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# Impact of Ife-Modakeke Intra-Communal Conflicts on Spatial Realignment of Ile-Ife City

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**Keywords:** *Ife-Ife, modakeke, conflict, CBD, GIS, GPS, landsat, google map.*

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IMPACT OF IFEMODAKEKE INTRACOMMUNAL CONFLICTS ON SPATIAL REALIGNMENT OF ILEIFE CITY

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**Abstract-** Ife and Modakeke communities in South-western Nigeria have engaged in several years of communal conflicts. The conflicts have reconfigured both the economic systems and land use structure of the Central Business District of Ile-Ife. This study assessed the impact of the Ife/Modakeke crisis with emphasis on mapping the spatial realignment of land-use in the CBD and the rate of urbanization before and after the last conflict. Primary data were collected through field survey and oral interviews. The secondary data used included the base map and Land sat images of 1999 and 2015 for Ile-Ife. The period of 1999 and 2015 represents the period before and after the last conflict in 2000. GPS coordinates of some of the features were taken and plotted on the base-map extracted from the Google-Map, geo-referenced and classified into the existing land-use and land-cover types. The results showed that physical reconstructions, urbanization and new economic activities have been generally fast in Ife but relatively slow in Modakeke. The study also showed that 31% of the vegetated land-cover had been lost. The study concluded on the need for intra-communal peace for sustainable development of the two communities.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Human socio-economic and political developments are frequently preceded by conflicts. Conflict is inevitable, as it is present in daily public and private life (Ekpenyong, 2011). Conflict has been variously defined. Fabiyi, Thontteh and Borisade (2012) contend that conflict often occurs when social, economic or political space is contested or injustice is perceived in the allocation of economic resources among groups in political jurisdictions such as states, regions or communities. Collier (2004) refers to conflicts as disputes, disagreements, quarrels, struggles, fights and wars between individuals, groups and countries while Bujra (2002) defines conflicts as violent and armed confrontations and struggles between groups, between the state and one or more groups, and between two or more states.

These conflicts vary in time space within large or small group of people that are either from same or different cultural background, seeking survival for financial gains from land resources and political strength over each other. Different types of conflicts emerge during different periods because of varying political,

economic and social conditions and environments (Bujra, 2002).

In every nation there is no complete agreement on how to share wealth, power and status among individuals and groups, and how to effect necessary changes and reforms (Fabiyi *et al*, 2012). Since different groups and individuals have diverse interests, the aims of some groups will conflict with those of others. Bassey (2007), cited in Ekpenyong (2011) contends that conflict is very often the interaction of political, economic and social instability, frequently stemming from bad governance, failed economic policies and inappropriate development programmes which have exacerbated ethnic or religious differences. Conflicts occur when deprived groups and individuals attempt to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology (Angaye, 2003, Akenpuun 2013).

Ife and Modakeke communities in Southwestern Nigeria have engaged in protracted intra-communal conflicts. Asiyanbola (2007) and Olayiwola and Okorie (2010) asserted that so far, there had been seven major wars between the Ifes and Modakekes and listed the periods to include: 1835-1849, 1882-1909, 1946- 1949, 1981, 1983, 1997-1998, and 2000. Based on this, the conflict appears to be the oldest intra-ethnic conflict in Nigeria. Its psychological dimension has reached an extent that both parties are in cold war (Olayiwola and Okorie, 2010).

Different types of conflicts have different causes. Ekpenyong (2011) listed some of the causes of conflicts to include land ownership and resource availability, disputed jurisdictions of traditional rulers and chiefs, prestige and jealousy, corruption, creation of councils and locations of headquarters, environmental destruction, religious rivalry, competition for scarce resources, power used to control economic resources, political processes, social and cultural institutions. Population increase with little economic growth is also a major cause of conflict in Nigeria (Ikejiaku, 2009). Fabiyi *et al* (2012) related the cause of the Ife – Modakeke conflict to the subtle social and cultural differences between the two communities over the years. They posited that when adjacent communities are differentiated by ethnicity, especially by a myth of ancestry, it often leads to violent conflict as each community appears to protect and defend ancestral homes or the ancestors' burial sites. On the other hand,

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Otite (1999), cited in Ekpenyong (2011) observed that the strong resistance by the Kingship and people of Ile-Ife to the Modakekes' ownership claims to their settlement and farmlands, has been the major cause of the conflict.

McGrath (2013) illustrated in different studies, how war and conflicts transform various cities. He cited as examples, Rome, New York and Bangkok Central Business Districts in which war, trade and desire for expansion were major elements of urban realignment. The conflicts between the Ifes and the Modakekes have realigned both the economic systems and land use structure of the Central Business District (CBD) of Ile-Ife, thereby increasing the rapid urban land use demand to support the contiguous expansion of economic activities in Ife CBD.

In almost all cities, the Central Business District (CBD) also referred to as "downtown" or the "City Center," is the nucleus of the city; the business, commercial and government hub (Kamunyor, 2007). Historically, the CBD developed as the market square in ancient cities. The market serves as forerunner and point where people, particularly farmers, merchants and consumers gathered on market days to exchange, buy and sell goods and services, and interact socially. City centres later grew and developed as fixed CBD location points for retail trading and commerce (Olayiwola, 2014). Ife CBD grew from the Obalufon market through the city's main transport route to May-Fair roundabout (Figure 1.1), which was one of the main areas often affected by the conflict.

Ife CBD like other Central Business Districts is continuously facing transformation in order to meet the socioeconomic developmental needs of Ile-Ife city and its environs. This transformation can be readily noticed in the fast rate of urbanization, coupled with commercial and administrative activities in Ile-Ife city, which is a very useful catalyst in the economic development of the city. The commercial growth in Ife CBD can be testified by the heavy traffic congestion in Sabo/Lagere and May-Fair roundabout. High level of commercial activity can be noticed such as banks, office buildings, call centres, chain of stores, gas stations, grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, shopping malls that have replaced the major cocoa merchants' warehouses that once dominated the area before the conflicts.

Communal conflict between Ife and Modakeke communities had been occurring for many years. The effects of the last conflict in both communities were enormous, and are still felt till today. These conflicts have contributed significantly in shaping the spatial pattern of expansion and growth of both communities. They have adversely affected the degree of socio-economic and cultural activities between the two communities. There has been limited research work in terms of mapping the impacts of the communal conflicts on the land use pattern, life and other human resources

using geographic information systems (GIS). A detailed spatio-temporal analysis of urban land use changes and mapping of the pattern of growth would elucidate further on the impacts of these conflicts on the study area. The objective of this study is to assess the impact of the Ife/Modakeke intra-communal conflicts with emphasis on mapping the spatial re-distribution of land use in the CBD and the rate of urban development before and after the last Ife and Modakeke conflict.

Ayanlade, and Orimoogunje, (2011) employed geographic information (GIS) to map areas affected by the Ife-Modakeke conflicts. The present study will employ GIS to investigate the impact of the conflict on the economic development of Ile-Ife CBD.

## II. STUDY AREA

The Ile-Ife and Modakeke intra-communities in Osun State are located approximately on latitude 7°29'N - 7°30'N and longitude 4°32'E - 4°34'E (Figure 1). They have a total land area of about 22.96 square kilometres. Ife/Modakeke share boundaries with Ibadan to the east, Ilesa to the south-west, and Ondo to the north. They are situated on an elevation of 275 m above the sea level.

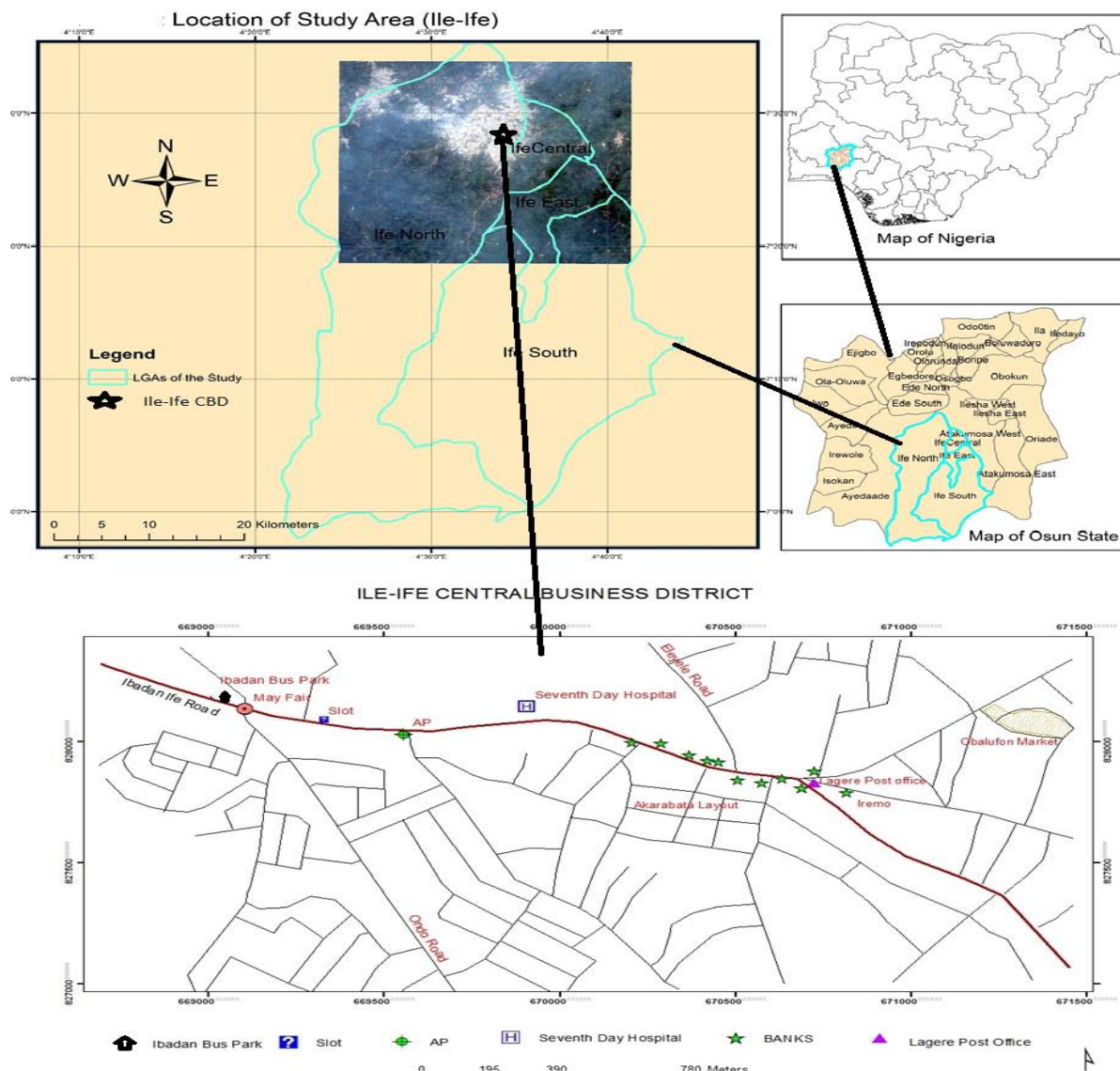


Figure 1.1: Study area

### III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Explanatory research method was used to acquire fundamental information that uncovered the nature of the problem under investigation while the conclusive research method was used in gathering data through field survey and oral interviews. The primary data acquisition involved the identification of the effects of conflict, socioeconomic needs, information, population increase and urbanization variables that were used in assessing the spatial realignment of the Ile-Ife Central Business District. The secondary data included the base map and 30m resolution Landsat (ETM and ETM+) images of 1999 and 2015 for Ile-Ife. The period of 1999 and 2015 represents the period before and after the last Ife-Modakeke conflict in 2000. GPS coordinates of some of the features were taken and plotted. The coordinates of some of the buildings; residential, commercial and public which were destroyed during the

crisis were taken using a global positioning system (GPS). The base map was extracted from Google Map, geo-referenced and classified into the existing land use and land cover types.

### IV. RESULTS

From the field survey it was discovered that most commercial enterprises were destroyed and some of the investors never returned. Ayanlade and Orimoogunje (2011) described several features that were destroyed during the crisis along Oke Yidi, Mayfair, Seventh Day Adventist, Lagere and Akarabata Layout-Lines 1, 2 and 3. These areas fall within the Ile-Ife Central Business District (CBD) which was the economic hub for cocoa merchants and other small scale and medium business enterprises before the last conflict. This led to the evolution of new economic activities in the CBD such as banking, fast food, buying and retail



businesses and other small businesses. The result also showed that physical reconstructions were generally very slow in Modakeke region mainly in Oke Yidi, Sijuede Estate, Ondo road, and Akarabata Lines 1, 2, and 3 (Fig 3.2 and Plates 3a and 3b.). This may not be unconnected with the fear that the conflict may reoccur at the slightest provocation in the future. This was attested to by Fabiyi *et al* (2011) that rebuilding is often fast and effective only if there is no likelihood that there will be a reoccurrence of such conflicts. The reconstruction process in Ife is however relatively fast, most especially along Lagere, Ibadan, and Ede roads.

This fast rate of development is due to the strategic location of these areas along the primary travel route in the Ile-Ife CBD as shown in Figure 3.1, Plates 1a and 1b, and Plates 2a and 2b. These developments are observed to be private efforts of members of the communities. This agrees with Fabiyi *et al* (2012) that found no government-sponsored initiatives for physical and social rebuilding in affected communities, but the community associations and cooperative societies are actively harnessing social capital for rebuilding in the affected neighbourhoods.



*Figure 3.1:* Image showing areas of active reconstruction in Ile Ife (red spots show reconstructed buildings)  
Adapted from Fabiyi *et al* (2012)



*Figure 3.2:* Image showing areas of slow reconstruction activities in modakeke (red spots show renovated buildings). Adapted from Fabiyi *et al* (2012)



*Plates 1a and 1b: Thriving Economic development in the CBD*



*Plates 2a and 2b: New developments Along Ibadan-Ife Road*



*Plates 3a and 3b: Relics of Ife-Modakeke Conflict*

## V. DISCUSSION

From the results of the classification procedures it was observed that Ife North, Ife Central and Ife East Local Governments were fast developing while there was relatively slower development in Ife South Local Government. It can be recalled that in 1983, Modakeke was renamed Ife South which triggered violent reactions that resulted in loss of lives and further damage to property. The data collected from the field survey revealed that most properties in Modakeke were owned by indigenes of Ife who were reluctant to rebuild them for fear of a relapse to conflict. However, from the field survey carried out, it was observed that the Federal

Government through the establishment of a Police Training School and the creation of several police out-posts and police stations in the two communities have helped in preventing a relapse to conflict and also in reducing violent crimes and activities in the study area. Table 1 shows the results of the classification of the images acquired for the study area in 1999 and 2015.

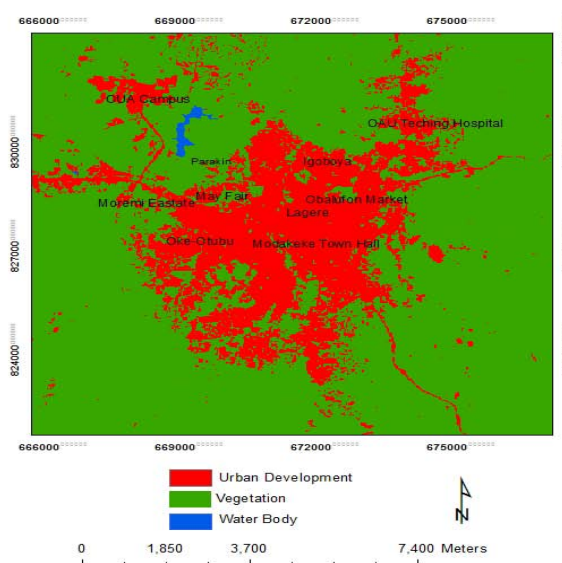
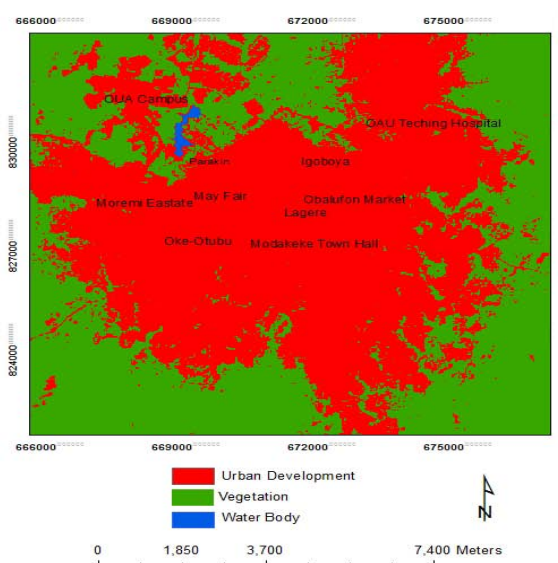


*Table 1:* Classification result of Ile-Ife land use classes

Class	1999 (Hectares)	2015 (Hectares)	Difference (Hectares)	% Change
Urban	2916	6983.37	4067.37	31
Water	33	29	-4	-0.03
Vegetation	10321	6258.69	-4062.31	-31
Total	13271	13271		

From the above classification result (table1), it can be noticed that there had been increase in the rate of demand for urban development. In the year 1999 before the Ife-Modakeke conflicts, urban land use stood at 2916 hectares but increased to 6983 hectares in 2015. This demand for urban development can be clearly noticed in the rapid reduction in vegetation land cover from 10321 hectares in 1999 to 6259 hectares in 2015. From this result, it can be clearly noted that urbanization has been on a rapid increase, with 31% of the vegetated land cover lost. Also a closer observation

of the satellite images indicated a parallel growth in the two neighbouring communities, with the Ife community expanding mostly towards the north west while the Modakeke area expanding mostly towards the south and south west especially towards Ondo Road. Similarly, the fear of reprisals or spontaneous attack that lingered amongst the two communities seemed to make them to expand spatially away from each other. This can be seen in the orientation of the pattern of development and expansion as shown in the 2015 Ife land use map (figure 3.4b).

**1999 IFE-MODAKEKE LANDUSE***Figure 3.3a:* 1999 land-use map**2015 IFE-MODAKEKE LANDUSE***Figure 3.3b:* 2015 land-use map

Data obtained from the Federal Bureau of Statistics showed that the population of males in Ife North in 2006 was 78,175 while that of females was 75,519. The population of males in Ife Central was 84,653 while that of females was 82,601. The population of males in Ife East was 92,054 and that of females was 96,033. Also the population of males in Ife South was 69,798 while that of females was 65,540. In 1991 the total population of males and females in Ife North was 186,856. From these figures, it can be deduced that the total population of Ife North decreased from 186,856 in 1991 to 153,694 in 2006. Figures obtained from the 1991 and 2006 census shows a gradual decrease in the population in Ife and Modakeke. This change in population can be attributed to migration in the

aftermath of the war. It is important to note that the population of Ife and Modakeke communities would have changed from the 2006 census figures as a result of rapid economic development in Ife Central Business District and increased demand in land use. Therefore, there is urgent need for national and local authorities to carry out demography study of the city for meaningful planning and community development.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study observed the rapid development in Ile-Ife Central Business District as a result of destruction of majority of the cocoa merchant's warehouses during the conflicts and this paved way for new socio-

economic development presently noticed in the CBD. The most prominent business establishments that sprang up in Ile-Ife CBD after the war are banking, fast food businesses, buying and retail businesses and other small scale enterprises.

There were parallel growths in the two neighbouring communities, with the Ife community expanding mostly towards the north-west while the Modakeke expanded mostly towards the south and south-west especially towards Ondo Road. This can be attributed to the continuous fear of reprisals or spontaneous attack that lingered amongst the two communities. This fear seemed to make them expand spatially away from each other. There is tendency of a possible relapse to conflict in the two communities due to the volatile atmosphere in these areas. The indigenes of the two communities have been traumatized and the relics of the war can still be found in these areas. Establishment of police posts and military training institutions in some areas that were adversely affected by the crisis such as Akarabata lines I-III and Oke yidi can help to check the activities of violent youths in these areas. The indigenes that have been traumatized by the war should be compensated and rehabilitated to reintegrate them back into the society. The Federal Government should carry out disarmament of the two warring communities to forestall a relapse to conflict.

Social welfare, community-based organizations and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) should be set up to counsel the youths on the dangers of war. Also the status of the local chiefs and traditional rulers in these communities can be upgraded to give them more influence with the authorities and their subjects. Secondary and tertiary institutions should be established in these areas to engage the youths in meaningful activities and also employment opportunities should be created to boost the financial state of the locals.

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