

Background

The Igbo of Nigeria are known, among others, for their migratory prowess and are found in all parts of Nigeria and beyond. The people are easily identifiable by their resilience and adaptability to situations (Nwolise and Olebunne 2010). However, Olutayo (1999) had pointed out that the quest for survival in an increasingly monetizing economy coupled with sparse land resource is responsible for high rate of migration among the Igbo. Limited availability of land in Igbo communities is largely a function of high population density driven by pronatalist ethos that is sustained by multiple socio-cultural beliefs and practices. For instance, Isiugo-Abanihe and Nwokocha (2008) revealed that the *ewu-ukwu* custom which is celebrated in parts of Igboland to honour a woman after her tenth child is not only perceived as an index of accomplishment but also a motivator for prolific childbearing.

Nwokocha (2007a) had identified male child preference, which is a variant of patriarchy, as a phenomenon that not only contributes disproportionately to high fertility but also polygyny and, by implication, large family size. Clearly, high population density is mainly responsible for high migration experience in Igbo communities. However, apart from large population among the Igbo, limited social and economic opportunities have strong relationship with Igbo-outmigration. As Nwolise (2004) observed, since 1970 there is hardly any meaningful federal presence in Igbo states. This arguable level of marginalization coupled with insecurity of lives and property, joblessness, hunger and starvation are sufficient justifications for permanent or semi-permanent geographic movement of the Igbo away from their homeland.

The suffocating economic and political effects of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war on Easterners, especially the Igbos, have also been pointed out; East is an ecological and economic wasteland from which victims stream to other viable areas of Nigeria (Uwalaka 2003). We note that even though the Igbo are known for their migratory tendencies believing that travelling bestows more knowledge on an individual than old age, the tendency was amplified by the Nigerian civil war and the attendant loss of sources of livelihood within the region.

Migrants of Igbo extraction are credited with sustained primordial linkages than any other group in Nigeria; notwithstanding their level of acculturation at destination, they still maintain contacts with home, although the regularity varies among individuals. As Nwolise and Olebunne (2010:296) noted:

There are no Igbo people located anywhere outside Nigeria as Aborigines of other areas. This is unlike the situation where there are millions of Hausas in Niger, Chad, Senegal, Mali etc and Yorubas in Benin Republic. However, there are millions of Igbo sons and daughters found in different parts of the world.

Rather, in the spirit of *onye aghala nwa nne ya*, which literally means *do not abandon your brother/sister*, the Igbos form Town Union Associations (TUAs), at their destinations, to cater for one another. As Onwuka (1989) observed, perhaps more than any other ethnic group, the Igbo contributed to intensify rural-urban migration and emigration beyond the borders of Nigeria. The benefits of belonging to such associations range from emotional and psychological support for members in times of difficulty, financial aid, settling disputes among individuals and subgroups, to serving as an avenue for social interaction and exchange of ideas (Onwumechili 2000). Honey and Okafor (1998:138) had further pointed out the relevance of Hometown Associations, which they noted:

... serve as instruments for coping with a changing environment... they also provide means of surviving amidst the vicissitudes of life at a time of great flux and uncertainty... they allow people to maintain their traditions. In addition, they can become centres of innovation, especially for modernization of the hometown. They do this by assuring that the town has the instruments of modernity – among them schools and medical facilities, as well as the kinds of infrastructure that are available to people elsewhere.

Thus, Igbo town unions, in addition, undertake oversight function relating to informal supervision of activities not only of members but also other relevant individuals and groups. The direct consequence of such subtle supervisory activity is that it largely constrains the Igbo within prescribed norms and values. In a way, it discourages frivolous behaviour especially among young people many of whom ordinarily would have been persuaded to take advantage of the anonymity that inheres in urban centres to partake in crime. Criminological and urban studies have identified a connection between urban environment and deviant behaviour (Opara 1998; Pfohl 1994). Due to the perceived importance of such home associations, Olutayo (1999) noted that it is almost compulsory for Igbos in diaspora; it serves as the foremost agent of orientation on urban life for new migrants. Thus, town unions strive to help Igbos maintain a balance between traditional values and diversity and the concomitant relativism in urban centres across Nigeria and beyond. Indeed, attributes such as self-reliance, courage, perseverance, hard-work, goal-setting, accountability and innovativeness among the Igbo have been highlighted (Onwumechili 2000; Olutayo 1999; and Nwachukwu 1989).

Theoretically, migration and integration among the Igbo can be explained through the functionalist perspective. The theory examines the role that parts play in sustaining the

whole; in this case, how migration of Igbos out of Igboland contributes positively to stabilizing these migrants on the one hand and the maintenance of society on the other (Ritzer 2008; Haralambos, Holborn and Heald 2004). Clearly, out-migration or emigration to other locations in the midst of limited physical space, relative to population size and the scorching economic environment make these migrations functional. In the short-run, out-migration balances out high fertility regime among the Igbo, while in the long-run remittances, both materials and otherwise, are used for development of Igbo communities. Consequently, Igbo marginalization though well established in literature (Nwolise and Olebunne 2010; Uwalaka 2003; Nwachukwu 1989), recourse to Self-help Development Strategy (SDS) has accounted for bridging the infrastructural gap between Igbo communities and those in other major ethnic locations in Nigeria.

The dysfunctional aspects of migration among the Igbo include those related to enculturation of the migrant into the prevailing norms and values at destination to the extent that traditional symbols and sentiments are largely abandoned. Another major consequence of out-migration is that of insecurity of lives and property of Igbos in the face of ethnic and/or religious disturbances. As Uwalaka (2003) had noted, for whatever reason, the Igbo have been made targets of internal terrorism and cleansing which characterize them as an endangered specie. Internal terrorism against Igbos has been reported in Kano, Kaduna and Plateau states, among others. Adopting social science research techniques, the present study specifically examines the Igbos in Ibadan with respect to in-migration, adaptation, challenges and contributions to the socioeconomic, cultural and political life of the city known for its very large size.

Materials and methods

Data collection for the study involved both secondary and primary sources. While secondary information was generated through archival materials and extant literature, primary data were elicited through the triangulation of In-depth Interviews (IDIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and unobtrusive observation.

Eleven IDIs were conducted among a cross section of Igbos residing in the city. A total of six males and five females were interviewed to reflect gender balance. The inclusion criteria were for the intended respondent to have resided in Ibadan for at least ten years and willingness to participate in the study. Given the historical dimension of some of the issues, it was expedient to engage relatively knowledgeable Igbos in IDIs. That way, rare as well as

serendipitous insights were generated. In addition, two Yoruba respondents were interviewed in-depth for the purposes of comparability. Thus, a total of thirteen IDIs were conducted.

Selection of FGD participants was not based on any specific criterion. This was necessitated by the need to involve different age, occupational and other sundry categories of Igbos in discussion. In all, seven FGD sessions were conducted with groups such as adolescents, male traders, market women, academics, civil servants, opinion leaders and unemployed youths. Each discussion group comprised homogeneous participants in line with rules guiding the conduct of FGDs (Isiugo-Abanihe and Obono 2002).

Non-participant observation was one of the methods adopted for the study. The use of observation as a “passive” ingredient of the qualitative research technique is a consistent prerequisite for proper undertaking of culture-related studies (Nwokocha 2007b:47-48). The influence of beliefs, values, customs, arts and the resulting practices – all subsumed in culture as a complex whole – on a people’s behaviour need not be underestimated and can only be deeply appreciated by observing them uninhibited. Different engagements of the Igbo in Ibadan such as socioeconomic activities, greeting patterns, mode of dressing for major events and family values among others were observed.

Ethical considerations were emphasized throughout fieldwork. The consent of both respondents and participants was sought prior to their participation in the study; the right to withdraw at any point or withhold information perceived to impinge on their privacy was fully acknowledged and respected. In addition, their confidentiality was guaranteed to the extent that information would never be traced to these participants. With respect to the principle of beneficence, the advantages accruable to these respondents for participation in the study and other Ibadan-based Igbos were also fully communicated to these participants.

Data analysis involved the use of ethnographic summaries and content analysis. The procedure began with the translation and transcription of tape recordings of both IDIs and FGDs. These were followed by the examination and, later, thematic isolation of various responses that threw light into study objectives. By adopting this method, responses from group discussions and in-depth interviews were imported into presentation and discussion on the merit of their applicability to relevant issues.

Results and Discussion

Literature on Igbos in Ibadan is scanty; relying mainly on primary sources for information on their migration, integration and challenges thus became expedient both for the

possibility of generating serendipitous data and empathy on the situation. Results of the study are presented schematically to cover major aspects. In what follows, data from the three primary sources are presented jointly in examining some important activities among Ibadan-based Igbos.

On migration

We stated earlier that migration is a persistent phenomenon among the Igbo. This section however focuses specifically on patterns of migration among Igbo people in Ibadan. Responses indicate several patterns, some of which varied by periods. According to a 72 year old Igbo trader:

In our days, most of us travelled straight to Ibadan from various villages in the East to undertake apprenticeship for different trades... we were really focussed and were not involved in frequent change of city of residence... these days what we find is that some of our young people first get to Lagos and only come to reside in Ibadan when they are unable to cope in the megacity... this generation is characterized by people who want quick money. When the money does not come forth quickly some of them continue their movement to places like Osogbo, Shagamu, Ogbomoso among others just after few years of business activities in Ibadan ... there have been instances where these people still returned to Ibadan to begin life anew (IDI).

This clearly indicates generational differences in migration attitude and behaviour between old and young Igbo residents in Ibadan. Two patterns are easily identifiable from the above response; first, from rural community to Lagos and/or Ibadan and second, urban to Ibadan and other urban centres. The attraction that Lagos holds for intended migrants and the delusion and powerlessness that the city may eventually conjure for these migrants have already been noted by Obono (2007) and Nwokocha (2007c; 2008). Younger Igbos traverse places in search of greener pastures in order to cope with challenging and changing times for as one of them noted, *anaghi ano ofu ebe ekiri nmanwu* meaning literally that ideally one does not watch a masquerade only from a spot. The implication is that the spectator is not only safer moving about as the masquerade hovers for its prey but also has a better view of the masquerade in its several activities. The respondent, in further buttressing the point, stated:

...times have changed and we need to step up activities. Our fathers did not have as much responsibility as we do today. There is pressure to buy car, look good, and live in a decent apartment among others... so we cannot afford to waste our time in a particular place when you are not sure it is your destined location. You must go to places to discover destiny and potentials. Because of the attitude of our parents, some of them are quite poor, while it took others donkey years to breakthrough financially. Hustling is not bad provided it is undertaken within the purview of legitimacy.

While we agree that poverty among some parents may be linked to indolence and inability to adjust sufficiently to prevailing socioeconomic currents, it is difficult to establish a relationship between affluence/financial breakthrough and frequent change of place of residence. We would rather argue that foresight and prudence in understanding the economic environment and efficient management of resources, respectively, are more critical than the issue of location. In addition, the view that, presently more responsibility is undertaken than in earlier times is largely invalid for one main reason. In all ages, taste, fashion, technology and motivations are drivers of social pressure and corresponding individual responsibility. As such, expectations and responsibilities in human epochs have always tallied with relevant epochal ideals and sentiments. To buttress this further, in earlier times, fertility levels were high and parents did not have to worry about the education of their children. The primary concern was achieving large family size; illiteracy was a norm. In contemporary society, fertility levels have dropped and will likely continue to drop since the cost of training children is astronomically high and thus a source of pressure on parents and guardians.

Another pattern of migration among Igbos in Ibadan that respondents readily identify relates to the number of family and/or household members that migrate in the short or long run. Virtually all the respondents stated that for unmarried migrants, spatial relocation is a simple individual activity. For married migrants, however, such change of residence is preceded by a sequence of decision making processes. According to most FGD participants, married migrants usually relocate to Ibadan with their family members as accommodation is not as difficult as the situation in Lagos. While this seems to be the case, few IDI respondents noted that in some situations, migrants came with some family members and not others and, that way, maintain strong links with place of origin. For others, migrating alone or with few family members is a strategy of *not putting all of one's eggs in one basket*. An IDI respondent further buttresses:

a wise person, ordinarily, should first move into a location to fully understand the environment before inviting his/her family over; it would be most terrible for an entire family to get stranded in an urban centre like Ibadan where it may be difficult to find somebody that may be willing to accept the responsibility of catering for, what I will refer to as, a crowd.

Nwokocha (2007c) has observed that the extended family ethos among Nigerians, as is also the case for most other Africans, explains the seemingly mandatory African hospitality but at times the grudge with which gate-crashing migrants may be accommodated by friends and

relatives. Yet, such magnanimity may be difficult to offer when help-seekers are likely to stretch family and household resources beyond acceptable limits.

Socioeconomic activities of Igbos in Ibadan

The Igbos in Ibadan are involved in a catalogue of socioeconomic activities. In terms of affiliations, respondents noted that most individuals belong to TUAs which exist at three levels. Virtually all the IDI respondents and FGD participants agreed that such belongingness is essential both as an avenue of social interaction and emotional support in times of crises. One of the participants stated:

Usually a full-fledged Igboman or daughter is expected to join his/her community association in Ibadan and attend meetings monthly... activities of members are guided by a constitution/bye law. Hosting of meetings is normally on the basis of individual membership; due to the rotation of hosting-responsibility, members readily become acquainted with places of residence of others. The second level of association involves the coming together of Igbos from a Local Government Area (LGA) in Southeast Nigeria to form a union... belonging to this larger group requires that an individual be a member of his/her community association; most times the meetings take place every second Sunday of the month... hosting is undertaken by communities rather than individuals due to the size of membership. The third level is almost as large as a senatorial district and meetings take place every third Sunday of each month.

For an individual that belongs to the three associations, meeting days provide an opportunity to identify with own people, for social interaction and review of development efforts. In addition, such unions reinforce participants' cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices. Apart from membership of TUAs, respondents noted that some Igbos in Ibadan also belong to social groups such as neighbourhood associations, market unions and smaller age-grade like groupings among others.

With regard to economic activities, the respondents/participants generally agreed that the Igbos in Ibadan partake in virtually all forms of business and occupational activities. However, trading was identified as the major activity among the people which an FGD participant linked with heredity:

All over Nigeria and beyond, Igbos are known for their ingenuity in trading which I attribute to natural endowment... that is why our people (referring to Igbos) thrive in business and can turn the most difficult trading terrain into a gold-mine... does it mean that people of other ethnicity that falter in seemingly booming economic environments are mentally incapacitated?. The answer is no; rather Igbos are divinely gifted to excel in trading more than other Nigeria peoples.

Although an IDI respondent of Yoruba extraction corroborated the above *divine-endowment thesis*, we argue here that trading is purely a learned skill and a group's distinctive excellence in it may be nothing more than the outcome of intergenerational socialization that emphasizes

insight, courage, prudence and diligence. If it were divine, all persons of Igbo ethnicity would automatically thrive in trading no matter the circumstance; but this is not so. Some Yorubas, Hausas and other Nigerian peoples are known to have also excelled in trading even in areas that some Igbos have failed. In terms of educational activities among Igbo people in Ibadan, respondents reported wide intergenerational differences with the younger generation showing higher attainment than the older. This global trend was further explained by an IDI respondent:

Most aged Igbos in Ibadan had primary or secondary school certificate as the highest educational qualification and ended up as traders or blue-collar workers in establishments including University of Ibadan... realising the importance of tertiary school education in defining status, ranking and placement of individuals, most parents/guardians struggle to train their wards in higher institutions.

As a result, the number of Igbo students in an institution like the University of Ibadan is relatively large, which may explain the formation and sustenance of community and/or state based Igbo Students Associations (ISAs) in the institutions. As some FGD participants pointed out, most of the ISAs liaise with TUAs on cross-cutting issues. The religious life of Igbos in Ibadan is a reflection of what obtains elsewhere; an overwhelming majority are Christians and Catholics in particular.

Cultural Engagements

Although several kilometres away from their Eastern homeland, Igbos in Ibadan still engage in some cultural activities pertaining to marriage, family life and dressing pattern among others. Like their counterparts back home, most Igbos in Ibadan delay marriages. It takes some time for young male traders who usually go through a period of apprenticeship to accumulate wealth necessary to defray the cost of, sometimes, elaborate marriage ceremony or to cater for a wife that may be barred from participation in serious economic activities. Respondents agreed that it is better to marry late than engage in early marriage that may be characterized by poverty and tension. However, the immediate implication of increased age at marriage among men is that marriage among females is also delayed; this impinges on length of fecundity and attainment of menopause before achieving preferred fertility and family size.

For those that finally indicate readiness to get married, participants noted that two options are available – traditional marriage rites take place either in Ibadan or Igboland. One of the group discussants pointed out:

Ordinarily, marriage is contracted in a prospective wife's homeland with kinsmen and women in attendance... what we see these days is that, for convenience, some parents

prefer that the ceremony takes place in Ibadan and people back home are informed later ... my experience is that most times kins-people never get to know about it from these parents.

As a result, the ceremony that ought to serve as farewell event for which important advise is given the newly-wed by significant others is foregone. Some of the respondents noted that some parents, for fear of being sanctioned by the village members back home, insist that the usually elaborate event takes place in Igboland. As an interviewee stated, the sanctions may range from ostracism to fines, among others. Another pattern identified by respondents is the increasing rate of inter-ethnic marriages between Igbos and people from other cultural groups especially the Yoruba unlike what obtained in the past when strong emphasis was laid on endogamy.

The study found that most young Igbos in Ibadan are relatively proficient in three languages which include, Igbo, Yoruba and English languages. In fact, some of these young people are more acquainted with Yoruba language than Igbo. Some others speak Yoruba and English only; the interest in Yoruba language may be explained by early exposure to the latter and the large number of Yoruba speakers that young Igbos come in contact, especially in the course of primary and secondary school education. Findings also reveal that a large number of Igbos in the thematic city socialize their young ones mainly in line with some Yoruba values. For instance, it is common to see Igbos that eat *amala*, *ewedu*, *gbegiri* and *iyam* which are mainly ascribed to the Yoruba.

In addition, responses indicate that while most aged people still maintain the greeting posture that Igbos are known for which include, a younger male shaking an elder with two hands standing and the females turning their backs for patting by men, most younger male Igbos in Ibadan, just like the Yoruba, bow to greet elders while their female counterparts genuflect with both knees. In terms of dressing, older Igbos still subscribe to the attire that the people are known for, particularly worn during special ceremonies such as weddings, naming ceremonies/christening, TUA meeting, among others. On the contrary, a large number of Igbo youths in Ibadan are not particular about traditional attires but rather prefer western-type of dressing. As a result, it is difficult to decipher these young people's ethnic identity merely by their dressing unlike what obtained in the past.

Igbos and Politics in Ibadan

Respondents discussed Igbos and politics in Ibadan from two perspectives. First, from the angle of general involvement in the wider Ibadan politics; second, with specific respect to

Igbo politics - within the group. Study participants noted that in the broader sense, Igbos in Ibadan, like other Nigerian peoples partake in the electoral process mainly as voters or indirectly as advisers to office holders. They hardly contested elections in the city even for the least political positions for fear of failure; a notion that respondents stated is borne out of perceived ethnic sentiments that usually prevail in Nigerian politics.

On Igbo politics, specifically among the people, the study found that until a few decades ago the idea of politics outside TUAs was inconceivable. Recently however, the notion of a united front in Igbo leadership gradually crept-in and became both contentious and dangerous. Some of the respondents noted that it was a surprise that the main actors equated their prospective position with *Eze/Igwe* or the equivalent of *Oba* among the Yoruba or *Emir* among the Hausa. The struggle for this non-existing position left the Igbos in Ibadan more divided than could be imagined. Data reveal that two notable factions struggled fiercely to woo TUAs for support; the situation became messy to the extent that the Oyo state government intervened at some point. One of the IDI respondents simply characterized the situation as unfortunate especially considering that notable Igbo intellectuals got immersed in the turbulence. She stated further:

The assumption that someone could become Eze (king) outside Igboland is laughable and childish... it is pitiable that some Igbo intellectuals in Ibadan went as far as getting conferred with chieftaincy titles by the so-called Ezes without domain. Was it not funny that back home the people that paraded themselves as Ezes paid glowing tributes to recognized traditional rulers... for right thinking people, those individuals were jobless and wanted cheap popularity.

The study revealed that the contradiction presented by such attempt at arrogant recreation of Igbo political culture and history attracted the attention of traditional rulers in Igboland who quickly disbanded as well as condemned in strong terms such anti-normative positions and corresponding unacceptable nomenclatures not only in Oyo State but also throughout Nigeria. Results indicate that rather the position of *Onye ndu* (Leader), in towns outside Igboland, was unanimously endorsed by these traditional rulers. However, in the spirit of *let us not lose it all* the struggle for the latter position and supremacy continues between the two camps.

Ibadan based Igbos and linkages with families in the Southeast

In an era of improved communication technology exemplified mainly by mobile phones and internet, interactions have been made much easier. However, linkages as used in this paper connote more of the physical presence of an Ibadan-based Igbo or group in Igboland and/or financial or material remittances to distant or close relatives. Some of the

respondents pointed out the importance of having a house/apartment/building back home as a strong pull factor for travelling during major festivals. An aged male IDI respondent elucidates further:

An Igbo man that does not have a house at home is regarded as irresponsible by family members and kin-group... as somebody with a chicken-brain (ofogori) and a spendthrift notwithstanding the occupational status of the individual. In order not to be so labelled, Igbos especially those in the Diaspora (living in urban centres and abroad) struggle to erect structures even if it means not fully utilizing them.

Clearly, such quest exerts socioeconomic pressure on the Igbo. As a result, several young men opt for business rather than acquire tertiary education perceived as a quicker means of getting rich and owning big houses. How far some of these business men and women have been able to achieve such dreams is debatable, for as we know, most magnificent structures either in urban or rural centres in Igboland are owned by individuals with some level of tertiary school education. Data further reveal that other factors that motivate Igbos in Diaspora to travel home include festivities such as Christmas, Easter, new yam festivals and other sundry customs among the different sub-groups. Indeed, these ceremonies apart from re-uniting families, relatives and friends are also avenues for initiating new projects and searching for life partners. Results also show that Igbos outside Nigeria are particularly encouraged to participate in these festivals at home to keep abreast of developments and challenges.

It was also revealed that although Igbos in Ibadan look forward to travelling during these major ceremonies, economic hardship is a major disincentive to embarking on such journeys. Respondents added that recently, the fear of being kidnapped became more critical in discouraging the people from travelling back home. This development meant that people of low socioeconomic status had better chances of not being kidnapped in South-eastern parts of the country unlike their affluent counterparts who could be targets. Some participants noted that some Igbos in Ibadan never bothered about travelling home for unidentifiable reasons; this category of individuals could afford to go back occasionally but are unwilling to do so even prior to the characteristic widespread kidnapping in Igboland.

Major challenges faced by Igbos in Ibadan

The challenges faced by Igbos in Ibadan are also common among other Nigerian peoples outside their traditional homes. This paper argues that ethnic based discrimination is pervasive and a defining attitude in relationship building in Nigeria with over 380 ethnic groups (Oтите 2000). The respondents identified discriminatory employment standards as one

of the major challenges Igbos in Ibadan face; those that struggled to get employed are still discriminated against in the work place. The study revealed that to safeguard their jobs, these Igbos put in extra efforts to keep their jobs. The advantage is that in the course of such rigor *the-victimized* gradually masters the work process and becomes such an expert that *the-protected* would eventually consult for mentoring and skills update.

The next major challenge relates to the difficulty of renting an apartment from some Landlords of Yoruba extraction. Some of the respondents stated that some of these Landowners, as a matter of policy, would not have Igbos as tenants. An Igbo interviewee who himself is a Landlord explains:

Some of us that now have houses in Ibadan were forced to do so as a result of the high level of discrimination and rejection that we faced in the hands of Yoruba Landlords. Some of them give definite instructions to their agents not to have us accommodated for reasons that I do not know... in instances where some of these Landlords rent apartments to Igbos, they still make life uncomfortable for them... so there is unbearable pressure for the Igbo in Ibadan to put up their own structures.

In a way, such rejection becomes a blessing in disguise for the Igbo whom circumstances compel to prioritize home ownership. Perhaps without this discriminatory attitude, the number of Igbos that own houses in Ibadan would not be as high as it is today. Undoubtedly, this has indirectly contributed to the characteristic physical expansion of Ibadan reputed as the largest city in West Africa. One of the IDI respondents, however, observed that most Igbos put up simple structures in Ibadan that they could easily dispose of on retirement from either the private or public sector.

Conclusion

Results of this study have shown that it is difficult to trace migration of the Igbo into Ibadan to a particular time in history. A combination of factors such as scarcity of land among a densely populated people, the quest to partake in trade among others is linked to the motivation to migrate to urban centres including Ibadan. While these factors explained out-migration into Nigerian cities and beyond, the socioeconomic, physical and psychological effects of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war on the Igbo amplified the zeal to struggle for survival outside Igboland mainly because they did not have faith in the Reintegration, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (RRR) proclaimed by the then military government.

Coming to Ibadan was envisaged as a first step towards overcoming powerlessness and frustration. While this became true for some of these migrants, others have continued in their penury to suggest that moving into a location is not sufficient condition to overcome

poverty but rather insight, diligence and prudence. For this and other reasons, TUAs not only have the oversight responsibility of guiding its members against frivolous behaviours but also financially aiding those that are disadvantaged. Discrimination against Igbos in the public sphere disheartens the people in the immediate but propels them to hard work and industry for which they are eventually appreciated. Such discrimination is not the case in the private sector where, due to ingenuity in trading, the Igbo dominate Ibadan-business landscape and could collectively decide prices of goods and allied services. Indeed, these economic power differentials and their concomitant demerits and strengths serve as push and pull factors respectively for an intending employee (a Yoruba, an Igbo etc) in deciding the most appropriate employment path to follow.

This paper reveals that while older Igbos in Ibadan have hardly been enculturated into Yoruba culture, except the few that were born and bred in the city, the younger are both *Yorubanized* and/or westernized; an attitude that readily manifests in their proficiency in Yoruba and English languages at the expense of Igbo language. We observe that exogamous marriage between Igbos and Yorubas or other cultural groups is one of the proximate ways of curbing the effects of ethnicity in Nigeria. This should be encouraged.

While we advocate healthy political contestations, especially within TUAs, this paper condemns, in strongest terms, getting involved in dangerous politicking for a position such as *Eze-Igbo* in Ibadan that is unpragmatic. We rather think that it is sensible to prioritize more fluid and visible linkages with family and relatives in the Southeast than engage in a venture that demobilizes efforts at unity and development.

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