MYCA participants suggested that there have been occasions of conflicts over chieftaincy titles and disputes over land among the Yorùbá. They further suggested that the Yorùbá are not always peaceful. However, they agreed that the Yorùbá often like to settle their conflicts as soon as they can. This response facilitated the need to investigate the basis of the *Èbí* theory among the Yorùbá, which suggests that the Yorùbá see themselves as a family to keep the conflict brief. The following two questions emerge relevant to this study:

- How potent is the *Èbí* uniting force among the Yorùbá and in what context is it viable?
- What are the conflict situations like among the Yorùbá and where do they get strength in a time of provocation?

These questions amongst the rest were asked in the subsequent ES.

Baker (1999) reiterates that the research questions and research problem must be relevant to the community under investigation. Wilson and Sapsford (2006) highlight the weakness of open-ended questions that put extra work on the interviewers due to the burden associated with writing down the answers given by the participants, but it has been avoided in this case. The participants present their responses in written format, which I subjected to the NVivo for a qualitative analysis. This is a strength for my ES questions, an opportunity to access and analyse a survey written responses in a qualitative manner.

According to Wilson and Sapsford, '[u]ncoded questions allow the researcher to search the full range of responses obtained before reducing replies to a set of categories and the "translation" of replies' (2006, p. 101). Thus, I examined the ES data, and the subsequent FGD and FI to generate the themes for a later discussion. The themes (categories) were first developed manually, while NVivo was used to generate nodes, mind maps and themes at the end of each phase of the data collection.

On designing survey questions, Flower says, '[g]ood questions maximise the relationship between the answers recorded and what the researcher is trying to measure' (2009, p. 87). In the ES open question, the participants shared any thoughts they had in their own words apart from the options I have provided. In the ES semi-structured questions, the participants could select more than one answer that they felt relevant to the issues. According to Flower, 'Survey questions can be classified roughly into two groups: those for which a list of acceptable responses is provided to the respondent (closed questions) and those for which the acceptable responses are not provided exactly to the respondent (open questions)' Flower (2009, p. 100). I leaned more on open and semi-structured questions in this ES to allow participants to make relevant selections and provide further explanations to support their responses.

The open questions allow free self-expression. Open questions also allow researchers 'to obtain answers that were unanticipated [and] may describe more closely the real views of the respondents [...] [who] like the opportunity to answer some questions on their own words' (Flower, 2009, p. 101). This is the case with inductive research and thick description, which remains objective and open to the facts behind the participants' stories and ideas in context.

### 3.2.2.3 Survey Structure and Specific Questions for Exploration

The selection criterion for the ES research participants was rigorous. Three sets of questions were asked. The first (1-6) identified the participants' gender, ethnicity and religious background, commitment to their religion and their level of education. These identification questions verified the participants' suitability for the study.

While researching how peace is maintained in a community like the Yorùbá, it is important to understand how they resolve any conflict that might be emerging to keep the peace. There are a few reported conflicts between Christian and Muslim groups in some Yorùbá communities and later resolved as shown in the literature review, while many Yorùbá communities still live in harmony across their religions. The second set of questions was, therefore, based on the fact-finding about peace (or fewer violent conflict occurrences) among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria. These questions (7 and 8) were as follows:

- Describe an incident of crisis and/or conflict that you have witnessed among the Yorùbá Christians, Muslims, and/or other religious people. What cause was attributed to those involved in the crisis/conflict? If you have not witnessed any such conflict, have you observed anything unique in the Yorùbá's attitude towards religious differences in their community?
- Please identify who has been most instrumental in managing the conflicts that have the potential for violence in your local community. (Choose and discuss your chosen answers in the space provided below.)

These questions address the first subsidiary questions; how peace can be sustained in the community. It also responds to the second subsidiary questions without being suggestive: how the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims sustain the peace in their community. This second

category of questions focuses on the participants' experiences and views about conflict and those responsible for conflict management among the Yorùbá. These are semi-structured questions with space to expand on their chosen answers and provide other personal views for a qualitative study. The discussions by the participants provided responses in a typed format for coding (nodes) and categorization later in the study.

The last questions (9 and 10) dealt with the participants' personal experiences, and how friendly they were with people of other religions in their families, workplaces, and communities. It also identified the factors that usually encourage them to live peacefully. This was designed to help identify the quality of peace in the Yorùbá community. The questions were:

- Do you have a person(s) of a religion other than yours in your household, extended family, school and/or workplace? If so, how well do you get along with them and in what kind of forum?

This question attempts to address the third subsidiary question to see how comprehensive the Yorùbá *Ebi* theory is, beyond the close family and across the religions:

- Do you often keep the peace (remain calm)? How and from where do you draw strength (or encouragement) to tolerate your neighbours or people of other religions during provocation?

This question also focuses on the first two subsidiary questions and provides the chance to identify potential prospective participants for the FGD and FI, when taking the study into its later stages.

#### **3.2.2.4 Approaches/Procedures for Electronic Data Collection**

There are many approaches to electronic surveying. Flower (2009) mentions two: email and a website-based questionnaire. Flower further notes that limited access to the internet often debars prospective respondents from participating in ES but a link to a website is better than email for a survey method, so my approach accepts this suggestion. Although I used email and telephone to disseminate information about my ES, the questionnaire was completed on a designated Survey Monkey web page, making the effort required from the participants less cumbersome (with no need to print the questions or post their responses). Flower also mentions the issue of non-response to an electronic questionnaire as a major problem but suggests the use of more than one mode of data collection to cater for such shortfalls and make the method more viable. This study adheres to these suggestions.

#### **3.2.2.5 Nature of the Samples and Identity of the Participants**

In doing a thick descriptive qualitative study, a detailed analysis of who the participants are is very important. Since the research concerns the Yorùbá population, the first challenge was how to ensure that only Yorùbá participated in the study. In this survey design, I gathered that approximately 98% of the participants were of Yorùbá ethnicity by birth, whilst the rest considered themselves Yorùbá by marriage (the spouse being Yorùbá), and the participants having been married or lived among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria for 20 years or more. There were no Yorùbá secondary *ethnie* by birth participants in the ES; the samples were, therefore, distinctively Yorùbá.

Nine practising Muslims, 33 Christians, one Yorùbá traditional religious practitioner and two other unclassified participants giving a total 45 participated in the entire survey. There

were seven women in all. Although the total number of Muslim participants was low, four of them held a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies, two of whom were full professors of Islamic Studies. Three Christian Ph.D. holders in Christian theology or a related discipline participated in the study. The total number of Christian participants was higher because the Bible College students in Ibadan participated, whereas the Muslim students from Ògbómòşò did not – their excuse being that their group leader was very busy and for whom they apologised on his behalf.

Most of the participants (74%) considered themselves to have excellent devotion or commitment to their religion, followed by 14% who indicated ‘very good’ and 9% ‘good’. Only one person claimed to have the lowest level of commitment. This is important as it reveals that the responses came from committed members of the religions and religious communities, a reflection of thick description methodology.

The bulk of the participants were well-educated with 40% having a bachelor’s degree, 19% a master’s, 17% a PhD, 10% a college or diploma certificate and 7% another level of education such as an M.Phil. The remaining 5% had completed primary school education. This means that more than 76% had at least a bachelor’s degree. No illiterate person participated, as all participants had at least the basic literacy required to access the internet.

The level of religious education attained by the participants was considered. This was to help with examining the basis of the religion-related responses. Only 26% of participants did not have any formal (classroom) religious education, other than that which their religious leaders had taught in their worship communities, or through their individual efforts at self-teaching. However, 16% had obtained a Ph.D. in religion, 30% a bachelor’s degree, 16% a certificate or diploma and 7% a Master’s, while 5% had obtained a different

higher qualification (see Appendix A). This shows that over half of the participants had at least a bachelors' degree in religion/theological studies, whilst almost all the respondents considered themselves to be devoted to their religions. The findings of this survey, therefore, concern religiously informed and committed members of the Yorùbá community. This implies that the non-religious Yorùbá and a significant number of others are not included in this survey, hence a conclusion cannot be reached with this data alone.

### **3.2.2.6 Quality Control**

The quality assurance for this research involved discussion with representatives of Survey Monkey, who clarified the cost implications and cost-effectiveness of their product. I also periodically changed the password required to access the questions and the survey participants were duly informed of the password expiration dates in advance. Similarly, I gave the participants the option to contact me for an extension of their password or to request a new password if they were unable to meet the deadline (often one-week) to answer the questions. One participant requested a password extension, while some indicated an interest in being contacted for further inquiries regarding the answers they provided.

For the subsequent FGD, I selected research assistants, Christians and Muslims working with me at each FGD site and included the elderly people who had the knowledge of the ancestors vis a vis the indigenous religious beliefs in my interviews for their inputs mostly in relation to peace culture.

Comparing the relevance of interview and questionnaire research, Akinloye (1994) argues for the use of an interview among the illiterate, claiming that questionnaires are better administered to literate participants. Akinloye (1994), however, raises an objection to

self-administered questionnaires left with the respondents for long periods of time, saying this could lead to falsification or questions being answered in such a way as to please the investigators. To avoid these anomalies, I used an ES to access the literates, while I used the FGD and FI for both the literates and those with little or no formal education. People without access to email or electronic facilities, especially the older people, who could make beneficial contributions, were enlisted for the FGD and FI. All ideas generated through the instruments contributed to my growing body of data.

I harvested all the 45 answers to the ES questions as qualitative data. However, I processed only the 27 responses from southwest Nigeria with NVivo codification to generate any emerging themes. I now proceed to present the FGD with my observations.

### **3.2.3 Focus Group (FG – Discussion with Personal Observation)**

Qualities like ‘observing, interviewing and reading various types of written documents’ are central to a qualitative research study (Baker, 1999, p. 240). Observation is essential for qualitative research. Akinloye (1994) describes participatory observation (PO) as a social anthropology tool for studying human groups. Burns describes the PO as a means of accessing data, (Burns, 2000, p. 405). Three things that come out in Burns’ description of PO are the researcher living closely or involved in the subjects’ activities, keeping records and field notes, and keeping an eye on recurrent events or themes. Living among the people or having a regular visit is an integral part of the PO research. I did as much observation as possible in the local communities and during their social functions rather than carrying out a full PO approach. Doing a full PO requires more time on the field than I was able to observe because of my immigration status and family commitments in the UK. Doing a series of focus group meetings, interviewing and careful observation of events as they unfold became more suitable for my situation in this research. Baker also supports this combination of approaches (1999).

Bell (2005) identifies some limitations in the PO such as being time-consuming, a generalization of findings' usefulness and inadequate representation of the group. Burns (2000) describes its weaknesses, amongst others, as the difficulty to be certain of any upcoming events to include in the research. These weaknesses did not disturb this study, as I did not perform a full PO, but used personal observation to acquire the PO strength like meeting the subjects in the real-life events to acquire the data in combination with the FG and interviews for a thicker description process.

### **3.2.3.1 FGD Site Allocation**

Focus group is a qualitative research method. Berg and Lune (2012) allude to FG developing around the Second World War, while Gray (2004) suggests the 1950s, being a market research method that has become increasingly popular in many disciplines. FG involves experts bringing together several participants from a unique population sample (Mason, 2012), to gather their views of a product or issue of interest (Walliman, 2016).

To support this description, Arksey and Knight describe FGD as:

A selection of people who are invited to respond to researchers' questions, findings from earlier studies, policy documents, hypotheses, concerns and the like. They may comprise people who are a cross-section of the population, or they may be homogeneous. (1999, p. 77)

Gray suggests the FGD advantages as permitting 'a variety of views to emerge, while group dynamics can often allow for the stimulation of new perspectives' (2004, p. 111).

The FGD sites for this study were selected from Òyó State (Ògbómòṣó and Sèpètèrì towns) and Kwara State (Ilorin town). Ògbómòṣó is believed not to have had violent conflicts relating to Christian-Muslim relations as gathered from the preceding ES. That informs the reason for selecting Ògbómòṣó for the FGD. Ilorin and Sèpètèrì have

witnessed violent conflicts and involved in conflict resolution of one form or the other. A reference was made to the Sèpètèrì crisis in the ES, which informed the reason for its selection, while I found the Ilorin situation through my literature search.

FGD in areas that had no violent conflict in recent times like Ògbómòṣó (able to sustain their peace) and the one that had experienced conflicts but later settles it like Ilorin and Sèpètèrì are viable places to seek solutions for this research.. Even in a situation where the Yorùbá had conflicts, the question of how they manage the disputes and conflicts and still retain their peace or harmony (in the religious sphere) remains.

#### **3.2.3.1.1 Ògbómòṣó Òyó State**

I conducted an FG in Ògbómòṣó, which is believed to have no experience of violent conflict between Christians and Muslims as suggested in the survey (R12). I spoke with some of the ES contacts in Ògbómòṣó to determine how to take the study further. We interacted through email and over the telephone to organize the FGD. One of the contacts, Taiwo, agreed to work with me on the arrangement. Ògbómòṣó was selected to examine how the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims have been keeping the peace. This site provided a clue to the religious temperaments of the Yorùbá and how disputes, crises, and conflicts with the potential for violence had been managed over the years. The findings were analysed and discussed moved to examine another site, Sèpètèrì that already experienced conflicts to see how they were recovering from its shock.

#### **3.2.3.1.2 Sèpètèrì Òyó State – FGD2**

Towns like Shaki (Adamolekun, 2012) and Sèpètèrì in Òyó State have experienced religious conflicts in the past and a survey participant (R30) mentioned Sèpètèrì, which

informed the selection of this site. Therefore, due to time, cost, and space available, I only examined the Sèpètèrì incidence in this study but not Shaki. The findings in the FGD among the Sèpètèrì people are documented and analysed and then moved on to examine another area, Ilorin that had conflicts that were already resolved.

#### **3.2.3.1.3 Ilorin Kwara State – FGD3**

Another site for the field study was Ilorin in Kwara State. It is a traditional city where native Yorùbá Muslims and Christians practise their religions and interact with one another for community development and commercial purposes (Ajayi, 2011; Blench, Longtau, Hassan, & Walsh, 2006; Laitin, 1982; Nwabara, 1963). Ilorin has witnessed religious disputes and conflicts over land and the *hijab* at some points, but these were resolved. Ilorin is a suitable site for research of this nature while reference to the previous conflicts was not intentionally mentioned by the researcher during the FG to see if the people were still hurting and if they would refer to it. The findings from the FGD in Ilorin were documented and analysed, which led to the face-to-face interviews (FI).

#### **3.2.4 Interviews (FI – Face-to-Face Interview)**

An interview is one of the most useful means of data collection done orally and is often used as the data collection approach in qualitative research. The FI in this study focuses on the Christians and Muslims selected from amongst the religious leaders and laymen and women. These are people with information relating to the Yorùbá's way of life or culture. Some of the research participants had witnessed conflicts or resolved them. These individuals should have had concrete examples to cite to enrich this research. Amongst

them were people in the traditionally preserved places like local family homes, palaces, and the media centres.

During any research, there is a possibility of having both solicited sources of information as in the interview and what Bryman calls ‘casual questioning during conversations’ (2008, p. 410). Similarly, there could be spontaneous unsolicited comments, which could be vital to the research under investigation, as Bryman suggests. Interviews often take the form of open-ended questions or semi-structured interviews to allow freedom, objectivity, and an opportunity to follow the course of the study unhindered. The open-ended question allows the respondents to freely express themselves, while the semi-structured interview guides the participants from straying out of focus. This is like what Omale (2009) adopted for his research, using both open-ended and semi-structured questions.

Some of the benefits of open-ended and semi-structured questions Omale (2009) identified are the openness for the interviewees, allowance for range, variability, preparation and variation of the questions and better depth of the research. Similarly, Akanji, writes, ‘qualitative interview encourages interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee through a flexible agenda [...] In exploration, one does not know all that one would meet’ (2011, p. 92). Bailey opines that open-ended questions allow for flexibility to make questions more relevant to the research and the participants and suggests some of the relevance of open-ended questions as:

When all the possible answers are not known...allow the respondent to answer adequately, in all the detail... They are preferable for complex issues that cannot be condensed into a few small categories. (1994, pp. 120, 121)

The merits of open-ended questions that Bailey mentions are relevant to this research, in that ‘all possible answers’ are not known regarding the interaction between the Christians and Muslims of Yorùbá descent.

Open-ended questions help the participants to provide answers as best they can to complex issues being addressed without the interruption of the researcher. Mavalla (2012), Akanji (2011) and Shimada (2010) adopt semi-structured interviews and FGD for the data collection of their Ph.D. research, implying that open-ended and semi-structured interviews have been used and found effective in peace studies. Similarly, Bryman (2008) and Baker (1999) suggest open-ended questions be used in interviews, while the PO should be more for observation and understanding. These combined approaches can help to represent the subjects as objectively as possible.

An open-ended question, although providing good access to information retrieval in research methodology, also has its own limitations including mediation of input from the interviewees (Omale, 2009, p.136). This suggests that the interviewees' contributions to the research needed to be well handled to be focused. This is what Bailey describes as the possibility of including unwanted information (1994). This difficulty must be monitored to prevent its negative influence, and I handled this by providing guidance and overseeing the entire FGD and FI process.

The cumbersomeness of the open-ended questions was narrowed down as I did just a sizeable number of interviews daily. I also designed the fieldwork with relevant contact people (research assistants) in the places where FGD meetings took place. This makes the flow from one data site to another simpler. Similarly, the interviewees were carefully selected with relevant information to share. I already had my research question, the subsidiary, and the survey (ES) questions, which were available to use if the field participants were going out of the focus of the study. All these careful considerations are believed were helpful to limit the demerits of the open-ended questions in my study.

Burns describes the significance of a researcher's involvement in the activities of the people under study, saying: 'investigators, therefore, must become immersed in a

situation to describe and interpret people's actions' (2000, p. 399). My involvement in the participants' circumstances was reinforced through the observations at the ceremonies I attended, the FGD meetings and the FI with a thick description as its research goal.

The samples had to represent both religions (Islam and Christianity) and reflect the views of some of the Yorùbá population situated in the Yorùbá culture. The latter was hard to come by as the entire sample in all the approaches (ES, FGD and FI) do not necessarily guarantee such a claim, hence the need for situating my findings with available literature and my indigenous researcher's experience as a person in the subsequent chapters. Similarly, the views and theologies of the religious leaders and the community involved in settling conflicts are essential. To probe the religious understanding among the Yorùbá, I found Atanda (1996) suggesting that the Yorùbá kings' palaces do have paid historians, a hereditary position with a depository of knowledge of the oral tradition of Yorùbá history. Likewise, Adetunji argues:

In the olden days and probably up till now, the local historians are certain families retained by the KINGS whose office is hereditary, they also act as the KING'S bards, drummers etc. or sometimes elderly persons who were very close to the KING. It is on them modern-day historians or writers depend as far as possible for any reliable information we now possess. But it must be pointed out, that as may be expected their accounts often vary in several important particulars, but all the same, the traditions have been universally accepted. (1999, pp. 1, 2).

This implies that ancient history has been passed down through these traditional orators, even though its accuracy cannot be ascertained (Law, 1991b). Nonetheless, interviewing such people could bring more light to the understanding of the Yorùbá and their disposition towards religious tolerance and peace discourse. Ojo (1966, p. 224) argues in support of the Yorùbá's use of 'proverbs and riddles' as a good means of passing on their linguistic philosophy through generations, even prior to the literacy era. Biobaku mentions a similar point on the challenges historians face in reconstructing history from

‘non-literate peoples’ (1960, p. 8)). Among the relevant authorities in the custodian of such vital information on Yorùbá cultural values are those residing in the palaces. Law (1991b) mentions the Aròkin headed by *Ologbo* of the Òyó Kingdom in Òyó as an example. Elderly residents of each palace in Yorùbáland may have something vital to contribute to Yorùbá culture and peace. As a result, I consider it of paramount importance to include some persons attached to traditional sites and the media for their views regarding this study in addition to the Christian and Muslim participants.

#### **3.2.4.1 Criteria for the Interviews**

The approach for interacting with the interviewees, including the greetings, is important. I greeted my interviewees in the religious and culturally acceptable manner among the Yorùbá, in line with the time of the day (whether morning, afternoon or evening, following the *a kú* and *ẹ kú* tradition) and in Arabic for the Muslims whom I knew would appreciate that (*Assalamu alaikum*, meaning peace to be upon you). Appropriate greetings do help create a good impression, rapport, and familiarity between the researcher and the participants and the appropriate authorities. Being a man, I conducted the FI with female participants accompanied by another man or woman where necessary for ethical reasons. This is important as ethical relevance is one of the points suggested for the thick description method.

Other points considered for the entire data gathering are: Identifying the participants by name was optional and the names obtained during the FI were held in confidence and changed to pseudonyms in the write-up:

Names and personal e-mails obtained through the electronic (ES) records were held by their actual names until the end of the research but kept securely in the Survey Monkey,

and in my Microsoft Office cloud's account of Middlesex University. The type and level of education of the participants were required and considered as important for the survey part of the study.

The FI participants were selected from the Muslim communities and Christian churches that had experienced conflicts or had been assessed to be able to contribute to the research in Òyó State (Ògbómòṣó, Ibadan, and Sèpètèrí), Osun State (Iwo, Ejigbo, and Ila-Orangun) and Kwara State (Ilorin). The assessment is based on the inquiry made from within the neighbourhood and from the FGD.

Other participants were selected from the higher institutions of learning, local communities, radio stations, a housing compound, and a palace.

I requested information regarding the social events that often bring Christians and Muslims together during the FGD and FI, and I sought to attend such functions for a better observation to aid my thick description of this topic.

In general, participants were expected from both Islam and Christianity. The calibre of the participants from each religion was expected to vary – literate and semi-illiterate, youth, adult, and the elderly. The instruments were administered in the Yorùbá and English languages.

#### **3.2.4.2 Interview Method**

I conducted the interviews mostly in Yorùbá with a few exceptions in English among the elites that preferred the use of English, all depending on the individual participant's wishes. I documented my findings in writing in English thereby reducing the time required for translation after the interviews. Video recordings were also made, subject to the individual participant's approval. Double recording (electronic and manual jottings)

helped to provide a backup in case any relevant points were missed from either of the methods of documentation. The notes taken during the interview helped to provide support for a proper understanding of the electronically recorded information for the data analysis. The electronic records were kept in the original language used by the participants and translated into English for data analysis wherever the Yorùbá language was used in the narratives.

Akinloye (1994) has argued on the effectiveness of electronic recording in field research, while Arksey and Knight (1999) discuss the recording of interviews. Miles and Huberman (1994) also suggest the need to keep anonymity where required, and so permission for the use of video recording was obtained from the research participants at both the FGDs and the FI. Anonymity was strictly upheld where requested by participants, and letters or pseudonyms were used in the write-up of the study. Letters and numbers were used to represent the ES participants while the level of education and religion are included as significant to identify any correlation between education and the Yorùbá resilience for harmony where necessary. The semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions used in this study allowed the subjects to express themselves, contributing as much as they could to the study.

### **3.3 Data Coding**

Data coding is the way information gathered from the field is categorized in an easily accessible manner for interpretation. When data is gathered from the samples, these often require a thorough examination to sift through and identify the important information relevant to the research; coding, therefore, is essential (Bryman, 2008). Bryman suggests

that coding is important in a qualitative study, as the first step in the generation of theory, and opines:

Coding in qualitative data analysis tends to be in a constant state of potential revision and fluidity. That data are treated as potential indicators of concepts and the indicators are constantly compared [...] to see which concepts they best fit with. (2008, p. 542)

Data coding is often done with the support of computer programmes (Earl Babbie, 2004; Igun, 1994; Kelle, 2000). I found out that the cost of coding with Survey Monkey using the SPSS qualitative facilities per annum is expensive for me, hence, I took a more cost-effective measure, using the NVivo provided by my host institution, Middlesex University, London. I stopped the use of the Survey Monkey after my ES data collection and categorisation, then used the NVivo to further analyse the data.

The data collected from the field could be so massive that it could be difficult to keep track of the material (Babbie, 2004). Yet, coding of information gathered into categories is vital because some of the field events are not repeatable (Berg, 1998, p. 380). Coding as soon as possible after the information is gathered is, therefore, important. The key process in the analysis of qualitative social research data is coding – classifying or categorizing an individual piece of data – coupled with a retrieval system. Together, these procedures allow you to retrieve materials you may later be interested in (Babbie, 2004, p. 376). It provides the opportunity to log information onto the computer system to keep it safe and made retrievable whenever it is needed without disruption.

I listened to the recordings after each meeting (either FGD or interview) and identified the salient points in the preparation for the subsequent data collection. I did the transcription and organized the themes manually before employing the use of NVivo to validate the themes generated under each approach. Babbie suggests:

Some researchers find it useful to put all their major concepts on a single sheet of paper, while others spread their thoughts across several sheets of paper, blackboards, magnetic boards, computer pages, or other media. (2004, p. 381)

In this study, some of the conversations in the video data were in Yorùbá which required translation first then followed by a manual transcription due to the lack of electronic transcription at the time of the fieldwork. It was more sensible to do both the translation and transcription together, being a native Yorùbá language speaker (and afterward process the data in English).

Once the translation was completed and added to the rest of the data, the data was logged into NVivo to generate the nodes starting with the ES. The findings from the ES served as a guide for the questions to explore further in the subsequent FGD. The findings from the FGD also became the basis for the questions examined at the FI to generate the themes or categories. The method when combined generated the data presented in the ES, the FGDs and the FI individual NVivo charts and the cumulative NVivo chart with the individually assigned mind maps.

There are considerable procedures for creating codes and these must be presented in a form that could be easily accessed through concept mapping (Babbie, 2004). Kelle (2000) discusses the incredible abilities of some computer software to assist and support researchers in the analysis of qualitative data. The answers to my main research question, subsidiary questions and other specific questions assigned to each method of inquiry were expected to generate the data, which require categorization or coding. With the use of the NVivo, the frequency of some ideas or words was noted periodically. The trends or common ideas were examined for possible themes in the Yorùbá Christians' and Muslims' perceptions and attitudes towards peace. The common ideas were generated into nodes and mid map with the aid of the NVivo to ascertain the emerging themes. These themes

are to be developed with the thick description method triangulated with the existing literature in peace and conflict studies and other related fields.

### **3.4 Research Approach: Thick Description**

Bryman suggests epistemological issues in support of research focusing on the ‘appropriate knowledge about the social world’ (2008, p. 4). For instance, while the natural science takes a quantitative approach involving the use of numbers or the five senses (touch, sight, taste, smell, and sound), the qualitative approach relies on the interpretation beyond the senses. The latter better explains my area of inquiry, being a human disposition towards each other, their shared values and how they sustain peace in their society.

At times, qualitative and quantitative research can be combined in sociological research, often described as the middle-way or mixed-method, or what Igun calls ‘compromise positions’ (1994, p. 8). The combination may involve the use of two or more approaches like interviews, FG, and participant observation (PO) versus questionnaires (a quantitative tool) for a single investigation. A mixed-method approach is tenable if it is workable and promises new insights and practical solutions to social research.

My study goes beyond a matter of numbers, like how many people live in harmony, to the nature of human relations – what makes them live in peace, how and why? As a result, I have adopted a ‘thick description’ method. A thick description has become an accepted research method in education, sociology, psychology, programme evaluation, often utilizing long interviews, (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 546). Three scholars are prominently mentioned associated with its origin and publicity among the academic namely Bernard

Williams, Gilbert Ryle, and Clifford Geertz. Heuer and Lang affirm Williams as using the term thick concepts such as ‘coward, lie, brutality, gratitude and so forth’ in his writing but did not elaborate it as we have it today, (Heuer & Lang, 2012, p. 219). Kirchin elaborates on how Williams first used the term as conceptual, distinguishing the thin from thick concepts in ethics and philosophy, and also first to put it on print<sup>4</sup> (2013, p. 3; Moore, 2003; Williams, 1985).

According to Chambers and Tanney (2009), Ryle coined the idea of ‘thick description’ while Chambers adds that ‘the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, [...] popularized it’, (Chambers, p. 131). Also, Kyle suggests Geertz uses ‘thick description’ as an anthropological tool, the idea he obtained from Gilbert Ryle, (Kyle). Attempting to describe the term, Chamber writes:

For Ryle and Geertz, the thick description refers to an exegesis of the signifying practices within a particular culture [...] so that outsiders can understand very complex winks such as cockfights, headhunting, beauty pageants, and soccer riots. (Chambers, p. 131)

A detailed interpretation of people’s ‘practices within a particular culture’ (borrowing Chambers’ words) is essential to investigating my study here, how the Yorùbá understand or interpret peace, manage conflicts and their potentials to keep the peace. This is like Goldman-Segall’s description of the term:

"Thick descriptions" are descriptions that are layered enough to draw conclusions and uncover the intentions of a given act, event, or process. In a video environment, thick descriptions are images, gestures, or sequences that convey meaning. Neither the quantity nor the resolution of the images makes the descriptions thick. Thickness is created by the ability of the visual description to transmit what is being 'said.' (Goldman-Segall, 1989)

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Williams was a professor of moral philosophy.

Relevant in the above quotation are the intentions and conveyance of meaning. The method that can both identify and interpret the people's latent abilities to keep the peace. Ponterotto agrees with Goldman-Segall that Ryle first used the term 'thick description' in his published lectures before Geertz began to use it (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 539). This implies Ryle replacing the 'concept' in Williams' work with 'description'. However, Kyle also traced the idea of thick and thin in research inquiry farther back to the 1950s Hare's work on the Language of Morals, 'So, the idea of a thick term was present in ethics well before Williams' terminology.' (Kyle). I refer to the works of Ponterotto on the evolution of thick description who harnessed Ryle (1971), Geertz (1973), Denzin (1989), Holloway (1997), and Schwandt (2001)'s work on this subject:

1. "Thick description" involves accurately describing and interpreting social actions within the appropriate context in which the social activities took place.
2. "Thick description" captures the thoughts, emotions, and web of social interaction among observed participants in their operating context.
3. A central feature to interpreting social actions entails assigning motivations and intentions for the said social actions.
4. The context for, and the specifics of, the social activities are so well described that the reader experiences a sense of verisimilitude as they read the researcher's account. (2006, pp. 542, 543)

From the above quote, the use of thick description suggests an attempt to describe and interpret a social action to include salient points like emotions, social interactions and motivations or intentions of the participants in a social context to provide the reader a reliable view of the people under investigation. It takes a person with a good background of the culture to do a descriptive and interpretative thick study.

Like Ponterotto, Punch adds, 'The exact nature of the thick description [...] acknowledge and emphasize the context around any project and its findings [...] as] we cannot *give* the full picture unless we have *got* the full picture.' (1998, p. 192). The intention of thick description, therefore, is to provide a deep investigation into a research, looking into the

background of the participant, the issue and topic being explored, the terms and ideas being investigated and their contributions in context. These are all relevant to this study.

### 3.4.1 Illustrating Thick Description Method

Gibbard and Blackburn use the Kumi party to illustrate a thick description:

A Kumi raiding party waits in ambush, invisible from the path that winds a mile to a village. Far from their own homes, they crouch silently for hours until footsteps become audible. A lone man appears, and Kumi spears fly. The head in a bag, the hushed Kumi party moves swiftly back toward home. Danger recedes, and their walk turns to a kind of dance, their whoops and ululations filling the air. (1992, p. 267)

The Kumi describes the ambush as *gopa*, the feeling of joy and excitement when a perceived human-danger (although the victim might be unaware of this) is killed. The Kumi act is described thus: 'Roughly, they apply the term to the killing of outgroup members, under conditions of danger – for instance, when sneaking around in outgroup territory.' (Gibbard & Blackburn., 1992, p. 267). They further add:

They glory in these killings. We will want to disagree: we say that these acts of killing innocent people are in no way glorious. But the Kumi think they are. (1992, pp. 267, 268)

This is an example of a thick concept, what glory or *gopa* means in context, and how other non-natives to the idea would possibly perceive or react to it? The concept that has conventional meaning in context but subject to interpretation when viewed in the philosophical, social, and ethical arena. 'The Kumi term *gopa* expresses a [...] full characterization of thick concepts might have to be fairly theory-laden' (Gibbard & Blackburn., 1992, p. 269).

Another illustration used for the term is that of twitch and wink by Ryle himself. In his own words, Ryle writes:

Two boys fairly swiftly contract the eyelids of their right eyes. In the first boy, this is only an involuntary twitch; but the other is winking conspiratorially to an accomplice. At the lowest or the thinnest level of description, the two contractions of the eyelids may be exactly alike. From a cinematograph-film of the two faces, there might be no telling which contraction, if either, was a wink, or which, if either, were a mere twitch. Yet there remains the immense but un-photographable difference between a twitch and a wink. To wink is to try to signal to someone in particular, without the cognizance of others, a definite message according to an already understood code. It has very complex success-versus-failure conditions. The wink is a failure if its intended recipient does not see it or sees it but does not know or forgets the code, or misconstrues it, or disobeys or disbelieves it; or if anyone else spots it. A mere twitch, on the other hand, is neither a failure nor a success; it has no intended recipient; it is not meant to be un-witnessed by anybody; it carries no message. It may be a symptom, but it is not a signal. The winker could not (sic) know that he was winking, but the victim of the twitch might be quite unaware of his twitch. The winker can tell what he was trying to do; the twitcher will deny that he was trying to do anything. (Ryle, 1968)

The above illustrates how thin description views on the surface, and a thick description brings out the intended or deeper meaning from a social structure which is not often visible to a stranger or unintended onlooker. Ryle further adds:

So far we are on familiar ground. We are just drawing the familiar distinction between a voluntary, intentional, and, in this case, collusive and code-governed contraction of the eyelids from an involuntary twitch. But already there is one element in the contrast that needs to be brought out. The signaller himself, while acknowledging that he had not had an involuntary twitch but (1) had deliberately winked, (2) to someone in particular, (3) to impart a particular message, (4) according to an understood code, (5) without the cognizance of the rest of the company, will rightly deny that he had thereby done or tried to do five separately do-able things. He had not both tried to contract his eyelids and tried to do a second, synchronous thing or several synchronous things. Unlike a person who both coughs and sneezes, or both greets his aunt and pats her dog, he had not both contracted his eyelids and done a piece of synchronous signalling to his accomplice. True, he had contracted them not involuntarily but on purpose, but this feature of being on purpose is not an extra deed; he had contracted them at the moment when his accomplice was looking in his direction, but its being at this chosen moment is not an extra deed; he had contracted them following an understood code, but this accordance is not an extra deed. (Ryle, 1968)

The third person involved in Ryle's illustration of winking could be interpreted in other ways, such as practising or misleading with winking or twitching depending on the interpretation given by the onlookers. The onlooker without an understanding of the background to the winking will describe these as an ordinary (thin) description while those who know the cultural basis and the meaning and purpose will handle it with thick description.

Furthermore, Ryle suggests the signing of a peace-treaty as more than just putting one's surname on a piece of paper (thinness) but [the chances of] putting an end to a war (thickness), as the ultimate goal of the signature, (Ryle, 1968). The thick description, therefore, according to Geertz provides a contextual interpretation of events within a social structure for a reader to fully grasp the social context of the people under investigation, (Geertz, 1973, p. 312). I suggest the perceived peacefulness among the Yorùbá Muslims and Christians within the Yorùbá host culture requires a thick description to bring to light where it could be compared with the already identified PS and if there are any distinct uses in the Yorùbá's version of peace.

### **3.4.2 Thick Description Elaborated**

On the steps to achieving a thick description, Ponterotto provides an approach which I refer to here. Ponterotto discusses the need to fully identify the participants, provide the procedures and present the results, all geared towards making known the lived experience of the people under investigation. Under the identification of the participants, Ponterotto writes:

“Thick description” of one’s sample would entail describing fully the participants of the study without compromising anonymity. A thickly described sample facilitates the reader’s ability to visualize the sample including their relevant demographic and psychological characteristics... gender, race, age, socioeconomic, academic

standing, immigration status, generation level, and so forth. (2006, p. 546)

Clear identification of the participants helps to know the origin of the information, yet anonymity must be guaranteed to preserve the integrity of the research. The procedure, as described by Ponterotto, must be able to bring to attention the context of the study and factors that might support the data collection like the environment and duration, or the quality time spent with the participants. Furthermore, Ponterotto writes:

“Thick description” of results presents [an] adequate “voice” of participants; that is, long quotes from the participants or excerpts of interviewer-interview dialogue. Again, a sense of verisimilitude is achieved as the reader can visualize the participant-interviewer interactions and gets a sense of the cognitive and emotive state of the interviewee (and interviewer). “Thick description” of results flows smoothly from a Method section that is thickly presented. (2006, p. 547)

The result takes a similar way, by presenting the voices of the participants to provide the thickness of the study:

A thickly described Discussion section of a qualitative interview report successfully merges the participants' lived experiences with the researcher's interpretations of these experiences, thus creating thick meaning for the reader as well as for the participants and researcher. The reader is, thus, able to digest the essential elements of the findings, and can discern whether she or he would have come to the same interpretive conclusions as to the report's author. (2006, p. 547)

Ponterotto concludes emphasizing the richness of a thickly described research that provides real-life situations (like *sitz im leben*<sup>5</sup>) as understood within a social context.

Similarly, Punch places thick description in qualitative research describing it as ‘something holistically and comprehensively, to study it in its complexity, and to understand it in its context’ (1998, p. 192). The idea of complexity, comprehensiveness, and context are relevant to dig deep into the basis of a research argument. About a human

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<sup>5</sup> The is a German word used in describing biblical theological concept in context.

social context, Punch adds: 'For the qualitative researcher, the 'truth' about human social behavior is not independent of context; it is not context-free... the qualitative researcher [must] convey the full picture.' (1998, p. 192). In the same way, Geertz elaborates the need to look beyond the research process:

To look at the symbolic dimensions of social action – art, religion, ideology, science, law, mortality, common sense – is not to turn away from the existential dilemmas of life [...] The essential vocation of interpretative anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said. (1973, p. 323)

If the goal of thick description includes presenting what humans have said, it must also be cognizant of how helpful such must be to the community under investigation, although not to unnecessarily disprove its illogicality. In applying the term among religious groups, Burley writes:

Thick descriptions of religious practices such as rituals, or other interactions between religious practitioners, can usefully contribute towards the undermining of facile assumptions about what being religious "must" consist in and about what certain important ethical or religious concepts "must" mean. (2018, p. 15)

Ethics and values are finding ways into this method as relevant to humanities. What contributions could a cultural group, therefore, make from their worldview to human social structures in general? This is an area to further explore using thick descriptions to examine the Yorùbá's peacefulness in this study. Being qualitative research that requires an investigation of the prospects' understanding and values about peace, thick descriptions will better explore this. The bases of the Yorùbá's discourse about peacefulness requires a thick description and I thus utilized a qualitative research spectrum of focus group (FG), face-to-face interviews (FI) and a short survey (ES) to generate my data and bring about the thickness of the idea of peacefulness among the Yorùbá.

### **3.5 Limitations of this Research**

The ability to select a suitable method determines the chances of getting the right outcome (Baker, 1999). I understood that the time required for a full PO could span many years of living with the participants and the associated cost. Since I was living in England during the study, although I had lived in Yorùbáland for more than 30 years, I did not use a full PO approach for my data collection. However, I made some observations of the interactions among the people during their social activities, in my FGD and the FI. I believe my non-use of a full PO had no major significant consequences on my data as the combination of the ES, FGDs and FI should equally provide reliable data. It is believed that each of the approaches like interviews, focus groups and surveys have their own weaknesses, but a combination of these often strengthens the validity of the data.

Similarly, I did not have access to the transcription software for the video interview, although it would have been used for only a part of the data that was recorded in English. This lack did not impede the research outcome as I translated the Yorùbá data into English and fed them all into the NVivo for data processing.

Chaitin et al. (2002) did some research with the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East and observed changes in their research methods over time. They also had a direct conversation with the relevant organizations after which in-depth interviews were carried out with an equal number of NGOs (about 40 from each). They identified obstacles in their research, such as ‘a lack of real dialogue between the sides; cultural differences; political disturbances’ (ibid, p. 80). Fieldwork can face hindrances; hence it is important to be alert and review research approaches to ensure they are viable for the research

questions. Similarly, I initially planned for a joint FGD with the Christians and Muslims in Sèpètèrì (FGD2) as I did in Ògbómòṣó (FGD1) and Ilorin (FGD3). However, I had to interview two Muslim elders in Sèpètèrì instead, as Muslims did not turn up for the FGD2 although invited. This was possibly due to the conflicts they had in the previous years. Also, the residents did not want to lead an FGD2 sub-group (as I previously did at the FGD1) to discuss conflict and peace but preferred their guest (myself) to do it so that none among them would be blamed should anything go wrong as a result of the FG. All the men present made contributions to the FG. However, the weakness I observed was that no women present were ready to speak until I called them individually to make comments. It was an unexpected hindrance in my fieldwork, but I sought to rectify it by involving the women present and interviewing two prominent Muslim elders in the town. I also selected a Muslim leader as my FGD3 research assistant to bring more Muslims to the meeting. A lack of an equal number of participants from each religion is a limitation to the FGD2, but my focus on peace, not necessarily on the differences in the two religions, makes the study and the data worthwhile.

### **3.6 Research Assistants, Gatekeepers and Key Informants**

Researchers require adequate preparation both for the field and the people they are going to engage with in the inquiry. Also, understanding and planning to gain access to the field is described as access negotiations, which Bloor describes as '[a] process by which researchers obtain admittance to research settings' (2006, p. 5). All these point to self-preparation, the identification of the site, the appropriate population (research subjects/participants) and the link person (gatekeeper) controlling access to the participants. The

terms gatekeeper, informant and key informant have been used at different levels of involvement in social research (Bryman, 2008).

A gatekeeper is often required at the initial stage of field research, but the role may change depending on the nature of the research. The significance of the gatekeeper increases to that of an informant depending on the nature of the research and how accessible the research participants are. Akanji (2011) did a study on conflict transformation, which required some FG and the interviewing of key informants. His use of a key informant was appropriate to bring into focus relevant specialists, victims, and those with helpful information for his study. In my case, I would not use informants in the sense that access to the population was not expected to be difficult, either for Christians, Muslims, or the traditional king's palaces. I used gatekeepers whose role would be to introduce me to the research participants, as I am a Yorùbá while the gatekeepers' role is expected to shift into a research assistant during the fieldwork.

While Babbie (2007) argues that an informant is a member of the group being researched, Bloor (2006) suggests that a gatekeeper may not even be a member of the study group, but one who only controls access to the group like the hospital or prison staff controlling access to research in their workplace. The role of key informants is necessary when access to information or the group becomes difficult, and the expected participants are not willing to open-up for interrogation. This is not anticipated here, instead, the gatekeeper would also function as a research assistant for this study. In this study, the gatekeepers are the selected Christians and Muslims in each site who invite participants for the FGD and the FI and support me during the FGD as my research assistants.

The purpose of the research was explained to my gatekeepers including the possible benefits to the Yorùbá community to retain their harmony. This is in line with Bloor's suggestions:

It is with the gatekeeper that much of the access negotiation is conducted. For example the researcher will need to explain the purpose of the research, what it will entail for the gatekeeper and others in the group, and how ethical issues such as protection of identities will be dealt with. Some social groups might view the research as a threat. (2006, p. 6)

This preparation with the gatekeepers is believed to have dispelled the possible fear of the research participants, more so given that Nigeria just finished its national election (2016) at the time of my fieldwork and the participants would probably be suspicious of people interrogating them about religion and peace.

### **3.6.1 Preparation**

I planned with the gatekeepers in regard of the samples needed for the FGD. The goal of the study was also explained to them through telephone and email contacts, to carry them along in the preparation before I began the fieldwork. Ethical issues in line with Bloor's suggestions on the confidentiality of the participants were also discussed during the negotiation period, in line with Bloor's suggestions (2006, p. 6). Similarly, the beneficial contributions of the research to the community like the Christians and Muslims of Yorùbáland keeping the peace were highlighted to the gatekeepers who took the role of research assistants. The same briefings were done for the participants at the beginning of each FGD to pass the ideas of the research to increase their commitment. The awareness of the benefits became a motivation for the participants during the study.

This preparation is supported by Burns (2000) and Berg (1998) who discuss the need to liaise with the gatekeepers who obtain the trust of the people and link the researcher with

them. Burns warns that the researcher must keep the trust of the people being studied and not to be 'unduly disruptive'. Berg (1998) suggests that the researcher should seek to interact with the participants so that if the gatekeeper eventually proves difficult (or is no longer interested), the researcher will be able to complete the study, using other members of the community who might have shown interest in the project, (1998, p. 132). These are good suggestions and informed the reason why I have adopted a multifaceted approach for my data collection.

I distinguished the gatekeeper (research assistant) from key informants, as the latter is required for groups difficult to access by the researcher. All the participants in my study were approachable and could provide first-hand information except for Sèpètèrí where the Muslim group did not turn up for the FGD probably due to the conflict the community had that led them to court settlement and still recovering from the emotional trauma of the crises. However, two significant Muslim leaders agreed to be interviewed and I made use of the opportunity as key informants on that occasion.

Bloor suggests that elites could be more difficult to reach than the other members of the community, although earlier contact could provide a better opportunity for easy access to the research prospects (Bloor, 2006). Religious communities are considered to provide easier access than elites in this study. However, my background among the Yorùbá was an asset for my accessibility to most of the research participants.

### **3.6.2 Training and Debriefing for the FGD Coordinators and Secretaries**

Three co-ordinators, three secretaries, and two persons to help set up the microphones and the video recording had been nominated a day before the FG and requested to come an hour earlier for a training before the FGD1 commences. My research assistant in

Ògbómòṣò (FGD1), Taiwo, was present as I provided the purpose, my motivation, and the training for these co-leaders (the coordinators and secretaries). The three FGD research assistants were already aware of this information via the email and telephone conversations I had with them before I arrived for the fieldwork.

My motivation for this study was shared with this small group on the site of the FGD1. My purpose to investigate the cause of peacefulness (if any) among the Yorùbá, was also shared with them, which could encourage peaceful communities to retain or keep their peacefulness. The ability to retain one's peacefulness will help to avoid many pains of loss, injuries, vandalism, unexpected death, poverty, and enmity as found in many conflicts, wars, and violent places in the world.

I read through the entire questions I have provided for the FGD. I discussed the approach I wanted them to use that is, their group members to discuss and provide answers to the sample questions I have provided with printed copies in their hands, (Appendix B/FGD questions) as examples. More questions could be generated during the discussion on how they settle conflicts and enumerate the features that informed their peacefulness.

Each question was to be read by each co-ordinator in each group and the group members to answer the questions one by one while the other members listened. The secretary of each group was to write the answers given by each person with a pen and paper and bring the responses to the closing assembly when we congregate after an hour of discussion. Each secretary was to present the report verbally to the whole joint group (FGD1) during the closing assembly and submit the handwritten reports to me for upkeep. I gave the group the opportunity to ask questions for further clarifications. The co-ordinators and secretaries are well educated, which made the understanding and their roles much easier.

### **3.7 Summary**

My goal is to investigate how the Yorùbá communities manage their disputes, crises, and conflicts and remain able to retain their harmony. While my main method of inquiry is thick description within the broad spectrum of qualitative method, I have used surveys (ES), focus groups (FGDs), and interviews (FI) to access the Yorùbá population in southwest Nigeria.

Having discussed the method here, I now proceed to present the data and themes arising from the study using the NVivo pro 11 (I upgraded the NVivo pro 11 to 12 during this study) to concretize my findings. The NVivo nodes from each approach (ES, FGD, and FI) were useful to generate the pictorial hierarchical and sunburst NVivo charts and Mind Maps for easy reading of the recurring nodes and themes in the following chapter. The themes I generated from the findings are also presented.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND THEME FORMATION

This chapter provides the findings from the data and the codification to generate themes. From the ES, as the number of contributors increased from 36 to 45 over time, the perceptions of the ES participants remained similar. I identified and developed the recurring issues into themes by first reading through the ES responses and identifying the salient points: conflict scenarios, tolerance, and Yorùbá conflict management strategies.

Similarly, having carried out the FGD and the FI, I embarked on the manual transcription of the data along with the identification of categories (or themes). The Ògbómòṣó FGD1 had 37 participants (Christians, Muslims, and those with Christian or Muslim in-laws). The group was subdivided into three (FGD1a, b and c), with three coordinators and three secretaries trained to moderate and take notes in the three subgroups (see 3.8). Sèpètèrì where I did the FGD2 was identified from the ES as having had conflict. The FGD2 were homogenous Christians and I kept them as one large group of 28. I acknowledge that this is exceptionally large for an FG but being homogeneous I had to lead the group by myself, considering the situation of the town at the time of the fieldwork and the participants' request. The Ilorin FGD3 had nine participants, comprising six Muslims and three Christians that is, four Muslim men, two Muslim women, two Christian men, and a Christian woman.

I attended the funeral service of an elderly Christian pastor (81 years old) who had an Islamic background (having Muslim parents). There were some Muslims present at the funeral. I initially attended the funeral as a complete observer (under the PO method), after which I interviewed two participants. Walliman describes a 'complete observer' under PO as:

The observer takes a detached stance by not getting involved in the events, and uses unobstructive observation techniques and remains “invisible” either in fact or in effect (i.e. by being ignored). (2016, p. 135).



**Photograph 1** Muslims’ presence at a Christian funeral

I took some pictures at the event (shown above) but used the event as an opportunity for interviews rather than a PO bearing in mind that I was not living among the people long enough for a full PO at that time.

#### **4.1 Data Presentation**

Below are the data obtained from this study in pictorial format with very little explanation to create space for the thick description of the study.

### 4.1.1 ES Electronic Qualitative Data

Using the NVivo pro 11 (12), I obtained 30 nodes as shown on the hierarchy chart below (Figure 2). The size of each rectangle or square represents the recurrence of such coding references.



Figure 2. 27 viable ES participants with 30 nodes from southwest Nigeria

The first three significant nodes that came out of the ES data are:

- Yorùbá culture
- Tolerance (among the Yorùbá)
- Personal religion (how the Yorùbá interpret or practise their religions)

These are followed by other nodes like excellent or good interpersonal relationships, understanding, respect and community leaders' management of conflict. The first three largest nodes are positive virtues which strengthen harmony amongst the Yorùbá. The bad activities are found in governance through politics and intolerance, which hinder

peacefulness. Politics and intolerant religious ideologies by their titles are some of the main causes of conflicts amongst the Yorùbá.

A closer examination of the first three positive nodes (virtues) shows that tolerance could either be by religion or culture. I decided to discuss tolerance with other themes later but selected culture (Yorùbá) and religions (personal) as the theme to develop mind maps for the positive virtues. I also designed a mind map for the causes of conflict making a total of three mind maps from the ES.

The three themes namely arrived at from my ES are: the Yorùbá culture, religions, and the causes of conflict.

- Yorùbá culture (and social life)
- Religions and values
- Causes of conflicts

All the 30 nodes are now distributed among the three themes formed above.

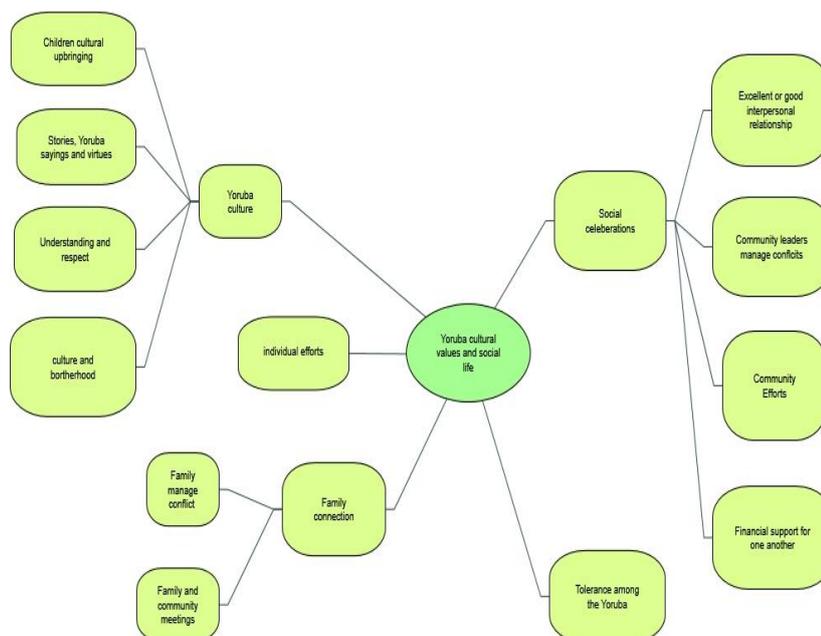


Figure 3. ES mind map – Yorùbá cultural (and social life)

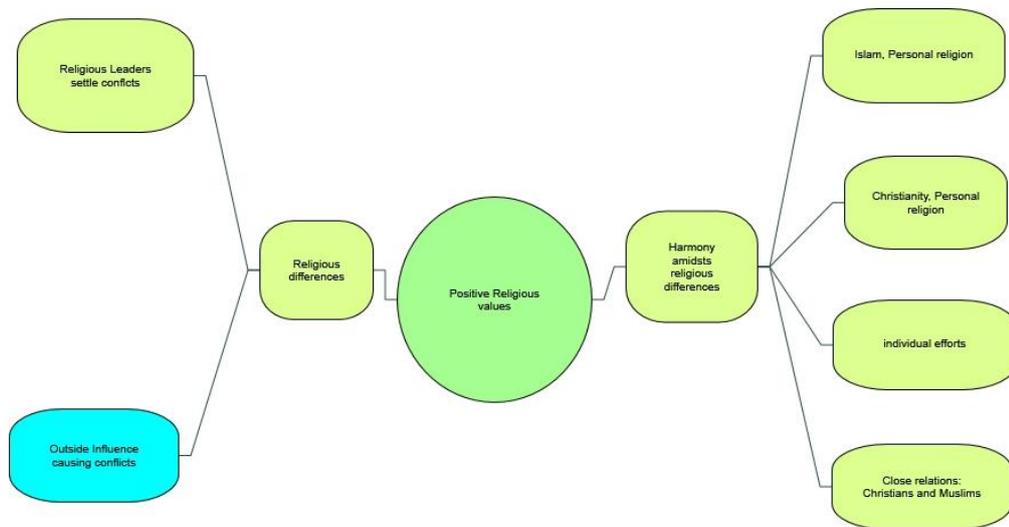


Figure 4. ES mind map – positive religious values

The mind map on the causes of disunity and violence amongst the Yorùbá, as shown in the data, makes a total of three mind maps. The figures show the categorized ES data from the findings showing some developed themes evolving.

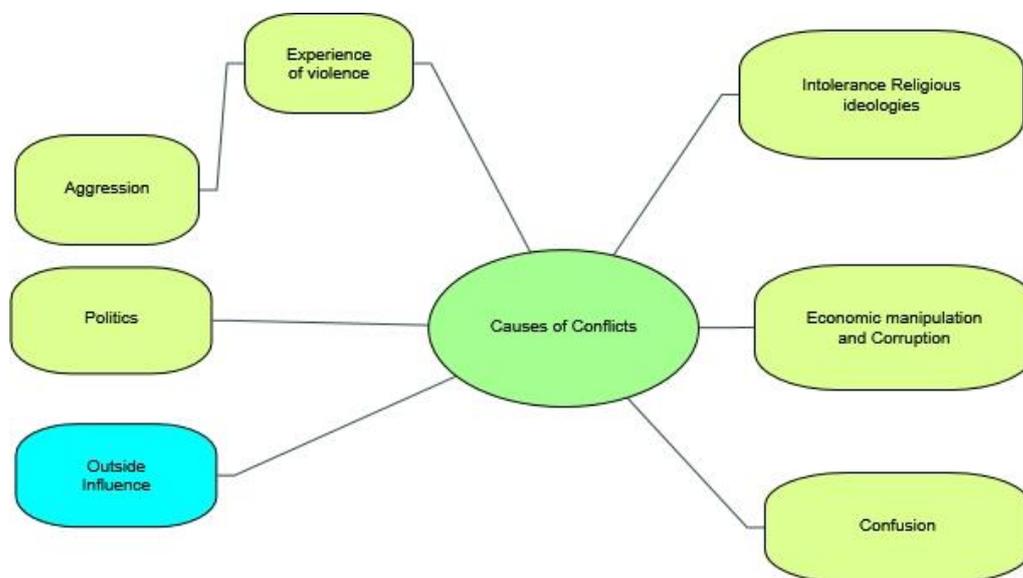


Figure 5. ES mind map – causes of conflicts

#### 4.1.2 FGD

The coordinators, secretaries, and those to help with the recording of the FGD1 arrived an hour early for a short training and to rehearse their roles before the discussion started at 11:00 am (see 3.8). The selection was made possible with the co-operation of my FGD1 research assistant resident in Ògbómòṣó where the study took place. Berg and Lune (2012) suggest that groups of 6-8 people are ideal for an FGD, the size making it easy to match contributions to participants when transcribing. The FGD1 and FGD3 satisfy these criteria, while FGD2 had many participants, who were homogeneous Christians.

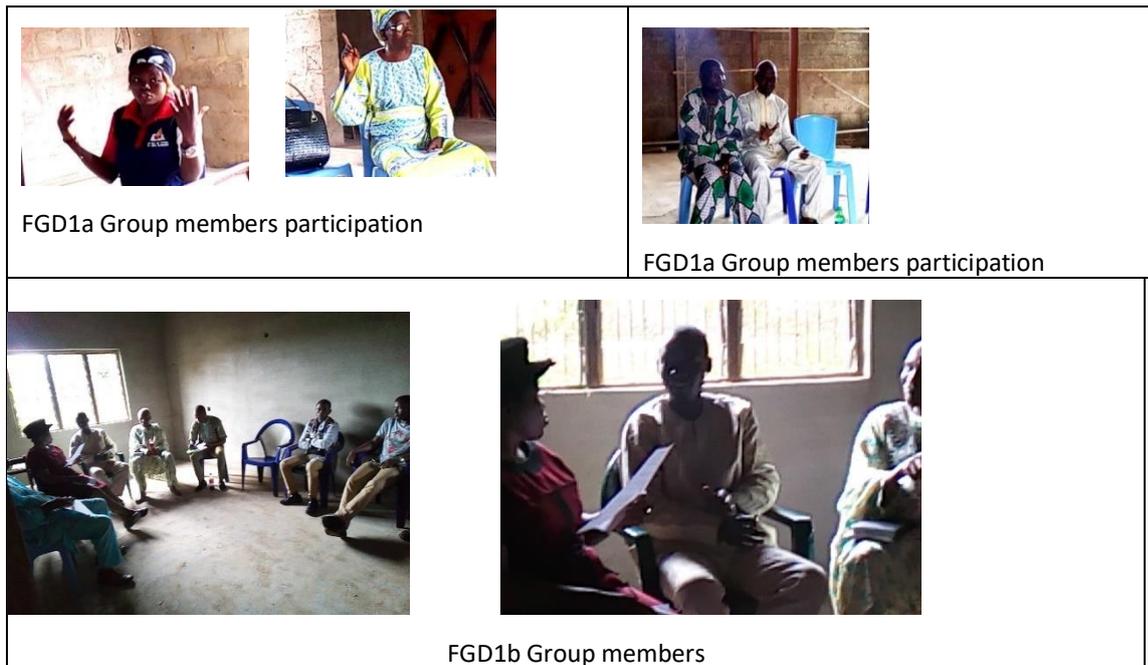
I ensured that members of both religions (Islam and Christianity) had a say on the harmonious relationship that is believed to exist among the Yorùbá (under the *Èbí* theory).



Gomm opines on how reliably a well-conducted FGD closely matches the everyday talk of ‘naturally occurring groups [...] for example, a group of school friends, or workmates (2009, p. 154). Brockington and Sullivan suggest ‘the way people discuss things as much as what they say’ (2003, p. 58) is significant for a proper interpretation of the group’s activities in an FG. Similarly, Berg and Lune write, ‘A typical focus group session consists of a small number of participants under the guidance of a facilitator, usually called the *moderator*’ (2012, p. 165). Berg and Lune warn about the problems of having a weak moderator and using groups or samples that do not properly represent the population the participants are intended to represent (p. 167).

Berg and Lune also further suggest that the researcher uses ‘several small focus groups, totalling 30 or more subjects in the full study’ (2012, p. 167). 37 people participated in the Ògbómòṣó FGD1, subdivided into 3 units (FGD1a, FGD1b, and FGD1c). 28 people participated in the homogeneous FGD2 (and a separate Muslim interviewees) and 9 in FGD3. The total number of participants in my three FGDs was 74, more than double the number suggested by Berg and Lune.





*Photograph 3 FGD1 members participation/Group dynamics*

An FGD moderator (the role I played) must, therefore, be dynamic and know both the people and the area of research. The finding in this study is expected to illustrate some aspects of the life situations in terms of conflict management and peace maintenance among the southwest Nigerian Yorùbá.

#### **4.1.2.1 FGD1 Questions**

Miles and Huberman suggest the need to pay attention to any ‘latent, underlying, or nonobvious issues’ during a qualitative naturalist research, (1994, p. 10). Considering the need to make regular translation of my questions to the Yorùbá language whenever necessary, I thought it reasonable to simplify my main research question for the participants to fully understand and contribute meaningfully to the study. The data emerging afterwards are expected to provide information on conflict management or de-escalation strategies and the maintenance of harmony among the people. My simplified questions based on the main research question are as follows:

#### 4.1.2.1.1 The First 'how' Question

A.) How would you describe the relationship (*ibágbépò àlàáfíà*) between Christian and Muslim Yorùbá people, giving examples to illustrate your points?

- i. in your family and extended family?
- ii. in your local area (*àdúgbò*) and commercial (markets) or workplaces?
- iii. in your town or where you live?

Question A aimed to find out if there were any differences between the ways in which Christians and Muslims in an extended family-related, compared to their relationships with non-family members in the market, workplace, and the general community. It helps to examine the role that blood relationships play in conflict management among the Yorùbá as an empirical basis to further examine Akinjogbin's *Ebi* theory (see Chapter 2). This question attempts to take the ES findings further by contributing to 'the components of the Yorùbá culture and leadership methods that play major roles in the interaction of the two religions (Christianity and Islam)' without necessarily being suggestive.

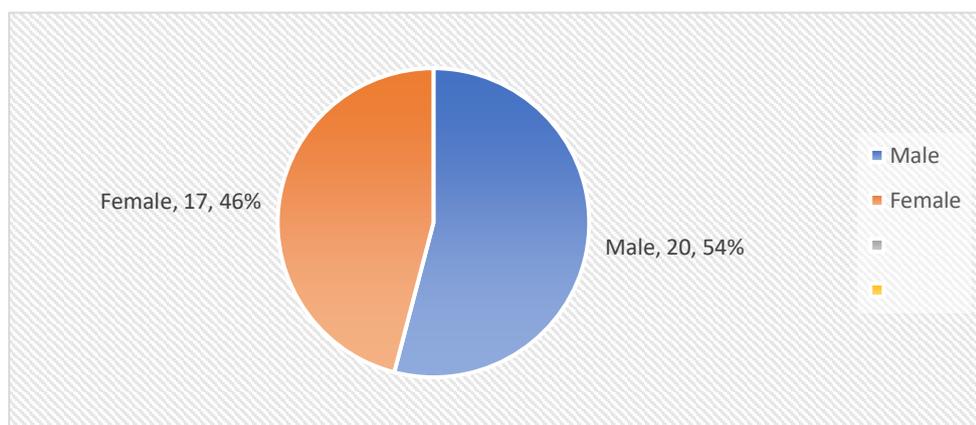
#### 4.1.2.1.2 The Second 'how' Question

B.) How do you handle disputes (disagreements or conflicts) between you and your friends (or people) of other faith traditions (religions)? This question focuses on how the conflicts between religious people are managed. The question considers conflict among the Yorùbá from outside of the blood relations (*Ebi*). This question attempts to take the ES findings further by contributing to the role that "the participants' understanding of their religion play in their interaction with people of other religions as a follow up from the ES" without necessarily being suggestive.

#### 4.1.2.1.3 The ‘what’ Question

C.) What do you think of the future of harmonious relationships among the Yorùbá people?

This question takes into consideration any thoughts or insights the participants may have about peaceful relations among the Yorùbá based on present reality. These three questions are expected to provide a view from which to explore positive peace among the Yorùbá. The programme started as scheduled and the assembly was divided into three sub-groups after the briefing, each of which left for their various groups for the questions and discussion with a co-ordinator and a secretary.



*Photograph 4 Ògbómòṣó FGD attendance by gender*

The registered attendees at the FGD1 (Ògbómòṣó) were as follows:

- 12 people in sub-group FGD1a
- 10 people in sub-group FGD1b
- 16 people in sub-group FGD1c

The participants in FGD1c increased to 16 as more people joined during the programme. The total registered attendance at FGD1 including their telephone contacts was 38. Deducting the non-Yorùbá, the total number of full participants was 37.

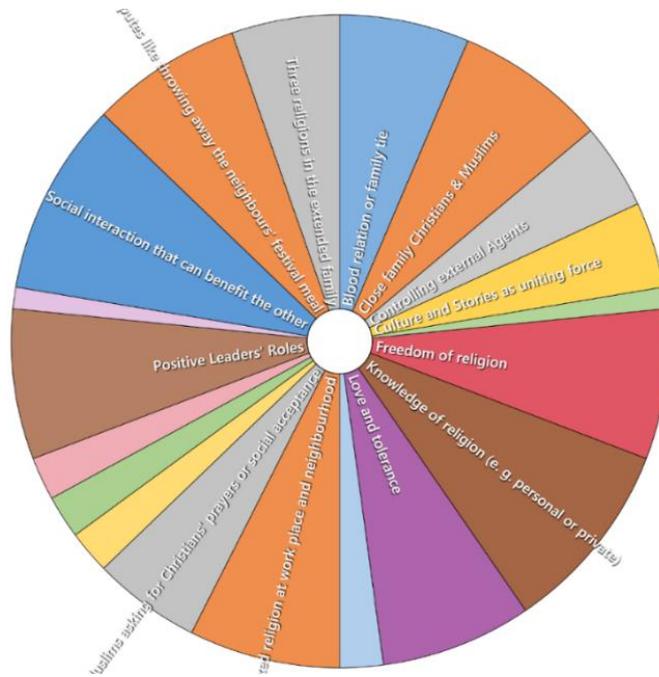


Figure 6. FGD1 NVivo in Ògbómòṣó: The sunburst

11 people participated fully in FGD1a, while the twelfth person, a non-Yorùbá, was not to be counted but was present as an observer. There were 6 male participants and 5 females. There was a very prominent Muslim man called Alhaji here, in FGD1a, a notable figure in the community and his opinion was given consideration. FGD1a and FGD1c were homogeneously Yorùbá, while the FGD1b coordinator was a secondary *ethnie*-by-marriage lady, having lived among the Yorùbá since childhood. The secretaries of each group documented the answers to the research questions, with video recordings capturing some of the discussions.

The sunburst<sup>1</sup> contains nodes compared by the number of coding references, while I present the nodes in another graphic format in Appendix C: FGD1.



Figure 7. FGD1 NVivo: Hierarchy chart.  
See Appendix C2 for FGD1 graphic codes

Using the primary data from FGD1, I adopted NVivo for the coding. I coded 19 nodes from the FGD1 data. Comparing the nodes to the coding references and using the hierarchy chart, the first nine points that arise clearly in the coding references aggregates shown in the above Figures are:

- Social interaction that benefits others
- Knowledge of religion
- Theological disputes
- Positive leader roles (culture)
- Mixed religions in workplaces and neighbourhoods
- Love and tolerance
- Freedom of religion
- Close family including both Christians and Muslims (higher nodes)

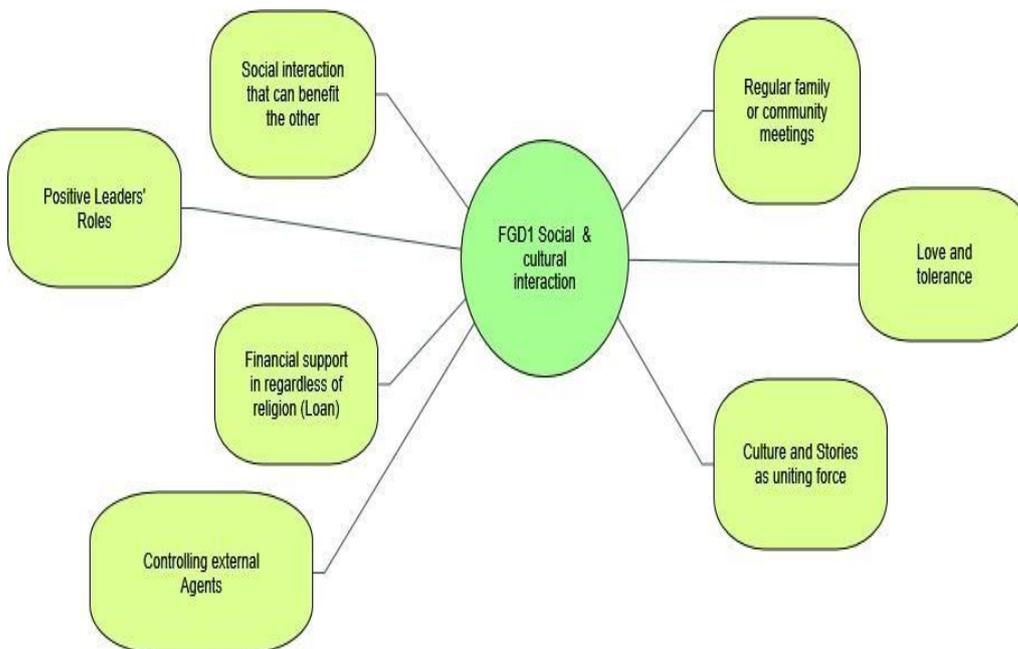
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<sup>1</sup> Nodes compared by the number of coding references. Also see Appendix C2: FGD1 explored for the nodes in another graphic format.

- Blood relations (within the family)

The two most commonly recurring are ‘social’ and ‘religion’, in the context of maintaining harmony, while theological discourse could be handled either way (harmony or disunity), but in this case, is handled for harmony among the Yorùbá. The fourth is ‘leadership’ in a cultural setting.

From the first four most commonly recurring points, I developed two mind maps showing social-cultural interactions and religious values as the sources of peaceful coexistence among the Yorùbá people. What constitutes the broad social, cultural, and religious themes are to be found in the relevant links shown in the mind maps below.



*Figure 8. FGD1 mind map on social and cultural interaction*

The social-cultural interactions relate to family life, leadership style and interdependency in the community.

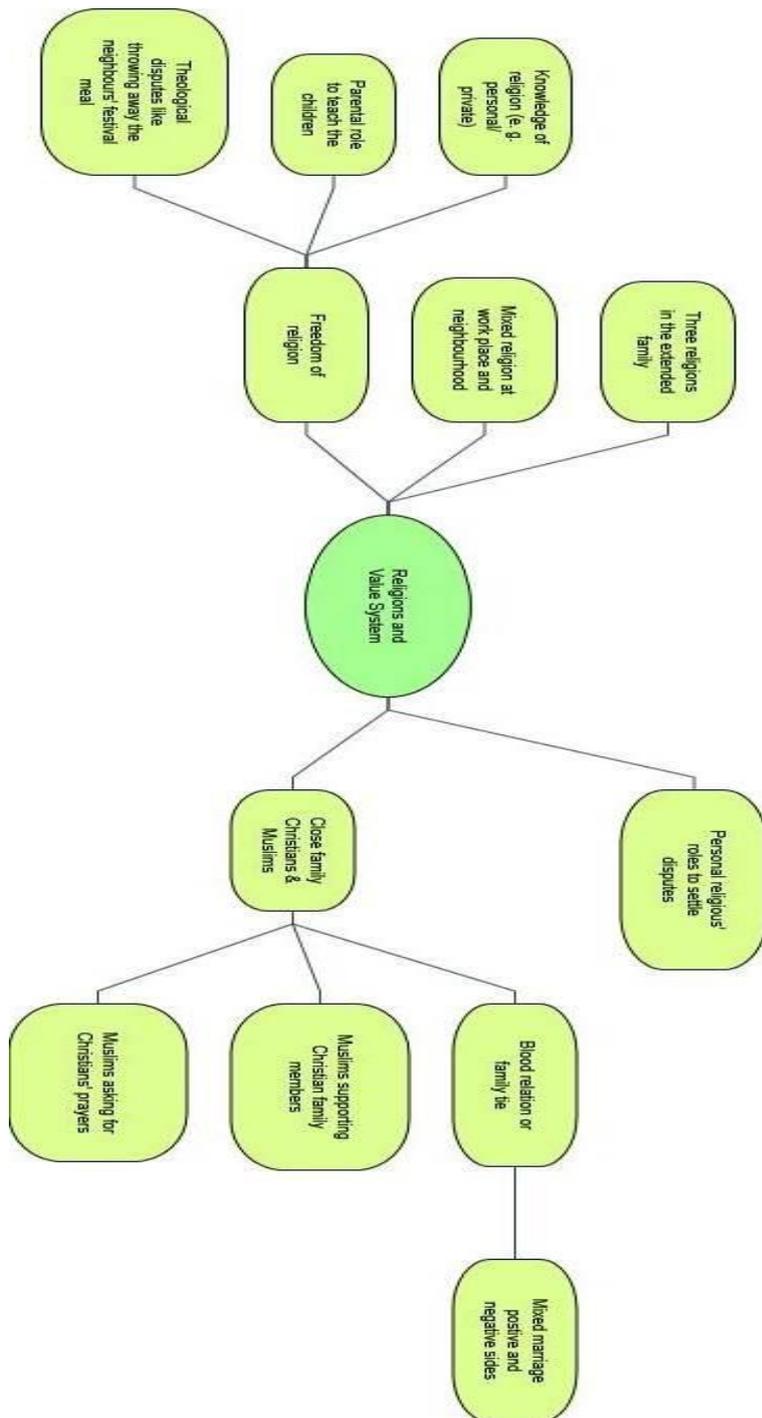


Figure 9. FGD1 mind map on the knowledge of religions and value system

#### 4.1.2.2 FGD2 Coding and Thematization (FGD2-NVivo)

To show the gravity of the conflict, a few of the video press statements about Sèpètèrì violence and the counterarguments are available online (Afolaranmi, 2013; Ajayi, 2013; Onanuga, 2013). The FGD2 primary data were subjected to NVivo, using the hierarchy chart and sunburst. The charts below from this study provide pieces of evidence to support this discourse. (Also see Appendix C: FGD2 explored for the nodes in another graphic format).



Figure 10. FGD2 NVivo: hierarchy chart.

See also appendix C3 for the FGD2 graphic codes

The nodes that emerged from the data are:

- Religious fanaticism
- Religious differences and violence
- Outside religious influences as agents or ideologies
- Love and tolerance
- Leaders' positive or negative roles in conflict situations

- Land disputes.
- Knowledge of religion and culture
- Injustices
- Cultural, family ties, mixed marriages, and love
- Township as a family (social interaction and trust across the town)

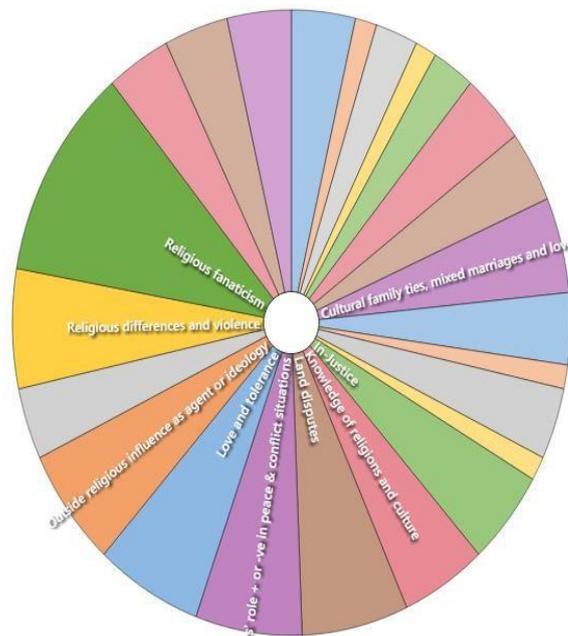


Figure 11. FGD2 NVivo: Sunburst

The first three prominent nodes contributed to disharmony and violence in Sèpètèrí. The fourth (love and tolerance) and the fifth (leadership) could promote harmony when well-managed, as is the case for the remaining nodes on the list.

A close study of the above two charts shows the following two categorizations used as the bases of the two mind maps shown below:

- Conflict causes and sources

- Coping strategies in conflict situations:
  - o Social life and family welfare
  - o Social interaction
  - o Welfare
  - o Knowledge of religions and culture
  - o Love and tolerance
  - o Mixed marriage
  - o Township interaction and development
  - o Good leadership
  - o Development
  - o Bad or weak leadership

I used the above two main categorizations to form the mind maps in the two Figures shown below.

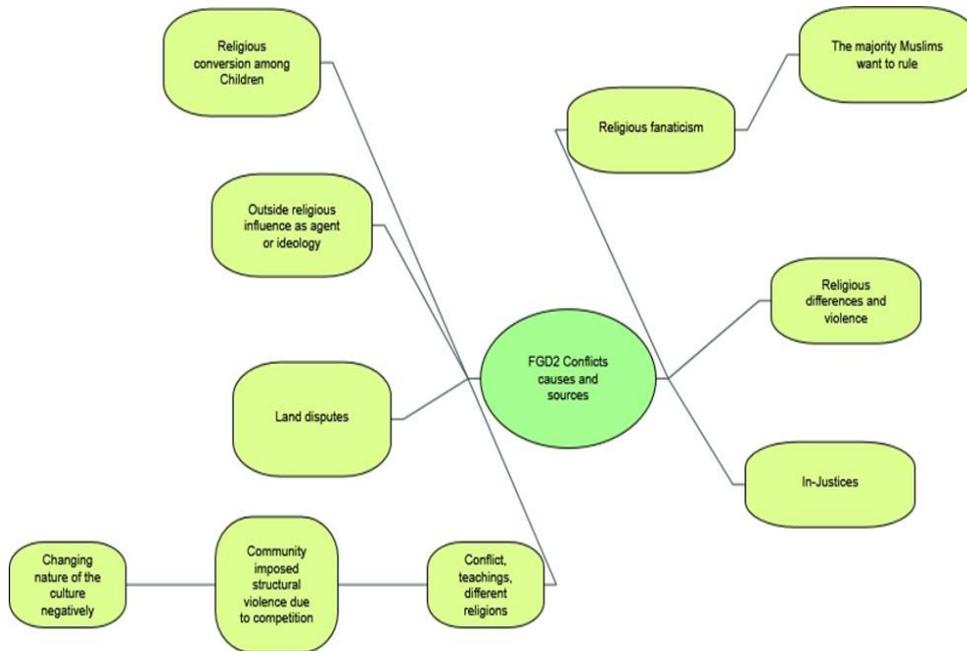


Figure 12. FGD2 mind map causes of conflicts

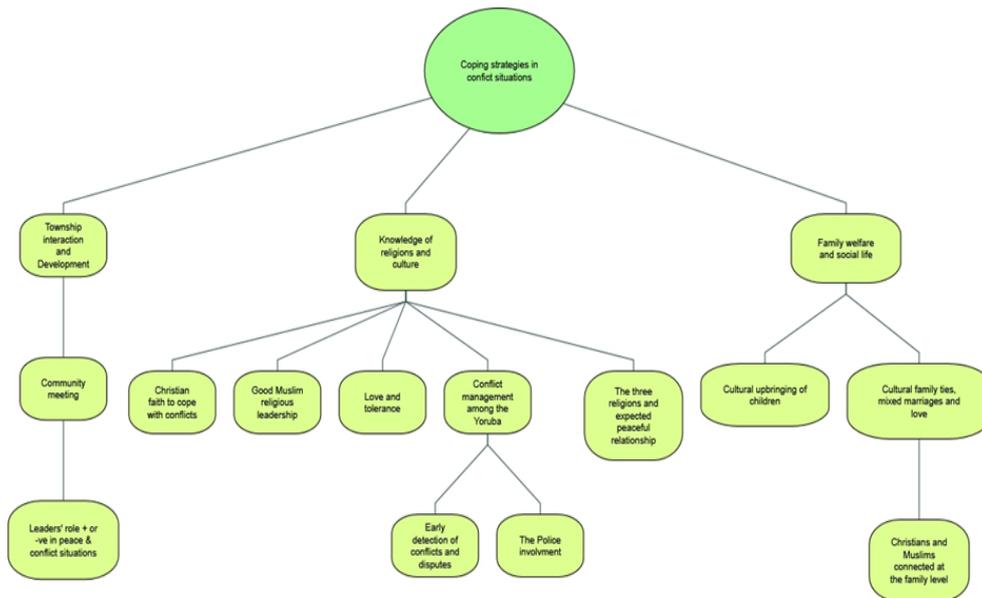


Figure 13. FGD2 NVivo mind map coping strategies in conflict situations

The coping strategies have to do with culture and social interactions, [as noted in FGD1, which is detailed here] like welfare, family, knowledge of religions and culture, and leadership or management. As this research explores how peace is sustained in a community, the coping strategies above are relevant to this study.

#### 4.1.2.3 FGD3 Coding and Thematization (FGD3-NVivo)

With the FGD3, the study began taking a good shape, with the building blocks for peace among the Yorùbá emerging to form the main discussion. 13 nodes were significant, as shown in the FGD3 NVivo hierarchy and sunburst nodes below.



Figure 14. FGD3 NVivo hierarchy chart.

See also appendix C4 for the FGD3 graphic codes

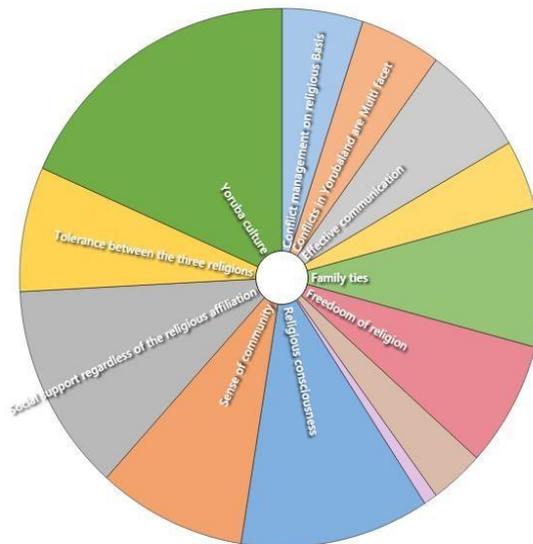


Figure 15. FGD3 NVivo: Sunburst

All the themes listed below are the findings as demonstrated in the charts:

- Yorùbá culture
- Social support, regardless of religious affiliation
- Religious consciousness

- Sense of community
- Freedom of religion
- Effective communication
- Family ties
- Tolerance
- Elders' roles in managing conflicts (leadership)
- Conflict management on a religious basis
- Conflict in Yorùbáland as multifaceted
- Mixed marriage
- Positive media outlets

Apart from the multifaceted nature of conflict among the Yorùbá, the rest of the themes surround the maintenance of peace. The Yorùbá culture was the most significant found at the top of the list within this method, followed by social support in the community and the religion. As I seek to align FGD3 with the previous findings, the first two nodes (culture and social interactions) are grouped together under culture for ease of discussion, while religion comes out as another major point of interest to the Yorùbá in terms of the ways in which they keep the peace.

I, therefore, categorize the nodes from FGD3 into two as shown in the mind map below. The culture mind map brings together the emerging themes that could be discussed under social and Yorùbá culture, highlighting what the Yorùbá culture and social support constitute.

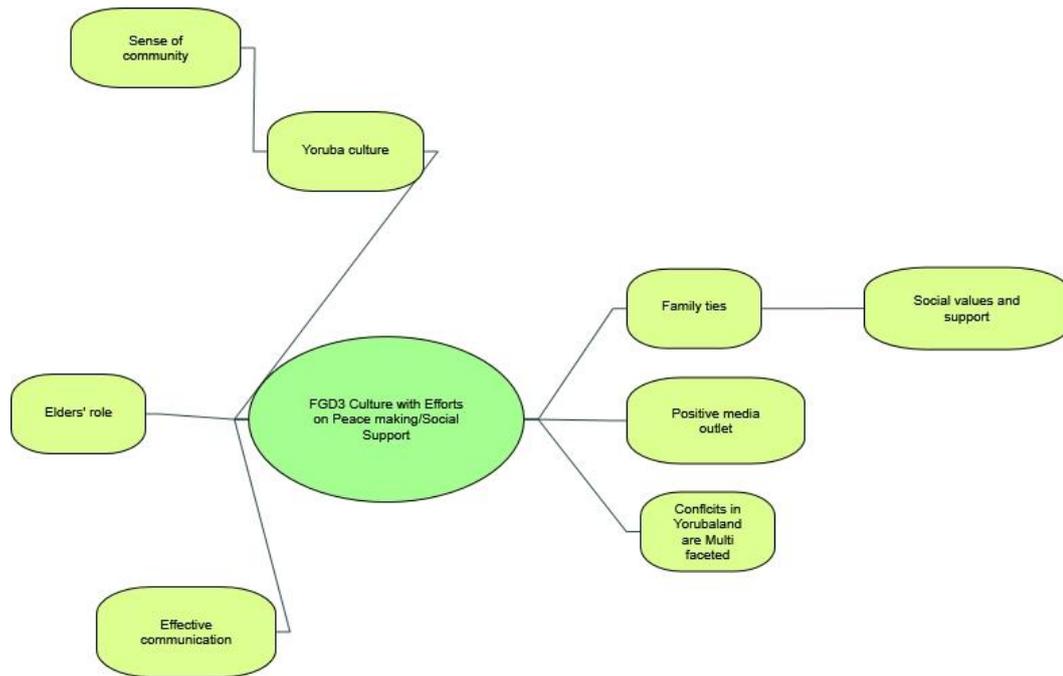
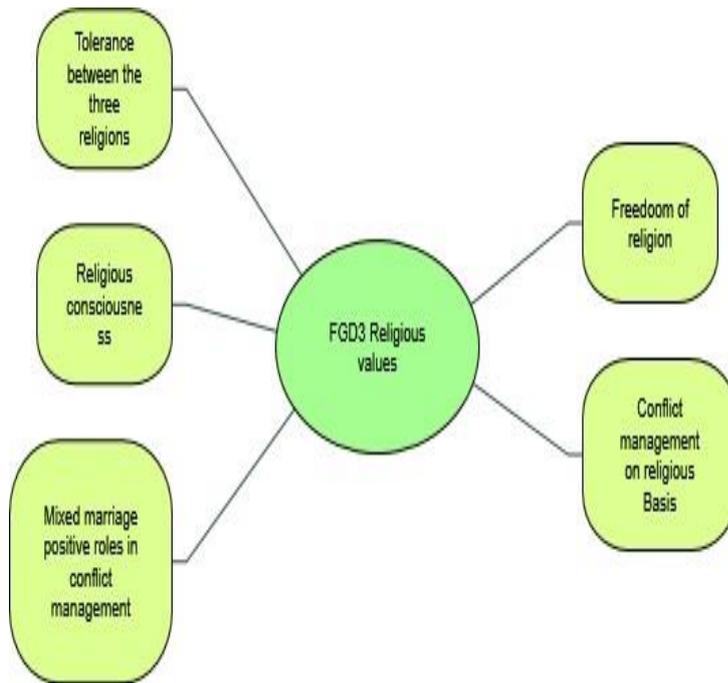


Figure 16. NVivo FGD3 mind map culture

#### Yorùbá culture and efforts at making peace (social values)

- Yorùbá culture
- Sense of community
- Family ties
- Social values and support
- Effective communication
- Elders' roles in conflict management (leadership)
- Positive media outlets
- Conflict as multifaceted

Similarly, I also present what constitutes the religious values of the Yorùbá:



*Figure 17. NVivo FGD3 mind map religious values*

Religious values:

- Religious consciousness
- Freedom of religion
- Tolerance
- Conflict management based on religion/religious values
- Mixed marriage

I made the mind map from the two categories (see the figures above).

#### **4.1.3 FI Coding and Thematization (FI-NVivo)**

The FI was to find out if new nodes or themes will emerge that strongly support the harmonious relationship of the contemporary Yorùbá. Following the adoption of NVivo

facilities to analyse the FI data, the hierarchy chart reveals 26 nodes from a series of extensive interviews. The first four prominent nodes are:<sup>2</sup>

- Culture
- Religion (knowledge, leadership, and freedom of religion)
- Yorùbá resilience (social interactions)
- Family



*Figure 18. FI – NVivo: The hierarchy chart*

<sup>2</sup> FI: The Hierarchy sunburst.

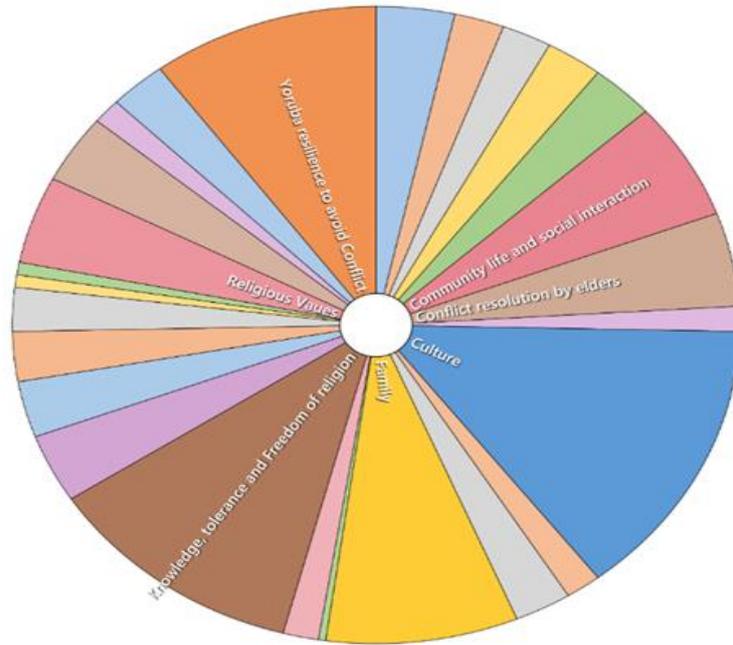


Figure 19. FI – NVivo Sunburst

After those four ideas, I included many other nodes generated from the FI data in the FI mind maps below and classified the resilience of the Yorùbá along with the culture and social lifestyle in the community.

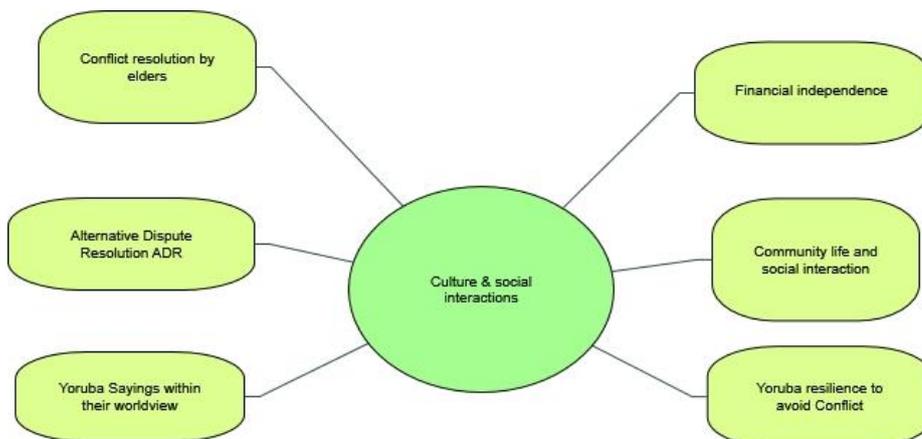


Figure 20. Interview mind map for culture and social interactions

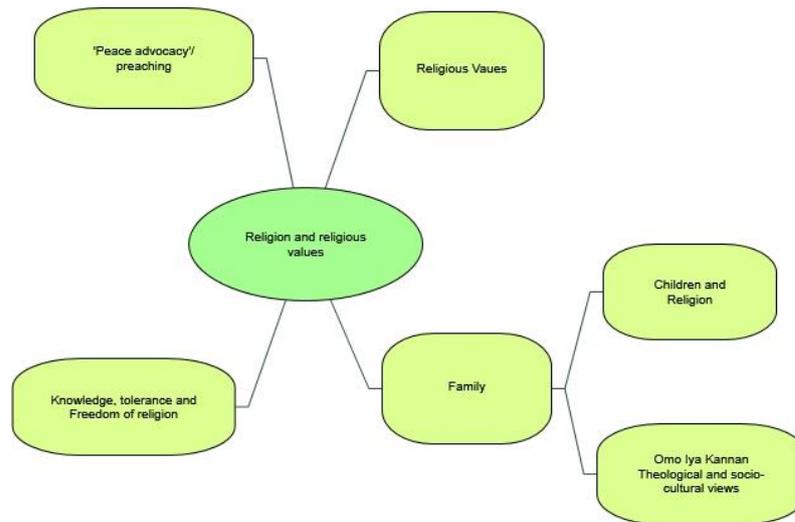


Figure 21. Interview mind map for religions and values

The first part of the nodes is re-categorized as cultural with social life (communal life), and religion. The last but not the least in the interview as identified in the nodes is the multifaceted nature of conflict among the Yorùbá.

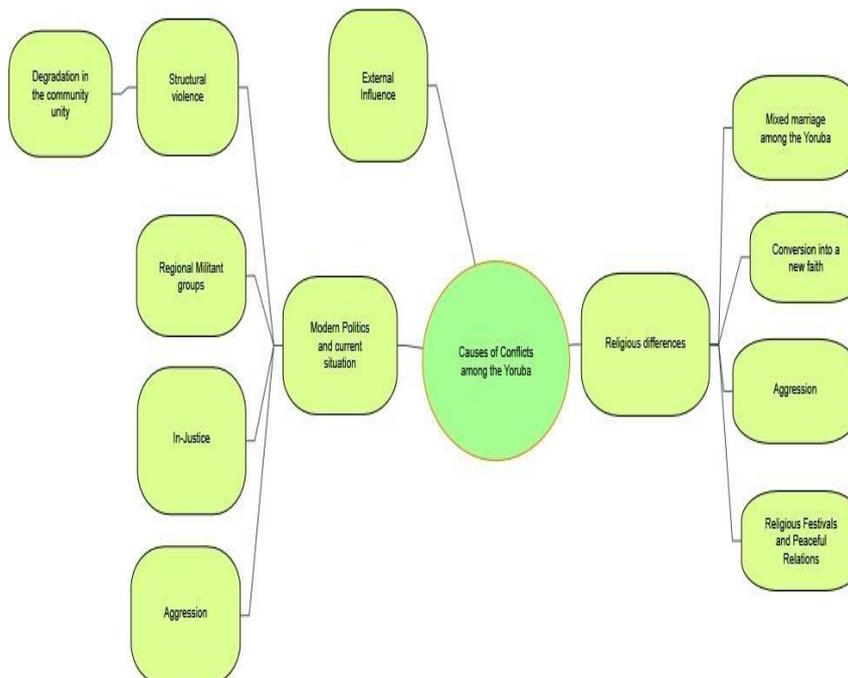


Figure 22. Interview NVivo causes of conflict – mind map

The themes in this section follow the same pattern as in the previous sections, i.e., the Yorùbá culture with social interactions, religious values or consciousness, and the various impediments to harmony among the Yorùbá, (or the causes of conflicts).

#### **4.1.4 Cumulative NVivo Findings**

I subsequently put all the nodes from the ES, the FGDs, and FI together – a total of approximately 80 – from all the data collected in this research to generate the final themes. The hierarchy charts highlighting the following six prominent themes are shown in Figures below.

The key issues points are:

- Yorùbá culture
- Social celebrations
- Knowledge of religions (as practised in the community)
- The idea of family (or blood relations)
- Communal life and leadership
- The multi-faceted nature of conflict among the Yorùbá

In the earlier mind maps, I put the Yorùbá culture together with the social celebrations. Going by the large number of nodes accumulated, I decided to separate the two in the cumulative findings to provide further details of each category. Bringing together the findings from all the data at various levels: culture, religions, social interactions, the idea of family and community with good leadership, all provide support for the Yorùbá both

to de-escalate conflicts and to support or sustain harmony in their communities. The study also shows that conflict among the Yorùbá is multi-faceted in nature.

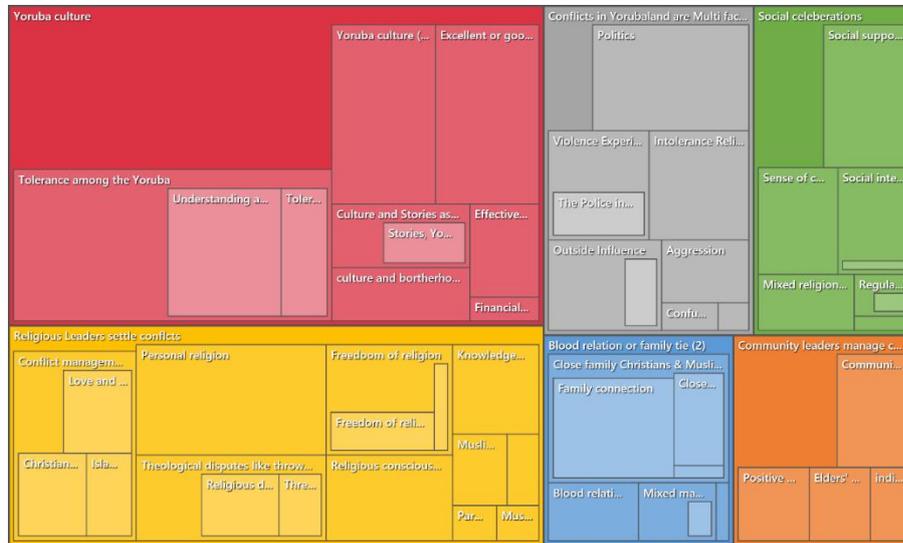


Figure 23. NVivo Cumulative Hierarchy chart.

Also see Appendix C1 for the word frequency showing religions, Christian, Muslim, community, relationships, discuss, questions, answers, peace, family, people, Yorùbá, patience, tolerance, conflict among others as relevant to peace discuss.

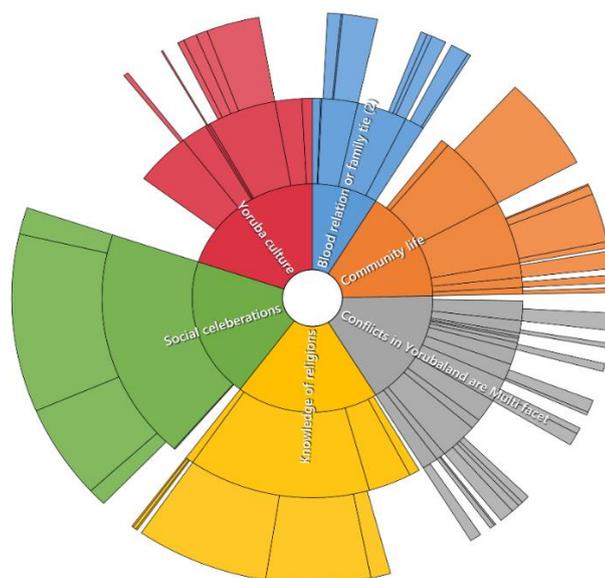


Figure 24. NVivo Cumulative Nodes/Sunburst

The above are the themes that determine the peacefulness among the Yorùbá, as shown in the cumulative hierarchy chart.

## **4.2 Sources of Conflict (Multi-faceted)**

Some of the causes of violent conflicts among the Yorùbá, according to the ES participants, are political differences, land disputes, chieftaincy disputes, and outside influences. As can be seen in the survey chart in Appendix A, the causes of violent conflicts observed among the Yorùbá are generated through the multiple-choice questions. However, of the 30 maximum obtainable points in each category, political differences attracted the most selections, with 17, followed by 12 for intolerant religious ideologies and 9 for religious differences. The second to last point was the influence from outside of the community, attracting 5 points, while the last, with 3, was economic manipulation.

### **4.2.1 Political Differences**

Political differences were still a cause of division resulting in political violence among the Yorùbá. This was noted by Muslim respondent R32, who traced the political problems among the Yorùbá to the 1960s. R3 (another male Muslim) suggests that ‘political differences and intolerant religious ideologies’ are causes of conflicts. Similarly, Christian contributors R22 and R11 argue that violent conflicts often erupt from the political arena among the Yorùbá. R22 refers to the dispute over election results between the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) in Òyó state. FGD3 participants made a similar affirmation about politics as a cause of disunity. Most of the

participants suggest that the way politics is practised in the country results in violence among the Yorùbá as in other parts of the country.

**Remedy:** Despite the unrest occurring during most political campaigns and electioneering in Nigeria, it was suggested that the Yorùbá often pacify themselves. R22 and R11 suggest that the Yorùbá community leaders take responsibility for settling disputes. R20 insinuates that the traditional community leaders, the police, and joint community efforts are all often involved in managing political conflicts.

#### 4.2.2 Land Disputes and Chieftaincy Tussles

Some of the participants suggest disputes over the use and ownership of land as causes of conflict. This factor was not on the list given in the questionnaire (although mentioned by the pre-testing of my questionnaire) but further suggested by the ES participants in the space provided for additional comments. R2, a Yorùbá Christian in the diaspora, cites economic manipulation and influences by the outside community as other causes of conflict, though he also singled out land ownership as an example. R14 raises the issue of land disputes, whilst R6 (Christian, diaspora) cites political and economic manipulation as critical among some leaders and farm owners. FGD3 discussed some violent conflicts in recent times, such as those of the Ifẹ̀-Modákéké, the Òffà-Èrinlé, and the Saragi-Odo Owa. These were major conflicts in which many people died.

**Remedy:** It has been observed that all the options provided in the questionnaire – namely, the community traditional leaders, family/local elders, the police, community joint efforts and individual efforts – are much used in conflict management among the Yorùbá. However, R6 and R14 left the police out of the list. When land disputes and chieftaincy issues cause disunity, the participants suggest the leaders have a responsibility to manage the situation.

### 4.2.3 Outside Negative Influences

There have been occasions of physical violence attributed to the influences outside the community. R30 witnessed violent conflicts among Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in Sèpètèrí. He alleged that some Muslim residents were the aggressors, acting under some influences from outside of their community. The occasion of violence propelled by outside influence calls for a further investigation through FGD and FI. Two Muslims reported two separate cases of intolerance by Christians, whilst another Christian had an unpleasant experience with some Muslims, describing them as perpetrators of violence influenced by outsiders. Another Muslim layperson (R25) also reported an account of violence against the Muslims in Òyó town by the traditional Oro worshippers (ATR), but the incident was handled well by the police and the law court. Most conflicts among the Yorùbá are settled by the family elders and the local leaders, whilst the extreme or criminal cases are referred to the police and the modern judicial system.

**Remedy:** The police were involved in the incident that R30 cited and the case was eventually settled through legal proceedings. This is an example of an incident of conflict between Yorùbá religious people which was settled in court.

### 4.3 Bases of Peacefulness

The themes that suggest the coping strategies during conflict or provocation and how the Yorùbá have been retaining their harmony as suggested by the participants are presented below. In general, they repeatedly cited tolerance as a strong virtue keeping the Yorùbá in harmony. In Sèpètèrí for instance, they use religious tolerance to describe their way of

copied after the conflict that led to violence. They wished they could have been more tolerant before the crisis that led to the violence.

#### **4.3.1 Culture and Religion**

Most of the participants in this study have either an excellent or very good relationship with their neighbours of other faith traditions (see Appendix A). R22 and R21, both Christians, claim to have excellent or good relationships with their Muslim neighbours and say their faith has been the source of their strength. R22 has this to say:

The Lord Jesus has taught us that we should be in peace with all men and Holiness [...] We are not to quarrel with people rather relate to them in love.

R29 (male, Christian) considers his relationship with people of other faiths as excellent and he finds it easy to relate to others regardless of their religious beliefs. For him, tolerance – or a lack of it – determines the presence of conflict among the Yorùbá. R11 presents his reasons for his good relationships with neighbours of other faith heritages; he describes this as the oneness of the Yorùbá. R14 suggests that he maintains good relationships with people of other faiths based on respect: 'we respect each other's religion and beliefs'. He considers the Bible to be the source of his understanding of forgiveness. R33 enjoys a good relationship with Muslim neighbours and claims to have drawn strength and encouragement to be peaceful from the Bible: 'The Bible says to follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see God' (Hebrews 12:14). R12, a Christian claim an excellent relationship with others, has a Muslim aunt, yet that has not led to disunity in the extended family. R5 and R21, both Christians claim to have excellent and peaceful relationship with their neighbours and attribute these to their Christian faith and the Yorùbá culture. A Muslim participant, R18, has an excellent relationship with his Christian neighbours and draws strength from his religion of Islam:

‘Islam has taught me to leave in peace with people irrespective of their religious affiliations’.

In examining the sources of strength among the Yorùbá in the face of provocation, the participants’ view of their relationships with their neighbours of other religions or faith traditions is significant. Various responses are identified as relevant for peaceful relations, such as support through religious beliefs, leaders’ willingness to mediate and the Yorùbá culture. The Sèpètèrì Christians consider the Bible and their faith in God to have helped them during trying times to maintain peace with their Muslim neighbours. The Bible and their religious beliefs help to restrain Christians in times of crisis. For instance, R20 suggests his religious leader, who is also his mentor, has had a significant influence on him and his ability to live in peace with his neighbours. The kind of teachings he received from his mentor, and his devotion to his religion, have proven crucial to his peaceful relations with his Muslim neighbours. In a nutshell, Yorùbá Christian teachings and their leadership style are influential factors for R20. R19 writes:

In the southern part of Nigeria, particularly in the southwest, most families have people practicing both major religions viz: Islam and Christianity. In my own extended family, we have Christians as well as Muslims living side-by-side with each other, without rancor. The difference in their religious beliefs is not an issue. We get along fine.  
(R19)

A healthy interfaith relationship is illustrated here. The impact of extended family and the commitment to care for relatives regardless of the religious differences is a strength of the Yorùbá. Wólé went further to emphasize freedom of religion as another theme in peaceful relations. The Yorùbá are believed to have the freedom to decide what religion they want to practise.

R19 also suggests that the Yorùbá culture helps them to be peaceful and kind to their neighbours. Furthermore, he says:

In Yorùbá culture, we settle our differences amicably most of the time. Serious disagreements are settled by our elders in a meeting called for this purpose, in which both sides are in attendance and the matter is settled there and then. This is replicated in the wider local community and the general community. I draw my strength from this practice. It enables me to get along as well as tolerate my neighbours. (R19)

This implies that many factors support R19 in maintaining peace with his neighbours, namely tolerance of other faiths in their families and the neighbourhood, the Christian faith, and the Yorùbá culture, all of which provide help in times of distress or provocation. These are some of the key features to look for in peace and conflict studies among the Yorùbá. What makes up the Yorùbá culture and the religious leaders' identities are yet to be spelled out here and must be ascertained to take this study forward.

R11 argues that his Christian faith allows him to live a peaceful life. His understanding of the Bible and his commitment to his faith are essential to his life and harmony with others. The Yorùbá religions and culture, along with their leaders' influence are claims for the perceived Yorùbá's tolerance of their neighbours. R30 has an excellent relationship with Muslims, despite the crisis they experienced in their Sèpètèrì community. He is from a mixed religious family and is of the opinion that both his Christian faith and the Yorùbá culture encourage his good relationships with people of other faith traditions. His mother is a Muslim, whereas he is a Christian and he is one of five siblings of their parents. The above narratives form one of the bases for investigating what the Yorùbá culture entails in the FGD and FI data collection.

However, both R15 and R16 (male, Christians) argue that religious difference could be a potential cause of conflict. R15 suggests that the claim of the superiority of one's religion over another is to blame for the few religious crises recorded among the Yorùbá. R12 (a male Christian), suggests intolerant religious ideologies as a cause of conflict but further claims that Ògbómòşó town has not witnessed violent conflict because of religious

differences in recent times. I am aware of conflicts between the indigenous religion and Christians during the traditional Oro religious festival in the past in Ògbómòṣó. However, it is being claimed that Ògbómòṣó has seen no religious conflict for some decades and has no record of Christian-Muslim violence. A further examination of R12's claim is required to validate how the current harmony is maintained in Ògbómòṣó, notably in the religious sphere.

R6 traces his commitment to the Yorùbá culture, his religion, and the general community, citing these as sources of support for peace in times of provocation. The issue of family arises for R26 (Muslim, diaspora), who suggests that his good interaction with people of other faiths in times of conflict or provocation can be traced to his religious beliefs. Religion is becoming personal in the way it is used in this survey. Just as belonging to a religion could be associated with conflicts in some cases, most participants among the Yorùbá claimed to use it for a peaceful end. R15, another Christian, also suggests his religion encourages and teaches him to be peaceful and tolerant of others, attributing the qualities to the Bible teaching on God's power that changed and transformed his behaviour and attitude. On mixed religions within the family, R9 notes that his Christian mother is from a Muslim family, while his uncles, aunts, and cousins remain Muslims and yet he has excellent relationships with them all. He writes:

Christianity is a religion of peace. God loves peacemakers, so a Christian is not supposed to be violent. A Christian cannot defend God, no matter how you try, so you should not try to defend God and get into arguments. [edited]

R21 talks about relating to other people as family, which encourages them to tolerate one another despite the differences in their religious persuasions. R16 has a good relationship with others and members of his family who belong to different religions.

For R21, Yorùbá culture contributes immensely to the way of peace among the people.

He further explains the way that the Yorùbá culture has enhanced his attitude towards peace:

I have learned in Yorùbá since I was very young and until now, that we practice hospitality because we are interconnected, intertwined, and interrelated. That means that what affects my neighbour is my utmost concern because it affects me as a person. Yorùbá is a tribe that is very peaceful and calm, and I have drawn my strength from the virtues of living peacefully and co-existing as a family unit. I have learned how to tolerate based on the lessons learned from the stories my father would tell us children in the evening (tales by moonlight) to encourage us to live in peace.

R3 combines his Islamic religion with the Yorùbá culture, citing them as helpful for living in harmony with non-Muslim neighbours: 'Yorùbá culture helps, and my religion [...] my religion preaches *sabr* [patience] and tolerance'. R25, an elderly Muslim man with a primary school education, who claims he has an excellent relationship with non-Muslims, traces his values to the humanity shared by all and the common theological ancestors, Adam, and Eve. According to R25:

In Islam, religious tolerance is sacrosanct, but that does not mean you should not speak out when you are offended or when the excesses are unbearable. Islam defines the right of one's neighbor over us and wants us to live in peace and harmony. Prophet Muhammad said, and I quote, 'Whoever among his followers cannot guarantee the safety of his or her neighbor in his or her own hands is not part of his followers. He further explained that our neighbors are not necessarily our brothers in the same faith, but those living forty houses to our right hand, forty houses on our left hand, forty houses in front of our house, and forty houses to the rear of our house. He said further that, 'He is not a Muslim who feeds himself or herself full while his or her neighbour goes to bed hungry', and encouraged us to extend the kind gesture of giving cooked food from our house to our neighbours because the aroma of our food could make them hungry and make them feel ungrateful before God since they have nothing to eat. Muslims are enjoined to avoid abusing other people of other faiths or abusing someone's parent because if those people abuse our religion or our parents in retaliation, it will be recorded in our books of deeds that we abused our religion or parents by ourselves. The Holy Qur'an also mentions that there is no compulsion in religion, and we cannot force anyone against their wishes towards Islam. It says that if people

are not from your religion, say to them, 'unto you is your religion and unto me is mine'. The disciples of Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) mandated Muslims to give part of their property as an inheritance to their neighbours based on how he encouraged Muslims to treat their neighbours.

A thick description method requires long quotations from participants to understand the individual's perspective and the context in which they base their arguments. R25's Islamic religion here is instrumental to him keeping the peace as a Yorùbá. R25 appeared certain of his beliefs about peace, referencing Islamic sources to reinforce his religious worldview. The understanding of both Christians and Muslims, and their practices of their religions are central to this study. One could also ask how far this has contributed to peaceful relations among the Yorùbá in general. It is not yet clear here what the Yorùbá culture entails, but many participants claim it helps them in sustaining peace with their neighbours.

However, R1 observes tension among some Christians and Muslims in certain quarters: '[t]he current relationship is like the relationship between a cat and rat, engulfed with suspicion'. R1's claim has to do with his role in the community, being a Christian perceived to be in competition with Muslims while teaching Islam in a secular institution that some practicing Muslims felt threatening. Otherwise, outside of the fear of losing converts, many Muslims and Christians get along well in Yorùbáland. Yet, this shows that whilst some enjoy peace, there are a few who remain suspicious of losing their members to other religions. Nevertheless, R1 claims that his Christian faith and the Yorùbá family tradition help him to live peacefully with his neighbours.

Individual religion (through inner strength or conviction) was the top answer to this ES question, with 70 points out of a hundred, indicating this is a very potent source of support in times of crisis or conflict. There were 45 points for the Yorùbá culture, while the general community represents 8 points as a source of inspiration for pursuing peace (Appendix

A). Yorùbá Christians and Muslims refer to their scriptures and its interpretations (religions) as helpful for living peacefully with one another, despite the differences in their faith traditions. Some of them specify scriptural passages on tolerance relevant for keeping them in harmony. There are also suggestions that the Yorùbá traditions and culture provide support for their harmony. The specific aspect of the culture that has been helpful were not identified in the ES but mapped out in the FGDs and FI.

### **4.3.2 Family and Children's Upbringing**

In this section, I present the family connections as a source of harmony among the Yorùbá. I also report the courage of those in mixed marriages and their ability to cope with the challenges associated with the union. R4 (female, Christian) claims to have an excellent relationship with her Muslim husband: 'My husband is Muslim, and I am Christian, and we get on fine. He does not try to change me. We both have our ideas and opinions and beliefs about religion, but we respect each other's religion.' R4 suggests her Christian faith is a source of encouragement to keep the peace and a source of hope for her in times of difficulty: 'I am a Christian and, like Jesus, we must go through trials and tribulations. We must put ourselves in God's hands. He is in control; he is our strength, after all' (grammar corrected). The situation has not always been easy for R4 but claims to lean on her Christian faith for support. R28 (diaspora, Christian) asserts: 'we consider ourselves to be a family – with different beliefs' (paraphrased).<sup>3</sup> R25 (Muslim) also refers to the biological connection among the Yorùbá. The Sèpètèrì participants argued that mixed marriages have helped in a way, as they observe that in-laws find it difficult to attack their relations or one another's kinfolk, as also confirmed by Lateef in the interview.

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<sup>3</sup> This is in line with scholars such as Akinjogbin on the reasons for the peaceful coexistence of the Yorùbá: biological connection or kindred.

The Sèpètèrì resident participants advocate moral education among children during their developmental stages. For them, parental contributions to moral education in Christianity and Islam are vital to peaceful relations in the Yorùbá community, as also mentioned by Lateef and Lódún in my interview. Examples of such moral education contents include the belief system they have in common across the religions and how it influences the children's upbringing in their community. Children's upbringing is linked with family ties. According to FGD3, differences in religion among children of the same parents do not often lead to major conflicts in families. They even see themselves as *Ebí* or *omọ ìyá kannâ* (children of the same mother). *Omọ ìyá kannâ* is used to 'domesticate religion' among the Yorùbá, according to FGD3. The Yorùbá are pleased to celebrate with neighbours and their relations in their social and religious settings. FGD3 also introduces a similar concept to *omọ ìyá kannâ*, suggesting *omọ baba kannâ ni wá* (we are children of the same father), which they claim predates both Islam and Christianity in Yorùbáland. *Omọ ìyá kannâ* has become a viable philosophical apparatus for keeping conflict at bay. This has been taken further, with, *omọ adugbo kanna* (identification with the same local compound or area in the city), *omọ ilu kanna* (native or indigenes of the same town) and *omọ Yorùbá kanna* (identification with the same Yorùbá language). Christians and Muslims extend their peace apparatus to their scriptural connection in the creation story of Adam and Eve.

In FG1, FGD2 Sèpètèrì, and the FGD3, family ties are considered a uniting force among the Yorùbá. Parental control and home-training with virtues such as honesty, tolerance, and kindness, are identified as good for community development.

### 4.3.3 Leadership

In relation to leadership role in managing disputes, R26 (male, Muslim) discusses the role of tolerance in religion among the Yorùbá, citing an example of what he witnessed in Ògbómòṣó:

In the city of Ògbómòṣó, there was a time when the Christians protested over the building of a mosque; and if not for the committee on religious dialogue that is on the ground, the unpleasant situation would have escalated into conflict.

Just as Christians have protested the building of a mosque opposite a church in Ògbómòṣó, some Muslims protected the building of a church (Winners' Chapel) in Ilorin, Kwara state (Nwogu; Olanrewaju, 2012). The striking thing is that both the Ilorin and Ògbómòṣó religious communities managed the situations. While the protest in Ilorin led to a fight (or violence) and a police investigation, the Ògbómòṣó conflict did not. It is important to understand the reasons for the fears on both sides regarding the building of places of worship so close to one another.

R33 (male, Christian) has Muslim family members and lives peacefully with them. The reason given is that he 'can't disown them'. This is an example of the unavoidable interrelations between Christians and Muslims in Yorùbáland, the peacefulness strengthened by their leaders and elders. Christians and Muslims live together, as both are found represented in most extended families he has claimed. R25 (diaspora) further discusses religious differences and the tolerance he experienced in Òyó. R25 gives an example of how some Yorùbá Muslims used the state judiciary system to protect their fundamental human rights against their violation by Yorùbá traditional practitioners. A need for tolerance, as opposed to resistance to change was asserted, which was well managed by the Òyó Yorùbá people. Another contributor to this survey, R18, a male Muslim cleric and scholar, suggests the ability to control religious intolerance and

ideologies as a virtue among the Yorùbá. He cites an example of a Christian student disrupting Muslim Friday prayer at the University of Ibadan Mosque. The maturity with which the Chief Imam of the University of Ibadan and the University Vice-Chancellor handled the situation is considered remarkable without resorting to physical violence.

R1, R5, and R15 similarly highlight the traditional community leaders' invaluable roles in crisis management. The 'Community traditional leaders' had the highest number of selections with 18 (out of 30 obtainable points), followed by 'community joint effort', with 13. The 'family and local elders' had 8, while the 'other categories with explanations' were 12, the 'police intervention' was 8 and the 'individual efforts' was 6. The reasons for the majority's choices of the community's traditional leaders (religions and cultural influences) and community joint efforts could be explained. When the individual religion or cultural conviction is broken down or weakened, it will require the community leaders to help in such a situation, no longer the individual effort. R29 suggests that community leaders are the first point of contact for help during conflicts.

The importance of community togetherness is stressed by R10, a male Yorùbá religion practitioner, who suggests that he has no knowledge of any religious conflict in his own community:

I have never witnessed any religious [conflict]. I did notice over the years, when growing up, that both Muslims and Christians lived together and celebrated everything together, including religious festivals.

Community togetherness and the positive elders' influence are identified as having a significant effect on the interaction of the Yorùbá and the value placed on peaceful relations among its people. There is, therefore, a connection between community togetherness and the elders' role in maintaining peace and managing conflict. Could this

be the reason for the limited involvement of the police in some local disputes that highlights the success of the existing conflict management structures among the Yorùbá? Other forms of support for peaceful relations, according to FGD2, include regular community leaders' meetings, co-operation, and endurance. These once flourished in Sèpètèrì, before the paradigm shifted some years ago. They recalled that when love flourished, the community development project also flourished, such as when an outpost of University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan was brought to Sèpètèrì. It also had a good fishpond and a forest reserve national park, and they erected electric poles through communal efforts before things began to fall apart due to hostilities and intolerance. The participants suggest that the Sèpètèrì people were able to manage the problems of the 1940s and 1958, but the recent conflict arose when strange teachings and hatred began to spread and the regular community meeting for social interactions and development ceased to exist. Similarly, good, and loving leaders are required for a peaceful community; poor and biased leadership led Sèpètèrì to distrust and mistrust and caused serious conflicts, division, and death as the FGD2 participants claimed. Strange teachings must be cross-examined thoroughly and stopped in the community, FGD2 suggested.

Enthusiasm for conflict resolution are multidimensional. Some take an ethical form: According to Ifá, crises and conflicts are managed via means that have religious undertones and ethical purpose, merged with ethical reasoning. The reasons for the Yorùbá's hesitation to use physical violence and their pursuit of *Omọ̀lúàbí*<sup>4</sup> attributes are summed up under ethics. Ethics can curtail reactions in a time of crisis as Ifá suggests at FGD3. He added that the Yorùbá believe in forgiveness and discipline and punitive measures where both are found in their culture and their religious life.

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<sup>4</sup> *Omọ̀lúàbí* is the term used by the Yorùbá to describe the highest virtues expected of them in their personal, private and community life as they relate with people. A person described as *Omọ̀lúàbí* has all it takes to be a good person in the context they are described as one.

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is common among the Yorùbá, according to Ifa. Equality, justice, and fairness, identifying that both parties in a dispute have faults to correct and virtues to praise and allowing cases to be settled amicably. Equality does not mean that they do not have a hierarchy: on the contrary, they do, and it helps them to maintain order. However, equality combined with justice and fairness helps hierarchy and leadership to support the system which works for the community. The Yorùbá, according to Ifá, will always find something to learn for both parties in a dispute, even if it is simply that, while a party was wrong, the other party might have been more patient, and the initial crises would have been averted. In this way, the guilty accept their wrongdoing while the innocent party learns something from the experience to possibly prevent similar problems arising in the future.

**Main remedies:** R26 suggests the roles of religious leaders in conflict management in the Yorùbá community are invaluable in peace talks. R18, R16, and R4 suggest that the joint community efforts are efficient in conflict management. R18 reinforces the community leaders' roles in conflict management. On the other hand, R25 and R33 highlight the relevance of the police in some difficult situations, whilst R25 suggests leadership partiality or failures as being responsible for the police involvement in conflict management. R25 further suggests that there have been instances when community leaders were biased regarding certain issues, which resulted in a conflict that was not resolved amicably until the police were called in to manage the situation. This implies that police involvement in non-criminal conflicts is often due to the leaders' failure to resolve conflict appropriately.

R1, R5, and R15 similarly highlight the traditional community leaders' invaluable roles in crisis management. R7 and R3 consider the family/local elders to be relevant in conflict settlement. R9 combines the family/local elders, community joint efforts and individual

efforts, while R12 identifies only individual efforts as relevant. In general, the conflict resolution or conflict transformation methods employed among the Yorùbá depend on the type of conflict and those involved in it. Family elders have been involved in resolving family-related conflicts before escalation, while community leaders oversee societal conflicts. The religious leaders are involved in the settlement of all types of crises (except for criminal cases), usually for moderation and pacifying the aggrieved parties. Most of the conflicts referred to the police are criminal or those which the community leaders have tried and failed to resolve.

#### **4.3.4 Community Togetherness (Communal Lifestyle)**

The Yorùbá people live together with little or no demarcation along religious lines in their various communities. The findings presented in the ES show that most of the participants, 26 of the 40 who answered the question, consider their relationships with people of other religions in their community, workplaces, or families to be ‘excellent’. Twelve described their relationships as ‘good’, one person was undecided, while the other selected ‘very bad’ to describe their relationships with their neighbours. The participant that selected ‘very bad’ claimed he based his response on a discussion he heard about a violent conflict but acknowledged that he had not witnessed one personally.

R26 suggests the roles of religious leaders in conflict management in the Yorùbá community are invaluable in peace talks. R18, R16, and R4 suggest that the joint community efforts are efficient in conflict management. R18 reinforces the community leaders’ roles in conflict management. On the other hand, R25 and R33 highlight the relevance of the police in some difficult situations, whilst R25 suggests leadership partiality or failures as being responsible for the police involvement in conflict management. R25 further suggests that there have been instances when community leaders were biased regarding certain issues, which resulted in a conflict that was not

resolved amicably until the police were called in to manage the situation. The police involvement in non-criminal conflicts is often due to the leaders' failure to resolve conflict appropriately.

R7 and R3 consider the family/local elders to be relevant in conflict settlement. R9 combines the family/local elders, community joint efforts and individual efforts, while R12 identifies only individual efforts as relevant. In general, the conflict resolution or conflict transformation methods employed among the Yorùbá depend on the type of conflict and those involved in it. Family elders have been involved in resolving family-related conflicts before escalation, while community leaders oversee societal conflicts. The religious leaders are involved in the settlement of all types of crises (except for criminal cases), usually for moderation and pacifying the aggrieved parties. Most of the conflicts referred to the police are criminal in nature or those which the community leaders have tried and failed to resolve.

Social reasons support violence de-escalation. Violent conflicts are kept at bay through inter-tribal, communal, and mixed marriages as confirmed by Ifá, FGD2 and FGD1. The Yorùbá say, *eni ba fòmofuni laya se pupọ ninu oore*, meaning that anyone who gives their daughter in marriage has done a great thing. Similarly, community projects also support community unity. Ifá states that there are many layers of relationships in Yorùbá cultural settings, such as leadership, economic, religious, political, and social well-being. These are manifest in different ways through celebrations at weddings, naming, funerals, and other forms of ceremonies in the neighbourhood. The people come together to help one another in social contexts, which provides the opportunity for interaction, understanding, co-operation and friendship.

#### 4.3.5 Use of Words and their Meanings (Hermeneutics)

Concerning the control or prevention of conflict, Wólé a Muslim leader suggests certain sayings among the Yorùbá as helping to prevent crises from unfolding into violence. Effective communication is seen in the Yorùbá saying, *pèlẹ̀ lákọ́ ó lábo*, which literarily means ‘sorry can be said in a feminine (peaceful) or a masculine (arrogant) manner’. Another suggestion concerns the way that the Yorùbá relate to people, described as *mọ̀wa foniwa niije ọ̀rejọ̀re*. This implies that friendship can last only if one really understands one’s friends, their weaknesses, strengths, and one knows how and when to take them seriously. Otherwise, one should let them seek friendship elsewhere, as the relationship will not last, however hard the pair try to understand each other.

Wólé points out that certain qualities become exceptional to the Yorùbá in terms of peaceful relations and that such qualities when present in other ethnic groups must also be used productively to sustain the peaceful relationship among their people. These are:

*Yorùbá ni arojinle* (A display of deep thoughts and foresight). Deep thought generates insights and better foresight, which are valuable before acting on an issue, according to Wólé. This contrasts what Saratu (FGD3) calls ‘pacifism’ among the Yorùbá, considering the Yorùbá as being slow to respond to issues with violence. Wólé, however, describes this as understanding and empathy.

Religious values and consciousness of eternal judgement are relevant here. Religious values and consciousness of eternal judgement remain strong among the Yorùbá. They believe in the traditional oath potent enough to kill culprits mysteriously. Sincere and devoted Yorùbá Christians and Muslims are conscious of heaven and eternal judgement and are careful of what they do and their involvement in conflict and violence. However,

some contemporary politicians are thought not to display such virtues while in power, claims Wólé, as also noted in Kànmí's argument in the subsequent FI.

Ismaila, a Muslim FGD3 participant, observed that Yorùbá give more respect to their elders to settle disputes when compared with his experience elsewhere in northern Nigeria. Meriani, a Muslim female participant, says that love is the ultimate value among the Yorùbá people. She (a secondary *ethnie*) is originally from Kogi state but married an Ògbómòşó Yorùbá man while living in Ilorin. She sees the Yorùbá as her brothers and sisters. Saratu, originally from Kastina state but now living among the Yorùbá in Ilorin, presents a scenario in which she considers some Yorùbá as pacifists rather than being firm when trying to keep the peace. Blessing, a staff member of a radio station, in an interview suggested music as a means by which the Yorùbá educate their people in the way of peace. I am aware also of the possibility of using music for causing division in their community. However, the public use of music on the electronic media among the Yorùbá is often positive.

#### **4.4 Summary**

This chapter has provided the findings from the data. Culture, religion, the idea of family and children upbringing, social life and leadership, and sense of community play major roles in the Yorùbá's peacefulness. Most of the participants attest to the roles of elders in dispute or conflict management, asserting that these contribute immensely to maintaining the peace amongst the Yorùbá. The elders here come from the community, religions, and family units. The Yorùbá culture (and what it entails) along with their social connections (and dependence on one another) and their religions (religious values and the role they play in the people's daily life) are also significant in encouraging peace. The hindrances

to the harmony are multifaceted with the pronounced ones being politics and land disputes. The theological differences that pose problems are often handled in the community to prevent dangerous escalation.

In the remaining chapters, I proceed to discuss how the themes generated here facilitate harmony among the Yorùbá, thereby answering the main research question on how the Yorùbá maintain harmony (or peace) within their communities despite their occasional disputes, crises, and conflicts.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### YORÙBÁ CULTURE AS A MEANS OF DE-ESCALATING CONFLICT AND MAINTAINING PEACE

In this chapter, I ascertain the presence of conflict and discuss how some features of Yorùbá culture facilitate harmony (see Figure 16: NVivo FGD3 mind map culture). Most works in peace and conflict studies concern interventions in conflict situations – such as conflict management– or projects seeking to sustain peace after a conflict, such as conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and peace education. However, using a peace lens, my findings from the previous chapter affirm the Yorùbá culture as one of the means of sustaining peace in their community.

Some scholars like Kyrou have examined what it takes to go beyond environmental problems into ‘the inherent capacities of the environment to inform and sustain peace’ described as ‘environmental peacemaking’ or ‘peace ecology’ (2007, p. 73). Similarly, Hyde argues for a ‘resocialisation of people’s sufferings from atrocities’ (2006, p. 257). Hyde’s addresses those suffering from atrocities, a form of conflict transformation (when coming out of a conflict). However, like Kyrou, my study projects the capacity of a community to sustain its peace in the religious and cultural domains.

Anthropology has continued to examine the ‘PS’ that is some selected tribes and communities who dissociate themselves from violence and attempt to resolve their conflict as much as possible (see Chapter one – 1.2.1). The societies in this category have their peculiar problems just as the Yorùbá also have theirs as discussed in the following section. Some associated problems with PS are poverty and the lack of connection with the outside world, yet there are areas of strength like a loose leadership hierarchy, a

productive social set-up and a communal lifestyle that discourages greed. These societies do not see the acclaimed weakness as a problem, but non-native scholars often do. How much of these correlates to or diverge from the Yorùbá acclaimed peacefulness? The cumulative hierarchy charts (Chapter 4.1.4) from my findings reveal six themes, namely:

- Yorùbá culture.
- Family
- Social interactions
- Community life
- The way in which the subjects practise their religions
- The multi-faceted nature of occasional conflicts among the Yorùbá

The first five themes help the Yorùbá to sustain their peace and live in harmony, while they work on the last theme whenever it emerges. Any failure to handle the occasional conflicts leads to violence, unless their leaders on each occasion are proactive enough in its management to keep it brief, which they often do. For the Yorùbá, culture, social interactions, community life, family, and religious cooperation or understanding are the suggested useful ways of de-escalating disputes and conflicts to retain peace.

## **5.1 Violent Conflict among the Yorùbá**

This research shows that, like any human communities, the PS included, the Yorùbá experience conflicts of different sorts. This is not to diminish the strength they have displayed in seeking to maintain their harmony, especially in the religious sphere. Yet, it

is worth mentioning some of the conflicts that the Yorùbá have experienced over the years.

Land disputes are one of the main causes of conflict among the Yorùbá. Both Wólé and Ifá discussed some of the violent conflicts that have occurred among the Yorùbá such as the town conflicts of Ilé-Ifè versus Modákéké, the Òffá versus Èrínlé and the Saragi versus Odò Qwá. The Òffá- Èrínlé led to calls for divorce where their children had inter-married. Calls for divorce also arose among the Ilé-Ifè and Modákéké people, as Wólé reiterates. In a separate interview in this study, Ọmọbọ mentions the various conflicts and wars among the Yorùbá in relation to land disputes, such as the Karigi and Ibadan, the Ogunmọla and Shodekẹ, Ikirun and Ọbaagùn boundary disputes, and the Modákéké and Ilé-Ifè conflicts. According to Ọmọbọ, the Ife and Modákéké war led to some in mixed marriages being obliged to divorce and return to their parents, reinforcing Wólé and Ifá's arguments. Ọmọbọ says, 'It was a terrible situation'. Ifá strongly believes that conflicts arise from economic related situations, politics, and religion, and can escalate quickly, as he relates economic conflicts to limited land and water resources, where family leaders have key roles to play to mediate to prevent their escalation.

Secondary sources suggest that the inability to meet the economic needs of a people had the potential to cause conflict, hence the PS often discourage greed (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). Like Ifá's claims on disputes over water or the economy, Grech-Madin et al. (2018) write about water diplomacy: the maintenance of peace regarding the use of water at the local, intrastate and international levels, citing examples of conflicts in Kenya between 'farmers and pastoralists' and across different ethnic groups (*ibid*, p. 107). Economics and resources related conflicts are becoming increasingly common in the middle-belt, western and southern parts of Nigeria. Ekpenyong's work corroborates Wólé and Ifá's argument on the causes of violence in southern Nigeria as disputes over land ownership, resource

control, politics and social institutions like chieftaincy and power struggles (2011, pp. 119-121). Other causes of conflict Ekpenyong mentions are jealousy, corruption, environmental destruction, discrimination, and religious rivalry (2011, pp. 121-124). Jealousy is commonly refuted among the PS.

Religion and political conflicts are other types of conflicts identified among the Yorùbá. Although religious violence is not very common, religious tensions have been reported recently: the Sèpètèrì conflict and the Islamic *hijab* controversy in Osun state discussed in this study are examples. I describe the *hijab* tension as institutionally caused. The Yorùbá women and girls wear traditional headgear and neck scarves at home and for important occasions. Such outfits have not been a cause of conflict until recently among the Shaki, Sèpètèrì and a few residents of the Ejigbo and Iwo in Osun state. The Osun State *hijab* conflict is traceable to the state government enforcing the wearing of the *hijab* by Muslim students in schools established and run by Christian communities.

The *hijab* debates that led to violence at the Ejigbo Baptist High School (EBHS) attracted my attention. I was permitted to conduct the interview on the condition of anonymity because the case had been taken to court and the school won, retaining its Christian ethos. It was reported that after the government's imposition of the Islamic *hijab* on high schools in Osun, the EBHS prevented Muslim girls from wearing the *hijab* at school, due to it being a Christian school. Some Muslims took the law into their own hands, invading the school principal's office and assaulting him (AB; CD). It took the intervention of the Ògìyán, the King of Ejigbo, who is also a Christian, to rescue the principal from the school and take him to the palace for his safety. Although the case was settled in court, the sustenance of the peace and living up to the school's ethos (with the normal school uniform) required the support of the parents, including the Muslims. The restoration of peace at the school shows understanding from both sides. AB suggests:

When the government took over many (mission) schools in Nigeria, it was well understood that the culture of each school would be maintained by each school, but they began to impose the idea of hijab on our school, which we do not agree with (FI).

This is the view of an insider and a witness of the *hijab* crisis in a school in Osun State.

Another teacher colleague, CD adds:

The emergence of the hijab crises at the schools in Osun State was politically motivated as the government took over the schools and stopped their known ethos: prayers, uniforms, and other standards the schools were known for. (FI)

After the recent crisis at the EBHS and the subsequent court verdict, the parents agreed to take responsibility for any act of vandalism or violence perpetrated in the school by their children and wards. The systematic taking over of Christian established and led primary and high schools in the west and south of Nigeria is becoming a concern to the southwest Nigeria Christians, due to the division created between the people by such intrusions.

Inter-religious conflict is present even though uncommon. The alleged role of the Osun state Muslim politicians and the state governor in the *hijab* crisis suggests leaders are responsible for the peace and/or conflict in their communities. Similarly, the inability to circumnavigate the differences in culture has caused disunity and strain. Ifá (FGD3) suggests that inability to adapt to the changes in religions and cultural dynamics have the potential to cause disunity such as the Oro (IAR) indigenous festival prohibiting women's movement at night and sometimes during the day in modern times. The conflict between Muslims and the indigenous (IAR) worshippers likewise appeared in Ọ̀yó in my survey, Iwo interview, and between Christians and the Oro indigenous practitioners in Ọ̀gbómòṣò at some point in their history (FGD1). Ọ̀mọ̀bọ (FI) mentions an example of an inter-

religious conflict between the Nurudeen Islamic group and the Egungun festival in Ila-Orangun, which was later resolved.

Community structures have been used to resolve many conflicts. Also, the constructive use of language is noted as instrumental for conflict resolution, and peace maintenance through an understanding of one another's values and tolerance. Thus, misinformation, misinterpretation, and misrepresentation of other peoples' ideas or values should be avoided, while tolerance encouraged in a community that seeks peace. The communities that can handle information, and understand their neighbours recover from conflicts more easily as suggested in this study.

Considering secondary sources to support this finding, it has been suggested that the colonial role had destabilizing effects on the leadership structure of the Yorùbá, such as the destabilizing of the flow of authority among the monarchs (Oba), the head chiefs (baálè) and the populace. While the Western-educated Yorùbá have tried to salvage it, Vaughan argues that the contemporary corrupt governance structure still holds on to the people (2006). Martineau equally proposes a re-visit of the roles the Kings (Oba) played within African societies (2006). Ekpenyong provides solutions to conflict like dialogue, forgiveness, promotion of social justice, workshops and spiritual engagement like prayer and evangelism, (2011, pp. 127-129, 130, 132), where the church should provide a leading role. Scholars have already identified the avoidance of jealousy and greed as areas of strength identified among the PS.

In short, land disputes and bad leadership represented by some of the contemporary politicians have caused Nigerians untold hardship through the religio-political violence common during election campaigns (Lyons & Reinermann, 2003), the *hijab* crises and corruption. The responsible leaders' role in managing these problems, where they are capable, have been productive. The narratives in this study show that the Yorùbá are not

free of violence, be it physical, psychological, or structural, but attention on the Yorùbá's capacity to de-escalate conflicts where possible and retain their peace must be given consideration as a contribution to peace research.

## **5.2 Culture of Tolerance, Values and Understanding**

In the cumulative hierarchy chart, the Yorùbá culture, social interactions, community life, family and religion arise as particularly relevant to the way the Yorùbá maintain harmony among their people. The features that appear in support of the Yorùbá culture in this study are tolerance, understanding, and respect; stories and Yorùbá sayings; effective and good communication; brotherhood; financial support for one another; and good interpersonal relations. These features are found to be helpful in supporting the Yorùbá to retain their peacefulness when given attention.

According to Giddens: 'Culture consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the *material goods* they create. Values are abstract ideas, while norms are definite principles or rules which people are expected to observe. Norms present the 'dos' and 'dents' of social life' (1989, p. 31). Going by Giddens' definition, the values, norms-rules, and social life described as the culture here have something to do with the way in which the Yorùbá respond to crises. While these could be applicable to any other human society, the crucial thing is the content of these norms and what the social life looks like, which often differs in detail from one culture to another. Giddens further writes:

We cannot understand these practices and beliefs separately from the wider cultures of which they are part. A culture has to be studied in terms of its own meanings and values – a key presupposition of sociology. Sociologists endeavour as far as possible to avoid

ethnocentrism, which is judging other cultures by comparison with one's own. Since human cultures vary so widely, it is not surprising that people coming from one culture frequently find it difficult to sympathize with the ideas or behaviour of those from a different culture [...] In sociology, we have to ensure that we remove our own cultural blinkers in order to see the ways of life of different peoples in an unbiased light. (1989, p. 39).

Two issues arise clearly: meanings and values and not imposing the researchers' culture onto the subject. The meaning and values are to be found in the language and the day-to-day life of the subject which this study attempts to clarify. However, the issue of the imposition of a foreign researcher's culture does not apply here, as I am a native and speak the language of the research participants. In the areas of discussion where I am not a practitioner (Islam, for example), a relevant practitioner was invited to the group discussion or interview. The study of culture and tolerance has also been addressed by a group of academics and expressed below in the Senegalese context:

Three Senegalese professors explain to the UW-Madison group several reasons for the peaceful relations between the country's religions. First, there is the culture of *teranga*, or hospitality, a deeply engrained Senegalese value taught at home and in school, said Badara Sall [...] 'When you encounter a person who doesn't share your religious belief', added Khadidiatou Diallo [...] 'you don't see that person as an enemy, but as a brother who at least shares the same culture'. (Senegal-n.a., 2009)

To the Senegalese, *teranga*, (hospitality) is the key factor in mutual love and peace maintenance. There are also indications of the presence of a peaceful Shi'i Muslim group in Senegal, (Leichtman, 2009).

To the Yorùbá, cultural and communal life expressed in the form of tolerance, respect, effective communication and brotherhood or family (*Ebi*) among the Yorùbá are relevant to their peacefulness. Similarly, financial support for family and neighbours have more social and economic relevance among the Yorùbá. Culture, therefore, is important to the Yorùbá's peacefulness.

### 5.3 Linguistic Heritage: Values, Music, and Storytelling

Another feature within the Yorùbá culture that facilitates peacefulness is their use of language. This common language is a feature that has become a binding entity, even when they are away from their hometowns as Ọpẹ has suggested in this study. Regardless of a person's religion, Ọpẹ often feels happy seeing or hearing somebody speaking Yorùbá while she was away from home (Yorùbáland). Similarly, Yorùbá wisdom sayings and music are identified as features for de-escalating conflicts and maintaining peace. Writing on culture, Giddens suggests:

When we use the term in ordinary daily conversation, we often think of 'culture' as equivalent to the 'higher things of the mind' – art, literature, music and painting [...] Culture refers to the whole way of life of the members of a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits. (1989, p. 31)

The Yorùbá culture embraces all the areas that Giddens suggests. Yorùbá's struggled for their literature to be published in their language despite the colonial regime's opposition. They used music to combat social injustice, diffuse tension and uphold their cherished values. Blessing (FI) at a radio station in Ibadan, suggests that certain music and songs express values that support the unity of the Yorùbá people, which politics had not been able to infiltrate. Some of the artists are well respected for their social, moral, storytelling, funeral, and praise songs. These musicians include King Sunny Adé (Adegeye)<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> I placed the English translation of some of Sunday Adeniyi Adegeye (aka King Sunny Ade)'s songs in Appendix E.

Ebenezer Obey (Fabiya)<sup>2</sup>, Kayode Fashola (Fashola),<sup>3</sup> Orlando Owoh (Owomoyela)<sup>4</sup>. Kayode Fashola and Ogundare Foyanmu on social and ethics while Fela (Anikulapo) Kuti (Kuti) concentrate on justice and politics<sup>5</sup>. Fela Anikulapo Kuti is a well-known Yorùbá artist, a humanist and a musician who often confronts exploitation, injustice, and other forms of maladministration in politics and religion in Nigeria and across Africa and even globally. Some examples are provided in the appendices.

These musicians promote the Yorùbá worldview and social interaction based on their popularity and messages their music conveys to the public. The music helps the masses to retain aspects of the Yorùbá culture, including its worldview of peace, ethics, social life, and courage. Most of their songs are accepted amongst Christians and Muslims, and are played at social functions such as weddings, naming ceremonies, dedications of new houses, and birthday parties with social commentary and moral lessons.

Concerning the control and prevention of conflict, certain sayings help to defuse disputes and prevent its degeneration into violence. Wọlé (FGD3) points out some which are utilized by the Yorùbá to preserve their peaceful relations. Wọlé suggests, *Yorùbá ní àròjinlẹ̀* ('the Yorùbá have used deep thoughts and foresight'). The *àròjinlẹ̀* takes place before an action is taken according to Wọlé:

They think of where and how an activity [...] will end and they are conscious of their roles if it is a joint activity with somebody else. They ask, "Should I be involved in this?"

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<sup>2</sup> The uploaded songs of Ebenezer Obey Fabiya are well patronized on the YouTube. I placed the English translation of some of his songs in Appendix E.

<sup>3</sup> Fashola's 'Ranti Omo Eni ti Iwo nse o' on the YouTube has about 533,000 views when accessed on 11/01/2020.

<sup>4</sup> Orlando Owoh's real name is Stephen Oladipupo Olaore Owomoyela. I placed the English translation of Owoh's song 'Ese rere' in Appendix E.

<sup>5</sup> Fela Kuti's 'Zombie' uploaded to the Youtube 14 April 2011 accessed 11/01/2020 had 41,216 views while 'Shuffling and Shmilling' uploaded 5 Nov 2011 had over 1.85 million views. The Fela's music that I accessed on the YouTube cited here have lyrics, hence its translation was no longer necessary.

Wọlé gives an example of an incident in Ibadan. At the end of Ramadan, two Christians (a man and a woman) approached Wọlé on different occasions, complaining of the early morning Muslim calls to prayer at the mosque and asserting the need to stop the noise. They said it often woke them up and disturbed the woman's ill mother. In his response, Wọlé wished her mother a quick recovery and then argued that he (Wọlé) gives the Islamic call to prayer without the use of loudspeakers and the woman should remember that the Christians use loudspeakers during their Wednesday and Friday night prayers and noted that he had not complained. This became an eye-opener for the woman, who then had to consider tolerance and mutual understanding. Wọlé called the mosque leaders to inform them of the complaints and the need for both sides to keep the peace without fault-finding. This is an example of how the Yorùbá seek opportunities to resolve disputes amicably before it degenerates into conflict. This is like Odu's (FI) 'reporting'; and Adé's (FI) example of the Yorùbá youth protesting the Fulani's cattle spoiling their farm produce at the Oyo State governor's office in Ibadan instead of taking the law into their own hands.

Wọlé's narrative shows sincerity, understanding, and awareness of the complaint's procedures and the effects of good leadership and empathy. The dispute was resolved due to the respect the complainants had for Wọlé and his status in the community (a Yorùbá Muslim leader) and they brought the grievances to him. Wọlé's ability to handle the complaint as a leader in their community, addressing the leaders of the mosque and the Christian group is gratifying. The incidence did not degenerate to reporting to the police, an illustration of ADR among the Yorùbá. Wọlé adds that their landlords' association meets regularly to resolve disputes. The landlords' association is akin to the community leaders' meeting discussed by Odu and Adé; and the kind that ceased to function and contributed to the collapse of harmony in Sẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀rì (FGD2).

Another example is that of effective communication. This is seen in the Yorùbá saying, *pẹlẹ lakọ, o labo* ('an apology could be said in a feminine or a masculine way'), the idea shared in Dayọ's narration (FGD3). This implies that one can apologise in a genuine feminine way or in a masculine arrogant and unacceptable way, which the aggrieved will not appreciate. The use of gender here reflects thick description, relevant to the Yorùbá worldview. Men are considered strong and dominating (in a positive way). Yet, apologies must be rendered in a soft manner (feminine like) to reflect meekness, honesty, and repentance. Dayọ says the Yorùbá takes genuine apologies very seriously.

In the interview with Adé, a radio station manager, he discusses the wisdom sayings which basically inform the Yorùbá's readiness to tackle problems before they escalate. These include *ómbò lókè, àwòn ni àádẹ́ dèè* ('when an object is falling from the top or from roof, the net should be set immediately to collect it'). That is, when you have privileged information about an impending problem or danger, you must prepare to tackle it. This saying prompts the Yorùbá to get ready for any danger that they are warned of, such as a plan to cause violence or a fight. In support of this, the FGD1 emphasizes the role of culture and elders in settling disputes, with Taiwo (FGD1) citing community interventions with their leader's cooperation and the interception of some reported invaders in Ògbómòşó.

Adé confirms that the Yorùbá seek to know their neighbours and describe them by their name, house, compound, and town. If in doubt, they will ask, *omọ ilé ibo ni ó?* ('which house are you from?'). According to Adé, if you know the family name of a young person initiating a conflict, the youth will be careful of continuing in such troublemaking, unless they are drunk with alcohol. The Yorùbá say, *ẹni ti a mọnya ati baba rẹ, agara daa* ('knowing both parents of a troublemaker before the deed renders them powerless'). The Yorùbá are proactive in challenging troublemakers and supporting them to seek peace.

Odù also suggests that family connections and knowing people by name in each community help to curb violence and inappropriate behaviour.

According to Odù, the Yorùbá use *ifinisùn* (reporting) and *ibániwí* (discipline) to keep their communities safe under the control of their responsible community leaders. A form of complaint's procedure. Reporting to elders or a designated leader is followed by a rebuke or discipline by a body of elders. According to Odù:

Rebuke often means a verbal and facial expression of discontent with the persons' behaviours, while discipline may be physical, like being given a fine or jobs to do on the farm (the community and leaders' farms) without pay. Both rebuke and discipline must be followed by apologies from the offender to the offended and the community in general, because the offences against one often have negative effects on the community's good name.

Equally, Odù says the idea of *omólúàbí* is cherished among the Yorùbá. *Omólúàbí* concerns the expected behaviour of a responsible Yorùbá person, regardless of gender, age, or social and economic status. Even though the *omólúàbí* qualities are seldom written, they are transmitted through Yorùbá storytelling, such as the respect for elders, respect for human life, appropriate greetings, and honesty, promise-keeping, good financial responsibility, caring for children and the elderly, truthfulness, shamefulness of identifying with a thief, industriousness, and love of one's neighbours. These qualities are reflected in the primary school Yorùbá literary texts, *Alawiye Apa Kinni titi de Apa Kefa* (the Alawiye textbooks parts 1-6), by Ọdunjọ and Lasekan, which numerous Yorùbá pupils have used for many decades. The translation of this enriching literature into other languages could help to promote these ideals in the early childhood education and ethical development of other non-Yorùbá children, thereby making further contributions to peace culture and peace education in general.

On whether the Yorùbá express their feelings as they seek to maintain a harmonious community, Adé suggests that they have the right to express their feelings and do so when interacting with their neighbours. He discusses scenarios in which some people protested at the Ògbómòṣó FM Parrot Radio Station and at the governor's office in Ibadan about the Fulani (Bororo sect) leading their cattle to eat from the Yorùbá people's farms. According to Adé, the elders took the initiative, following the report and the protests to curb the Bororo's invasion of the Ògbómòṣó farmlands. In a later telephone conversation with a resident of Ilorin in the northern part of Yorùbáland (January 2018), however, there was another report of a similar Bororo invasion of farmland, where the farmer was unable to challenge them for the fear of being attacked or killed. Non-settler Fulani<sup>6</sup> herdsmen have been accused of violent crime against many local farmers in Nigeria.

In contrast, Saratu, a secondary *ethnie* in Ilorin (FGD3), contests the Yorùbá's harmonious ambition, declaring it is all timidity as she was cautioned for rebuking a woman who allegedly lost her child through carelessness. The FGD3 responded that the Yorùbá are not timid as much as Saratu suggested, but are rather considerate and thoughtful (an *omólúàbí* and *aláròjinlẹ̀* attribute), not to increase the sadness of the woman that was recently bereaved of her child by verbally attacking her. In general, they suggested they would consider taking up arms against others a last resort as implied by Wólé's use of the idea of *aláròjinlẹ̀* (thoughtful). Similarly, the Yorùbá from the FGD1 suggests the elders have been co-operating for peacefulness in Ògbómòṣó and such leadership is essential for curbing violence and injustice in their communities.

Does peacefulness mean non-response to physical assaults? The invasions of various farmlands by the Fulani and the killing of the owners have plagued the regime of President Muhammadu Buhari in Nigeria as of 2016, which had not ceased till May 2020. Wole

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<sup>6</sup> An ethnic group found in northern Nigeria and many other parts of West Africa.

Soyinka (a Nobel Laureate) has disclosed the readiness of the Yorùbá Ogun state local hunters to defend their people in future cases of Fulani herdsmen trespassing and launching attacks in their communities, should the police fail to help (Folasade-Koyi, 2018; Makinde & Dada, 2018). The southwest governors launched a joint local hunters' group called Àmòtẹ̀kùn to support the policing and provide security for every resident of the Yorùbáland (Johnson, Sessou, Badru, & Abubakar, 2020). Peacefulness among the Yorùbá, therefore, does not mean defencelessness.

The ability of the Yorùbá to resolve their conflicts and retain peace also has to do with their understanding, values, and the linguistic heritage of their culture. Considering secondary sources on language in a sociological context, Giddens writes 'No one disputes that possession of language is one of the most distinctive of all human cultural attributes, shared by all cultures (although many thousands of different languages are spoken in the world)' (1989, p. 40). The harmony observable among the Yorùbá in their day-to-day community interaction has to do with their understanding, values, and use of language in their culture, which also has a link with their tolerance of religious differences in their society. Similarly, the Yorùbá's understanding and the idea of family, with their expressions concerning *Èbí* and *Ọmọ ìyá kanná* (motherhood) are noted as features that help to de-escalate tension and conflicts, thereby affirming Akinjogbin's *Èbí* theory. However, this research takes the *Èbí* theory further by unlocking other linguistic features that have contributed immensely to the unity of the Yorùbá. Wenden's paper comes to mind:

View[ing] language, not as a neutral medium for the description of reality but as actively shaping and giving meaning to human experience. It argues that the linguistic factor is taken into account in the analysis of and prescription for problems deriving from social and ecological violence that challenge contemporary societies. To that end, it outlines the components of a linguistic framework that illustrates how language communicates ideologies, which shape

group attitudes and justify social practices that sustain the use of such violence. (Wenden, n.d.)

Wenden bases the argument on the ‘theories of critical linguistics’, arguing that linguistic factors should be considered while handling problems associated with social and ecological violence. Also important is how ‘language communicates ideologies’, which in turn has a direct impact, positive or destructive on society. The roles that the sayings and cultural values play among the Yorùbá cannot be over-emphasized.

My findings show how the positive use of language in day-to-day communication and in music has influenced the peace-sustaining culture of the Yorùbá over the years. Wenden writes:

Despite the multifaceted role language plays in promoting direct and indirect violence, activities that would develop the linguistic knowledge and critical language skills for understanding how discourse shapes individual and group beliefs and prompts social action are conspicuously absent from peace education. This article aims to address this absence. It will present a framework for promoting critical language awareness, discuss its relevance to the preparation of critically literate citizens and suggest ways of incorporating it into programmes and curricula that educate for peace. (Wenden, 2007)

Wenden provides a work that is relevant to my findings, arguing for the inclusion of ‘how discourse shapes individual and group beliefs and prompts social action’ in peace education. The positive use of language to promote peace and de-escalate tension should be further explored in peace studies.

This list of the Yorùbá sayings, songs, values, and ideas is not exhaustive but useful for understanding Yorùbá thoughts, worldview regarding disputes, de-escalation, and sustaining peace in the community. These all have the effects of restraining the Yorùbá’s response to conflict, to maintain harmony with attempts to pass on the same ideals and norms to the younger generation through oral traditions and via the Yorùbá literature used

in schools, the evening moonlight (or bedtime) stories (*àlò*), and the media. An example of how language is used to promote peace is found in the *Èbí* theory among the Yorùbá.

#### **5.4 *Èbí* and *Ọmọ ìyá kanná* as a Family Bond**

The idea of the family bond or *Èbí* is used amongst Yorùbá in many ways, biologically as well as in a social context and sometimes with the aim to pacify them in a time of conflict. Akinjogbin (1966) initiated the *Èbí* theory but the subject has been discussed widely by other scholars (Brandon, 1997; Ogunremi & Adediran, 1998; Westermann et al., 1969, 2008). Sholagbade (n.d.) describes a similar concept – *Ọmọ ìyá kanná* (children of the same mother) – to illustrate the harmony between the Yorùbá Muslims and Christians in Epe, Lagos State, Nigeria. The clue behind *Èbí* is that the Yorùbá view themselves as a family, an idea which permeates their society with potential to ease tension in times of conflict (see 2.4).

According to Lateef (FI), a Yorùbá Muslim:

There are hardly any families in Yorùbáland without mixed religions. My brother is a Christian. He has just completed his PhD and is now a pastor. We get on with each other very well. We do not quarrel because of our religious differences. I let him know my religion is mine and he has his.

Lateef's case is one of a biological connection, having a Christian brother with whom there are no threats of Islamic apostasy is a good example of Yorùbá religious freedom and tolerance. Iya Waisu is a Muslim wife from Christian parents, married to a Muslim husband, while Kunle, Láńre (FGD2), and Ọmọbọ (FI) are Christians from Muslim families. The situation differs in the northern part of Nigeria, where religious conversion is labelled 'apostasy' and attracts an informal and illegal death sentence. Illegal as such

violence against a convert is not officially approved by the federal (national) government.

Similarly, according to the FGD3 and Lateef (FI), differences in religion among the Yorùbá of the same parents do not lead to physical violence and there is no evidence of apostasy-related deaths among the Yorùbá. They claim to see themselves as *Ẹbí* or *omọ ìyá kannâ*. The idea of the family kept Lateef and his brother together in harmony after his brother's conversion to Christianity. Lateef is an Imam and was completing his Ph.D. while his Christian brother also holds a Ph.D. and is a pastor of a local church. This is an incredible relationship when viewed from an international religious context.

Ìyabò (FI) [a university undergraduate] mentions the hospitality she received during her travel to another part of Yorùbáland (Oke Ogun) for her university admission examination<sup>7</sup>. Her host did not know her prior to her arrival yet she said she spent the night with the host like a family [she also enjoyed free housing and feeding for the night].

The discussion of *Ẹbí* was taken further by Múfú in FGD3, who explores the origin of the term. According to Múfú, *omọ ìyá kannâ* has been in use since before the advent of Islam and Christianity amongst the Yorùbá and has been used to domesticate religion. The three religions adopted the concept and use it as a potent uniting force for harmony and to resolve disputes. Múfú suggests a similar concept to *omọ ìyá kannâ* – that is, *omọ bàbà kannâ ni wá* (we are children of the same father) – which he claims also predates both Islam and Christianity. The *omọ baba* concept is also used among the Yorùbá, like *omọ ìyá kannâ*, for conflict resolution and for pacifying people in times of dispute. Múfú said he worked in Osun state among his Yorùbá people and observed that the Yorùbá are often pleased to celebrate with their neighbours and relations in social contexts. Should siblings

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<sup>7</sup> Oke Ogun in Òyó State of Nigeria experienced religious related violence but the community members seem to be humane in their relationship to resolve it.

fight, hate and/or injure each other because of religious differences? Most Yorùbá's default answer is no, rather they resolve their disputes in a reasonable manner.

## 5.5 Evolution of Other Related Concepts

Some everyday Yorùbá sayings contribute to the building of harmony and maintaining peace. As noted in FGD3, where the use of *omọ iyá kannâ* (motherhood) and *omọ bàbá kannâ* (fatherhood) to unite individuals in disputes or conflicts is discussed, other similar sayings have also become part of the cultural apparatus for keeping conflict at bay. For instance, some say, 'stop arguing, after all, you are siblings [of the same father and mother]'. This idea is used in many Yorùbá communities to pacify people in conflict and to bring an end to a dispute, reminding the aggrieved of their common parenthood and the need to resolve their conflicts as soon as possible.

This household conflict management strategy is also effective among Yorùbá Christians and Muslims, as they interpret motherhood and fatherhood in connection with Adam and Eve in their scriptures. They both consider Eve to be the mother in the *Ẹbí* theory. FGD3 in Ilorin and FGD1 in Ògbómòşó highlight this connection. When the Ilorin FGD3 refers to Eve as the mother in *Ẹbí* theory [for a thicker description], I challenged them to explain how the idea of Eve as a primordial mother comes into their conflict resolution apparatus. They suggest that the idea of motherhood in conflict resolution predates Islam and Christianity on Yorùbá soil, although both religions have adopted Eve as a common mother. The use of Eve by both Christian and Muslim Yorùbá is an adoption of the *Ẹbí* concept into their religious milieu as it is both relevant and useful in reconciliation and peace talks.

*Ebí* and *ọmọ ìyá kannâ* are not the only ideas used in conflict resolution by the Yorùbá but are the main ones the Yorùbá academia employ in the debate. When taken literally, in a biological context, *ọmọ ìyá kannâ* would be irrelevant where there is no biological mother connection, as in a polygynous [a man with more than one wife] family as common among the Yorùbá. Yet, the community or household elders still seek concepts of relationships that can persuade parties involved in a conflict to resolve their differences. In that sense, if the parties involved in a conflict are of the same father but with different mothers, their shared fatherhood is affirmed to persuade them to resolve their conflicts (*ọmọ bàbá kannâ*), in line with Múfú's suggestion. In a situation when parties to a conflict do not have the same parents but were raised in the same large house (compound), the elder or peacemaker affirms the common household to dissuade them from violence and reconcile them. In a similar way, just as *ọmọ bàbá kannâ* (same father) is used in conflict management in a polygynous context, so *Ebí* (family ties) is used where the grandparents are the point of connection and *ọmọ ilé kannâ* (same house or compound) is used when appropriate, as are *ọmọ àdúgbò kannâ* (same area/community) and *ọmọ ilú kannâ* (same hometown) and *ọmọ Yorùbá kannâ* (same language).

## **5.6 Childhood Education among Peaceful Societies**

How does family life look like as far as peacefulness is concerned among peaceful societies? The answer to this question is found in their ability to pass on their cherished values and knowledge to the younger generation. Biesele and Howell's study among the !Kung hunter-gatherers identify older people (often illiterates) as sources of knowledge, values, and culture for younger people, (the grandchildren). The older people provide an informal leadership role as mentors, make economic contributions by providing the

knowledge of the local flora and fauna, and various skills needed for adult life, (Biesele & Howell, 2015). The Yorùbá also teach their young morals, prohibitions, family related skills like drumming, crafts, oil production and weaving. The !Kung divert the attention of children to other activities whenever they are quarrelling to diffuse the situation, (Draper, 1975) just as many Yorùbá do.

Fry's study among the Zapotec communities in Oaxaca in Mexico substantiate the indispensable roles of adult in the upbringing of the young in a communal society. Fry writes:

The Zapotec children of San Andrés and La Paz imitate the behaviors of their elders, especially their parents. They increasingly engage in behavioral patterns that are accepted, expected, and/or rewarded by other community members. (Fry, 1992, p. 632)

Fighting among adults, according to Fry, corresponds to the children's attitude to fighting. San Andrés children watch their adults fighting on various occasions and they also fight as children and teenagers, (Fry, 1992). On the contrary, fighting is not acceptable among the La Paz adults, hence their children also shun fighting with one another. Reflecting on La Paz, Fry writes:

If they should become involved in a physical confrontation, they are likely to separate of their own accord. Husbands in La Paz tend not to beat their wives. La Paz men treat women with greater respect and are not nearly as jealous or possessive as San Andrés men ... [o]n several other occasions, I heard La Paz parents telling children to cease play-fighting. (Fry, 1992, p. 632)

The parents, therefore, play a major role in mentoring children for peacefulness among the people of La Paz while the San Andrés' cultivate fighting, (Fry, 1992), 'San Andrés children learn that fighting and play-fighting are expected of them—that these activities

are viewed as part of their nature' while contrary is the case in La Paz, (Fry, 1992). So, it is implied from Fry's study that early childhood education and role modelling by parents or a community mostly informally, play a role in the formative years of a child and their value of or future attitude to peacefulness.

## **5.7 Summary**

Yorùbá is rich in culture with features to support them to keep their peacefulness if utilized. It has the reconciliatory means to foster love and unity among people who are not necessarily of the same biological parents. The idea of *Ebí* used in conflict resolution, which is often viewed as biological, goes further into a primordial context to foster unity and love. The Judaeo-Christian creation story of mankind as descendants of Adam and Eve (the first man and woman) is also accepted among the Muslims and used in uniting or reconciling Yorùbá Christians and Muslims. The *Ebí* theory has, therefore, evolved beyond a close family or ethnic connection to a primordial level, as the Yorùbá are resourceful in the way they handle conflicts and disputes to restore peace to their communities, all things being equal.

The peace debate attributed to the family relationship in the *Ebí* theory, therefore, does not exist in isolation but is sustained by several other connected features and values identified in the nodes generated in this study and taught within their community. The valued culture taught within a society has a direct impact on the outlook of the community, whether for offensive-defensive dichotomies or peacefulness.

## CHAPTER SIX

### COMMUNAL LIFE AND LEADERSHIP HIERARCHY AS MEANS OF DE-ESCALATING CONFLICT AND SUSTAINING PEACE

Community life (community togetherness/communal life) and hierarchy in leadership are relevant to the Yorùbá peacefulness. The relevant features under leadership are the leaders' management of conflict; community efforts, leaders' roles; elders' roles; and individual efforts. In terms of communal lifestyle, I identified the social life, social celebrations; social support regardless of religious affiliation; a sense of community; social interactions that benefit others; mixed or interfaith marriages; and the regular family and community meetings. The family is in the form of family connections, family ties and the family's management of conflict to strengthen their harmony. Mixed marriages and religion will be discussed in the next chapter.

While trying to discuss communal or community, I want to put 'commune' in perspective. 'Commune' is a noun, defined as 'a group of people living together and sharing possessions' (Webster, 2007, p. 65), and 'communal', an adjective, meaning 'of the community; shared in common' (*ibid*). Communal life in this study is thus the way in which the Yorùbá live together with a deep sense of community, including the sharing of ideas and possessions and lending helping hands as when needed, using their culture to harmonize their society. Bond earlier asserts: 'The establishment of a strong, long-term, durable, positive peace requires the cooperation of a number of stakeholders attending to a wide range of variables on a number of levels' (2014, p. 165). This kind of long-term, durable peace that needs the co-operation of stakeholders (or responsible local elders, in the case of the Yorùbá) suggests the contributions of the Yorùbá community elders to peace sustenance, the failure of which can lead to conflict and physical violence, as in the case of Sèpètèrì in this study. Similarly, Bond suggests:

Sustainable, positive peace can thus assist in avoiding or mitigating the negative conflict environmental, economic and social outcomes that ensue from destructive expressions of conflict. (2014, p. 165)

Equally, Galtung suggests that there would have been a conflict ‘before the violence broke out’ (2000, p. 14). This study corresponds to Bond (2014), suggesting a need for sustainable peace. Could understanding within a community and the maintenance of any peace features already existing in such communities complement the therapeutic dimension of Galtung’s triangular model of peace? The core areas of strength among the PS is their loose leadership structure, strong social dimension and less attention on greed or economy. Could these be relevant to the Yorùbá community?

The findings in this study are like those of the Senegalese Christian and Muslim relations, which are considered good, with the people celebrating their religious festivities that appear to strengthen their harmony (UguccioniI, 2018). On the contrary, the conflict in Sèpètèrí (FGD2), where people lacked the support needed to avoid the outside influence and the cessation of the community leaders’ meeting led to the divided community. However, the FGD1 that represents the community that handles their disputes and outside negative influences were able to maintain their harmony. So, the ability to minimize negative outside influences and render helping hands across religions when needed are areas of strength among some Yorùbá.

## **6.1 Good Communal Lifestyles and Social Interactions**

The Yorùbá have been able to sustain peace over the years in their community through social interactions and projects they execute for communal purposes. Many Yorùbá families live together in compound housing, hold regular meetings to discuss how they might be of help to one another and engage in family and community social functions.

There is co-operation at the grassroots level to reduce the intensity of structural violence against families and the community at large, as a result, homelessness is very rare amongst the Yorùbá in Nigeria.<sup>1</sup>

Structural violence is one of the least noticeable but the most damaging act against civilians in the contemporary world, Nigeria included. The public is sometimes powerless to make changes through protest or elect more responsible leaders for political offices. In the absence of responsible political leaders, however, individuals sometimes resort to be their brothers' keepers by supporting one another to survive the hardships. The Yorùbá express their care for one another regardless of the differences in their religion and social status in most of such situations. For instance, prior to the establishment of the modern political leadership structure, the ancient Yorùbá farmers used the *àáro* method, where a group of farmers are united to work on a friend's farm, then moving to another member's farm the following day or week, depending on their prior agreement. They used a similar method to build their houses, while the house owner (the host) provided food and essential materials such as roofing sheets, nails, and planks as may be required. This idea has been transferred to the local co-operative societies, which had lent money for important items or to support children's education when government-funded schools do not meet the parents' expectations and the students' needs. Parents may seek loans from locally formed co-operative societies or make monetary rotational contributions to support one another across religions. An example of such co-operative groups is the Ijeru Ọba Co-operative Society Ọgbómọṣọ where Àníké made contributions to get fund to support her children's education. The co-operative society has mixed membership of both religions (Islam and Christianity), while Àníké is a practising Baptist Christian woman, the chairman of the

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<sup>1</sup> What appears as a partial homelessness may occur among some traders while on business trips but always have a place where they call home with their family after the trips.

co-operative is a Muslim gentleman. The Yorùbá are, thus, united across religious lines in terms of helping one another in times of need, with politics dividing them more than religion. They also support one another in times of illness with loans for hospital bills, visitations, prayers, and gifts. They participate in one another's ceremonies such as the naming of a new-born, weddings, and funerals, and making monetary contributions to the celebrants. They see themselves as a family beyond the religious divide. Thus, the goal of co-operative ventures and the informal support the Yorùbá render to one another and their non-Yorùbá neighbours could be likened to what Lateef (FI) describes as 'success for one is a success for all' in their community.

There are many levels of relationships which appear in the Yorùbá cultural setting, where they provide the services for their community's benefit. An example of one party's contribution to benefitting all is the provision of healthcare facilities by the Christian community. I visited the Baptist Hospital Ejigbo (Osun state) and observed patients receiving care regardless of their religious affiliation. The hospital provides medical care to people, irrespective of their social or religious background. Muslims and their families came for medical support during my visit and no discrimination amongst the staff or patients was observed. One might wonder if that was the same town where a Christian school principal was assaulted by a Muslim parent for the school's disapproval of the wearing of the Islamic *hijab* in a Christian pioneer school. I wanted to see how the interaction would be on neutral grounds, hence I did not introduce myself until the end of my visit, after staying for over an hour with a patient whom I knew. However, I told the nurses of my intentions at the end of my visit and observation.<sup>2</sup> For Ifá (FGD3), it is unfair

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<sup>2</sup> The observation was made on the 9th September 2016, 14:00 hours. Ejigbo Baptist Hospital is an annex of the Baptist Hospital Ogbomoso. The Baptist Hospital Ogbomoso was established by Baptist Christian Missionaries along with the Baptist training centre which has become the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, both in Ogbomoso. The Baptist Hospital Ogbomoso has been developed as the site of the Bowen University Teaching Hospital Ogbomoso.

to commit violence on the basis of religious differences when same people at other times use many avenues to mutually benefit one another such as in social work, healthcare, economics, travel and education. In many instances, Yorùbá can see beyond religious differences and come together to render services for the benefit of their entire community. Religion, therefore, although ‘socially practised’, is also spiritual and personal, which allows them to take responsibility for their individual and collective actions, and a willingness to be good to their neighbours.

Saratu (FGD3) recounts an incident where some Yorùbá showed pacifism, which she strongly opposed. In the incident reported, Saratu accused a mother of being responsible for the death of her baby through negligence as mentioned earlier. She aired her opinion by rebuking the mother, but her brother-in-law confronted her for her bluntness and for being unsympathetic to the bereaved mother. For Saratu (a secondary *ethnie*) said that the Yorùbá (her brother-in-law on this occasion) were timid; while, for the Yorùbá in-laws, her approach to the situation was callous. Other participants at the FGD3 commented on this story, saying that Saratu could have reported her views to an older person in the family, who could have said a similar thing to the supposed ‘careless mother’ and such an elder would not be challenged for rebuking the mother in this narrative if the allegations were true. It is suggested that Saratu was cautioned only because such a rebuke from an equal or colleague to a distressed mother could cause problems among the younger married women in their community, who may begin to show hatred and fight one another. They might begin to see one another as enemies and the good intentions of such a rebuke would not be achieved. An appeal to the elders in a communal setting is often incontestable and the erring member of the community will learn better from their mistakes. When all these features are kept in place, the structure, or the firewall of peace for the Yorùbá community will be safeguarded.

### 6.1.1 Compound Housing and the Family

To strengthen this argument about the Yorùbá communal life, I present the story of the Òsálágbèdẹ compound. The local housing structure of a local Yorùbá community reveals the way the Yorùbá depend on one another, regardless of the individual religion or faith differences. However, this is changing nowadays, replaced by separate individual bungalow-style housing. The changes in the housing structure, nevertheless, have not prevented members of the extended families making regular visits to their relations in the same town, or occasionally during religious festivities and social functions, such as *aárẹ̀mísé*. Each home or nuclear family form the cell that makes up the extended family. A combination of extended families, sometimes including family friends in the neighbourhood, form the compound.



*Photograph 5 A local family compound house (Ile Òsálágbèdẹ)*

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<sup>3</sup> This compound housing extends to the back like a trapezium.



Photograph 6. A girl child in the hijab within a church premises



Photograph 7. A full view of the Oja Oba Baptist Church, Ògbómòşó



Photograph 8. Òsálágbède Mosque for Muslim residents



Photograph 9. The entrance of the Ogun shrine.

An example of the Yoruba indigenous religion in Ògbómòşó



Photograph 10. The house of Rev'd. Ige



Photograph 11. Ayegun Baptist Church



Photograph 12. Women with different religions within a compound housing



Daughter-in-laws with the grandchildren visiting at the Òsálágbède compound (2016)

<sup>4</sup> An example of hijab used within a peaceful, friendly and unsuspecting society.

<sup>5</sup> Ige struggled for women's freedom during the Orò African traditional festival, where the women's movement was curtailed at night and sometimes during the day in Ogbomoso. Some residents of

An example of a compound is the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ (Ọ̀gbómòṣó, Ọ̀yó state), which I have been familiar with since childhood and examine here. The residents of the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ compound include Muslims, Christians, and indigenous religion (IAR) worshippers. I interviewed some of the residents about the peaceful relations in the compound. In response to the research question on how the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ manages any disputes and conflicts that have the potential for violence while retaining their peace, Alhaja replied ‘*Ìfẹ̀ ní*’ (It is love):

The leaders use *ìsopò* (bringing people together). We do not show partiality in the way we treat the children in the compound, as each adult has the duty to relate with all the children as their own biological children, both in caring and discipline. We stay together until midnight talking about life and community life and a better understanding of *ìrẹ̀pò* (unity), regardless of religion or biological parenthood. [translated by Akintayo Olayinka]

This is an explanation of how the practice of ọ̀mọ̀ iyá kannà has expanded from the nuclear family to compound housing in a cultural setting. Alhaja speaks further:

*Àwọn bàbá ijóun kó Ebí mọ̀ra* (our forefathers<sup>s</sup> were accommodating and united the whole family): the three religions lived in harmony. There were no segregations between the children of the elders and those of the younger ones. *Ọ̀nyà kan kíyàwá* (no separator, no comb can separate us), *káà alájà* (dog owners’ section), *káà Mùsùlùmí* (Muslims’ section, otherwise known as *Káà Ìmọ̀nle*, the section for the religion difficult to learn), *káà bàbá Ọ̀gbùró* (returnees from Ọ̀gbùró – near Ìwó), all united for mutual support and progress. *Bí àwọn èwè ode oní báalẹ̀ gbé ní ìrẹ̀pò bí àwa ti ùgbé, ayé wọn ì bá nídèrùn bíi ti wa* (if today’s children [youth inclusive] were able to live in unity as we did, their lives would be better and peaceful as ours). (translated by Akintayo Olayinka)

The harmony in the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ compound cannot be thoroughly understood without a thicker description of the basis of such harmony. This involves their leadership structure, economic life, religious commitment, and social interactions.

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the Ile- Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ (compound housing) attended Ayegun Baptist Church, Ogbomoso, which also provided regular visits to the compound.

Òsá, from the name Òsálágbèdè, is a local instrument used in weaving cloth, as there were weavers and cloth traders in the compound. Àgbèdè refers to blacksmiths, which is why the Ògún indigenous worshippers have a shrine for the Ògún worship (the god of iron of the Yorùbá indigenous religion), in their compound. Similarly, the compound has a masquerade called Òbèlé, known for its friendliness with children. Òbèlé and its followers visit and greet the children in the compound and the neighbourhood and *súre fúnwòn* (pronounces blessings upon them).

Religious, cultural, social, and economic supports for peaceful relations are identified in the Òsálágbèdè compound. I can recall that the elder who is also the leader of the compound, *baálé* (head of house) traded in cocoa (cash crop) for his livelihood and did not rely on the residents' generosity for his livelihood. This helped him to ensure justice among his people, in line with Odù's suggestion that the kings and leaders who are financially independent have the potential to exhibit fair judgements. One of the Òsálágbèdè women, Mámá Elépo, produced palm oil (red vegetable oil) and other associated products from the palm industry. Another, Ìyá Eléja sold fried fish to the community, thereby having her own livelihood. Káà Alájá housing unit had dogs and traded in cocoa and local corn such as custard and *gaàrí* (powdered cassava). Adjacent to the Ògún shrine (popularly called Ìdí Ògún) is a small breakfast cafeteria which served to the community. One of the older inhabitants of the Òsálágbèdè compound owned a sawmill, which served a large population of the Ògbómòşó town for many decades. Some of the young learned men and women in the compound were schoolteachers and one a court clerk.

The neighbouring compounds render other services to the area, which keeps them economically buoyant. For instance, to one side of the Òsálágbèdè is the *Awogun* compound, which provides commercial laundry services. On the other side is the

*Ògúnlùdè* house, which provides tailoring services and maize products. Towards another end of the *Òsálágbèdè* is the Ayégún Baptist Church Mission House (Manse), which provides the Christian visiting chaplaincy services led by Rev'd. Joseph A. Ogunmoriyele, in addition to the church services. To the west is the public latrine for those who do not have toilets in their homes. The community has a local dispensary for minor health issues, while the hospital is approximately a mile away. That is Bowen University Teaching Hospital, which serves *Ògbómòṣó* and the surrounding town and villages, with an annex at Ejigbo mentioned earlier. Approximately three miles away are the state government general hospital facilities, which have become the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, *Ògbómòṣó*.

Since the 1970s covered in this study, the harmonious relationship among the *Òsálágbèdè* Yorùbá people has been kept intact by features such as an industrious lifestyle, a good economy, social justice through self-funded leaders, cultural and religious values and commitment, good health and hygiene facilities, and a good neighbourhood. A clear majority, if not all the children raised in the 1970s and 1980s have either followed their parents to their newly built houses or moved on to build their own houses elsewhere, renting out their grandparents' houses to tenants. Most of the children had no need to fight over such inheritance (houses), in line with the Yorùbá adage, *agbójúlógún firarè fó sì ta* (a dependence on inheritance for a living, [without developing life's necessary skills] will eventually end one in poverty').

Thus, the harmonious relationship in the *Òsálágbèdè* compound between people of the three religions is sustained not just by their family connections, as in *Èbí* theory (or *omọ iyá kannā*), though this is pertinent for the Yorùbá. Rather, the harmony is strengthened by their commitment to their individual religions and cultural values, and their industrious lifestyle, good neighbour relations, efficient self-supporting leadership, and love.

Maintaining peace in a house or community is principally a multi-dimensional task. As

Lateef warns:

So Yorùbá culture and upbringing have a role to play in the way people react to provocation. If you remove religion, you will see people react to provocation according to their cultural background. (FI)

Lateef reiterates that culture and upbringing contribute to the way in which people react under pressure or provocation, regardless of their official religious affiliation. Lateef, nevertheless, fails to mention the role teaching (either religious or cultural) plays in a child's upbringing, to blend with or oppose the generally accepted norms. I suggest, therefore, that whichever has the dominant impact on a person – whether culture, politics, normal religion, or aggressive religious thoughts – can influence an individual to make certain decisions under pressure or provocation. Nonetheless, the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ compound was fortunate: with virtues, good economy, social lives, morality, and religious values – with the opportunity to thrive and the ability to maintain good cordial relationships in their three religions mono-cultural compound and neighbourhood.

The heads of the Yorùbá housing compounds in general have the responsibility to maintain the harmonious relationship between the large household family where they also belong biologically to the people in their care. Odù discusses how, as in the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ compound, some ọ̀òdẹ̀ or *káà* (family unit) send representatives to the weekly or monthly *Agbo Ilé* (compound) meeting, often one per ọ̀òdẹ̀. The meeting agendas usually follow greetings, roll calls, prayers, and reports of social progress such as births, wedding notices, notifications of the need for new houses to be built and warnings for potential troublemakers. I knew, from the Ọ̀sálágbèdẹ̀ compound, that the meeting (*ìpàdẹ̀ agbo ilé*, or *ìpàdẹ̀ ọ̀mọ ilé*) is usually attended by the male adult representatives of each extended

family house (relation by grandparents). Women occasionally meet in the planning for the celebration of events such as weddings and to discuss the clothes/attire for such occasions. Through these meetings, when reports are delivered to various homes, children learn that they do not exist in isolation from the compound or community. Children also learn that they are their brothers' keepers. Responding to the question of how the Yorùbá maintain harmony, Ọmọbọ in the interview stated, '*Enìkan ní nbímọ, igba èniyàn ló ń wǒ* (only one-person labours at the delivery of a baby, but many [igba = 200] look after the child afterwards. A similar expression is, *oyún ni a kíl ran ni à mọn ran ni lómọ* ('it is unusual to help in surrogacy, especially transferring the pregnancy to someone else mid-way, but you can certainly help to carry the baby after the birth'). This shows how the Yorùbá appreciate the discipline of their neighbours' children and the need to be a responsible community.

Similarly, the compounds' representatives meet in Àdúgbò to resolve conflicts that the *agbo ilé* has been unable to resolve and discuss politics and their joint projects. The area representatives come together for the town meeting. Any unresolved conflict in the compounds is taken to the king's palace or the town hall. The areas are concerned with their good name and want to resolve their conflicts before reaching the town hall or the king's palace. When family connections do not provide a panacea for conflict resolution or a harmonious society suggested by the *Ebí* theory, the active involvement of people in the community life by knowing each other well and making a commitment to responsible leadership help to maintain harmony in their communities.

Similarly, upbringing and learned behaviour to build individual personalities play a vital and foundational role in the making of a community and eventually influence their practices and culture. This implies that people's reactions can be traced back to their upbringing in their family and society or education they received along the way. One may

ask if the culture of the people makes the individual, or if the individual makes up the dominating culture. I suggest that it is a kind of equilibrium, whichever is the stronger of the two, that dictates the flow of influence.

In his work, Abiodun suggests that the Yorùbá as a nation or community were good at arts such as bronze and terra-cotta heads of Ifè, and ornaments from wood, ivory, beads, leather, textiles with samples found in many museums at various locations across the globe (Abiodun, 2001, p. 17). He further adds that the Yorùbá culture embraces *àsà* (as a tradition) and *àsà* (as a style), (Abiodun, 2001, p. 17), *àsẹ* as in ritual power or life force, (Abiodun, 2001, p. 20); *ìwà* (character) and *ẹwà* (beauty), where character is an illustration of beauty (*ìwà-lẹwà*). He further opines, ‘Indeed, a Yorùbá aphorism declares *iwa l’ewa*, that is, “*iwa* is beauty.”’ (Abiodun, 2001, p. 21). So, to lose one’s character is to lose one’s beauty in a sense. Therefore, the character advocated for among the Yorùbá goes beyond differences in religion within their communities. Could the quest for complementary *àsà* (tradition or habit), *àsẹ* (potency and dynamic authority), *ìwà* (character) and *ẹwà* (beauty) along with other metaphysically related beliefs be the reason behind the current harmonious Yorùbá relationship, especially, when they are the basis for the new religions of Islam and Christianity?

### **6.1.2 Struggles and the Current Harmony**

The Yorùbá have a history of struggle. They have experienced violence, both internally and externally at the hands of their rulers and externally at the hands of the colonial masters. The Yorùbá fought wars and were often greeted with *oriki*, which has to do with the victories and the brutality they experienced or inflicted on their opponents in battle (Falola, 1991). Law (1991a) describes the expansion of the Yorùbá Kingdom, the slave

trade and the internal conflicts that people had with the Aláàfin between 1600 and the 1800s CE.<sup>6</sup> Balogun (1985, p. 133) provides a copy of the 1886 treaty between the Aláàfin and several Yorùbá communities and towns after their civil war. The document makes a pronouncement of autonomy for some towns and communities in Yorùbáland. The contents of the treaty are remarkable, having encouraged the Yorùbá warring factions to lay down their weapons and promote unity between the leaders and their subjects. Some of the contents are quoted below:

1. There shall be peace and friendship between the Kings, Bales, Baloguns and Chiefs the signatories to this Treaty and their peoples respectively [...] 5. In order to preserve peace the town of Modákéké shall be reconstructed on the land lying between the Osun and the Oba rivers to the north of its present situation, and such of the people of Modákéké as desire to live under the rule of the Bale and Balogun of Ibadan. (Balogun, 1985, p. 134)

The treaty also bears the title of the Queen of England as a witness. The warring factions were appeased and the reconstruction of Modákéké was suggested and approved under the suggested leadership, a form of conflict transformation in late 1800s Yorùbá history. However, there was another major violent conflict between the Ilé-Ifè and Modákéké (Toriola) in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which was also resolved without the involvement of any international peacekeeping force.

By the same token, there were elements of democracy in the Òyó Kingdom among its rulers. Law (1991) notes evidence of the dethroning of a king, a reference to Aláàfin Abioye's public apology, and a power struggle between the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the fall of the empire in the 1830s. This implies that, although the Yorùbá kings often had absolute authority, there were checks and balances on some of their reigns as most towns have

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<sup>6</sup> Alaaafin is the title of the King of Òyó and the former Òyó Empire, a major part of the Yorùbá Kingdom.

*afobaje* (kingmakers). The less privileged in society undoubtedly had only very little freedom and have experienced some violence in their history. Yet, many scholars, like Goddard in recent times, have affirmed the pro-activeness of the Yorùbá living in harmony in their communities, while this research further suggests features like the Yorùbá culture, social setting and religious milieu as pertinent to the Yorùbá's harmony.

The Yorùbá shared joint projects, such as literacy. There had been a quest for the Yorùbá literacy and culture promotion. Active participation in writing the Yorùbá language can be traced to the 1840s in a slow process, begun by the Yorùbá Christians and supported by foreigners including the British, Germans, Americans, Italians, and other Africans (Akinjogbin, 1996). According to Falola:

When academic history writing began, the Yorùbá were among the earliest to earn a higher degree and to publish their theses. The rapidity with which modern education spread and the expansion in access to university education in the Yorùbá-speaking areas hastened the reconstruction of the history of many of these groups. (1991, p. 135)

Akinjogbin (1996) mentions some of the research establishments concerning the study of Yorùbá, among which are the Yorùbá Historical Research Scheme (YHRS) and the *Egbé Ìjìnlé Yorùbá*, supporting the growth of literature in the indigenous language. However, the colonial administration of 1861 did not support the inclusion of Yorùbá in the school educational curriculum, which led to protests by the Yorùbá people (Akinjogbin, 1996, p. 40):

So, when the first education code was passed in 1881, Yorùbá was excluded from the subjects to be taught in schools. All alert men in Lagos, educated or not, protested very loudly and vigorously against this attempt 'to educate them' out of the face of the earth. A giant petition, signed by all the prominent men in Lagos and thumb printed by those who could not sign, produced no change of heart on the part of the colonial government. (Akinjogbin, 1996, p. 40)

There are no indications that the protests involved violence. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) supported the Yorùbá in the printing of materials needed for their language study (Akinjogbin, 1996). Although there was a slow growth of Yorùbá literacy in the early 1900s, the 1920s witnessed an increase in research geared towards Yorùbá history and literacy, followed by the launch of a Yorùbá newspaper (Akinjogbin, 1996). The more significant development was the Yorùbá literary works for primary schools and adult learners that appeared in that early period of publishing:

An analysis of the contents of the *Iwe Kika Ekerin* and *Iwe Kika Ekarun* will show the astounding width of the subjects treated in them. In about one hundred chapters of the former, and sixty-five chapters of the latter, the subjects treated in very readable Yorùbá include religion, both Christian and Islamic, history of Christianity in Yorùbáland and the biographies of some of the earliest missionaries in Yorùbáland; history of England and of Yorùbáland, geography of the world and of Yorùbáland; ethics, proverbs and philosophy; short Yorùbá stories and foreign stories translated into Yorùbá; music and songs. The subjects treated also include oceanography, anatomy, botany, climatology and the solar system. (Akinjogbin, 1996, p. 41)

The contents of this primary school literature in the Yorùbá language are of interest to me, concerning ethics, philosophy and Yorùbá stories. These were excellent means of passing on the cherished Yorùbá values to young people and inevitably had an impact on wider society and people's interaction with one another over the years. This must have positively influenced their worldview (after the inter and intra-tribal wars and the collapse of the Òyó Empire of the 1800s). Although the initial request for the inclusion of the Yorùbá language in the school curriculum was rejected by the colonial administration, Yorùbá's optimism and strength paid off and they eventually achieved literacy education in the indigenous language.

Ọdunjọ, one of the most prominent writers during the early history of Yorùbá writing before Nigerian independence, authored books for Nigerian pupils. His literature, *Iwé Aláwíyẹ*, which has six series, was used in primary school education and in adult literacy

courses.<sup>7</sup> The series presented a picture of the Yorùbá African way of life which includes living a happy life, morality, and endurance. My study of the contents of the series used for the six years of primary school education, reveals pressing truths about the young Yorùbá and what is expected of them as they grow to adulthood. This highlights the relevance of childhood education to the adult way of life. For instance, *Ìwé Kínní Aláwǿyé Fún Àwọ̀n Ọ̀mọ̀dẹ̀, àti Àwọ̀n Àgbàlagbà* is an elementary reading book in the Yorùbá language. The contents concern helping or supporting the needy, friendliness and industriousness among children (p. 16). Another section of the book features a birthday celebration (p. 19), teachings on kindness (p. 26), cleanliness (p. 34), truthfulness (p. 42), greed (p. 44) and honesty (p. 43). Such early childhood virtues included as a part of the curriculum must have had significant effects on the little ones' formative years, and their later adult lives. These books were produced in the mid-1900s to nurture young Yorùbá people. It is worth noting that most PS discourage greed and support kindness to reduce or eliminate conflicts in their societies (Peaceful-Societies, 2019).

Concerning the foundation of the Yorùbá ethics, Ajisafe (2003) writes of the laws and customs of the Yorùbá people, which demonstrate the vastness of the people and how organized they were before the colonial era. His work covers areas such as the head of community leadership (the *Bale*), the succession, the duties of a guardian, the right of ownership, bribery, cruelty to animals, medicine and divination, marriages, breaches of contract, funerals, and widowhood. These are prudent expressions of the Yorùbá culture and must have had an impact on the interrelations of its people across religions. These are the embodiments of the Yorùbá culture, which neither Christianity nor Islam rejects in their own traditions. This could be one of the reasons why my research findings point to

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<sup>7</sup> I studied this literature during my primary school education and also read it recently at the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, UK while conducting this research.

the Yorùbá culture as being relevant to the way in which Christians and Muslims value tolerance and seek to interpret their religions in the context of the harmony found in Yorùbá culture.

Thus, the Yorùbá people share a common culture and historical origin, while the dialect spoken in the Òyó area became the accepted form, with many publications using that Òyó variation. This is the literary form studied by the early Western Christian missionaries who served among the freed slaves in Sierra Leone and which they used for their writings (Law, 1991). To corroborate this, Olupona adds the travellers and explorers to the missionaries, as being instrumental to the exploration of the Yorùbá people (Olupona, 1993, p. 240). This language is often described as ‘Yorùbá Proper’ (*ibid*, p. 6).

The Yorùbá of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was militarily strong while the public lived in fear of slavery and kidnapping. The situation amounts to physical, psychological, and structural violence when viewed from the contemporary context. Rodríguez-Martínez and Calvo write:

Peace is not solely the absence of war, physical violence, destruction and subjugation, but also the absence of symbolic violence imposed by hierarchical relationships, which places some people in the position of tools for achieving the goals of those who control economic and political power, the cultural hegemony, access to technical and scientific development, recognition of gender, generation and territory. (2014, p. 108)

The situation among the Yorùbá of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was far from being a positive peace, rather the *Pax Romana*<sup>8</sup> kind of harmony enforced through political subjections by the ruling power – a negative peace. The idea of an *Ebí* (family), co-operative ventures, rendering helping hands, community meetings, respect, the use of language and music,

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<sup>8</sup> *Pax Romana* expresses the peace attributed to the ability to comply with the ruling power’s expectations otherwise subject to distress and abuse.

public media (such as the radio) and responsible leadership are key to the Yorùbá's current harmonious disposition as presented in the research.

Bringing the discourse to a political context, Sen (2008) uses 'unfreedom' as an example of the absence of positive peace. The absence of positive peace – that is, the presence of structural violence and social injustice – is linked to politics and power structures. However, a study of the Yorùbá community shows that the Yorùbá display some fundamental qualities that sustain the people during politically imposed structural violence. This research has examined what a peaceful community must have to keep the peace. The Yorùbá community has leadership structures, beginning in individual homes and expanding to a compound, with a group of compounds forming a community (or area) and many areas forming the town. Although some other African communities might have similar structures, the Yorùbá in this study uses these structures to promote peace and provide structural support for their families and neighbours, regardless of their religious differences to avoid violence and promote unity. This offers a step forward in peace research, as social structures are enhanced to pursue and sustain the unity of the people. Social justice, social interactions, and infrastructural development are managed harmoniously at the local level. When the state or national government fails, the traditional community is often able to ameliorate the effects of the structural violence or injustices of the ruling politicians on the local people and their families. This is not to justify the injustices caused by the contemporary politicians, but rather to put on record the level of tolerance and strength that supposed vulnerable people have displayed in their anthropological setting. Adé and Odù highlight the complaints procedure and the grassroots support for families as discussed earlier.

It is saddening that the Nigeria state governments' failures were not often due to a lack of resources but to the misappropriation of the public funds and un-assessed natural

resources. The government has been known to monopolize resources for itself and its associates or immediate families, further preventing the masses from realizing their full potential, which Kànmí (FI) in my interview, and Galtung describe as indirect violence. Indirect violence is a common phenomenon in southwest Nigeria, experienced by the Yorùbá and in other parts of Nigeria. The rise of many militant groups in Nigeria has been traced to the government's direct and 'indirect violence' against its own people. On being able to enjoy life's full potential, Galtung writes:

Thus, the potential level of realization is that which is possible with a given level of insight and resources. If insight and/or resources are monopolized by a group or class or are used for other purposes, then the actual level falls below the potential level, and violence is present in the system. In addition to these types of indirect violence there is also the direct violence where means of realization are not withheld, but directly destroyed. Thus, when a war is fought there is direct violence since killing or hurting a person certainly puts his 'actual somatic realization' below his 'potential somatic realization'. But there is also indirect violence insofar as insight and resources are channelled away from constructive efforts to bring the actual closer to the potential. (1969, p. 169)

The wider Nigerian population experiences violence due to the national resources not being evenly distributed while people live in abject poverty and their actual life achievement is far below their potential. The southern oil-rich communities complain of the siphoning of their natural resources to the north. The north has complained of the miserable condition of its people since independence, emphasized by Sanusi Lamido Sanusi (31 Oct. 2017), the former Emir of Kano and one-time Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. The West complains of political side-tracking, while the federal government complains of corruption. No one claims responsibility for or seems to be satisfied with the current Nigerian situation.

Despite the structural violence and other anomalies prevalent in Nigeria, the Yorùbá seek alternative sources of support from their anthropological setting, families, social groups, neighbours and community; their blood being truly thicker than water. The local

community is productive, industrious, and sufficiently wise to manage its affairs within its available means and social structures. This is shown by how some individuals and communities began providing non-government funded primary and high schools when the government failed to adequately maintain the existing schools. On infrastructure, some communities and individuals have erected electricity poles to serve their newly built houses, using their own money, while government officials send bills for the electricity used (Tunji, FI). Pipe-borne water is no longer available in most of the cities in southwest Nigeria and the public resort to personal boreholes and sachet or bottled water for their household use.

The governmental health sector is making efforts to meet the demand of the growing population but where it is found inadequate, private hospitals cater to their most urgent needs. Some were not comfortable with the president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, spending months in United Kingdom (UK) hospitals (BBC-News, 2017; Egbas, 2018) taking many trips for medical treatment due to the lack of adequate medical facilities he could not provide for an ordinary Nigerian. Yet, Nigerian-trained doctors when provided with good facilities in other countries do perform extraordinarily; Nwachukwu and other media outlets reported the case of Dr Oluyinka Olutoye originally from southwest Nigeria practising in the United States (2016; The-Elites, 2016).

There have not been much positive outcomes from the protests to correct the prevalent structural violence. University students who embarked on protests have put their lives in danger from the police brutality (Mustapha & Othman, 1986). The national and state governments have often been unsympathetic. For this reason, the Yorùbá sometimes resort to alternatives whenever they are faced with difficulties, disregarding government failing institutions wherever possible. Such a situation shows that the peace enjoyed by southwest Nigerian Yorùbá is far from being absolute or genuinely positive; rather, the

structural violence in economic terms, the denial of essential services and infrastructural failings has been the norm. Grewal writes:

Galtung in most of his work has sought to project positive peace as a higher ideal than negative peace [...] For this to happen, peace and violence need to be looked at in totality at all levels of human organisation. (2003, p. 4)

Positive peace is essential for a society to thrive, but this is hindered by the presence of structural violence and other forms of personal violence among the Yorùbá. When the contemporary politicians could not meet their duties as leaders, the Yorùbá often take responsibility for supporting one another for the betterment of their families and their local community. This is one of the ways in which the Yorùbá have sustained their peace, where the society attempt to heal itself, using what Galtung calls ‘self-restoration’ (Galtung, 1996, p. 1). Tolerance, understanding and responsible local leadership all work together to moderate the society to keep the peace or effect self-restoration in the context.

Negative peace – a lack of social justice and the presence of structural violence – does occur in some local Yorùbá communities. As a result, an individual who is displeased with a leader’s verdict or dispute resolution outcome may seek redress, which may lead to another conflict that will require police intervention. Peace discourse, therefore, is a regular part of a dynamic society, to avert the negative outcome of injustices and advocate for the society to flourish. With the current level of strength on peacefulness the Yorùbá do display, the political violence notwithstanding, can the Yorùbá be considered a prospective peaceful society?

## 6.2 Leadership as a Means of Dispute Management

Elders and leadership are important for conflict resolution and for sustaining peace among the Yorùbá. All elders (*àgbà* or *àgbàlagbà*) are leaders (*adari*), but not all leaders are elders among the Yorùbá. An elderly position is attained by age amongst the oldest responsible people in a local house or community while leaders are chosen amongst both the young as well as the old and given responsibilities to perform, sometimes to be accountable to the elders.

Most cultures have their own leadership style either tight or loose, defined by features such as their norms and values, whether written or unwritten. On this, Giddens writes, '[e]very culture contains its own unique patterns of behaviour, which seem alien to people from other cultural backgrounds' (1989, p. 30). Leadership styles in two cultures may be similar, based on qualities such as respect and love, yet their operational dynamics remain unique because each culture has its own values, worldview, and emphasis.

The hierarchy of leadership amongst the Yorùbá, for instance, is multifaceted: from the husband being the head of the family in a patrilineal culture to the oldest man often being selected as the head of the extended family or compound where he takes the position of an elder. The king is the head of the entire town, with the chiefs (*Olóyè*) working with him to co-ordinate the affairs of the people. The complaints procedure follows a similar pattern, with domestic conflicts handled at a family or compound level and the more grievous offences, such as robbery, are dealt with at the township level. It has been suggested that the Yorùbá are able to de-escalate or handle conflict due to the respect the community has for the hierarchy of the leadership, which gives individuals the confidence to pass on their complaints, rather than taking the law into their own hands. Sometimes when this fails, however, the community resorts to 'jungle justice', physically attacking

offenders and, on some occasions, leading to the death of the suspect, especially when the offences are considered grievous like murder. Inuit, an example of PS experience homicide in their communities as mentioned earlier but often regret it (Briggs, 1994). The act of jungle justice though sometimes found among the Yorùbá is rare, regrettable and unacceptable as a norm.

### 6.2.1 Leadership Hierarchy

In my interview with Mic from Ila-Orangun, he attributes the harmony in Yorùbá families and communities to several causes: leadership hierarchy, respect for in-laws and older people and disciplinary action taken against erring individuals. According to Mic:

These leaders would challenge the perpetrators not to spoil their community or family name. They could take the matter to the king and possibly ostracise such persons from the town if they persist in disturbing the peace of the family or community. There is peace in the community that respects this form of hierarchy.

The roles of elders (or older persons) amongst the Yorùbá cannot be overemphasized. Following a radio broadcast, which I heard the previous day,<sup>9</sup> I arranged an interview with Adé, a radio station senior staff. In the interview, Adé shares his view of how the Yorùbá settle their conflicts amicably based on the concept of *omolúàbí*; about the family relations in their homes, compounds and areas; and in their town leadership structures. Describing a scenario in which some Fulani herdsmen attacked some farmers in Ògbómòṣó villages, Adé suggests that the perpetrators on that occasion were not the Fulani who had been living locally among the Yorùbá, rather others who wished to cause communal conflict. Some Fulani herdsmen became major headlines amidst many reports of insecurity in Nigeria media and are considered notorious in some quarters, responsible

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<sup>9</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

for hundreds of clashes, thousands of victims of violence and kidnappings, (Watch., 2018). Adé suggests that listeners to his radio broadcast should be ready to confront such evil head-on adding that the already-settled Fulani neighbours amongst the Yorùbá were not the perpetrators of the reported violence in Ogbomoso.<sup>10</sup> I interviewed Adé the following day, when he added:

The Yorùbá are good travellers and if there are conflicts between them and the Hausa unjustly, for instance, the trade will become difficult and could also lead to casualties. The Yorùbá know that blood is red in every human and life should be respected.

This shows both the commercial and economic relevance of peaceful relations and the need for a careful examination of an incident before it escalates into a crisis. In this way, the Yorùbá control violence using empathy, love, mutual benefit and the hierarchy of their leadership structure. In the above narrative, the radio broadcaster is the senior management staff and able to advise his community on the envisaged conflict in their community.

Discussing the hierarchy of leadership among the Yorùbá, Adé notes that the *Sárikí Haúsáwá* (the community leader of the Hausa residents) in Ògbómòṣó has the authority of the king (the Sọun of Ògbómòṣó) to depose the Fulani leader, being under the leadership of the *Sárikí Haúsáwá*. On one occasion, some armed Fulani boys robbed some villagers and the *Sárikí Fulani* was consequently deposed by the *Sárikí Haúsáwá* as a form of reprimand. The cautioning of the offenders or erring leaders by a superior leader helps the Ògbómòṣó to keep the peace. Adé says that the Yorùbá generally welcome visitors, supporting them as they settle in the community and, when they increase in number, aiding them to appoint a leader among their new arrivals who will be responsible for both their growth and conflict management.

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<sup>10</sup> FM 101.1 Radio broadcast, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Concerning the research question of how the Yorùbá manage their disputes and conflicts, keeping them brief and maintaining harmony, these stories provide some clues. Their leadership structure, complaints and reporting procedures, and reprimanding offenders, all contribute towards managing disputes and conflicts. It is for this reason that the Sábó Areas are set aside for the Hausa settlers in most Yorùbá towns. Ògbómòṣó has Sábó for the *Haúsá* and *Gàá* (such as *Gàá Māsifà* and *Gàá Lágbèdù*) for the Fulani minority in which they settled and made their livelihood without disturbing the Yorùbá people and their way of life: an ethnic anthropological setting. The Yorùbá visit Sábó and *Gàá* for commercial purposes – to buy the Hausa and Fulani produce and other commodities. The children of the settlers attend the same government-funded schools as the Yorùbá children, thereby socializing in that context unlike the discrimination against the non-native in a government school in Maiduguri mentioned earlier. Hierarchy and proper leadership, therefore, promote opportunities for monitoring erring individuals and for establishing a good justice system and discipline among the Yorùbá.

Mic explains the Yorùbá idea about the use of the court system for minor incidents:

*A kii ti kóòtù dé s`orẹ* (friendship after returning from court is not always as good as that before you go to court) implies that you should settle your disputes as soon as is practically possible and cooperate with peacemakers or elders on the steps laid down for amicable dispute resolution and reconciliation.

Most conflicts are resolved through ADR. Àníké, in FGD1c, notes the good leadership of the king (Sọun) of Ògbómòṣó in conflict resolution and management and his role in keeping the people in harmony. Similarly, Adé presents the leaders' roles and hierarchy under the king of Ògbómòṣó in relation to the Sáríkí *Haúsá* as shown in the Figures below.

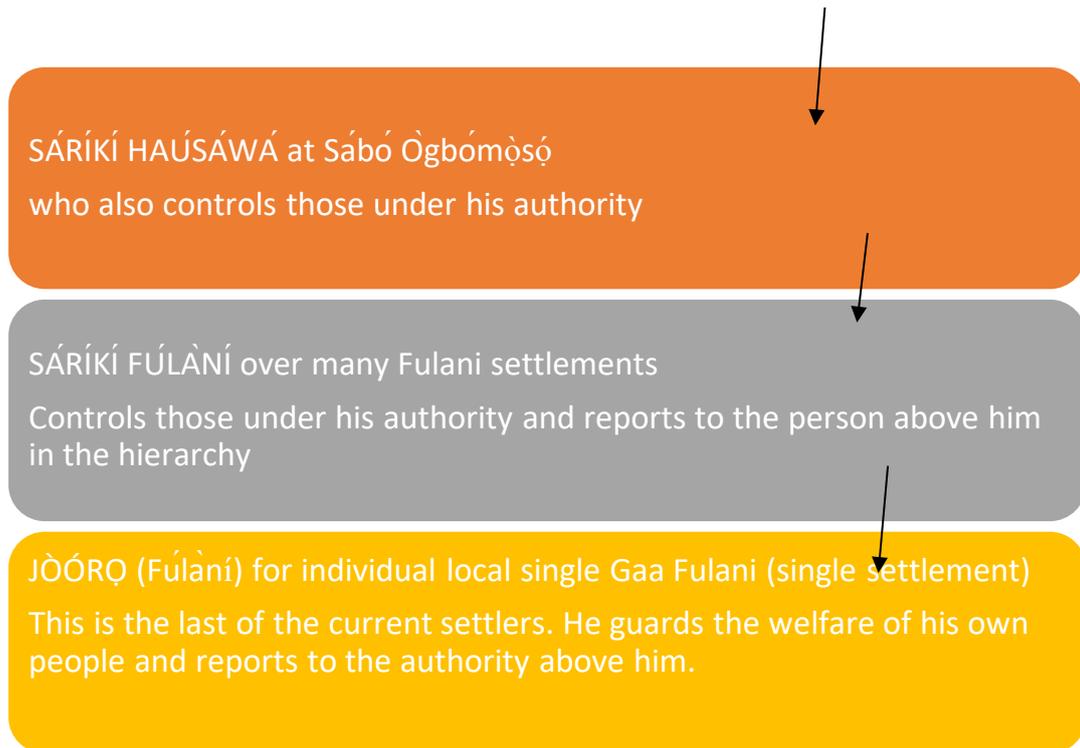
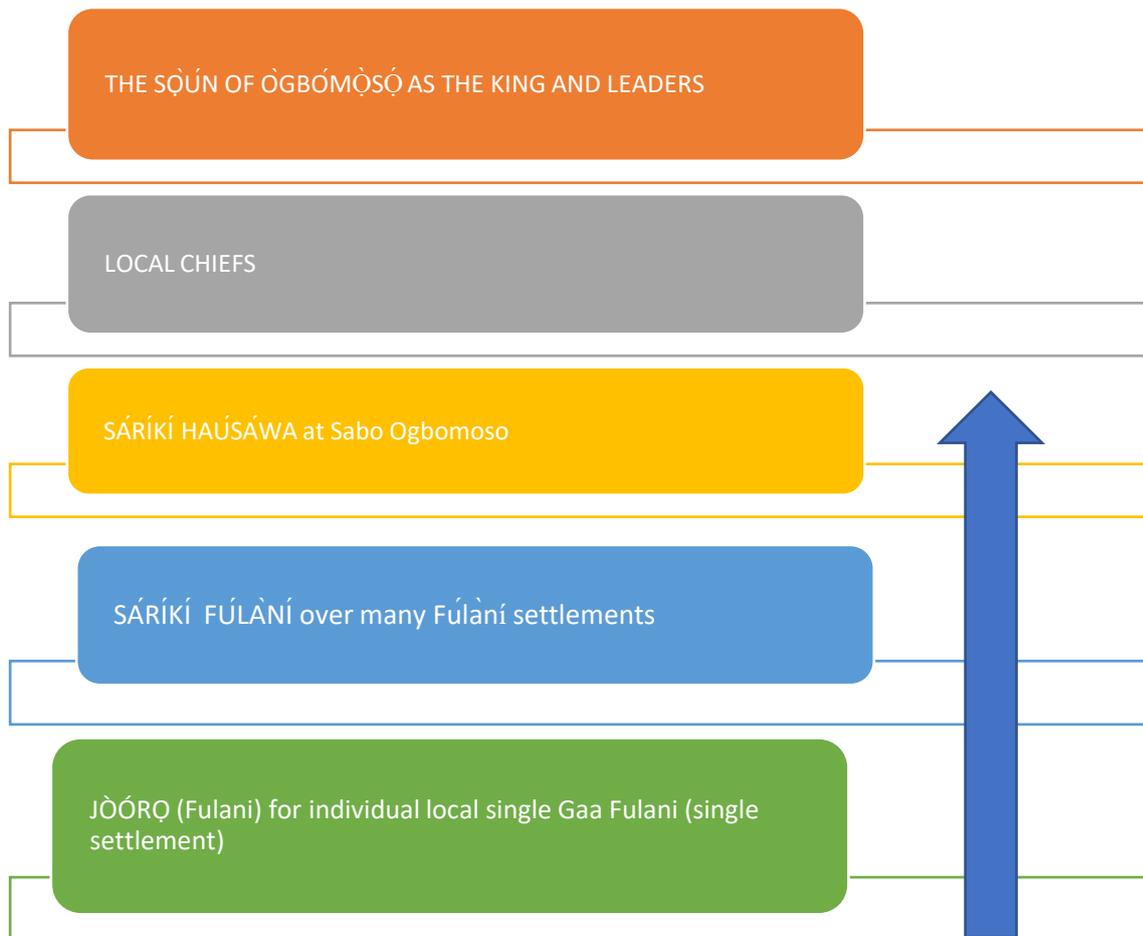


Figure 25. The leadership roles in conjunction with ethnic settlement

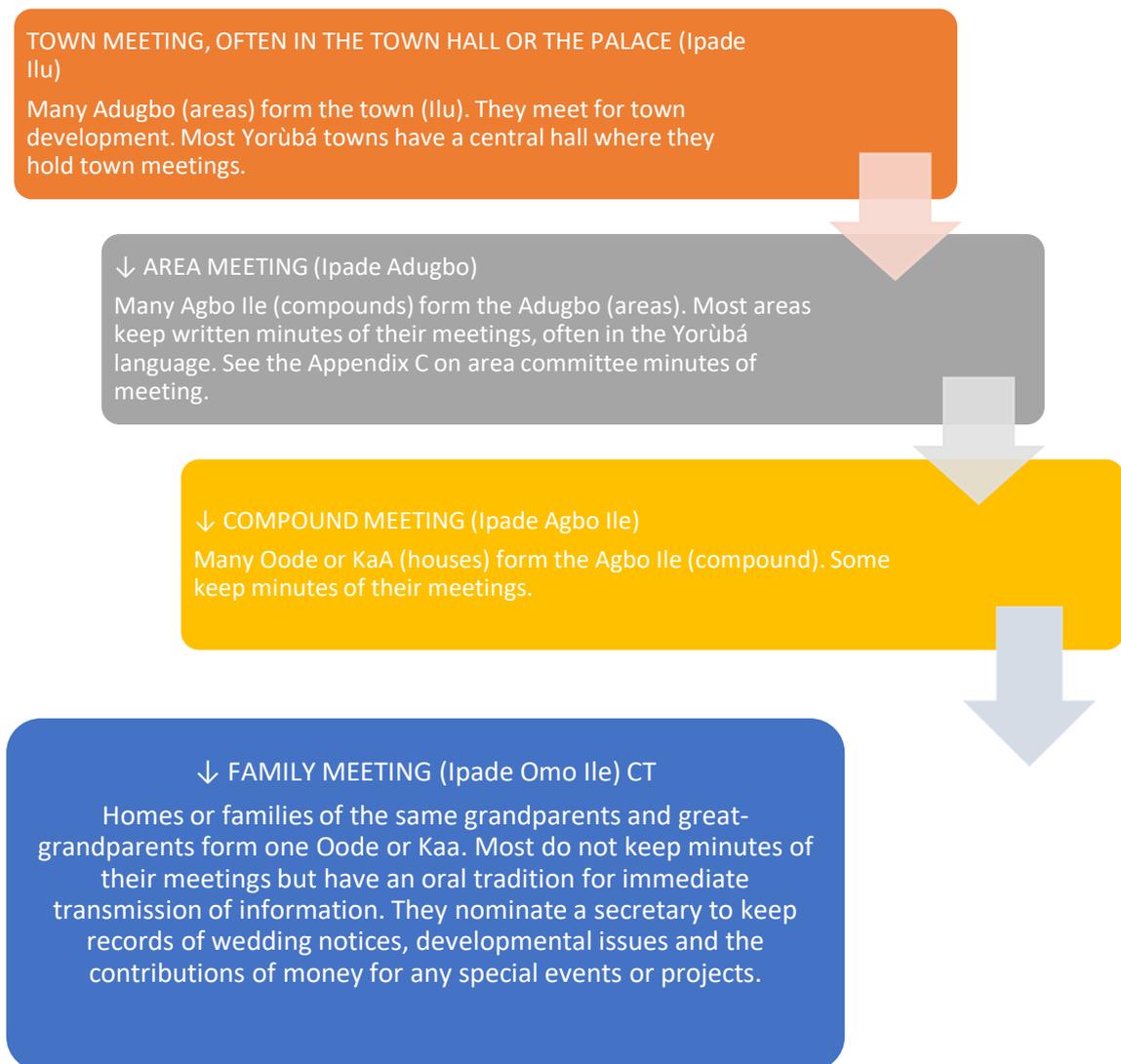
The lowest in the ladder is the *Jòórò* Fulani followed by the *Sárikí* Fulani, then the *Sárikí Haúsáwá*. On top are the chiefs or kings of the town. This shows the flow of authority from the settlers to the indigenous kings or chiefs.

When the discourse involves the king, the *Sọn* of Ògbómòşó, is set at the top of the hierarchy, the setting is illustrated in the order the subjects will take instructions as shown in the Figure below.



*Figure 26. The leaders' roles in ascending order to the king*

Furthermore, according to Adé, the hierarchy and intervention – or flow of authority from family to the king– when excluding the settlers is shown in the Figure below, a flow of authority in descending order for conflict transformation.



*Figure 27. The leaders' roles in descending order to a family unit*

Odù similarly aligns the arrangement of the leadership hierarchy and posed it with the western judiciary. This, according to Odù, is both the Yorùbá's leadership hierarchy and conflict resolution channelled from the smaller unit (family) to a higher level of authority (the king or the town hall):

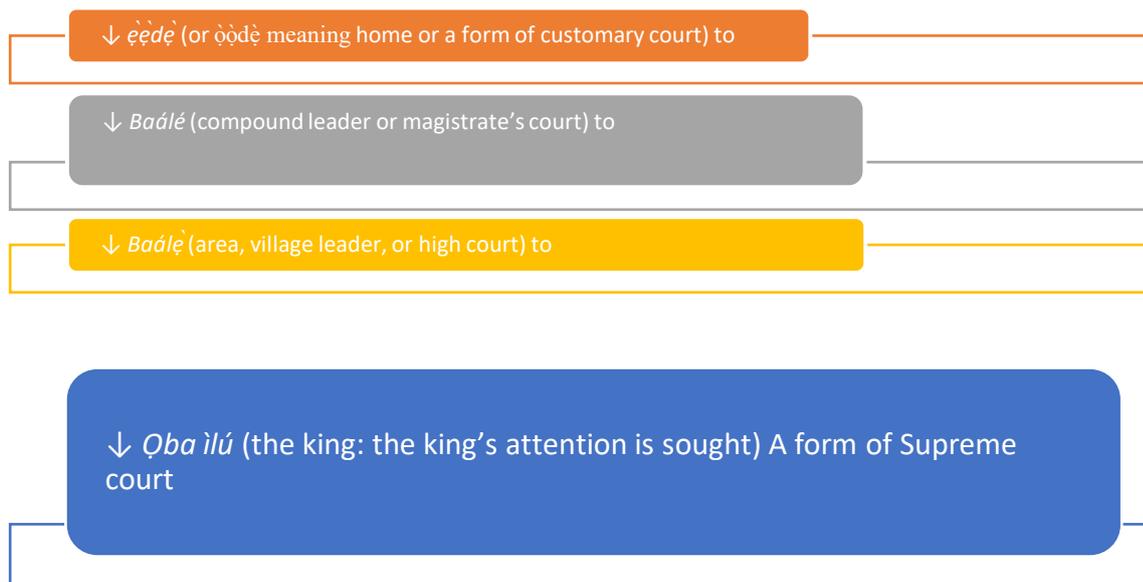


Figure 28. The leaders' roles in relation to the king

The flow of authority has helped to avert conflicts and disseminate information among the Yorùbá on numerous occasions over the centuries.

The information gathered at *ipàdẹ̀ àdúgbò* (area meeting of many families' representatives or leaders) provides an opportunity for cooperation and love in the community, which is often used for social and security support for one another. In a separate interview, Lódún (FI) adds that each community has a leaders' committee to manage their day-to-day affairs, by meeting regularly and can identify strangers and their effect on their society. This means that neighbourhood watch is a joint effort of the community, as it sources information and discusses means of keeping the people safe. The lack of a regular meeting and subsequent outside influence in Lódún's town (Sẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀rì) have been blamed for the conflict that lasted about a decade (FGD2 and FI).

Considering the available works in this area, Peel writes on the hierarchy in leadership among the Yorùbá with an attention on the colonial era following the pattern:

Here Yorùbá community must be understood as an expanding hierarchy of levels: at its center the town or historic community known as the *ilu*; below this the town's quarters, and (at the bottom) the family compound; above it a level of subtribes (*Ijesa, Ekiti, Egba*, etc.), often related to colonial administrative divisions, and at the top the pan-Yorùbá level, which was progressively emergent over the colonial period. (2016, p. 126)

Peel's illustration of the hierarchy among the Yorùbá during the colonial era has a little different pattern from the one I obtained in Ògbómòṣó. Mine follows – family (the lowest unit with one or up to about three grandparents called *Kaa*), compound (a large housing with many grandparents even of non-related family accommodated within the housing *Agbo-ilé*), the Area [which some locals and Peel also call quarters], and the town. Peel's addition of the sub-tribes like the *Ijesa* and *Ekiti* that interacted with the colonial administrators no longer play that role as the administrators are no longer in operation. However, presently, each sub-tribe and their towns relate with their town kings or otherwise, the local and state government and the modern judiciary whenever necessary. Similarly, I know there are major *Ọba Aládé* (crowned kings) whose descendants are respected for their noble roles or participation in wars over the centuries to keep their people safe, like the Alaafin of Ọyó, the Sọun of Ògbómòṣó, the Aláké of Ègbá, the Olúgbón of Orílẹ̀ Igbón, the Arèsà of Ìrèsàadú, to mention but a few who still command the respect of their followers. The Ọ̀nì of Ifẹ̀ holds a top position among the Yorùbá kingship while each sub-tribe within the Yorùbá nation has its own dialect that covers more than one town or settlement. The hierarchy among the Yorùbá family ends temporarily at the king of each town while villages visit the town for help when necessary. However, while any case that cannot be handled by the palace (chiefs and king) would proceed to the higher crowned king in the past, the secular judiciary system handles such cases nowadays. This local structure notwithstanding, some people still involve the police directly during disputes or criminal related conflict without following the local dispute resolution procedure.

Odù warns the kings that involvement in partisan politics lowers their prestige and authority. He adds that the noble role a king plays in the community should be upheld to keep their people in harmony. Odù also opines that older people or grandparents have notable roles to play in the family and in conflict settlement. Odu, however, neglects to mention the examples of grandparents sometimes interfering in the lives of the newly married couple, which can and has led to crises, although this is mostly unintentional and done out of being over protective and as an expression of love. Nevertheless, older people are expected to provide wisdom on conflict management, having the confidence to confront offenders and the ability to trace people by their family name and thus ostracize any known criminal in their community.

Decentralization of conflicts within the context of PS takes a form of ostracism as demonstrated among the Batek, Hutterites, Utku and Ladakhi' (Peaceful-Societies, 2019), which helps the erring member to feel repentant and later reunite with the community. The purpose of the decentralization of conflicts is often achieved here by the correction of erring members of the community to restore harmony. Ostracism is practised among the Yorùbá also known as '*déyẹ síi*'. A troublemaker is ostracized by asking him/her to stay away at a corner of the house (if a young person) or banishment for an adult's more serious offences.

In a different context, the Nigerian government decentralized the Nigerian population by creating multiple states from the 3 regions to 12, and now to 36 states, to enhance development and for easy control. This they believe will lessen agitation and increase unity among the Nigerian communities. However, the expected development has not been so much achieved. The outcome of the fragmentation, initially thought to be meaningful for responsible governance, has not led to the development in the current Nigerian context, rather weakening the solidarity of the Nigerian various languages and ethnic

groups. The peace is not yet achieved in Nigerian larger context, as it seems to be among the local Yorùbá culture and the globally recognized PS.

Nevertheless, the vision for empowering the community and providing a grassroots level judiciary system falls into place among the Yorùbá community, ensuring dispute management and the sustaining of harmony by the local leaders and the community's joint efforts. The help did not come through recent innovations but rather had been present in the culture at the family level as reflecting in the larger community. The new religions (Islam and Christianity) found a footing in a culture of tolerance, whilst neither is considered syncretistic or alien to the faith they profess or the culture they inherit. Similarly, where the federal and state government (or politicians) fail to provide social and infrastructural amenities, the Yorùbá have attempted to provide alternatives, such as in the case of electricity-generating sets, privately or community-owned and funded schools and hospitals, and the co-operative ventures to help their neighbours. Their community meetings provide further evidence of such co-operation.

Furthermore, one of the causes of violence at the FGD2 site was the cessation of their regular community leaders' meetings while conversion to another religion [under the freedom of religion for the beneficiary] caused resentment by the relations. Odù supports the building of houses that join in the neighbourhood as essential to ensuring that security and watch-care remain strong, an idea which Lódún also suggested.

By comparison, the Senegalese Christian and Muslim communities hope that, with the cooperation of their leaders and the police, their unity will not be compromised (UguccioniI, 2018). However, in the Nigerian context and legal perspective, Williams-Elegbe (2015) has associated the leadership failings to many factors including the Nigerian political elites but suggests the citizens' pressure on the government as the way

out. The pressure has not yielded much fruits though as seen in the Nigerian protests over the years. Yet, for those with some elements of peacefulness, the warning is clear, a once-peaceful community must remain vigilant to retain its peace and keep watch for any undesirable influences that may threaten their peace. A peaceful community is not immune to challenging situations but must be proactive against unwholesome intrusions into their society. The Sèpètèrì community (FGD2) failed to foresee this, the Ògbómòşó were prepared for it, while the Senegalese have begun to observe some outside influences on their society. The leadership ability to forestall danger and prepare to handle it well is a strength in conflict management.

### **6.2.2 Responsible Adult Authority**

In line with the leadership hierarchy, Yorùbá culture expects certain duties from every older person and those in positions of authority. The family unit, the Yorùbá indigenous religion worshippers, and Christians and Muslims, all help to control social vices by emphasizing the ethical dimensions of their religions and religious practices. These various aspects of the Yorùbá culture do not negate what the religions uphold privately at home and their public life in meetings and the community. Similarly, these are often latent features that keep the Yorùbá together in the form of cultural values, accepted ethics, tolerance, and love for one another, as shown in the cumulative hierarchy chart. These directly or indirectly influence the public and the Nigerian Yorùbá media. Although there are reports of deviations like the occult harmful use of the indigenous religious (IAR) knowledge and the unethical behaviour sometimes found amongst some Yorùbá irrespective of their religious professions, the Yorùbá public officially and jointly oppose these.

Leaders of each group or elders of each home often resolve conflicts and amicably settle non-criminal cases. The religions and the culture of *omọlúàbí* do not condone murder for instance and, as a result, responsible elders withdraw from criminal cases by handing these to the modern court. While there have been major conflicts involving disputes over land, politics and the economy, the family ties are found to be potent in peace talks, and feature as a reconciliatory phenomenon. The local conflict management strategies led by a responsible leader involve an observance of the early warning signs of conflicts (mentioned by Wọlé FGD3), the praise of their subjects for their good works and the use of ADR to resolve their conflict (mentioned by both Adé and Odù). These are coordinated by the responsible designated elder, who may be an older person in the home, community, or vicinity. The early warning signs of conflict are often noticeable in a small community when neighbours are not on good terms with one another and mediators attempt to bring them together for questioning or reconciliation (Odù). Likewise, in FGD3, Múfú suggests that the respect for elders and the recognition of their authority to settle disputes before it escalates is a key contribution to peaceful relationships among the Yorùbá. FGD1, FGD2 and FGD3 in different fora and towns and at different times unanimously agree that the Yorùbá elders, when pro-active, keep their communities from violence and invaders. On the question of how long conflict could last among the Yorùbá, Ọmọbọ suggests that many Yorùbá do not maintain enmity for longer than necessary once they have tendered a genuine apology, as such offenders could have useful contributions to the community in the future. The act of reconciliation and forgiveness of offenders is interpreted in some contexts as tolerance.

Sàngó, in FGD1c, uses a Yorùbá idiom, *bí ògiri kò bá lanu, alá`ngbá kòle ráyè wọ ògiri* ('if there are no cracks in the wall, the lizards will not have access to hide in such walls). This implies that intruders will find it difficult to infiltrate a community that lives in unity.

A similar idiom is *ẹ ẹe arayín ní òṣùṣù ọwọ̀*, meaning that the community or family should make itself a bunch of brooms, as it is more difficult to bend and break a collection of hundreds of brooms with human hands than it is to break one. These are ideas that the Yorùbá community often pass onto their young to help them see beyond that which seems to divide them and thus to keep their grievances as brief as possible. Odù discusses some approaches of conflict resolution, which I categorize under: (1) responsible leadership; (2) justice; and (3) maintaining the peace. These are relevant to thick description of the idea of peace sustenance among the Yorùbá.

On responsible leadership, reconciliation is carried out by an older person by *pẹtu si won ninu*, or *bu omi ẹrọ sii*; meaning, to cool the situation down. Both parties in a conflict are supported to see two possible sides of the case and try to resolve the conflict. The mediators might lead them to think of something positive to bring them together in the future. Both parties to the conflict may shake hands, prostrate, hug, or kneel (cultural practice) in appreciation of the unknown greater problems which may have been averted by the reconciliation. The idea of doing something better for one another in the future was also mentioned by Lọlá in FGD1c and Ọmọbọ (F), while describing it as not holding grudges for longer than necessary as one could need the other person's help in the future.

On justice support, Odù suggests the Justice Department Council of the Roman Catholic Church in southwest Nigeria was actively involved in supporting people with minor court cases. He argues that some simple disputes which ended up in court have led some people to prison when they lacked advocates to speak on their behalf, while more serious criminals who had money and sponsors escaped justice. This is the reason the church, in this example, initiated the conflict resolution to support the state justice system to help the poor community in need of justice. The local reconciliation system discussed in (1) and the church idea (2) are a form of ADR.

On maintaining the peace, the other point Odù raises concerns the way in which the Yorùbá maintain harmony, which I describe as ‘keeping the firewall’. This denotes that what works well and strengthens the harmony should be maintained. This includes the need to support the local leaders and kings to maintain the structures which are working. Odù suggests that some kings are wealthy and financially independent and do not bow to the political elite or allow injustice in exchange for financial reward. Odù’s point is significant, as some politicians have sought to interfere in the traditional structures and removed traditional kings or threatened them in some parts of the country. Such threats had effects on society, affecting the psychological disposition to obey such local leaders and thereby breaking the potentials for the ethical fabric of the society. Similarly, Odù and Kànmí suggest the need for economic support for the citizens as there are great divides between the rich on one hand, and both the middle class and the poor on the other hand. Odù adds that inequality is on the rise and probably the reason for the police's frustration and their extortion of the citizens.

Concerning the maintenance of peace, the need for community policing was raised, where people would know one another in the community and can identify criminals. According to Odu (FI) and Lọlá (FGD1c), reporting incidents to the police is not entirely safe, as criminals are sometimes set free and retaliate against the person who reported them, as confidentiality was not often well-protected. Some individuals report criminal incidents just to put it on record and may not expect much from the police in some hopeless situation. Although incidences are reported, there is little proactive response, says Adé. It seems the police do not appear to be relevant to the Nigerian common society in certain respects. The police, on many occasions, seem like the ruling party’s personal guards instead of being loyal to the entire Nigerian community.

### 6.2.3 Mentorship and Social Relations among Peaceful Societies

Among the positive values the Ju/'hoansi bring to their community as older persons is their storytelling ability (Biesele & Howell, 2015). 'They delight in telling the stories again to make a new generation laugh. Storytelling is gladly undertaken as a valued skill to be exercised with interest and pride when one is old.' (Biesele & Howell, 2015, pp. 88, 89). The Yorùbá also tell stories to younger folk in the form of *ààlọ́* mentioned earlier. Just as in a social context, the Ju/'hoansi older people help in providing childcare when the parents are out for work often as gatherers, the Yorùbá grandparents also help in providing childcare to their children. The Ju/'hoansi provide companionship, food and are available to teach skills, traditions, puberty related knowledge to teenagers, and social values to the younger generation (Biesele & Howell, 2015), and the Yorùbá perform similar roles in their communities. Like many PS, the Ifaluk are good at social interpersonal relations, showing respect and have a hierarchical leadership structure, (Lutz, 1990) like the Yorùbá collective society as affirmed by Ismaila (FGD3) in this study.

Some available literature supports both the PS and my findings on leaders' roles in peace sustenance in human society. In his work on sustainable livelihood and leadership for peace, Daniel recommends training, follow up to sustain the level of peace already reached, dialogue, financial support and the youth involvement in South Sudan conflict resolution (Daniel, 2018). Training here is like the mentoring provided by the grandparents in the PS and the Yorùbá informal education through their norms, storytelling and music. Similarly, Connolly and Mincieli identify the leaders as important in 'setting the direction for implementing the peacebuilding and sustaining peace resolution.' (Connolly & Mincieli, 2019). The roles of leaders among the PS and the Yorùbá have been discussed in the previous section. Furthermore, Petersen and Mulindwa

provide policy recommendations in their research, identifying the youth engagement, the traditional and community leaders as essential in the security of their people and the need to identify strangers coming to their midst whom they called ‘unfamiliar faces’, (Petersen & Mulindwa, 2019, p. 13). Kidane and Anderson in separate research discussed women as invaluable in post-conflict peace maintenance. Kidane strongly suggests women’s leadership roles in sustainable peace at post-conflict peacebuilding at national and international levels (Kidane, 2014, p. 98). Anderson identifies women’s roles as crucial to peace negotiation globally through their transnational activism, peace negotiations and peace agreements. (Anderson, 2017).

The views presented by the participants in FGD1, FGD3 and those of secondary *ethnies* by marriage are important for a balanced cross-examination of the narratives regarding the elders and leadership roles in conflict management and/or sustenance of peace amongst the Yorùbá, which are all culturally relevant and similar to the PS discourses. It was unanimously accepted in this study that the Yorùbá often get over their disputes with time, due to the local leaders’ interventions. Thus, the Yorùbá culture, as expressed in the leadership style/roles and some reliance on their adult authority, has much to contribute to conflict resolution and the maintenance of peace in their various communities.

### **6.3 Summary**

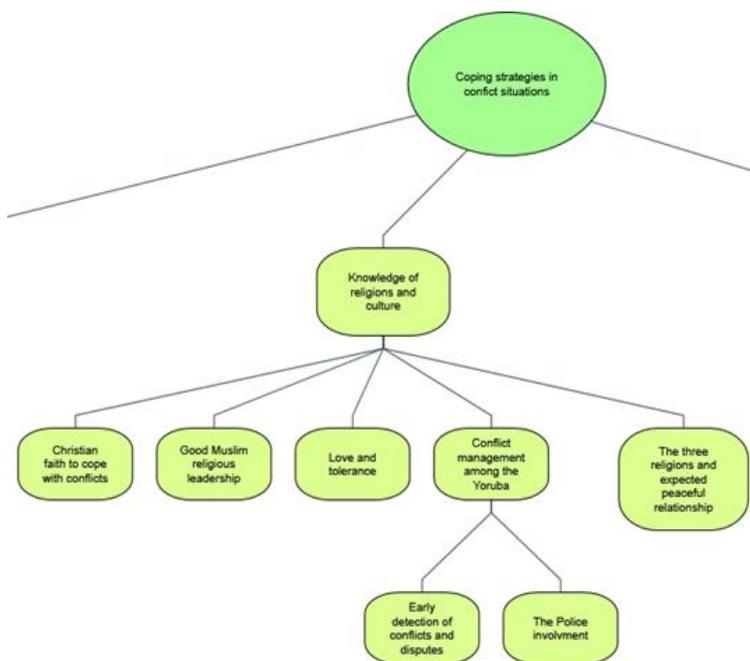
In this chapter, I examined how the Yorùbá handle their conflicts to retain their harmony through their communal life and leadership structures. The Yorùbá communal life and co-operation are vital to sustaining the peace in their community. Similarly, the Yorùbá use certain aspects of their culture like the complaint procedures administered by responsible trusted elders and their leadership hierarchy as avenues for conflict de-escalation and

maintenance of the peace. Some of these features are like the already identified peaceful communities globally. Are these features among the Yorùbá viable enough to consider them as creating a peaceful society?

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### INEVITABLE INTERACTION

In the previous chapter, I discussed how the communal lifestyle and leadership hierarchy play vital roles to maintain peace among the Yorùbá. In this chapter, I want to discuss the inevitability of interaction among the Yorùbá people. Here, I will show a display of freedom of religion and understanding to manage conflict and sustain the peace in their community (see Figure 9. FGD1 mind map on the knowledge of religions and value system and Figure 17. NVivo FGD3 mind map religious values).



**Figure 13.** FGD2 Coping strategies

Religion is mentioned in this study data as a source of support for the Yorùbá in times of provocation useful for de-escalating conflict and sustaining the peace in their community. Under the religion, the themes that emerged within the hierarchy chart are religion as a personal belief, freedom of religion, religious consciousness, knowledge of religion,

leaders' roles in conflict management, formal and informal dialogues, love and tolerance, interdependency and dynamics in religious interaction (or interpretation). This chapter, therefore, examines how religion helps to keep society in harmony with the attention on religions, religious teachings, and religious leadership.

One of the ways in which religion has been useful to maintain good relationships among the Yorùbá is its focus on tolerance, patience and other virtues that the leaders teach their members. This helps to keep the Yorùbá in harmony and to settle conflicts and disputes. This idea is reinforced by Dayo in FGD3, and Wọlé's mediation on the conflict around the Christians' complaints regarding the Muslim call to prayer in Ibadan. A survey (ES) participant also calls this *sabr* (which means patience), the Islamic tradition taught among the [Yorùbá] Muslims. The Christians refer to the Bible teaching that one should live in peace with others, encouraged by the promise of eternal life (Hebrews 12:14). The religious teachings of the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims coupled with their Yorùbá culture contribute to the way they respond to provocation and the resultant effect on how they sustain or return to a harmonious living after a crisis.

Considering the elders' roles, Ismaila, a Yorùbá Muslim participant in FGD3 appreciates the uniqueness of the prevailing culture among the Yorùbá, which became obvious to him while working outside of the Yorùbáland in Kebbi northern state.<sup>1</sup> Ismaila said that he observed less respect shown for elders in a local Kebbi community when compared to the practices of the Yorùbá, where elders are allowed to settle disputes. Since both Islam and Christianity are practised in the Kebbi northern state, and the Yorùbá southwest Nigeria, the contents of both the culture and religious teachings of Yorùbá (southwest) must provide an explanation for the harmony enjoyed by the Yorùbá community. Going by

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<sup>1</sup> National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) is the Nigeria Federal government programme for university graduates under the age of 30 to work in a State other than their own to learn more about the country and serve their people with less wages.

secondary sources, Lateju (2012) argues that the leadership style in northern Nigeria is different from that which is seen in the southwest and eastern Nigeria. The reason he gave was that the north adopt the Arabic culture expressed in Islam whereas the Yorùbá culture has features that complement Islam and Christianity. In this study, while Saratu (FGD3), a secondary *ethnie*, considers the Yorùbá's peacefulness as timidity, Meriani (FGD3), another secondary *ethnie* calls it love in line with FGD1 responses. The Yorùbá's actions go for thick description here. Meriani regards the Yorùbá as her brothers and sisters claiming that the Yorùbá do not often want to offend people. She suggests: 'The Yorùbá have good values and respect and we like to keep ourselves and our names out of trouble'. Meriani includes herself as a Yorùbá, using a possessive plural noun ('ourselves'). She added that the Yorùbá have certain values, such as the desire to maintain a good name and wanting to distance themselves from trouble in an ideal situation. This is like the thoughtfulness Wólé mentions in FGD3. It is, therefore, necessary to closely examine how religion, as practised among the Yorùbá, helps to maintain a harmonious community. As it appears, the interaction of the Yorùbá, Christians and Muslims alike are inevitable.

## **7.1 Freedom of Religion**

Wólé (FGD3), Lódún (FI) who is a retired Muslim teacher, and two imams namely Lateef (FI) and Mako (FI), all mention the freedom of religion employed by the Yorùbá as a significant contribution to the harmony enjoyed by the people. This is visible in the day-to-day social interaction across religious lines and even in their typical responses to religious conversion. Ọpé, a Christian who has Muslim friends ate with them at the end of each day's fast, even though she did not observe the Muslim fasting. Also, Ọpé had a

Muslim elder in her maternal family home and there had been no occasion of violence among them as a family.

Freedom of religion is identified as a strong contribution to peaceful relations, allowing the Yorùbá to interact for their mutual benefit. The Yorùbá are believed to have the freedom to select and practise their own religions. According to Wọlé, each person can practise their religion and religion should not be enforced on anyone. Wọlé notes that he was invited to a church, but declined, claiming that he would not understand how to respond in Christian worship. Similarly, he does not invite non-Muslims to his mosque. Freedom is the principal factor for him. This is examined further in the scenario of Muslims happily attending social functions among the Christians such as funerals and weddings within the church premises, while Christians also reciprocate the gesture in context.

That notwithstanding, there have been strained relationships because of conversion to other religions, where the convert considers it as freedom, but the family calls it worrying. A major conflict among them can have serious consequences for their family unit and the community, hence they often try to avoid inter-religious conflicts. Similarly, the relationship of the Yorùbá community in their traditional setting and a conversion between two denominations of Christianity are also relevant to this discourse. Of paramount importance are the evangelicals' conversion activities and the Muslims' response to apostasy with the Yorùbá people's vigilance not to allow 'imported foreign religions' to cause disunity among them to lead to violence. Clearly, these have not resulted in honour killings or executions among the Yorùbá in contrast to what is seen in some other parts of the world. Odù identifies religious values as a source of help for the Yorùbá during difficult times contributing to their tolerance and worldview. The Sẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀rì conflict suggest that conflicts can start in a small way and escalate. They could originate

from conversion to cause stress within the family. While some Yorùbá may not completely object to conversion to other religions, some find it difficult to cope with and resort to grudges. However, most converts see this as religious freedom: being able to choose the religion they prefer. It requires wisdom to handle such situations to please the parties directly involved – the happy converts and the worried relations.

Conversion is considered a part of the freedom of religion exercised among the Yorùbá, especially when done without coercion and among those who follow their own minds, despite the initial shock to the family, close friends and the community. Dispute and conflict management skills at family and community levels might be required in such situations. Similarly, family unity is observed in the idea described as *gbomo fun miwo* or *funi lomwo wo* – the practice of giving youngsters to newly married couples, uncles and other relations to bring up to adulthood. This leads to youngsters sometimes converting to the religion of the host family, which Christians have benefited from over the years, as seen in Kunle’s narration. Muslims also help their Christian relations as reported in FGD1. Most Yorùbá parents do not raise objections to conversion for a long time if they sense such children would grow up to be educated and keep a moral tradition (like the *Omoluabi*). This could be why Kunle’s father (FGD2) eventually agreed to his conversion to Christianity, although the brother was not pleased with the situation for some time after the conversion.

Singh discusses the ineffectiveness of Christian witness to Muslims while using polemics, being the reason for their search for new approaches in mission especially in the West (2005). The study among the Yorùbá however, according to Nolte, Ogen and Jones confirm the peacefulness observed among the Ede town’s three prominent religions (Islam, Christianity and the Indigenous Yorùbá religions) (Nolte, Ogen, & Jones, 2017). For the Yorùbá outside of the formal church and mosque worship, their social interaction

is expected to be first cordial and second, inevitable. This interaction sometimes leads to conversion on the condition that the new convert will not turn aggressive by being unsympathetic to their family and loved ones. The distinctiveness of the Yorùbá's peacefulness might be a less use of polemics that Singh suggests the West used in their interaction with Muslims although the West has begun to get rid of such methods (2005). These concur with the PS' avoidance of competition, arguments and ostracizing any member that brings their society into disrepute. Common positive values and caring social relations, therefore, contribute immensely to a society's peacefulness.

### **7.1.1 Interaction of Religions**

The motivation for the Yorùbá's religious interaction is their belief in and consciousness of Heaven, or life after death, which has a strong ethical dimension for Yorùbá Christians, Muslims, and the indigenous worshippers. The cultural connection with their religious beliefs encourages them to interact at a social level based on convictions relating to their worship, the idea of the divine, funerals, the new-born, and weddings cumulating in the social progress (*aárẹ̀mísé*) periodically celebrated in the community. They use ethical common ground such as love, prayer, scriptural teaching, fasting, heterosexual marriage, modesty and honesty to strengthen this relationship and interaction.

Parrinder noted intermarriage between Christians and Muslims, and was amazed at the commitment within the Yorùbá community at large:

One has heard it asked whether a Muslim may act as sponsor at a Christian baptism? Among the Yorùbá it is not uncommon to find Christian, Muslim and Animist in the same family [...] Many Christians teach in Muslim schools, and innumerable Muslims children attend Christian schools for the latter area by far the most numerous schools. (1959, p. 134)

This interaction and willingness to render help is not uncommon within many Yorùbá communities. Although the details of each religious practice may pose difficulties for the others' beliefs, they have learnt and keep learning to respect one another's choices in different contexts and sometimes embark on dialogue for a better understanding of their different beliefs and practices.

To illustrate the interaction amongst the Yorùbá, Lateef, in my interview, makes comments about Muslim men wearing hats, and Christians eating beef from Muslim abattoirs. Some Christians politely decline the meals offered during the *Eid Al-Adha* feast, while others do not mind eating at the feast (see FGD1 and FGD3). This offers some clues to their level of deep interaction, understanding, freedom, and tolerance. Deficient understanding is, in contrast, one of the causes of the violence experienced by troubled multireligious communities, such as in northern Nigeria. According to Lateef:

Yorùbá people often 'tried to avoid conflict so that there would be tranquillity in the society [...] If you study the geopolitical zones of this country, there is a low rate of conflict in Yorùbáland compared with other regions of Nigeria'.

On the human potential to cause violence, Lateef observes the violence seen in northern Nigeria:

When you see violent people, it is important to see beyond the religion to that person's personality ... The Yorùbá are very slow to react to anyone who offends them, whereas, in other cultures, they are immediately offended and attack without thinking of the consequences. If a person is a Muslim, they will say it is his religion, whereas such reactions are due to cultural upbringing.

Lateef's argument for a 'peace culture' among the Yorùbá is substantiated in FGD1 and FGD3 in two different towns in this study. As I have lived in northeast Nigeria, I am aware that there are peace-loving people in the northern local communities, especially when politics is not involved. My wife, Remi, narrated an experience at the Monday market in Maiduguri (2003 – 2006). The Monday market is an international market with people

from the Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon coming to Nigeria to trade. Remi was holding two bags in her two hands and our baby on her back (an African way of keeping the baby warm and/or secured to the mother's back while on the move). Remi accidentally brushed past a man with one of her bags while walking along the market's narrow paths. She stopped to apologise, but the gentleman looked at her, smiling and asked her to keep going and not to worry, as she was 'doing more than enough'. A man in a 'wild culture' would demand an apology before the woman could even speak, but this gentleman from northeast Nigeria Maiduguri showed understanding and empathy. There are, therefore, peace-loving northern individuals and possibly communities that constitute the backbone of the northern 'peace culture', although how many there are of such people is not very clear.

So, I disagree with Lateef on his claim about the north not being peaceful because of their culture; rather, what determines a community's peacefulness is whether peaceful contents of a culture or religion is being taught and how much effort is placed on its propagation to become an acceptable norm in such a community. The contents of a culture and religions as being taught in turn frames how loving and caring the people will be. By comparison, in Senegal, the Sufi Muslims 95% and the Christians 5% speak many languages, belong to different religions yet live harmoniously. Peace or violence, thus, has to do with what has the upper hand in a community at a given time: a culture of peace, tolerance and empathy or aggression and intolerance. In addition, an interpretation of a religion geared towards love, or hatred geared towards violence and the level of support given by their promoted culture and religions' leadership are also relevant to a society's peacefulness. If Lateef was right that the Yorùbá culture helps to facilitate harmony as also suggested by some scholars, it implies that the people and their leadership support peacefulness to make it work in favour of their community at that time and space as they

teach it regularly to keep the custom. If they relax the keeping of the tradition of teaching and mentoring, the people will obviously follow other traditions or unhelpful behaviour.

The leadership's failure as seen in FGD3 has led to violence in that part of Yorùbáland. The roles of the religious and cultural teachings in the making of the individuals' behaviour, the community and responses to disputes and conflicts cannot be over-emphasized. Culture and upbringing must have contributed to the Yorùbá people's application of their religious teachings to the existing social context, making them responsible neighbours. The level of tolerance expressed in the Yorùbá culture and their religious maturity underpin how the Yorùbá manage their disputes and crises to maintain harmony wherever such peacefulness is still found.

The cultures are not always constant, as new settlers will either lose their own cultures ('detrribalization', as the host becomes dominant) or mix with their hosts to form a hybrid of cultures ('retribalization'), as suggested by Wiberg and reinforced in this research by Ifá (FGD3). Ifá claims that the Yorùbá Christian and Muslim population have supported one another over the centuries. Ifá suggests the Yorùbá Muslims have early morning prayer around 5.00 am, and the further calls to prayer in the afternoon, which have possibly motivated some Christians to pray more often, while the Christians' night (vigil) prayer has also inspired the Muslims to hold night prayers. The Christians emulating Muslims for a regular prayer may be particular to the area where Ifá lives in Ilorin, as many churches in Nigeria have early morning prayers with the Christian daily devotional (the locally published Seek Daily, the Daily Bible Reading, and other foreign works including Our Daily Bread), at the family level, in homes and churches. Yet, one cannot rule out the possibility of a mutual social implication or benefit of seeing one another going for prayer. In addition, Ifá suggests some Christian girls cover their heads when going to church, as their Muslim female counterparts (with the hijab) do because the

Christian women see this as acceptable both in their Yorùbá culture and according to some interpretations of their scripture (1 Corinthian 11:1-16). This leads to mutual interactions and understanding between the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims. Sharing and borrowing from their respective religious cultures, according to Ifá, enhances peace, making the Yorùbá culture-positive and advantageous for community harmony, without necessarily being syncretistic.

Understanding the culture and values of a people thus plays a significant role in the maintenance of harmony and good relationships with outsiders. In the Yorùbá context, Christians and Muslims adopt the ethics of their religions to their host Yorùbá culture and are thus able to get along. They both participate in joint programmes that allow participants to pray in their own individual ways like the parents' and teachers' association in schools and at community meetings. They seek to avoid syncretism and endorse freedom as much as their religious dogmas permit. The level of permissiveness among the Yorùbá Muslims is discussed in terms of the *Kaida* in the following chapter.

Three Yorùbá pastors from Ògbómòṣó – Akan, Ayo, and Diran – presented their views regarding peaceful relations among the Yorùbá people in the interview. Akan (FI) lived in northern Nigeria for many years, before returning to the west and trained as pastor. Akan sees the Yorùbá as accommodating. He observes that the Yorùbá often think and weigh consequences of what they want to do before acting unless they are under the influence of peers, alcohol, or have an ulterior motive. This comment is in line with Lateef's assessment of the Yorùbá's temperament in time of conflict, Ọmóbò and Wọlé's concept of *aláròjinlẹ*, (deep thought). Ayo, a secondary *ethnie* with a Ghanaian mother and Yorùbá (Nigerian) father, has been fully integrated into the Yorùbá community. He trained as a Baptist minister and is currently a pastor at a Yorùbá-speaking church in western Nigeria. Ayo is pleased that he was accepted into the Yorùbá community and not discriminated

against for his mixed blood. He considers the Yorùbá to be welcoming and loving. This is in line with Adé and Odù's assessments of the Yorùbá communal life and generosity towards visitors or settlers. This idea of generosity is reinforced by Ìyabò's assessment of the non-biological family concept of *Èbí* among the Yorùbá.

Similarly, Diran pastored a church in northeast Nigeria for over six years and then relocated to Kwara state. Diran, who has lived in Yorùbáland throughout, except while on a pastorate in the northeast suggests that the Yorùbá are accommodating and generous, always ready to provide space for others. They are not easily provoked to indiscriminate violence. This mirrors Lateef's thoughts and Wólé's view of *aláròjinlẹ́*. Diran and Akan have non-Christians in their extended family and relate well to one another. Ayo, Akan, and Diran all suggest that outside influences and unacceptable behaviour have begun to creep in through violent non-indigenous people, such as the Bororo Fulani herdsmen, and unethical internet activities such as movies featuring pornography, gun violence, and robbery. Diran suggests such non-ethnic behaviour could be controlled at the local family level to ameliorate the situation, all pointing to the positive interactions of religions among the Yorùbá people.

Wólé (FGD3) emphasizes the religious consciousness and Yorùbá cultural moral ideals/values as being strongly associated with life after death and eternal judgement, the ideas the three religions have in common – Islam, Christianity, and indigenous Yorùbá religion. He further suggests that the indigenous oath-taking is potent and often kills people mysteriously, thereby instilling fear and providing easy access to fair justice. Olupona (1993) supports this belief. This is not far from the idea of karma in Hinduism and Buddhism but works faster among the indigenous Yorùbá religion's practitioners. FGD2 also alludes to this idea, while a Christian interviewee (in Sepeteri) attests to some violent Muslims dying mysteriously while a sympathetic Muslim cleric was spared

through God's personal intervention to defend the innocent. I was privileged to meet and interview the Muslim cleric mentioned in this narrative. Adé also mentions something similar concerning some Yorùbá Sunni Muslims cautioning their youth against the violent activities of some youth they considered to have ‘the Shiite’<sup>2</sup> tendencies who had antagonised the local Muslim leaders. According to Adé, the violent youth leader later fell to his own death in the public view of others while on the stage to address his audience. Wọlé states that the Yorùbá endeavour to avoid conflict as much as possible. As a result, sincere and devoted Yorùbá Christians, and Muslims, who have God’s judgement as a common ground in their culture, live and interact well with their neighbours. Wọlé, nonetheless, notes some exceptions, where some Yorùbá leaders lost sight of these virtues while in political office. Odù also mentions the role of contemporary politicians in causing moral decadence and abuses of power in the Nigerian state.

In the discussion of how the Yorùbá handle disputes or conflicts, Mako suggests, ‘whenever there are conflicts, what we need is *sùúrù* [patience]’. A similar suggestion was given by R3 (ES), using the Arabic term *sabr*, also supported by Alhaja (FI) at the Ọsálágbèdẹ compound. In his publication, Abiodun mentions characters like *sùúrù* (patience), and *iwàpẹ̀lẹ́* (gentle character), (Abiodun, 2001, p. 22) as relevant terminologies often used among the Yorùbá to retain harmony among their people. A lack of *suuru* can lead to conflict. *Sùúrù* in the Yorùbá culture is a virtue taught by both the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims. Could the close interactions among people of different religions but with some shared values help in building harmony without necessarily compromising their faiths? The study among the Yorùbá suggest this could be true.

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<sup>2</sup>It is not clear if those youth are Shi’ites or nicknamed as such by the peace-loving Yorùbá Muslim parents, and there are no intentions to relegate the Shi’ites or any religious group in this study, but only to present the views of some Muslim parents.

### 7.1.2 Mixed Marriages

According to Singh, Goli, and Sekher: 'Mixed marriage is the term typically applied to a marital union of two individuals from a different race or religion.' (2013, pp. 195-6). These writers also extend the definition to cover couples of different social, economic, and castes. Mixed marriage is a complex union, (Bouma, 1963; "Mixed Marriages," 1970) most especially among couples across ethnicity or nationalities (Neyrand & Marine, 1998) possibly raising bilingual children.

Imamura's research on marriages across international traditions of residents of southwest Nigeria with women (21 in all) from the UK, USA, Africa/West Indies, and Western Europe underscores love as the primary basis of the unions. However, the research found out that the husbands' society in Nigeria reacted more on the differences in their ethnicity whilst the couples paid attention to the similarities and their love stories. The family's role in supporting the couples to live in harmony suffered some setbacks, although their union did not often end in divorce, (Imamura, 1986). Thus, the involvement of the extended family in the life of married couples in Nigeria, from the introduction of the suitors to marriage and raising of the children cannot be over-emphasized, (Feyisetan & Bankole, 1991). Cottrell, in a literature review of 33 examples found that mixed marriages run the risk of psychological, cultural, and social marginalization. Some are multicultural, and the society's acceptance or tolerance played a major role, even among the Japanese and Koreans who put greater value on the purity of their race. (Cottrell, 1990). Chae's work on marriage in sub-Saharan Africa found various forms of marriages whether formal or informal that could be stable, unstable, and/or memorable, (Chae, 2016).

Samples in this study includes mixed marriages across religions (Islam and Christianity) and ethnicities within Nigeria, although my attention is more on inter-religion. There are

many cases of mixed marriages among the Yorùbá. Some participants in this study testified that they showed respect to their spouses and tolerated each other as they practise different religions. There is a growing literature on mixed marriages that can be compared with the situation among the Yorùbá. Interfaith marriage as an example of mixed marriage is limited to marriage between two individuals of different religions or denominations. Although mixed marriage in a religious context is viewed as between persons of different religions like Islam and Christianity, Bouma suggests it includes between denominations of the same religion like the Christian Reformed Church and any other Christian group, (1963, p. 428). Bouma argues that some people do not admire interfaith marriage as they consider it could be potentially unhelpful to both the marriage and their denomination or religions. The idea of a religion gaining or losing its members is crucial to mixed marriage, but evangelical Protestants in the United States have gained more through such unions (Smith et al., 2015, p. 13). Baber added that a greater number of children in Catholic-Protestant mixed marriages were being raised as Protestants (1937). Other religions like Islam and Hinduism also recorded an increase in their membership as noted in the Religious Landscape Study, (Smith et al., 2015, p. 28). However, another opinion shows that although Christians (Americans) marrying outside of their faith try to retain their beliefs, the idea of Christian authority regarding superior knowledge of the divine could be diminishing with time as the practice continues (Wuthnow, 2005). There are studies on the Catholics and Protestants coping in mixed marriages, often allowing the couple to make decision that suits them, ("Mixed Marriages: Can the Problem Be Solved?," 1975).

Considering the African setting, the increase in the number of women in education and professional jobs has shown a potential to reduce the fertility rate in developing countries like Nigeria as the age at marriage or childbearing was deferred (Wusu, 2012). Yet, there

are more complexities when it comes to mixed marriages as it still affects women, and the children born from such unions. Among the Yorùbá, the wife could be systematically forced to follow the husband's religion and the children go through some latent stress of determining which religion they should follow as they grew older. Children born outside of wedlock also suffer some psychological trauma (Chinwuba, 2016), but contrary to Chinwuba's argument, such children would be free of stigmatization as they progressed to adulthood.

However, the Yorùbá place a high value on marriage and responsible elders seek harmony and endeavour to make marriages work, even in a mixed marriage situation. Otite writes on marriage in Nigeria with some attention to the Yorùbá. According to Otite, there are three types of marriages in Nigeria, namely: The indigenous (or traditional), Christian, and the state type of marriages with similar features but slight differences in the accompanying ceremonies after the joining. While Otite categorizes marriages among Muslims under the traditional marriage (Otite, 1991, p. 40), Efoghe (1990) adds that the Muslims' type of marriage is separate from the traditional marriage that is the Church, and Court or statutory marriage while Boparai (1982) provides a comparison between the customary and statutory (Common) laws. Otite adds that Christian marriage does not permit divorce, while the state and traditional forms of marriage do.

Nevertheless, the traditional allows polygyny which Christians do not officially accept, (1991, p. 41). Islam also allows polygyny and divorce, but in a Christian marriage, the parties must seek the assistance of the state for a divorce to be carried out (Otite, 1991, p. 45). However, in the neighbouring Cameroon, theologians, missionaries, and women in the community have engaged in theological discourse and developed their own biblical interpretation that accepts polygyny as an acceptable union in their African Christianity, (Notermans, 2002). Howbeit, many African Christians have also begun indigenous

Christian theology in response to their cultural and theological needs which has led to the establishment of many African independent churches, (Joseph, 2018; Nkomazana, 2010).

Marriage problems often reach the stage of divorce in court, when one party insists on divorce and will not recognize the ADR of the leaders or elders. Although people have the freedom to divorce their spouses, this is not encouraged or considered the norm. A divorcee living in her father's house is called *omọ-osú*, an indication that there were unresolved marriage conflicts that ended in divorce among the Yorùbá.

Lawson and Gibson describe polygyny as the marriage between a man and more than one wife at the same time, which he noted as common among the rich, the cause of which is attributed to women out to compete for marriage partners (2018, p. 181). The rivalry is not uncommon among the wives in such relationships, (Lawson et al., 2018, p. 184), even among the Yorùbá. In his research on aggression among couples in Ekpoma current Edo State in Nigeria, Efoghe found:

Subjects in polygynous marital unions were more aggressive than subjects in monogamous marital unions [also] ...subjects in religiously heterogamous marriages were more aggressive than subjects in religiously homogamous marital unions. (1990, p. 67)

This by no means suggests a home without conflict, but more pronounced in polygynous identified in the above research.

Polygyny is not opposed, but rather encouraged among some Yorùbá Muslims if the husband is able to love the wives equally. The Yorùbá Christians, on the contrary, discourage polygyny, although some do find themselves in such unions. The Yorùbá cherish marriage as they do not want to embark on conflict with in-laws and if this happens, it is often a bitter experience, as in the case of the Ifè-Modákéké and Offa and Erin-Ile conflicts discussed earlier. Hence, violent conflicts involving in-laws are rare

among the Yorùbá. While FGD2 discusses this extensively, Adé adds that mixed marriage helps the family as relations seek to treat one another with respect.

The complexity of mixed marriages is evident as Yorùbá Muslims officially accept and promote polygyny, while the Yorùbá Christians officially uphold monogyny. Yet, the Yorùbá do not have unanimous teachings or understanding about mixed or interfaith marriages. Lateef, an Imam with a western education teaches and argues for his male Muslim followers to marry Christian women, but teaches that the Muslim women should not marry Christian men:

Muslim ladies have no right to marry Christian men. Christian ladies who marry Muslims must know that their husbands would want the children to practise Islam.

Rodríguez-García has described this as exogamous in Islam, where Senegambian Muslim men marry within and from other religions whereas their women are not allowed to marry from outside of Islam. Women who violate that rule are considered having *kafir* as children (unbelieving children), (2006, p. 412). Rodríguez-García's suggestion among the Senegalese in the European context is in congruence with Lateef's argument in this research about Muslim men's freedom to marry non-Muslim women and in a polygynous relationship while Muslim women are not allowed to marry non-Muslims.

How children born into such mixed marriages among the Yorùbá decide their religion is a point of discussion among the Yorùbá, based on the criteria Lateef lays down above, which is not strange to many Yorùbá mixed families. The stress such children pass through is a crisis, which they must cope with throughout their developmental years, even if they decide to change their religion as adults, exercising their freedom of religion. Additionally, the peace expressed in mixed marriages is based on the couple's

preparedness and in connection to the extended family acceptance of the union if they live close by.

However, the stress in inter-faith marriage is inevitable, according to Ọmọbọ [a convert who married outside of the parents' religion], although not as dangerous as in the cultures where converts are subjected to the threat of death or imprisonment by the society. For interfaith married couples, their children's choice of religion and interrelations with their in-laws and the larger extended family are all areas that could pose challenges. These problems are particular to the Yorùbá traditional homes and the wider community. Interfaith marriages are often accompanied by problems relating to the social and religious status of the children, and the extended family. Lateef contends that children born into mixed families with Muslim fathers would not be allowed to practise Christianity. He adds: 'Muslims can marry Christians as wives but cannot allow the Christian wife to take their children to church. It happens, but it is not common'. An important question here is how such couples settle their disputes. Lateef replies, 'It is an internal conflict and they resolve it internally'. I consider this as unsafe, subject to abuse if the woman is not co-operating. So, Lateef's answer is not satisfactory as it gives no space for the freedom of religion that he and other contributors such as Wólé and Mako have described earlier.

On the sustainability of harmony in a polygynous mixed marriage and conversion to other religion in different parts of Yorùbáland, Lateef suggests:

Family brackets allow Yorùbá people to live in peace and to value the contributions the individuals bring to the larger family including a convert to another religion. So, there is an economic aspect to peaceful relations and tolerance within the Yorùbá larger extended family. Family brackets mean we value the development we bring to the family.

One of the reasons for the Yorùbá's quest for harmony is the benefit each relation can bring to the family, regardless of their religion. It is no surprise that the idea of *omọ iyá kanná* in both the biological and primordial senses is well-known among the Yorùbá, as families are required to cater for one another. Kings are thought to be responsible for the welfare of their people and accountable to their ancestors as a means of sustaining the peace. In general, marriages (mostly monogamous, and even polygyny) among the Yorùbá often receive the support of the extended family and community to endure and avoid conflict as much as possible. This is like Otite's suggestion regarding the support traditional family offers homes:

Such affection, strong as it may be, is often the product of cooperation in economic activities and child rearing in the traditional family process. Both the Christian and State type of marriage may be used to consolidate the traditional form although the rules of all three may be incompatible. (Otite, 1991, p. 41)

The *Òsálágbèdẹ* (FI) illustrates this extensively. Otite adds that marriage among the Yorùbá is not a perfect type as some spouses caught up in extramarital affairs, which could lead to divorce, often seek mediation and reconciliation if the innocent party [like the legal wife] does not want a divorce. Connections within the families, therefore, help to heal the concerned couple and reinforce support to keep the peace, (see Otite, 1991, p. 46), although it sometimes allows indulgences.

Giddens writes: '[a]ll cultures have some recognisable form of the family system, in which there are values and norms associated with the care of children' (1989, p. 39). The reciprocal care among the Yorùbá is noted as a uniting force for harmony and the continuity of their race. Giddens goes on:

The institution of marriage is a cultural universal, as are religious rituals and property rights. All cultures, also have some form of incest prohibition – the banning of sexual relations between close relatives,

such as father and daughter, mother and son, or brother and sister.  
(1989, p. 39)

When such values begin to diminish, it is expected that harmony will also be depleted. The current harmony among the Yorùbá is, therefore, due to the ability to sustain the common virtues, especially those promoted by their religions and culture. Mako (FI), a Muslim cleric without Western education, argues: '[t]here is peace in Yorùbáland because we are *Ọmọ iyá kannâ* from Adam and Eve'.<sup>3</sup> He adds that cultural values, intra-tribal understanding and communal and mixed marriages have been useful in keeping violent conflict at bay. These ideas are also emphasized in FGD2 and FGD1.

Mythological, theological, ancestral, and religious discourse about Adam and Eve are suggested as encouraging tolerance between the Christian and Muslim Yorùbá. In traditional Christian and Islamic theology, humans are said to originate from the same parents, cherished by the devoted Yorùbá religious people. This theological connection supports their disposition towards one another. This theological discourse goes beyond the Abrahamic faith already discussed by scholars (see Hughes, 2012). The creation story, the story of the first human parents, is one of the crucial points for harmony among the devoted Yorùbá Christians and Muslims. The understanding of the connecting stories like Adam and Eve in an inter-faith context is an area for peaceful engagement in the religious milieu. The question here is, what features do religions and culture have in common to sustain the peace in this regard?

Mako argues that changing one's religion has an impact on the convert's family and on the community at large; yet he repeated patience (or *sabr*) as required to settle conflicts, a virtue among the Yorùbá. Mako further comments:

There is no freedom of religion for a Christian woman who marries a Muslim man. A Christian woman who is not ready to become a

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<sup>3</sup> Translated by the researcher from Yorùbá into English.

Muslim should not marry a Muslim. Muslim girls marrying Christian men should not come back to the mosque. She should stay with the Christian husband. A Christian girl marrying a Muslim has technically adopted Islam. So, think carefully before you marry a person of another faith, as the family of the other man or woman will be unhappy about the relationship at least for some time.

On marriage, Mako warned anyone going into a mixed marriage of the need to convert to the husband's religion, even though it does not always work that way. *Ọmọbọ* has Muslim parents but became a Christian and claimed to be happily married to Mic, a Christian man. This negates Lateef's recommendation that Muslim women should not marry Christian men but in congruence with Mako's suggestion to go with the husband's religion. I recall my interaction with Wasiu's mother and father, some years ago. Wasiu's mother was from a Cherubim and Seraphim Christian tradition but married Wasiu's father, a practising Muslim, and both now practise Islam, in line with Lateef's suggestion. This shows the complexity of an interfaith mixed marriage in the Yorùbá worldview, with a certain level of religious freedom. It is common among the contemporary Yorùbá that the immediate family will experience a shock because of such unions but later recover so that the conflict does not deteriorate into physical violence (or murder).

Comparing Mako's and Lateef's positions on interfaith marriage, we see differences in their understanding and the teachings from the Islamic tradition. For Lateef, Muslim men are free and encouraged to marry Christian women, whose children must practise Islam – or at least half of their children should; while Muslim women are not (officially) allowed to marry outside of the Islamic faith. For Mako, all women are warned to think well before deciding who to marry. They must be ready to practise the religion of the man they marry and allow the children born of such a union to do the same. The two suggestions appeal for harmony by giving warnings of what future spouses should expect of such marriages. *Lódún*, a Muslim retired teacher, does not condone conversion from any religion, although he is married to a woman from a Christian family.

Singh and others noted that mixed marriage is more pronounced among women with a higher education and socio-economic development but low in the poor local communities in India (2013, p. 204). Bandyopadhyay & Green also suggest marriage for convenience, social-economic reasons, culture [or value], and similarity in education level, (p. 29) as bases for mixed marriage in the European context among the immigrants and the host community. Rodríguez-García rates social class and citizenship as the relevant factors often considered in a mixed marriage in the West rather than the culture (2006, p. 427). In contrast, Murphy suggests the importance placed on marriage within the same religion in the United States but not as strong as it was in the past among their older couples (Murphy, 2015). However, scholars vary in their opinions about the relationships between couples with the same religions compared with those of inter-marriages. Some specific research in the US shows:

That members of certain religious groups [like Protestants in the US] are more likely than others [the Hindus, Mormon and Muslims] to be with someone of their faith, whether they are married or living together in a romantic relationship. (Murphy, 2015).

One may then ask, does the reason behind intermarriage have anything to do with the people's economic or financial gains, or the community's cherished values (maybe values within the culture or religions)? Smith and others suggest an increase in intermarriage in the United States, especially religious people with a 'religiously unaffiliated population' (Smith et al., 2015, p. 5). This connecting point between the Christians [Americans] and the unaffiliated spouses could be explored further to unveil if such relationships have any relevance to a commonly held values.

Among the Yorùbá, women advancing in age sometimes experience pressure from family and friends to possibly accept marriage proposals that may end in polygyny (that is being the second wife) or in a mixed marriage. Mixed marriages across cultures and

nationalities is common in the southern part of Africa as their connection with Europeans and Asians over the centuries has provided the opportunities (Bandyopadhyay & Green, p. 5). I am also aware that mixed marriages across ethnic groups and religions is practised in West Africa. Bandyopadhyay suggests:

[There are] ... strong evidence that measures of modernization such as literacy/education, urbanization, wealth, non-polygamous marriages, later age at marriage and non-agricultural employment are correlated with inter-ethnic marriage, which helps to explain why inter-ethnic marriage rates have been steadily increasing in Africa since the 1980s. (p. 29)

Considering Singh et al.'s research in India, education, economic potential, and value systems have correlations with mixed marriages, meaning that the wealthy and educated are likely to be open to marrying a person of their choice often with similar values to make the marriage work.

In as much as a social class is considered in intermarriage in Africa, the family and community values embedded in their culture and religions are emphasized among the Yorùbá. Could education and socio-economic bases be the reasons for the harmony in Lódún's interfaith marriage and why he would not recommend intermarriage for others? Each situation seems peculiar and must be handled carefully. In a very traditional place like India for instance, Singh and others suggest that is a drive to promote mixed marriage to increase the 'socio-economic progress [...mixed marriages...] as a critical indicator of socioeconomic integration in society.' (2013, p. 205). However, there are still reports of honour-killings when victims violate the family or community's regulations against mixed marriage despite India's over fifty years' legalizing inter-caste marriages (2013, p. 194). Interfaith marriage among the Yorùbá, though not often encouraged is still more peaceful than as in India. Mako in my interview stated:

Christians and Muslims should not treat each other as enemies. Christians and Muslims both take a strong interest in the family relationship and oppose violence. *Ajobi wa ko ni baje o* [may our family relationship not grow sour or stale]. ‘Your religion is yours and mine is mine.’ Insults should be avoided in the contents of sermons/*waasi*. In Shaki, a Muslim was banned by other Muslims from preaching because he preached provocative sermons and the Muslim communities threatened to hand him over to the police if he violated the ban.

This reflects the desire of an elderly Muslim leader to keep the peace among his people and could suggest what an average Muslim would interpret as ‘Islam is peace’, a kind of thick concept, giving warnings and not seeking to force Islam on others. Lateef’s suggestion for Muslims to marry Christian women and to keep the children in such mixed marriages within Islam appears more aggressive than Mako’s teaching, both found in the ‘peaceful’ Yorùbáland.

Some participants suggest certain benefits from interfaith marriage. Adé suggests that mixed marriages help family relationships and that the Yorùbá leaders discourage any attempt to use religious differences to cause conflicts. Anike makes a similar comment in FGD1c, with a reference to Sọun the King and his advocacy for harmony among Christian and Muslim residents of Ògbómòṣó. Two of Sọun’s daughters married Christians and the couples practise the Christian faith, following Mako’s proposition to practise the husband’s religion.

Ọmọbọ, a woman from Muslim parents, narrates her own experience. She was brought up in a Muslim family but converted to Christianity and married Mic at the Customary Court in Nigeria. Ọmọbọ was a practising Christian when she married Mic and she has continued to be so over the past 30 years. From a Muslim family of four children, one of her siblings became a Christian, while the other two have remained Muslims. Ọmọbọ had disputes with her parents over her choice of a Christian husband and her parents were upset at the time of her wedding, suffering the stress that Mako notes often follows conversion. Ọmọbọ’s mother had to hurry to the scene of the wedding, followed by the

father, having changed their mind to attend the wedding. The Yorùbá parents' view was that it would be unfair to reject their daughter because of her choice of husband and to later attend the weddings of her siblings. This also shows the complexity of the culture of tolerance and love and their freedom of religion. Since the wedding, there has been no conflict between Ọmọbọ and her parents, even when it became clear that Ọmọbọ and Mic (the husband) would not be celebrating the Islamic festival (the sacrificial mandate in Islam) with the family. Mic and Ọmọbọ, however, care for her Muslim parents and siblings in some other ways. According to Ọmọbọ, 'whatever may happen, we would not go into physical violence with one another'. This quote mirrors the FGD1a Christian participants saying, 'You cannot continually be fighting with your cousins'. Similarly, Ọmọbọ suggests that the Yorùbá think deeply and the reason that if they lose anything during any violent conflict, there may not be a way of repairing such damages easily, talk less of a loss of life. This is in line with the use of the term '*aláròjinlẹ*' by Wólé to describe this idea, claiming that they would not destroy property because of religion. They, nevertheless, do destroy property because of political conflict, which is beyond the scope of this study.

Raising the children born within mixed marriages requires patience, tolerance and understanding and there is no one way of doing this, even in the view of religious leaders. Muslim children are permitted to live with their Christian cousins and vice versa if certain ethical standards are maintained and there is a promise of looking after their parents as they grow older. I have gathered that education and social status is helpful in maintaining harmony in homes, as with Lódún and his wife, Mic, and Ọmọbọ, and as illustrated in the European context. However, Wasiu's parents did not receive literacy education and belong to a very low social class yet claimed to live harmoniously. What other areas of life would have been significant in keeping Wasiu's parents in harmony in a mixed

marriage context? Higher education and social status alone may not necessarily be the only factors behind harmony in mixed marriages as they were lacking in Wasiu's harmonious mixed family. I discuss this further under hermeneutics in the following chapter.

## **7.2 Co-operation for Conflict Management**

Some scholars have identified the quest for power, politics, and money as the root causes of conflicts in Nigeria in the last few decades (Abdulkarim, n.d.; Efolia & Adogame, 2012; Harnischfeger, 2004; Musa & Ferguson, 2011). Odumosu (1999) and Omale (2009), on the other hand, suggest the potential of the local indigenous organizations to settle religious and political disputes in Nigeria. Some Christians and Muslims have met for social purposes under religious banners set up by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), such as PROCMURA as mentioned earlier. Frederiks (2010, p. 270) also mentions the roles of 'social collective enlightenment' in uniting Christians and Muslims. This, he argues, involves peace action, protests injustice and campaigns for awareness on health-related issues, as championed by NGOs or other sectors. Sholagbade (n.d.) suggests that some NGOs support the health-related campaign. Social work has also helped with what Akinade calls the 'dialogue of life' (2002, p. 1), which has profited the Yorùbá a great deal. Frederik (2010) writes on the current trends in Christian-Muslim relations and argues that a lack of knowledge of the other religion, the use of 'inflammatory words' and the implementation of *Sha'riah* in northern Nigeria have been responsible for the conflict in some parts of the country. This implies that the ability to manage such problems where it surfaces is beneficial for peaceful coexistence in communities.

This research has shown that the Yorùbá's knowledge of the religions practised among its people, their use of language in their sermons and their avoidance of inflammatory words are useful tools for peace maintenance. Other useful means for the avoidance of conflict and maintenance of peace among the Yorùbá are the messages conveyed in the music and media and positive social functions. These suggest that the lack of one or more of these tools could be responsible for the tension in northern Nigeria and other multi-religious communities that are prone to religious conflicts.

Through the study of religious texts, scholars have responded to the lack of knowledge of their neighbours' religions, organizing dialogue conferences such as those led by PROCURA. Similarly, Albert (1999) blames the poor use of media and communication management by some leaders for many conflicts, while Adé, in this study, suggests that the positive engagement of the Yorùbá people through radio broadcasting is profitable for peace. The use of the media by the Yorùbá has helped to strengthen their harmony, as suggested by Adé and Blessing in my interviews. Adé uses his skills as a senior staff member of the radio station to promote harmony among the Yorùbá and Blessing reinforces this idea citing appropriate use of music. Osaghae and Suberu elaborate on the approaches for managing conflicts:

Decentralisation of conflicts [...] thereby reducing the capacity of such conflicts to polarise or destabilise the entire federation', i.e. creation of multiple states instead of 'regional centres'. (2005, p. 20)

So, other approaches include the division of each major ethnic group, the empowerment of each community and the establishment of a judiciary at the grassroots level for all aggrieved people to obtain justice when wronged (*ibid*, 2005). The decentralization of conflict helps to reduce the agitators' capacity, which benefits political leaders who want to subdue and control their people, but it does not provide a lasting solution to the problems that led to the agitation and protests. The division of the major ethnic group for

easy development in Nigeria has rather inflicted more agony and prevented the people from airing their views to obtaining the support they needed, whereas they did not receive the infrastructural development it was meant for.

### **7.3 Control or Management of Aggression**

How do the PS manage their conflicts? Briggs argues that although the Inuit society show aggressiveness, sometimes committing murder, they often seek peace, meaning that they reject violence as a norm but project their cherished peaceful values among their communities through joking, reassurance and ostracizing culprits, (Briggs, 1994). Inuit are nomadic and during dispute use songs to diffuse tension, (Briggs, 2000). According to Bonta:

While the strategies for managing conflicts employed by these peoples are comparable to those used in many other small-scale societies, their world-views of peacefulness and the structures they use to reinforce those world-views do distinguish them from other [violent] societies. (Bonta, 1996, p. 403)

Briggs further provides approaches to averting conflict as the communities express their wishes indirectly not to offend others, and the use of jokes to present their requests or needs, (Briggs, 2000). Biesele and Howell add that the Ju/'hoansi prevent conflicts as they discourage wealth accumulation while strengthening their social bonding of their young, (Biesele & Howell, 2015). Bonta compares the western approach to conflict with that obtainable among the PS:

Several common notions about conflict and conflict resolution that are asserted by Western scholars can be questioned in light of the success of these societies in peacefully resolving conflicts: namely, that violent conflict is inevitable in all societies; that punishment and armed force prevent internal and external violence; that political structures are necessary to prevent conflicts; and that conflict should be viewed as positive and necessary. The contrary evidence is that over half of the peaceful societies have no recorded violence; they

rarely punish other adults (except for threat of ostracism); they handle conflicts with outside societies in the same peaceful ways that they approach internal conflict; they do not look to outside governments when they have internal disputes; and they have a highly negative view of conflict. (B. D. Bonta, 1996, p. 403)

The distinctions identified above serve as qualities that strengthen the peacefulness of many of the identified societies in anthropology.

Some Yorùbá also use jokes to present their requests although this appears to be fading away but the idea of not wanting to offend while presenting a request is still in use and is described as shyness (*ojú ntii*) among the Yorùbá. So, violence is avoidable where people are willing. Peace also is obtainable where it is promoted, and the parties involved are ready for it. The key features to peacefulness, therefore, are the people's worldview, values, and the available structure to both manage conflict and sustain their serenity.

In response to some psychologist's linear cause and effects relationships of frustration causing anger that leads to aggression, Robarchek argues that frustration among the Semai causes fear rather than anger, and they have learnt to cope with situations that have the potential to lead to frustrations with the use of their charms, exorcism and their good interpersonal relationships (Robarchek, 1977). Semai's dispute resolution technique (*abaraá*) requires the parties involved and some members of the community to be present. Though the case in question is well known to them, their goal is to seek peace but not to determine and punish the guilty. In doing this, they try to avoid emotions, and present their case and viewpoints. The headman will conclude the meeting with a lecture on peacefulness, acceptable behaviour, unity, and the benefit of interdependence on one another (Robarchek, 1979, 1981, 1997). Bonta, with reference to Robarchek, argues that whereas the modern communities like Pennsylvania (in the USA) seek an attorney to defend them, to win their cases and get a reward, familiarity among the Semai is helpful in conflict resolution as the Semai look up to one another for help and the betterment of

their children rather than aggravating a conflict situation for a personal reward (Bonta, 1996). Many of the Yorùbá communities are known to want to keep friendships hence they often seek ways to end conflicts or prevent them from happening. This is seen in a secondary *ethnie* describing the Yorùbá as timid while the FGD3 Yorùbá participants call it *omólúàbí* attributes of peacefulness. Most PS seem to have solidified their worldview on peace whilst violence sometimes emerges mostly out of their slackness in safeguarding it.

## **7.4 Summary**

The Yorùbá interact at various levels, in homes, communities, within their towns and villages for cultural, religious, and social purposes. While they found the bases of their interactions inevitable as it surrounds essential events of their day-to-day activities geared towards meeting their needs, it also involves their friends and families in social and cultural contexts. Christian and Muslim Yorùbá, therefore, come together under inevitable interactions for social/cultural like wedding, funeral, and naming; dialogue under religious freedom which occasionally results in a better understanding for conflict management, conversion or mixed marriages and joint ventures. With all the available methods and theories of managing conflict and bringing about peace, conflict is still a regular experience in some quarters of Nigeria, while the Yorùbá remain relatively steady. Can a study of the maintenance of peace when proactively using certain features of its culture and religions to foster unity help our understanding of the society?

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### RELIGIOUS HERMENEUTICS AS A MEANS OF DE-ESCALATING CONFLICT AND SUSTAINING THE PEACE

In this chapter, I present the roles the understanding of religion and the interpretations of religious texts could play in the sustainability of peace in human society. The Yorùbá's way of practising their religions has developed over time. At the inception of Christianity and Islam among the Yorùbá in Nigeria, each was allocated certain portions of land by local kings on which to build their centres of worship, schools, while Christians in addition also built hospitals. On some occasions, thick forests or jungles were allocated to churches, but in time such places have been developed to become habitable. A few examples of institutions transformed from these allocated lands are the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ògbómòṣó, and the Bowen University Teaching Hospital (formerly known as the Baptist Medical Centre), Ògbómòṣó. Others are the Baptist College Iwo now the Bowen University Iwo and the Baptist Hospital Shaki. How has the interaction of religions and the Yorùbá culture given way to religious discourses and what are the hybrid outcomes of such interactions?

#### 8.1 Religious Discourse

There have been occasions of resentment due to how the indigenous religion (IAR) was treated by the new religions (Islam and Christianity) and vice versa, but the three were ultimately able to form strong relationships with time, as they engaged in dialogue to understand one another better. Dialogue and understanding have taken root among the Yorùbá. The Orò Yorùbá festival that bans women from going outside during their festival

for instance, gave space for the Christian's demand to allow their women to attend Sunday evening services in Ògbómòsò. A clergyman, Rev'd. Ige, was very influential in this dialogue to work it out peacefully as he also was a recognized personality within the Ògbómòsò Palace Chieftains.

Similarly, a Christian contact at the Sèpètèrí (FI), Gabu, testifies that Mako was a Muslim respected cleric, friendly and loyal to the Christian community despite the conflict that lasted close to a decade in the town. As a result, the Sèpètèrí conflict is linked directly to the way in which religion is interpreted and taught among the militant group, not the widely acceptable norm of the Muslim community. I use the term 'militant' carefully, not as an equivalent to 'terrorist'. Such weird interpretations of religion are found to be incompatible with the Yorùbá culture. Individual and group attitudes to others have to do with their upbringing and what they learn or consider acceptable behaviour as adults through the agency of the religion, culture, or other avenues of direct or indirect learning. The learning that dominates in an individual or group often takes pre-eminence in the community at large. For instance, Mako, a Muslim cleric suggests:

Christians and Muslims are not idolatrous; hence Christians are not *kafir* [unbelievers]. Only the idolaters are *Kafir* [whom Mako described as the people without a written scripture] and conversion to other religion has an impact on the community and the parents.

On the contrary, Muslims refer to Christians and other non-Muslims in northern Nigeria as *kafir* or infidel, unbelievers in God unlike Mako's proposition. Some Christians also refer to non-Christians as unbelievers (*alàìgbàgbó* in Yorùbá language) but not violent at them. The strength of Mako's teaching is that Christians are not unbelievers to be confronted or persecuted by Muslims in Sèpètèrí or Yorùbáland. Like Mako's argument, the Senegalese Imam suggested, Christians are not *kafir* (Wisconsin-n.a., 2009).

Mako's teaching appeals to tolerance and peacefulness between Christian and Muslim Yorùbá within the context of the Yorùbá culture, while the Christians also seek to live in peace and holiness and would not be 'fighting their own cousins' (FGD1). However, the Sèpètèrì militant group did not adhere to these religious interpretations, hence provided an alternative teaching, which was more fundamentalist in nature and coupled with other factors in their society like a slackness in their regular houses leaders' meeting, that eroded their peacefulness. It is reasonable to infer that the Sèpètèrì community were quite peaceful when Mako's teachings and similar ideas were operational until other alternatives were brought in which were considered less tolerant. Thus, a community with similar or complimentary teachings appear more harmonious than the one with opposing alternative ideas. Similarly, in a community with two or more opposing operational norms, the one that dominates determines the general outlook of such a community. An understanding of one's neighbour's values, teachings, and interpretations of their religion, therefore, increases the community's ability to sustain the peace among their people. In the Senegalese context, both religious festivals are celebrated together by their communities that is made up of mixed families, like the Yorùbá, although the percentage of Christians is lower, at around 5% (Senegal, January 2009), compared to the equal split among the Yorùbá.

By inference, the common themes of Islam and Christianity are often encouraged to be discussed in dialogue meetings, rather than the areas of differences. In the Senegalese context, for instance:

For the Imam (the 83-year-old), 'Islam' means 'peace'. He pointed out that the Qur'an not only mentions but accepts many prophets in the Bible such as Moses, Abraham and Jesus. In his community, Muslim and Christian leaders often invite the other side to official events. For example, when the Cardinal came to Saint Louis for a visit recently, the Imam was invited and, because he was too frail to go, he sent a representative. The main challenges facing the Muslim

community are poverty and the preservation of shrines such as mosques. (Wisconsin-n.a., 2009)

Lateef (FI), Mako (FI) and Wólé (FGD3), in different towns and on different occasions, made a remark like the above. This is an attempt by interpreters and leaders to present religion in a way that facilitates harmony. Similarly, there was a poverty concern among the Senegalese (95% Muslims and 5% Christian). Such concerns are present among some Nigerians. The former Emir of Kano and also the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, likewise claims poverty is endemic among northern Nigeria Muslims (2017), whilst Nigeria has had more Muslim leaders as presidents and heads of state than any other religion's representation since its independence in 1960. The Comptroller-General of the nation has always been a northern Muslim. The cry about such poverty in northern Nigeria is indefensible.

On a positive note, the southern Nigerian Muslims refer to Christians as their kinsmen and vice versa, as seen in Mako's suggestion. As far back as 1800, Yorùbá Muslims have been delighted for their kinsman, Ajayi Crowther, becoming a recognized Christian and a bishop of the Church of England, (Cole, 2004; Law, 1991a; Milsome, 1987). Samuel Ajayi Crowther was the first indigenous Christian bishop in West Africa. The virtues of love and understanding are paramount for the Yorùbá, as suggested in FGD1, FGD3, and the interview with Babatunde, Ìyabò, and the Òsálágbèdè confirm.

I can claim that the peaceful relations among the Senegalese are like those among the Yorùbá. Kukah, writing on the strength of the interaction between Christians and Muslims in Senegal, suggests, 'As history has shown us, any system that is not anchored on the realisation of the good of all is doomed to fail' (Kukah, 2007, p. 163). Hence, Senegal has come to attention in recent years among scholars of anthropology and communication, due to the peaceful relations among the Senegalese Christians and Muslims. Other attributes observed among the Senegalese are their culture of hospitality, referred to as

*teranga*; mixed marriages between Christians and Muslims; Muslim children accepted in the Catholic school and thereby coming to understand the other's beliefs, and the adults' participation in both Christian and Muslim festivals (Senegal-UW-Collaboration, 2009). Also, the Senegalese religious leaders engaged in dialogue at the community level and have mutual concern for one another as a community. Research among the Senegalese is ongoing and open for contributions, asking questions such as:

What do you think of Senegal's model for interfaith peace? Is it a special case or can some parts of it be replicated in other countries? What else can be done to increase mutual understanding of Muslims and Christians? Senegal-Collaboration. (Senegal-UW-Collaboration, 2009)

In another section, they asked:

What role can religious leaders, Muslim or Christian, play in promoting interfaith harmony? Will Senegal's model work in your community? (Wisconsin-n.a., 2009)

These are relevant questions, like those in this research among the Yorùbá, located in peace and conflict studies and relevant to dialogue, anthropology as well as communication studies. Yet, it is not simply a matter of replicating the Senegalese case, but of discovering other communities that already exhibit such [inter-religious] harmony. This is not only to ascertain the means of increasing mutual understanding among religions but also to analyse what is currently being done to sustain the peace and manage their disputes. Similarly, leaders' roles are as important as the contents of the teachings and the religious interpretations they provide their followers and the accepted cultural grounds for accommodating the quest for harmony. So, religious interaction and discourses at a social level contribute in many ways to the knowledge of peace in human society.

### 8.1.1 Formal and Informal Theological Discourses

My study in Ògbómòṣó suggests that family relationships and family bonds help to resolve disputes when they arise. The interaction at this level is mostly informal. It takes a formal channel when the family head or designated person is involved to settle any disputes. A closer attention to FGD1 reveals that disputes sometimes occur over the question of whether Christians should accept Islamic festival meals. Akinjogbin's theory that the harmonious relationships among the Yorùbá based on their *Èbí* connections was initially evident in FGD1 until the FGD1a and FGD1c presented another view on the theological issue of the Yorùbá Christians eating Islamic festival meals. While some Christians eat such meals, some do not. Those who reject the meals support their claim by their belief that Jesus Christ's final atonement (see Hebrews Chapter 7 and 8) indicates no further requirement for a compulsory animal slaughtering for worship purposes (or sacrifice in a regulated feast), which they believe the Muslim festival constitutes. Discourses along this line are often informal while it becomes formal only when the family head is involved to present the reasons for their non-participation in the meal. Either way, the outcome is always peaceful, understanding each other better for the future possible engagements.

Rich in FGD1a, Fúnmiláyò and Sàngó in FGD1c, each saw nothing wrong with eating a festival meal offered by Muslim friends or neighbours. Wùmí in FGD1a and Oyè in FGD1c, rejected the festival meal as it negates their Christian beliefs. To the latter, Jesus Christ is the final atonement, and animal slaughtering for spiritual purposes (implied from the Muslim *Eid Al-Adha* festival) are no longer required or demanded by God. Yet, FGD1 unanimously agreed that, when offered such festival meals, Christians who do not want to eat should politely provide explanation for the refusal, so they do not receive and dispose of it. A similar discussion emerged in FGD3, when Wólé, a Muslim leader who

was also my research assistant at that site expressed his displeasure at non-Muslims (like Christians), throwing out the Islamic festival meals given to them. This theological discourse occurs in informal settings among the Yorùbá, usually unplanned but often well managed. Christians who want to eat would have made up their minds prior to the festival, as would those who do not want to eat. They might change their minds through dialogue and intelligent discussion. In most cases, the Muslim celebrants will, over time and through years of interaction, identify the Christian neighbours who will partake in their feast and those who will decline. As examples, Wùmí (FGD1a), Ọmọbọ (FI) and Oyè (FGD1c) will not, while Fúnmiláyò FGD1c and Sàngó (FGD1c) will. Both religions can get along through honest dialogue.

Most formal theological discourses among the Yorùbá take place in their communities, higher institutions of learning as organized by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). One example of an institutional dialogue (or seminar) was mentioned at FGD1a, where an Islamic Imam and a Roman Catholic priest were invited to a university to address the students on understanding their neighbours and peacefulness. The student participant in FGD1a who made this contribution was elated that the clerics expressed the commonalities of the two religions and highlighted the need for mutual understanding and love. One of the notable NGOs that oversees Christian-Muslim dialogue and understanding in Africa is the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA), formerly known as the Islam in African Project. PROCMURA was formed by Christians to educate interfaith communities through dialogue. It often organizes programmes that include Muslim leaders and scholars, and sometimes engages in community awareness and developmental projects (PROCMURA-Witness, n.d.). PROCMURA lists its ‘Christian and Muslim joint programmes of action’ to include: “Peace and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims and ... [c]arrying out

Christian mission and Muslim da'wah in a manner that respects the spirit of good neighbourliness' among others.” (PROCMURA-Witness, n.d.). I functioned as an Associate Area Adviser for PROCMURA in Western Nigeria from 2002 until 2007 and participated in attendance and leading seminars in Ibadan and Maiduguri. These were formal discourses in seminar fora with topics around the theological bases of peacefulness among Christians and Muslims. With offices in western and northern Nigeria, and Ibadan (in the west) as its headquarters until 1997 before it was moved to Nairobi, Kenya, (PROCMURA-Nigeria, n.d.). PROCMURA's operations among the Yorùbá for many years could have contributed to their peaceful relationships. Both formal and informal dialogues are common among the Yorùbá, which they often use to improve their understanding of one another's expectations to strengthen their unity.

### **8.1.2 Intolerance and Outside Influence**

Another theme relevant to religion supporting harmony among the Yorùbá is their ability to manage intolerance and outside negative influences. This theme may appear negative, but the community's ability to handle the situations determines the outcomes in individual cases. According to Kúnlé (FGD2), poor teaching and hatred expressed in Christian sermons or Islamic *da'wah* (preaching) when not well handled, are sources of conflict. According to Kúnlé, the Sèpètèrì conflicts breed 'hatred and individualism'. He adds:

The 2000–2013 conflicts led to the death of three persons. After the death of the King, the town found it difficult to install a successor because the Christians were careful of accepting a Muslim king that will sanction Islamic domination over Sèpètèrì town. Power due to the influence of Islam is causing a problem in Sèpètèrì presently. However, some Muslims claim that since the last King was a Muslim, the new to be installed must also be a Muslim, which the Christians have rejected.

Like Kúnlé, Mako made references to what might cause provocation between the two religions, suggesting the Muslim *da'wah* (preaching) should be done without being

confrontational. Mako adds that insults and assault should not be condoned in the interaction between Christians and Muslims, and provocative statements about one another's religion should be avoided. Mako, a Muslim respected cleric was in support of peaceful relations between the two religious' communities in Sèpètèrí.

However, FGD2 participants express dismay at the interactions between the two religions that have turned sour since a Yorùbá Muslim trainee (Òjèlabí) returned to Sèpètèrí from Cairo and spread antagonism and disunity among the people. They argue that Òjèlabí taught some Muslim residents of Sèpètèrí the art of violent *jihad*, encouraging attacks on Christians and teaching a mode of dressing, and methods of naming and burial. Some Muslims who became his followers were violent towards the Christian community. The Sèpètèrí general community could not bear the intolerance that followed, which led to violence, arson, arrests, and court cases. Gideon provides the names of those responsible for the spread of the conflicts between Christian and Muslim residents of Sèpètèrí who have all died through natural causes (their names are withheld in this writing). He states:

Thirty years ago, there was harmony in Sèpètèrí. You could hardly see any difference in the ways the traditionalists, Christians, and Muslims lived. Suddenly, some kids began to behave differently. It was seen that those causing the trouble were born around the time the Ogun-Osun River basin authority was established. The Christians seemed to be more prosperous. In 1952, the Sèpètèrí Improvement Union was founded by the elites, without any Muslims there. Some encouraged certain boys to cause a problem for leading Christians so that Muslims might rise.

Gideon also accused Òjèlabí of teaching Samex, who burnt down a Baptist Church in Shaki, a few miles from Sèpètèrí. Òjèlabí, according to Gideon, falsely accused some Christians of violence when Christians were exercising self-defence. Òjèlabí also was later caught in another violent act and arrested by the police. Another report presented by Gideon concerns the inter-state underground plans for violence against the Yorùbá people:

17 May 2015. I was at Tagita, the Republic of Benin in my guest house. In the next (adjacent) room, the occupant was a Fulani who had taken his father for hospital treatment. The man talked about Kaiama in the Kwara State of Nigeria. He inquired about a man who built a big mansion in Sèpètèrì whether he was a Christian or a Muslim. When he heard the man was a Christian, he warned that he (the Fulani young man) has been invited to KMS Islamic village near Iseyin (Òyó State) for a lecture. There, he met many people, including two people from Sèpètèrì, training for a Boko Haram type of mission. Their focus was to burn down Sèpètèrì and spare only Muslims.

Gideon informed his church, on his return to Nigeria about the above-narrated experience.

The Deputy Governor of Òyó, at that time, was then informed by an Ìgbòho indigene (name withheld). Gideon adds:

These Muslim boys that were trained to cause crises went to build mosques in Ìgbòho Baptist High School and Sèpètèrì Baptist High School. A mosque was erected in the premises of the Ìgbòho Baptist Church, but the court said Muslims should never use it and the court judgment stands! No mosques have been built at Sèpètèrì primary school yet. The discussion is ongoing on the use of the hijab and the government allows them to use the hijab in government schools.

The level of religious provocation grew when some members of the community tacitly or willingly co-operated with the outside influences (engineered by Òjèlábí and other internal informants) and strange teachings to become intolerant. The provocation by the intolerant behaviour of the violent Islamic group further took root in Sèpètèrì and its surroundings in the Òkè Ògùn area of Òyó state, due to a lack of proactive leadership. At the same time, without the insiders' co-operation, it would have been difficult for intolerance to blossom, which authenticates the Yorùbá saying, *olè ilé ní òsì ilẹ̀kùn fún tòde* ('the thief in the house opens the door for the burglars').

I argue here that one of the reasons for the militant Muslims' rebellion can be attributed to their not being involved in development projects as could be inferred from the earlier Gideon's quote, even when Gideon could not see this as important, although the responsible way of rectifying the imbalance should not be Òjèlábí or any other led violence. This has an economic undertone. Nevertheless, the supposed leaked planned

training to attack the unsuspecting Sèpètèrì Christians is *un-Yorùbá*. To further provide space between the two communities for peace to be restored, many Sèpètèrì Christians have begun to send their children to privately own fee-paying schools where the *hijab* is not allowed, as the *hijab* becomes violently enforced rather than being a simple spiritual or religious attire. Many Muslims who send their children to such fee-paying schools but want their daughters to wear the *hijab* have withdrawn their children, placing them back in the *hijab*-approved government-funded schools. A few of the Sèpètèrì Muslims who wanted a more quality fee-education for their children have kept them in the fee-paying schools, while tolerating the non-acceptance of the *hijab*.

On a positive note, Mako is known for his religious toleration and many Sèpètèrì Christians speak well of him. This implies that not all Sèpètèrì Muslims are violent towards Christians and the violent individuals are in the minority. The intensity of the intolerance and the responses of the responsible religious community determine what the future holds for the non-Muslims in such a community. Good examples are the welcoming disposition of Mako in Sèpètèrì and the Sòún of Ògbómòṣòland, both Muslims and both showing love and support for Christian and Muslim communities together. In 2017, the Sòún released the formerly leased land as a gift to the Nigerian Baptist Convention, the site of the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Bowen University Teaching Hospital Ògbómòṣò. This is another kind of gesture towards Christians by a Muslim leader in Yorùbáland.<sup>1</sup>

In short, a violent fanatical Islamic group threatened the peace of the Sèpètèrì residents; a lack of development among some Muslims is one of the reasons for this and another

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix F on how the Christian community (especially Baptists) celebrated with singing, drumming and dancing, walking to Sòún's palace in appreciation of the gift of the land for the Church work and the mutual benefit of the hospital to the community and the nation at large.

reason being outside learned behaviour strange to the Yorùbá community. The two communities learn to balance their attitudes about their children's use of the *hijab* in schools through understanding and tolerance. The Christians in fee-paying schools without the use of *hijab*, and Muslims in government funded schools with the use of *hijab*, while a few do not mind sending their children to either of the schools. In general, the Yorùbá are peaceful, trying to avoid conflict that has a connection to religion as they seek to treat each other as *Ebí* (family). It is, however, unclear how the supposed harmonious Yorùbá communities will handle the underground attempts of the outsiders' influence on their peacefulness. That is the influence of unfriendly education received from outside of the community and any other outside influences in the context of what the Yorùbá refer to as the *olè ilé ní ñsì ilẹ̀kùn fún tòde* ('the resident thief [outlawed] that has potential to open the door for the burglars'). The unity must remain strong, otherwise, an aggrieved insider might become an informant for the outside invaders, or put in another way, *bí kú ilé kò bá pani, tòde kò lè pani*, meaning if your household security is strong outside invaders will find encroaching difficult.

### **8.1.3 Peaceful Societies and Fear of Strangers (Outsiders)**

Considering the peaceful societies' corresponding attitudes to strangers, I refer to the Paliyans, Semai, and Chewong as examples here. There are various situations that mend the frequency and seriousness of disputes among the Paliyans, but often they maintain non-violence as they avoid external pressure or influence, other possible causes of violence like alcoholism and show respect (Gardner, 2000). The Semai had suffered enslavement in the hands of the Malays their neighbour as well as being kidnapped, raided, and killed. The Semai teach their children to fear strangers through the teaching of terrifying stories of strangers' violence. Such early childhood training influences the

later life of Semai people, (Dentan, 2001, pp. 89, 90). The Chewong also fear outsiders like the Malays and Chinese. Brave people with the potential to harm falls outside of the Chewong 'moral universe' (Howell, 1989, p. 53).

What are the PS' attitudes to modernity? The PS's knowledge often informed the reasons for their fears as they often leave the site of danger or strangers based on their previous experience. Sometimes, they assess the situation or ideas being introduced to them for its value contents and if it does not contradict their community values. Although they maintain their values and appear as closed groups, some PS appear to be selective in what they consider relevant to their well-being. Bonta reports that the Canadian Hutterites respond well to the recent, coronal virus (covid-19) outbreak by restricting other colonies' access to their community. They also stopped the eating together in their communal dining hall as they used to do before the outset of the global pandemic. They go out only for the essential commodities and use hand sanitizers, gloves, and masks. Being Christians, they have reduced the number acceptable for each worship service to 15 and do that in turn to accommodate all the people in their colony, (Bonta, 2020). Furthermore, the Inuit use radio communication to air complaint, educate their community, and express warmth for social interaction, yet with a few traditional groups who prefer privacy rather than bringing concerns on the public radio, (Briggs, 2000, p. 122). As reserved as most PS appear to be, some are open to modern societies, although selective on what they consider beneficial to them without jeopardising their interest and valued life choices. The Yorùbá also find the use of radio useful in propagating their values through talks, music, jokes, and drama.

Most of the PS live in underdeveloped communities as the Ju/'hoansi live in the desert, lacking medical facilities, with their life expectancy and fertility rates low, and child mortality high, (Biesele & Howell, 2015). A helping hand will be relevant here. Yet, the

PS's worldview must be studied with carefulness by non-residents. For instance, many of them lack electricity, but may not feel the lack as much as those in the modern societies would think they do because some never had it and would not feel its absence so desperately as researchers might think they do.

#### **8.1.4 Religious Heritage and Socio-Cultural Values: The Meeting Point**

An average Yorùbá cherishes religious consciousness and the concept of eternal judgement. They socialize through celebrations such as weddings, naming days, funerals and other areas considered an essential part of living. They also interact through family connections and Area meetings, as previously noted. Muslim neighbours, for instance, attended Ọpẹ's wedding ceremony (FGD3) and joined in the wedding reception, where people ate, drank, and danced to the music. In the Senegalese context, UguccioniI mentions the Muslim leaders' request for prayer from the Christian priest:

Relations between Christian and Muslim religious authorities are also very friendly. Father Flavio cites, among many, two episodes that he considers key: 'Some time ago a boy came to tell me that the imam of the neighborhood wanted to see me. When I came to him I discovered that he had been ill for a week: he had called me because he wanted us to pray together. Another imam, two years ago, when his third son was born, asked me for the courtesy of reaching him because he wanted me to bless the newborn'. (UguccioniI, 2018)

This shows the level of trust that people can have for one another in times of need, all other things being equal. In this research, FGD1a expresses how a Muslim landlord often requested prayer from a Christian university student tenant. This is a common practice among the Yorùbá, requesting prayers during Christian worship. Muslims participated in the cooking during the graduation ceremony of Sàngó from the seminary as a trained Christian minister, and Wọlé travelled from western to northern Nigeria for the wedding of a former colleague's daughter (after my fieldwork), even though they do not practise the same religion. Both Christians and Muslims were present at the funeral service of the

81-year-old Christian clergyman in Ògbómòṣó. These are some of the social-religious occasions where members of the two religions meet for positive engagements, in addition to their daily encounters at work and in the neighbourhood.

With reference to the 81-year-old's funeral mentioned earlier, the deceased was a Christian minister from a Muslim background. I interviewed two women cousins of the deceased. The Muslim woman was with her *hijab* on while the Christian dressed in the Yorùbá woman's attire with a neck and headscarf both walking towards the church for the funeral. Christians and Muslims were present at the funeral (see Photograph 1. Muslims' presence at a Christian funeral). The Muslim men who were not willing to remove their caps as the Christian Yorùbá men do at worship sat in the company of other worshippers and sympathisers under the canopy outside the church building, as the inside hall was full to capacity. The Muslim women present wore the *hijab* and sat throughout the service with the other attendees at the funeral. One can see that the Yorùbá people see beyond their religious differences and celebrate with one another, doing so without necessarily compromising their faith. The Yorùbá describe their coming together for social celebrations as *aárẹ̀mísé*, a social concept rooted in the Yorùbá culture. Social interaction is a binding force among many the PS.

## **8.2 *Kaida*: Hermeneutics and Religious Leadership**

Some of the abilities of a religious community to sustain a harmonious society lie in the clerics' values, teachings, the interpretation of their scripture vis a vis the influence on their community. These also determine the level of freedom and tolerance their followers will exhibit. The clerics and the contents of their messages/sermons are crucial to the

harmony among the people they lead. Some relevant examples from this study data are the incidents at the University of Ibadan mosque versus the evangelical female students; the Sunni versus the supposed Shi'ite youth in Adé's narrative; and the Christians versus the Oro indigenous worshippers in Ògbómòṣó. Others are the Muslims versus the indigenous worshippers in Òyó and Iwo; the instructions on mixed marriage by Mako and Lateef; and the unity of the Islamic *sabr* (patience) and the Christians' peace and holiness. The Yorùbá leadership has been able to largely manage those incidents, except for the Sèpètèrì conflicts which have proven difficult due to the breakdown of the community leaders' meeting and the outside influences of militant ideologies.

Prior to the University of Ibadan female students' conflict with the Mosque worshippers, (Adesina & Gbenro, 2010),<sup>2</sup> M.K.O Abiola (a Muslim businessman and a presidential candidate) had made a demand for the Christian Cross statue erected in 1954, close to the Catholic Chapel at the University of Ibadan be demolished in 1985. The argument he put forward was that the cross statute was visible from the newly built mosque in the University. This led to conflict. A compromise was reached to build a concrete screen to block the view of the cross from the mosque premises (2016, p. 147). Peel adds:

When the dispute was eventually settled, there was a great sense of relief at having pulled back from the brink of something very nasty and un-Yorùbá – the more because of the intermittent outbreaks of serious religious violence that were by then occurring widely in Northern Nigeria. (p. 148)

So, Yorùbá leaders have been given credit for the way in which they have managed disputes over the years, with the exclusion of the contemporary politicians, who it is claimed have brought untold hardship to their people. The local leadership and influence

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<sup>2</sup> This incidence reported by Wole was widely covered by many Nigerian newspapers.

of the religious moderates on the ‘aggressive’ fanatics in each religious community determine the prevailing disposition of the society towards peace.

Here, I want to examine the contents of some teachings of a cleric that is relevant to community unity bearing in mind the thick description method for this study. Could the contents and interpretation (hermeneutics) provided by a religious leader contribute to the followers’ tolerance in human society? Lateef, an Islamic cleric, describes Islam as a religion of peace, which was also suggested in the Senegalese narratives. Lateef explains that Islam permits Muslims to practise polygyny, marrying up to four wives, and to proactively seek Christian females as wives in such relationships. This does not appear to be universal for the Muslim *Ummah* (people). A Muslim research colleague of mine from Syria (during my study at Edinburgh in 2007) was shocked to hear of the practice of polygyny among some African people and Muslims in particular. However, regardless of the Islamic authority for or against polygyny, the Yorùbá Muslims either find the traditional Yorùbá polygyny culture appealing and adopted it in line with the relevant Islamic traditions (*Sunnah*), or my Syrian Muslim colleague (and Muslims who reject polygyny) are more westernised in their Islamic orientation. I argue that the contents of the sermons, teaching and the hermeneutical style adopted for religious text in each locality play significant roles in the followers’ attitude and practices of religion (as well as polygyny). Hitherto, Lateef fails to see the contradiction in his promotion of Muslim men marrying Christian women in polygynous relationships and his prohibition of the reverse, for the Muslim women to marry Christian men. Lateef’s position is a potential source of conflict that could result in psychological and physical violence in the home unless underage marriage is outlawed, and adequate consents sought among the adult suitors.

Also, Lateef attributes the reasons for Muslim men wearing their hats in worship, while the Yorùbá Christians remove their hats as part of the understanding they both have displayed over the years. This understanding and respect have helped their togetherness as they need to attend one another's social and religious functions. Lateef claims to have attended his Christian brother's programmes and informed him that he would not move close enough to be mandated to remove his cap as, being a Muslim, he is required to wear a hat during worship. He made his belief in the freedom of religion clear, citing the Qur'an 2:256 ('There is no compulsion in religion') to reinforce his point. Both Wólé and Mako at different towns and locations also cite this Qur'anic text in their narratives. With reference to UguccioniI in Senegal, open-mindedness and the proper teaching of cherished values are deemed important to maintaining a harmonious community:

It is important that there are people in the community who are open-minded, capable of educating others with concrete gestures. Our mayor, for example, participates in Muslim activities, but is also present in Christian activities. (UguccioniI, 2018)

Thus, Lateef's knowledge of his own beliefs and the need to navigate those of others concerning his use of a cap in worship, without causing offence, helps him to maintain reasonable boundaries, keeping the peace with his Christian brother and remaining a committed Muslim, whilst his brother (a convert from Islam) remains a devout Christian minister. This mirrors the situation in Senegal, where mutual knowledge and respect is identified as crucial to the continued unity and peaceful relations among the majority of Sufi Muslims and the minority Roman Catholic Christians.

### 8.2.1 *Kaida*

Why are there peaceful Christian – Muslim communities in some places like among the Yorùbá and Senegalese whereas it is difficult to maintain harmony among the two religions' adherents in some other places like Kaduna, Zaria, and Kano in northern Nigeria? In Kaduna, Christians and Muslims live separately due to the frequency of violence and religiously motivated conflicts (Diji, 2012; Kazah-Toure, 2003; Okoye, 2014). The clue to the harmony among the Yorùbá is partly discussed by scholars, as illustrated in my literature review on the *Ebí* theory (Akinjogbin, 1966; Lateju, 2012). Are there other clues to this harmony? Thick description qualitative means will be relevant here.

Lateef suggests the idea of *Kaida* in Islam, when he tried to explain the tolerance displayed in the practice of Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*) by the Yorùbá Muslims, who remain committed friends of the non-Muslim Yorùbá, especially the Christians. Regarding this idea, I interrogated Lateef on why Muslims emphasize the *Shari'ah* and *halal*, when there are equivalent principles such as '[A]n eye for an eye' (Deuteronomy 19:21, Leviticus 24:20) and the dietary laws (Exodus 20:31, Leviticus 19:26) in the Bible. Lateef argues that the use of the Islamic terms is necessary to deserve the appropriate rewards from Allah. According to Lateef:

You cannot see all the things that *shari'ah* contains in other books, but you can see the similarities. Take, for instance, *shari'ah* allows a Muslim to marry up to four wives. Can you find that in the Bible? [...] That is why Muslims will say: let us use the *shari'ah*.

Lateef's comments sound dogmatic to me because there are polygynists in the Bible, albeit the practice is not legislated or recommended for Christians. There are polygynists out of circumstance, as in the cases of Abraham, Elkanah, David, and even Solomon,

(New-King-James-Version, 2006).<sup>3</sup> Zachariah (Luke 1), remains a *monogynist*, despite not having a child until his old age. The Yorùbá were known to be polygamists before the arrival of the two religions and many still practice the union. How is polygamy a unique Islamic practice?

A further elaboration is needed here for a thick description of peace among the Yorùbá in the context of marriage, in-laws, and neighbourhood relationships. Lateef's responses prompted a question concerning the variety of *Shari'ah* practices in different parts of Nigeria. I asked, 'Which *Shari'ah* are you talking about as there are broad materials and teachings in this area?' Lateef replied:

There is no book called *shari'ah*. *Shari'ah* is extracted from the Qur'an and the Hadith. That is the sayings and actions of the Prophet. From there we derive *shari'ah*. How the Prophet lived [...] to live according to the prophetic rules [...] Muslims believe that if they follow that, they are practising their religion and they will be rewarded. That aspect of the reward cannot be underestimated when it comes to *shari'ah*.

This response led to another question: since the *Shari'ah* is not codified, but rather extracted from the Quran and the *hadith*, can Islam highlight the sections also found in other religions or traditions, thereby socializing with other people and mentioning the *Shari'ah* only when the practice is uniquely Islamic? I was not convinced that polygyny and dietary rules (*halal*) are uniquely Islamic in a social, religious, or African context.

The practice of the *Shari'ah* varies across Nigeria. The Yorùbá Muslim women ride on motorcycles with men as a form of commercial transport, whilst this is forbidden in some *Shari'ah*-promoting states in northern Nigeria, such as Zamfara. I added that there are certain *Shari'ah* practices that are peculiar to northern states, but different in Yorùbáland,

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<sup>3</sup> See Genesis 25, 1 Samuel 1; 2 Samuel 3: 1-5; 1 Samuel 25; 1 King 11, Luke 1.

as in the prohibition of the use of motorcycles by both genders, which is exclusive to the north:

It is very simple; you know we have the sources of Islamic *shari'ah* [...] We may see different places approaching *shari'ah* differently based on their level of knowledge and level of the permissibility of practising that law. In *Iwo*, you may see Muslim women riding a motorcycle with men because we are not practising *shari'ah* as we ought. If we want to practise *shari'ah*, women will not be using a motorcycle because the body of a woman ought not to touch a man who is not a member of her family. [paraphrased]

According to Lateef, the separation of genders in school is also based on morality. Feyisetan & Pebley have suggested virginity at marriage as part of the valued Yorùbá culture (1989), and the prevention of premarital sex cherished among the three groups: Christians, Muslims, and the indigenous people alike.

I asked, why he would not use the term 'morals' to describe this reasoning, as taught in the Yorùbá indigenous religion, culture and Christianity, rather than the *Shari'ah*. Lateef's reply was 'the reward', saying that, 'the issue of reward is the main thing [...] Allah promises to reward those who practice the *Shari'ah*'.

In the discussion of traditions that are not unique to Islam and which I claim should not necessarily be termed 'Islamic' or *Shari'ah*, I suggest that the Yorùbá women traditionally use the neck and headscarves, while Muslims use the *hijab*. All three major religions among the Yorùbá fast for religious purposes. Each officially teaches sexual purity such as discouraging extramarital sexual unions or premarital sex. There are specifications for acceptable food and cleansing among the Yorùbá and the Judeo-Christian people, Kosher in Judaism, and *halal* in Islam. All the three religions officially practice heterosexuality. So, I challenged Lateef that the use of the term '*Shari'ah*' by many Nigerian Muslims, notably, the politicians during election campaigns, seems to segregate Muslims from other citizens who have similar practices. The use of *Shari'ah* for ideas shared with other

citizens brings in focus the Islamization practices, which has come up in some scholarly debates (Tayob, 2012). Why would Lateef join others in identifying such practices as *Shari'ah*? Lateef, in his response, insists that those who practise the *Shari'ah* as prescribed are seeking a reward from God (Allah). Lateef then describes the *Shari'ah* practice among the Yorùbá as *Kaida*, that is the rule of the practice of the *Shari'ah* as far as possible until there is an opportunity to practise it in a fuller form. In his own words: '*Kaida* is a rule for practising the *shari'ah* at some levels and developing as the people have better opportunities to involve more aspects of the Law. So, the Yorùbá do not practise a full *shari'ah*.' Lateef contemplates a stricter practice of the *Shari'ah* that must be peaceful and non-offensive to non-Muslims. Lateef's description of the practice of a full *Shari'ah* among the Yorùbá implies that more could be on the way, and what that will entail is not clear yet. This is a question that only time can answer because the Yorùbá currently practise the *Shari'ah* under a rule Lateef described as *Kaida*, which is the *Shari'ah* that the situation allows.

### **8.2.2 What is the Yorùbá Islamic *Kaida* (*Koida*)?**

*Kaida* needs a thick description in the context of the Yorùbá practice of Islam. *Kaida* also pronounced *koida* locally is derived from the Arabic word *qai'dah* or قاعدة *qaeida*, which literally means a basis, base, regulation, rule, or norm as an adjective, (Arabic-English-Dictionary), as against its use to describe the 'Al-Qaeda terrorist group' (Hellmich) discussed among scholars and the media in the last two decades. The Yorùbá alphabets do not have the letter q, hence letter k is used in the transliteration of the q in *qai'dah*. In the context of this discourse, it is *al-qai'dah muamalat*, meaning the rule of social life. *Muamalat* is described as:

Dealings. Refers to commercial and civil acts or dealings under Islamic law. Islamic law divides all legal acts into either *ibadat* or *muamalat*. *Ibadat* are acts of ritual worship such as prayer or fasting, and *muamalat* are acts involving interaction and exchange among people such as sales and sureties. The distinction is important because the principle in all matters involving *ibadat* is that they are not susceptible to innovations or change (*ittiba*). In *muamalat*, however, there is considerably more room to develop and change the law to facilitate human interaction and promote justice. There is disagreement among Muslim jurists on whether certain legal acts, such as marriage or divorce, fall under the category of *muamalat* or *ibadat*. ("Muamalat")

The rule of *muamalat* can further be explored through *darar*, meaning out of necessity, the situation that makes some actions permissible, mostly on social grounds. *Darar* within Islamic jurisprudence is described as:

[L]egal term [...] an example, during illness, fasting could cause harm, so some schools of law allow an exemption from prescribed fasting during illness. In marriage, *darar* may be grounds for divorce. For instance, traditional Maliki jurisprudence granted a wife the right to divorce if her husband did not treat her and her co-wives equally or if the husband married a second wife. (Oxford-Islamic-Studies-Online, n.d.-a)

Some necessities (*darar*) warranting some rules of social life – which Lateef called *kaida* among the Yorùbá became grounds for tolerance such as: the social obligation to render help to people in need like picking up women by a male motorcyclist. This rendering of help or for a commercial purpose as a means of transportation is acceptable among many Yorùbá Muslims but forbidden by some northern Nigerian Muslims as noted by Lateef in this study.

Another example relevant to *Kaida-Muamalat-Darar* (K-M-D) as I want to call it (Lateef's *Kaida*) is the *Qi'bla*, the direction to face during the Muslim daily prayer (*salat*) '(toward the Kaaba in Mecca), or a prayer wall in the mosque into which the *mihrab* (niche) is set, indicating the direction of prayer.' (Oxford-Islamic-Studies-Online, n.d.-b). The direction to face for prayer while travelling in an aeroplane or while in the North Pole is not very certain (except the aeroplane is travelling in the direction of Mecca). Hence

Muslims freely make their choices on such occasions. Some Yorùbá Muslims seem to have adopted and extended a rule – (K-M-D) on a social basis (*al-qai'dah-muamalat-darar*) to render help and show love to their neighbours, Muslims, and non-Muslims alike.

In his work on 'The case for secularity in Islam,' Mavani, writes:

First, during Prophet Muhammad's time, at least in theory, religion and state were indivisible; in practice, however, there was an explicit separation between ritual acts of worship (*'ibadat*) and creed (*'aqidah*), on the one hand, and human interrelations (*mu'amalat*), on the other. The former are constant, immutable, essential, and trans-historical, whereas the latter consists of rules of conduct and behavior that are open to public negotiation in a space that accommodates civic pluralism. (Mavani, 2011, p. 35)<sup>4</sup>

Mavani further adds 'thereby suggesting that non-ritual acts are subject to continual elaboration and evolution, (Mavani, 2011, p. 34). In his own words, Mavani suggests:

A distinction ... between religion's moral authority, ... and the state's coercive power. Given that religious faith and conviction are matters of individual choice, as specified by an unconditional Qur'anic verse on the freedom of religion and conscience, [his footnote 4, Quran 2:256] both domains must be separated so that each person can choose his/her own religion and with the right intention (*niyyah*). This separation is necessary because every act in Islam is morally evaluated on the basis of its underlying intention, which suggests the primacy of moral intent. (Mavani, 2011, p. 35)<sup>5</sup>

The Yorùbá in this study utilize the idea of *muamalat* to explore human interaction at the social level to accommodate their non-Muslim neighbours. Taking this further in other cultures, Mavani suggests:

The *Shari'ah* must be acknowledged as the normative, immutable, and the ideal, whereas *fiqh* is no more than a fallible, human approximation of the *Shari'ah* that needs to be interrogated critically on an ongoing basis so that it can be corrected and revised in accord with changing times, contexts, circumstances, and customs.

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<sup>4</sup> Mavani citing Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Mavani with reference to "Actions are judged by the intentions" (*innama al-a'mal bi al-niyyat*); Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari* (Dar al-fikr, Beirut 1980) 1, 2.

Moreover, this approach would probably enable one to create a space for secularity within the Islamic tradition. (Mavani, 2011, p. 35)

In a study of Senegalese Sufism, Hills traced their tolerance to pluralism rather than liberal Sufi Islam, describing Shariah as “—understood not as a predetermined politico-judicial order but as God's prescriptions derived from the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's example—to guide acts of worship or *'ibādāt* and social behavior or *mu'āmalāt*’ (Hill, 2013, p. 99). So, the religious texts were to guide both the act of worship as well as their social life; not just a rigid exercise of the laws without being in touch or not having human feelings.

On the other hand, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, one of the major voices among al-Azhar graduates adopts a liberal (*wasati*) approach to religious law (p. 417), trying to address the challenges the Muslim minorities face in the West although strongly challenged by the Saudi Arabia *salafī* conservatives. Shavit writes:

The *wasati* approach ... presents two objectives: making the lives of Muslim minorities easier in order to preserve their Islamic identity, and endorsing efforts to Islamize the West. To promote these objectives *wasatis* emphasize a systematic search in all four religio-legal schools and beyond them and the liberal application of *maslaha* (public or individual interest). Some of the results achieved by this methodology demonstrate the potential of *maslaha* to revise any religious law relating to *mucāmalāt* (social transactions). (Shavit, 2012, p. 418)

Shavit cites Yusuf Al-Qaradawi defining *fiqh al-aqalliyyat al-muslima* as the *fiqh* on Muslims in majority non-Muslim societies like the West. This position gives Muslims the opportunity to adapt to other cultures and assimilate if they choose to. Shavit further traces the idea of this kind of *fiqh* to the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE debates on whether it was ideal to reside in non-Muslim countries or areas. However, Shavit suggests the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries debates were on how Muslim resident minorities of a country possibly had their faith and practices weakened thereby giving the non-Muslims the upper hand against the Muslims.

Migrating to non-Muslim areas will be legitimate for Muslims, they suggested, only if they have no other alternatives and are able to practice Islam in their new location (p. 417). Further studies show how Muslims' residence became legitimized in the following centuries as they had the freedom to practice their religion, (Shavit, 2012, p. 418). The rule of social life (*muamalat*) thus paid off for Muslims not to be rigid as they interact with other people in a general social context:

The *wasati* approach encourages Muslims to create a presence in the West and modifies some religious laws in response to the special condition of living as a minority; the *salafi* approach permits residence in the West on more restrictive terms, and rejects the permissibility of adjusting religious laws to accommodate the minority condition. While the two approaches are grounded in revivalist, triumphalist justifications, the *wasati* approach allows for a large measure of interaction with and integration into Western societies, while the *salafi* approach promotes segregation from non-Muslim majorities. (Shavit, 2012, p. 418)

The *wasati* approach here is similar to the Yorùbá Muslim's way of life among their non-Muslim neighbours and extended families, not necessarily because they are in the minority but it seems to have become a way of life, all other things being equal (reciprocating peace gesture).

So, in this research, I asked Lateef a follow-up question concerning how much freedom the non-Muslims would have when *Kaida* (Q-M-D) gives way to a full *Shar'iah* in a community. This is important, one, for a thick description study, and two, as it is hoped that the harmony among the Yorùbá will continue regardless of how and when more aspects of the *Shari'ah* begin to unfold among the Yorùbá. Lateef suggests that only a few places such as Mecca currently practise a full *Shari'ah*, where everybody must comply with the Islamic religious rules to the letter. This suggests that the harmony enjoyed by the Christian and Muslim Yorùbá is expected to last as they continue to practise tolerance.

In the same way, it has been suggested that there has been harmony among the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims since the 1800s, during the Samuel Ajayi Crowther era (Cole, 2004; Law, 1991a). It is attention-grabbing, therefore, that over two centuries, the Yorùbá have been identified to be tolerant as far as Christian-Muslim relations are concerned and are accommodated among their indigenous religion and culture. The Yorùbá have avoided most external aggression, intolerance, and violent ideologies, all of which remain alien to the Yorùbá family (but weakened in some part as reported in the FGD2). Many Yorùbá have decided not to be quarrelling with their cousins, as suggested in FGD1. There is a likelihood that such harmony will continue, as revealed in these research findings regarding the use of *Kaida* (Q-M-D). There, Muslims restrain the use of a full *Shari'ah*, whenever it would make life unnecessarily difficult as both genders riding on the same motorcycle and would not hurt non-Muslim neighbours or fight their cousin because of religious differences (see FGD1, Ọmọbọ – FI and Mic – FI). The committed Yorùbá Christians also seek to work in peace with everyone and show love to their neighbours as a requirement for their access to the Kingdom of God. They both attempt to avoid provocative sermons (or *waasi*) and seek understanding during conversion to another religion.

At the FGD3, Wọlé argues that most violent conflicts among the Yorùbá are politically sponsored, as ‘No religion as understood and practised by the contemporary Yorùbá Christians and Muslims really allows you to kill in its name’. This claim suggests the cultural weight given to the interpretations of religious texts as significant to the peace culture in the Yorùbá community. Lódún mentions a similar idea in Sẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀rì (FI) on harmony between the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in their communal lifestyle. According to Wọlé and Ifá, most violent conflicts originate from manipulation and, where

politics is involved, may have economic undertones. This supports the PS idea of avoiding greed and their use of simple local leadership style in their communities.

The idea of *Kaida* or the rule of practising the *Shari'ah* as far as the circumstances allow whilst being tolerant of those who do not hold the same faith, religion or traditions is a welcome idea. There is a warning, however, that *Kaida*-moderated Islam, which I term *Al-Qaida-Muamalat-Darar* (Q-M-D) is being identified and emulated rather than being enforced presently. This is a practice among the Yorùbá as they interact over the past two centuries. A similar idea is reported among the Senegalese Sufi Muslims and their local Christian community, although the term *Kaida* (Q-M-D) is not used by the scholars involved in the Senegal research. Furthermore, a Senegalese Muslim mayor gave a painting of Jesus's crucifixion as a gift to a Catholic priest, to the amazement of the priest (UguccioniI, 2018), since most Muslims place a greater focus on Mary rather than the cross or the crucifixion of Jesus. This gesture is fascinating, more so to a Christian missionary, reflecting an incredible understanding of Christian-Muslim relations, a few steps beyond tolerance. The root of this proposition is in the interpretation (hermeneutics) of religion against a background of love and hospitality, situated in the culture of the host (or local people). To people in this category, knowingly or unknowingly, the concept of 'good' in the local culture moderates the interpretations of their religions. This, however, does not mean that there are no threats to the peace of the community concerned, but the continuing ability to reject violence and maintain harmony remains the strength of the communities where *Kaida* (Q-M-D) is identified and/or practised.

### **8.2.3 Religious Leadership**

On the role of religious leaders, Adé suggests that just as Christians have the order in their appointment of ministers to their churches, so also many Yorùbá community mosques

appoint their *Imams*. This complements Lódún's idea that religious leaders should undergo training before embarking on leadership roles. Such years of training might have some positive influences on the leaders' hermeneutical predispositions. The Islamic *Kaida* and Christian love for neighbours is seen in how leaders and parents handle sensitive religious matters. Adé discusses a scenario in which some Muslim fathers warned their Sunni youth to stay out of trouble when some militant youth wanted to take over a mosque programme. The peaceful Sunni boys obeyed their fathers by boycotting the meeting. The leader of the 'rebellion' fell while climbing the stage and died, according to Adé as mentioned earlier. The Yorùbá Muslim leaders called the death of the rebellion 'nemesis' (*èsan ñké*); likewise, some Christians and Gideon consider the deaths of the perpetrators of violence on some Christians to be God's judgement. These both point to Wólé's claim that the Yorùbá believe in the enacting of God's vengeance on earth and the final judgement after death (or heaven). To corroborate Wólé's suggestion, I cite Olupona here that the Yorùbá religion punishes offenders faster than in Islam and Christianity:

There is a strong belief even among the educated Yorùbá that while it takes the God of the Bible or Qur'an a long time to act against sinners and offenders (as both Gods suspend sentences pending a sinner's repentance), the judgement of Ogun is swift and certain. (Olupona, 1993, p. 251)

From the above, however, all the three religions look forward to God's intervention in their crisis time and want to be blameless during God's judgement. Similarly, Adé cites an example from an Islamic community:

Those with extreme religious commitment often initiate conflict but do not often materialise. An Islamic militant group refused to perform the parents' funeral. On one occasion, the deceased had six children, two of the children belonging to this extremist group while the remaining four children told the other two extremists to stay clear. The ceremony was done without violence.

Adé's contribution here shows that Islam, as practiced among the Yorùbá, is not a single strand just as there are many denominations among Christians. There are patterns accepted in Islam relevant to the Yorùbá culture and others considered aggressive and thus rejected by the mainstream Yorùbá Muslim community. Adé's example might not be known to Lateef, who claims that anyone who is violent towards his neighbour is either intoxicated or has not lived among the Yorùbá from childhood, or Adé may be unaware whether these perpetrators of violence have lived abroad. However, I suggest that the culture or teaching that dominates the community determines the flow of peace or violence in such a community. The crucial thing is the leadership.

One of the strengths the Yorùbá display is in the leadership and ability to detect conflict and division and stop it before it escalates, as suggested by Adé, Odù, Wọlé, Diran, Ayo and Akan. The harmonious relationships in Yorùbáland between different religious groups are thus sustained by both the community and the religious leaders. A change in the leaders' beliefs or interests may have serious implications for the community's peaceful engagement. Thus, responsible Islamic, Christian, and indigenous religious leaders in Yorùbáland are often privileged by knowing when potential conflicts are approaching and warn their wards to be careful of violent groups. A similar harmony is found among the Senegalese leaders in general, as Uguccioni reports, 'If relations between Christians and Muslims in other countries were as serene as those living in Senegal, there would be more peace on earth.' (2018).

As seen among the Yorùbá, the Senegalese Christian minority and Muslim (Sufi) majority have peacefully co-existed for many years. Senegal is a country, while Yorùbá is a 'language group' (often referred to as Yorùbá nation). Senegal has many languages, while Yorùbá is just one language with many dialects. The Senegalese population is 5% Christian and 95% Sufi Muslim, while the Yorùbá religions make up is thought to

constitute approximately equal numbers of Christians (evangelical in larger proportion) and Muslims (majority Sunni). The percentage of the indigenous worshippers is not very certain. A thorough examination of the places of worship and the attendance at each worship time, however, could show that those identifying as Christians is larger than the Muslim population, followed by the indigenous worshippers in Yorùbáland.<sup>6</sup> With the assumed 50:50 representation for Christians and Muslims, crises and conflicts are managed with a religious and ethnic undertone and for religious and ethical purposes. The Yorùbá do not often resort to physical violence because of differences in religions, as they resort to the *omólúàbí*<sup>7</sup> attributes to restrain them in times of dispute and conflict.

On teaching and leadership, Lódún suggests that loving one another and instructing the youth to avoid ‘bad company’ associated with ‘gangsterism’ are necessities for a harmonious community. Therefore, being religiously conscious people with a goal of pleasing God, Ọlórún or Allah, the Yorùbá often restrain from violence, especially when they are not under the influence of alcohol as reiterated by Lateef, or an outside influence, as in the case of Gideon’s narrative. The clerics’ teachings embedded in their ethical values help keep the peace. The ethics of peace are what Wólé describes as ‘providing domestic answers to the Yorùbá domestic problems by using the Yorùbá value (yardstick) to understand the Yorùbá way of life’. Lateef underscores the use of internal settlement to resolve conflict. This is seen in the Yorùbá’s promptness in resolving disputes, avoidance of pressing charges in court for non-criminal cases, with the saying, *akìì tí kóòtù dé sòrẹ* meaning it is difficult to retain friendship after a court case. I want to end this chapter by citing Mahmoud & Makoond:

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<sup>6</sup> There are bigger or mega-structure church buildings and always full to the capacity on Sundays in most towns. There are fewer big mosques in each Yorùbá cities with full attendance and others who cannot have space performing their prayers on the streets when the streets are blocked for that purpose for the time of the prayer.

<sup>7</sup> *Omólúàbí* is described in Chapter 5.

Sustaining peace constitutes a paradigm shift in how we think about peace and how we address conflict. As a process and a goal, building sustainable peace is not the burden of outsiders. Even under the direst of circumstances, external interventions should endeavor to build on what people know and what they have. Societies that have developed national infrastructures for peace offer valuable lessons for this eminently internal enterprise. More needs to be done to demystify the concept at the national and global levels. (Mahmoud & Makoond, 2017, p. 5)

I bring out the salient points from the quotation as sustainable peace being a process and a goal, a burden of the people concerned more than the outsiders', relevant to what the people already know with their locally developed infrastructures (which I call features in this study) and the need to demystify the concept globally.

### **8.3 Summary**

I have discussed in this chapter the interpretations and understanding of religions spearheaded by their religious leaders as the means of de-escalating conflict and maintaining the peace. The caution to be careful of strangers or strange influences was also underscored. The discussion led to the idea of *kaida* (Q-M-D), the act of practicing religion (or *Shari'ah* in this case) as much as the situation allows among the Yorùbá Muslims and the correspondent unity with the Yorùbá Christians. With the Islamic *kaida* (Q-M-D) regulated by social life (not wanting to hurt self and one's neighbours under Islamic rules) and the Christian love and holiness (ethics) in place, the peace culture among the Yorùbá is expected to last. They seem able to keep any outside influences at bay.

The Yorùbá religious communities pursue the virtues approved by their religions and strengthen the harmony in their cultural milieu. In an ideal situation, therefore, the Yorùbá Muslims would practise Islam within the parameters of *kaida* (Q-M-D), strengthened by the established Yorùbá culture and embracing Christians as a family or good neighbour.

The Yorùbá Christians also follow the idea of love for one's neighbours and living together in peace, as these are the characteristics that they consider God expects of them. The two religious' communities thus can continue to seek to work together to harness their Yorùbá values to maintain their harmony. These features were seen to have crumbled in Sèpètèrí at the time they embarked on violence and rancour that lasted about a decade, just being settled during the time of this research. Having discussed the major findings and themes that emerged from this study, I now proceed in the following chapter to provide the conclusion.



## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSION

I began this study by examining the origin of peace and conflict studies, the focus of which was to bring about peace in human communities and nations. Peace researchers and practitioners work to resolve conflicts and support their subjects to stabilize their societies. In this process, peace studies advanced beyond international relations and developmental studies, leading to various theories on conflict resolution, conflict transformation, conflict management, non-violence, peacekeeping, peace-making and peace education to mention but a few. Different professionals were engaged to make contributions to the study, seeking peaceful, harmonious, and productive societies in conflict-ridden nations and communities. Whilst academics and practitioners were focusing on resolving conflicts and resettling the communities and individuals affected by conflict and wars, other initially peaceful communities were beginning their own conflicts. The newly emerging conflict makes peacemaking efforts more difficult to achieve as O'Reilly contends (2016).

To join other researchers to ameliorate the setbacks by attempting to sustain positive peace in human society, I proposed a study of a relatively peaceful community [the Yorùbá] to find how the community has handled disputes, crises and conflicts that have the potential for violence, whilst maintaining its harmony. To do this, there was a need to study the community for any peace features they might possess, to understand their potential to reduce the rate at which a peaceful community may degenerate into conflict or lose its communal unity. I selected the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria because they are

described among some academics as more peaceful when compared with the northern part of Nigeria, and the Nigeria police data support this claim.

I considered how the Yorùbá manage their disputes and conflicts whilst sustaining the peace. I used an in-depth study of my data among the Yorùbá to generate relevant themes from 27 electronic qualitative surveys, 72 participants in three FG discussions sites and 27 interviews. The most recurring of the 80 generated nodes showing how peace is sustained are culture, religion, family, social interactions, communal lifestyle, and leadership. Furthermore, regular community and leaders' meetings strengthen harmony and help in identifying stress points to nip conflict in the bud and unite the Yorùbá to positively engage and use their common values to resolve their conflicts and maintain their peace. The elders' roles, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and complaints procedures are also found to be helpful. An in-depth examination reveals that relative peace is rooted in features like values (positive), and religious hermeneutics. Equally, the harmony among the Yorùbá that has endured for a long time was initially ascribed to their perceived family ties (*Ebí*, or *Omọ iyá kanná*) but now is seen as ingrained in their broader culture, social interactions and religious hermeneutics.

While cross examining this study, some scholars like Lateju had identified culture and religions as paramount to the Yorùbá's peacefulness but this study went further to provide the components of the culture and the practices of the religions [presented in the mind-map] relevant to the Yorùbá's peacefulness which are not part of Lateju's focus. Religion in general as a cause of peace is undermined as religion has played a role in violence in other parts of Nigeria. So, the way religion is interpreted (hermeneutics) and then practised are part of the keys to the Yorùbá's peacefulness.

A further cross-referencing of relevant literature and the Nigeria police reports<sup>1</sup> with my findings among the Yorùbá, affirm that the Yorùbá are relatively more peaceful as they possess, display, and often utilize certain features within their community to enhance their peacefulness. The features in this study include their social and leadership structures, language, music, sayings, and the model of religious values they broadcast or display through their media like radio, and oral tradition in their community. I need to quickly mention here that the Yorùbá are not the only one using media like radio to propagate their peaceful values; the Inuit, one of the PS, is another example. Continuity plays a significant role in the sustainability of any cherished value and some PS are out to use the media to keep and propagate their message.

Features like social interactions found among the PS are prominent among the Yorùbá. The PS maintain their peacefulness through a closed community interaction and returning to their local areas to maintain their harmony even when they had a reason to contact the outside world. Conversely, the Yorùbá have travelled far and wide, and often interact with people of other religions and cultures. Many Yorùbá communities have been identified making efforts to retain their cherished peaceful values despite their exposure to modern civilization while the PS often retain their closed community interactions. While the PS comprise mainly of the agrarian communities that socialize through their culture utilizing their limited access to the modern world, the Yorùbá mingle with other cultures and civilizations especially in their homeland (southwest Nigeria). So, by comparison, the Yorùbá are more educated and more exposed to modern civilization with their first university established in Ibadan about 72 years ago (1948) and television 60 years ago (1959). This implies that with the Yorùbá's example of peaceful features, the idea of

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<sup>1</sup> As in Chapters 1 and 2.

peacefulness in human community cannot be restricted to the agrarian culture (as in the case of most of the identified PS) but can be further explored among modern societies like the Yorùbá in this study.

With the similar peaceful features identified among the PS and the Yorùbá like social interactions and leadership roles in sustaining peace at the community level, the idea of humans, being helplessly violent, as often presented in the West requires a reassessment. In support of human potential for peacefulness, I found Sponsel's extensive reviews useful, probing the works on conflict and war with little attention to peace or nonviolence, which Sponsel describes as reducing peace to the avoidance of war or violence (1996). From the study, Sponsel suggests humans are not just historically predisposed to violence contrary to ideas often projected by the West. This provides an answer to my first subsidiary question on the sustainability of peace in human community. Peace is sustainable in human society.

With attention to the peace element of human societies, I proposed my hypothesis based on the available academic literature concerning the Yorùbá as a harmonious society when compared with other regions of Nigeria in recent times: 'Conflict leading to physical violence on religious grounds is rare among the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria and when it occurs, the Yorùbá people can prevent the situation from escalating to retain harmony in their community.' This hypothesis is upheld by the findings of the research, which indicates that the Yorùbá live in harmony in the religious sphere, in contrast to the reports of religious violence in northern Nigeria. This harmony has to do with many features promoted by the community, mostly championed by their local leadership and method of dissemination of information.

## 9.1 Yorùbá Christian-Muslim Relations

An appraisal of the binding force in a community has the potential to make contributions to peace and conflict studies. This study has referred to the trends and assessment of the Yorùbá culture over the years and how it has positively accommodated Christianity and Islam and the extent to which it has enhanced peaceful relationships. I refer to Wiberg's (1981) concepts of detribalization and retribalization and whether they offer clues to the second subsidiary question on how the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims sustain the peace in their communities. Some values within the Yorùbá culture as presented in this study enhance the peacefulness between Christians and Muslims. While Christians seek to be tolerant and kind, the Muslims apply the concept of social interaction promoted in Islam, *al-qai'dah-muamalat-darar* [Q-M-D] to interact with their neighbours. There are situations in which Christian families care for their Muslim cousins through the idea of *fúnmi lómọ wò* (children looked after by an extended family member). There are examples of Muslims being kind to their Christian cousins and neighbours. Significant to note is that while the source of peacefulness in Christianity is traced to their approach to the Bible with a focus on love, the Muslims reciprocate this with *Kaida* (Q-M-D), the act of practising Islamic rights as much as the situation permits without making life difficult for neighbours, the qualities not alien to the Yorùbá culture. The Yorùbá are known for being accommodating on religious grounds, with their kings generously offering land to build places of worship, schools, and hospitals since around 1800.

Some non-Yorùbá cultures like languages and dressing [both Nigerian and foreign], have influenced the Yorùbá over the years. Yorùbá remains in competition with other Nigerian languages. While English is used as an official language, it has not been seen to threaten the peace enjoyed by the people. The use of Yorùbá is strong in markets, social functions, music, on the radio and television, and this is known to promote the Yorùbá virtues as

media of dissemination of information. As a result, the Yorùbá have not been ‘detrribalised’ in the sense of completely losing the values of their language, sayings, drumming and music, as they are still supported and promoted by the media, albeit in competition with other Nigerian languages and English. The virtues expressed in the Yorùbá language translate into harmonizing the Yorùbá’s interpretation of their religions by stressing the contexts of love, harmony, and care for one another. This supports Laitin’s description of the Yorùbá’s ‘unnatural toleration’ (1986, p. 9), which is ideally known to the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims as ‘natural’, although currently under the threat of structural violence experienced across the country. Wiberg, considering ‘peaceful cultures’, asks:

What characteristics do they have in common that seem to make for their peaceful qualities? On what dimensions do they differ, hence demonstrating that a given variable value is not a necessary condition for peace? To what extent do they contain what forms of structural violence? (1981, p. 113)

The cumulative data from this study provides an answer to Wiberg’s first question. The Yorùbá culture, as expressed in their tolerance and use of language, the way the culture is communicated through music, sayings and interpersonal relationships and their understanding and respect, all work together to harmonize the Yorùbá. Regarding Wiberg’s second question, the Yorùbá are a mono-ethnic language group that are considered to live in harmony. Even though the common language has made contributions to community harmony, the way the Yorùbá use their language, sayings, stories, and music have all been found helpful in educating and promoting harmony and virtues among the people, irrespective of religion. It is the richness of the Yorùbá language that is profound – that is, its dynamics, usage, and structure – rather than just being unique. The Senegalese in a separate study (Senegal-n.a., 2009; UgucconiI, 2018), have many languages and live harmoniously. The harmony is produced by the way the Senegalese

languages utilize the common values of hospitality (*teranga*) prevalent in the Senegalese communities. It is the use of the language(s) and contents that matter to peacefulness.

On Wiberg's question of structural violence, my data reveals both physical and structural violence among the Yorùbá. This is not strange as one form of violence or the other could be found even among the acclaimed PS (Kemp, 2004), although often being able to manage it. This, study, however, dwells more on the Yorùbá's coping strategies and maintenance of peace, especially between Christians and Muslims within the Yorùbá host culture. The way the Yorùbá manage their occasional religious conflicts is seen in their consciousness and references to eternal judgment and other aspects of their valued culture. This research, therefore, is in support of PS, as it presents the need for appraisals of the positive values in relatively peaceful communities to enhance positive peace and de-escalate conflicts. Empirical inquiries among peaceful communities have the potential to provide further findings that can move forward conflict transformation and peace studies into the ideals of positive peace.

## **9.2 *Ẹbí*/Family Theory and Beyond**

The Yorùbá have been studied in many academic works and found to be a peaceful people who consider themselves a family (see Chapter 2). Akinjogbin's (1966) *Ẹbí* theory is a significant work in this area. *Ẹbí* has become the Yorùbá linguistic tool for harmony and the maintenance of peace. This study, however, shows that the concept of family has been revolutionized among the Yorùbá to embrace people outside of their close relations to include neighbours across culture and religious line, Christians, and Muslims alike. This takes the *Ẹbí* theory forward into a new realm thereby answering my third subsidiary question on the comprehensiveness of the *Ẹbí* theory.

This research, examining the interactions between the Yorùbá in their religious milieus, confirms that the Yorùbá have been involved in political violence and have a history as warriors. As a result, the *Èbí* theory of family relations cannot be held in an absolute sense as the cause of peace among the Yorùbá as it fails to help during political violence. It is more than a one-word answer like *Èbí* (family) that keeps the Yorùbá in harmony.

So, the concept of family (as in *Èbí* theory) discussed among scholars is not the only source of harmony among the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims; in fact, it is not the first on the list produced by my data. This research shows that the *Èbí* commonwealth theory of family unity, or family connections, although helpful, does not work in isolation. It is one of the several themes that facilitate harmony among the Yorùbá. Others include the broader Yorùbá culture, religion as interpreted and practised among the people, communal social benefits and interactions, the sustainability of their hierarchical leadership, complaints procedures and the sense of community. All these operate in addition to their idea of family to jointly facilitate harmony.

### **9.3 Towards an Informal Peace Education and a Peaceful Society**

A long-term peace advocacy or education, not necessarily as an aftermath of war or conflict, but embedded within the social, religious and cultural milieu, often delivered informally via a daily engagement using music, idioms, stories, literature, and legends have helped to sustain the peace among the Yorùbá as demonstrated in this study. The make-up of the culture [the language, dressing, stories, music], leadership, social interaction, religious understanding, family unity, and the media, all communicate values and virtues to the wider community and comprise features that support the Yorùbá to sustain their peace. These are a form of informal peace education embedded in Yorùbá

practices, an embodiment of rewarding and peace education themes not necessarily as an aftermath of war. On peace education, Harris and Morrison suggest: '[E]ducators [...] influence the important values and beliefs of their students [who are] taught about peaceful responses to complex conflicts in the post-modern world' (2013, p. 3). The important words in that definition are 'influence', 'values', 'beliefs' and 'taught'. Other ideas of peace education both authors mention include the goal that future conflicts 'are resolved non-violently and build a sustainable environment', followed by attributes of 'love, compassion and reverence for all life' (2013, p. 11). In this study, values and beliefs are found in various contexts, seeking to resolve disputes through communal efforts with the goal of sustaining harmony in the Yorùbá community. This type of informal education that enhances peacefulness is also found among the PS like the Paliyans, Semai, Ifaluk, Chewong. So, are the Yorùbá not far from gaining a PS recognition?

This idea of maintenance of harmony re-affirms Bond's suggestion describing peace, not as an end, but rather as a continuing process, (2014). Similarly, the PS are described, not as utopian in themselves but displaying abilities to defuse tension. The Yorùbá practise an informal kind of peace education in an informal setting, with known but often unwritten curricula embedded in their daily activities. This education that exists among the Yorùbá (and other cultures as within the PS) does not have to be in the aftermath of a serious conflict or civil war but a continuous learning process that sustains harmony in a community.

While many scholars affirm the harmony of the Yorùbá as being based on their shared idea of family (*Èbí*), this research provides evidence of the Yorùbá's proactive support for peace through other features in their culture, social setting, and religious milieu. Even though both formal and informal peace education can have written curricula, the method of delivery could differ: the formal in a structured setting following a war or conflict

situation, whilst the informal is provided within the structures of the society such as homes, communities and through the media to maintain peace but not necessarily as an aftermath of a conflict.

With all the features being utilized for peacefulness among the Yorùbá discussed in this study, are the Yorùbá far from being enlisted among the PS if they continue to maintain their existing peace nurturing practices? Harris and Morrison have suggested the benefit of peace education as its ‘potential for inner transformation’ and ‘social change’, which is taught in different settings (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 11). They add a pertinent feature, its ‘commitment to the way of peace’ (ibid, p. 12). The maintenance of peace among the Yorùbá also involves constant learning in different settings, including the home, areas, and townships through the radio, from immediate family, friends, in-laws, elders, kings, and responsible older people in the vicinity. This takes place among the Yorùbá informally and is potent for educating their community. This is a venture in which many people learn, and all learners subsequently become trainers who also continue to learn from others. This provides an insight into a harmonious society sustaining its peace through certain features they know to have the credibility to resolve disputes, de-escalate conflicts and retain their peace or harmony. This resembles the communal life among the already identified PS (Peaceful-Societies, 2019) globally although scholars do not seem to use peace education to describe this process unless it is in an aftermath of a war or crisis. I suggest a proactive support for this venture as informal peace education, a lifestyle of learning during peacetime (not just an aftermath of war). So, how do the Yorùbá manage their conflicts and retain their peace? It is through a lifelong informal education utilizing various features of their culture, religions, and social values to attain their goal.

## 9.4 Connections with Previous Scholarly Debates

This research affirms some virtues of the community that enhance positive peace to possibly reduce the rate at which a harmonious society may dissolve into violence. Such peaceful communities use internal dynamics to settle conflicts and retain peace. The internal dynamics include the hierarchy in the leadership among the Yorùbá loosely structured from the home (the husband) to the town level (the king). Some communities among the established PS also have a hierarchy and elders who provide mentorship, and some serve as local judges like the Semai as Robarchek (1977) argued. Katsos and Fort also express the view that ethical leaders can maintain peace ‘without reference to academic theories’ (2016, p. 464). The duo suggests their research examines: ‘[the] attributes of relatively non-violent societies [...] proposing the possible link between ethical leadership and peacebuilding in business (Katsos & Fort, 2016, p. 468). This elucidates PS widely researched by scholars in anthropology (see my Chapter 1). This study has examples of peace practitioners who include figures such as the Sòún, the king of Ògbómòṣó, who harmonizes Christians and Muslims without connections with academic theories. Similarly, FGD2 presents a link between ethical leadership and peace, while its absence later led to dangerous outside influences and violence.

There are communities other than the Yorùbá with a history of harmonious relationships in religious contexts. Senegal is an example of communities that maintain their peace, and scholars advocated other communities with similar practices and a possibility of replicating it elsewhere (Wisconsin-n.a., 2009). Scholars like Lateju and Akinade have also shown that the Yorùbá tolerate one another. This has been studied closely to reveal religions and family within the Yorùbá culture as sources of harmony. The ingredients of the religions that foster unity among the Yorùbá and other contents of the culture apart

from the family, not specified in the previous scholarly works are contributions from this study as presented in my mind maps.

The contribution of the culture to the maintenance of harmony among the Yorùbá complements Lateju's (2012) findings. Lateju argues that one of the reasons for less religion-related violence in the south and west Nigeria and among the Yorùbá is their culture, which is separate from religion. He argues that the northern Nigerian Muslims adopt an Arab culture along with Islam, which causes them to relate differently when compared to the Yorùbá in the west and the Igbo in the southeast. This research, nevertheless, identifies the relevant features within the Yorùbá culture as in their use of language, a step beyond Lateju works. Also, this study details the Yorùbá communal life and beliefs as noted in afterlife idea and the Yorùbá's idea of *bí a bá dé bodè, a ó rojò*, (we will give the account of how we lived on earth at the gate of heaven), a strongly believed concept of eternal judgement for every good or evil deed one might have done. This idea cautions many Yorùbá believers regardless of their religion (be it Christianity, Islam, or indigenous religion). My study shows that Yorùbá social interactions and beliefs help to sustain harmony, displaying the compositions of the social interactions and the contents of the culture responsible for the Yorùbá's peacefulness.

This study agrees with the findings of Sholagbade (n.d.), who indicates that if faith-based organizations avoid religious jealousy and unhealthy politics, but focus on peace and social well-being, the pace of development in Nigeria and other African countries will inevitably increase. In this study, unhealthy politics are identified as a cause of conflict among the Yorùbá, threatening to dislocate the harmony but the ethical dimensions of their culture and religions create a uniting force. Sholagbade further recommends the benefit of the concept of *omọ ìyá kanná* (motherhood) for the northern ethno-religious sensitive region, which places the concept into a broader perspective. While this study

extends the *Ẹbi* theory into a primordial context, the scientific explanations for the Yorùbá's harmony highlight many other features, thus the *Ẹbi* theory's replication among the Hausa/Fulani north would be challenging. A replica of some of the identified features among the Yorùbá like a possible use of stories, music and the media to unite communities must be sought in the communities that aspire to replicate a kind of Yorùbá harmony in order that Sholagbade's suggestion might work in such cultures as in northern Nigeria.

## 9.5 Future Research

My research findings about community peacefulness has as its centre the local culture, the values they admire and/or propagate and the contents of their religious teachings. The Yorùbá often emphasize the complementary aspects of their values and religions to strengthen their harmony. In a previously study among the Senegalese Muslims and Christians, scholars identify the essence of their peacefulness as *teranga* meaning hospitality. So, on religion as a factor for unity or division in general:

- Religion has divided many northern Nigerian residents. (Akanji, 2011; Mavalla, 2012)
- Religion has not divided the Senegalese since its independence in 1960, just as it has not successfully divided the Ògbómòṣò Nigerian Yorùbá, as seen in this research. (FGD1)
- How religion has been a uniting force in this study (based on religious hermeneutics with cultural relevance) and unifying through the concept of hospitality among the Senegalese but is a division elsewhere is thought-provoking.

I present the need for further studies in non-Senegalese and non-Yorùbá communities to uncover more features that might be relevant contributions to human peacefulness and PS. The study of relatively peaceful communities like the PS that are not very exposed to modern education or civilization for possible contributions to peace discourse is one of the areas being explored in anthropology. However, I present in this study the Nigerian Yorùbá in West Africa that are more exposed to modern education and civilization along with their peace maintenance features. Could the features the Yorùbá currently display put them forward for consideration as a peaceful society, and could more modern or western societies be studied for any element of peacefulness? Further studies on peacefulness in modern societies may make more positive contributions to humanity.

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#### A. Survey:

- R1 to R43 (Anonymised codes) in the Survey Monkey 2015 Chart. See Appendix A below.

#### Prominent Focus Groups Discussion (FGDs) contributors (anonymised)

- Àjàmú, FGD1c, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Alhaji-Ọba, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Bòdé, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Bòsè, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Dayọ, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Fatai, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Fúnmiláyò, FGD1c, Ògbómòṣó.....	30/08/2016
- Ifá, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Isaiah, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Lákúnlé, FGD2, Sèpètèrí .....	06/09/2016
- Múfú, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Meriani, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Olú, FGD1b, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Opé, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Oyè, FGD1c, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Sàngó, FGD1c, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Sèyí, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Sìnà, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016
- Wọlé, FGD3, Ilorin .....	07/09/2016
- Wùmí, FGD1a, Ògbómòṣó .....	30/08/2016

## Interviews

-	AB, EBHS, Interview at the EBHS, Ejigbo .....	20/09/2016
-	Adé, Interview at the Second Radio station, .....	14/09/2016
-	Akàn, a Christian minister, Ògbómòṣó .....	13/09/2016
-	Alhaja, at the Òsálágbèdẹ Compound, Ògbómòṣó .....	13/09/2016
-	Aminatu, at a funeral service, (plus observation) .....	03/09/2016
-	Àníké, at the Òsálágbèdẹ compound, Ògbómòṣó, .....	13/09/2016
-	Ayò, a Christian minister, Ògbómòṣó, .....	13/09/2016
-	Babátúndé, at the Òsun State University, Ejigbo Campus .....	09/09/2016
-	Blessing, at a Radio station in Ibadan .....	20/09/2016
-	Bóláńlé, at a funeral service, (with observations) .....	03/09/2016
-	CD, EBHS, at the EBHS, Ejigbo .....	20/09/2016
-	Deacon, an indigene of Ila-Orangun living in Ibadan .....	17/09/2016
-	Diran, a Christian minister, .....	13/09/2016
-	Gideon, at Sèpètèrí, .....	06/09/2016
-	Ìyabò, at the Osun State University, Ejigbo Campus .....	09/09/2016
-	Ìyá-Olóbì, at the Òsálágbèdẹ compound, .....	13/09/2016
-	Kànmí, a politician's associate, .....	19/09/2016
-	Láńre, a Christian gentleman .....	06/09/2016
-	Lateef, an Imam with Western Education, and a Christian brother ...	31/08/2016
-	Lódún, a Muslim retired teacher .....	06/09/2016
-	Mako, Alhaji, a Muslim cleric without the Western Education.....	06/09/2016
-	Mic, Interview in a Mixed Marriage context .....	18/09/2016
-	Mulikatu, at the Òsálágbèdẹ compound, .....	13/09/2016
-	Odù, at a major king's palace, .....	19/09/2016
-	Omóbò, mixed marriage context and the Yorùbáland .....	18/09/2016
-	Surveyor, a politicians' friend, .....	18/09/2016
-	Túnjí, Ikoyi road, Ògbómòṣó .....	21/09/2016

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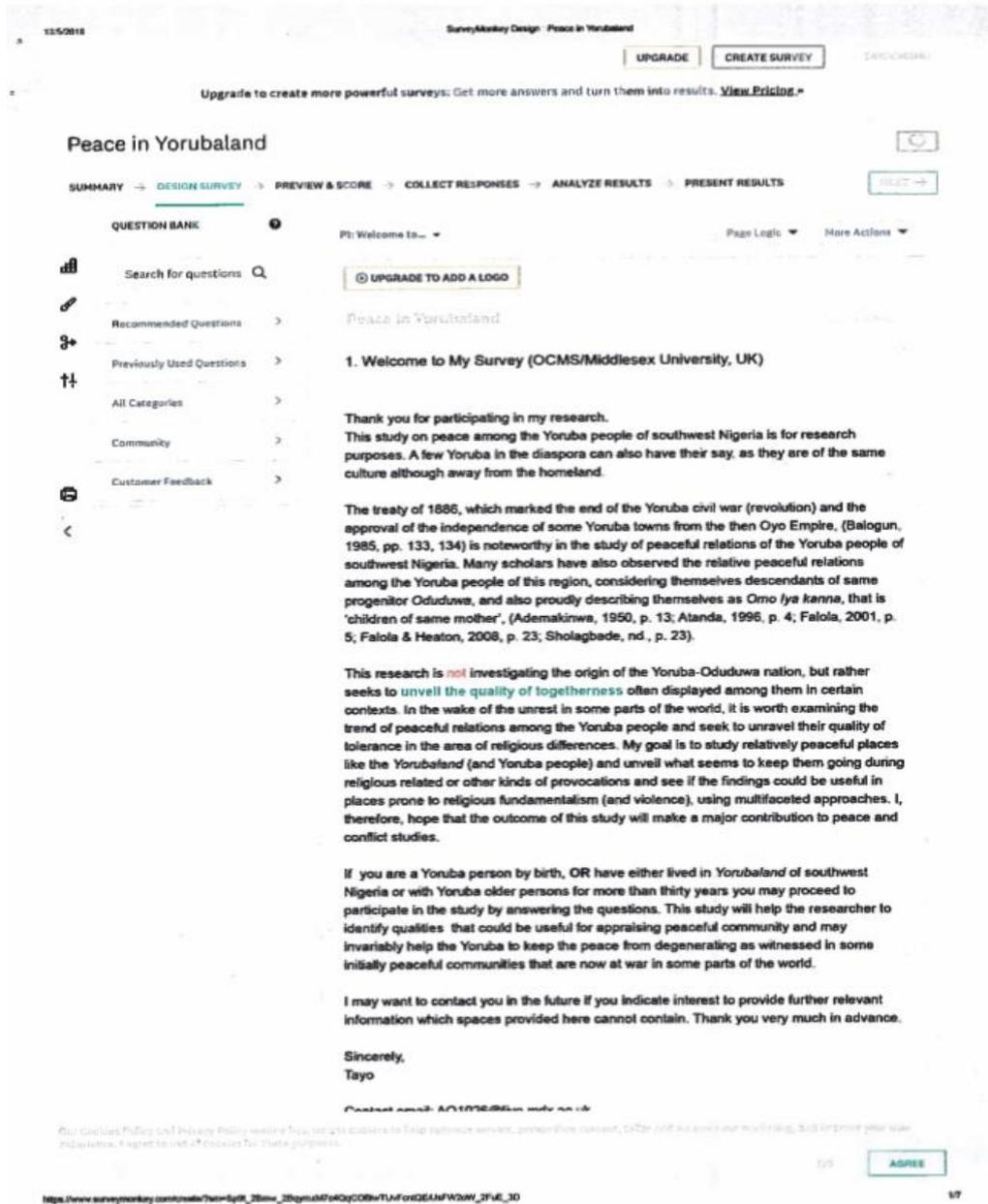
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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: ES/Survey Monkey 2015 Chart

### ES questions



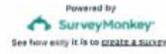
NEW QUESTIONS

or Copy and paste questions

1/4

25%

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY



NEW PAGE

P2: Qualifying ...

Page Logic

More Actions

UPGRADE TO ADD A LOGO

Peace In Yorubaland

## 2. Qualifying Entries

Biographical Data, Residency and Personal Background (BD, GQ)

### 1. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

### 2. What religion do you profess?

- Islam
- Christianity
- Other (please specify)

### 3. How devoted do you consider yourself in this religion? Tick one from (a) to (e) where (a) is least and (e) is excellent.

- a
- b
- c
- d
- e

4. What is the highest level of secular education you have completed?

5. Which ethnicity best describes you? (Please tick as many as are relevant to you.)

- Yoruba
- Yoruba by marriage (e. g. In-law to Yoruba fami Yoruba ni mo ni Ọmọdun)
- Yoruba secondary ethnicity (my grand or great myself a Yoruba person having lived in Yorubaland since birth and I am now more than 30 years old. Ọmọdun Ọmọdun)
- Hausa
- Igbo

Multiple ethnicity / Further explanation/ Indicate if Yoruba was your home or community language as a child

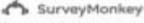
6. What is your highest level of education in religion or related discipline?

- Nil
- Certificate/Diploma
- Degree
- Masters
- PhD
- Other (please specify)

NEW QUESTION

Copy and paste questions

Preview

Powered by  
 SurveyMonkey  
See how easy it is to create a survey

NEW PAGE

P3. 0. MASH RE...

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More Actions

UPGRADE TO ADD A LOGO

Peace in Yorubaland

### 3. II. MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION [MRA]

Please describe an incidence of crisis and/or conflict you have witnessed among the Yoruba Christians, Muslims and/or other religious persons. If you have not witnessed any, then have you observed anything unique in the Yoruba's attitude to religious differences within their community?

If you know of any crisis/conflict, can you reflect on/discuss the immediate causes, the processes by which they were managed, specify what worked and what did not work (or did not work very well) in the settlement of the conflict? Please distinguish between crisis (*ede aiyede*, *laasigbo tabi isoro*: misunderstanding, or difficult-relationship) and conflict (*gbonmisii omoto*: boiling relationship, uneasiness). Your answer may reflect how you (or they) managed conflict that have potential for violence (*lagidiigbo* or *ijogbon*: violent conflict), citing examples where necessary? (MRA).

Discuss this in the space below.

7. What did those involved in the crisis/conflict attribute to its causes? Also, kindly provide further explanation in the space below.

- Political differences
- Religious differences
- Intolerance religious ideologies
- Influences from the outside of that very community (Outside influence)
- Economic manipulations

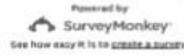
Any other (please specify) or/and explain your selected answers below

8. In your answer to the above (MRA) question, please identify who among the following have been most instrumental in managing the conflicts that have potential for violence in your own named local community? (choose and discuss your chosen answers in the space provided below)

- Community traditional leaders
- Family/focal elders
- The police
- Community joint efforts
- Individual efforts
- Any other category and further explanation could be given below

PREV QUESTION

or Copy and paste questions



NEW

P4: Tolerance ...

UPGRADE TO ADD A LOGO

Peace In Yorubaland

#### 4. Tolerance and Patience

9. Do you have person(s) of a religion other than yours in your household, extended family, school and/or work place, how well do you get along and in what kind of forum? Tick which best describe(s) your relationship with them. Use the space below to explain the reason for your choice.

- Very bad
- Bad
- Undecided
- Good
- Excellent

Discuss reasons for your answer

10. Thank you for your patience; this is the last question.

Do you often keep your peace (remain calm); how and where do you draw strength (or encouragement) to tolerate your neighbours or people of other religions during provocation?

- Yes - Yoruba culture
- Yes - My religion (Specify/name and discuss the specific area/how in the space below)
- Yes - The general community
- No - I always/often fight back

Discuss your chosen answer below

Discussion area with a large empty box for text input.

NEW QUESTION

or Copy and paste questions

4/4

100%

Prev

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See how easy it is to create a poll.

NEW PAGE

END

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## ES Respondents Overview

SurveyMonkey - Manage Your Messages Page 1 of 2

Maintenance reminder: You won't be able to access your account on January 5th starting at 5:00pm PT (1:00am UTC) for approximately 12 hours. [Learn more.](#)

### Peace in Yorubaland

SUMMARY → DESIGN SURVEY → **COLLECT RESPONSES** → ANALYZE RESULTS

[Back to All Collectors](#)

## Email Invitation 1 CLOSED

OVERVIEW **RECIPIENTS** OPTIONS

Of 100% invited

**171**  
TOTAL INVITATIONS

- 26.3% responded (45)
- 0.6% opted out (1)
- 11.1% bounced (19)
- 62.0% not responded (106)

Of 100% responded

**45**  
TOTAL RESPONSES

- 88.9% complete (40)
- 11.1% partial (5)

### Message History

INVITE MORE ▾ SEND REMINDER ▾ SEND THANK YOU ▾

1/5/2018	Sent thank you message to 45 contacts	...
3/28/2016	Sent reminder message to 107 contacts	...
3/28/2016	Sent reminder message to 4 contacts	...
3/23/2016	Sent invitation message to 11 contacts	...
3/9/2016	Sent invitation message to 1 contacts	+

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/collect/email/manage?sm=ZW1Aq2AocSVpQwpNslZzGX...> 05/01/2018

MESSAGES: 1 - 5 of 51



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# ES Data Collection over time

SurveyMonkey Analyze - Peace in Yorubaland Page 1 of 4

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## Peace in Yorubaland

MANAGE → MANAGE SURVEY → COLLECT RESPONSES → ANALYZE RESULTS

**CURRENT VIEW** VIEW

**FILTER** 12/11/2018 VIEW

**IDENTIFICATION**  
 Get a unique name for each response and add a unique ID to each response. [Learn more](#)

**UPGRADE** [Learn more](#)

**As I Am** Complete responses ...

**GRID VIEW** (0) VIEW

**GRID VIEW** (No data applied) VIEW

1/1

**EXPORTS** VIEW

**RAW DATA** VIEW

**No shared data**  
 Don't allow you to share your survey results with others. You can share all data, a subset, or a single question's results. [Learn more](#)

1/1

**QUESTION SUMMARIES** **DATA TRENDS** **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES**

**Responses (by month)** 12/11/2018 From Apr 2018 to Nov 2018 Chart Type Trend by ... Zoom

**Page 2: Question 1 (100%)** Chart Type Display Options Trend by ... Zoom

**What is your gender?** 12/11/2018 From Apr 2018 to Nov 2018

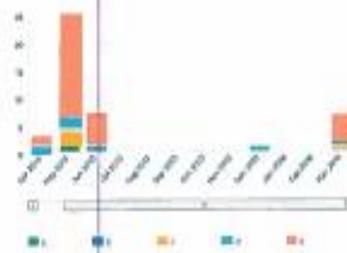
**Page 3: Question 2 (100%)** Chart Type Display Options Trend by ... Zoom

**What religion do you profess?** 12/11/2018 From Apr 2018 to Nov 2018

**Page 4: Question 3 (100%)** Chart Type Display Options Trend by ... Zoom

**How devoted do you consider yourself in this religion? Tick one from (a) to (e) where (a) is least and (e) is excellent.** 12/11/2018 From Apr 2018 to Nov 2018

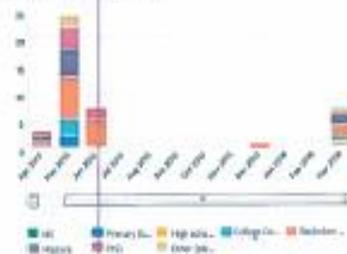
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/data-trends/Sp9t\\_2BqymxM7c4QqCOBlw...](https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/data-trends/Sp9t_2BqymxM7c4QqCOBlw...) 05/01/2018



Q4 (Unlabeled) Chart Type Display Options Filter by... Zoom

What is the highest level of secular education you have completed?

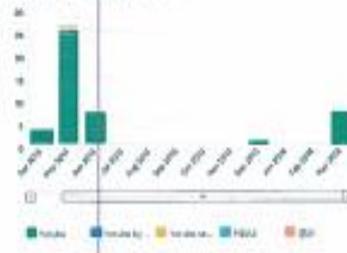
Unlabeled Q4 | Response 1 | Total: 427/500 | Answered: 203 (47.5%)



Q5 (Unlabeled) Chart Type Display Options Filter by... Zoom

Which ethnicity best describes you? (Please tick as many as are relevant to you.)

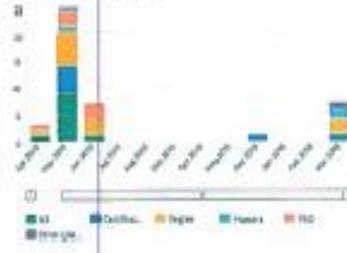
Unlabeled Q5 | Response 1 | Total: 417/500 | Answered: 203 (48.7%)



Q6 (Unlabeled) Chart Type Display Options Filter by... Zoom

What is your highest level of education in religion or related discipline?

Unlabeled Q6 | Response 1 | Total: 427/500 | Answered: 203 (47.5%)



Page 2 of 4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Q7 (Unlabeled) Chart Type Display Options Filter by... Zoom

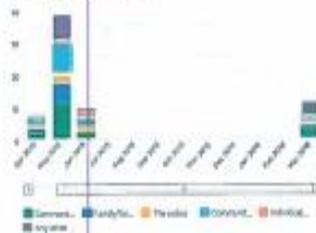
What did those involved in the crisis/conflict attribute to its causes? Also, kindly provide further explanation in the space below.

Question ID: Q104612 File: 4712022 Date: 07/03/2018 14:28:08



In your answer to the above (MRA) question, please identify who among the following have been most instrumental in managing the conflicts that have potential for violence in your own named local community? (choose and discuss your chosen answers in the space provided below)

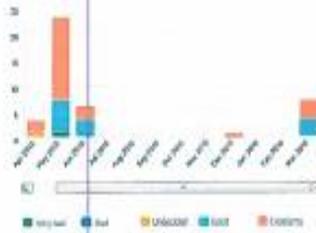
Question ID: Q104613 File: 4712022 Date: 07/03/2018 14:28:08



Page 4: Cohesion and Patience

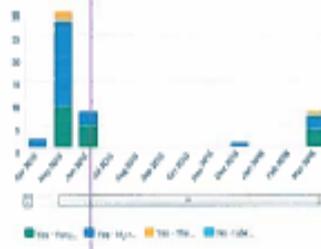
Do you have person(s) of a religion other than yours in your household, extended family, school and/or work place, how well do you get along and in what kind of forum? Tick which best describe(s) your relationship with them. Use the space below to explain the reason for your choice.

Question ID: Q104614 File: 4712022 Date: 07/03/2018 14:28:08



Thank you for your patience; this is the last question. Do you often keep your peace (remain calm); how and where do you draw strength (or encouragement) to tolerate your neighbours or people of other religions during provocation?

Question ID: Q104615 File: 4712022 Date: 07/03/2018 14:28:08



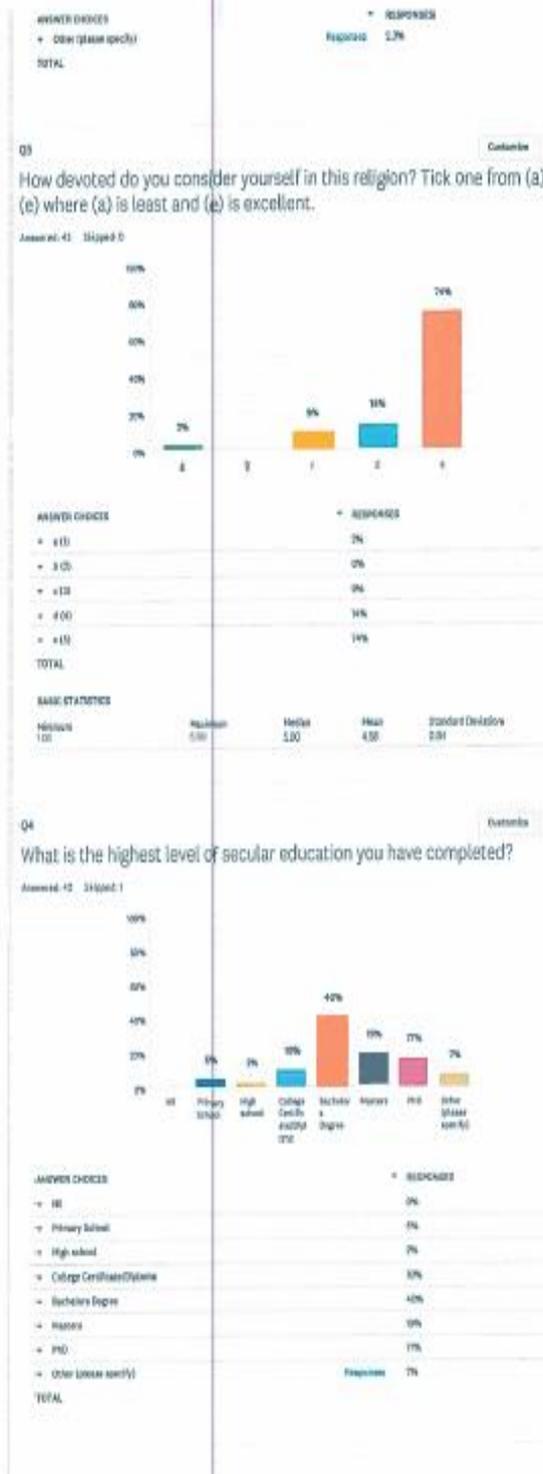
END OF REPORT

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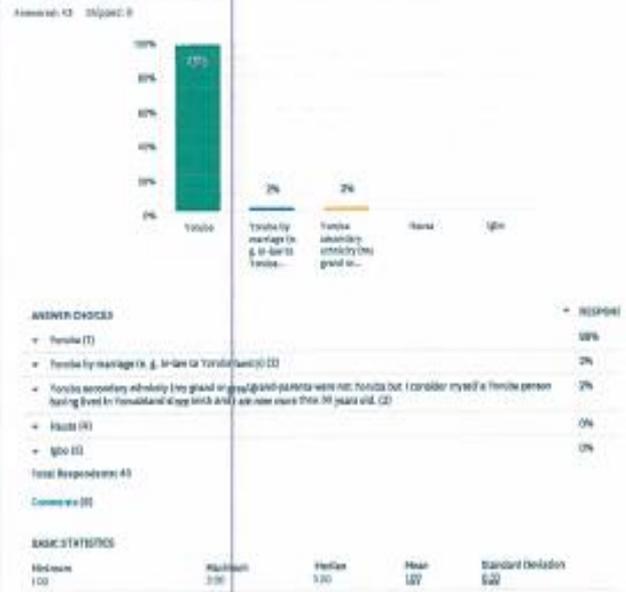
# ES Data Analysis



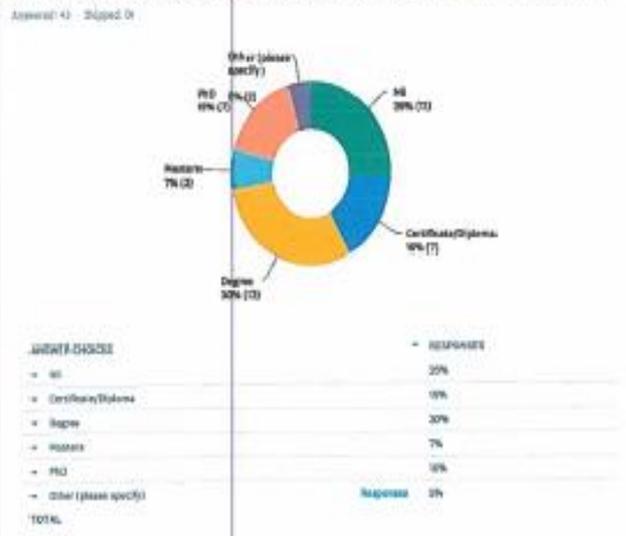


[https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/Sp9t\\_2Bmw\\_2BoymxM7o4QqCOBlwTUvFcatQE...](https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/Sp9t_2Bmw_2BoymxM7o4QqCOBlwTUvFcatQE...) 03/01/2018

Q6 Which ethnicity best describes you? (Please tick as many as are relevant to you.) Customize



Q6 What is your highest level of education in religion or related discipline? Customize

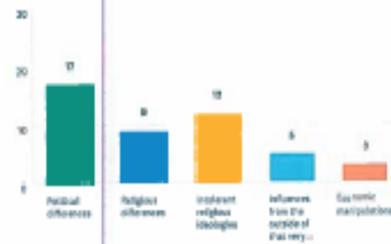


Page 3 of 6. HUMANRESEARCH QUESTION (MRS)

Q7 Customize

What did those involved in the crisis/conflict attribute to its causes? Also kindly provide further explanation in the space below.

Answered: 23 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Political differences	52%
Religious differences	37%
Inherent religious identities	36%
Influences from the outside of the region (Outside Influence)	13%
Economic manipulation	2%

Total Respondents: 33

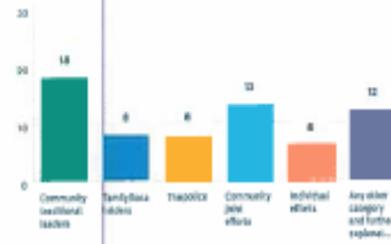
Comments (20)

Q8

Customize

In your answer to the above (MRA) question, please identify who among the following have been most instrumental in managing the conflicts that have potential for violence in your own named local community? (choose and discuss your chosen answers in the space provided below)

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Community traditional leaders	47%
Family/relatives	27%
The police	27%
Community joint efforts	34%
Individual efforts	10%
Any other category and further explanation could be given below	27%

Total Respondents: 30

Page 4: Tolerance and Patience

Q9

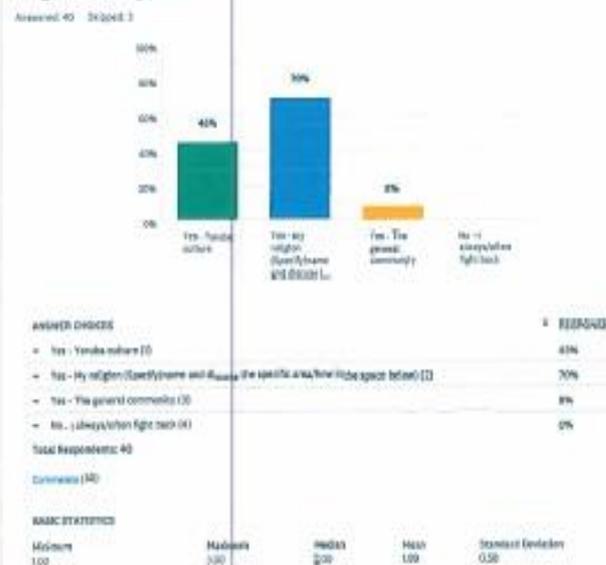
Customize

Do you have person(s) of a religion other than yours in your household, extended family, school and/or work place, how well do you get along and

what kind of forum? Tick which best describe(s) your relationship with the  
 Use the space below to explain the reason for your choice.



Q10  
 Thank you for your patience; this is the last question. Do you often keep  
 peace (remain calm); how/and where do you draw strength (or  
 encouragement) to tolerate your neighbours or people of other  
 religions during provocation?



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## Appendix B: FGD Questions

### Focus Group Questions/Tayo 2016 OCMS, OXFORD/MU, LONDON

#### 1. Background to the questions

Quoted/adapted from my online survey chart

This study on peace among the Yoruba people of southwest Nigeria is for research purposes.

The treaty of 1886, which marked the end of the Yoruba civil war (revolution) and the approval of the independence of many Yoruba towns from the then Oyo Empire (Balogun, 1985) is noteworthy in the study of peaceful relations of the Yoruba people of southwest Nigeria. Many scholars have thus observed the relative peaceful relations among the Yoruba people of this region, considering themselves descendants of same progenitor *Ochudana*, and also proudly describing themselves as *Omo Iya kawna*, (that is 'children of same mother'), (Ademakinwa, 1950; Atanda, 1996; Falola, 2001 and others). This research therefore seeks to unveil the quality of harmony often displayed among Yoruba people.

In the wake of the unrest in many parts of the world, it is worth examining the trend of peaceful relations among the Yoruba people and seek to unravel their tolerance or changes in their tolerance to religious differences. My goal is to study relatively peaceful places in Yorubaland and the Yoruba people, and unveil what seems to keep them going during religious related or other kinds of provocations and see if the findings could be useful in places prone to conflicts. I, therefore, hope that the outcome of this study will make some contributions to peace and conflict studies discipline as well as enhancing the harmonious relationship among the Yoruba people of southwest Nigeria.

This study could also be useful to appraise peaceful community in other places and invariably help the Yoruba to keep the peace from degenerating as witnessed in some initially peaceful communities in other parts of the world that are now at war.

Thank you very much for your understanding and willingness to participate in this Focus Group/interview.

Copy right © Tayo Olayinka at OCMS, Oxford and MU, London 2016.

**Focus Group Questions/Tayo 2016 OCMS, OXFORD/MU, LONDON**

**2. Research Ethics: -**

Please be honest, as your name is not required and the research, hopefully, will benefit the Yoruba people, and peace studies discipline in general.

**3. Questions: -**

1. Discuss what you consider to be the relationship (*ibágbépo alááfíá*) between Christian and Muslim Yoruba people (with examples to illustrate your points).
  - a. Within your family and extended family?
  - b. In your local area (*àdúgbò*) and commercial (markets) or work places?
  - c. Your town/where you live?
  - d. Are the answers you gave above to 'a' similar to the one given to 'b' and 'c'? If your answers are not similar, what reasons do you think caused the differences?
2. How do you handle disagreements or conflicts between you and your friends or your community in general?
3. What do you think of the harmonious relationships among the Yoruba people in the future?

Sincerely Yours,

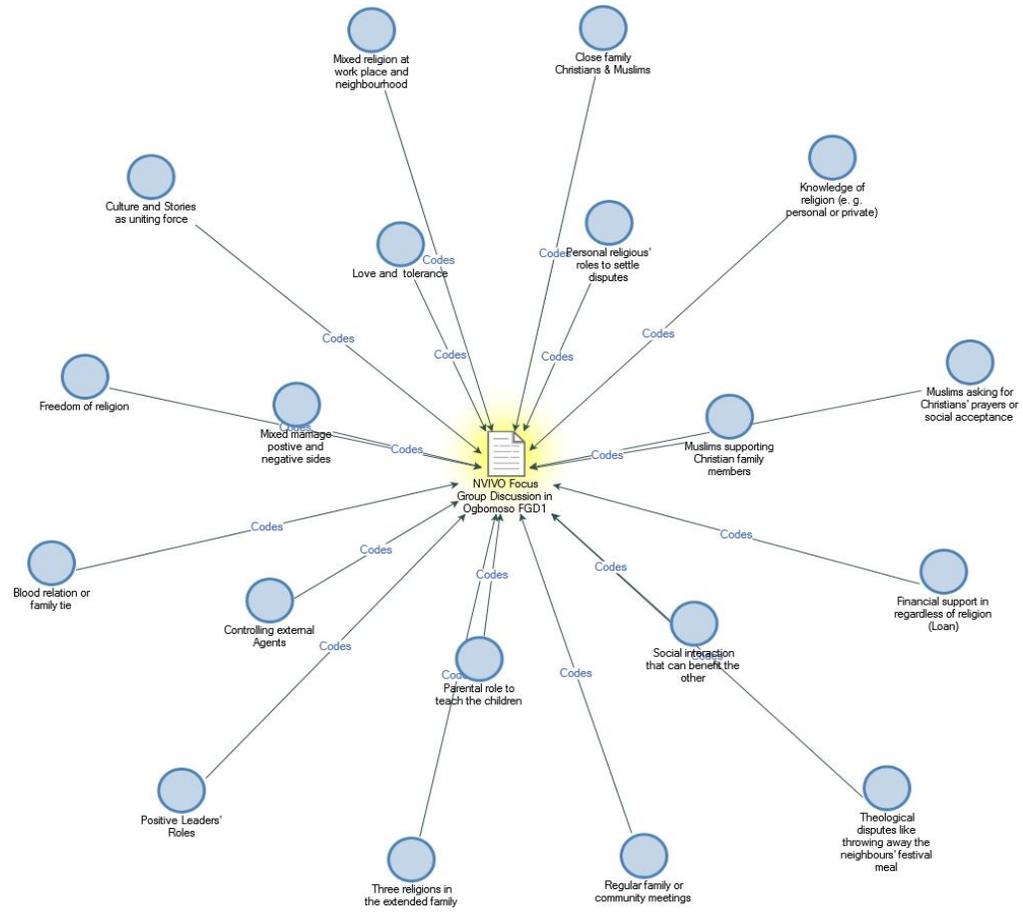
*Electronic copy 04/08/2016*

**Tayo Olayinka**

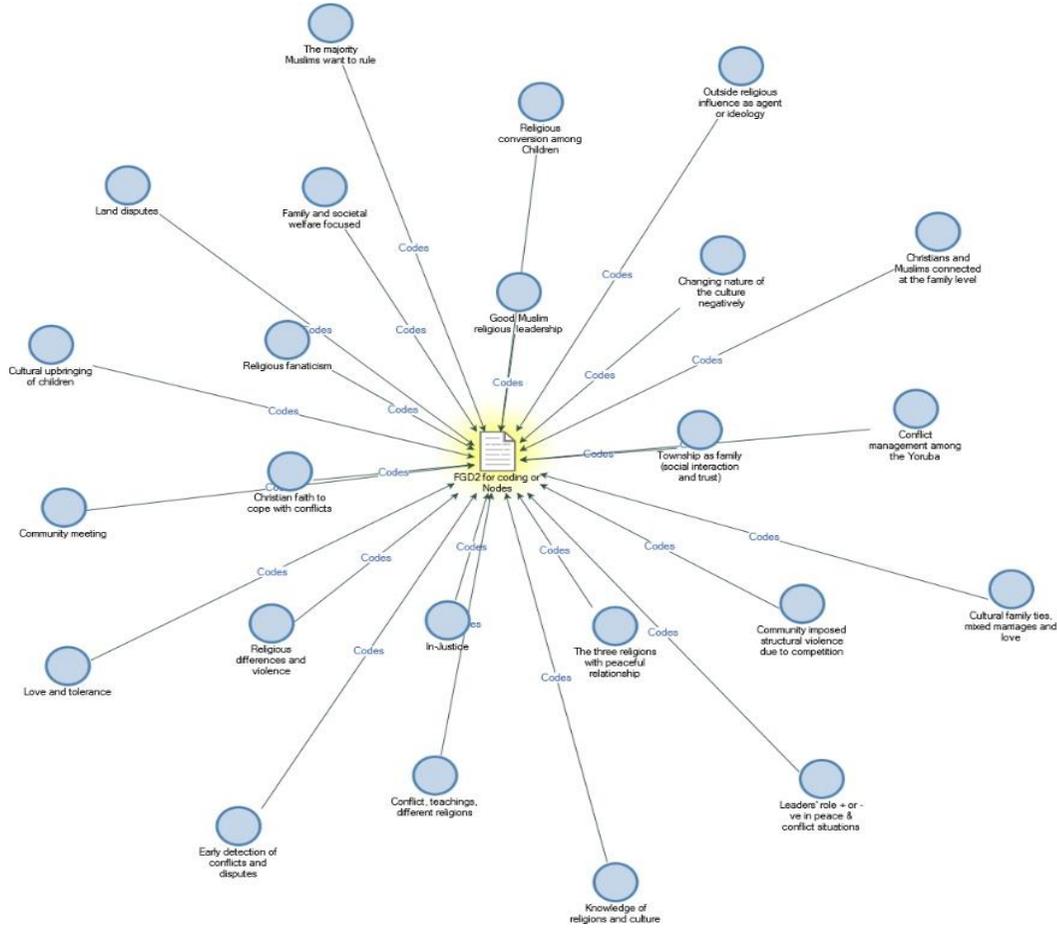
Email: AO1026@live.mdx.ac.uk



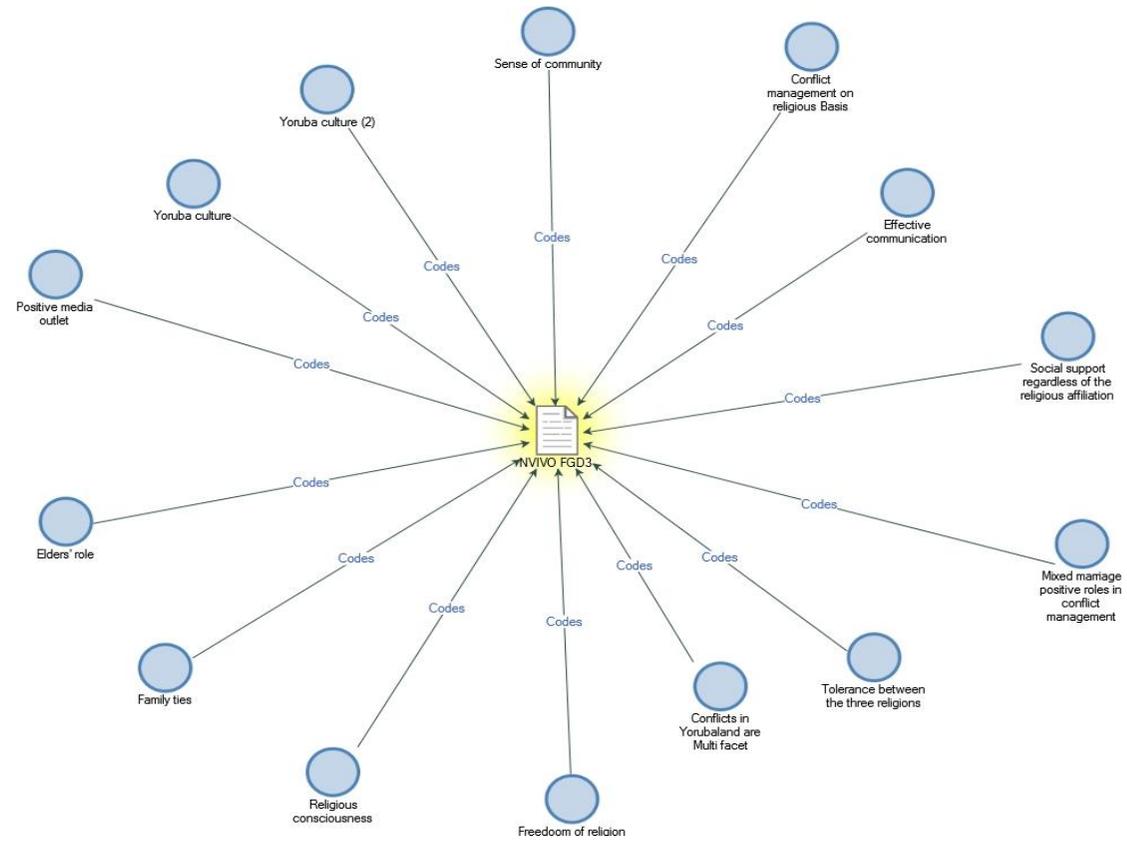
## C2: FGD1 Explored



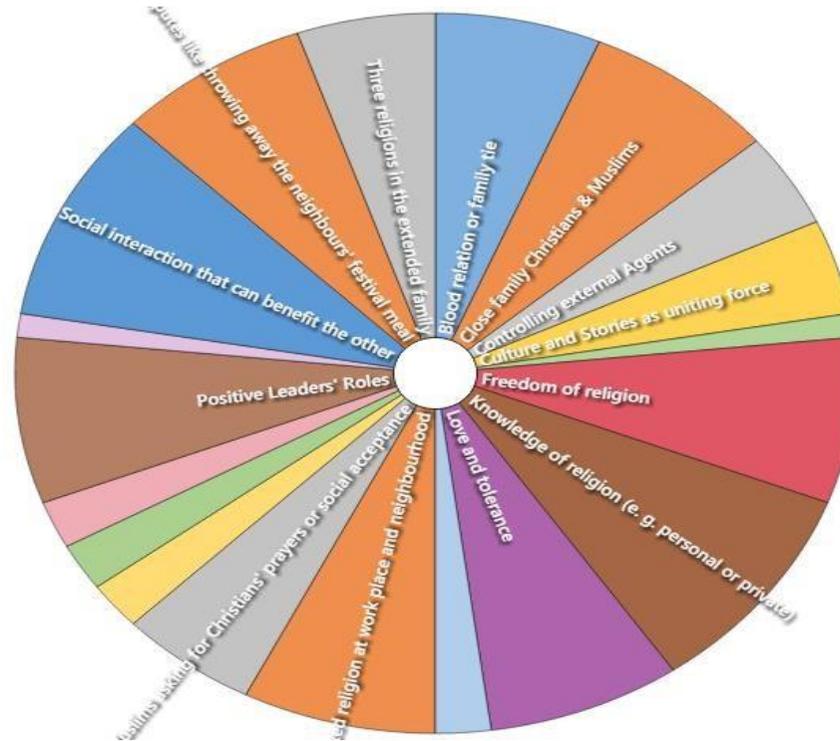
C3: FGD2 Explored



## C4: FGD3 Explored



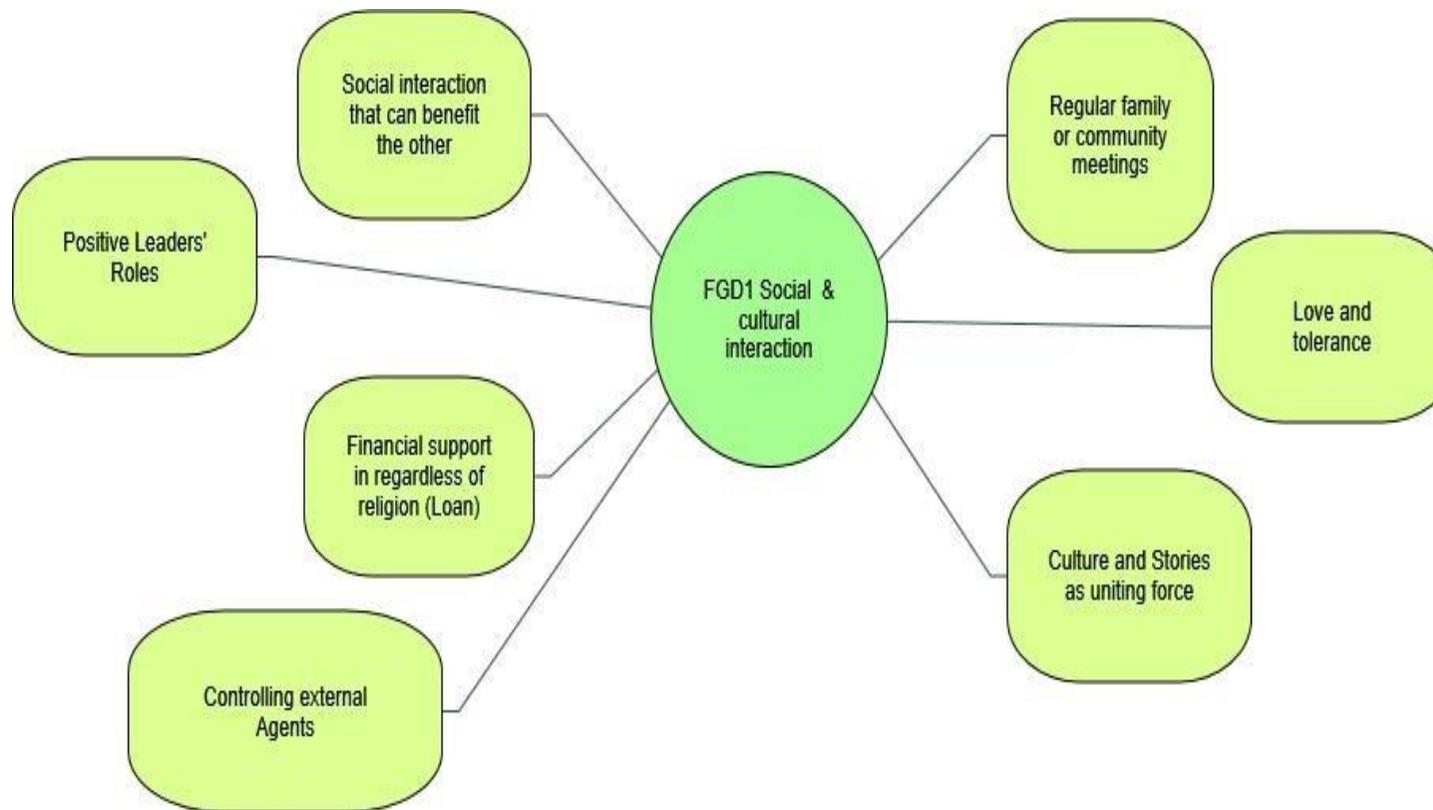
## C5: NVivo Charts in enlarged form



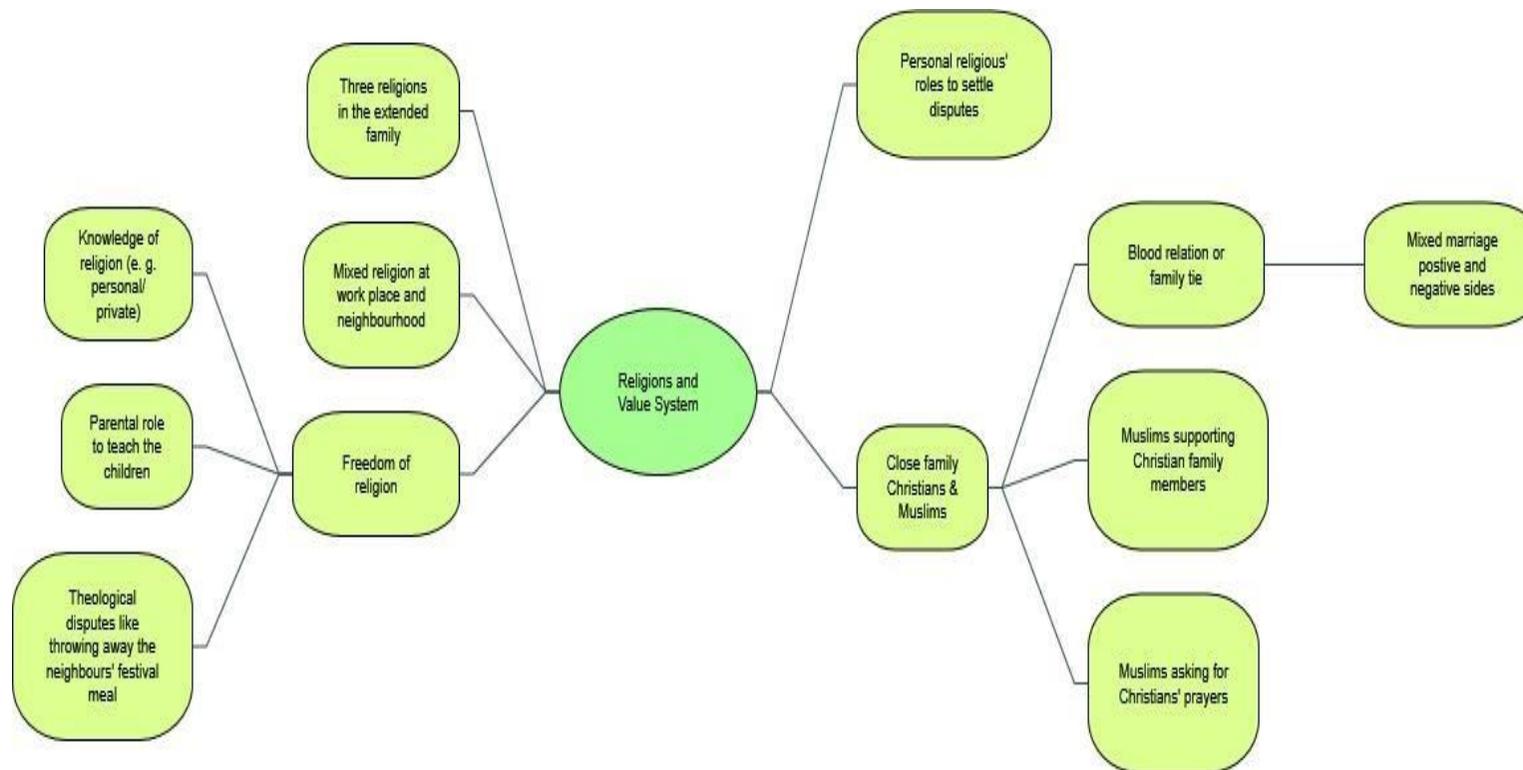
(i) FGD1 NVivo in Ogbomosho: The Sunburst chart



(ii) FGD1 NVivo: Hierarchy Chart Nodes compared by the number of coding references



**(iii) FGD1 mind map on social and cultural interaction**



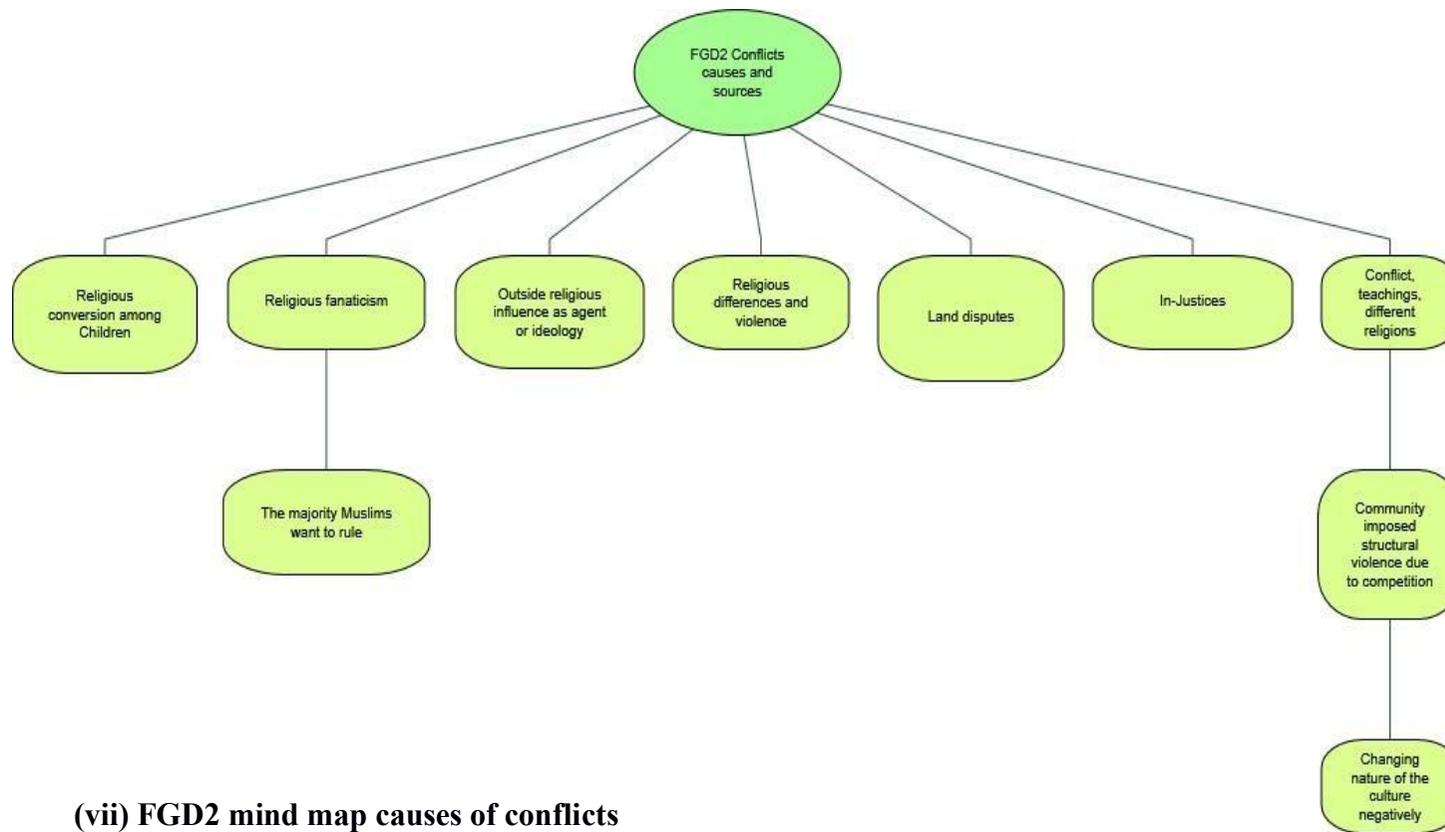
**(iv) FGD1 mind map on religions and value system**



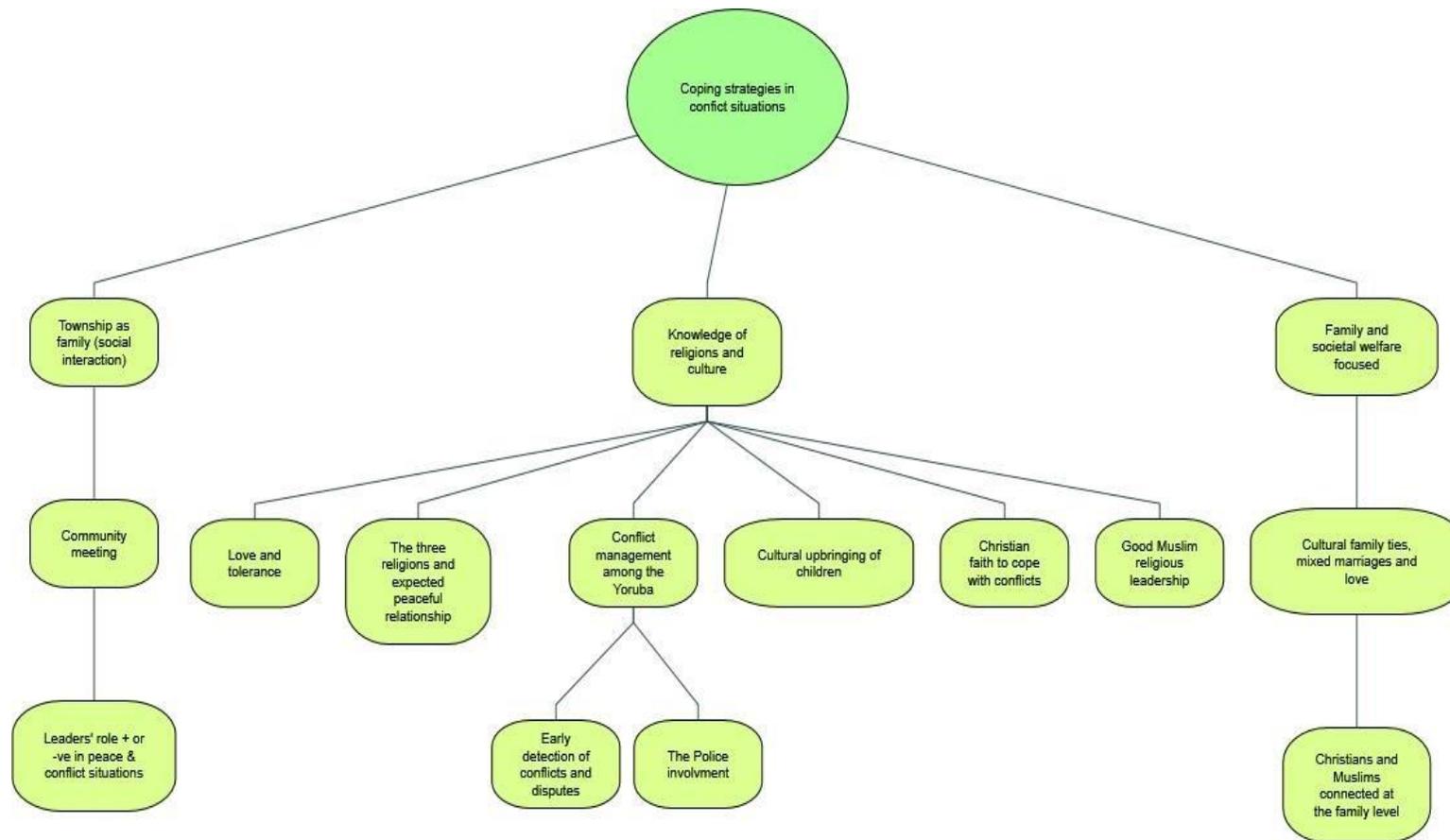
(v) FGD2 NVivo: Hierarchy Chart



(vi) FGD2 NVivo: Sunburst Nodes compared by the number of coding references



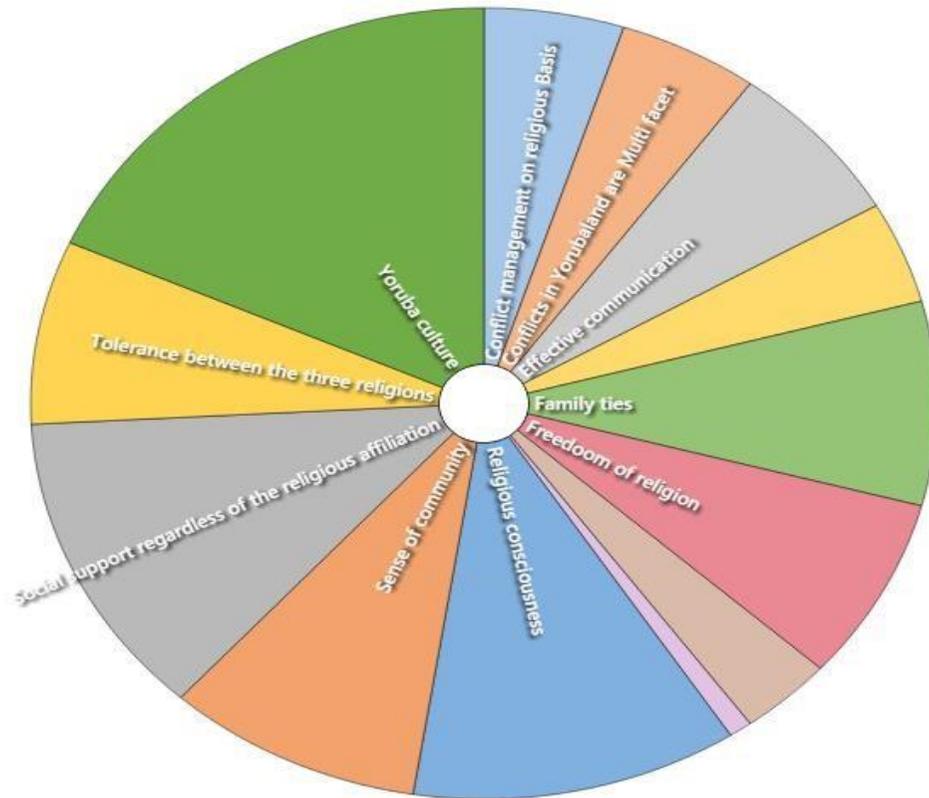
(vii) FGD2 mind map causes of conflicts



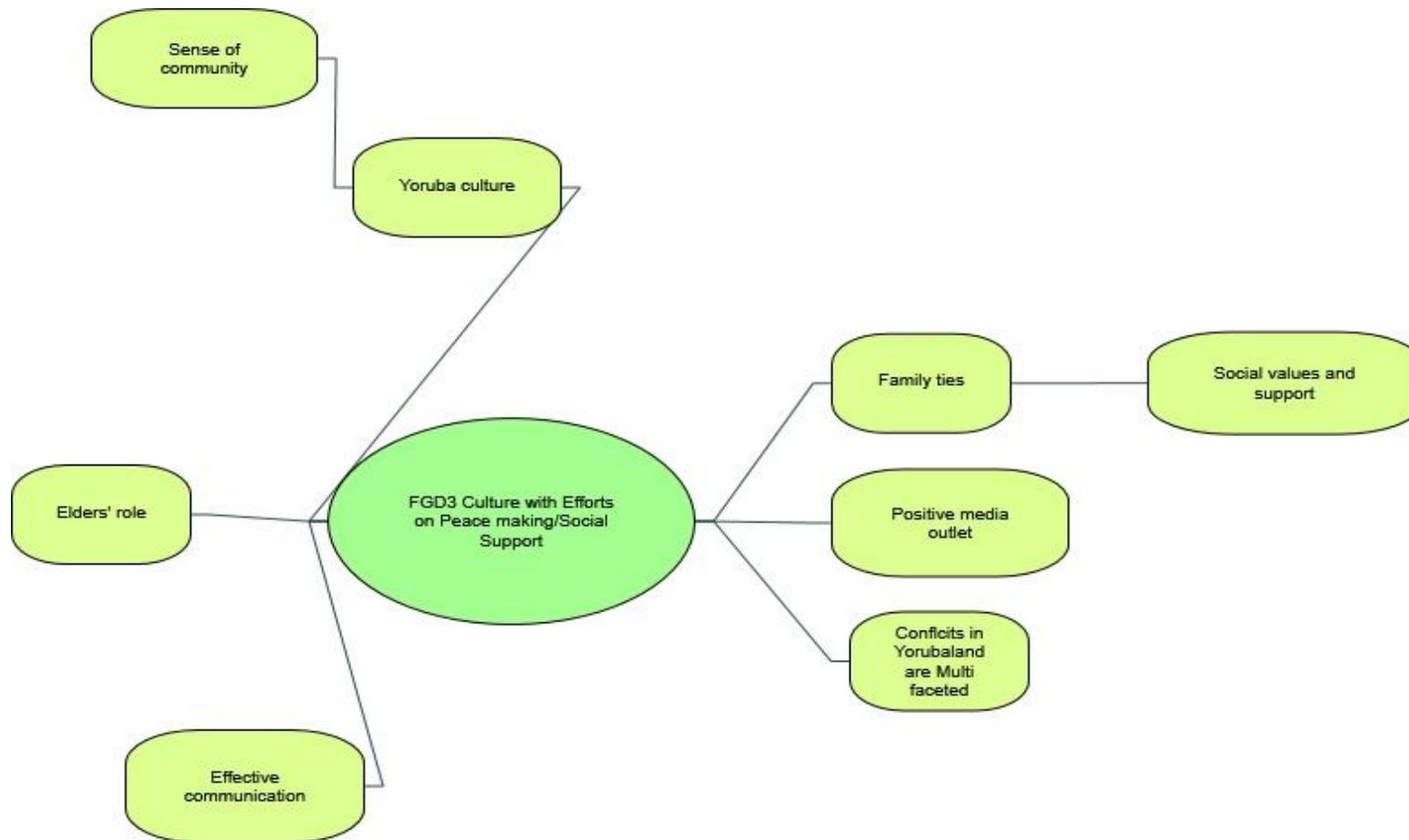
(viii) FGD2 NVivo mind map coping strategies in conflict situations



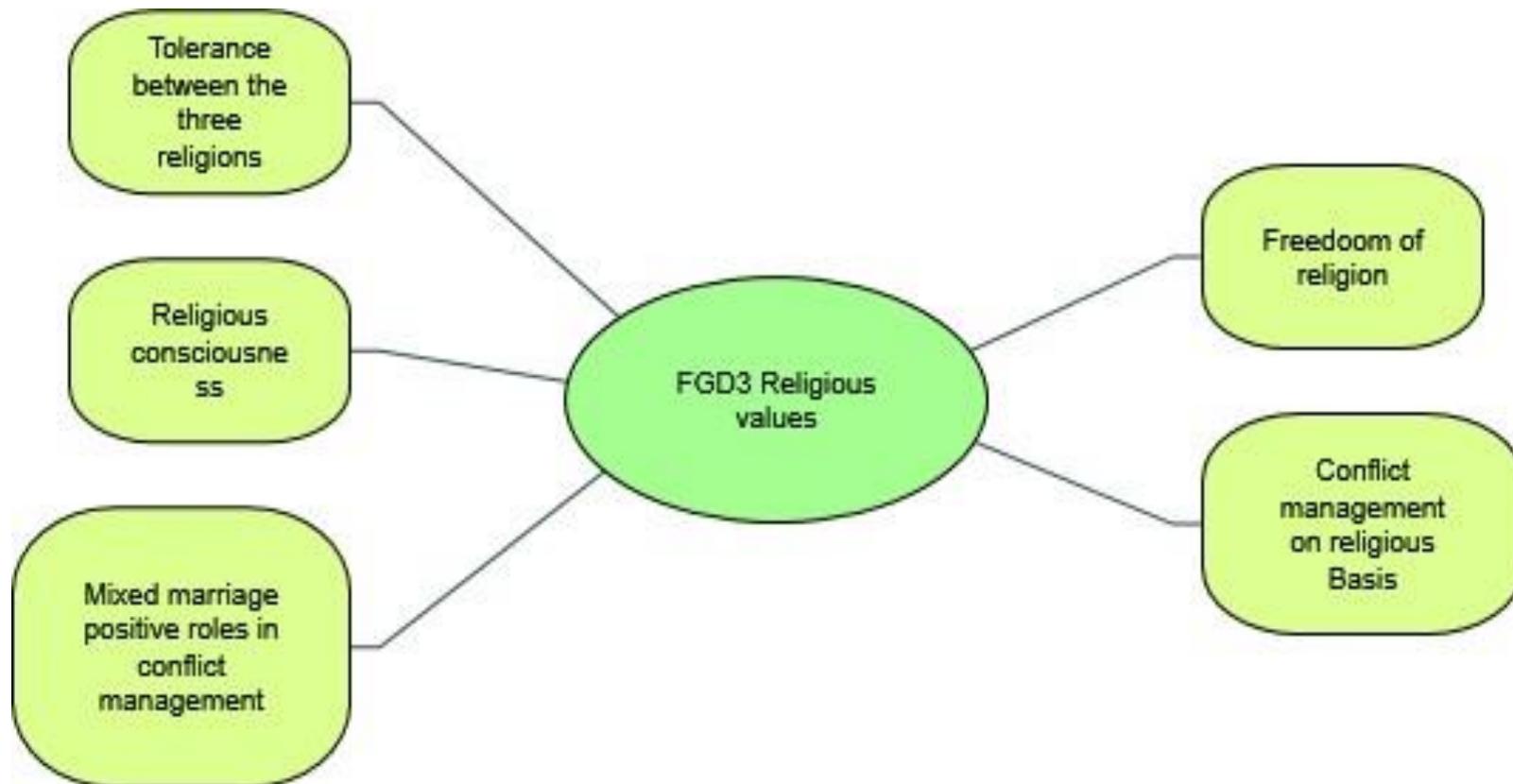
(ix) The FGD3 NVivo hierarchy chart



(x) FGD3 NVivo: Sunburst Nodes compared by the number of coding references



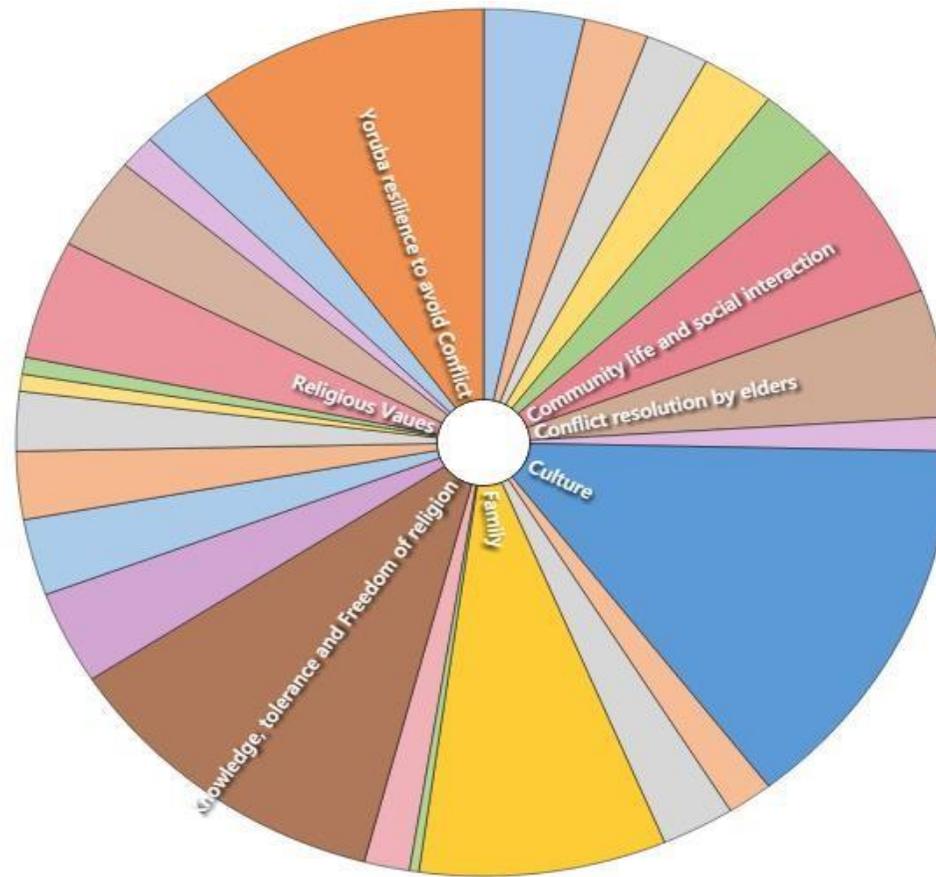
**(xi) NVivo FGD3 Mind Map Culture**



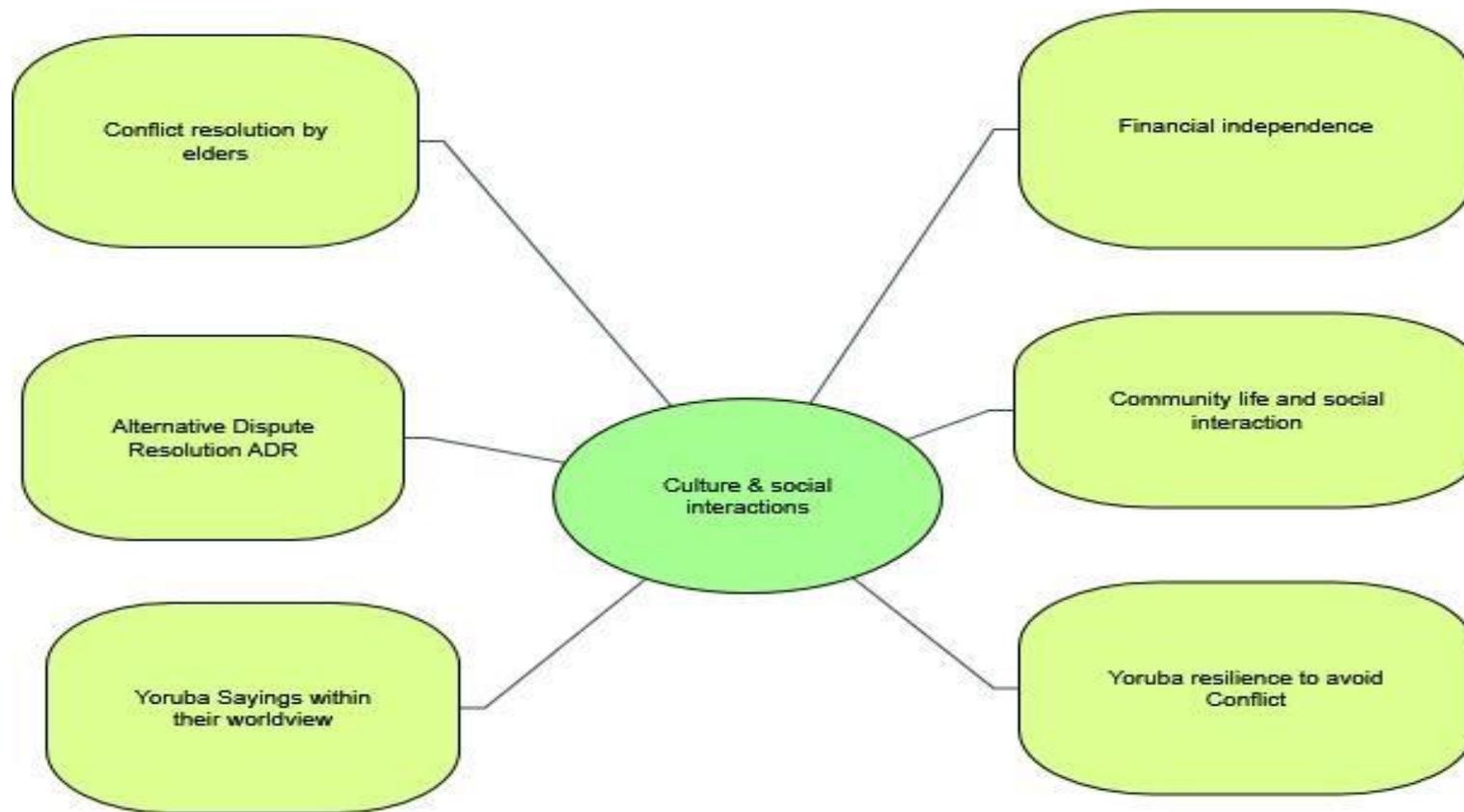
(xii) NVivo FGD3 Mind Map Religious Values



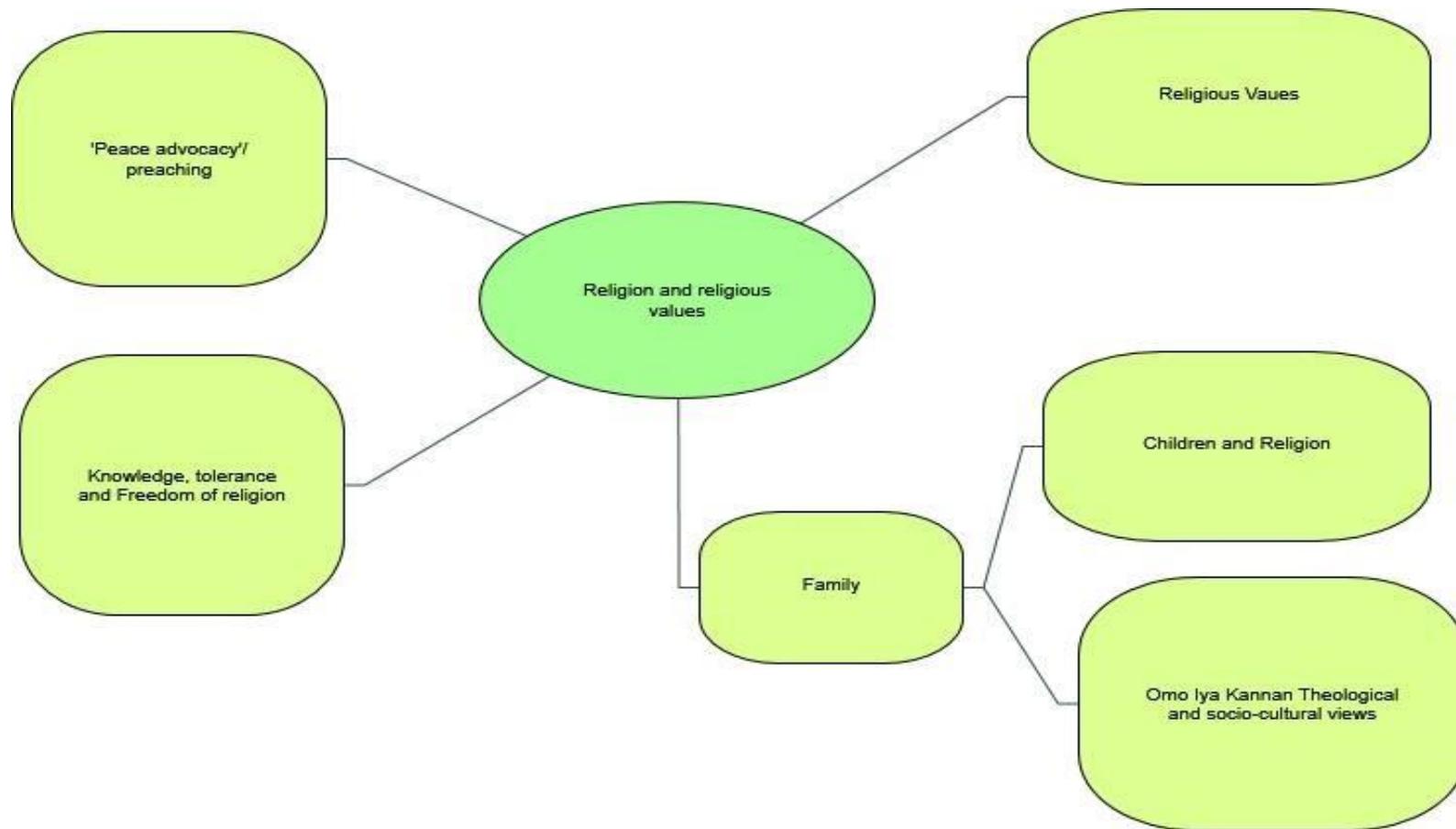
(xiii) FI – NVivo: Hierarchy Chart



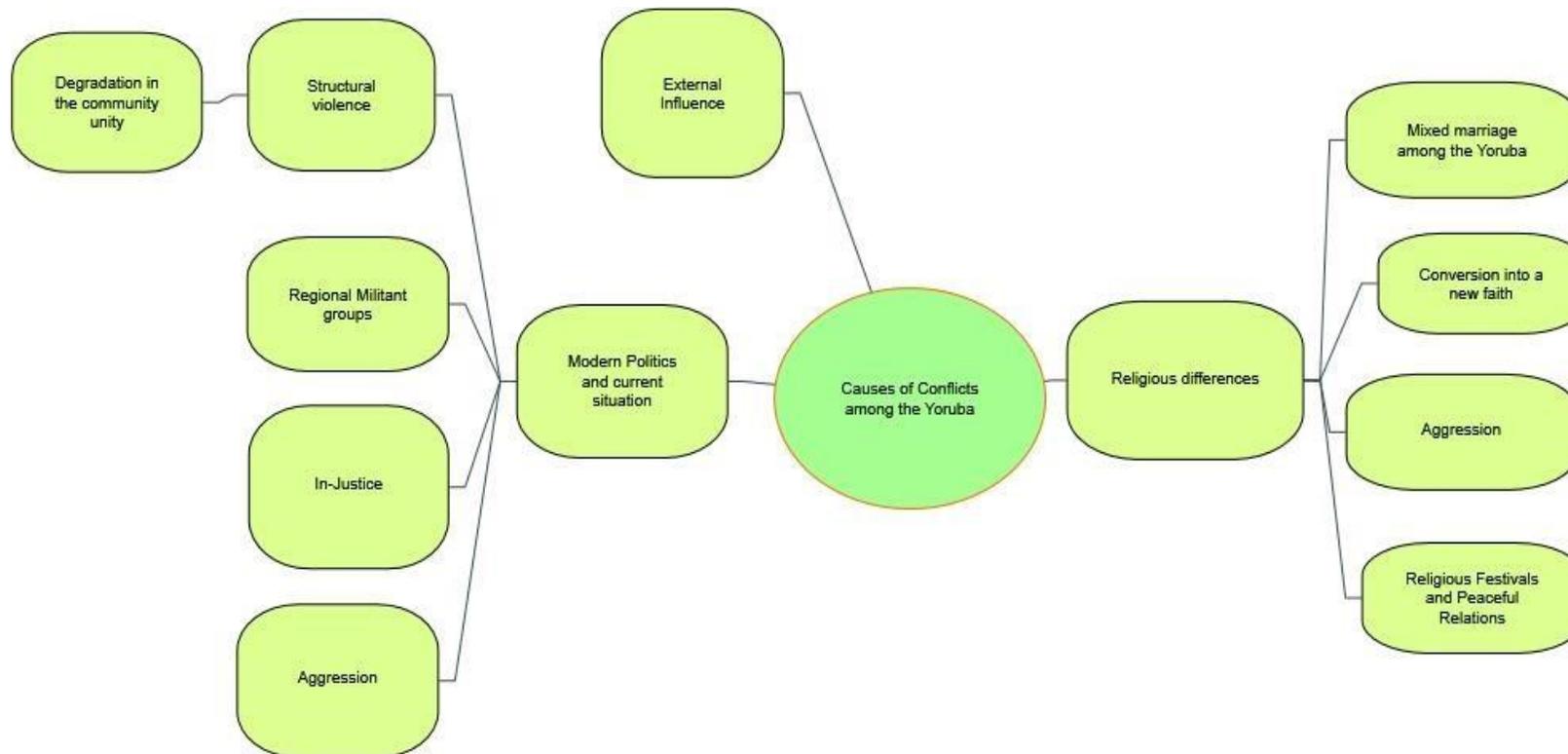
(xiv) The FI – Sunburst NVivo nodes compared by the number of coding references



**(xv) Interview Mind Map for Culture and Social Interactions**



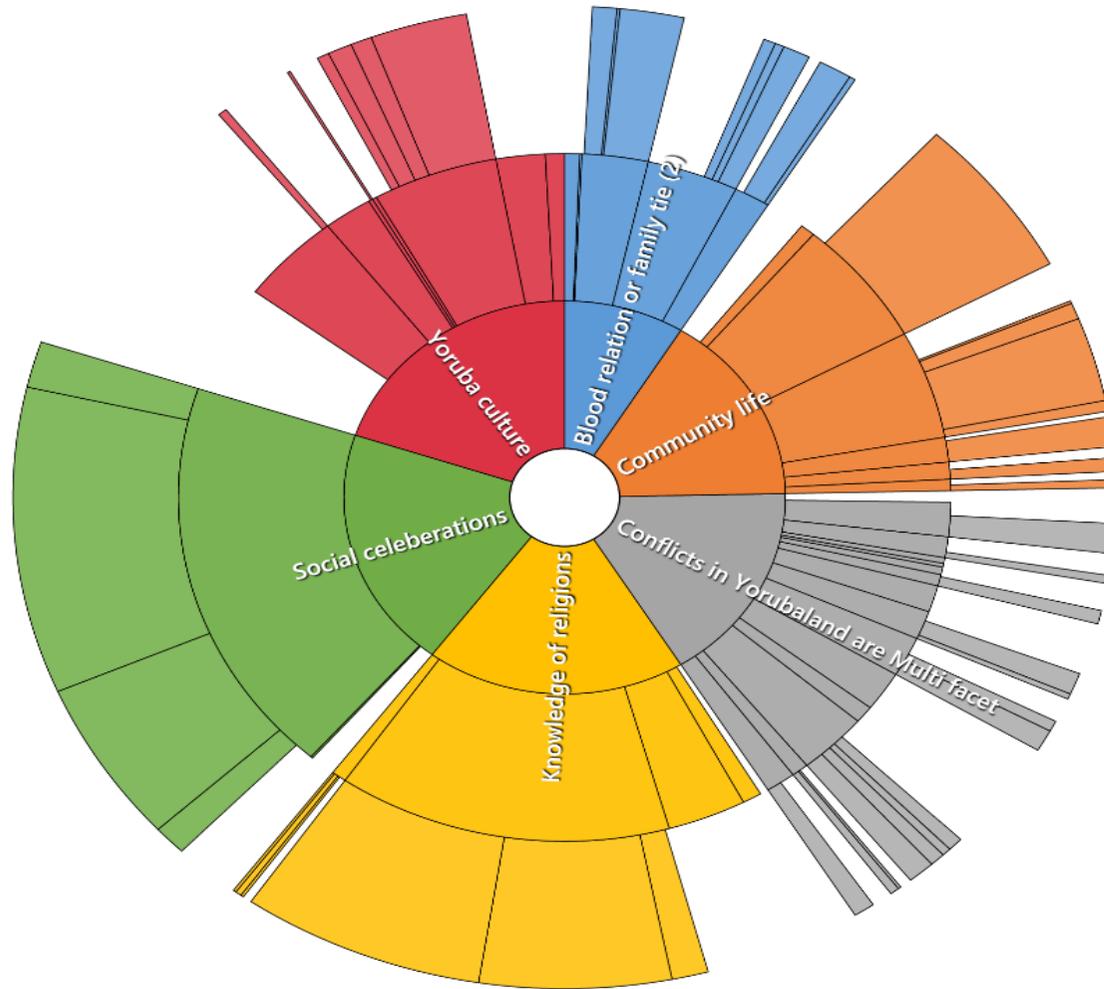
**(xvi) Interview Mind Map for Religions and Values**



**(xvii) The Interview NVivo Causes of Conflict – mind map**



(xviii) The NVivo Cumulative Hierarchy chart



**(xix) NVivo Cumulative Sunburst Nodes compared by the number of coding references**

## Appendix D: An Area Committee: Minutes of Meeting

11 - 09 - 2016

Ipade oni bere ni dede agogo kan abo ninu ile egbe yii. Mr. Tunde Oladeji lo fun wa ni adura ibere ipade.

Awon ti o toro aye ni won yii Prof Adedunwo won lo si Ghana fun conference, Alhaji Basiru Akanbi ati Alhaji Abgusu.

Lehin ti akawe ka iroyin ipade ti o kaja tan. Aare egbe yii bere aya kuro tabi afiku kosi. Aba fun gbigba iroyin ipade na Dr. Ayangbetun dida won lu akawe ni ogo enu wipe won ku ise diwa yoo maa ran wa lawo, eniti osi koo aba na ni Prof. Opeyemi Mr. Ojedoja.

Pafaki ninu ipade foni, idi ti o bawo de ibi ni wipe Alhaji Abgusu loni ipade yii, sugbon won awon ko le gba fun idi kan pafaki.

Igbano ti gba wipe ipade ko ni maa waye nibi yii mon. Fun idi eyi Aare egbe yii fe, ki omo egbe kidan soro si iru igbese be nitori ako fe ipade ko waye ninu egbe ni afo lo si ile-alegba Idowu Akande.

Amofin Dapo Atanda se alaye wipe iru igbese yii pelu alaye Idowu na ni won fun wa ki won to gba ipade ti o kaja. Ki won wo asiko ti gba ipade sehin.

Baba Emilda-<sup>Oladeji</sup>da se alaye wipe ki iru re ma waye eniti yoo ba gba ipade ki eniti yo maa ta oonye afo mun-mun wa ni ile egbe.

Amofun Dapo Afamfa tako baba Oye alagba Eniola wipe oro ti o ti kuja ni won tun pada si. Nitori wipe a o maa gbe ipade kiri. Nitori wipe iyamu omi eniti o gba ipade yoo mon awon eniyawo ti eniti ngba ipade nba urin ati se asapo.

Dr. Afodayan se alaye wipe ko si ikora eni-ni yanu ninu egbe. Nitori wipe agba wipe a o maa gbe kakiri ni asi ti ni roaster fun eniko-kawo. Eniti ko ba pa ofin egbe mon. Ni-  
gliati oro egbe nba nlo. Eyiun yo ri wipe siko egbe yo ja won sele.

Mr. Amisola, se alaye wipe ki ale mon ara wa dele-dele ni a nfi gbe ka-kiri. Fun idi eyi iku ko ni yo wa legbe, Arun ko ni yo wa legbe fun idi eyi awon ti ngba ki se apo.

Eniti oni oju, ni, oju maa ti. nitori o lo sele enikan oje, omun, o wa di asiko tire oni wo koraye.

Alagba Adegbite se alaye wipe eniti ko ba gba ipade o yeki yiya wa fun iru enibe.

Tunde Oladeji se alaye wipe o yeki yiya wa fun eniti ko ba gba ipade.

Mr. Egunyomi, dida wipe oro ko ye ki alaye paju. e jeki a dibo.

Aare egbe yic Hon ~~Alagba Amisola~~ Debo Ojelade, ko ye ki adibo lori oro yii. Awon committee gbodo lo

si se lori oro na. Ati yrya ti yo tosi awon ti ku ba gba ipade.

Mr Job Awode, dide wipe ki won je ki a mon oruko awon ti oku ti yoo gba ipade ki a si mon ero okan won.

Bayi Elder Tunbe Babalola dide won si ka oruko awon enyan won yu.

Aare egbe yu Hon Debo Oyelade se alaye wipe lori eko-ofe ti a fe se awon ara Ilu Oyo nba apwon soro sugbon won gba lati fun wa ni iran-loro, sugbon ako ti o wa nile ko fun aye bayi. Sugbon awon education Committee ki won ma tara sele rara. Ni kete ti awon entyan yu ba ti ranse si wa a maa bere eto na.

Athaji Alimtoyin, se alaye wipe abo ti Aare le fun awon ara Ilu Oyo koju om - ti yo gba wipe akoko ti lo fun sa yu. Ki a duro fun eyi ti nbo.

Alago eto ikole se, alaye wipe awon ko ti se igbese kan-kan lori ise ti o wa ni waju awon.

Dr. Afodayan se alaye wipe nje awon igbimo yu ti mon iye ti ise yu yoo na awon bi.

Mr. Adegbite se alaye wipe ki se owo gan ni isoro awon. Sugbon eniti awon ran wipe ki o lo bere ni nda wa duro.

Dr. Afodayan se alaye wipe ki awon igbimo fi aye sele awa gan mon ibi ti won ti nta awon sun elo won yu.

Elder Tunde Babalola se alaye wipe  
#40,000 ni gbogbo owo ti owa fun wa  
nile fun won lati san. Ki won le to di  
omo egbe.

Lawyer Atanda dide wipe we ti enki  
Okan wipe oun yoo darapo ko, ko boju mu  
tara ki won da we na pade.

Igbimo ti gba wipe lati asiko lo omo  
egbe ki kan gbodo maa mun #1,000 ni  
fun edeun.

An Afọayan se alaye wipe bi abalo  
si ode, gbogbo nye ti o ba wile ati nye  
ti afun olode o ye ki o maa je igbepa  
ninu ipade.

Tunde Olawuyi tun pe akijesi awon  
alaga-social wipe ki oruko awon ti o  
ba dawo, ki o maa jade si gba-ngba.

Alaga Lawyer Atanda dide wipe ki  
yoo fun alaga social ni ipinu lati maa  
na owo egbe lati ra ofi lode. Aun ti odo  
ba fi sile ni ki a maa lo.

Alhaji Olurumtoyin da imoran wipe ki  
ipade wa si idanu duro.

Aaare egbe yii pe Com. Job Owade  
lati fun wa ni adura idanu duro  
Owo ti Owode

Due	6,000 - 00
Building	7,500 - 00
Social	5,000 - 00
	<hr/>
	18,500 00

Aare egbe yii Hon. Debo Oyelade se alaye wipe alaga igbun<sup>ko</sup> eyin ni amaa deju ebi ise ko ti ko ba je sise Ewa aye fun wa ki o to di ipade ti nbo ki ise yii je sise ati oko ayi ka lle yii je fifin. Duwa yw ran wa lowo.

Igbun<sup>ko</sup> gba lati kawe si awon ti o je owb, bayi Elder Tunde Babalola dide lati maa fi we iran-ni lati seta fun eniko - kan ti oro na kan

Alagba Emula dide wipe we ti egbe ko, ko boju mun rara nitori kosi apo iwe ri be.

Ahaji Oloruntimehin se alaye wipe ki se wipe ata abaku awon ti akawe si. Sugbon ki apo egbe ti se ri.

Dr Afolarin, se alaye wipe bi eyin agba ba ko wa leko a ko le wipe wan ti eso ko dara. Agba wipe a se atunse

Aare egbe yii Hon. Debo Oyelade se alaye wipe alagba Emula fi abuku pupo kan egbe, nitori ona ti won gba gbe oro yii kale o ga pupo. Sugbon - ki Duwa ran wa lowo.

Letim - eyi Elder Tunde Babalola dide lati ka awon we ti awon eniyan meji yii ko lati dara po egbe yii

Ahaji Oloruntimehin dide wipe, Karin - kapo yaje si je eniyan. Emi da imoran wipe ki a gba won.

Dr. Afọdayan dide wipe awon oni duro won lo ye ki won da imoran lati gba won wile - nitori awon ni won seun mon dada. Kise Alhaji Olurantoyin.

Mr. Tunde Alarayi, dide wipe aba ti Dr. Afọdayan da ni awon fe ki leyin. Ara ko ni wafa bi onigbowo abanikowoo lara ni. Nitori bi ako bari won awon oni gbowo won ni amra deju ko.

Bayi awon oni-duro meji dide wipe awon gba wipe ki won wo egbe awon fi owo si.

Aare egbe yii Hon. Debo Oyelade dide wipe, ki won rii lawyer <sup>Atanda</sup> ki won ba won fi owo si we, ki won ran-won lowo. Ki won kiwe si egbe.

Mr. Dada Omidola se alaye wipe alagba Lonikola wa ninu lu-won se alaye wipe ako bere awon.

Mr. Azeez Akanyi, se alaye wipe entu o de lu ti ko bere egbe. Eniti o wolu lo ye ki o bere egbe. Bi won ba bere egbe, <sup>bere won</sup> egbe yii.

Alhaji Olurantoyin lo silayi aba Mr. Azeez Akanyi wipe alagba lonikola to ye ki o bere egbe lapapo.

Aare egbe yii ba alaye ti o fe darapo mon egbe soro wipe, ki won wo egbe dada enikan lo fun wa ni le le egbe yii. Sugbon omo egbe lo ko. Orun yoo je ki ele bun-wa ni oun ti o ju ti lo. Ima-tinun ko egbin da sinu. Sugbon egbin buruku ko si ninu ti wa. Orun yoo ran wa lowo.

## Appendix E: Some of the Yorùbá music played by the media

Sunday Adeniyi (Sunny Ade)

Songs transcription from the audio recordings	Songs translation from Yorùbá
<p>The merciful God x2</p> <p><i>Oba to nsore funmi sore fun e to sore lojojumo</i></p> <p><i>Oba ako, matikalehin,</i></p> <p><b>Oba</b> <i>aduro gboin gboin leyin asotito.</i></p> <p><i>Koje ronu ibi rara.</i></p> <p>The Merciful God.</p> <p>(x2)</p> <p><i>Awamaridi loba Eledumare,</i></p> <p><i>Oda bobomi taya tomo tẹbi tara (x2),</i></p> <p><i>Igbokegbodo mi ko je ko ja sori asan (x2)</i></p> <p><i>Mo nyan fanda fanda loju apegan,</i></p> <p><i>Bi opolo senyan loju elegusi telegusi kogbodo yi lata</i></p> <p>The Merciful God.</p> <p>(x2)</p> <p><i>Gbogbo ona ti monrin lOluwa tinsaju milo to nsaju mi bo.</i></p> <p><i>Ona yowu tesu legba lonbami di patapata</i></p> <p>The merciful God</p>	<p>The merciful God (2x)</p> <p>The King, generous to you and me</p> <p>The King who opposes the wicked</p> <p>The King who stands by the righteous</p> <p>Will not think of evil</p> <p>The merciful God</p> <p>(2x)</p> <p>God's wisdom is unsearchable,</p> <p>He protects me, wife, children, and relations from evil (2)</p> <p>My going out and coming in is not in vain (2)</p> <p>I walked in the presence of my enemies as frogs do in human communities that do not eat frogs.</p> <p>The merciful God</p> <p>(2x)</p> <p>The LORD protects my going out and my coming in</p>

<p><i>Gbogbo ona mio ti monrin nile aye, lOluwa nsaju milo lo lotun nsaju mi bo.</i></p> <p><i>Gbogbo ona tesu legba lonbami di patapata</i></p> <p><i>Anise,</i></p> <p><i>Gbogbo ona ti monrin lOluwa tinsaju milo to nsaju mi bo.</i></p> <p><i>Ona yowu tesu legba lonbami di patapata</i></p> <p>The Merciful God</p>	<p>Whatever the tricks the devil might want to use are being blocked by God.</p> <p>The merciful God.</p> <p>(Same as above)</p>
<p><i>Mafijo yin Baba, Mafijo yin Baba ogo o</i></p> <p><i>Mafiyin yin Oluwa. Mafiyin yin oba ogo o</i></p> <p><i>Mafoyaya yin Oluwa Orun. Mafoyaya yin Oba ogo o</i></p> <p><i>Mafilu didun yin Oluwa oba. Mafiludidun yin Oba ogo o</i></p> <p><i>Mafinudidun jo fun Oluwa. Mafinudidun yin oba og o</i></p> <p><i>Mafatewo mi yin Eledumare Oba mimo</i></p>	<p>(Same as above)</p> <p>I shall praise the Father with a dance, the glorious Father</p> <p>I shall praise God with joy/laughter</p>
<p><i>E ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye (x2)</i></p>	<p>I shall praise the LORD the King with drums</p> <p>I shall praise the LORD with joy</p>
<p><i>Kabiyesi, Araba ribiti, Aribirabata</i></p> <p><i>Oba leni, Oba lana, Oba titi aye</i></p>	<p>I shall praise the Almighty, the Holy King with clapping</p>
<p><i>E ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye</i></p> <p><i>Alagbala imole, Alagbala itura</i></p>	<p>Join me to dance in a traditional way for the glorious King Who fills the whole earth (2x)</p>

<p><i>E ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye</i></p>	<p>The great Royal Highness, the King today, yesterday, and forevermore.</p>
<p><i>Eli alau, Eli la, Eli alahu, Eli la (x4)</i></p>	<p>Same as above</p>
<p><i>E ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye</i> <i>Ema ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye</i></p>	<p>The one whose courtyard is filled with light and pleasant things</p>
<p><i>Oba tingbe nu wundia sola, to ngbe nu adelebo sogo</i></p>	<p>As above</p>
<p><i>Oba alade Alafia o</i> <i>Oba lana, Oba loni, Oba tit aye</i></p>	<p>The great God, the great God</p>
<p><i>E ba mi rababa fo ba ogo o, oba a te rere kari aye</i></p>	<p>As above, join me to praise God</p>
<p><b><i>The 10 minutes ends here</i></b></p>	
<p><b><i>Social and the artist' personal achievements begins from here</i></b></p>	<p>The King Who resided in a virgin woman...</p>
<p><i>Iro ni bata npa, eye Awoko loga o.</i> <i>Iro ni bata npa, eye Awoko loga o.</i></p>	<p>The Prince of Peace. The King yesterday, today, and forever</p>
<p><i>Iro ni pepe npa o, e ha e, Awon aja loleru, e ha e</i></p>	<p><b>Personal achievement of the artist</b></p>
<p><i>Kinni onigba le gbe, e ha e,</i> <i>To le dabi talapere, e ha e</i></p>	
<p><i>Okun lolori gbogbo omi, e ha e,</i> <i>eyin osa ese pele o, e ha e,</i></p>	<p>Social</p>
<p><i>Ba aba bi efon ni gba ojo</i> <i>Taba bi, Taba bi erin nigbagbele odaju</i></p>	

<p><i>ori erin a ju tefon lo.</i></p> <p>X2</p> <p><i>Molulu ariya titi, mo gbade ori x2</i></p> <p><i>Mo sere titi mo wewu oye, mo gba ileke orun,</i></p> <p><i>Motun tepa ileke ni tele ntele</i></p> <p><i>Alade gba baba Esin</i></p> <p>(x2)</p> <p><i>Emi na ko ise Oluwa ma ni,</i></p> <p><i>Emi naa ko Olórún Oba mani</i></p> <p><i>Ani Mo sere titi mo wewu oye, mo gba ileke orun,</i></p> <p><i>Motun tepa ileke ni tele ntele</i></p> <p><i>Alade gba baba Esin</i></p> <p><i>Ori ade lori mi, moti yan, moti yan latorun wa, mo ti yan</i></p> <p><i>Ori ola lori mi, mo ti yan, mot iyan latorun wa, mo ti yan</i></p> <p><i>Sebí ori oye lori mi, mot iyan latorun wa, mo ti yan</i></p> <p><i>Ori ola lori mi, mo ti yan, mot iyan latorun wa, mo ti yan</i></p> <p><i>Edakun, Ape moni lan pe temi dire</i></p> <p><i>Sebí ori owo lori mi, moti yan latorun wa, mo ti yan</i></p>	<p>Social</p> <p>Personal achievements.</p> <p>All honour to God for the achievements.</p> <p>Personal achievements.</p> <p>Recognition of the artist's achievements</p> <p>Praise song for personal achievements.</p>
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<p><i>Akii lahun ni yi, Omo alade</i>  <i>Akii lahun ni yi, Adeniyi</i>  <i>Inu mimo, iwa tut logbe o dele oye</i>  <i>Sunny omo alade, wa wee o. x2</i>  <i>Baba elesin ni Bariga, waa we o.</i>  <i>Elesin dudu, elesin funfun, waa we o.</i>  <i>Baba elesin leekan,</i></p> <p><i>Agogo ko maaa ro, ko maaro, yeske, Ko maaro</i>  <i>Ewi kingbo, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Opa lowo alagogo, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Sekere ko maar o wele, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Guitar nlo lesoleso, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i></p> <p><i>Ilu ko maa dun, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Kemele o maa gbe ru, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Kako gbowo labo, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Kabo gbowo lako, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Bo ba see se kee gbetan lera, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i></p> <p><i>Onilu mi ogbodo sun, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Agogo ko maaro o, ko maaro, ko maaro,</i>  <i>Edakun o, kiku ma pota mi, ko lee reran wo</i>  <i>Ni se ju ota mi, dami lola</i>  <i>Ota iba yo mi o, Olórún ni o je,</i>  <i>Ni se ju ota mi dami lólá</i></p> <p><i>Se bi oju ota mi lose demi lade o,</i>  <i>Ni se ju ota mi dami lólá</i>  <i>Kiku ma pota mi ko le reran wo</i></p>	<p>Praise song for personal achievements.</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Social</p>
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<p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lólá</i></p> <p><i>Ko ma bere lowo mi pe bo lQlórún mi wa</i></p> <p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lola</i></p> <p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lola</i></p>	<p>May God give me victory over my enemies</p>
<p><i>Kiku ma pota mi ko le reran wo</i></p> <p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lola</i></p> <p><i>Gbogbo ore tonse fun mi lojojumo o mondupe o</i></p> <p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lola</i></p> <p><i>Ota iba yo mi, Qlórún ni o je o,</i></p> <p><i>Ni seju ota mi dami lola</i></p>	<p>Prayer song</p> <p>Prayer song</p>
<p>(41:58 minutes onward)</p> <p><i>Ota ngbogun, esu ngbogun,</i></p> <p><i>Mo do minira, ninu Jesu mo do minira to ga</i></p> <p><i>Baba lo sise ara, baba lo sise iyanu fun mi</i></p> <p><i>Mo nkalalluyah to rimo wa laaye,</i></p> <p><i>Ope iyin ogo lo ye fo ru ko re</i></p> <p><i>Ohun to wu mi o, ohun to wu mi o, Edumare masai se fun mi, ohun to wu mi laye mi.</i></p>	<p>Thanksgiving song</p> <p>Enemies and Satan fought but God gave me victory</p>
<p>(51 Minutes onward)</p> <p><i>Ero to duro esun mobi ijo ti ya, eni to joko, emura sijo,</i></p> <p><i>Boba sepe emi ni wo ni, mamura sijo</i></p> <p><i>Maajo, maajo, matun memu, mafi paronu re</i></p> <p><i>Bi egbegberun eniyan baku ...</i></p> <p><i>Niwon igba ti emi nbe, ireti nbe,</i></p>	<p>May the LORD grant my desire</p> <p>Social</p>

<p><i>Maajo, maajo, matun memu, mafiparonu re.</i></p> <p><i>Omode nku, agba nku, orile ede ndide sira</i> <i>won,</i></p> <p><i>Maajo ....</i></p>	<p>Social: I will dance, will drink to overcome anxiety</p>
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**Ebenezer Obey**

Songs transcription from the audio recordings	Songs translation from Yorùbá
<p><i>Fimilokan bale Oluwa</i></p> <p><i>Gboro mi ro, dakun maje nsise x2</i></p> <p><i>(Guitar: Do di mu emi fere de beni Jesu wi, Ran dahun pada sorun pe wa odimun)</i></p> <p><i>Maje nsise, maje asimu, maje asilete</i></p> <p><i>Eledumare, dakun maje a sise</i></p> <p><i>Fimilokan bale Oluwa, Gboro miro, dakun maje asise</i></p> <p><i>Iwo lo sagbe nigbo to fi fiye e karo</i></p> <p><i>Ohun lo saluki to fi fiye e kosun,</i></p> <p><i>Ohun lo so didere, to fi ye e bepo</i></p> <p><i>Gboro mi ro dakun ma je nsise</i></p> <p>(x2)</p> <p><i>Nini owo eda, se o gbagbara</i></p> <p><i>Aini owo eda, se o gbagbara</i></p> <p>(x2)</p> <p><i>Nibi talagbara gbe nsise, to nse wahala, (x2)</i></p> <p><i>Aro ti o lee dide a si maarise</i></p> <p><i>Chr: Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da (x2)</i></p> <p><i>Aye lokun, aniyán losa ye o aye,</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye lokun, aniyán losa ye o aye,</i></p>	<p>Give me peace of mind oh LORD. Keep from errors</p> <p>Keep me from error</p> <p>Keep me from error</p> <p>A song about riches for both the strong and the weak</p> <p>About wicked people</p>

<p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye lo se la ti la fiko lori</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye lo se kan to fi we wu eje o</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye toto, akamara, mojuba kiba se</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye aye aye o aye</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Iba araye, mo juba kiba se</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Kadarami, mapakadarmida aye,</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Kadarami o, e mapakadarmida aye,</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye lo se la ti la fiko lori</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Aye lo se kan to fi we wu eje o</i></p> <p><i>Araye o ke ma pa kadara mi da</i></p> <p><i>Mase ri talenti re mole ara kunrin</i></p> <p><i>Oluwa yob ere lowo re ohun tofi se</i></p> <p>X2</p> <p><i>Mase ri talentire mole ara binirin,</i></p>	<p>As above</p> <p>Do not hide your talents. The giver (the LORD) will ask you to give an account of how you used it</p>
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<p><i>Oluwa yob ere lowo re ohun to fi se</i></p> <p><i>Eeniyan mi o, te ba bi mo, nigba to ba wa lomode</i></p> <p><i>To ba fe gba boolu, aye ema ba wi o, o lee je thunder lola</i></p> <p><i>Mase ri talenti re mole ara kunrin</i></p> <p><i>Oluwa yob ere lowo re ohun tofi se</i></p> <p><i>Eniyan mi o</i></p> <p><i>To ba feran lati maa nkorin, tabi fi guitar sere, Ole je commander (Obey) lola</i></p> <p><i>Mase ri talenti re mole ara kunrin</i></p> <p><i>Oluwa yob ere lowo re ohun tofi se</i></p> <p><i>Bi e ba tun lomode, to tun jo obinrin to fem aa sare, tabi ma fo</i></p> <p><i>Ole di Dupe Osunkuya lola</i></p> <p><i>Mase ri talenti re mole ara kunrin</i></p> <p><i>Oluwa yob ere lowo re ohun tofi se</i></p> <p><i>Eyin ni e wo, ko se ni to mo la. X2</i></p> <p><i>Oluwa lomose asela, odamiloju</i></p> <p><i>Koseni to mola</i></p> <p><i>Eyin ni e wo, ko se ni to mo la. X4</i></p> <p><b>At 12:30 minutes into the music, Obey began the social music, praising some Yorùbá personalities</b></p>	<p>Encourage your children to develop whatever skills they are good at from childhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Could be footballing</li> <li>- Singing or playing with the guitar</li> <li>- Athletics</li> </ul> <p>Nobody knows tomorrow.</p>
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Songs transcription from the audio recordings	Songs translation from Yorùbá
<p><i>Ese rere ye o ese rere</i>  <i>Ese rere kobalo ye wa o x2</i>            Inaudible (repeated several times)</p> <p><i>Eni kan mbe loke to ju gbogbo wa lo</i>  <i>Oju Oluwa wo o ese rere</i>  <i>Eni to dawa si o gbo wo,</i>  <i>Eni to dawa si o gbo bi o</i></p> <p><i>Ofun wa loju afi nri, - ofun wa leti a fi ngbo,</i>  <i>Ofun wa nimu afi nmi - Enu ti ani alee fi jeun</i></p> <p><i>Ese rere ye o ese rere - Ese rere kobalo ye wa o x2</i></p> <p><i>Mofe sotan kekere kan, - Itan orogun meji ni</i>  <i>Oko teyale lorun - Oni fe iyawo gidigidi</i>  <i>Iyale se abiyamo - Iyawo si se abiyamo</i>  <i>Omo iyale rele iwe, Omo iyawo rele iwe</i>  <i>Iyale: Olomo iyawo mo we jo mo ohun lo</i></p> <p><i>Operopo lojo kan, oni afi bon bapa omo iyawo ohun</i>  <i>Ose asaro eleporederede eyi tomodeleje,</i>  <i>ose asaro elepo rederede, ose okan o funfun balau</i></p>	<p>Do good that it may be well with you</p> <p>God is greater than every human</p> <p>God sees you, so do good</p> <p>The one who created us does not obtain money for the services He renders to humanity</p> <p>He gives eyes to see, ear to hear</p> <p>Nose for breathing and mouth to eat</p> <p>As above</p> <p>I want to tell a story</p> <p>Of a man with two wives</p> <p>The husband loved both wives. The sons of both women were in primary school education</p> <p>The elder wife became jealous of the younger wife's son's education progress</p> <p>The first wife planned to poison the son of the second wife</p> <p>She dished out the food into two plates but put poison in one she thought the boy was going to eat.</p>

<p><i>Asaro elepo rederede, ebuti lo bu si ojure.</i></p> <p><i>Oni bomo iyawo ba de, kala kori si je ko ku</i></p> <p><i>E wo se Oluwa mi oba esan, awamaridi mama ni</i></p> <p><i>Omo iyale lo ko wole de, oba bere si wa onje kale</i></p> <p><i>Asaro eleporede lomo iyale lo gbe. bomo ti je tan lomo ba ku</i></p> <p><i>Be lOmo iyawo wo le de, asaro to fun fun balahu,</i></p> <p><i>Ohun lomo iyawo lo gbe</i></p> <p><i>Omo je tan lo ba gba boolu</i></p> <p><i>Bee ni iyawo wolede,</i></p> <p><i>Beeni Iyale wole de, Bee ni baa le wole de</i></p> <p><i>Iyale be kawo leri, oba bere sini sunkun,</i></p> <p><i>Oni aseni serare omase x2</i></p> <p><i>Ebu ika tionbu le, omo ohun lo pada wa wu je</i></p> <p><i>Ese rere ye o ese rere. Ese rere ko ba le ye wa o</i></p> <p><i>Irelope ika ope o. Ese rere ye o ese rere,</i></p> <p><i>Ese rere ko ba le ye wa o</i></p>	<p>Unfortunate, her son picked the poisoned food while the son of her rival ate the poison-free food.</p> <p>Her son died after eating the food.</p> <p>She regretted her actions, but too late as her son died of the poisoned food</p> <p>Doing good pays, so do good to your neighbours</p>
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## Ogundare Foyanmu

Foyanmu's album on 'Owó Náírà' (meaning this currency called Naira). The music is on how better it is to invest in matrimony than to keep a mistress (concubine). The first four minutes of the album is on fidelity. The translation of the Yoruba song from the audio was done by the researcher, 22/01/2018, Akintayo Olayinka.

Songs transcription from the audio recordings	Songs translation from Yoruba
<p><i>Ibi gbogbo nii so kankan osupa, nijoojumo nil emo lotun</i></p> <p><i>Ebi npami ko se fi fe wi, Ina njo mi o se sim un mun</i></p> <p><i>Eni ara ba ni kio wi eni ara ba re kio fenu so</i></p> <p><i>Ijoba o ni fi handcuff so wo ko tun ma roju ya ke so binrin</i></p> <p><i>Owo naira ti o sese de ni yo sabe elomiran dahoro</i></p> <p><i>Ai lowo lowo ni a nsoo gun ale</i></p> <p><i>Oogun ale to je bi naira tuntun ko si mo</i></p> <p><i>Owo naira to sese de o je ju tiro lo</i></p> <p><i>Emi ni mo sese yan ale ni mo nmowo naira yi wa o</i></p> <p><i>Mofun ni naira to sese de, akinyeye lo ku owo naira tuntun t-omo ohun</i></p> <p><i>Ni mo ba ni ya ni mo ba se nko ba omo re se</i></p> <p><i>Oogbe dun joo run lo</i></p> <p><i>Ale fife dun jaya eni lo</i></p> <p><i>Ojo kokanle logbon ni tale</i></p>	<p>Moon light, bright day</p> <p>If hungry or torched with fire, do not whistle but speak out.</p> <p>If you are in pain, people will notice with time.</p> <p>You cannot keep patronising women while you are in the police custody with handcuff.</p> <p>The new naira currency will damage some people' body...</p> <p>I patronised a concubine, and after paying her, she asked for a gift for her daughter.</p> <p>I protested that she was my contact not her daughter.</p> <p>Is slumber sweeter than a sleep?</p> <p>Is concubinage better than having a wife?</p> <p>Concubine has the 31<sup>st</sup> day, the wife has every day.</p> <p>Do quick I am about to leave is the concubine's motto</p>

*Ojojumo akinlaye lanrobinrin eni*

*Baya eni ba ba ni gbele, aya eni asun mojumo lodo eni*

*Ese giri n olo ni nkan tale fi niyi*

*Baba agun ope, ma fowo ope yan ale mon mo.*

*Koo mo gbagbe pe owo ipade aye ati torun ni*

*Aji ya ale lai renikan aa wi fun*

*E ko gbodo lo sile ale lale mo o. solu solu o jin si kanga ninu won*

*Ojo niipe, ipade ko I jina, lo difa fun yanale yanale lale*

*Lojo tin lo febinrin koto*

*Bo ba gbagbe lule, o wa lee gbagbe wiwo?*

*Oo sin ni gbagbe oju agbamo giri labe pepe*

*Agbere o pe, e pa ise asewo ti kee pa agbere ti*

*Ati igba ti nko ti yan ale mo lowo mi ti ngbe owo mi*

*Ale ti mo ni lesin ku, to dun yi ko si kan ga*

*E ba mi dupe mo ti bo lowo ewu eeya.*

*Ni to ri bolorun ba nso ni, aa dabo bara eni ni*

Palm tree climber stop using your income on concubines, as you cannot share your concubinage sufferings with anyone.

Stop keeping mistresses, you are being gullible will fall into a well.

The lust after money and extra marital affair can ruin people's life. Physical assault inclusive. Stop the business.

I started having saving since I stopped having concubines.

My last year mistress has died, the one I have this year fell into a well.

Join me in thanksgiving for the deliverance.

If God keeps you, you need to also be careful/discipline.

**Appendix F: Some Photographs of Christian–Muslim Interaction from Ògbómòṣó**

 <p>A cross-section of Baptist Christians dancing to Sòún's palace in Ògbómòṣó</p>	 <p>A cross-section of Baptist Christians dancing to Sòún's palace</p>	 <p>A cross-section of Baptist Christians dancing to Sòún's palace</p>
 <p><i>Photograph 13. A cross-section of Baptist Christians dancing to Sòún's palace</i></p>	 <p>Baptist Christians arrived at the Sòún's palace</p>	 <p>Baptist Christians at Sòún's palace Ògbómòṣó</p>

\*Photos' credit to Adedokun Samson Facebook, 26th January 2017 06:30 accessed 16th February 2017



*Photograph 14. The President of the Nigerian Baptist Convention at Sòún's palace in Ògbómòṣó*

\*The picture accessed from Adedokun Samson Facebook, 26th January 2017 06:30 accessed 16th February 2017)

## Appendix G: Field Research Timetable

27 August – 23 September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1: 28 <sup>th</sup> August – 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2016						
I visited the venue in preparation for the Ògbómòşó Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	<b>ÒGBÓMÒŞÓ, ÒYÓ STATE</b> - Focus Group (exploring peaceful community PC) - In-depth interviews within the local community <b>Focus Group Venue:</b> Centre for Interfaith Relations and Cross-cultural Outreach (CIRCO), Abaa, Ilorin road, ÒGBÓMÒŞÓ In-depth interviews: within the local community	Interview of an Imam & Scholar in Iwo, at the OSUN STATE (CT)	Return to my base in Ògbómòşó and compilation of findings and initiating more contacts	A visit to Ilorin in preparation for the University of Ilorin, KWARA STATE (FGD)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept. Participant observation (PC) + Interview in ÒGBÓMÒŞÓ 1. Funeral Service of Rev Gentleman, Christ Baptist Church Ògbómòşó 2. Funeral Service at Oke Ishoko Baptist Church, Ògbómòşó	

Week 2: 4 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2016				
<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> September at Sèpètèrì, ÒYÓ STATE</b></p> <p>Focus Group and in-depth interview (CT)</p> <p>Venue of the FGD: First Baptist Church Sèpètèrì</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>5<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b> A visit to the burnt Baptist church buildings</li> <li>- Interview of the Chief Imam of Sèpètèrì and another Muslim scholar in Sèpètèrì</li> <li>- A visit to the Òyó National Park and Museum</li> </ul>	<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> Sept. Ilorin, KWARA STATE</b></p> <p>Focus Group Discussion (exploring conflict transformation CT. Non-teaching staff among the participants).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Venue:</b> The University of Ilorin, ILORIN, Kwara State, Nigeria</li> </ul>	<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> September</b></p> <p>Compilation of findings</p>	<p><b>9<sup>th</sup> Sept. in Ejigbo, OSUN STATE</b></p> <p>In-depth interview (CT)</p> <p>Osun State University Students (Fisheries and Wildlife Department)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Also visited the Baptist Hospital, Ejigbo</li> </ul>	<p><b>10<sup>th</sup> September</b></p> <p>Compilation of findings</p>

Week 3: 11 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2016
<p><b>ÒGBÓMỌŞÓ</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. Further In-depth interviews, participant observation (PC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 13<sup>th</sup> Sept Interview, Baptist Pastors, Ògbómọşó</li> </ul>

- 13<sup>th</sup> Sept Interview, Ọsálágbèdẹ Compound, Ọgbómọṣọ
- 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2016 Interview at the Parrot FM 101.1 studio, Mr Adé
- 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. A visit to my second supervisor in Ondo, Ondo State
- 16<sup>th</sup> Compilation of findings

Week 4: 17 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2016	
<p><b>Saturday evening 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September</b></p> <p><b>Ila-Orangun</b></p> <p>Interview continued (PC)</p> <p>17<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016, Interview a surveyor, an indigene of Ila-Orangun</p> <p>18<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016 Interview in ILA ORANGUN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mic (anonymised)</li> <li>- Mrs Omobo (anonymised)</li> </ul>	<p><b>ỌGBÓMỌṢÓ</b></p> <p>19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept.</p> <p>Further in-depth interview and participant observation</p> <p>19th Sept 2016, interview, Mr Odù (anonymised), the secretary of the Sọun of Ọgbómọṣọ, Ajagungbade III and a top chief within the palace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 19th Sept 2016 evening, interview on political situation in Nigeria and party loyalty</li> <li>- 20th September 2016 morning, interview on Ejigbo Baptist High School, Ejigbo hijab crisis</li> <li>- 20th September 2016, afternoon: Radio Nigeria/the Premier FM Radio, 93.5FM, Ibadan, ỌYÓ STATE</li> <li>- 20th September 2016, afternoon: A visit to a Muslim professor who had information about the Christian student provocation at the University of Ibadan mosque.</li> <li>- 22<sup>nd</sup> September: Compilation of findings</li> <li>- 23<sup>rd</sup> Preparation to return to the UK</li> </ul>

**Colour codes**

Exploring peaceful community (PC)	
Exploring conflict transformation (CT)	

**OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION EXAMINED IN EACH SITE/CITY/LOCATION**

1. Religious and community leaders
2. Music type

**OTHER COMMENTS**

1. I visited two Radio stations and had a good quality time with their senior members of staff.
2. At the end of my fieldwork late September 2016, I ‘tentatively’ settled with the following possible theory: Given that all other factors are in place, religious consciousness, cultural values, effective conversation, regular communication, small group or community leaders/representative meetings and alternative dispute resolutions are very crucial to maintaining peaceful relations among the Yorùbá people of southwest Nigeria. Copy right Akintayo S. Olayinka, September 2016, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, OXFORD & Middlesex University, LONDON

# Appendix H: Risk Assessment Sheet

Appendix H (i)

## INDEPENDENT FIELD/LOCATION WORK RISK ASSESSMENT FRA1

*This proforma is applicable to, and must be completed in advance for, the following fieldwork situations:*

1. All fieldwork undertaken independently by individual students, either in the UK or overseas, including in connection with proposition module or dissertations. Supervisor to complete with student(s).
2. All fieldwork undertaken by postgraduate students. Supervisors to complete with student(s).
3. Fieldwork undertaken by research students. Student to complete with supervisor.
4. Fieldwork/visits by research staff. Researcher to complete with Research Centre Head.

### FIELDWORK DETAILS

Name: Akintayo S. O. OLAYINKA	Student No M00516480 Research Centre (staff only) .....
Supervisor Dr Zoe Marriage	Degree course: MPhil/PhD

Telephone numbers and name of next of kin who may be contacted in the event of an accident	NEXT OF KIN Name: Mrs. Morayo O. OLAYINKA Phone: +447960216669
Physical or psychological limitations to carrying out the proposed fieldwork	Nil .....
Any health problems (full details) Which may be relevant to proposed fieldwork activity in case of emergencies.	Nil .....
Locality (Country and Region)	Southwest Nigeria (Yorubaland) .....
Travel Arrangements	Flight from Leeds/Bradford Airport to Lagos Nigeria arranged. Local transport within Nigeria also arranged. ....
NB: Comprehensive travel and health insurance must always be obtained for independent overseas fieldwork.	Researcher, while in Nigeria is registered with the Bowen University Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, Nigeria. ....
Dates of Travel and Fieldwork	Fri 26 Aug 2016 - Sat 24 Sep 2016

PLEASE READ THE INFORMATION OVERLEAF VERY CAREFULLY

**Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment**

PLEASE READ VERY CAREFULLY

List the localities to be visited or specify routes to be followed (Col. 1). Give the approximate date (month / year) of your last visit, or enter 'NOT VISITED' (Col 2). For each locality, enter the potential hazards that may be identified beyond those accepted in everyday life. Add details giving cause for concern (Col. 3).

**Examples of Potential Hazards :**

- Adverse weather: exposure (heat, sunburn, lightning, wind, hypothermia)
- Terrain: rugged, unstable, fall, slip, trip, debris, and remoteness. Traffic: pollution.
- Demolition/building sites, assault, getting lost, animals, disease.
- Working on/near water: drowning, swept away, disease (wells disease, hepatitis, malaria, etc), parasites', flooding, tides and range.
- Lone working: difficult to summon help, alone or in isolation, lone interviews.
- Dealing with the public: personal attack, causing offence/intrusion, misinterpreted, political, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic differences/problems. Known or suspected criminal offenders.
- Safety Standards (other work organisations, transport, hotels, etc), working at night, areas of high crime.
- Ill health: personal considerations or vulnerabilities, pre-determined medical conditions (asthma, allergies, fitting) general fitness, disabilities, persons suited to task.
- Articles and equipment: inappropriate type and/or use, failure of equipment, insufficient training for use and repair, injury.
- Substances (chemicals, plants, bio- hazards, waste): ill health - poisoning, infection, irritation, burns, cuts, eye-damage.
- Manual handling: lifting, carrying, moving large or heavy items, physical unsuitability for task

If no hazard can be identified beyond those of everyday life, enter 'NONE'.

Give brief details of fieldwork activity:

Focus group meetings, interviews and personal observation (in the place of participatory observation)

1. LOCALITY/ROUTE	2. LAST VISIT	3. POTENTIAL HAZARDS
1. Ogbomoso town, Nigeria	24/09/2016	No hazards envisaged.
2. Sepeteri town, Nigeria		There could be a possibility of conflicts erupting as the people have a history of violent conflicts.
3. Ilorin town, Nigeria		Going by the location of the Focus group meeting, within the University of Ilorin campus in Ilorin, involving some teaching and non-teaching staff, there are no reasons to envisage hazards at the meeting.
4. Ejigbo town, Osun State, Nigeria		There is a possibility of conflicts erupting as the people have a history of religious related violence.
5. Ibadan, Nigeria		Interviews shall be conducted at a Media Station in Ibadan. There are no reasons to envisage any hazards.
6. Iwo town, Nigeria		There is a possibility of conflicts erupting in Iwo town because of recent hijab crises. However, this being an interview, there may not be any hazard at the location of the interview.
7. Ila-Orangun, Nigeria		Interviews shall be conducted in Ila-Orangun. There are no reasons to envisage any hazards.

*The University Fieldwork code of Practice booklet provides practical advice that should be followed in planning and conducting fieldwork.*

**Risk Minimisation/Control Measures**

**PLEASE READ VERY CAREFULLY**

For each hazard identified (Col 3), list the precautions/control measures in place or that will be taken (Col 4) to "reduce the risk to acceptable levels", and the safety equipment (Col 6) that will be employed.

Assuming the safety precautions/control methods that will be adopted (Col. 4), categorise the fieldwork risk for each location/route as negligible, low, moderate or high (Col. 5).

**Risk increases with both the increasing likelihood of an accident and the increasing severity of the consequences of an accident.**

**An acceptable level of risk is:** a risk which can be safely controlled by person taking part in the activity using the precautions and control measures noted including the necessary instructions, information and training relevant to that risk. The resultant risk should not be significantly higher than that encountered in everyday life.

**Examples of control measures/precautions:**

Providing adequate training, information & instructions on fieldwork tasks and the safe and correct use of any equipment, substances and personal protective equipment. Inspection and safety check of any equipment prior to use. Assessing individuals fitness and suitability to environment and tasks involved. Appropriate clothing, environmental information consulted and advice followed (weather conditions, tide times etc.). Seek advice on harmful plants, animals & substances that may be encountered, including information and instruction on safe procedures for handling hazardous substances. First aid provisions, inoculations, individual medical requirements, logging of location, route and expected return times of lone workers. Establish emergency procedures (means of raising an alarm, back up arrangements). Working with colleagues (pairs). **Lone working is not permitted where the risk of physical or verbal violence is a realistic possibility.** Training in interview techniques and avoiding /defusing conflict, following advice from local organisations, wearing of clothing unlikely to cause offence or unwanted attention. Interviews in neutral locations. Checks on Health and Safety standards & welfare facilities of travel, accommodation and outside organisations. Seek information on social/cultural/political status of fieldwork area.

**Examples of Safety Equipment:** Hardhats, goggles, gloves, harness, waders, whistles, boots, mobile phone, ear protectors, bright fluorescent clothing (for roadside work), dust mask, etc.

If a proposed locality has not been visited previously, give your authority for the risk assessment stated or indicate that your visit will be preceded by a thorough risk assessment.

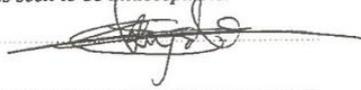
4. PRECAUTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	5. RISK ASSESSMENT	6. EQUIPMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The people (Christians and Muslims) get along peacefully.</li> <li>2. Focus group meetings and interviews in Sepeteri shall be held for Christians and Muslims bearing in mind that they had experienced conflict before.</li> <li>3. The identity of participants at the Ilorin focus group meeting should be held in confidence if required or informed consent obtained before the program starts.</li> <li>4. Individual interview shall be held with any resource person either Christian or Muslim in Ejigbo.</li> <li>5. Confidentiality shall be observed in general, while some may wish their pictures or names appear in a 'peace research', I shall keep their confidentiality and use discretion in the selection of pictures to make public in the study.</li> <li>6. An interview with Christian and Muslim clerics may or may not require any precautions but each situation shall be examined from the context of whether they have witnessed conflict before and able to settle it.</li> <li>7. No special precautions were required for the interviews to be conducted in Ila-Orangun as they do not have a history of Christian – Muslim conflicts.</li> </ol>	<p>I grew up within the Yorubaland and shall assess the situation in collaboration with my local contacts in each site of the focus groups and interviews.</p>	<p>No equipment is required other than the cameras, mobile phone, my laptop, and writing materials.</p> <p>Confidentiality very important</p>

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**DECLARATION:** The undersigned have assessed the activity and the associated risks and declare that there is no significant risk or that the risk will be controlled by the method(s) listed above/over. Those participating in the work have read the assessment and will put in place precautions/control measures identified.

**NB:** Risk should be constantly reassessed during the fieldwork period and additional precautions taken or fieldwork discontinued if the risk is seen to be unacceptable.

Signature of Fieldworker  
(Student/Staff)



Date 01/07/2016

Signature of Student Supervisor

Date

**APPROVAL: (ONE ONLY)**

Signature of  
Curriculum Leader  
(undergraduate students only)

Date

Signature of Research Degree  
Co-ordinator or  
Masters Course Leader or  
Taught Masters Curriculum  
Leader

Date

Signature of Research Centre  
Head (for staff fieldworkers)

Date

**FIELDWORK CHECK LIST**

1. Ensure that all members of the field party possess the following attributes (where relevant) at a level appropriate to the proposed activity and likely field conditions:

- Safety knowledge and training?
- Awareness of cultural, social and political differences?
- Physical and psychological fitness and disease immunity, protection and awareness?
- Personal clothing and safety equipment?
- Suitability of fieldworkers to proposed tasks?

2. Have all the necessary arrangements been made and information/instruction gained, and have the relevant authorities been consulted or informed with regard to:

- Visa, permits?
- Legal access to sites and/or persons?
- Political or military sensitivity of the proposed topic, its method or location?
- Weather conditions, tide times and ranges?
- Vaccinations and other health precautions?
- Civil unrest and terrorism?
- Arrival times after journeys?
- Safety equipment and protective clothing?
- Financial and insurance implications?
- Crime risk?
- Health insurance arrangements?
- Emergency procedures?
- Transport use?
- Travel and accommodation arrangements?

**Important information for retaining evidence of completed risk assessments:** Once the risk assessment is completed and approval gained the supervisor should retain this form and issue a copy of it to the fieldworker participating on the field course/work. In addition the approver must keep a copy of this risk assessment in an appropriate Health and Safety file.



Middlesex University Data Protection Checklist for Researchers [Appendix H (ii)]

Student No M00516480

REC no: \_\_\_\_\_

Project title: Peace Research in Non-Violence Contexts: A Case Study of Southwest Nigerian Yoruba	
PI/Supervisor: Dr Zoe Marriage	Date: 01/07/2016

There are 8 Data Protection Principles, which states that information must be:

1. Fairly and lawfully processed;
2. Processed for specified and lawful purposes;
3. Adequate, relevant and not excessive;
4. Accurate and kept up date where necessary;
5. Not kept for longer than is necessary;
6. Processed in accordance with individuals' rights under the DPA;
7. Kept secure;
8. Not transferred to countries without adequate protection.

Section 33 of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) provides exemption to some of the eight data protection principles for processing personal data for 'research purposes' including statistical or historical purposes. These are noted in the checklist below.

For guidance on the Data Protection Act for Social Research please see the MRS/SRA Data Protection Act 1998: Guidelines for Social Research, April 2013 which can be accessed using the following link: <http://www.mrs.org.uk/pdf/2013-04-23%20MRS%20SRA%20-%20DP%20Guidelines%20updated.pdf>

Guidance on large data sets can be found at the Information Commissioner's Office website – Big Data and Data Protection July 2014. [http://ico.org.uk/news/latest\\_news/2014/~media/documents/library/Data\\_Protection/Practical\\_application/big-data-and-data-protection.pdf](http://ico.org.uk/news/latest_news/2014/~media/documents/library/Data_Protection/Practical_application/big-data-and-data-protection.pdf)

You may also find JISC Legal Information on Data Protection and Research Data Questions and Answers, Aug 2014 helpful. <http://www.lisclegal.ac.uk/ManageContent/ViewDetail/ID/3648/Data-Protection-and-Research-Data-Questions-and-Answers-21-August-2014.aspx>

Note: Personal data which is anonymised, permanently, is exempt from compliance with the DPA and registration process. See endnotes for further details.

Conditions which must be met for a research exemption to apply under section 33 of the DPA 1998	Please indicate	
	Agree	
1. The information is being used exclusively for research purposes?	Agree	
2. The information is not being used to support measures or decisions relating to any identifiable living individuals?	Agree	
3. The data <sup>a</sup> is not being used in a way that will cause or is likely to cause, substantial damage or substantial distress to any individuals or very small groups?  <i>If you 'Disagree' please provide details why an adverse effect is justified:</i>	Agree	
4. The results of the research, or any resulting statistics, will not be made available in a form that identify individuals?  <i>If you 'Disagree' please provide details why identification is intended:</i>  There are occasions when some work places or offices are mentioned in my study (like the king's palace and a radio station) and the top officials interviewed anonymized; yet may be traceable being top officials in those offices. In such a situation, the information disclosed (data) are not really confidential but informative as the interviewees were pleased that their video, pictures and real names be taken when they understood the	Agree	Further explanation/exceptions



Middlesex University Data Protection Checklist for Researchers [Appendix H (ii)]

Student No M00516480

REC no: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>goal of the research being uncovering what they do to keep their community at peace and were ready to make the information available. The topic appears more friendly to cause distresses for the participants, yet I have shall shorten or completely anonymised the names in this fieldwork. I acctually used alphanumeric to represent my survey participants.</p>		
<p>If you 'Agree' to all of the above conditions then the use of personal data is exempt from the Second Principle and the Fifth Principle, but you must comply with First, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Principles of the DPA. If a research exemption does not apply then you must ALSO comply with the Second and Fifth Principles of the DPA</p>		
<p>First Principle: Fairly and lawfully processed</p>		
<p>5. Will you have appropriate Informed consent<sup>iii</sup> secured from participants for the personal data<sup>v</sup> that you will be analysing? i.e., Inform participants of  a) What you will do with the data?  b) Who will hold the data? (Usually MU, unless a third party is involved)  c) Who will have access to the data or receive copies of it?  (e.g., for secondary data sets, are you sure that appropriate consent was secured from participants when the data was collected?) If 'no' please provide details and any further actions to be taken:</p>	Yes	
<p>6. If you plan to analyse sensitive personal data<sup>v</sup>, have you obtained data subjects<sup>iii</sup> explicit informed consent<sup>iii</sup> (as opposed to implied consent<sup>iii</sup>)? If 'no' please provide details:</p>	Yes	
<p>7. If you do not have the data subjects' explicit consent to process their data, are you satisfied that it is in the best interests of the data subject to collect and retain the sensitive data? Please provide details:   <b>An unidentified girl in hijab with other co-sympathizers within the premises and at the entrance of a church in the 'peaceful' Ogbomoso.</b></p>	Yes	
<p>8. If you are processing<sup>v</sup> personal data about younger individuals or those with reduced capacity, have you put a process in place to obtain consent from parents, guardians or legal representatives, if appropriate? Please provide details:</p>		N/A
<p>9. Will you have a process for managing withdrawal of consent?  If 'no' please provide details:   The participants either have my email, telephone number and/or the research assistants' contacts and were duly informed of how they can withdraw their consent if they later changed their mind.</p>	yes	
<p>10. Will it be necessary or desirable to work with external organisations e.g., charities, research organisations etc. acting as a third party i.e., directly providing a service for us or on our behalf that involves them accessing, collecting or otherwise processing personal data the third party will become a data processor under the DPA?   If 'yes' then you will be using a third party as a data processor you must take advice from the Middlesex University Data Protection Officer about the planned contractual arrangements and security measures.</p>		N/A
<p>11. If you hold or control personal data, will you register and/or inform the Middlesex University Data Protection Officer when:  i) A new dataset has been established,</p>		N/A



Middlesex University Data Protection Checklist for Researchers [Appendix H (ii)]

Student No M00516480

REC no:

ii) The purpose for which personal data stored in a dataset has changed, iii) A networked dataset of personal data is being used, iv) Extracting personal data from a networked dataset to create a new dataset.			
<b>Second Principle: Processed for limited purposes</b>			
Will personal data be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and not further processed in any manner incompatible with the purpose(s)? (Research data subjects should be informed of any new data processing purposes, the identity of the Data Controller <sup>2</sup> and any disclosures that may be made.)  <b>Research Exemption Note</b> (section 33(2)): Personal data can be processed for research purposes other than for which they were originally obtained if that processing does not lead to decisions being made about an individual and is not likely to cause substantial damage or distress to an individual. That data may also be held indefinitely (Section 33(3)).	Yes		
<b>Third Principle: Adequate, relevant and not excessive</b>			
12. Will you only collect data that is <b>necessary</b> for the research? <i>If 'no' please provide details and any further actions to be taken:</i>	Yes		
<b>Fourth Principle: Accurate and where necessary, kept up to date</b>			
13. Will you take reasonable measures to ensure that the information is <b>accurate, kept up-to-date</b> and corrected if required? <i>If 'no' please provide details:</i>	Yes		
<b>Fifth Principle: Not kept for longer than is necessary</b>			
14. Will you check how long data legally must be kept and routinely destroy data that is past its retention date and archive data that needs to be kept?  <b>Research Exemption Note</b> (section 33(3)): Personal data processed for research purposes can be kept indefinitely.	Yes		
<b>Sixth Principle: Processed in accordance with individuals' rights under the DPA<sup>21</sup></b>			
15. If you are intending to publish information, which could identify individuals, have you made them aware of this when gaining their informed consent? <i>If 'no' please provide details:</i>  Yes, the real names are in the Middlesex University Microsoft Office 365 clouds and the Survey Monkey app but anonymized in the published work.	Yes		
16. Will you allow access to all personal data held about a data subject if an individual makes this request?  <b>Research Exemption Note</b> (section 33(4)): Where the results of processing personal data for research purposes do not identify a data subject, that data subject does not have a right of access to that data.  The Unpublished data has the subjects' names. The published will not have their names.			N/A
17. Will you ensure that all researchers who have access to personal data understand that it must not be provided to any unauthorised person or third party (e.g. family members etc.) unless consent has been given?			N/A
<b>Seventh Principle: Kept secure</b>			



Middlesex University Data Protection Checklist for Researchers [Appendix H (ii)]

Student No M00516480

REC no:

18. Will you ensure that personal data will be stored in locked cabinets, cupboards, drawers etc. (regardless of whether data is on paper, audio visual recordings, CDs, USBs, etc.)?	Yes		
19. Will you ensure that if personal data is to be stored electronically it will only be kept on encrypted devices?	Yes		
20. Will you ensure that individuals who have access to the personal data are aware that email is not a secure method of communication and should not be used for transferring the data?	Yes		
21. Will you ensure that disposal of personal data will be via confidential waste services or in the case of electronic media and hardware should be destroyed in line with Middlesex University guidelines and procedures?	Yes		
Eighth Principle: Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection			
22. Will you ensure that personal data is not transferred outside the EEA unless one of the following applies?	Yes		
i. The country you are transferring the data to has been approved as providing adequate protection			
ii. You have obtained explicit informed consent from the individual(s)			
iii. You have a contract in place with the recipient of the data, which states the appropriate data protection requirements.			
iv. You have completely anonymised the data.			

Any concerns in relation to compliance with the DPA should be discussed with the Middlesex University Data Protection Officer.

<sup>i</sup> **Anonymous data** is prepared from personal information but from which, an individual cannot be identified by the person holding the data. Anonymisation is a permanent process. Personal data must be treated so that it cannot be processed in such a way as to link the data to a specific individual (e.g., using an identifier). Coded data is not anonymised and therefore not exempt from compliance or registration.

<sup>ii</sup> **Data** covers information that is held on computer, or to be held on computer to be processed. Data is also information recorded on paper if you intend to put it on computer.

<sup>iii</sup> **Informed consent** means providing participants with a clear explanation of the research project in order for them to give informed consent regarding the use of their data. Individuals should be informed that their involvement is voluntary and that they have the right to refuse or withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

**Informed** refers to the following information being provided to the data subject/participant:

- i) Who you are, the organisation you work for and who else is involved in the research project or using the data.
- ii) What data will be collected and how.
- iii) Who will hold the data, control access to the data and how it will be stored and kept safe and whether it will be transferred to a third party.
- iv) How the data will be used.
- v) How long it will be kept and what will happen to it at the end of the project.
- vi) Risks related to any aspects of the research project and data, benefits of the research project and any alternatives.

<sup>iv</sup> **Personal data** (sometimes referred to as personal information) means data which relate to a living individual who can be identified from those data whether in personal or family life, business or profession, or from those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of, the data controller. The data is of biographical significance to the individual and impacts an individual in a personal, family, business or professional capacity. It includes any expression of opinion about the individual and/or statements of fact.

<sup>v</sup> **Sensitive personal data** means personal data consisting of information about the **data subjects'**

1. Racial or ethnic origin,
2. Political opinions,
3. Religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,



Middlesex University Data Protection Checklist for Researchers [Appendix H (ii)]

Student No M00516480

REC no: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Trade union membership
5. Physical or mental health or condition,
6. Sexual life,
7. Criminal matters

Also personal financial details are vulnerable to identity fraud and should be handled confidentially and securely although not defined as sensitive under the Act.

<sup>vi</sup> **Data subject** is a living individual to whom the personal data relates. If an individual has died or their details have been anonymised then their data does not fall within the Act. Personal data relating to deceased individuals may still be owed a duty of confidentiality.

<sup>vii</sup> **Explicit informed consent** is where an individual actively opts to participate.

<sup>viii</sup> **Implied consent** is where an individual must inform the researcher that they wish to opt out.

<sup>ix</sup> **Processing** of personal information includes collecting, using, storing, destroying and disclosing information.

<sup>x</sup> **Data controller** is the person who either alone or jointly on in common with other persons determines the purposes for which, and the manner in which, any personal data are or are to be, processed. The fact that an individual or institution holds or processes personal data does not make them a Data Controller if they do not determine the purpose and manner of that holding or processing. (This is probably one of the most widely misunderstood definitions of the Act.) In most cases the Data Controller will be Middlesex University, however further guidance and clarification can be sought from the Middlesex University Data Protection Officer.

<sup>xi</sup> **Data subject rights** include rights to access, for accuracy, to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress, to prevent direct marketing, to prevent automated decision making, to seek compensation and for no third party access. Access means an individual can make a subject access request for all copies of all personal data held about them and ask to whom it has been disclosed. An individual potentially has access to personal comments written about them. It is an offence to deliberately edit or destroy data once a subject access request has been received. Third parties do not generally have access to subject data unless an exemption applies or there is overriding public interest. There may be limited third party access to ordinary personal data relating to a business or professional capacity in the public interest through the Freedom of Information Act.

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MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

UNIVERSITY ETHICS COMMITTEE

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Middlesex University is a charitable body dedicated to teaching and research for the public good. It is committed to safeguarding the academic freedom of its staff and students to research, study, and publish, and it shall not permit the independence or integrity of its teaching or research to be compromised. This document should be read in conjunction with the *Middlesex University Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures* and the *Middlesex University Definition of Research*. The Middlesex University Research Ethics Review Framework applies to all staff, those in honorary positions and students and their supervisors engaged in research, (regardless of whether it is externally funded or not), and includes students at collaborative partner institutions registered as Middlesex University students.

### Procedures for ensuring consideration of ethical issues in research

Middlesex University is committed to maintaining high standards of ethics in research. This means abiding by the principles of ethical research (see *Section 2 Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures*) and appropriate ethical procedures (see *Section 3 Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures*). To this end, the following guidelines and procedures are designed to support researchers at all levels in conducting research according to relevant ethical, legal and professional obligations and standards, in whatever context and are therefore also drawn from and consistent with the British Educational Research Association second revision (2011) of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011)* <https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2011>, the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012)* <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/rsrch/infrastruct/concordat/> and The Association of Research Ethics Committees document – A Framework of Policies and Procedures for University Research Ethics Committees (2013) <http://s3.spandefish.com/s/21217/documents/independent-membership/12-11-13-framework-complete.pdf>. According to this document there is common agreement that the basic principles of ethical research are:

- **Autonomy.** The participant must normally be as aware as possible of what the research is for and be free to take part in it without coercion or penalty for not taking part, and also free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without a threat of any adverse effect.
- **Beneficence.** The research must be worthwhile in itself and have beneficial effects that outweigh any risks; it follows that the methodology must be sound so that best results will be yielded.
- **Non-maleficence.** Any possible harm must be avoided or at least mitigated by robust precautions.
- **Confidentiality.** Personal data must remain unknown to all but the research team (unless the participant agrees otherwise or in cases where there is an overriding public interest, or where participants wish their voices to be heard and identified).
- **Integrity.** The researcher must be open about any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and conduct their research in a way that meets recognised standards of research integrity.

Research ethics review processes therefore provide additional safeguards for staff, students and participants, and can positively contribute to further understanding of ethical issues, research methods and processes for students and staff. It should also be noted that research conducted without appropriate research ethics review and in some cases, approval, is not covered by the University's insurance. This means that should a participant make a claim in relation to the research, the staff or student could be personally liable.

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Evidence of research ethics review, and in some cases, approval is generally required for research funding, e.g., by research councils such as the ESRC (see ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (FRE) 2012 <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/research-ethics.aspx>) and sometimes for the publication of research results. However, duplication of full ethics review should be avoided.

#### Committee structure for research ethics review and approval at MU

The University Ethics Committee (UEC) is concerned with maintaining and developing the University's ethics policy framework in line with best practice and appropriate national and international standards and guidelines particularly those relating to research investigations involving human participants and animal subjects (see *MU Statement on the Use of Animals in Research, Teaching and Practice*) carried out in the University or under the auspices of the University, by its schools, staff, students and partners.

The UEC operates a framework of delegated authority to Research Ethics Committees (RECs) and Research Ethics Sub-Committees (RESCs). This structure reflects the diversity of academic disciplines within the University and recognises the different approaches and the distinct requirements of activities in different subjects, while ensuring appropriate academic ethical oversight in a flexible and responsive manner adhering to relevant professional body requirements and/or codes of conduct.

All Research Ethics Committees (RECs) report to the University Ethics Committee (UEC), which in turn reports to the Assurance Committee which is a sub-committee of Academic Board (see Appendix 1 for *Diagram of University Ethics Committee Structure*) and must follow the *Middlesex University Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures* for identifying and dealing with potential conflicts of interests.

#### Research Ethics Committees' (RECs and RESCs) responsibilities

The UEC together with RECs/RESCs aim to maintain ethical standards of practice in research, to protect participants in research and researchers from harm, to preserve the participants' rights, to take account of legitimate interests of other individuals, bodies and communities associated with the research and to provide reassurance to the public and to outside bodies that these are being done. It is also the aim of the committee to facilitate, not hinder, valuable research, and to protect research workers from unjustified criticism.

Research Ethics Committees (RECs) and Research Ethics Sub-Committees (RESCs) are responsible for reviewing ethical issues in relation to research proposals to ensure that key principles of ethical research are addressed. RECs and RESCs are expected to act independently, free from bias and undue influence. Ideally, RECs and RESCs should be multidisciplinary to reflect the range of different perspectives, philosophical and methodical, presented in individual research proposals and include member(s) independent of the institution. RECs and RESCs are encouraged to include members from other RECs/RESCs to facilitate discussion between different ethics committees and to share good practice.

RECs/RESCs are responsible for specifying arrangements for processing of ethics applications, for proportionate or expedited (fast-track) review of applications, for reporting decisions and/or further requirements, processing requests for extensions, modifications, progress review reports and referring appeal cases and/or complaints to the UEC if not resolved by the REC.

RECs/RESCs should publish a projected timetable on the time needed to consider a proposal (including the maximum number of working days to complete the review process given a complete submission from the researcher) and provide feedback on what needs to be done to meet necessary ethical standards and achieve ethics approval if refused. The decisions of RECs/RESCs have to be transparent and are accountable to the UEC.

RECs/RESCs are also responsible for providing an approval letter signed by the Chair or designated person. Approved applications should not be backdated. Ethics approval should be valid for the duration of the research project as specified on the application form and RECs/RESCs may need to include processes that allow for monitoring/progress reports to be submitted on an annual basis.

It is recommended that the constitution of a REC/RESC should consider the following principles of membership:

- Be multidisciplinary

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- Include both men and women
- Include at least one appropriately trained external member with no affiliation to the department, university or research institution;
- Have members with a broad experience of and expertise in the areas of research regularly reviewed by the REC/RESC, and who have the confidence and esteem of the research community;
- Include at least one member who is knowledgeable in ethics;
- Include individuals who reflect the ethnic diversity of the local community;
- Have members who represent a broad range of methodological expertise;
- Be constituted so that conflicts of interest are avoided.

The remit, responsibilities and composition of RECs/RESCs, as defined above, complies with the ERSC FER (2012) and follows the model of standard operating procedures as recommended by the Association of Research Ethics Committees document – A Framework of Policies and Procedures for University Research Ethics Committees (2013)  
<http://s3.amazonaws.com/s21217/documents/independent-membership/12-11-13-framework-complete.pdf>.

Details of the *Research Ethics Committee Terms of Reference* (including frequency of meetings, membership and chair of the committees) can be found in Appendix 2.

Details of the *Research Ethics Sub-Committee Terms of Reference* (including frequency of meetings, membership and chair of the committees) can be found in Appendix 3.

RECs/RESCs are responsible for determining appropriate business procedures and managing the documentation for their meetings with administrative support provided by Academic Registry.

### **Responsibilities of principal investigators, supervisors and all researchers**

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator, supervisor and all researchers to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to ethical and compliance issues pertaining to their research activities; to comply with the *Middlesex University Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures*; to seek advice, ethics review and/or approval of their research and to conduct and manage their research activity in accordance with their professional/statutory/regulatory body Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics/Research Governance Framework. Researchers who fail to refer relevant projects for ethics review and/or deliberately act against the requirements of their REC/RESC or UEC may be liable to investigation for misconduct in research (see *Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures, section Definitions of Research Misconduct*).

### **Responsibilities of supervisors**

Students undertaking research must be supervised by an academic member of staff, acting as the project supervisor. For joint provision, the supervisor may be a member of staff of the partner institution. If a member of staff is also a student conducting research, then he/she must have an appropriate academic member of staff as his/her supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring compliance with the required ethics review and approval procedures.

### **Research requiring ethical review and approval**

All proposed research activity\* (defined as any form of disciplined inquiry that aims to contribute to a body of knowledge) to be undertaken by staff or students, which requires data collection involving human participants and/or personal data must be reviewed prior to research commencing. (\*The following activities are not considered research: routine audit, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal education requirements, literary or artistic criticism.)

According to the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (2012) "while data collected and stored as a record at an individual level is considered 'human data', material already in the public domain is not. For example, published biographies, newspaper accounts of an individual's activities and published minutes of a meeting would not be considered 'personal data' or sensitive personal data requiring ethics review, nor would interviews broadcast on radio or television or online, and diaries or letters in the public domain.

Information provided in forums or spaces on the internet and web that are intentionally public would be valid to consider 'in the public domain', but the public nature of any communication or information

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on the Internet should always be critically examined, and the identity of individuals protected unless it is critical to the research, such as in statements by public officials.

Ethics review may not be required for anonymised records and data sets that exist in the public domain. This includes, for example, datasets available through the Office for National Statistics or the UK Data Archive where appropriate permissions have already been obtained and where it is not possible to identify individuals from the information provided. Specific regulations relate to the use of administrative data and secure data (see website for details in appendix). Other data providers are likely to specify their own restrictions on the access to and use of their data. These must be complied with. There may be some circumstances where ethics issues arise with the use of secondary data." See ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (2012) for further guidance.

Research ethics review and/or approval is achieved by completion of the Middlesex University Research Ethics Review Form A (or equivalent) submitted to the relevant Research Ethics Committee, or for research in Psychology and Natural Sciences (e.g., for Human Tissue Act Compliance) specific ethical approval forms must be completed and submitted to those Research Ethics Committees.

#### Documentation required for submission to RECs/RESCs

1. Research Ethics Review Form A\* detailing research aims, design and ethical issues arising from the research, rationale and actions to be taken to mitigate concerns
2. Participant Information sheet (where applicable)
3. Informed consent form (where applicable)
4. Details of materials for data collection e.g., copy of questionnaire, interview guide
5. Debriefing sheet (where applicable)
6. Data Protection Checklist for Researchers (where applicable)
7. Risk Assessment (required if research is to be conducted away from Middlesex University property (or premises of an approved partner institution), otherwise leave this blank. Institutions/locations listed for data collection must match original letters of acceptance)

\*or specific research ethics review forms for research in Psychology and Natural Sciences (e.g., for Human Tissue Act Compliance)

#### Responsibilities of researchers following review/approval

Compliance with ethics requirements is expected and the responsibility of the researcher and supervisor where applicable. Following review/approval the researcher (staff or student supported by their supervisor) must

- Report (in writing) any adverse effects or potential risks (serious or non-serious) to participants, the researcher(s) or others to the relevant REC/RESC and include details of mitigating actions or amendments to the study.
- Seek research ethics re-approval for any proposed changes in previously approved research applications or apply for an extension to current ethics approval to the committee through completion and submission of the Amendment to Ethical Approval Form D. The changes may not be implemented without prior review and approval, except where necessary e.g., to immediately avoid harm.
- If the research is on-going and would benefit from extending to beyond the end date specified, the researcher must complete and submit the Extension to Ethical Approval Form E.

#### Research ethics review/approval appeals

If staff or students are dissatisfied with the decision made by the Research Ethics Committee he/she should discuss this with the Chair of the committee. If the matter is not resolved an appeal against the decision of the Research Ethics Committee may be made to the University Ethics Committee.

#### Failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations

According to the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012)* research misconduct is characterised as behaviour or actions that fall short of the standards of ethics, research and scholarship required to ensure that the integrity of research is upheld. See *MU Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures for Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct*.

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#### **Research ethics enquiries and complaints**

Enquiries and complaints regarding a research project should be addressed to the relevant Chair of the REC/RESC. If the matter is not resolved it should be referred to the University Ethics Committee. It may then be referred to the DVC (Academic).

#### **Research ethics committee reports and identification of training needs**

Annual reports from Research Ethics Committees and signed by the Deans of School should be submitted to the University Ethics Committee. The purpose of the report is to act a self-monitoring and reflection exercise to ensure any issues are identified at the local level and addressed immediately, and as a means to formally identify specific training needs, as well as to document the annual amount of ethical approvals submissions and outcomes, new or revised practices to be responsive to additional internal or external professional, legal or ethical obligations and standards. Reports from collaborative partners with joint provision should also be submitted to their aligned REC and reflected in the REC report.

#### **Institutional monitoring**

The University Ethics Committee reports to the Assurance Committee (a sub-committee of Academic Board). Annual reports from the RECs/Deans of School and the University Ethics Committee, and any documents produced or work undertaken by the committee are submitted to the Assurance Committee for final approval.

#### **Ad hoc audits**

The audit process ensures that a random selection of research (approximately 10%), pertaining to each REC/RESC, is occasionally monitored. The process involves verifying that:

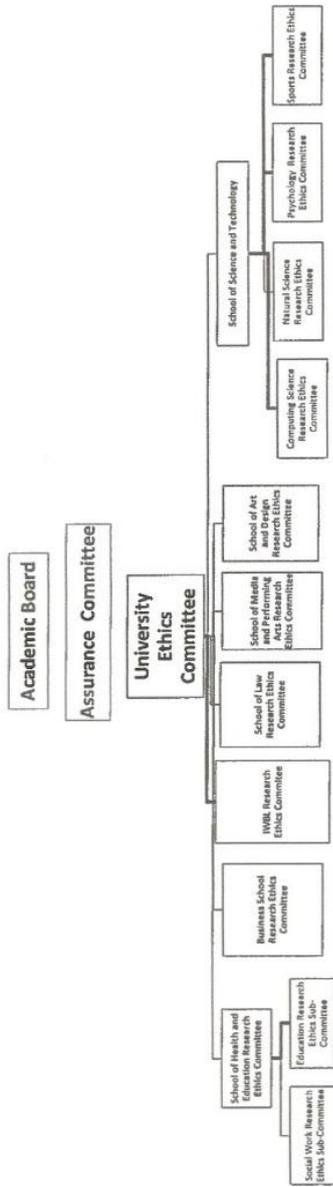
- i) Approved submissions are available and complete
- ii) Correct forms are being used for approval
- iii) Research is undertaken after approval is granted
- iv) Amendments and extensions for approval have been submitted timely and appropriately,
- v) Evidence of signed consent forms is available on request and otherwise appropriately filed.
- vi) Questions on data storing and data sharing may also be asked.

Where an ad hoc audit considers that a study is being conducted in a way which is not in accord with the conditions of its approval or in a way that does not protect the rights, dignity and welfare of research participants, the Chair of the relevant REC/RESC should meet with the researchers concerned with a view to resolving those difficulties. In an extreme situation the Chair of the REC/RESC may revoke ethics approval for the research and require that the research is suspended or discontinued. All relevant parties (e.g., funding bodies), Chair of the UEC etc. must be notified immediately and a provided with a report documenting the evidence and decision making process.

*This Research Ethics Review Framework was approved by the Assurance Committee July 2014. It is due for review in July 2019.*

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Appendix 1: Diagram of MU Research Ethics Committee Structure



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### Appendix 2: University Ethics Committee (UEC)

#### Terms of Reference

1. Maintain and develop the University's ethics policy framework in line with best practice and appropriate national and international standards and guidelines, making recommendations to the Academic Board as necessary about ethical guidelines to be adopted to cover specific areas of academic activity and professional practice through regular monitoring and reporting to the Assurance Committee
2. Monitor, review and make available the range of related policies, which impinge on ethical issues within the University and disseminate new and revised policies to staff and students.
3. Monitor, review and make available lists of relevant reference materials on ethics produced by professional bodies, funding councils and other national bodies, alongside documents pertaining to legal processes and the law, and disseminate new and revised materials to staff and students.
4. Provide guidance and advice to Schools and Services and individual members of staff, collaborative partners, visiting academics and honorary researchers on activities carried out in the name of Middlesex University that may have ethical implications e.g. arising from teaching, research and institutional practice, as specified in the University Code of Conduct: Principles and Procedures.
5. Monitor research ethical approval processes through the submission of annual Research Ethics Committee reports and outcomes of ad hoc audits to the University Ethics Committee.
6. Consider, approve, withhold or withdraw approval for research proposals and/or appeals referred by Research Ethics Committees.
7. Consider complaints of ethical misconduct referred by Research Ethics Committees and where necessary refer unresolved complaints to the DVC Academic
8. Make arrangements for training on ethical matters.
9. Refer matters pertaining to corporate social responsibility to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Committee
10. Formulate institutional responses to national and international developments relating to ethical issues, in conjunction with the CSR committee where appropriate.

#### Membership

- Member of the University Assurance Committee as Chair of the Committee.
- One representative of each School of the University (nominated by the Dean of each School).
- One representative of the Institute of Work Based Learning
- Data Protection Officer (ex-officio)
- The University's Equality and Diversity Manager (ex-officio)
- A member of staff from the University's Corporate Marketing Department
- Up to two representatives of Corporate Services (nominated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Director of Corporate Services)
- A representative of Middlesex University Students' Union (nominated by the MUSU President)
- Up to two co-opted members, as required, either internal or external (appointed by the committee)
- Secretary to the committee.

**Meetings:** The committee shall meet not less than twice a year

**Quoracy:** Quoracy for formal decisions to be set at 50% of membership.

### Appendix 3: Research Ethics Committees (REC) and Research Ethics Sub-Committees(RESC)

The functions of RECs and RESCs include the oversight of staff and student (UG and PG) research proposals and to implement and improve arrangements for ensuring good ethical standards e.g., through staff training and up-dating and within all levels of academic provision.

Research Ethics Sub-Committee allow subject/departmental level responsibility for ensuring staff and students give close attention to ethical issues in their proposals for and in the conduct of research activities carried out in the name of Middlesex University, whether externally or internally funded or unfunded. They operate on behalf of and report to the Research Ethics Committee within their School structure.

The key principles of RECs and RESCs include:

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- Maintaining robust procedures.
- Utilising the existing knowledge and experience of staff members appropriately.
- Improving arrangements for and attention to user involvement issues in research processes.
- Awareness of diversity and the promoting discussion, understanding and adoption of good practice of different approaches adopted by distinct subject areas where appropriate.
- Awareness of the distinct requirements in different areas e.g., clinical work, fieldwork, placements etc.
- Maintaining the independence and integrity of committee decisions and e.g., so that no member is subject to pressure from interested parties and decisions are overturned on appropriate grounds.
- To implement and improve arrangements for ensuring good ethical standards, there are a number of related needs including:
  - The need for continuing staff training and updating.
  - The need to build attention to ethical issues into core curricula.
- Research ethics committee arrangements may need to be responsive to the following conditions and constraints:
  - The expectations of funding bodies, key stakeholders and/or partner institutions.
  - The expectations of professional bodies.

#### Terms of Reference

1. Responsibility for ensuring staff and students give close attention to ethical issues in their proposals for and in the conduct of research activities carried out in the name of Middlesex University, whether externally or internally funded or unfunded.
2. Provide and/or request guidance and/or training for staff and students to ensure research is conducted safely and appropriately in accordance with the ethical principles as specified in the University Code of Conduct: Principles and Procedures and meet the requirements of the Law e.g., with regard to Data Protection.
3. Identify relevant codes of professional conduct relevant to the subjects and ensure that appropriate ethical dimensions are incorporated within undergraduate and postgraduate provision and ethical approval processes for staff and students and inform the UEC of any changes in the ethical codes of professional bodies in relevant discipline areas, in order that the University's procedures remain valid.
4. Liaise with School Executive and/or University Ethics Committee on ethical issues or REC in the case of RESCs.
5. Liaise with the School Research Degrees Committee on ethical issues, ensuring close attention is given to ethical issues at the registration and transfer stages of each research student's career.
6. Specify arrangements for submission of ethics applications, for proportionate or expedited review of applications, for reporting decisions and/or further requirements, processing requests for extensions, modifications, progress review reports and appeals process to the UEC (or REC in the case of RESCs) in a competent and timely manner.
7. Review, approve or withhold approval for research proposals submitted by staff and student researchers within and associated with the School. (This may be delegated to Research Ethics Sub-Committees.)
8. Ensure ethics review is independent, competent and timely and adopts a blind review process where possible.
9. Protect the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants.
10. Consider the legitimate interests of other individuals, bodies or communities associated with the research.
11. Consider the safety of the researcher(s).
12. Make informed judgements of the scientific merit of proposals, or check that such judgements have already been made.
13. Refer unresolved applications or complaints to the UEC or REC in the first instance for RESCs.
14. Self-monitor ethical approval procedures through the preparation of annual School Reports on Ethical Issues, including RESC reports where appropriate, for submission to the UEC.
15. Undertake ad hoc audits of research projects with ethics approval.
16. Disseminate and where appropriate, implement, the recommendations of the UEC and/or REC/RESCs.

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### Membership

- Chair – Deputy Dean or Nominee
- Members with special/relevant expertise
- A student representative
- An independent member or lay person and/or a representative from another RECs/RESCs

### Secretary

- Administrative member of staff from Academic Registry

### Frequency of meetings

- Minimum of twice per year, with arrangements for virtual meetings when needed