
BOUNDARY DISPUTES AND COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA: AN EXAMINATION OF MODAKEKE AND ILE-IFE COMMUNITIES IN OSUN STATE

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Abstract: *The factors that contribute to communal conflict in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities in Osun State, Nigeria, were investigated in this study using a descriptive research design. The study's population consisted of the people who live in these communities, and a sample size of one hundred respondents was purposefully chosen. Land disputes, unequal wealth distribution, political power struggles, socio-economic factors, and human rights exploitation are important factors contributing to communal conflict, according to the study, which also found that these conflicts have devastating consequences, such as loss of life, destruction of property, displacement, and economic instability. The data was collected using a self-designed questionnaire then subjected to simple percentage, pie chart, and bar chart analysis. The study came to the conclusion that fostering peace and stability requires tackling the underlying causes of inter-communal violence, such as land conflicts and unequal economic distribution. In order to avoid inter-communal violence, the report recommended that stakeholders and policymakers give priority to measures that address land disputes, advance economic equality, and fortify institutions. To lessen the effects of conflict and promote resilience, it was also suggested that efficient community conflict management techniques be created and put into practice.*

Keywords: *Communal conflict, Community, Ile-Ife, Modakeke, Nigeria*

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INTRODUCTION

African nations are currently facing unprecedented challenges to peace and balance, with Sub-Saharan countries like Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo characterised by insecurity, instability, corrupt political institutions, and poverty. The most significant conflicts of the twentieth century, such as World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Ethiopia/Somalia War, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War, serve as stark reminders of the impact of disputed borders on national and continental stability. It is concerning to note that the majority of these nations are vulnerable to continuing armed ethnic conflicts because they lack the political will to enforce prior peace agreements (Monty, 2003). Ineffective conflict management is also to blame for this phenomena. Notably, ethnic groups rather than states are the main source of conflict in these countries. Ethnic conflicts have the potential to spread quickly across borders like a contagion if they are not controlled. According to research, poverty and weak governments and institutions frequently serve as catalysts for conflicts in Africa (Irobi, 2005). As evidenced by contemporary patterns of violence and conflict, the desire for resource control has also fuelled civil unrest in Africa (Albert, 2005). According to Albert (2005), competition for resources causes or intensifies the majority of African conflicts, leading to stress connected to distribution. Competition for resources including land, minerals, and water has therefore resulted in conflicts, deaths, displacement, and refugee problems. In Nigeria, boundary disputes have grown to be a major source of intra- and inter-state conflicts, impeding national integration and economic growth (Angaye & Gwilliam, 2008). These disputes are frequently drawn out, with some spanning decades, like the India-China conflict, which has lasted for more than 60 years. According to Uzoma (2019), Nigeria, a sizable multiethnic nation, nevertheless struggles with sporadic ethnic violence and ethnic division. In Nigeria, ethnic disputes are resolved through a comprehensive process called conflict resolution. Committees and panels set up to look into disputes across communities frequently pinpoint the root problems and find solutions that work for both parties. Conflicts that are not handled well, however, have the potential to turn into crises that result in property damage, fatalities, and forced relocation. Nigeria's minority ethnic groups have historically rebelled against majority dominance as the country approached independence (Okonjo, 1974). The regionalisation policy, which put regional loyalty ahead of national interests, led to a number of territorial contests and disturbances, such as the Aguleri/Umuleri and Ife/Modakeke disputes. Additionally, some conflicts are prolonged because of the struggle for dominance between weaker groups, which is frequently fuelled by the indigene-settler dichotomy. Although Osun State is regarded as one of the more peaceful states in Nigeria, communal crises still occur there, frequently as a result of various societal problems. According to a study by Olajide, Ayuba, and Ayodeji (2019), many rural areas in Osun State have turned into hotspots for intra-community boundary disputes, some of which have escalated into violence, resulting in property destruction and fatalities. Despite the historical conflicts between the Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities in Osun State, there is a surprising lack of in-depth studies on this particular context; existing literature tends to focus on general trends rather than the unique dynamics of Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities in Osun State. Research on communal conflicts in Nigeria has identified key drivers, such as boundary disputes, economic factors, political tensions, and cultural differences. For example, seven significant violent clashes between the Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities were chronicled by Adejumo (2020). These battles took place between 1835-1849, 1882-1909, 1946-1949, 1981-1983, 1997-1998, and 2000-2003. Through an examination of the fundamental causes of communal conflicts in Modakeke and Ile-Ife communities, this study aims to close the current

knowledge gap. It specifically seeks to determine the primary cause of these disputes in Nigeria's Osun State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Community conflicts have become a common occurrence in Osun State, Nigeria, with devastating effects on the social, economic, and political fabric of the affected communities. In particular, the conflicts between the communities of Ile Ife and Modakeke have been unresolved, resulting in property destruction, displacement, and loss of life. Despite government and non-governmental organisations' efforts to address the conflicts, the root causes have not been addressed. Given their complexity, these conflicts appear to be influenced by a variety of causes, such as political, ethnic, and socioeconomic divides. Tensions may be caused by socioeconomic issues like poverty, unemployment, and competition for resources, as well as political factors such the exploitation of ethnic differences for political ends. Conflicts have also been found to be significantly influenced by historical grievances and ethnic differences. However, little is known about the precise dynamics of these elements and how they interact to fuel inter-communal strife in Osun State. Examining border disputes and inter-communal confrontations in the Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities of Osun state, Nigeria, is the goal of this study. This study looks into the causes of inter-communal disputes in an effort to help create practical methods for resolving disputes and fostering peace within the state. In the end, the study seeks to offer information that can guide policy initiatives meant to support sustainable development and peaceful coexistence in Osun State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What are the factors responsible for communal conflict in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities of Osun East senatorial district, Nigeria?
- ii. Which of the factors has the highest influence on Ile-Ife and Modakeke communal conflict?
- iii. To what extent has a communal conflict affect Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities, Osun state, Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

- i. identify the factors responsible for communal conflict in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities;
- ii. examine which of the factors has the highest influence on Ile-Ife and Modakeke communal conflict; and
- iii. examine the impacts of communal conflicts in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities, Osun state, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research designed. The population of the study comprised the residents of Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities. A sample size of one hundred respondents was purposively selected for the study. A self-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including; frequency count, simple percentage, Mean, and Standard deviation. Bar and pie charts were also used to present findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results based on demographic characteristics of the participants, research questions and hypothesis, respectively. The responses from the interviews were thematically analysed.

Results Based on Demographic Information

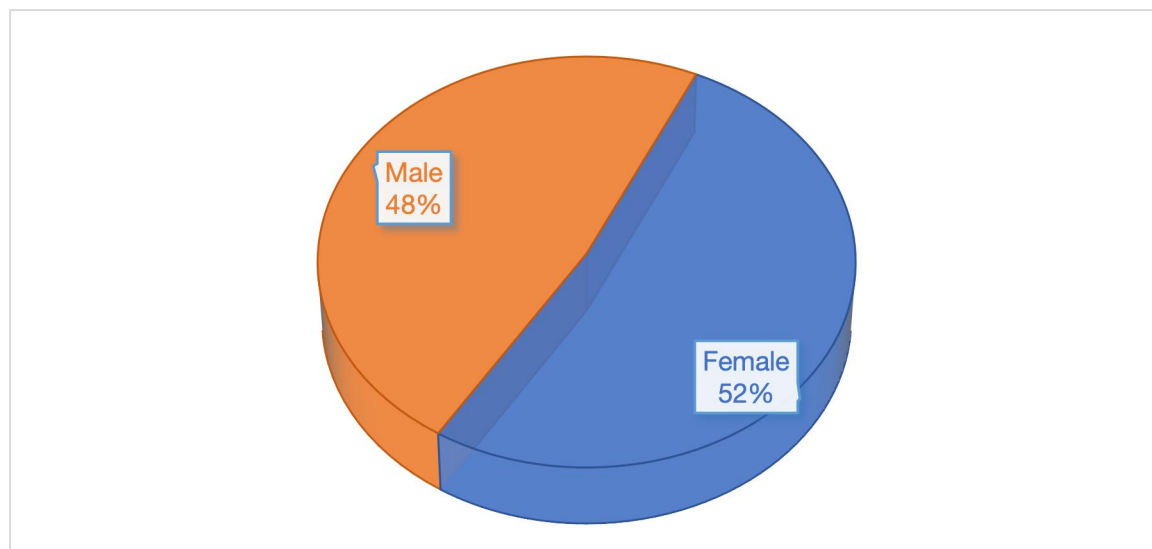


Figure 1: A pie-chart showing distribution of respondents by gender.

Figure 1, which is a pie chart expressed in percentage, indicated that 52% of the respondents sampled from the two communities under investigation were male, while the remaining 48% were females. The demographic analysis of the respondents revealed a slight male dominance, with 52% of the sampled population being male, while the remaining 48% were females, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution among the respondents from the two communities under investigation.

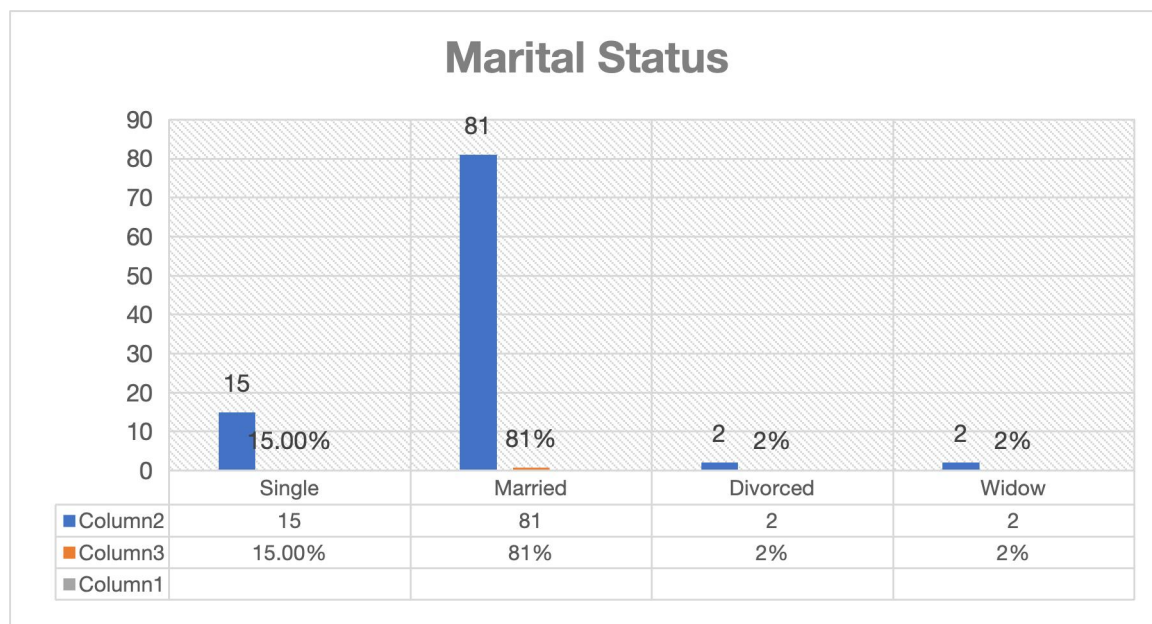


Figure 2: Bar-Chart Showing the Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Figure 2, which is a bar chart, is expressed in both percentage and frequency for the participants. The results indicated that fifteen (15) of the respondents, which represented 15% of the total participants, are single going by their marital status, eighty-one (81) of them, which represented 81%, were married, while two of the participants, which accounted for 2%, were divorce and widows. It can be deduced that the majority of the participants involved in the study were married, accounting for 81% of the entire respondents used in the research. The marital status of the respondents revealed a predominantly married population, with 81% of the participants being married, while a smaller proportion, 15%, were single, and a minimal 2% were divorced or widowed, indicating a relatively stable and committed sample.

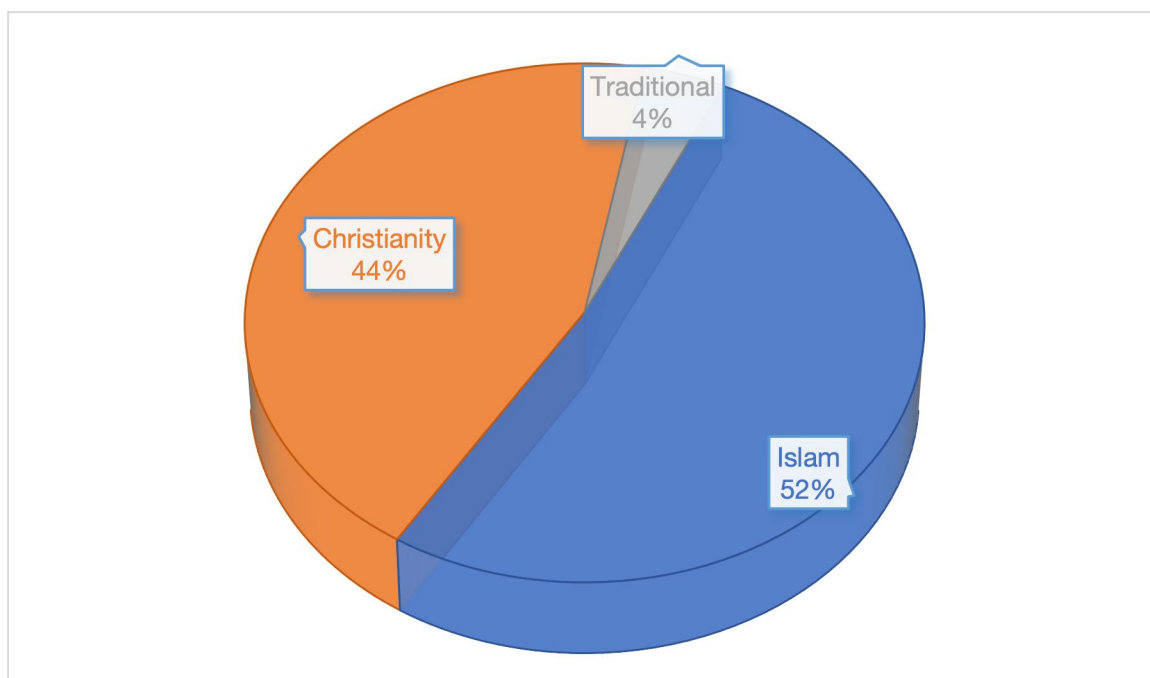


Figure 3: Pie-Chart showing the distribution of respondents by religious affiliation.

Figure 3, which is a pie chart, is expressed in percentage. The chart indicated that 52% of the participants were Muslim, 44% were Christians, while 4% were traditional worshipers. The majority of the respondents, 52%, identified as Muslim, while 44% were Christian, and a smaller proportion, 4%, practiced traditional worship, indicating a predominantly Muslim and Christian population.

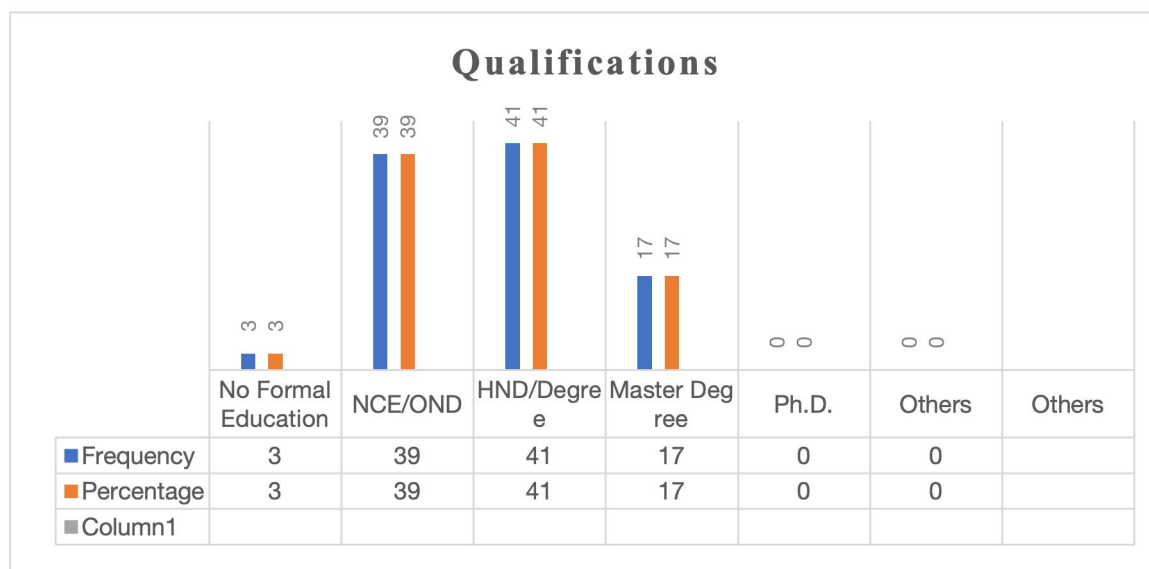


Figure 4: Bar-Chart showing the distribution of respondents by educational qualifications

Figure 4, which is a bar chart, shows the distribution of respondents with respect to their educational qualifications. The chart indicated that three of the respondents had no formal educational certificates, thirty-nine (39) of them had Ordinary National Diploma certificates or its equivalent Nigeria Certificate in Education; forty-one (41) had Higher National Diploma or its equivalent First-Degree certificates, seventeen (17) of them had master's degree certificates, while none of them had Ph. D. and other certificates, respectively. The educational profile of the respondents showed that the majority had acquired higher education, with 41 holding Higher National Diploma or First-Degree certificates, 17 with master's degrees, and 39 with Ordinary National Diploma or Nigeria Certificate in Education, indicating a relatively well-educated sample, except for 3 who had no formal educational certificates.

Research Question One: What are the factors responsible for communal conflict in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities?

Table I: Responses on Factors Responsible for Communal Conflict in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities

Description of items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Land dispute is a root cause of the communal crisis in my community	80(80%)	20(20%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.20	0.75
Unequal distribution of wealth among the people	60(60%)	30(30%)	7(7%)	3(3%)	3.11	0.72



Political power struggles	65(65%)	15(15%)	17(5%)	3(3%)	3.08	0.70
Socio-economic factor	61(61%)	17(23%)	20(20%)	2(2%)	3.02	0.68
Exploitation or violation of human rights	58(58%)	14(14%)	22(22%)	6(6%)	3.00	0.64
Domination and oppression by majority group	68(58%)	14(14%)	12(12%)	6(6%)	2.98	0.61
Indigene and settler conundrum	66(66%)	10(10%)	20(20%)	4(4%)	2.94	0.58
Frustration and aggressive displacement	55(55%)	12(12%)	23(23%)	10(10%)	2.90	0.64
High level of illiteracy	0(0%)	0(0%)	80(80%)	20(20%)	1.02	0.45

Table 1 indicated that the land dispute was one of the factors responsible for communal conflict in Modakeke and Ile-Ife communities. This is because 80 and 20 participants strongly agreed and agreed with the notion with the mean value 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.75. The finding underscores the critical role that territorial claims and competition for land resources played in sparking and sustaining the violence between the Ife and Modakeke communities. The strong consensus suggests that land disputes are a deeply ingrained issue, contributing substantially to the conflict's persistence. The finding is aligned with the study of Agheyisi (2019) who affirmed that the curiosity to secure land, exploit land resources and the ancestral attachment to land are the major factor responsible for conflict in many parts of Nigeria.

The findings indicated that 60%, 30%, 7% and 3% of the respondents strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed that the unequal distribution of wealth among the people was identified as another factor responsible for communal conflict with mean values of 3.11 and standard deviation of 0.72. This is to say that the unequal distribution of wealth among people can fuel communal conflict by fostering an environment of economic inequality, social injustice, and perceived exploitation, which can ignite tensions and hostility between different groups, particularly when one group feels disadvantaged or excluded from access to resources and opportunities. The study revealed that unequal distribution of wealth was a significant factor in communal conflict, as a substantial majority of respondents endorsed this view, highlighting economic disparities as a major contributor to the conflict. This finding underscores the need to address wealth inequality as a crucial step towards mitigating communal tensions and promoting peace. Olukoshi (2017) and Ake, (2018) found that economic inequality is a major driver of communal conflict which is in alignment with the outcome of this study.

The empirical outcomes indicated that the political power struggle was another factor responsible for communal conflict with mean and standard score of 3.08 and 0.70, respectively. Such that 65%, 15%, 17%, and 3% of the respondents strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed with the notion, respectively. A significant majority of 65% of respondents hold the view that communal conflict is largely fuelled by the struggle for political power, with 15% sharing this opinion, 17% opposing it, and a mere 3% strongly rejecting it. This is to infer that the strong agreement among respondents that political power struggle is a cause of communal conflict highlights the need for efforts to promote inclusive and participatory governance, where all members of the community have a voice and are represented in the decision-making process. This can help to reduce tensions and promote social cohesion, ultimately reducing the likelihood of communal conflict.

The study found that political power struggle was a notable cause of communal conflict. A significant proportion of respondents agreed that political power struggles contribute to the conflict, highlighting the role of politics in exacerbating communal tensions. In consonance with this study, Ekwutosi et al., (2024) claimed that political clashes among community members over the years have served to polarize the communities rather than integrate them for the purpose of nation building in Nigeria

Moreover, socio-economic factor was considered as another factor responsible for communal conflict in Modakeke and Ile-Ife communities with mean and standard value of 3.02 and 068, respectively. Majority (78%) supported the claim that socio-economic factor is the cause of communal conflict, while minority (22%), refuted the claim. The socio-economic power struggle was identified as another significant cause of communal conflict, with a substantial majority of 78% of respondents endorsing its role in fuelling tensions, while a smaller minority of 22% disagreed with this notion. This underscores the widespread perception that economic disparities and competition for resources play a significant role in fuelling communal conflicts.

The study revealed that socio-economic factor was a contributing factor to communal conflict, with a significant majority of respondents supporting this claim and highlighting the role of economic and social disparities in exacerbating communal tensions. This finding underscores the complexity of the conflict, emphasizing the need to address socio-economic inequalities to promote peace and stability. Nafisat and Idoma (2020) found that competition of community members over limited resources was the root cause of communal conflict in Billiri Local Government Area of Gombe State, Nigeria which is in tandem with the outcome of this study.

The empirical outcome indicated that 58%, 14%, 22% and 6% of the respondents were of the view that exploitation or violation of human rights was among the causes of communal conflict by strongly agree, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. This item has mean and standard deviation value of 3.00 and 0.64. A substantial proportion of respondents, with 58% strongly agreed and 14% agreed, totalling 72%, believed that exploitation or violation of human rights was a cause of communal conflict, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.00 and standard deviation of 0.64. The finding that a substantial proportion of respondents believed that exploitation or violation of human rights is a cause of communal conflict implies that addressing human rights issues and promoting social justice could be a crucial step in preventing and mitigating communal conflicts. This showcases that when the human rights are violated, then, there is likelihood of causing communal conflict in the community.

The result indicated that majority 72% of the respondents concurred that domination and oppression by majority group is the root cause of communal conflict. The item with mean and standard deviation of 2.98 and 0.61, respectively. The study revealed that an overwhelming majority of respondents (72%) attributed communal conflict to the domination and oppression by the majority group, indicating a strong perceived link between power imbalance and social unrest. The finding implies that addressing communal conflict requires a critical examination of power dynamics and the dismantling of oppressive systems that perpetuate domination by the majority group.

The study's findings suggest that domination and oppression by the majority group are perceived as significant contributors to communal conflict, with a substantial majority of respondents supporting this view. This highlights the importance of addressing power imbalances and promoting social justice to mitigate communal tensions and foster peaceful coexistence among different groups. In consonance, Daniel and Ajiyitu (2023) found that ethno-religious conflicts in Wukari Metropolis are

intense and centered around competition for limited resources such as land, political positions, economic resources, natural resources, and human resources, as well as oppression by majority group, respectively.

The finding reveals that accusation and allegation of neglect was another factor responsible for communal conflict with mean and standard deviation of 2.94 and 0.58, respectively. The result indicates that 76% which was majority acknowledged that the accusation and allegation of neglect is the cause of communal conflict, while the very few 24% refuted the claim. The finding suggests that a significant majority (76%) of respondents perceive accusation and allegation of neglect as a substantial cause of communal conflict, implying that addressing perceived neglect and promoting inclusive governance may be crucial in preventing and resolving communal conflicts. This finding implies that policymakers and community leaders must take allegations of neglect seriously and address them promptly to prevent escalation into communal conflict.

The empirical outcome reveals that the 66%, 10%, 20% and 4% of the respondents strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed that the indigene and settler conundrum is another cause of communal conflict. The mean and standard deviation values stood at 2.9 and 0.58, respectively. The findings suggest that while a significant majority of respondents acknowledge the indigene and settler conundrum as a cause of communal conflict, its relatively low ranking implies that other factors may be more prominent in perpetuating conflict, warranting further investigation into the complex interplay of factors driving communal tensions.

The study suggests that the indigene and settler conundrum is a notable factor in communal conflict, with many respondents attributing tensions to issues of identity and belonging. This highlights the need to address these underlying concerns and promote a sense of inclusivity and shared citizenship to mitigate conflicts and foster social harmony. In tandem with the finding of this study, Sunday and Piate, (2019) found that the indigene-settler dichotomy is a significant factor in communal conflicts in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the result indicated that 55% and 12% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the frustration and aggressive displacement caused communal conflict, while 23% and 10% were of the view in disagreed and strongly disagreed form that the frustration and aggressive displacement was not a cause of communal conflict. The item with mean and standard deviation of 2.90 and 0.64, respectively. The findings suggest that frustration and aggressive displacement are key drivers of communal conflict, underscoring the need for conflict resolution strategies to prioritize emotional alleviation and address the root causes of these destructive sentiments.

The implication of this finding is that addressing the emotional and psychological impacts of frustration and displacement is crucial in preventing and mitigating communal conflicts. It highlights the need for interventions that provide support and relief to affected individuals and communities, promoting social cohesion and reducing tensions that can escalate into conflict. Nwobashi and Nnaji (2018) claimed that relative deprivation, which can lead to frustration and aggressive displacement, is a key factor in the onset of communal conflict which is agreement with the outcome of this study.

Finally, the high level of illiteracy was identified as another cause of communal conflict. The majority 80% and 20% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively that high level of illiteracy among community members caused communal conflict. However, the mean and standard deviation value stood at 1.02 and 0.45, respectively. The overwhelming majority of respondents (80% strongly disagreed and 20% disagreed) rejected the notion that high levels of illiteracy among community members caused communal conflict, suggesting that literacy rates may

not be a primary driver of communal violence. It can be inferred that communal conflict is likely driven by more complex and nuanced factors beyond simple literacy rates, and that addressing the root causes of conflict will require a more comprehensive approach.

The study found that high levels of illiteracy were not perceived as a significant cause of communal conflict, with an overwhelming majority of respondents rejecting this notion. This suggests that the conflict is more closely tied to other factors, such as resource disputes, power struggles, and social inequalities, rather than educational attainment. In consonance, Krause, (2017) submitted that economic factors, such as poverty and inequality, are more important drivers of communal conflict than literacy rates.

Generally speaking, the implication of these findings is that addressing the root causes of communal conflict, such as land disputes, unequal wealth distribution, political power struggles, socio-economic factor, and human rights exploitation, is crucial for promoting peace and stability. Policymakers and stakeholders must develop targeted interventions to tackle these issues, fostering inclusive economic growth, ensuring equitable access to resources, promoting good governance, and protecting human rights to reduce communal tensions and prevent conflicts. The study is in consonance with Adriaenssens, Verwimp and Verpoorten's study (2018) which found that horizontal inequalities, including perceived neglect, can contribute to communal conflict in Africa. Similarly, Ozturk, Oruc and Yıldız (2020) submitted that perceived discrimination is a significant predictor of communal conflict, and that this relationship is mediated by feelings of resentment and mistrust towards the government.

Research Question Two: Which of the factors has the highest influence on Ile-Ife and Modakeke communal conflict?

Table II: Responses on which of the Factors has the Highest Influence on Ile-Ife and Modakeke Communal Conflict

Description of items	SA	A	D	Ranks
Land dispute is a root cause of the communal crisis in my community	80(80%)	20(20%)	0(0%)	1st
Unequal distribution of wealth among the people	60(60%)	30(30%)	7(7%)	2nd
Political power struggles	65(65%)	15(15%)	17(5%)	3rd
Socio-economic factor	61(61%)	17(23%)	20(20%)	4th
Exploitation or violation of human rights	58(58%)	14(14%)	22(22%)	5th
Domination and oppression by majority group	68(58%)	14(14%)	12(12%)	6th
Indigene and settler conundrum	66(66%)	10(10%)	20(20%)	7h
Frustration and aggressive displacement	55(55%)	12(12%)	23(23%)	8th
High level of illiteracy	0(0%)	0(0%)	80(80%)	9th

The study as presented in the above table investigated which of the factors has the highest influence on Ile-Ife and Modakeke communal conflict, and the results revealed that land disputes are the primary driver of conflict, ranked first among the respondents. This finding suggests that competition

for land and resources is a significant source of tension and conflict in the community. The second most significant factor contributing to communal crisis was unequal distribution of wealth among the people. This finding implies that the perceived unfairness in the distribution of resources and wealth has led to feelings of marginalization and resentment among certain groups, contributing to the conflict. Political power struggles were ranked third, indicating that the competition for political power and influence is also a major driver of conflict in the community. This finding suggests that the struggle for control and dominance in the political sphere has contributed to the communal crisis.

Socio-economic factor was ranked fourth, highlighting the role of economic and social inequalities in fueling conflict. Exploitation or violation of human rights was ranked fifth, implying that the disregard for human rights and dignity has also contributed to the crisis. The study also found that domination and oppression by the majority group (ranked sixth) and indigene and settler conundrum (ranked seventh) are also significant factors contributing to the communal crisis. Furthermore, frustration and aggressive displacement (ranked eighth) and high level of illiteracy (ranked ninth) were also identified as contributing factors, although to a lesser extent. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the communal crisis in the community is a complex issue driven by a combination of factors, including land disputes, unequal distribution of wealth, political power struggles, and socio-economic inequalities. Addressing these underlying issues is crucial to resolving the conflict and promoting peace and stability in the community.

Research Question Three: To what extent has communal conflict affect Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities?

Table III: Responses Showing the Extent to which Communal Conflict Affect Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities

Description of Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S. D
Loss of lives and injuries to community members	75(75%)	25(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.66	0.82
Destruction of community property and infrastructure	70(70%)	30(30%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.50	0.75
Lead to uneven development	68(68%)	32(32%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.01	0.61
Distraction of school system	70(70%)	30(30%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.50	0.75
Result in the scarcity of food and other essential resources	77(77%)	22(22%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.67	0.65
Lead to economic meltdown	68(68%)	32(32%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.01	0.61
Displacement of community members	68(68%)	32(32%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.01	0.61
Unlawful acquisition of properties	77(77%)	22(22%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.67	0.65
Rise of thuggery and violent behaviour in the community	70(70%)	30(30%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.50	0.75
Loss of cultural heritage	70(70%)	30(30%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.50	0.75

The empirical findings in Table 2 revealed that the loss of lives and injuries to community members ($\bar{x}=3.66$, S.D =0.82), destruction of community property and infrastructure ($\bar{x}=3.50$, S.D =0.75), uneven development between communities ($\bar{x}=3.01$, S.D =0.61), distraction of school system ($\bar{x}=3.50$, S.D =0.75), scarcity of food and other essential resources ($\bar{x}=3.67$, S.D =0.65), economic

meltdown ($\bar{x}=3.01$, S.D =0.61), displacement of community members ($\bar{x}=3.01$, S.D =0.61), unlawful acquisition of properties ($\bar{x}=3.67$, S.D =0.65), rise of thuggery and violent behaviour in the community ($\bar{x}=3.50$, S.D =0.75), and loss of cultural heritage ($\bar{x}=3.50$, S.D =0.75) were identified by the respondents as the consequences of the communal conflicts, as the mean values for all the items are greater than the threshold of 2.50.

The study highlights the devastating impact of communal conflicts, with all respondents (100%) agreeing that loss of lives and injuries to community members are significant effects. This underscores the urgent need for conflict resolution and peace building efforts to protect human life and prevent harm to individuals and communities. Communal conflicts have devastating effects on individuals and communities. Research has shown that these conflicts lead to significant loss of life and injuries, emphasizing the need for conflict resolution and peace building efforts to protect human life (Hartoyo et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies have highlighted the role of law in peace-building and conflict management, suggesting that legal frameworks can play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of communal conflicts (Adebayo, 2023). Effective peace building and conflict management strategies are therefore crucial for promoting national development and stability. The consequences of communal conflicts are far-reaching, with long-term mental health impacts, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression (Kposowa, 2020). Moreover, communal conflicts had hindered development, including economic growth, poverty reduction, education, and access to basic necessities (Okoli, 2024). Addressing the specific needs of vulnerable populations, such as women and children, who are disproportionately affected by these conflicts, is essential for building sustainable peace.

The study found that destruction of community property and infrastructure is a significant effect of communal conflicts, with 70% of respondents strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing with this assertion. This highlights the devastating impact of communal conflicts on community resources and infrastructure, emphasizing the need for reconstruction and rebuilding efforts to restore community assets and promote recovery. The study's findings on the destruction of community property and infrastructure are supported by the fact that communal conflicts often result in widespread damage to physical structures, displacement of people, and disruption of essential services (Okoli, 2024). This destruction can have long-lasting effects on the community's social and economic fabric (Hartoyo et al., 2020). However, it's also possible to refute the notion that destruction of property is an inevitable consequence of communal conflicts, arguing that effective conflict management and resolution strategies can mitigate such damage and protect community assets (Adebayo, 2023).

The study reveals that communal conflicts lead to uneven development, with 68% of respondents strongly agreeing and 32% agreeing. This suggests that conflicts disrupt economic and social progress, exacerbating existing inequalities and hindering sustainable development in affected communities. Communal conflicts significantly hinder development, leading to uneven progress and exacerbating existing inequalities. Studies have shown that conflicts disrupt economic activities, result in loss of properties and income, and hinder sustainable development in affected communities (Okoli, 2024). The relationship between conflict and development is complex, with conflict often leading to instability in businesses and creating significant risks to socio-economic development (Wood, 2016). Effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies are crucial to mitigate these effects and promote sustainable development.

Communal conflicts significantly impact education, with 70% of respondents strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing that the school system is distracted. This disruption can have long-term consequences for the affected communities, including lost learning opportunities and decreased educational



attainment. Communal conflicts indeed have a profound impact on education, distracting the school system and disrupting learning opportunities. Studies have shown that conflicts lead to school closures, displacement of students and teachers, and destruction of educational infrastructure, ultimately affecting educational attainment and long-term development (Okoli, 2024; Hartoyo et al., 2020). The disruption of education can have lasting consequences, including increased dropout rates, reduced academic performance, and decreased opportunities for future generations.

The study highlights that communal conflicts result in scarcity of food and essential resources, with 77% of respondents strongly agreeing and 22% agreeing. This scarcity can have severe humanitarian consequences, including increased poverty, malnutrition, and mortality. Communal conflicts indeed lead to scarcity of food and essential resources, exacerbating humanitarian crises. Studies have shown that conflicts disrupt food systems, leading to food insecurity, malnutrition, and increased mortality rates (Okoli, 2024). The scarcity of essential resources can have devastating effects on affected communities, including increased poverty, displacement, and vulnerability to diseases. Effective conflict resolution and humanitarian response are crucial to mitigate these effects and ensure access to basic necessities.

Communal conflicts lead to economic meltdown, with 68% of respondents strongly agreeing and 32% agreeing. This economic instability can have far-reaching consequences, including loss of livelihoods, business closures, and decreased economic opportunities. Communal conflicts indeed lead to economic instability and meltdown, with far-reaching consequences. Research has shown that conflicts disrupt economic activities, lead to loss of livelihoods, and hinder sustainable development (Okoli, 2024; Wood, 2016). The economic instability caused by communal conflicts can result in business closures, decreased economic opportunities, and increased poverty, ultimately affecting the well-being of individuals and communities.

The study shows that communal conflicts result in displacement of community members, with 68% of respondents strongly agreeing and 32% agreeing. This displacement can lead to significant social, economic, and psychological trauma for affected individuals and communities. Communal conflicts indeed result in displacement of community members, leading to significant social, economic, and psychological trauma. Studies have shown that displacement can lead to loss of livelihoods, separation from families, and increased vulnerability to exploitation and abuse (Hartoyo et al., 2020). The trauma caused by displacement can have long-lasting effects on individuals and communities, making it essential to provide support and protection to those affected.

Unlawful acquisition of properties is a significant consequence of communal conflicts, with 77% of respondents strongly agreeing and 22% agreeing. This can lead to further conflict, displacement, and economic instability. Unlawful acquisition of properties is indeed a significant consequence of communal conflicts, exacerbating existing tensions and leading to further instability. Research has shown that conflicts often result in the exploitation and displacement of vulnerable groups, with the unlawful acquisition of properties being a major factor (Okoli, 2024). This can lead to increased poverty, social unrest, and economic instability, highlighting the need for effective conflict resolution and protection of property rights.

Communal conflicts contribute to the rise of thuggery and violent behaviour, with 70% of respondents strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing. This can create a culture of violence, undermining community cohesion and stability. Communal conflicts indeed contribute to the rise of thuggery and violent behaviour, fostering a culture of violence that undermines community cohesion and stability. Studies have shown that exposure to conflict can lead to increased aggression and violence,



perpetuating a cycle of violence that affects individuals and communities (Hartoyo et al., 2020). This highlights the need for conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts to address the root causes of violence and promote community stability

The study reveals that communal conflicts result in loss of cultural heritage, with 70% of respondents strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing. This loss can have significant cultural, social, and economic implications for affected communities. Communal conflicts indeed result in loss of cultural heritage, which can have profound cultural, social, and economic implications. Research has shown that conflicts can lead to the destruction of cultural artifacts, historical sites, and intangible cultural practices, eroding community identity and cultural diversity (Hartoyo et al., 2020). Preserving cultural heritage is essential for maintaining community cohesion, promoting cultural tourism, and supporting economic development.

This implies that the communal conflict can escalate into loss of lives and injuries through a process of escalating tensions, provocative incidents, violent clashes, and ultimately, lethal force deployment by opposing groups or security forces. Communal conflict can result in the destruction of community property and infrastructure could occur through escalating violence, arson, looting, and targeting of critical facilities. The uneven development between communities could happen by disrupting economic activity, reducing investment, and limiting access to resources and services. This showcased that communal conflict can disrupt the school system by forcing closures, damaging infrastructure, and creating a climate of fear and insecurity that deters students and teachers from attending classes. The scarcity of food and other essential resources may happen during communal conflict when the supply chains are disrupted, crops and livestock are destroyed, and access to markets and essential services is limited.

Furthermore, communal conflict can lead to economic meltdown by disrupting trade, destroying infrastructure, reducing investor confidence, and diverting resources away from productive activities. Displacement of community members could occur through forced evictions, destruction of homes, and fleeing from violence, leaving them without shelter, livelihoods, and access to basic services. This is to say that the unlawful acquisition of properties may occur through looting, arson, and forced takeovers which allow perpetrators to illegitimately seize control of land, homes, and businesses. The thuggery and violent behaviour in the community by creating a culture of fear, mistrust, and retaliation, which emboldens criminals and fuels further violence. Finally, communal conflict can lead to the loss of cultural heritage through the destruction of historical sites, artifacts, and cultural institutions, erasing the community's collective memory and identity.

In agreement, Madu and Goni (2013) identify three major implications of ethnoreligious conflicts on youths and the community: socio-economic, political, and educational. Socio-economic implications refer to the adverse effects on the economic and social well-being of individuals and communities. Political implications involve the influence of ethno-religious conflicts on political dynamics and governance. Educational implications pertain to the disruption of educational institutions and the hindrance of educational opportunities for the affected population. This submission agrees with the finding of this study.

In the same vein, Onah, Diara and Uroko, (2017) acknowledged that conflicts have also had an impact on educational institutions, since schools have been forced to close on an irregular basis due to safety concerns, depriving children of their right to an education. Many lives have been lost and property worth billions destroyed leaving people destitute and homeless. Madu and Goni, (2013) established that throughout the crisis years in Takum/Ussa, in Taraba State, Nigeria, there was a



decline in the level of agricultural investment/yield, decline in income levels of the people of the area, and increased level of social and residential segregation and damages to lives and property worth millions which aligns with the empirical findings of this study.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it revealed a complex web of factors contributing to communal conflict, including land disputes, unequal wealth distribution, political power struggles, socio-economic power imbalances, human rights violations, domination and oppression, accusations of neglect, indigene-settler tensions, and frustration-driven aggressive displacement. The study's findings concluded there are devastating consequences of communal conflicts, which encompass widespread loss of life, destruction of property, disruption of essential services, economic instability, displacement, and cultural erosion, ultimately threatening the very fabric of the community.

- The study conclusively established that communal conflicts are often triggered by a complex interplay of factors, including leadership disputes, religious differences, land ownership issues, and socio-economic inequalities to a high degree. The study concluded that the most effective communal conflict management strategies led to a significant reduction in conflict escalation, with the top-ranked strategies being utilisation of early warning signals, collaboration with security agencies, and facilitation of round table discussions. The application of communal conflict management strategies is significantly and positively correlated with reduced effects of communal conflict, indicating that these strategies can effectively mitigate the negative impacts of conflict and enhance community resilience.

- Recommendations

- Based on the conclusion drawn from the findings of the study, the following recommendations were offered.

- Inter-faith dialogue and cooperation initiatives be established to promote mutual understanding, respect, and tolerance among individuals of different religious backgrounds, thereby preventing religious differences from fuelling communal conflicts and fostering a culture of peace, harmony, and social cohesion.

- Youth empowerment programmes should be developed and implemented to engage young adults in peaceful and constructive activities, thereby reducing their involvement in communal conflicts and promoting a culture of peace, tolerance, and social cohesion.

- The education and awareness programmes should be implemented to promote tolerance, understanding, and respect for diversity, and to prevent the spread of misinformation and stereotypes that can fuel communal conflicts, leveraging the high level of educational attainment among community members to foster a culture of peace and coexistence.

- Policymakers and other concerned stakeholders should prioritise policies aimed at addressing land disputes through inclusive policies, promote economic equality and social justice, strengthen institutions to prevent political power abuses, and foster dialogue and reconciliation to address historical grievances and promote peaceful coexistence among others.

- Policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders should collaborate to develop and implement effective strategies to prevent, manage, and resolve communal conflicts, promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development.

- Traditional leadership structures should be reformed to ensure accountability, transparency, and representation of all groups within the community. Moreover, efforts should be made to promote education, cultural exchange programs, and people-to-people diplomacy to break down stereotypes and build bridges between different communities.



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- The development and implementation of effective communal conflict management strategies should be prioritized by policymakers and community leaders to mitigate conflict impacts and foster resilience.

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