



September 1981

# The next child: spacing strategy in Yorubaland (with translations from taped interviews)

Lawrence A. Adekun

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African Working Papers Working Paper No. 8 September 1981

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# The next child: spacing strategy in Yorubaland (with translations from taped interviews)

## **Abstract**

The translations of taped interviews with Yoruba parents in two' sub-ethnic groups, the Ikalẹ and the Ekiti, are the substance of this Working Paper. Very rarely do the views expressed at the field level survive into research reports, much less reach the demographer, concerned as he or she is ultimately with aggregated analysis. Very rarely, too, does the opportunity arise for parents involved in demographic surveys to 'have an input into the development of survey concepts. They are usually faced with readymade conceptualization, definition and operationalization of phenomena closely related to their lives, and asked to respond within these limits. The convention of pre-testing questionnaires, embodying those pre-determined concepts, helps up to the point of identifying inappropriate concepts, but not those that may be most germane.

## **Keywords**

yoruba, Africa, Ikalẹ, Ekiti, ethnic groups, in-depth interview, cross-sectional demographic study, interviews, ethnography, family planning, survey, Nigeria, questionnaire, KAP survey, literacy, Next Child Project (NCP), translation, transcripts

## **Comments**

African Working Papers Working Paper No. 8 September 1981





# African Demography Working Papers

Working Paper No.8

The Next Child: Spacing Strategy in Yorubaland  
(with translations from taped interviews)

Lawrence A. Adekun

September 1981

POPULATION STUDIES CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

**THE NEXT CHILD: SPACING STRATEGIES  
IN YORUBALAND**

**(with translations from taped interviews)**

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**8**

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Working Paper No. 8  
Population Studies Center  
University of Pennsylvania**

**September, 1981**

**New cover design by Marina Givotovsky**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the grant from The Ford Foundation made under the joint Ford and The Rockefeller Foundations' Research Program on Population and Development Policy, which made possible the research project 'The Next Child: Decision Making in Non-Contracepting Communities'.

I am also grateful to Messers Tayo Aṣogbon and Olu Olaleye who conducted the in-depth interviews in Ikale and Ekiti respectively, and to Miss Bola Ojo who translated the Ikale tapes. I am indebted to Professor Etienne van de Walle who, apart from suggesting that I prepare this Working Paper, gave many useful comments.

But to Margaret, my wife, who initiated discussion on our 'next child' and to our three daughters and one son - Omolola, Monisola, Adeola and Olusola - and the anonymous parents who subjected themselves to the interviews, this Paper is dedicated.

## CONTENTS

Part 1: THE NEXT CHILD: SPACING STRATEGIES IN YORUBALAND	
Introduction	p. 1
The Next Child Project	2
Planning the Interviews	7
Features of the Translations	11
Some concluding Remarks	13
References	16
Part 2: FAMILY PROFILES AND INTERVIEWS	
Ikale Family Profile No. 1	17
Ikale Family Profile No. 2	30
Ikale Family Profile No. 3	39
Ikale Family Profile No. 4	49
Ikale Family Profile No. 5	59
Ikale Family Profile No. 6	64
Ekiti Family Profile No. 7	70
Ekiti Family Profile No. 8	74
Part 3: GLOSSARY	79



## INTRODUCTION:

The translations of taped interviews with Yoruba parents in two sub-ethnic groups, the Ikale and the Ekiti, are the substance of this Working Paper. Very rarely do the views expressed at the field level survive into research reports, much less reach the demographer, concerned as he or she is ultimately with aggregated analysis. Very rarely, too, does the opportunity arise for parents involved in demographic surveys to have an input into the development of survey concepts. They are usually faced with readymade conceptualization, definition and operationalization of phenomena closely related to their lives, and asked to respond within these limits. The convention of pre-testing questionnaires, embodying those pre-determined concepts, helps up to the point of identifying inappropriate concepts, but not those that may be most germane.

The use of the in-depth interview technique, closer to the tradition of the anthropologist than that of the large scale cross-sectional demographic studies, brings the parents closer to the evolution of concepts and definitions concerning the circumstances surrounding maternal and child care and the timing of additional children in the community.

The use to which the information can be put will depend, of course, on the imagination of the readers and their interests. But in order to put the translations in their proper perspective, and in order to assist some with the methodological and ethnographic problems that may arise in the material, it has been thought necessary to include this introductory section which will cover the evolution of the Next Child Project (NCP), the planning of the interviews, features of the

translations and a few concluding remarks on the main themes of the taped discussions.

#### THE NEXT CHILD PROJECT:

My involvement with family planning studies in Nigeria form the initial stimulus for the ideas that finally took shape in the NCP. In 1970, I carried out the second of a 4-round annual evaluation survey of a rural family planning delivery project organized by a private hospital. Although the full report of the survey has been published (Farooq & Adeokun 1976), there were some features of the exercise that raise doubts about the methodology employed and the wisdom of expending the effort involved to prove the obvious: that the Nigerian society, either in Ishan Division or in Yorubaland, was largely pro-natalist, non-numerate, fatalistic about child bearings and apparently not cost-conscious about the burdens of large families.

First, although the questionnaire was short, it contained the main key-words and concepts associated with KAP surveys. The children ever born, the ideal and desired family sizes, and the desire for additional children, were all duly investigated. The problem was that, although the inadequacy of the concepts and a few of the questions became apparent in the second round, the convention of assuring comparability between the rounds and the absence of concrete alternatives meant that the evaluation continued. For example, the responses to ideal and desired family sizes were, for some, unrealistically high and for half the sample non-numeric at all. The response, that it was 'up to God' is capable of many interpretations.

Second, although the questionnaire was printed in the English

language, it was not administrable in that language because of the prevailing illiteracy. Whilst this is not unique to the Ishan evaluation survey, some outcomes may well have been peculiar to it. In an attempt to assure that translations were standardized during the second round, and in a language which I myself did not speak, I divided the interviewers into two groups. On alternative questions, one group provided the translation and the other group responded with approval or amendment of the translation. The arrangement worked well and translations became generally acceptable after little discussion. However, on one question, the very seriousness of the meaning attached to any one translation, and its impact on the reliability of results became apparent. The two translations<sup>1</sup> of the question: 'Do you want to be able to stop having children?' provided by the groups sounded similar and differed only in the last word. Yet the heated debate between the groups revealed how the simple enquiry about the desire for contraceptive knowledge could be misconstrued to mean a threat of imposing sterility on a population very desirous of large families.

The next involvement with family planning survey was on a larger scale. In 1971, the Institute of Population and Manpower Studies (now the Department of Demography and Social Statistics) of the University of Ife, Nigeria, embarked on a national KAP survey. The survey was to be in three regional phases extended over a two year period. But political and organizational problems resulted in the survey spreading into four calendar years. The questionnaires contained the whole range of topics

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1. Translation A: 'Iho ni che ye hama?'  
 Translation B: 'Iho ni che ye bie?'



usually covered in KAP surveys and there were separate schedules for the household, the eligible females and their husbands. Detailed marriage and pregnancy histories and the investigation of knowledge, understanding and use of 14 modern and supposedly traditional methods of contraception were included. After due consideration has been given to the regional differences in the rate of urbanization and the uniformly low level of literacy, the principles of probability selection or the magnitude of the sample could do no more than provide a sample that would consist largely of rural, illiterate residents with very low knowledge and use of contraception. It was also obvious that since there had been no serious effort at mass propagation of family planning in the country, and since the outlet for commercial distribution of some contraceptives was limited to a few of the larger urban centers, the knowledge and use of contraception would be very low.

There were other problems, but the ones relevant to the present exercise are, first, that the results (Adeokun ed. 1979) confirm the very low prevalence of modern contraception. Second, some traditional practices served universal needs that were unrelated to family limitation. Consequently, the reported knowledge of abstinence or breastfeeding as a contraceptive device could not be disentangled from the mere knowledge of the same practices as part of normal child rearing. Third, the volume of data generated from the survey was so massive and the speed of analysis so slowed down by various circumstances that it called in to question the initial scale of the exercise. And, finally, there was very little room for clarification of responses, in a schedule which consisted of asking precise information, even when there were doubts as to the extent to which such concepts were even salient let alone

numerically exact.

It is doubtful that this family planning research significantly improved understanding of the child-spacing strategies and mechanisms. Apart from confirming the very low levels of KAP, the feedback to family planning program effort in government or voluntary agencies was equally limited. It was my view that further investigation of the decision-making mechanisms for the timing of the next child was needed and that knowledge gained would be a pre-requisite for promoting changes in family formation and limitation.

I decided to focus on the Yoruba for a number of reasons. Although the Yoruba now number about 20 million in Nigeria alone, there are at least nine sub-ethnic groups to be recognized on the basis of their history and dialects. The sub-groups vary in size from an estimated six million Oyo and two million Ekiti to a quarter of a million Ikale.<sup>1</sup>

I belong to the Yoruba and was born into the Ekiti sub-group. I knew from commonsense knowledge that there were differences in various aspects of child rearing and marital sexual relationships between and within ethnic groups, which KAP schedules do not adequately take into account. I was aware that the riverine groups, such as the Ikale, were considered by the upland Ekiti group to be more fecund and fertile. There were suspicions that the attitudes toward premarital sex, the conditions of marriage and crucial elements of marital sexuality varied

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1. Other sub-groups are Egba, Ijebu, Ijesa, Ilaje, Ondo, and Owo. It is not easy to derive population estimates for the groups from available census data because information is not collected on sub-ethnic identity. But each group has easily identifiable core areas and settlements that are predominantly occupied by the group.



from one sub-group to another. Apart from popular jokes and comments, there were occasional mass media reports and some background literature (Ward 1937, 1938) which reinforced the likelihood of such variations.

At about the same time, I became aware of some circumstances of child rearing that may set lower limits to inter-birth intervals in any society, irrespective of differences in postnatal sexual practices. The medical concern with age/weight charts and the planning of basic health services in Nigeria also drew my attention to the relevance of the child-centered decision-making elements that affect the timing of additional children. The variations in such intermediate variables as duration of breastfeeding, patterns of growth and social development of each child were such elements. The Next Child Project (NCP) was the product of concerns with maternal care, patterns of child care, growth and development, and postnatal marital sexuality in relation to a decision on having another child. The objectives of the NCP were to investigate the patterns of maternal and child care, the parents' perception of the timing of various milestones in the development of their children, and to seek the links between marital sexuality, child development and the timing of a next child (other than the first). To achieve these objectives, it became necessary to alter the emphasis from that of the standard KAP survey.

Doubts were raised as to the readiness of women, and to a lesser extent men, to discuss marital sexual behaviour, although commonsense suggested that such topics were being discussed among friends and even with strangers during fertility festivals. Consequently, the pilot questionnaire, printed in English and Yoruba, was tested under a contrived situation, to determine the initial reaction to the whole range of new questions. A female interviewer was 'planted' on the staff of a

maternal and child welfare center where her duties were to make a detailed investigation of maternal care, infant behavior and marital sexuality. Judging by the responses and the opinion of the interviewer, the so-called delicate topics of sexuality were in place within the context of the overall emphasis on the timing of additional children. In essence, child spacing strategies were intrinsically interwoven with patterns of marital sexual behavior. A few modifications were suggested at this stage and these were effected before the questionnaire was taken into the field.

As long as the main target of the questionnaire was the quantification of patterns of behavior, it was of limited use in the definition of concepts that emerged from the experiences of the respondents. Consequently, a set of recorded interviews were planned to follow the administration of the questionnaires. The purposive selection of parents to be interviewed was aimed at providing views on child rearing and family formation from different social and marital contexts. Parents with few children, some with many, monogamous and polygamous unions, rich and poor parents were included.

#### PLANNING THE INTERVIEWS:

One feature of a large scale survey from which a small scale project could escape is the flurry of activities associated with the seeking of official approval and support at administrative and local levels. Such activities result in the raising of expectations, which the detached nature of most research projects are ill-suited to meet. We also realized that, at least in Yorubaland, the grand gestures to the high levels of administration were of no avail in obtaining the support of each village

or household head involved in the project. Unlike parts of northern Nigeria, where the approval of the hierarchy assured cooperation down the line, each Yoruba family's home was a "castle". In addition, the two locations chosen, one in upland Ekiti and the other in coastal Ikale, were both in the same administrative unit, Ondo State. Consequently, as a citizen of that state, I took the liberty of going directly to the village level to seek cooperation for the project. The anonymity of a University letter-headed paper, introducing the student of local origin to the village heads concerned and asking for their support, was considered adequate.

The use of students of local origin was a device to solve two problems. They would serve as intermediaries in the process of recruiting and training other local resource people such as teachers of primary schools and older pupils of the secondary school level. Since they came from the area, my participation in the actual execution of the fieldwork and the need to scale the 'outsider' hurdle would be reduced.<sup>1</sup> Whilst it was useful to have the letters of introduction and some vague academic rationale for the exercise, my personal appearance on the scene at the initial stage was likely to raise problems. I would be seen as part of the privileged group of academics, administrators and politicians who, unfortunately, were despised by the masses because of their connections to the former civilian regime and the then ruling military junta.

Another advantage of the 'insider' with whom they could more easily identify was the need to probe the new areas of marital sexual relationship and child rearing and development. This was to be entrusted to a

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1. I had entertained the idea of holding group discussions, with a number of families joining in, when I was writing the research proposal. This idea was abandoned after a few attempts revealed the reluctance of parents to hold such conversations.



single interviewer in each location. The selection of the person for the recorded interview was to emerge from performance in the administration of the questionnaires and the type of rapport that emerged between the respondents and the different interviewers. In Ekiti, the students emerged the most suitable for the task. Besides, I am an Ekiti and had spent my first 18 years of life in and around the villages selected there. In addition, the main features of Ekiti family formation approximated the broad pattern specified for the Yoruba (see Orubuloye 1977). I knew that abstinence was not only prolonged for purposes of observing the lactation taboo, but also (from the questionnaires themselves) that an additional period of abstinence was required before a decision was taken on the next child so that children would be old enough to be integrated into the mothers' activities (Adeokun 1981).

The situation in Ikale was different. The students from this relatively poor part of the country carried more status and a higher degree of remoteness from the community than their Ekiti counterpart. Whilst they made very good supervisors and trainers of the local interviewers, and whilst one of them was to be closely connected with the process of translation and transcription of the tapes from the local Ikale dialect into English, they did not meet the basic requirement of being able to empathize and relate to the local respondents who would be involved in the recorded interview.

Far from being a liability, the situation in Ikale produced a very fortunate development. The need to look for a totally different in-depth interviewer drew my attention to the one resource person I had used all along as a general liaison between me and the Ikale project. In the process of preparing the questionnaires, seeking out Ikale students, and

keeping in touch with them on the field, he had been my constant courier. The result was that he knew the overall intention of the project, the progress of the fieldwork and the problems likely to arise with the proposed taped interviews. He is not a university student. He works as an office clerk in one of the Faculty offices. He has only three years of post-primary education. He was about 25 years of age and was then unmarried. He had lost his father, a local Ikale chief, in infancy and had consequently had to cope with some local and personal responsibilities that made him more mature than his years. On a couple of visits to the fieldworkers with him as companion, I had watched his easy access to both old and young in the community. In some sense, he is a stand-in for his late father and, therefore, welcome at all levels of the society. I arranged for him to be granted occasional days off by his office, to allow trips to be made to the villages for the interviews. The quality of the very delicate discussions of various aspects of the project, contained in the Ikale tapes, more than justify my trust in this unusual interviewer.

Very small cassette recorders that carry their own integrated microphones were used. These need not be held by the interviewer and recordings were made with the recorders in the very generous pockets built into traditional Yoruba dresses. A request was made of parents selected from the questionnaire survey for further discussions of a more general nature. They were told that this would need to be recorded since no one knew how the discussions would go. Once approval was given, the recorder hardly drew any attention, except on one occasion when a husband was requested to give out what he regarded as a secret formula.

#### FEATURES OF THE TRANSLATIONS:

The procedure for the translations was as follows. Because of the limited education of the Ikale in-depth interviewer, the translation of the Ikale tapes into English was carried out by the university student who had taken part in the execution of the questionnaire survey. Although she was a university major in English language, she was instructed to keep very close to the literal translation of the conversations so as to preserve the atmosphere of the discussions. The translations were then passed on the interviewer to read through and comment. Points of minor correction were then ironed out by listening to the tapes again.

In the case of the Ekiti tapes, the interviewer, himself a university student, made the translations. Since I myself speak the dialect of the conversations, I then read his translations whilst listening to the tapes. I was able to make the necessary minor corrections.

In Ikale, 14 families were interviewed, using 10 separate cassette tapes with a total capacity of 13 hours. Of these, six family interviews, aimed at presenting the main ideas discussed, have been included in this Working Paper. There were 10 families interviewed in Ekiti on 7 tapes with a total time of 10½ hours. But only two of these interviews have been included here because they are considered adequate for showing the limited range of child-spacing options and choices made by parents in Ekiti.

One of the points emphasized in the briefing of the interviewer was the need to avoid asking leading questions that would suggest a desirable answer to the respondent. There are, however, some basic themes that were assumed as proven and, therefore, useful as opening lines. One such theme is the procreative motive for marriage. And since we were



not concerned with the timing of the first child as such, taking that to be desirable as soon after marriage as possible, it was possible for the interviewer to begin the discussion of child spacing with reference to the observed elapsed time between marriage and the arrival of the first child.

In Ekiti discussions, the opening theme was experimented with to see the effect of the wording on the readiness of parents to reveal the extent to which they had trouble starting a first pregnancy. If respondents were asked how long after marriage it was before the wife became pregnant, they tended to go on the defensive and reply that it was immediately. But if the question was worded in terms of the first child, that is, not in the idealized form of elapsed time since marriage but in the personal terms of a named child, then the respondents produced some detail of the trial for a first pregnancy that would indicate the existence of some delays for a few couples.

Interviewers were also free to make the very simplest deductions from the previous observations of respondents, not only as checks against accuracy but as point of departure for new lines of discussion. They were also equipped with a few problem areas that could be introduced without specific details, to give the respondents a chance of conveying how they idealize the problems. Nutrition, child care, illnesses and cures are such problem areas.

Finally, it will be observed that for 90 per cent of the text, the discussion is between the male interviewer and the husbands. This may give the impression that what we have is the male's point of view. Whilst the female perspective might differ somewhat, there are reasons to believe that their participation is more than the transcription might suggest. First, it was clear to the parents, even in polygamous families,

that the discussion was to be held with both husbands and wives. Consequently, the women were always within ear-shot, even when they went about some domestic activities. The atmosphere on the tapes leave no doubt that the women considered themselves part of the conversation going on. That they do not make many interventions does not mean that they did not influence the views expressed. In one illuminating instance, one woman remarked that with the look she gave her husband, he could not reveal the secret formula for a medicine to the interviewer. The spokesman is subject to the presence and views of the wife or wives. However, with reference to the nutrition and child care details, the women become more involved in the discussion, especially in the Ekiti interviews.

#### SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Apart from the curiosity value of direct access to the ethnographic recording of other people's conversation, there are some areas in which the content and quality of the translations can contribute to ongoing interests in the study of fertility, especially in non-contracepting societies.

First, whilst the demonstration of voluntarism in matters of child-spacing and family building is not a negation of the assumption of natural fertility in traditional society, it does raise doubts as to the degree of passivity and the extent to which the society is victim of supposedly inflexible biological imperatives and quasi-religious cultural practices. Whilst aggregated study might point to limitations imposed on the whole society, study of small scale demographic processes point to the available room for making choices by individual parents, choices that may depend on the changing circumstances of each child.



Second, once the voluntarism is granted, it is easier to recognize the existence of various strategies, employed singly or in combination, to achieve desired birth spacing. Apart from the more popular child-spacing strategy built around the practice of extended lactation and the observance of a taboo on sexual intercourse during lactation (Page and Lesthaeghe, 1981), a strategy which approximates the Ekiti pattern, there are two other strategies represented in the Ikalẹ discussions.

One strategy is based on the observance of a very short postnatal abstinence, not because of the existence of a taboo on sexual activity during lactation, but because of the condition called agbon or female body odor after parturition (Adeokun 1981a, forthcoming). Once the period of agbon is over, sexual activity is commenced, although extended lactation is continued. The interbirth interval is thus a function of the length of agbon, the length of post-partum amenorrhoea, and the practice of pregnancy prevention after agbon has ended.

The other Ikalẹ strategy starts from the notion of apa, that is, the principle that if a surviving child is less than one year old and another pregnancy occurs, a conflict situation arises between the survival of the nursing child and the survival of the foetus. In order to avoid the conflict, the marital sexual relationship of the parents may be organized in such a way as to prevent the undesirable pregnancy. In this connection, the observance of a short postnatal abstinence, the use of available traditional methods of contraception, and the possibility of inconvenient pregnancies are choices facing the parents.

One feature of the Ekiti child-spacing strategy is the existence of a clear distinction between the termination of lactation and the onset of

sexual activity. Although the observed mean duration of lactation was 21 months, the mean duration of abstinence was 27 months (Adeokun 1981). In effect, for most Ekiti, the phenomenon of amenorrhoea of a mean duration of 15 months was totally irrelevant to the child-spacing strategy. The duration of lactation was similarly of no direct relevance. The outer limit to the interbirth interval is primarily set by the duration of total postnatal abstinence. This conclusion draws attention to the common features of the child-spacing strategies in Ikalẹ and Ekiti, in spite of the apparent dissimilarities in marital sexual relationships.

The common feature in both societies is an externally derived concept of a "stage", unconnected with the parents' preferences in matters of sexuality, when it became proper to "decide on" or "plan for" the next child. By external I mean that the stage will not necessarily be affected by changes in such components in the interbirth interval as duration of lactation or associated amenorrhoea. In contrast, the stage will likely be determined by patterns of child rearing and growth and the extent to which parents maintain traditional contraceptive practices which make desired child spacing possible.

It is the derivation of this stage that the discussions attempted to probe by focusing on the patterns of child care, particularly those bearing on health and growth, attitudes to modern medical practices, and the specifics of the decision-making about the timing of additional or next child. The discussions indicate that child-spacing is highly surviving-child-centered. In addition, the stage in the physical growth and social development of the surviving child might be the critical variable in the study of natural fertility, variables through which child welfare, breastfeeding and socio-economic changes might be operating.

In the translated interviews, terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader are underlined. A glossary of such terms may be found at the end.

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## IKALE FAMILY PROFILE: No. 1

1. Type of marriage: Monogamous union
2. Duration of marriage(s): 9 years
3. Ages of spouses: Husband:- 30 yrs.; Wife:-n.a.
4. Years of education: Husband:- 8 yrs.; Wife:-n.a.
5. Occupation: Husband:-Farming; Wife:-Farming
6. Number of living children (age<sup>sex</sup>): Four (8<sup>f</sup>, 6<sup>f</sup>, 4<sup>m</sup>, 2<sup>f</sup>)
7. Number of deceased children: Nil
8. Number of still births: Nil
9. Number of miscarriages: Nil
10. Interviewer: Tayo
11. Husband: Resp
12. Wife: Wife
13. Visitor: Man

NAME

- Tayo When one gets married, it is implied that he wants children. After the birth of Owolabi, there is a whole two-year gap between Owolabi and Funmi. Why?
- Resp If a child is only one year older than the next, Apa will worry him. He will be very tiny and he might die as a result. That is why I allowed a two-year gap between them.
- Tayo What is Apa?
- Resp When a woman is expecting, the apa of the baby-on-the-way worries the one growing.
- Tayo How is that Apa in Ikaḷe land?
- Resp It cannot be seen. It is in the stomach. The baby-on-the-way is the Apa.
- Tayo Does it have a cure?
- Resp Yes, it does.
- Tayo Do you use a native cure or a European medicine?
- Resp I use a native cure.
- Tayo And it cures it completely?
- Resp Very much.
- Tayo After the birth of Owolabi, it was up to a week before you visited your wife's bed wasn't it?
- Resp The seventh day after her delivery I get there.
- Tayo And it doesn't worry her?
- Resp It doesn't. I already know how to do it.
- Tayo When you went, it did not bother her or worry her any how?
- Resp No.
- Tayo If your wife is expecting, do you still visit her bed?
- Resp That is when I go most because I want the baby-on-the-way to be very strong and healthy.
- Tayo And you mean that your visits make the coming baby strong?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo It has no error at all?
- Resp No.

- Tayo When you had Funmi, was it because of apa that you waited for two years?
- Resp Yes, so that my growing child might not be worried by apa.
- Tayo It is believed that when a man visits a woman's bed, pregnancy results. How were you able to avoid another child for up to two years since you visit your wife's bed on the seventh day after delivery?
- Resp Thank you. It is not every time you meet a woman that she takes in.
- Tayo How do you do it?
- Resp I know the way to do it.
- Tayo I see that each of your children is two years older than the next one. How do you do it? Do you take European medicines or do you do family planning?
- Resp What I do is that we are both cunning in doing this thing. If I go to her, I know how I will tell her to let's pour off the sperms so that it might not become a child. That is the method we use until it is time to allow another pregnancy.
- Tayo Is there a method you use?
- Resp There is.
- Tayo What method?
- Resp If sperms do not stay in a woman she will not be pregnant.
- Tayo It means it is the sperms that form a child?
- Resp They are the ones that form a child.
- Wife The thick and slimy thing.
- Tayo That is the method you use to effect these two year-differences in the children's ages.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo When you wanted to have Tomi after Funmi, that was how you did it, wasn't it?
- Resp It was.
- Tayo That is how you always go to your wife as you like and there has been no trouble?
- Resp None.
- Tayo Until you had Bose?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Bose is now two years old you know?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Why hasn't she got a junior yet?
- Resp The mother is expecting now.
- Tayo Is that so?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What disease do you know worries children most, especially as the next child is on the way?
- Resp Apa worries the growing child most.
- Tayo Apa alone?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is there any European medicine for apa you have used before?
- Resp I have not used the European one. It's the native one I use. There are the European ones.
- Tayo But you haven't used any of them?
- Resp I haven't.

- Tayo Is the native cure common? Does everyone know it or someone prepares it for you?
- Resp I was taught, so I know it and prepare it.
- Tayo You prepare it and sometimes also for sale?
- Resp I don't sell it. If anyone needs it for his child, I will freely prepare it for him.
- Tayo Children's welfare really means much to you?
- Resp Yes, children are for the whole world.
- Tayo What other disease do you know worries children?
- Resp There are others like cold, headache and fever.
- Tayo What medicines do you use in such cases?
- Resp I get the bark of Adenden tree and use it to prepare (cook) Owo mixture by grinding it before putting it to boil in some water. I then give it to my child. The fever will go.
- Tayo That is what you often use?
- Resp It is what I use most.
- Tayo You've had four children already. Now what disease do you think is quite general with them that is a disease that is common among them and may be termed the family disease?
- Man Is it when she's just pregnant or don't you know she's just pregnant?
- Wife Do not interrupt.
- Resp All I know are cold, headache, fever and apa.
- Tayo And you don't use any other curative.
- Resp I don't use any other medicine apart from the ones I said before.
- Tayo The curative for Apa. What do you use in preparing it? You said the medicine for fever is the bark of Adenden tree etc.
- Resp Ah! the apa one is very difficult to tell people about.
- Tayo How is it?
- Resp Ah! I have it in my head. I can never tell anyone about that.
- Tayo You know that we are among ourselves now.
- Resp Oh yes I know.
- Tayo If you tell me, it doesn't make any difference.
- Resp If you come to me for your own personal purpose, I will describe it to you. It is a secret thing.
- Tayo As it is now, it is for the benefit of everyone - born and unborn.
- Resp Ehn! If I'm going to describe, it will be to one person alone and not to the whole world.
- Tayo It is not the whole world that will hear you, it is you and I alone.
- Resp That thing is hearing us.
- Tayo Is it this thing in my hand?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo It doesn't make any difference.
- Resp I know, but I can't describe the medicine like that.
- Tayo Okay I agree.
- Resp It is the secret of men and women. If we want to talk about it, you have to put off that thing.
- Wife He dares not say it after the way I looked at him.
- Tayo When your wife puts to bed, does she have problems?
- Resp How do you mean?
- Tayo During delivery, some women have rips or they experience incessant stomachache.



- Resp One thing that worries her is what we call Oyiyi (turn-turn).
- Tayo How is this Oyiyi?
- Resp It's like sand but I haven't seen it before. It stays with the coming baby during pregnancy. After delivery, it searches for its companion hitherto, the baby. That is Oyiyi.
- Tayo It's in the stomach.
- Resp It's permanently there. It stays among the cord from which the baby comes out.
- Tayo Does its staying there not disturb the woman?
- Resp No.
- Tayo When there is no baby there, where does it stay?
- Resp It then starts worrying the woman, not all women, of course, but it worries my wife. After seven days it stops. Until she conceives and delivers another child before it starts all over again.
- Tayo Where does it go when there is no pregnancy?
- Resp It enters a nook, in the stomach of women.
- Tayo Is there a nook there?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What medicine do you give to your wife when Oyiyi worries her?
- Resp I use many kinds of medicine. The medicine do not cure it yet and I'm still looking for other ways.
- Tayo But you have had four experiences already and among them, there should be one steady medicine you give her.
- Resp I look for the soft part in the plantain tree, squeeze it, and give it to the woman. That part of the plantain tree is a very good curative for Oyiyi.
- Tayo When you give her to drink-----
- Resp Yes, it will leave her a bit.
- Tayo You don't have any other that you do?
- Resp No, the trouble will cease a bit and she will not be crying out as before.
- Tayo It goes until it enters the nook eventually?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo When your wife becomes pregnant, what illness does she normally have?
- Resp No other one apart from the fact that she vomits.
- Tayo When you become pregnant, is it true that you vomit, madam?
- Wife It is true.
- Tayo In that case what do you tell your husband?
- Wife I go to him and inform him that I vomit.
- Tayo What does he do?
- Wife He does nothing more than give me any medicine he thinks appropriate.
- Tayo And it cures it?
- Wife It often cures it.
- Tayo Vomit has now become the sort of disease that you have now?
- Wife Yes.
- Tayo Is it when you become pregnant alone that you vomit? For how many months do you vomit during pregnancy?
- Wife Not up to a month. It goes before the second month.
- Tayo In fact, your vomiting is the main sign of the commencement of your pregnancy.
- Wife Not that alone, when my menstruation circle fails, then I realize that I'm pregnant.

- Tayo So when you start vomitting, you are not surprised.
- Wife En helm! It shows that the baby is already planted there.
- Tayo After that and until your delivery do you experience any other problems?
- Wife No.
- Tayo I'm a native of Ilutitun and I know a bit of the whole process. There are some women, who, right until their delivery, complain of waist pains, thigh aches and stomach aches. Don't you experience any of these problems?
- Wife Not at all. It's only my vomitting.
- Tayo But when you are pregnant, what medicines do you use since if you were in a hospital town, you would be attending clinic?
- Wife My husband gives me the curatives for Dipadipa igbalode, Ilaun, and sometimes when the delivery date draws near, he gives me the Awebi soap and I use it for my bath.
- Tayo What is Igbalode?
- Resp It is a big problem in women and to prevent it from killing our women we prepare the medicine for it.
- Tayo What does it look like in women? Is it in women alone?
- Resp Yes it is solely in women. Do men get pregnant?
- Tayo Men do not get pregnant.
- Resp So it's in women.
- Tayo Is this Igbalode found inside the stomach?
- Resp Yes it's in the stomach.
- Tayo With the coming baby?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo How does it worry women?
- Resp When they deliver, Igbalode can start worrying them and this is why they use the cure during pregnancy.
- Tayo How does it trouble them after delivery?
- Resp It is the women who can explain that because I've never been pregnant.
- Tayo How is it, madam?
- Wife After delivery, my abdomen starts paining, an enlarged experience of some pieces of stone in one's eye. That is how it is.
- Tayo Is that Igbalode?
- Wife Yes.
- Tayo What is Dipadipa?
- Wife It kills children, starting from time they are still unborn. That is why we use the curative even before delivery.
- Tayo Does that dipadipa worry the baby right from pregnancy time?
- Wife Yes but as one uses the medicine from then, even if after delivery it comes, it will be much reduced. The taking of the medicine continues, though.
- Tayo What is this dipadipa like?
- Wife It is only women who know how their stomach are created. It has been a disease for our new born babies.
- Tayo How does it worry babies, Madam?
- Wife It is very much like Giri (convulsion). We all fear it.
- Tayo Giri?
- Wife Yes
- Tayo But your children do not suffer from giri.



- Wife Ah! It's because we know much about it. Evern since I did the curative for giri, it has not been worrying my children.
- Tayo I will ask about giri later. That dipadipa, if it gets to your child, let me ask your husband.
- Wife I will not even let it get to my child.
- Tayo If dipadipa worries your child, what do you do?
- Resp Dipadipa can't ever catch my child. I start treating it from pregnancy time.
- Tayo You seem to know how serious it is. Has it ever worried any of your children?
- Resp This is how I know, my father has told me the story of it long before I started having my own children. He said dipadipa kills children. He said dipadipa kills children and then taught me the medicine for it.
- Tayo Can't you teach me the medicine?
- Resp I can teach you.
- Tayo I want you to teach me please.
- Resp Not today.
- Tayo Today, I want you to teach me for the good of all of us born and unborn.
- Resp I am happy that you asked me to teach you but not today. There is a proverb that we cannot deal carelessly with things that are the top secrets of the society.
- Wife It kills people both young and old.
- Tayo How is it?
- Resp It is what we call "fear" or Eru. Some people call it Amukaka.
- Tayo Is that in books?
- Resp Yes, they call it that in the books of medicine men.
- Tayo Is it the babalawos?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What tribe calls it amukaka?
- Resp Very far away among the deep-tongued Yorubas.
- Tayo You don't know the name of the area.
- Resp No.
- Tayo How does it affect children?
- Resp When it comes, the child straightens both arms and legs and opens wide his eyes which is a sign that death is occurring.
- Tayo Does it have a cure?
- Resp It has.
- Tayo What do you often use to cure it?
- Resp I will tell you one medicine I give to such children that catch this disease. I get cow's urine and add something to it. Then I rub it on the child.
- Tayo What is that you add?
- Resp Sometimes I add ground Itaye.
- Tayo Is Itaye the real thing to add?
- Resp Yes I add Itaye. I rub it on child's head and even give him to drink.
- Tayo You mean cow's urine? It might cause another problem for the child.
- Resp Never, it's standard medicine.
- Tayo Standard?.
- Resp Yes.

- Tayo And it cures the eru.
- Resp It cures it.
- Tayo Does that eru swell in body before straightening him?
- Resp It doesn't swell. When it is coming to worry the child, even a fowl's feather will appear to him like teeth.
- Tayo To the child?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Has it ever worried you that you know so much about how it appears?
- Resp It has never happened to me but my father whose many children died...told me much about it and the cure because he didn't want any more deaths.
- Tayo Great things to him.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo So when you apply the aforesaid medicine, it goes?
- Resp Finally.
- Tayo Do you have more faith in European medicines than in native ones?
- Resp I believe more in the medicines from my fatherland.
- Tayo So you think the whites that perform operations do not know the work well?
- Resp They know but it's quite a different matter entirely to my fatherland's.
- Tayo Which one do you want to take to out of these two parties?
- Resp It's particularly the native ones that is good to take to. It has the whole world in its hands. One ought to go deep into it.
- Tayo But the people that know native medicine do not show the world of their knowledge.
- Resp Yes since the government doesn't allow them.
- Tayo The government doesn't prevent anyone who knows it from doing it. If you know the curative for giri, put signboard outside as to that effect. We will be coming to you. All of us make the government.
- Resp Do you know the reason behind this? The government wants something. If a person is taken to hospital, they will ask for ₦80 in the hospital, money will be given to them immediately.
- Tayo It is not the government that owns the money in the hospital. It is exclusively for the hospital.
- Resp But if it is within Ikale, ₦4 will be reluctantly paid. That is why they die in numbers.
- Tayo You believe that the native medicines are the best.
- Resp They are the best, my man. They will reduce these numerous deaths, though we know that we will all die.
- Tayo Is it that they will reduce deaths much?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo If your wife is in labour, do you take her to the hospital?
- Resp If my wife wants to deliver?
- Tayo Yes.
- Resp Spirit of my father please do not put me in hospital trouble.
- Tayo Amen.
- Resp It is in this, my father and mother's house, in their room, that my wife delivers.
- Tayo Who helps her deliver (Igbebi)?
- Resp My elders who know the job very well do it. Like Apena, I will call him to come and help me and within minutes he has done it.



- Tayo Is that apena his name?
- Resp It is a chieftaincy title for perfection in native medicines in Ogboni fraternity.
- Tayo Is it the babalawos that have that chieftaincy?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Which Awo is that?
- Resp Apena is a real awo.
- Tayo Is it Opele or Orumila?
- Resp He does all that and there is nothing he doesn't know in the world. He does everything. He's even in the Ogboni fraternity.
- Tayo Which one is he, the apena of among all these things?
- Resp In Ogboni.
- Tayo And he does help in delivery?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo And he does Awo?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo That is, he saves people from death?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo So it's him you patronize instead of going to the hospital?
- Resp It is because I go to him that I do not go to hospital. Because the hospital does not help.
- Tayo How is that Apena to you?
- Resp He's my brother.
- Tayo Of the same father?
- Resp No, he's my father's younger brother.
- Tayo So, he's like a father to you?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo And he saves?
- Resp He helps me a lot and saves a lot.
- Tayo There is saving at his place.
- Resp Yes, God accepts his prayers.
- Tayo I still don't understand how you said you always do it that your wife does not have two pregnancies within a year. What method do you say both of you use to prevent her getting pregnant at unwanted times?
- Resp To be honest, it is the women who really know the method.
- Tayo Okay let me ask Mama Bose why she does not get pregnant when you visit her bed? Madam, why?
- Wife It is all the work of God. According to the Yoruba proverb "if pounded yam is trying to kill one, it is the soup that begs it." The method I use is in my head.
- Tayo Will you please tell me?
- Wife Ah! You are a man.
- Tayo I know I'm a man but....
- Wife I can't give you my secret.
- Tayo I know you can't give me but as I am now, I am an Ikale man and I married an Ikale woman. I have wife and a child and there is no new thing beneath the sky. The world is the market and heaven is our home. Tell me because I may use this method for my wife. If I tell you the history of myself and my wife, she can relate to you.
- Wife Thank you. There are many methods. If I don't want to be pregnant yet, immediately my husband comes of me, I too get up. The whole thing comes out. That's one method. Is that not enough?

- Tayo Is that the method you use?
- Wife Yes, I use that.
- Tayo Is that the only method you use?
- Wife Is it not enough for you?
- Tayo It is, but is that the only one you use?
- Wife Yes.
- Tayo There is no other one?
- Wife No.
- Tayo Thank you for telling me. Don't you disagree with your husband, visiting your bed a week after delivery?
- Wife No, how can I, is he not my husband?
- Tayo Yes I know but there are many who refuse.
- Wife It's because they do not understand. Do I know how long I will live, to start refusing my husband? Since it's not an outsider.
- Tayo So the thing is a source of real joy?
- Wife Yes it is really.
- Tayo Just as if you are enjoying yourself.
- Wife Yes, its real enjoyment. Maybe there is not such enjoyment in heaven, no one knows.
- Tayo You too, Sir, how does it look like? Do you enjoy it very much?
- Resp Thank you. That God created me deserves gratitude. Then the person (wife) of enjoyment he gives me, it's just great. It's real enjoyment he gave me when he made me a man. It gladdens me.
- Tayo It gladdens you when you are doing it?
- Resp Yes, very much. Particularly since I enjoy another element in it, the element of children coming out of the whole process.
- Tayo The child bearing? I know that but when you do not want that yet. What does it give to your body?
- Resp In my body, it sometimes gives me strength.
- Tayo Strength?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo During the process, you drain some blood from your wife or what?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Or your wife drains yours?
- Resp She drains mine and I drain hers.
- Tayo How do you drain hers?
- Resp When our bodies touch, hers come into me and when I release, she gets mine.
- Tayo Is that all you get?
- Resp Yes, but the best is the child gotten from it and it is a big gain that God gives to both of us. We thank him for the enjoyment.
- Tayo Is that all?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo My mother told me that I did not walk until I was three years old. At what age do your children walk?
- Resp My children walk before they are one year old.
- Tayo How do you do it that they walk so quickly? Do they use children's bicycle?
- Resp Never, but one thing I do is that I hold my little child by the hands in the moonlight, and make him walk singing "tete o" you are old enough to have a junior, "tete o" (3ce) As we move, I suddenly drop his hands, when he wants to fall, I hold him again and on and on like that. Before the end of the month, he starts walking.

- Tayo So before they are one year old, they walk?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is it all of them? Or do some of them walk at 9 months?
- Resp At eleven months, my children can run about.
- Tayo They have started walking around 10 months of age?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Why is it that children of today start walking at an early age because I am sure you were up to two before you walked.
- Resp Even more than that.
- Tayo And it is what our people use in those days that you use now, what then is the reason?
- Resp This is why. Dirtiness was too much.
- Tayo Dirtiness?
- Resp It was too much.
- Tayo Is it what we call cleanliness?
- Resp Yes, dirtiness was too much in the olden days. It didn't allow children to walk early. It did not allow their healthy growth.
- Tayo Is it that your children are very fat and healthy now?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Apa doesn't affect them since you give them the curative for it.
- Resp They are very healthy.
- Tayo You are a farmer. Don't you take them to your farm?
- Resp Thank you. They walk to my farm on foot themselves. And this farm is 2 miles to my ago settlement area.
- Tayo What is ago?
- Resp Where I settle or live. Not my village but where I work.
- Tayo You build a hut there or a real house.
- Resp I built a real house there. When I return from the farm, I sleep in the house and....
- Tayo You later come to Ilutitun, your native town?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Have you just arrived this weekend?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo In your farm do you have a hut?
- Resp No, I do not have.
- Tayo What happens when it is raining?
- Resp I run to the house.
- Tayo Leaving the children behind?
- Resp They are so fast, I won't even catch up with them.
- Tayo But you said it is up to 2 miles.
- Resp Yes it is, might even be more.
- Tayo The rain will meet you on the way.
- Resp If the rain first blows wind, it will not meet us but otherwise, it does.
- Tayo When it's raining, with what do you protect yourselves?
- Resp I get cocoyam leaves or plaintain leaves and give them to each of my children.
- Tayo Why do you not buy umbrellas or raincoats?
- Resp I can't afford umbrellas for each of them.
- Tayo What do you do to them to effect the cleanliness that is different from the olden days?
- Resp I, their father have my bath regularly. In the morning, before going to the farm, I take a bath and do so later in the afternoon.



- Tayo Before going to the farm, knowing fully that you are going for a dirty job.
- Resp Yes. And so I gradually educate my children that way. If after the day's work, I'm exhausted throughout the night, when I take my bath in the morning, my strength comes fully back.
- Tayo The water is just like a drug for you.
- Resp Yes. The cold water is like a real medicine.
- Tayo Do you put the water outside in the dew throughout the night?
- Resp No. The newly fetched water from the river is the best.
- Tayo And your body straightens.
- Resp Yes. I will be able to work better than the previous day.
- Tayo Was there no cold water in the olden days, since its these cold water baths that make your children healthy?
- Resp That was very cold water then.
- Tayo They use it for bath taking?
- Resp Yes for bath taking.
- Tayo Is it that you know or you were told?
- Resp My father told me the story.
- Tayo What kind of food do you give to your children?
- Resp I don't have much. I give them cassava, gari, eba, yam, cocoyam. That's all.
- Tayo How do you think these foods are?
- Resp Since they do not worry my children, I take it that they are alright.
- Tayo Out of all these, which one do you like best?
- Resp Cassava.
- Tayo What is cassava?
- Resp Pupuru. We plant it in the farm.
- Tayo How do you do it? After planting it in the farm?
- Resp It grows, and when we feel it's alright, we dig it up. The skin is peeled off and the body is soaked in water. When it gets soft, the women wash it, make it into mounds and put them up to dry. Later we sieve it and turn it in a pot containing boiling water. After that we eat it.
- Tayo How many times do you eat it daily? You and your children.
- Resp Morning and evening.
- Tayo What do you eat in the afternoon?
- Resp If there is gari, we take it soaked in water. Because I don't want them overfeeding.
- Tayo It is gari they take in the afternoon.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo When do you take pounded yam?
- Resp Once in a while.
- Tayo Aren't you a farmer?
- Resp I'm a farmer. I have a reason for taking pounded yam rarely. It really makes one lazy. One feels Ikefu.
- Tayo What do you mean?
- Resp If I eat pounded yam today, I will not be able to go and do my work tomorrow. My stomach will stay big and hard.
- Tayo How?
- Resp But if it were cassava, I would have gotten rid of the whole thing by morning. I will be very healthy.

- Tayo What is Ikefu?
- Resp Pounded yam is not like cassava in the body. That is the meaning of Ikefu.
- Tayo Does it swell in the stomach?
- Resp It does not swell but you will feel the difference in your body. It's like when one is worried by Lukuluku. Does it swell? It does not swell but still it is in the stomach.
- Tayo What is lukuluku?
- Resp It's in the stomach. It is what the Europeans made a medicine called Nivaquine.
- Tayo Nivaquine?
- Resp Yes, it is for Lukuluku.
- Man It is what we call Agbigbara.
- Resp Agbigbara.
- Tayo Is that what Ikale call it?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo If it catches a child, how is it?
- Resp The hands and legs will be very cold.
- Tayo But the other parts?
- Resp The stomach can be warm.
- Tayo What signs do you see before the real agbigbara comes.
- Resp When a child looks sullen, feel his palms and soles and you will find that they are cold.
- Tayo Then we know that this thing is coming.
- Resp We then massage the sides of his stomach and under the last ribs.
- Tayo Then how do you know where the lukuluku is?
- Resp When your hand gets to where it is, the child screams.
- Tayo And so you get its medicine. Did it ever worry any of your 4 children?
- Resp Yes, it did. It worries the whole world.
- Tayo When I was asking you did not say that.
- Resp Ah! It worries everyone. I thought it is not strange to you since you are an Ikale.
- Tayo I haven't been staying at home.
- Resp It even worries Europeans.
- Tayo Does it?
- Resp Yes. That is why they made Nivaquine.
- Tayo Is that what they use?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Since you know that Nivaquine is used, do you use European medicine or Yoruba one?
- Resp The Yoruba one. I only read about it because I knew some things those days that my father sent me to school.
- Tayo When Lukuluku worries your child, is it your wife that reports the matter to you. Or how do you know?
- Resp If I am in the farm when it happens, my wife brings me the child telling me to feel him. I feel the palm and sole and stomach and if he screams I simply start looking for the appropriate herbs.
- Tayo What herbs do you use?
- Resp I look for popore, I soak it and give the solution to my child.
- Tayo What tree is popore? Is it the root?
- Resp It is a tree.



- Tayo What does it look like? Is it found only in the bush?
- Resp Everywhere but Alahan is not found during the dry season. Not at all around here but near the river.
- Tayo Can you take me there later?
- Resp It's very far away.
- Tayo I want to be preparing it for sale just as the European sells Nivaquine.
- Resp If I ask you to pay ₦20 before taking you there, will you pay?
- Tayo Yes I'll pay.
- Resp Okay let's go.
- Tayo When we finish our discussion we go. So, it's only lukuluku that worry your children?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What food do you and your wife eat often?
- Resp I eat cassava in the morning before going to the farm and again in the evening. I eat twice a day but I can't tell how many times she eats per day since I am never at home in the afternoons.
- Tayo What do you eat in the afternoon?
- Resp I don't eat anything except if I drink water.
- Tayo How do you then get enough strength to do your farming work?
- Resp The breakfast carries me up to 3 o'clock then I drink cold water.
- Tayo What does water do to you?
- Resp The strength it gives me is much. If I drink water on realizing that I'm getting tired, my strength comes back in full force.
- Tayo Praise be to the farmer. What soup do you often take?
- Resp Vegetable soup, water leaf, iroko, legede, tete. But I don't take bitter leave.
- Tayo Do you specify the type of vegetable you want for your wife?
- Resp Yes, because she wouldn't have known otherwise. At the first harvesting of okro, I eat it. But I stop eating it after a month.
- Tayo Is it not good then?
- Resp It's not good after a month.
- Tayo Do you ration your food? Or you just take any one when you like to?
- Resp I take anything anytime I want it.
- Tayo Does your wife add Ogiri (rotten mellow) into your vegetable soup?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo I see that you have plenty of plantains. How do you eat them?
- Resp When they are good enough, I ask my wife to take them to Atijere market for an exchange with fish. That is done at Atijere. And I use the fish to cook vegetable soup. Later I sell the rest to Calabar people and keep the money. I occasionally cook them for my children.
- Tayo Do you think that it is mainly in these food items that cleanliness exists to effect the healthy growth of your children?
- Resp Yes, I believe that what one eats without any harm is one's saviour.
- Tayo There are orange trees, cashew trees, mango trees and the rest here. Do you allow your children to take them?
- Resp Not into excess. I allow them to take some.
- Tayo What good do you think is derived from these oranges?
- Resp The old people told me that they cause fever.
- Tayo What about sugarcane?
- Resp I was told that it causes fever.



Tayo Sugarcane also?  
 Resp Yes. If my children take only a bit of it, I'm okay.  
 Tayo Since it causes fever, why do you allow them to take it at all?  
 Resp Since it is only a small bit, it will not cause much havoc and the slight result can be cured by herbs.  
 Tayo When do they take coconut?  
 Resp The children do take the oranges despite all warnings so I give them herbs and they go to toilet.  
 Tayo I can see pepperfruit, coconut and many others.  
 Resp Yes. It is not all of them that my children take. I sell some.  
 Tayo You sell them to others to take knowing fully well what they cause?  
 Resp When they come to buy, they don't usually buy them for feeding. They come to buy. If instead they ask for them to take, I know how to ration it for them.  
 Tayo Do they not harm or even kill people?  
 Resp No they don't.  
 Tayo I'm happy they don't kill people. May God give you long life. I will be seeing you later.  
 Resp May we meet in peace.  
 Tayo Thank you mama Bose.  
 Wife May we meet in peace.  
 Tayo Amen.

IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 2

1. Type of marriage: Monogamous union  
 2. Duration of marriage(s): 15 years  
 3. Ages of spouses Husband:- 42 yrs.; Wife:- 40 yrs.  
 4. Years of education: Husband:- 15 yrs.; Wife:- 11 yrs.  
 5. Occupation Husband:- Teaching; Wife:- Teaching  
 6. Number of living children (age<sup>sex</sup>): Four (13<sup>m</sup>, 11<sup>m</sup>, 9<sup>m</sup>, 6<sup>f</sup>)  
 7. Number of deceased children: Nil  
 8. Number of still births: Nil  
 9. Number of miscarriages: 3  
 10. Resp Husband  
 11. Tayo Interviewer  
 12. Wife Wife

NAME

Tayo When one gets married, it's agreed that he wants children. After the delivery of Dayo was it up to a week before you visited your wife's bed?  
 Resp It was longer than that.  
 Tayo Up to a month?  
 Resp Up to a year. I was not around.  
 Tayo Where were you?  
 Resp I was in training.

Tayo Was that the result?

Resp Yes.

Tayo Do you only meet here during your holidays?

Resp Yes but sometimes I don't even see her because I go to Lagos for my holidays.

Tayo Don't you like to spend holidays with your family?

Wife The child was ill at the time.

Resp The illness was the result of poor care. I was never happy with the condition I met Dayo and the mother because there was no proper care.

Tayo Is it because of lack of proper care that Dayo falls sick?

Resp I should think so.

Tayo Is the sickness permanent or it comes and goes?

Resp It comes and goes.

Tayo Did the sickness last up to 2 years?

Resp It lasted a year but has since stopped after my training.

Tayo What sort of illness was it?

Resp I could call it convulsion.

Tayo Always convulsion?

Resp Lack of food and proper care.

Tayo What causes convulsion?

Resp Lack of food and care.

Wife Another disease is jafuje.

Tayo What causes jafuje?

Resp It is common in Ikale land. What I know is lack of the normal food to give the child blood. I wasn't working, my wife too was not working and my parents with whom she was staying were not around. She was alone in the house.

Tayo When Dayo was having convulsion was he taken to hospital?

Resp Local medicine was used.

Tayo Did it work?

Resp It worked well.

Tayo For jafuje, was Dayo taken to hospital?

Resp There was never a time when he was taken to hospital. It was always treated at home.

Tayo Until he was okay?

Resp Yes.

Tayo Why?

Resp Medically, I see that the hospital treatment is hygienic.

Tayo Why? In what year was a hospital built in our area?

Resp It was around 1957.

Tayo I know that you were grown up by then, even I was growing up then. Before 1957, what medicines were you using?

Resp The native ones and it was the one used for my child. But after treatment, it come back again later. But if it were the European medicine, it's total cure.

Tayo So you believe that it was the hospital that finally cured your child.

Resp Plus the care and the food she takes after finishing my training to maintain the family.

Tayo When you were just coming home for that whole year, you did not 'see' your wife at all?

- Resp I have to, how can you have a wife and not see her?
- Tayo Has there been any miscarriage?
- Resp No, since I started until I had the 4 issues, there had been none.
- Tayo Why is there no pregnancy for 2 years and 3 months?
- Resp Her case is peculiar to her because after delivery she does not menstruate until another pregnancy and that is a whole year.
- Tayo Within that year, both of you are free.
- Resp Yes, there is no calculation.
- Tayo After your training, you started living together immediately?
- Resp Yes, for some time.
- Tayo When Dayo was being expected, were you not around?
- Resp No, the pregnancy resulted from my visit during one holiday time. I went back for training barely a week after our marriage.
- Tayo After the delivery of Dayo, it was 3 months before you had a holiday and could see your wife.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Before the delivery of Tunde, you had finished your training and was living with your wife.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Was it up to 2 weeks after delivery before you 'saw' her?
- Resp It was longer than that. Up to 3 months.
- Tayo Why?
- Resp Because, that is how I like it.
- Tayo You know no pregnancy can occur before a year, why did you not make the best of it?
- Resp Because for the first 3 months, a woman has an odor that I don't like.
- Tayo What causes the odor (agbon)?
- Resp I think it is new blood (Eje tutu). Immediately after delivery their blood is new and clean. When their body is strong again, the new blood finally goes as the new baby is getting stronger.
- Tayo So agbon is caused solely by the cold new blood.
- Resp The women ought to know the cause better.
- Tayo Madam please do you know?
- Wife I'm not sure either, but maybe it's the new blood. Again, new born babies do have an odor. If one is holding a baby, the odor will spread out.
- Tayo Sir, does this agbon apply to all women?
- Resp Yes, all.
- Wife It's because of the numerous pieces of clothes she uses to cater for the baby's welfare.
- Tayo Is agbon peculiar to Ikale women alone?
- Resp No, to every woman.
- Tayo So, the agbon keeps you away from your wife for 3 months but after that, you are free.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Does your wife not complain that you inconvenience her?
- Resp How can she, when I own her?
- Tayo Madam can't you say it?
- Wife If it is not convenient, I will say. But it has not been too frequent.
- Tayo For 3 months after the return of your wife's menses after the one year lapse after delivery, she did not take in. Why?



Resp: There was no 3 month-delay of pregnancy.

Tayo: So she has been having her subsequent pregnancies on the dot, a year after delivery?

Resp: There was a break during Kole's pregnancy.

Tayo: What was that?

Resp: There was no miscarriage.

Tayo: Then why?

Resp: I did not notice why. Maybe I was not around.

Tayo: Where were you after training?

Resp: I was at Ijuodo with my wife. But she wanted to deliver Tunde. So she came back here permanently.

Tayo: It is a short distance. Were you living at Ijuodo, you could come here daily. Why is there a gap between your children?

Resp: There is no gap between Femi and Tunde.

Wife: Tunde and Kole.

Resp: Oh we were at Ikoya here. Then I was teaching.

Tayo: Then why the gap between Tunde and Kole? Did you travel?

Resp: No, but I can't recollect why. Oh my wife was teaching then and she had a different station from mine.

Tayo: Didn't you like to be together?

Resp: Supposing we did like that but the government opposed.

Tayo: I feel that the government allow married couples to be together.

Resp: Our government here, they did not allow that.

Tayo: So the gap resulted from her having another station?

Resp: Yes I think so. It's even so.

Tayo: Was her station far from yours then?

Resp: No. She might have finished her menstruation on a Monday and so if we meet at the weekend it might not result in pregnancy.

Tayo: What time do you think is good after menses?

Resp: The first five days.

Tayo: So, if she finished on Monday, it is still okay on Friday?

Resp: What if she did not come home?

Tayo: If she didn't come home, why did you not go to her?

Resp: That is if I knew at all.

Wife: He would even have had to cross the river.

Resp: Yes because she was at Mahintedo then.

Tayo: It's not far.

Resp: Will I be running about because of that when I have my own work? And even there were the little ones with me then. (Femi and Tunde).

Tayo: Was that the sole cause of the gap between Tunde and Kole?

Resp: Yes, when she was expecting she came back here and then took to Gedege.

Tayo: And you were here then.

Resp: Yes.

Tayo: But she was walking there daily?

Resp: No, she lived there.

Tayo: During pregnancy, do you not visit her bed?

Resp: Why not?

Tayo: Definitely you don't know about her pregnancy in the first month but you know in the second month.

Resp: Yes.

Tayo: Don't you mind continuing?

- Resp No, I visit her bed right from the 3 months after delivery till she delivers again and there is no affect.
- Tayo But when you are expecting a child, do you believe in giving medicine to the one growing?
- Resp How do you mean?
- Tayo Maybe the coming child worries the one growing.
- Resp Apa, no apa doesn't worry my children.
- Tayo You believe there is no apa?
- Resp There might be according to people, but I have not experienced it.
- Tayo Don't you know the cause?
- Resp No, even if it is explained to me, as long as I don't experience it to have knowledge of it, I don't believe it.
- Tayo Why is there a small gap between Kole and Ola?
- Resp There is no gap - 1970 to '72. Two years.
- Tayo 3 years Feb. '70 to Feb. '72.
- Resp Plus only 3 months. By Feb. 1971 he was one year old.
- Tayo And pregnancy lasts for only 9 months.
- Resp Some are longer than that.
- Tayo It means that she might even stay longer than a year after delivery before she takes in again.
- Resp All I know is that she takes in with the first menstruation.
- Tayo Okay. It then means that her menses keep away for more than a year.
- Resp That might be so.
- Tayo Is it not regular? Why do you think her menses keep away?
- Wife People are different from each other.
- Tayo What disease is common with your children?
- Resp Apart from Dayo's case my children have fever.
- Tayo When that happens what medicine do they take?
- Resp Tablets and native medicines.
- Tayo Which one do you prefer?
- Resp The tablets help my children better than the native medicines and they now suit my blood.
- Tayo Your children were brought up with the European medicines?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Which is the better of the two?
- Resp It depends; the native medicines are dying away and the native doctors too are getting extinct and so fewer or them are available to prescribe the right herbs to you. But there are tablets for different illnesses, available in the nearest chemist to you.
- Tayo Why can't we get these herbs?
- Resp You yourself see how Akintola eradicated the whole lot.
- Tayo Is it because Akintola acquired all forests that there are no herbs?
- Resp Yes. The two are happening. Old people are dying with the knowledge of herbs.
- Tayo Supposing they transfer their knowledge to younger generation. Would you still think the native medicines are better than the foreign ones?
- Resp Yes. They are much better.
- Tayo Does your wife deliver at home?
- Resp Yes, she does and doesn't labour for more than 20 minutes.
- Tayo And you undergo all the native processes?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is that the best step to take?



Resp That is how I do it, whether it is the best or not does not matter.  
 Tayo She doesn't attend clinic?  
 Resp No she's never been there.  
 Tayo So your children too have never been there. How then do you treat them?  
 Resp I get the tablets myself.  
 Tayo What food do you often give to them?  
 Resp I practice what they call balanced diet.  
 Tayo I know that some doctors don't want their children to take what they cannot take - what about your children?  
 Resp There is none they can't take.  
 Tayo What can they take?  
 Resp Eba, cassava, (pounded yam) yam, rice beans and plantain etc.  
 Tayo When they are still very small, what food do they take?  
 Resp My children do not take baby foods.  
 Tayo You do not feed them at all?  
 Resp They are given but they refuse.  
 Wife After 5 months they reject totally.  
 Resp Some even start rejecting after 2 weeks.  
 Tayo Do you then mix cassava for them?  
 Resp No, they breastfeed.  
 Tayo Does that last up to 2 years?  
 Resp A year. Before they are one year old, they start eating what I eat myself.  
 Tayo What food do they like best?  
 Resp Kole, what food do you like best?  
 Kole Rice, pounded yam.  
 Tunde Rice and pounded yam.  
 Tayo Do you give them these things often?  
 Resp Why not?  
 Tayo They eat pounded yam very much?  
 Resp Yes and they eat cassava too.  
 Tayo What food is best for the children?  
 Resp We eat pounded yam once a week.  
 Tayo Don't you have problems with the food items?  
 Resp No problem  
 Tayo Do you have a timetable for food?  
 Resp No, but we eat what is appropriate.  
 Tayo Since your children like rice and pounded yam, could you give them everything they want, e.g. morning, afternoon and evening?  
 Resp No, they take what they are given despite the likeness for some special food items. If they are ill, then we give them whatever they want but when they are okay, that stops.  
 Tayo Do your children walk around 1½ years old?  
 Resp When they are one year old they walk.  
 Tayo Why is this? I was told I walked at 3 years of age.  
 Resp It's the lack of balanced diet.  
 Wife Children do take after their mothers.  
 Tayo Why are your children not being sick?  
 Resp If one has good blood, there is no disease he cannot combat. And this blood is derived from good food.  
 Tayo What food items are good?



- Resp We always take green vegetables, beans.
- Tayo What vegetables do you often take?
- Resp Water leaf, black pepper-soup. I don't take fried pepper stew or else we will have to make okro soup differently.
- Tayo Is it water leaf alone you take, or all vegetables?
- Resp My wife must cook it for me nearly always either to eat with rice, cassava or eba.
- Tayo Madam, do you have problems when you get pregnant?
- Wife I do have problems.
- Tayo Like what?
- Wife I will be vomitting and getting sick.
- Tayo Is that at the commencement of the pregnancy? Around the first month?
- Wife Yes and even longer than that.
- Tayo What medicine do you use?
- Wife I use herbs.
- Tayo What herbs?
- Wife I don't know them because I'm always given.
- Tayo They are local ones?
- Wife Yes.
- Tayo After 5 months, don't you have problems? whether backache etc.
- Wife No.
- Resp On the day of the birth of Tunde, we went to the farm to work and she delivered on our return journey. Kole too. That day she came back from school and was writing her lesson notes when labour came. She had him after ten minutes. So she has no problems. But we weren't together.
- Tayo Why didn't you like to be in the same environment?
- Resp It's good like that. Because there was no nearby school in the settlement I was in then, and the government did not allow the two of us to be in the same school. I stayed at Aye.
- Tayo Why did you not move her to Aye?
- Resp I wouldn't have liked to.
- Tayo Then why did you not come down to Ikoya?
- Resp I requested that many times but to no avail. It was my wish to be there.
- Tayo Why haven't you had another issue since 1972?
- Resp In 1973 my wife gained admission into a teachers training school. She came out in 1976.
- Tayo Why since 1976 has she not got any issue?
- Resp She's had up to 3 miscarriages since 1976.
- Tayo What causes them?
- Resp I don't know. People said it was worms. She went to see the seer and he said there was nothing. The first pregnancy lasted up to 4 months. The next one about 7 months and the last one lasted 3 months.
- Tayo Please madam, how do you feel when the pregnancy is about to fail?
- Wife Nothing serious. I may be having slight stomach upset.
- Tayo What medicine do you use then?
- Wife I use some.
- Tayo Native or foreign?
- Resp For the first miscarriage, they were having their physical education practical teaching. The following week, this miscarriage took place.
- Tayo Do you think the physical education caused it?

Resp Yes, she had to stand on her head with her legs up and she often fell heavily.

Tayo Were you at the school then?

Resp Yes.

Tayo When it happened, did you leave school for the house?

Resp No, we went to the hospital.

Tayo That was the only one you had to go to the hospital for?

Resp And the third one.

Tayo What did the doctors have to say?

Resp They just treated her and told us that there is no problem.

Tayo Was that the hospital at Okitipupa?

Resp Yes.

Tayo Why did you not change hospitals the third time?

Resp We usually go on emergency. And after treatment we go back home. At the third time, when the pregnancy was 2 months old, she went for a check-up and the doctor said there was no problem.

Tayo Is there only one doctor at Okitipupa?

Resp Yes, Dr. Essien.

Tayo Is he a Yoruba man?

Resp No, Ibo.

Tayo When it was suggested that the miscarriage might have been caused by worms, why did you not try to use local medicines?

Resp We tried those.

Tayo After the miscarriages, did you not try to check the blood and how it was?

Wife It was not ordinary blood. It had formed a foetus. The first one, we could see the different parts of the baby. The second one too, was obvious. It was only the last one that had not formed well.

Tayo What did you do immediately?

Wife I came back home.

Tayo And you don't know the causes? During those pregnancies that ended up in miscarriages, did you feel or notice any differences from the preceding pregnancies?

Wife They are not different.

Tayo Why did you not try to go to another hospital?

Wife When we saw the doctor, I asked him maybe I have to stop having children. But he said no and that the next time I take in, he was going to treat me and see me through the delivery.

Tayo Supposing he had asked you to stop, were you okay with 4 issues?

Wife If he knew that something bad could come after, I would gladly have stopped.

Tayo Do you believe that this modern life is okay?

Resp Yes, why not? It's better than the old times.

Tayo It is better than the old times?

Resp Though it entails unrest, nevertheless, it's a better life.

Tayo Why is it better?

Resp In all aspects of life, it is better medically, even spiritually.

Tayo You married in 1963 and had your first issue in '65. Why?

Resp I was in training.

Tayo For 2 years?

Resp Yes.

Tayo Was the training the sole cause?



- Resp It contributed. My wife also had some trouble with worms in the early stage.
- Tayo Did you use foreign medicines then?
- Resp I've said that I've never used any foreign medicine.
- Tayo When you applied native medicines for 2 months, was she cured?
- Resp Not for a month but immediately we did the necessary things, she was cured. And there was no other problem.
- Tayo And so you like to go back to the native medicine now?
- Resp From that time, I did not leave it.
- Tayo For your wife?
- Resp I did not leave native medicine, even for her case. What happened was that I was no longer in touch with the man but I have now found him.
- Tayo Do you like having many children?
- Resp No. I don't.
- Tayo Why?
- Resp It's because of the modern life. It is possible to ask God to help bring up the ones I've had already, I'll do it. It's the problem of maintenance.
- Tayo Is it food?
- Resp Feeding, education, appearance, clothing, and so on are the things.
- Tayo So you like your children to be educated.
- Resp Yes and during their education, I don't want them to suffer at all.
- Tayo Our forefathers were not educated and yet, they had money and such cases still exist.
- Resp Money belonging to an uneducated man is either inherited or gotten by foul means. If we mean to labour for money, our forefathers did not do this. For example, we are the first set of Manuwa Memorial Grammar School. When I gained the admission, I went to my father who asked me what the school fees were per annum. I told him it was up to ₦200. He said he did not have up to 30 ridges of cassava in the farm, how would he pay ₦60, there was no way, so I looked for petty job to send myself to first Grade III T.T. School and then to Grade II. T.T. School. If I had had the chance to attend a secondary school, only God knows what I would have become by now.
- Tayo But you believe that one should accept any position one finds himself in?
- Resp It is a common saying. But I only cited that example.
- Tayp Since you like the modern life better, why don't you practice it genuinely, i.e. give up the native medicines?
- Resp I've said it before that I use native medicines mainly because I'm already used to it.
- Tayo Oh! That's only why you still use it.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Thank you. I'm sorry to have disturbed you a bit.
- Resp It's okay.
- Tayo Thank you madam.
- Wife Thank you sir.



## IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 3

1. Type of marriage: Polygamous union
2. Duration of marriage(s): Wife 1:-14 yrs.; Wife 2:-8 yrs.
3. Ages of spouses: Husband:-50 yrs.; Wife 1:-47 yrs.;  
Wife 2:-32 yrs.
4. Years of education: Husband - none; Wife 1 - none;  
Wife 2: - none
5. Occupation: Husband-farming; Wife 1-farming;  
Wife 2-farming
6. Number of living children (age<sup>sex</sup>): Wife 1:- 5(13, 10, 8, 5, 2);all male)  
Wife 2:- 4(8 to 2 yrs., all female)
7. Number of deceased children: Nil
8. Number of still births: Nil
9. Number of miscarriages: Nil
10. Husband Resp.
11. Interviewer Tayo
12. First Wife Wife 1
13. Second Wife Wife 2

NAME

- Tayo When a man marries, he want children. So I can't ask why your wife got pregnant immediately after marriage or maybe she was even expecting before coming into your house?
- Resp Not at all.
- Tayo Did she stay up to a month after wedding before getting pregnant?
- Resp Up to 3 months.
- Tayo Why did she not take in immediately?
- Resp It's strictly the work of God.
- Tayo After a month and no pregnancy, did you visit the herbalist?
- Resp I went to ask for the reason why my wife has not conceived. Then I was told to make sacrifices. I gave the elders food. And that month, my prayer was answered.
- Tayo That was when and why Oluremi was conceived?
- Resp Yes. That is how it was.
- Tayo For how many months does your wife's pregnancy stay?
- Resp The tenth month is the month of birth.
- Tayo What medicines does she use during pregnancy?
- Resp Dipadipa medicine, Ilaun medicine.
- Tayo What is dipadipa?
- Resp It is a native medicine. We burn it. It is Efun. After burning it we give it to her to take. We put some in Adin, mix it for her to lick every morning sometimes grind and put the burnt efun for her to lick every morning.
- Tayo How is that Ilaun?
- Resp The same thing with dipadipa.
- Tayo Do you use one medicine for it or many?
- Resp All sorts but it is burnt.

- Tayo Do you know the medicines yourself or some other person prepares them for you?
- Resp My dead grandfathers taught me and I know it.
- Tayo Can you teach me?
- Resp I'll have to be paid to teach you - ₦10.
- Tayo For each one or for all of them?
- Resp ₦10 for each of them.
- Tayo That is too much.
- Resp It's not too much?
- Tayo How much did the person that taught you get from you?
- Resp My father taught me and told me to get money from any learner so that the medicine might work.
- Tayo So he told you to get ₦10?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is it not too much? Do you not have another work? I thought you said you are a farmer?
- Resp Yes, I'm a farmer.
- Tayo Are those 2 the only medicines you give to your wife during pregnancy? What of when she complains of some other things?
- Resp She takes her bath with water and soap.
- Tayo What soap is that, native?
- Resp Yes the native black soap.
- Tayo Do you mix it with medicine?
- Resp Yes we add some of the burnt efun. We add different leaves.
- Tayo Your wife experiences petty illnesses during pregnancy does she?
- Resp That's occassional.
- Tayo Is it not because of the pregnancy?
- Resp No, sometimes when she overworks, she gets very weak and so uses the soap for her bath.
- Tayo Does she deliver at home?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Are there no delays and complications?
- Resp She returns from the river for delivery. As fast as possible.
- Tayo After delivery what medicines do you give her?
- Resp We wash the baby and put a rag in hot water to press her stomach very well. We give her M & B (May & Baker) and she continues to lick the mixture she was licking before delivery.
- Tayo Which M & B do you give her?
- Resp These A P C's (aspirins).
- Tayo Who told you to apply all those?
- Resp Other people told me.
- Tayo Which is best, native or European medicines?
- Resp We were taking the native ones before the European ones came.
- Tayo Which is best?
- Resp The one that belong to me is the best.
- Tayo Then why do you give M & B to your wife?
- Resp It happens like that sometimes. People come to tell you that M & B is the best and immediately a woman hears that, she continues hampering on it until you give her. That's why.
- Tayo Does she have problems after delivery?
- Resp My wife doesn't have problems, sometimes she cooks almost immediately after delivery.
- Tayo And you eat it?



- Resp Yes, isn't she a human being and has delivered a human? The children and I eat the food.
- Tayo Don't you run away from agbon?
- Resp No I don't.
- Tayo Does she not have it?
- Resp No she has never had it at all. I only hear about it but have not seen it and may I not.
- Tayo Is agbon a disease?
- Resp Some people say it is but I don't believe it since I've never seen it?
- Tayo Some people told me that it's not a disease but an odour every woman has, after delivery may be you don't even know what it is.
- Resp It is lack of cleanliness they call agbon. If they are clean before delivery there will be nothing of that sort.
- Tayo Do you have time for cleanliness since you are a farmer?
- Resp My wife must be clean.
- Tayo Isn't she, too, a farmer?
- Resp Don't you know that a woman makes herself cleaner than a man?
- Tayo We know that but a farmer is different from a teacher.
- Resp It's true.
- Tayo How does she have time to make herself clean?
- Resp She has ample time. I go to the farm at dawn. My wife stays at home to clean herself and prepare my food. She brings the food to me later and we stay together for some time. She returns home to make herself clean till I return from the farm.
- Tayo Did you marry her for that kind of thing?
- Resp Yes, as long as she gives me everything I want and makes herself clean, I take her as a good standard wife since we don't fight.
- Tayo Does your second wife not have agbon?
- Resp None of my wives have it. I eat the food they prepare immediately after delivery.
- Tayo What medicines do you give to your growing children?
- Resp The medicine I prepared for the mother during pregnancy is what I give to my child until he walks.
- Tayo Does he run temperature or have petty illnesses?
- Resp If he does, I get different kinds of barks of trees.
- Tayo Do you just get them and take all sorts indiscriminately?
- Resp Only those that my father showed me and the things he asked me to mix with them. At home I cook the mixture thoroughly and give the liquid to the child. And then he is alright.
- Tayo Is that what you do to every illness that comes their way until they are old and they go to school?
- Resp Yes. Then when they come back from their far away schools, they inform us of the use of European M & B. I don't know why they use it.
- Tayo You had the rest of your children the same way in which you had Oluremi. Why is each one 3 years older than the next?
- Resp That is how they were created by God.
- Tayo After delivery do you not visit your wife's bed?
- Resp Why not, it's when God wants that she gets pregnant.
- Tayo How is God's approval so regularly placed?
- Resp It's one's fate.



Tayo It isn't. How can it be?  
 Resp Women do menstruate. If then she has her bath and mixes with her husband, God might approve of a child.  
 Tayo Do you go there once?  
 Resp Numberless times. Anytime I call my wife, she's ready.  
 Tayo Do you have it up to 4 times per night?  
 Resp No it's once in a night.  
 Tayo Do you go to her in the afternoon?  
 Resp No, I am busy in my farm then. When I return, I take my bath, eat and lie down. The job starts then.  
 Tayo Isn't it once a night? Why do you say the job starts when it's not up to 2 minutes?  
 Resp Ah! It's work.  
 Tayo How many times do you do it before knowing that she's pregnant?  
 Resp I can't say.  
 Tayo Is it up to 10 days?  
 Resp We don't do it daily because it will prevent pregnancy.  
 Tayo When after menstruation do you do it?  
 Resp After her menses, if we do it, we will refrain from it the next week because we don't know which one hits the target. The woman will know that she has taken in after 3 weeks.  
 Tayo But you yourself cannot know.  
 Resp At all.  
 Tayo What period, after menses, do you think is fruitful?  
 Resp The third to the fifth day after menstruation.  
 Tayo What happens between the fifth day and the tenth day?  
 Resp The whole thing will be scattered.  
 Tayo Does it mean that if it is done twice or thrice they might all turn to babies or is that why people have twins?  
 Resp They both occur the same way.  
 Tayo Since you said that if it is done once, it yields a child, maybe if it is done twice or thrice, they will all yield a baby each.  
 Resp No, it's God who allocates the number one should have to one. It is how we do it and one child is formed that we do it and 2 children are formed.  
 Tayo How do you do it for one child?  
 Resp It is our mixing together but when the pregnancy wants to stay, God writes there that he wants the woman to have 2 children. If we see each other everyday, even if pregnancy wanted to stay, it can't because it's scattered.  
 Tayo Does the same thing apply to both wives?  
 Resp Women have menstruation the same way.  
 Tayo There are women who have their menses a month after delivery.  
 Resp Yes, even 7 days after. But we mustn't go near them because another pregnancy might result.  
 Tayo As for you know, your wife's menses come 2 years after each delivery, you can go to her anytime you like even on the seventh day after delivery.  
 Resp Not at all. I leave her to rest for about 3 months.  
 Tayo Why?  
 Resp She's tired and I am tired too. We are both resting.  
 Tayo What work did you do?

- Resp The birth of a new baby is work for me.
- Tayo What of the mother who carried the child in her stomach for 9 months continuously?
- Resp She helped me to carry the child and now that she puts him down, both of us will be carrying and playing with the baby.
- Tayo I said, what about the woman that carried the pregnancy for 10 months?
- Resp That is why I leave her for 3 or 4 months to rest because both of us worked.
- Tayo I don't know the kind of work you did?
- Resp If I didn't go near her, she wouldn't be pregnant at all, much less have a child.
- Tayo Don't you know there is Ilori!
- Resp I don't agree and I don't pray to have an Ilori.
- Tayo Why? You want to test the work of God.
- Resp Do you not know that God created 2 people?
- Tayo I know God created man and woman but some women get pregnant without going to bed with any man.
- Resp And have a child?
- Tayo Yes. You are a Christian and should remember Jesus Christ. Mary was conceived of the Holy Ghost.
- Resp Yes, that time and period is gone.
- Tayo Why?
- Resp In this modern life, the person that will believe in Jesus must be prepared to try hard.
- Tayo You cared for all your children in the same way.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Do your wives fight each other?
- Resp There is no way they won't fight. We settle it for them later.
- Tayo Do you fight them too?
- Resp They beat me and I beat them. It's a real fight. Then later our elders settle it and fine the guilty one. A bottle of Ogogoro.
- Tayo Don't you know that the stay-at-homes can beat their wives to death.
- Resp Yes, we teach each other sense.
- Tayo When you fight today and she's fined a cock, another day, a bottle of ogogoro, don't you know that it is the people that will take these? If instead she has 60k, can you not get this for your own use instead of giving out these useful things?
- Resp Yes, it might be that I was trying to get the money from her and she disagrees then we fight.
- Tayo You could have allowed her to use that money to buy pants for your child.
- Resp I wanted to use it that day but she didn't want to give me.
- Tayo So you could not borrow from somewhere else or wait till another day?
- Resp I tried to borrow but I didn't get it.
- Tayo And so you make her give it to the whole town. A stay-at-home will definitely beat his wife to death.
- Resp That is how it is sometimes.
- Tayo How do you feel when your wives fight?
- Resp If after an attempt to pacify them, I fail, I too become angry.
- Tayo How could you try to pacify them and fail? Maybe that depends on the way you have been handling them.



- Resp Not that. When anger comes every other thing is forgotten.
- Tayo I know (If we can stay together then we must be able to live together).
- Resp When I talk to them, one might agree but the other disagrees. So I get the elders to settle it for them.
- Tayo Do you like their behaviour when there is no fight?
- Resp Yes, they carry out my orders and like each other. They eat from the same soup pot. If I fight one of them, then there is no food for me. That is why I don't fight any of them.
- Tayo But you said you beat them.
- Resp Yes we fight about money. Not about food because I like food. It is why I work.
- Tayo I think you eat up to 5 times a week.
- Resp I eat thrice with soup, i.e. food to be swallowed. I eat pounded yam.
- Tayo 3 times per day?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Mama, does your husband care much for your children?
- Wife 1 Yes and he looks after me too.
- Tayo Sometimes you punish him by not giving him food when you are angry with him.
- Wife 1 No matter how angry I am, I don't punish him with food because my mother did not do that kind of thing.
- Tayo Do you often fight with the junior wife?
- Wife 1 No, she does whatever I tell her.
- Tayo Does she sometimes annoy you?
- Wife 1 Yes, she is young and so I'm not bothered.
- Tayo Do you often ask her to do the cooking alone?
- Wife 1 Yes, at the approach of evening I tell her to go and prepare supper and she does. When she finishes we dish out our husband's. Then the children's and ours. We eat together.
- Tayo Why don't you eat with your husband?
- Wife 1 Often there are visitors and we can't be eating with men. I like my co-wife and wish her to continue cooking since she does whatever I tell her.
- Tayo Doesn't she want to cook separately. Did you ever ask her?
- Wife 1 She doesn't want to cook separately and I have no cause to ask her to, since she does all I tell her.
- Tayo How long does it take after delivery for the body to return to normalcy?
- Wife 1 Sometimes it takes 5 to 6 months to come back to normalcy but sometimes it takes just 3 months. It varies.
- Tayo Do you go to the farm during the time when your body has not returned to normalcy after delivery?
- Wife 1 How can we? We can't go to the farm then. We take care of the baby and press our body with a hot piece of cloth to make us strong again.
- Tayo Will that not annoy your husband?
- Wife 1 No, because anyone that goes through pregnancy and delivers has actually travelled to and from heaven.
- Tayo But he goes to the farm then.
- Wife 1 Yes



- Tayo He said you both work.
- Wife 1 Yes, when we are feeling strong.
- Tayo He said he too worked for the birth of the baby and so he too needed to rest.
- Wife 1 He was only lying. When we have just had a baby and we can't work? What do we eat if he does not work?
- Tayo What food do your children usually eat?
- Wife 1 Like our foremothers, we give them breastmilk and agbo.
- Tayo You've had 5 male children and the junior wife has had 4 children all female. Is there anything like jealousy?
- Wife 1 Why should there be? Is that not what God wants to give her? Moreover she has just started. She might still have a male child. She's not annoyed.
- Tayo Madam, don't you feel anything about your having 4 children all female while the senior wife has 5 all male?
- Wife 2 I'm not angry.
- Tayo Why aren't you? Our elders say boys have no where else to go, but women go away to their husband places.
- Wife 2 There are women who are better than men. There are girls who do better things for their parents than boys.
- Tayo Is that why you are not annoyed?
- Wife 2 Yes.
- Tayo Some women fight their co-wives because of their children's sex. The children of your co-wife are all in school. Yours are not yet there.
- Wife 2 When it is time, my husband will take them to school.
- Tayo Supposing he dies before then?
- Wife 2 That wouldn't stop them from going to school. I will just try to do my best.
- Tayo Supposing he dies after having educated the other children and yours are still uneducated?
- Wife 2 The educated ones will help to educate mine.
- Tayo Sir, do you still want more children?
- Resp Yes, I want them to be plenty. I'll have the number of children God gives me.
- Tayo Don't you consider that you're getting old? Do you want the children to suffer?
- Resp By God's grace they will not suffer. I'm training them. When I die, before the money I leave behind finishes, their mothers must have started on somethings.
- Tayo So you have money in stock? Aren't you a farmer?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo How much do you have in the bank now?
- Resp Up to ten bags (₦2000).
- Tayo That finishes in a short time.
- Resp Before it finishes more will be added.
- Tayo Do you think the children will be able to work as you now do?
- Resp I still know how they are.
- Tayo Don't you believe that one good standard child is far better than a hundred foolish children?
- Resp When one's wife has a baby one cannot refrain from going to see her bed again.

- Tayo Why don't you do family planning?
- Resp I'm not impotent.
- Tayo You will be able to meet your wife, she will not just take in.
- Resp I want mine to yield children.
- Tayo Mama, do you want many more children?
- Wife 1 I will have the number of children God gives me.
- Tayo If God gives you 10 more, will you have them?
- Wife 1 I will, if he wants it to stop, then I stop.
- Tayo At what age does a woman stop having children?
- Wife 1 I don't know.
- Tayo How much have you saved because you and your co-wife are going to fight on your husband's belongings after his death?
- Wife 1 Up to ₦1,000.
- Tayo What food is good for people?
- Wife 1 Cassava, Eba, Pounded yam.
- Tayo At what age do you stop breastfeeding your child?
- Wife 1 At the age of 3 when my menses come, I stop breastfeeding.
- Tayo Does that not make the child rather unintelligent?
- Wife 1 It doesn't affect my children because my mother told me that I should breastfeed for 3 years.
- Tayo What other food item apart from those ones you enumerated?
- Wife 1 Sometimes we eat yam in the afternoon. There is no other thing we eat in Ikale land.
- Tayo What of plaintain and cocoyam?
- Wife 1 Yes, those ones and sometimes rice in the morning.
- Tayo How many times should we eat a day?
- Wife 1 3 times
- Tayo If your children are hungry apart from the 3 main meals, what do you do?
- Wife 1 I give them what they want. My children and my co-wife's children alike.
- Tayo What soup is good?
- Wife 1 The pepper stew makes one's stomach very active. Makes one's appetite active.
- Tayo Which is better, fish or meat, bushmeat, etc?
- Wife 1 It is what each person likes and have the money to buy that one uses in preparing soup.
- Tayo Out of all the food items, which do your children like best?
- Wife 1 I like everyone of them and so do my children. Cassava, eba, pounded yam.
- Tayo There should be one that pleases the children very much.
- Wife 1 Cassava and sometimes pounded yam.
- Tayo No, cassava is light but pounded yam sickens. What do you do to your yam?
- Wife 1 We eat some of it and sell the rest.
- Tayo Supposing you had water on the fire, you wanted to prepare cassava and the children start saying its pounded yam they want. What do you do?
- Wife 1 I will keep the cassava flour and peel yam into the water for pounded yam. The next day, we eat the cassava. We give the children what they want.
- Tayo Why do you have to go out of your way to give the children what they want?



- Wife 1 Because my mother gave us what we wanted those days and not what she wanted. So I have to please my children as she did please me.
- Tayo Do you like your children very much? During Christmas when their father buys them new dresses do you buy for them too?
- Wife 1 Yes, the other wife too.
- Tayo Are there times when your husband comes to you and you reject him?
- Wife 1 Yes, one gets fed up, even with food. If we are not ready, we just ask him to go and he does because one cannot be forced.
- Tayo Some couples beat each other at night.
- Wife 1 We do not fight here.
- Tayo Sir, if your wives reject you, don't you beg them?
- Resp I do but when they remain adamant, I go away.
- Tayo Both of them can't reject you at the same time, can they?
- Resp No.
- Tayo Why did you marry 2 wives?
- Resp When I was young, I stayed with my father and mother. Later I was told that I have a half brother. Then I know that my father had 2 wives. That is why I have 2 wives. It's good for my children to have brothers and half brothers.
- Tayo Will you have more than 2 wives?
- Resp My mind wants up to 10 wives.
- Tayo But your father had only 2.
- Resp Yes, we pray to be greater than our fathers - not age wise.
- Tayo If your father spent 20 years before dying and you spend 30 years aren't you older than your father?
- Resp Yes, but if we count the number of my years with my father's, he's older.
- Tayo We only count what we see. When one dies, where does he go.
- Resp When one dies, that's the end.
- Tayo Turns into sand.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Why do people worship dead people's spirit?
- Resp Sometimes one doesn't want his child or himself to die young and when he gets the medicine man, he prescribes worshipping the dead ancestors. Then the death goes away.
- Tayo How does your dead father hear you.
- Resp We do it as the medicine man prescribes it. It is not really our dead fathers that we worship but those wiser than us.
- Tayo They should have told you to worship the wiser ones instead of your dead fathers because if you dig out their tombs, you will only meet bones.
- Resp Yes, but if they told us that straight away, we will not know whom to worship. But now, the wise ones just take out the sacrifices supposed to be for our forefathers.
- Tayo Do you believe there are bad people?
- Resp Yes, they exist in numbers.
- Tayo How do you know them?
- Resp Some of them put on that appearance. Some right from their youth exhibit very bad behaviours and some pretend but are found out to be bad later. Sometimes we go to the medicine man and he finds out.
- Tayo When you see that a person is bad to you, do you pay him back in his own coins?



- Resp No, I'll be good to him so that God might not be angry with me. That I might have success. Then if he wants to do me bad, God will judge him.
- Tayo Where is God?
- Resp One's God is in himself.
- Tayo Do the people who go to church see God there?
- Resp No.
- Tayo What do they do there?
- Resp The church is for the totality but the best one is yourself because God says care for yourself before I care for you.
- Tayo How many more children do you need to have?
- Resp The number God gives me.
- Tayo How serious are you about education?
- Resp I don't want my children to be farmers like myself.
- Tayo Then you shouldn't have many children.
- Resp Yes but as long as one has wives, one cannot but go to their beds.
- Tayo When are your expenses more, is it when you have not had any children?
- Resp It's when I had one that expenses started.
- Tayo How much is the increase now every year?
- Resp I can't know now.
- Tayo Isn't it a child? You only buy him a Christmas dress.
- Resp When he starts going to school expenses mount. The expenses are more than the time we had only one etc.
- Tayo How old will a child be before he affects the expenses of the family?
- Resp Immediately the pregnancy is realized money starts being spent.
- Tayo After birth.
- Resp From the day of birth, one spends money on the child till later.
- Tayo At what age does a child start requiring and having much money spent on him?
- Resp From the age of 5.
- Tayo What causes that?
- Resp He starts schooling.
- Tayo At age 5?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo When did Oluremi start schooling?
- Resp When he was 5 years old.
- Tayo No.
- Resp Why are you doing these things?
- Tayo For the benefit of all of us and our children and grandchildren. The medicines your father taught you could be handed over to our children. And we want to know the better one of native and European ways.

## IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 4

1. Type of marriage: Polygamous union
2. Duration of marriage(s): Wife 1:- 11 yrs.; Wife 2:- 5 yrs.
3. Ages of spouses: n.a.
4. Years of education: Husband:-8 yrs.; Wives:-none
5. Occupation: Husband:- Titled chief/farmer;  
Wives:- farming.
6. Number of living children (age<sup>sex</sup>): Wife 1:- Four (10<sup>f</sup>, 8<sup>f</sup>, 5<sup>f</sup>, 2<sup>f</sup>)  
Wife 2:- Two (4<sup>m</sup>, 1<sup>m</sup>)
7. Number of deceased children: Nil
8. Number of still births: Nil
9. Number of miscarriages: Nil
10. Husband: Resp
11. Interviewer: Tayo
12. First Wife: Wife 1
13. Second Wife: Wife 2

NAME

- Tayo When one marries in Ikaledland, he wants children. Was it long after marriage before your wife got pregnant?
- Resp She was pregnant the month she came into my house.
- Tayo She delivered that same year?
- Resp Yes. And that was around Christmas time.
- Tayo When she's pregnant, what medicines do you give her? Did you go to hospital or to the medicine man's place?
- Resp When my wife is pregnant, I take her to the herbalist because our native medicines are better than hospital medicine. We have already adapted ourselves to those medicines that are handed down by our forefathers and so they suit us better than hospital medicines because disease usually worries children in our area.
- Tayo What disease is that?
- Resp It is called dipadipa. If you take a case of this to the hospital, they can't cure it until you take it to our herbalists. They will just give you a medicine to give to your wife and that is given to the child having dipadipa.
- Tayo Is dipadipa the only common disease in Ikaledland?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo When your wife is pregnant, do you take her to the herbalist?
- Resp Dipadipa doesn't worry her. She wouldn't know but when the baby is born, he will have it. After delivery we continue applying the medicine which will now have a greater effect than during pregnancy.
- Tayo Is dipadipa the only disease existing?
- Resp No, but it's the commonest and the treatment starts from the time of pregnancy.
- Tayo How is it?
- Resp It makes the child cry very much, disturbing neighbours and if the parents are not careful, he may die.
- Tayo What disease often worries your wife during pregnancy?



- Resp My first wife gets very strong and healthy when she becomes pregnant.
- Tayo What about your junior wife?
- Resp She's a product of a new, modern life. They are weakened at the slightest sign of headache.
- Tayo Is she often ill?
- Resp Yes, she starts being sick right from the first month of pregnancy.
- Tayo Was it long after she came to your house before she became pregnant?
- Resp She was pregnant from her parents house.
- Tayo You are very fast. There are other diseases I hear of in this area apart from dipadipa, some are called Oyiyi, Bomoje.
- Resp It's true. These Oyiyi and Bomoje are one and the same thing. That is why I said that it is better to take one's wife to the medicine man than taking her to the hospital, which to me doesn't do anything. But if you take your wife to the babalawo's and opele is laid on it and medicine is given to you at the herbalists, the stars come peacefully.
- Tayo Is it Babalawos and medicinemen who have been giving you medicines? Or you ask the man to see your wife from the time of pregnancy until delivery and after her delivery, you pay him?
- Resp No, that is done in the hospital. You will take your wife to the herbalist and tell him what the problem is. He will prepare the medicine and give it to you. If you take someone to the hospital, some pay up to ₦400 before he's discharged. But at the herbalist's, sometimes I don't spend more than 60k throughout my wife's pregnancy and she delivers easily.
- Tayo Don't the herbalists receive money? Is that not their only source of income? Or do they do other work?
- Resp They get money but most of them have other jobs.
- Tayo Do you continue to sleep with your wife when she's pregnant?
- Resp Right until she delivers.
- Tayo Isn't it bad?
- Resp It strengthens the bones of the coming baby and makes it healthy.
- Tayo Will it not be disturbing the baby?
- Resp Not at all.
- Tayo It is not good.
- Resp What you say is not good, I will say it's good because I have got some children and this is what I always do without trouble, so I take it that it's good.
- Tayo Does the medicineman continue to look after your wife after delivery or do you do other medicines apart from the boiled solution elders help prepare for the bath of both the newborn baby and the mother?
- Resp Often, there is no cause for continuing medication but if there is any trouble, the attention of the herbalist will be called.
- Tayo What trouble could she get?
- Resp Sometimes there is a continuous rush of blood. Then we call the elders who apply the medicine to stop it.
- Tayo So after that is done, the whole thing stops?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Do you stay away from your wife for up to a month after a delivery?
- Resp It should be longer than that.
- Tayo Why?



- Resp We call it agbon. Immediately a woman delivers a child, she automatically acquires it.
- Tayo Is it that thing that smells according to people around?
- Resp Yes, exactly - until that agbon leaves her, one cannot sleep with her. That is why I married my second wife. I cannot refrain from 'sleeping' with a woman for 3 good months. One cannot go to a newly delivered woman until after 9 months.
- Tayo Does it not have a cure?
- Resp No. It is not a disease. It's with all newly delivered mothers.
- Tayo Some elders say that it has a cure.
- Resp Many new things come with every new day. My father did not tell me of a cure before he died.
- Tayo When agbon leaves, you then go?
- Resp Often, everyday.
- Tayo Why then doesn't she get pregnant because each of your children get a junior 3 years after.
- Resp We measure it. She informs me when her menses stop and I stay away for some 10 days because any contact then will result in pregnancy.
- Tayo Don't you know the particular day within the 10 days?
- Resp No.
- Tayo So after 10 days any 'meeting' is for enjoyment.
- Resp To me it is.
- Tayo When it is time to have the next child and you go to your wife, will she not reject you?
- Resp If she rejects me, I will explain to her that the growing child is already healthy and walking and she will agree.
- Tayo Titilayo, Solape, Morenike & Moyin were all the same way. And for your second wife, the same method is used?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo And your wives agree to having their children at so wide an interval?
- Resp How will they carry them to the farm, on their shoulders? If it were educated people, it suits them but how does one carry a tiny child all the way from here to our farm miles away?
- Tayo So farmers can't afford any rapid succession of children because of their farms.
- Resp It's not because of the farm. I hate feces littering the corridors because of two many tiny children.
- Tayo What illness worries a growing child whose junior is on the way?
- Resp If a child is very young and the mother gets pregnant, apa will worry him.
- Tayo What is apa in Ikaledand?
- Resp It is common with children whose mother gets pregnant when they are still too young to have a junior. Their stomach runs incessantly. They cry and sit down at a spot. Often their buttocks become wrinkled on the spot and when they want to ease themselves, they turn the side of their buttocks. Those, I hate very much. That is why I allow my children to be fully grown before any next pregnancy.
- Tayo Does apa have a cure?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo But the herbalists help you with it.
- Resp When they do it, we hang it on his neck and apa goes away for good.
- Tayo What is apa?

- Resp It's not a disease. The child will be crying indiscriminately. He will not walk.
- Tayo When the medicine is done, it goes?
- Resp Yes, when we prepare what our forefathers showed us before they died and we hang it on the child's neck, apa goes.
- Tayo Can you use the same medicine for 2 different children at different times?
- Resp No. We do something to it by the time we want to remove it from the child's neck.
- Tayo Your first wife has had 4 issues all female. Your new wife has had just 2, both males. Do you, because of that, like the second wife better?
- Resp I like them all. I encountered the same problems when marrying each of them.
- Tayo But you are happy that you now have male children.
- Resp Yes because the girls will soon go away but the boys own the house.
- Tayo You are so happy with the second wife.
- Resp I like them equally but we shouldn't discuss that. There are children around.
- Tayo I see that none of your wives is around, that is why I ask you that when they are here, I won't talk like that.
- Resp Yes. Sometimes when I'm confused as to whom I will give on thing, I think about how she gave me what I needed most and then I give her. I like her very much.
- Tayo Even if the first wife is quite old now, the second wife is the stronger of the two, in your house.
- Resp It's true, but you cannot say all that in front of a woman.
- Tayo Yes I know it's because they are not around.
- Resp If a woman bears a male child for you, you will like her too.
- Tayo Yes but all children are equal. There are female professors.
- Resp They are plenty teaching here.
- Tayo Don't your wives fight each other?
- Resp Fighting between women is in the hands of their husband because if anything happens and the first wife is guilty, I'll make her realize plainly that I don't allow my second wife to have a separate pot.
- Tayo So they eat together?
- Resp Yes. It's the way a husband handles his home from the beginning that haunts the home.
- Tayo This must be how all Ikaileland is because in every family I have interviewed today, none separates its cooking.
- Resp Yes, that's it but there are some who are bad.
- Tayo Yes, there is no co-living without fighting and no fighting without settlement.
- Resp The new world children even contradict their mothers at home talk less of co-wives.
- Tayo Does your junior wife behave like that?
- Resp She doesn't. But I was explaining why some second wives want their separate cooking pots. It is because they aren't satisfied with what the first wife cooks.
- Tayo Both your wives deliver through the help of medicinemen?
- Resp Yes, I go to them.
- Tayo Which is better than the other, foreign or native medicines?



- Resp My first child brings M & B from school. When she takes it, her headache goes only to come back later. And we take iteji leaves, squeeze them together and add palm wine. Only 2 gulps of it help you out.
- Tayo Do you believe that Ikale medicines are very good?
- Resp Yes, they satisfy me more than foreign medicines.
- Tayo Why do you not ask the medicineman that prepares medicines for you to teach you?
- Resp It is not that I do not know most of these things but a herbalist cannot help himself.
- Tayo What type of medicine you know best?
- Resp For children or what?
- Tayo Anybody.
- Resp If ategun (wind) worries a person, if the person lies dead, I can wake him.
- Tayo Will you do it with Ogede (incantations)?
- Resp Not that. We give him the herbs and he bathes with it.
- Tayo You know it very well? Can you teach me?
- Resp Not that I can't teach you because there is nothing I hide from people.
- Tayo That is what we are saying. That if you know how to prepare a medicine, teach your children. So you can teach me?
- Resp Yes I can. A teacher says there's no free help, I'll get some small amount of money?
- Tayo How much?
- Resp That is not why you came today. You can come another day.
- Tayo In order to learn it?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo I'll come. Thank you very much. Can you call your wives for me?
- Resp Morayo! Bose! Come, both of you.
- Tayo Welcome Madam.
- Wives Good afternoon Sir.
- Tayo When you are pregnant, don't you have complications?
- Wife 1 Nothing goes wrong with me at all.
- Tayo Even after delivery there is nothing?
- Wife 1 Nothing.
- Tayo When the child is growing, nothing still?
- Wife 1 Nothing truly. But one cannot remain like a stone. Sometimes one has headache or cold and in such cases I take medicine.
- Tayo You have no more than headache and cold?
- Wife 1 No.
- Tayo Even during pregnancy, you don't fall ill?
- Wife 1 No, I don't.
- Tayo Which do you want your children to eat, European food or native food?
- Wife 1 I give my children our native food.
- Tayo Why?
- Wife 1 Because I don't want my children to drink milk and lactogen. Those who take these things behave like animals. The milk is from cow. I give my children cassava solution and pupuru. At 7 months my children and my co-wife's children take solid food and they are healthy and strong.
- Tayo Those who take milk and lactogen behave like animals?



- Wife 1 Exactly like animals. The children of the educated ones among us have animal behaviour just because they feed on milk and lactogen.
- Tayo Do you think they are fools? Those children are very wise and brilliant.
- Wife 1 They wouldn't be behaving like animals if they are not fools. They are really foolish.
- Tayo For how long do your children breast feed?
- Wife 1 3 good years.
- Tayo What about you madam. For how long do your children breastfeed?
- Wife 2 3 years.
- Tayo As you are younger than the first wife, can't you breastfeed your children for only 2 years?
- Wife 2 It's what my husband wants to be done that I have to do.
- Tayo Children grow up very rapidly nowadays and they will not be brilliant after sucking for 3 years.
- Wife 1 They are brilliant. My first born is very brilliant. She's always first in her class. Even in running, she's best. I ask her not to run again.
- Tayo Please, don't stop her. Only God knows what is best for her.
- Wife 1 In running? If her leg is hurt she will be brought home for me to run about.
- Tayo She will not get hurt if that is her job. If it's playing ball she won't get hurt. If that is the kind of thing she'll excel in.
- Wife 1 Is there any gain in playing ball?
- Tayo People in the profession ride in big cars. Okala uses 504 Peugeot, Awesu and Segun Odegbami too. Haven't you heard about them? There are talks about them on the radio on Thursdays.
- Wife 1 The radio lies a lot. In any case, I do listen to it.
- Tayo Allow her to run and jump and see by example. Many days ago, I wanted to be a musician but my father refused saying musicians have no homes. But now Sunny Ade is so rich he gave scholarship awards and paid salaries to graduates. What about Obey. Only God knows the right profession. So please don't stop your children doing whatever they enjoy doing. You only have to tell her to work harder.
- Tayo If a person takes a Cutlass and is going into the forest, do not stop him, just tell him to think twice before doing any deed and always to remember the son of who he is inside the forest. Drivers are now buying cars. If your child doesn't want to study but want to run instead, let him. If he wants to play music, he will not die in these days, he would be like Sunny Ade.
- Wife 1 It is true.
- Tayo Madam do all your children eat the same kind of food?
- Wife 1 Yes.
- Tayo After starting to take solid food, which one do your children like best?
- Wife 1 Cassava.
- Tayo How many times do you eat cassava in a day?
- Wife 1 Thrice a day, in the morning and in the evening. Sometimes we eat yam and sometimes we take gari.
- Tayo Do you eat cassava everyday or do you sometimes eat pounded yam?
- Wife 1 We sometimes eat pounded yam.

- Tayo Don't you eat rice and beans at all?
- Wife 1 Those are European foods. We don't eat them.
- Tayo When do you eat plantain and cocoyam?
- Wife 1 We eat all those.
- Tayo In the afternoon?
- Wife 1 We eat them in the afternoon. After cooking, we add Ikaun to it.
- Tayo What name do you call it after adding Ikaun?
- Wife 1 Poun and we make ogolo with it.
- Tayo That thing is palatable. I will eat it again. If I come to visit you here the next time I come home, maybe you will give me some? Is there plantain in the farm?
- Wife 1 They are plenty there.
- Tayo Just riping plantains are very nice in poun. So you don't eat rice?
- Wife 1 Not at all, it is for the learned.
- Tayo How many times should we eat in a day?
- Wife 1 3 times is good for a cool headed man.
- Tayo I eat a lot.
- Wife 1 It's not good at all. 3 times is quite nice.
- Tayo Why?
- Wife 1 Overfeeding is not good, it makes children have pot bellies. And doesn't make one strong.
- Tayo What time is good to eat in the morning. Do you eat before going to the farm?
- Wife 1 We often do eat before going but sometimes we roast yam in the farm to serve as breakfast.
- Tayo That means you don't have time to eat cassava in the morning.
- Wife 1 Yes.
- Tayo Do you come home to eat cassava or do you take it to the farm for the afternoon?
- Wife 1 No, we roast yam again for lunch. And we eat pounded yam for supper.
- Tayo What food do your children like best?
- Wife 1 Cassava.
- Tayo What soup should one eat?
- Wife 1 Okro soup is very good. Waterleaf too is very nice for refreshing the body.
- Tayo What meat is best?
- Wife 1 Bushmeat is very nice, e.g. Oya, gelete brought home by my husband.
- Tayo Does he set traps?
- Resp Why do I live in this bush if I don't set traps!
- Tayo You also hunt with a gun?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo I have seen that gun ever since I came here but I couldn't understand. Instead I was getting frightened at the sight of the gun.
- Resp There is nothing.
- Tayo Can you go and check your traps now maybe I can get some bushmeat to buy?
- Resp It's so wet one doesn't have the urge to go into the bush. Maybe next time you come.
- Tayo I'm not going away soon because I want the progress of this town.
- Resp That is what I want our sons to be doing.
- Tayo Our grandchildren are going to benefit from this thing I'm doing.
- Resp Thank you very much.



- Tayo This is for our grandchildren because the way this world changes is very rapid and we should be able to let our children have something laid down for them.
- Resp It's quite true.
- Tayo I ought to have gone to Hausaland or Iboland, to do this work but I wanted to seize this opportunity to do it in my homeland.
- Resp The opportunity is very good.
- Tayo Mama, does your husband not quarrel with you?
- Wife 1 No, we all play together.
- Tayo I can guess that, but there may be sometimes when the going is not so good.
- Wife 2 Co-living people cannot but have some time like that.
- Tayo Does he refuse food?
- Wife 1 Yes, when that happens, we go and beg him.
- Tayo Both of you?
- Wife 1 Yes, if he refuses my food, it means he refuses my co-wife's food, too, and vice versa.
- Tayo Suppose his refusal is total?
- Wife 1 We mustn't eat according to the practices here.
- Tayo What will you eat?
- Wife 1 Suppose we prepared pounded yam for that meal and he refuses to eat, we may take gari. We mustn't eat that pounded yam.
- Tayo But you sometimes fight with your co-wife?
- Wife 1 She has never offended me since she came. She's a good woman.
- Tayo Madam, are you sometimes offended by the things done by the senior wife?
- Wife 2 Not at all.
- Tayo But you seem to want a separate cooking pot?
- Wife 2 We mustn't, except if ordered to do so by our husband.
- Tayo Even after the order, you can still refuse to separate the cooking.
- Wife 2 The senior wife would have consulted him on the issue to tell him of my disagreement.
- Tayo Sir, are you ready to give a separate pot to your junior wife?
- Wife 1 I cannot do that yet because women's behaviour differ and until she asks for it, I won't attempt to tell our husband.
- Tayo She's had 2 issues both males and you've had 4 issues all girls. Aren't you affected by this?
- Wife 1 Good forbid. I'm not affected when it's time for me to have sons, I'll have them.
- Tayo You still want more children?
- Wife 1 Yes. 2 more to make 6 children. The medicineman told me during my last delivery that the next child will be a boy.
- Tayo So you often visit native doctors.
- Wife 1 It's there I go during pregnancy.
- Tayo Do you have separate rooms.
- Wife 1 Yes.
- Tayo Which of you does your husband like best?
- Wife 1 Our husband likes me very much because I'm his first wife and I do not keep anything of mine secret with him. So he likes me and tells me everything he does.
- Tayo You mean he likes you better than he likes the junior wife?
- Wife 1 He likes me but I don't know maybe he likes me better than he likes the junior wife.



- Tayo Does he like the junior wife at all?
- Wife 1 Very much.
- Tayo Is there nothing your husband does for both of you that angers you?
- Wife 1 Nothing. He gives us money readily to do the shopping.
- Tayo Does your husband annoy you?
- Wife 2 No. It seems my marital home is more peaceful than my extended family. We eat together mostly and I am happy.
- Tayo I'm happy to hear good things happening in this area. Your family is so good compared to the one I met in the morning fighting.
- Wife 1 There are families where the junior wife must not talk to the senior wife. But ours is not like that.
- Tayo What does meat give to the body?
- Wife 1 Bushmeat is more palatable than fish.
- Tayo But it doesn't do anything to the body?
- Wife 1 I don't know since I'm not a doctor who tests everything.
- Tayo Have you eaten this today?
- Wife 1 We have all eaten.
- Tayo Do all your children eat together?
- Wife 1 Yes. On a mat. Children must always behave like children.
- Tayo How long does it take before a newly delivered mother's body returns to normalcy?
- Wife 1 9 months.
- Tayo Your husband doesn't visit your bed until your agbon has gone completely.
- Wife 1 He doesn't come to me until 9 months after delivery.
- Tayo But after agbon has gone?
- Wife 1 If I have just finished my menses and I don't want to be pregnant yet because of the age of my child, I will tell him everything and he'll leave me.
- Tayo Even when you were free to do it, haven't you ever refused?
- Wife 1 Sometimes, I return tired from the farm. If he comes, I refuse but after much pleading and explaining, I'll let him have it.
- Tayo Is there no time he has had to go back without it?
- Wife 1 None. He's my husband.
- Tayo Does he really plead with you whenever you refuse?
- Wife 1 He begs me and so on.
- Tayo Do neighbours like this family?
- Wife 1 Many people like us but many don't
- Resp I can't but have sexual intercourse for the 9 months I have to stay away from my first wife because she has just delivered and has agbon.
- Tayo Is that the only reason?
- Resp The second reason is that my father had 9 wives and a house before he died. I have just 2 wives and a house but we all pray to be greater than our fathers, so I'm still praying to have more wives than my father had.
- Tayo How did he feed them?
- Resp Farmers just eat as they like. There is nothing like food scarcity.
- Tayo Are you still going to have up to 10 to 12 wives?
- Resp I've just had 2. My father had 9. I'm still going to have at least 12 wives.

- Tayo Was your father a chief?
- Resp He died too early to become one.
- Tayo Do you want to be a chief?
- Resp I am a chief and chiefs here have numerous wives. The number of children that will be present at a chief's burial ought to be great. In this area, a chief's family should be large in the real sense of the word.
- Tayo What is your chieftaincy title?
- Resp Is that part of what you come for? You are still a child.
- Tayo Not at all. If later you die here and I ask for the name of the deceased, they might know only your title. In that case, I should know, to be able to recognize you as one of those people who answered questions to affect the progress of our town. I will be moved to enter your household and join the sympathizers.
- Resp My title is "Ogeleyibo elegberun abon of oshoro".
- Tayo You look too young for that title because I know how great it is and the great old man that held it some time ago.
- Resp Since my father died before becoming a chief just because he's too young, I decided to take it young as I am. Immediately my people told me about it, I took it.
- Tayo The post is big. The last holder of this post had 23 wives.
- Resp Were they not up to 25?
- Tayo I knew 23 of them. When he died some 5 years ago, I was here. It was really terrific.
- Resp I am now holding the post after him.
- Tayo I am sorry to have been talking to you irreverently.
- Resp Don't mind. It's because you did not know.
- Tayo So the title compels you to marry many wives?
- Resp It's part of it. My father had 9 wives, I must have more than he had. If a man dies people ask for the number of wives and children the deceased had been catering for and the greater the number the more dignified he is to people. So I'm still praying to have 12 wives. That is what I want.
- Tayo Mama, will you agree to his having 11 wives after you?
- Wife 1 I'll agree.
- Tayo You will be the head wife.
- Resp My junior wife's father married his 25th wife some time ago.
- Tayo Is he dead now?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Your second wife came from a real polygamous family.
- Resp Both of my wives come from polygamous families. If a girl does not have many relatives, I won't marry her.
- Tayo How long does it take before the body of a woman who has just had a miscarriage returns to normalcy?
- Wife 1 Around 2 weeks.
- Tayo Does that apply to the miscarriage of a month or 2 month's pregnancy?
- Wife 1 Yes.
- Tayo Suppose the pregnancy is around 6 to 7 months old, will it take up to 1 or 2 months to be normal again?
- Wife 1 Yes.
- Tayo Do women have that odor called agbon after miscarriage?
- Wife 1 No.



- Tayo Is it the newborn baby that smells, giving its mother agbon?
- Wife 1 There is some liquid that surrounds the growing baby in the womb. It comes out before the baby during delivery. It's that that smells.
- Tayo So it cannot smell yet. Could any trouble result from a man 'seeing' his wife just 3 months after delivery?
- Wife 1 There is no harm.
- Tayo When a man goes to a woman it doesn't cause anything?
- Wife 1 No harm is done to anybody through that. At least no woman is harmed.
- Tayo Let me not go on disturbing your wives. It seems that they have not prepared their children for bed. Thank you. I am sorry I've disturbed you sir.
- Resp I'm not annoyed. This is what we want for our progress and the way to achieve it. I like what you're doing now. More grease to your elbow.
- Tayo This could fetch us a hospital.
- Resp It will be God's grace.
- Tayo The benefit is really for our grandchildren.
- Resp That is what we pray for.
- Tayo Thank you very much Sir.

IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 5

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Type of marriage:                                | Monogamous union                         |
| 2. Duration of marriage(s):                         | 38 years                                 |
| 3. Ages of spouses:                                 | Husband- 78 yrs.; Wife- 60 yrs.          |
| 4. Years of education:                              | Husband- none; Wife- none                |
| 5. Occupation:                                      | Husband- farming; Wife- farming          |
| 6. Number of living children (age <sup>sex</sup> ): | Two (23 <sup>m</sup> , 20 <sup>m</sup> ) |
| 7. Number of deceased children:                     | Four                                     |
| 8. Number of still births:                          | One                                      |
| 9. Number of miscarriages:                          | Seven                                    |
| 10. Husband   | Resp                                     |
| 11. Interviewer                                     | Tayo                                     |
| 12. Wife  | Wife                                     |

NAME

- Tayo Sir, if sometime after delivery one 'visits' his wife's bed, is the newly born baby affected?
- Resp Some men allow 3 months but some don't stay away for so long.
- Tayo Which is better among the two?
- Resp It's good to allow 3 months gap.
- Wife With what wife did you practice that? Because I don't 'see' a man for a whole year after each delivery.
- Tayo If you 'visit' your wife's bed only a year after delivery, why then is each of your children 4 years older than the next?
- Resp She doesn't get pregnant as long as she doesn't menstruate.
- Wife I don't see my menses for 3 years after delivery.
- Tayo When her menstruation circle returns after 3 years, do you then utilize the first menses to become pregnant?



Tayo: Thank you very much Sir.  
 Resp: That is what we pray for.  
 Tayo: The benefit is really for our grandchildren.  
 Resp: It will be God's grace.  
 Tayo: This could fetch as a hospital.  
 Tayo: I'm not annoyed. This is what we want for our progress and the way to achieve it. I like what you're doing now. More grace to you.  
 Tayo: I am sorry I was not prepared their children for bed. Thank you. I am sorry I was disturbed you Sir.  
 Tayo: Let me not go on disturbing your wives. It seems that they have no harm is done to anybody through that. At least no woman is harmed. When a man goes to a woman it doesn't cause anything.  
 Tayo: There is no harm.  
 Tayo: His wife just 3 months after delivery?  
 Tayo: So it cannot swell yet. Could any people result from a man's swelling? It comes out before the baby being delivered. It's that that swells. There is some liquid that surrounds the growing baby in the womb. Is it the newborn baby that swells, giving its mother agony?

IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 5

1.	Type of marriage:	Monogamous union
2.	Duration of marriage(s):	38 years
3.	Age of spouse:	Husband- 78 yrs; Wife- 60 yrs.
4.	Years of education:	Husband- none; Wife- none
5.	Occupation:	Husband- farming; Wife- farming
6.	Number of living children (age sex):	Two (2), (30)
7.	Number of deceased children:	Four
8.	Number of still births:	One
9.	Number of miscarriages:	Seven
10.	Husband:	Resp
11.	Interviewer:	Tayo
12.	Wife:	Wife

NAME

Tayo: Sir, if sometime after delivery one 'visits' his wife's bed, is the newly born baby affected?  
 Resp: Some men allow 3 months but some don't stay away for so long.  
 Tayo: Which is better among the two?  
 Resp: It's good to allow 3 months gap.  
 Wife: With that wife did you practice that? Because I don't see a man for a whole year after each delivery.  
 Tayo: If you 'visit' your wife's bed only a year after delivery, why then is each of your children 4 years older than the next?  
 Resp: She doesn't get pregnant as long as she doesn't menstruate.  
 Wife: I don't see my nurses for 3 years after delivery.  
 Tayo: When her menstruation cycle returns after 3 years, do you then utilize the first month to become pregnant?

Tayo What causes your miscarriages?  
 Wife I don't know.  
 Tayo Why don't you get a native doctor to help you?  
 Wife When I got one Urhobo man, that one helped me and I had a child - Mayowa.  
 Tayo Before you had Mayowa, you had had three miscarriages.  
 Wife Not three but seven miscarriages.  
 Tayo And you didn't go to the hospital?  
 Wife There was no hospital then.  
 Tayo Did you not ask the Urhobo man who helped you out to teach you?  
 Wife He did not teach us then.  
 Tayo Was it that he did not want to teach anybody?  
 Wife Yes he said he wouldn't teach us.  
 Tayo Is he dead now?  
 Wife Yes.  
 Tayo Don't you know anybody he might have taught?  
 Wife Maybe he taught his children. His name was Nuya.  
 Tayo Did he live in Ikoya here?  
 Wife I used to climb that hill to use the medicine.  
 Tayo You climbed the hill?  
 Wife Yes.  
 Tayo Did he want money before teaching you?  
 Wife He didn't even teach us.  
 Tayo That is why medicinemen keep their distance and the main reason why I'm doing this. When old people die with their knowledge, we don't know anything anymore. Dipadipa, I don't know the medicine for it. Giri too, I don't know.  
 Wife Don't you know giri?  
 Tayo I don't. Was it up to three months after the late Urhobo man treated you before the medicine worked?  
 Wife After he did it, none of my pregnancies was ever spoiled again.  
 Tayo What is dipadipa like?  
 Wife When a child wants to have it he will see something like a lizard and he'll close up his fingers and toes.  
 Tayo An unborn baby or an already born child?  
 Wife The living child. But that dipadipa is believed to exist in the baby during pregnancy.  
 Tayo How old can a baby be before he can be attacked?  
 Wife Three months old. And it stays up to 9 months with the child.  
 Tayo What medicine is used for this?  
 Wife Marks are made all over the body of the child and the medicine is rubbed into the wounds. The marks are called Kaka.  
 Tayo Doesn't anybody know the medicine one rubs into the body?  
 Wife I know.  
 Tayo If I go to him, will he teach me? They should be teaching people these medicines. How is ilaun?  
 Wife The medicine?  
 Tayo Yes and how does it affect children?  
 Wife It is a medicine to make the child cry out immediately it is born.  
 Tayo What about abiwere?  
 Resp It is to effect easy delivery.  
 Tayo Another one to make the child swim in the womb. What does that mean?

- Wife If the baby does not swim about and it remains stagnant in one position, the mother will be ill.
- Resp When she uses the oily medicine, the oil gets to where the baby is and frictionalizes its body so that it swims about and the mother is alright.
- Tayo What is called igbalode?
- Wife Immediately after delivery, we take igbalode medicine so that there will be no blood clot. If there is blood clot, it pricks us in the stomach.
- Tayo Is it what is called epupu (brick)?
- Wife Yes. That is why epupu is brought near a newly delivered mother.
- Tayo When epupu is put near her what happens?
- Wife The pricking lessens.
- Tayo How does something inside the body know that epupu is beside the woman?
- Wife We met that in the world and it works.
- Tayo Some other thing is called Bomoje.
- Wife It's the same thing. When epupu is placed near a newly delivered woman, bomoje goes to rest because it would have been restlessly looking for the baby who's been its companion.
- Tayo What is wrong with the blood clot then?
- Wife When bomoje and the blood clot coincide, it is the beginning of suffering for the woman.
- Tayo What is agbigbara like? Where does it stay in the body.
- Wife It's at one side of the stomach.
- Tayo Where does it come from?
- Wife I don't know. I'm not a doctor.
- Tayo Then how do you know that it is there?
- Wife When it worries a child, we search for it and pull it up.
- Tayo Can it be broken?
- Wife No.
- Tayo What is it? Flesh or skin?
- Wife It is aka. (flesh)
- Tayo Does it go only when the medicine is applied?
- Wife Yes. It enters a nook.
- Tayo What about giri?
- Resp When the child sleeps, he jerks awake.
- Tayo Mama said it's like a lizard. How does one see it?
- Resp Giri is called odudu (fear).
- Tayo Can it kill a child?
- Resp No.
- Tayo How do measles worry a child?
- Resp It's the brother of Oluwaiye.
- Tayo It goes when medicine is applied?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What medicine is used?
- Resp Oil, Pap, kolanut are used for sacrifices. Chalk is mixed in some things and rubbed on the body.
- Tayo What other disease is common in this land?
- Resp Cough, dysentary, diarrhoea.
- Tayo Do you take these cases to the hospital?
- Resp No, we cure them at home.



- Tayo What food do you give to your children?  
 Resp Dysentary medicine etc.
- Tayo No, I mean food. What food do your babies take?  
 Resp Pap and breast milk.
- Tayo For how long do your babies breastfeed?  
 Resp Some 3 years, some 1 year and some for only 6 months.
- Tayo I mean how long do your children breastfeed?  
 Resp It's variable. It's one year plus or minus one or two months.
- Tayo When they stop breastfeeding, what do they eat?  
 Resp They eat rice, pupuru, gari, eba cassava, pounded yam, yam and all that.
- Tayo Which is best out of all these?  
 Resp They are all good. There was no hospital in the past.
- Tayo When you go to your wife when she's pregnant, does any trouble result?  
 Resp Nothing happens.
- Tayo When she delivers and you go to her, nothing happens?  
 Resp No.
- Tayo What disease is common with your children?  
 Resp Stomach trouble and sometimes the child would faint. He will just be breathing noisily.
- Tayo You mean the child may not know what is wrong with him?  
 Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is it up to 1 year before your children walk?  
 Resp Yes but some walk before a year.
- Tayo Do you make wooden bicycles for them?  
 Resp Yes.
- Tayo Do you like your children to play about outside the house?  
 Resp It's good for a child to play outside with his friends.
- Tayo How many times do your children eat per day?  
 Resp Three times.
- Tayo Which soup is the best for the blood?  
 Resp You know we are not rich we just eat to fill our stomach. The ones that are good are: - Okro, green soup, mellow, vegetable.
- Tayo Which vegetable is good?  
 Resp Iroko, waterleaf, bitterleaf.
- Tayo Which is best?  
 Resp Iroko.
- Tayo Is it good to eat fruits?  
 Resp It is good for the body.
- Tayo Can they not harm?  
 Resp No.
- Tayo Some people say that oranges cause fever.  
 Resp Yes it's true and sugarcane too.
- Tayo Why then do you plant them?  
 Resp They are very tasty and we use them.
- Tayo Even if they are tasty, they don't do anything for the body.  
 Resp It repairs something in men. Sugarcane gives sperms to men.
- Tayo Does it give men strength?  
 Resp No.
- Tayo But it only makes men have sperms?  
 Resp Yes.
- Tayo What else creates those sperms?

- Resp Palm wine and hot drinks.
- Tayo For how many days after menses will pregnancy result at the slightest contact of a man and a woman?
- Resp For some it is the first day and for others it is 6 or 7 days.
- Tayo How many times can one have sex before a pregnancy results?
- Resp Once.
- Tayo Which one do you use - your method?
- Resp I go to her the second day her menses end and she takes in.
- Tayo The ones you do later is just for enjoyment?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo After you've had twins, why did you not have Idowu and Alaba?
- Resp My wife said she could not cope with labour again and so no more pregnancies. I begged her but she refused.
- Tayo So since then you've never been to her bed?
- Resp No. She refuses me anytime she has just finished her menses.
- Tayo She doesn't want any other pregnancy because her labour period is too painful for her. Why don't you then use abiwere medicines for her when she's pregnant?
- Resp I do it. I even do a lot others but eventually she labours for 2 or 3 days. The medicines get too many.
- Tayo Why don't you get a very good native doctor?
- Resp They do it and we all try long before she delivers.
- Tayo Does she fall sick after delivery?
- Resp No.
- Tayo Now that you've stopped having children, is there no after effect?
- Resp None.
- Tayo What prevents a newly born baby from crying?
- Resp I don't know the cause. It's the work of God.
- Tayo Is it that you did not use enough medicines?
- Wife I don't know.

#### IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 6

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Type of marriage:                                | Monogamous union  |
| 2. Duration of marriage(s):                         | 20 years  |
| 3. Ages of spouses:                                 | Husband:- 43 yrs.; Wife:- 40 yrs.   |
| 4. Years of education:                              | Husband:- 8 yrs.; Wife:- none   |
| 5. Occupation:                                      | Husband: farming; Wife: farming   |
| 6. Number of living children (age <sup>sex</sup> ): | Five: (19 <sup>m</sup> , 16 <sup>f</sup> , 13 <sup>m</sup> , 10 <sup>f</sup> , 7 <sup>f</sup> ) |
| 7. Number of deceased children                      | Nil   |
| 8. Number of still births:                          | Nil   |
| 9. Number of miscarriages:                          | Nil   |
| 10. Interviewer:                                    | Tayo  |
| 11. Husband:  | Resp  |
| 12. Wife  | Wife  |

- Tayo When one marries, it is agreed that he wants children. Was it up to a week after the delivery of Segun before you visited your wife's bed?



- Resp It was much longer than one week. You are a son of this land and you know that when a woman delivers here, an odour called agbon emits strongly from around her and prevents any man from going near her.
- Tayo Does agbon last up to a month?
- Resp 3, 4, 5 months. In my own case I go to my wife after a year. I am not impatient. And not meeting a woman does not bother me at all.
- Tayo Why was it up to a year after the birth of Segun before you 'met' your wife?
- Resp Because of the agbon and also that she might not have too early a pregnancy because that is not practiced in Ikaleland.
- Tayo Why is it not practiced in Ikaleland - lack of helpers, or lack of adequate care?
- Resp No, it is mainly the mouth of the town. Some people want to have their children rapidly and enjoy themselves later, but it cannot be done here because people will abuse the man and most often the woman as irresponsible and so forth.
- Tayo Is that the only reason why you don't have an additional child every year?
- Resp Yes, part of it.
- Tayo But you like having a baby each year?
- Resp No. There is another thing called apa here. It attacks on under-developed child. He will not be able to walk and will be unhealthy and very sickly and tiny.
- Tayo What is apa?
- Resp It is the baby in the womb that is called apa. When it is moving about in the womb, it fights the growing child.
- Tayo Does the baby see the child?
- Resp It does not see him but we met that kind of thing in this world and will leave it there.
- Tayo You went to your wife's bed after a year and yet it was 3 years later that the next child was born.
- Resp It was even 9 months after the birth of Segun when I went there.
- Tayo Why then did she not become pregnant?
- Resp We have a method that we use.
- Tayo What method? Is it medicine?
- Resp It's not medicine. It's a method - when we finish doing it we get up immediately and the whole thing comes out. If sperms do not stay in a woman, she cannot get pregnant.
- Tayo Do you mean that it is when you 'meet' your wife that a baby comes?
- Resp Yes, it is the sperms that become a child.
- Tayo Are sperms the only things that form the child?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo How do they form a child?
- Resp It is God's work. We have always seen it like that.
- Tayo I know but do you agree that it is by making love that a child is formed?
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Is that the method you used for Kemi, Biodun, Feyi & Funke.
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo What medicines does your wife take during pregnancy?
- Resp I don't use any medicine since this is now a European world. Although I am a farmer, my wife and I were living in Lagos. We got married there. For the first pregnancy the child was born in



(Resp)

- Lagos and the second pregnancy was brought here from Lagos. We always go to the hospital. If my children have a little headache, it is to the hospital that we go, so I don't know herbs because I've never used any before.
- Tayo Do you believe that European medicines are better than ours?
- Resp This world is Europeanized. If I ask you to get me Iroko leaves, will you be able to identify it?
- Tayo I don't even know Iroko tree.
- Resp That's it. If anyone is ill now, I can't imagine going into the bush to get leaves. I go to the dispensary instead and it's very easy too.
- Tayo But you believe that European medicines don't work as well as ours.
- Resp When we use them, the illness goes only to return but we normally try to continue using the medicines for long to effect a complete cure.
- Tayo You depend totally on hospital medicines even when your wife is pregnant? You don't use any other medicines?
- Resp I look for someone to give me herbs for her.
- Tayo What leaves do they usually give you?
- Resp Abiwere leaves. Dipadipa medicines, and . . .
- Wife Ilaun, Ibode, epupu . . .
- Resp Medicine to enable the baby to swim about.
- Tayo Is there water in the womb for it to swim?
- Resp It isn't that there is water in the womb. It is so that the baby can move about and the mother knows the positions.
- Tayo Madam do you often know the positions of the baby?
- Wife Yes.
- Tayo How does it swim about?
- Wife It changes position. Sometimes the head goes down or sideways.
- Tayo What is abiwere?
- Resp It is for easy delivery.
- Tayo What of Ibode? Is there a string in the womb that ties the baby?
- Resp There are many cords in the womb and the baby can get entangled among them. The medicine disentangles the baby.
- Tayo What is epupu?
- Resp After the birth of a baby, epupu searches for the baby in the womb causing a lot of pains for the mother.
- Tayo What forms the epupu?
- Resp It is the clotting of black blood. It happens in some women but not in others.
- Tayo What forms Bomóje?
- Resp It's the same as epupu.
- Tayo What is giri?
- Resp It makes a child cry and to straighten up will be impossible for him. We then apply the medicine.
- Tayo Do you then take him to the hospital?
- Resp Yes, and immediately, the problem will be solved. You see, I don't know any native medicine.
- Tayo Suppose it happens in the night?
- Resp I will go and wake up the owner of the chemist shops around. They will recommend some things that will work. It's not much of a problem. The mother has to pass urine on him and that makes it.

- Tayo Madam, if you pass urine on your child having giri, does that cure it immediately?
- Wife Yes, immediately.
- Tayo Will it not come again?
- Wife If it comes we'll treat it like that again.
- Resp Another thing is that we take the child to the native doctor.
- Tayo What food is best to eat?
- Wife Pounded yam, cassava, beans. Those items give us strength.
- Tayo Before I go to work in the morning, I eat pounded yam. How many times should one eat per day?
- Wife Three times.
- Tayo I eat 6 times in a day.
- Wife That is too much. But you are an educated man.
- Tayo I eat 6 times. I feel very hungry.
- Wife Three times is the best.
- Tayo Do you see me carrying a book?
- Wife What about this thing you are doing. It's all part of it.
- Tayo What food is second best?
- Wife Beans, rice, dodo.
- Tayo What else?
- Wife Plantain.
- Tayo What is plantain?
- Wife Big banana. Cocoyam too.
- Tayo Is cocoyam good, too?
- Wife Yes, and yam. When eating, we take fish and meat.
- Tayo Not many cows are killed daily here.
- Wife There is enough for us to buy.
- Tayo How do you get fish?
- Wife There is plenty of fish here. Very fresh and brought to the market by Ilaje people. They are very nice.
- Tayo What about adagba (snake fish)?
- Wife Many people don't eat that.
- Tayo I used to eat it with gari.
- Wife It gives us pains in the stomach.
- Tayo Sir, what does adaga do to people?
- Resp Women say it's not good. I think the worms in our body are going to have the same shape as Adagba has.
- Tayo Madam, what does it do?
- Wife It pricks the stomach membranes.
- Tayo Which of the food items your children like best?
- Wife Pounded yam, cassava, eba, plantain.
- Tayo If all those are made available, which will they choose?
- Wife Pounded yam.
- Tayo Sir, what do you like best?
- Resp If I don't eat pounded yam in the morning, I can't go to the farm. In the evening too.
- Tayo Suppose it is not given to you for an entire day, what will you do?
- Resp My wife will have to go back home. Why do I work if I don't eat pounded yam? That is why I farm.
- Tayo What do you eat in the afternoon?
- Resp Sometimes I roast yam in the farm. I might roast cocoyam. Sometimes too, I ask them to use plantain to cook poun for me.



- Tayo With what is poun made?  
 Resp Plantain with potassium and pepper with fresh fish. It's very palatable.
- Tayo Do you give your children food on time?  
 Wife Yes, 3 times a day.
- Tayo How do you eat?  
 Wife We eat pounded yam in the morning, cassava in the afternoon and yam or poun in the evening.
- Tayo You like poun very much.  
 Wife Yes.
- Tayo I think I will have to move down here now.  
 Wife Just to eat this rubbish?
- Tayo They'll make me strong.  
 Wife Educated people do not eat such things.
- Tayo Don't say I'm educated. Can you see me carrying a fountain pen?  
 Wife That one in your hand. Is that not a 'Biro'? Educated people do not do better work.
- Tayo Why have you not got a next pregnancy since Funke was born?  
 Resp My wife said it's enough.
- Tayo Does she order you around or you order her?  
 Resp It's no command. After having been beaten by rain from the farm one day, I went to her bed and asked to have another pregnancy. She asked if I like my child to be beaten from the farm in future by rain. When I said no, she said she wants us to have a few children and be able to send them to the University where after finishing they can buy a car and drive us about in it later in our lives.
- Tayo Why did you not disagree?  
 Resp Another man's son who went to University couldn't educate his juniors. He always complained of being broke. So I can't have many children, send some to University and leave the rest at their mercy.
- Tayo That son is very bad not to be able to educate his juniors.  
 Resp He says he's broke. Then the father had to go into a lot of trouble to get money to educate his young ones.
- Tayo Who told you to stop bearing children after having 5, Madam?  
 Wife I like how the educated sons of people bring their cars. So, if I have a few, I will be able to educate them and have very happy days later.
- Tayo I see that you look like a young lady. It's 8 years since you carried a baby last. No trouble.  
 Wife I work for money.
- Tayo God will help you to look after them.  
 Wife Amen.
- Tayo Your wife sees her menses the month after delivery but you go to her after 21 months. You must have a mistress.  
 Resp I do not have a mistress. I don't have time for it any longer. I leave those things for my children. My son Segun brought girls here some time ago. A girl came in trousers and agbada. I did not realize that she was a girl.
- Tayo You should have seen the bust. What day after menses is good for securing a pregnancy?  
 Resp From the fifth day to the tenth day.



- Tayo If you visit your wife then you can have another pregnancy? (Resp)
- Resp Yes.
- Tayo Since you have decided to stop having babies, what do you do?
- Resp I don't go there again, until it is 20 days to another menses before I go to her.
- Tayo You are very much afraid. But you are a man.
- Resp Yes, but my wife has done a lot for me. The wisdom she taught me is great because a year after, when I went to a village, one small boy told me to be very moderate in doing this thing and I realized the truth in what my wife has said.
- Tayo Does your wife hint to you when it is time to have a next child or do you tell her?
- Resp A woman will never say a thing like that. A man decides.
- Tayo It is not always for a baby. Sometimes you just want it.
- Resp It doesn't harm anybody.
- Tayo But you are contradicting yourself.
- Resp I sometimes feel like doing it.
- Tayo Suppose you feel like having it during the 9 months after the birth of a baby?
- Resp I've answered that.
- Tayo When does the body of a newly delivered woman go back to normalcy?
- Resp 9 to 8 to 7 months to recover, how is that? It is true. A place where a whole human being came out from. That is why women look older than men of the same age.
- Tayo Suppose your wife refuses you one night what will you do?
- Resp She can never say that. I brought her into this house.
- Tayo She could still refuse.
- Resp I'll beg her. If she still refuses, I'll go back, but she has never refused.
- Tayo Suppose she refuses when you're really up, can you beat her?
- Resp I can't fight. We have never fought each other.
- Tayo I can't agree.
- Resp We do fight but another person has never settled it for us.
- Tayo What will you do, if he comes to you?
- Wife I will only tell him that I can't do it. I can't fight at all. You can't force people.
- Tayo Which is best of all vegetables?
- Wife Sokoyokoto, Iroko. We don't like waterleaf but the educated one like it, they say it gives blood or strength.
- Tayo Do you always cook vegetable soup or you vary it?
- Wife When our vegetable soup finishes, we cook another one. Green soup is made occasionally for someone who's ill, or soon after delivery.
- Tayo What leaves do you use for it?
- Wife Marigbo, iteji, jangbokun. We grind them together and add, and cook.
- Tayo Is the soup very palatable?
- Wife Yes. Itapan is also prepared by grinding pepper with rotten melon and cooking with salt.
- Tayo What disease is common in this area, or to your children?
- Resp None. Some people go to the native doctors but the expense is high: "bring 3k today, tomorrow bring a goat etc." I go to the hospital and so, no trouble with illness.

- (Resp) My children too, do not have problems. They are very healthy. See Segun, he'll finish his School Certificate exams this year. I want him to become a teacher. This girl Kemi, will finish in the Teacher's Training this year. This one I had wanted to go to modern school but now there is none. She'll start going to the secondary school. Their mother helps me a lot.
- Wife We have to be like the rest in this modern world.
- Child Thank you mother for not leaving me to be an idiot.
- Tayo Thank you very much Sir.

EKITI FAMILY PROFILE No. 7

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Type of marriage:                                | Monogamous union   |
| 2. Duration of marriage(s);                         | 16 years   |
| 3. Ages of spouses:                                 | Husband: - 38 yrs.; Wife:- 36 yrs.                         |
| 4. Years of education:                              | Husband: - 11 yrs.; Wife:- 8 yrs.                          |
| 5. Occupation:                                      | Husband:-Cocoa produce buyer;<br>Wife:-Trader              |
| 6. Number of living children (age <sup>sex</sup> ): | Three (14 <sup>f</sup> , 8 <sup>m</sup> , 3 <sup>f</sup> ) |
| 7. Number of deceased children:                     | Nil  |
| 8. Number of still births:                          | Nil  |
| 9. Number of miscarriages:                          | One  |
| 10. Interviewer:                                    | Olu  |
| 11. Husband:  | Husb   |

Olu When you married your wife, how long was it before Ramotu was conceived?

Husb It was about 4 months before she became pregnant. The pathetic side of it was that the first pregnancy ended in miscarriage after six months.

Olu Was it after that miscarriage that she conceived Ramotu?

Husb Yes it was.

Olu How long was the gap between the miscarriage and the pregnancy of Ramo?

Husb It was about 8 months.

Olu May God prevent such a loss in the future.

Husb Amen.

Olu After the delivery of a baby, how long do you keep away from your wife?

Husb It should be at least 2½ calendar years.

Olu When the mother is nursing, is it not possible for a man to have sex with his wife?

Husb It is very difficult if the person is not used to it. It will affect the child. It cannot be done at all.

Olu How will this act affect the child?

Husb The child will suck the sperm through the breast if one has sex with the wife during the nursing period.

Olu Is that the reason why it is bad?



- Husb Yes it is not good at all. It is not reasonable for one to destroy one's own property. One should be patient.
- Olu When the wife is pregnant, is it good to have sex with her?
- Husb Yes it is good, after all we have sex before she became pregnant, but after 7 months, we should give her time to rest very well.
- Olu What has that to do with the expected child?
- Husb It cannot do anything to the expected child, even if you have sex till the day of birth, but when you see the condition of the wife, you would not like to worry her at all because her strength will not be like in the past. Therefore she should not be worried.
- Olu After the birth of your first child Ramo, how old was the child when you decided to have another child?
- Husb In my own case, it is always 2½ years. So before the child has a brother or sister, she should have reached the age of 3 or more and be able to walk well so that it is no longer necessary to carry it on the back.
- Olu What is the food loved most by Ramo?
- Husb Is it baby food?
- Olu Either that or any type of food.
- Husb When she was young, she took Lactogen baby food. But when she started having solid food, she liked yam.
- Olu Do you give her beans?
- Husb Yes, we give her beans, rice or anything we eat. Since we do not like pounded yam ourselves, we give these other foods in turn.
- Olu What are the diseases that are common in Ramo?
- Husb As a first child, I spent a lot on her because she did not walk early. When I discovered that it was getting late and that the bones were not strong, I took her to the hospital before she walked.
- Olu How old was she when she walked?
- Husb She was 3 years old.
- Olu Was the mother pregnant by then?
- Husb There was no pregnancy at all.
- Olu Was it because she had not walked?
- Husb Yes.
- Olu Is it the early or late walking habit of a child that you use to decide on the timing of another child?
- Husb Yes, it is. When she cannot walk, how do you expect me to decide on another child? When she is not walking and the mother becomes pregnant, who is going to carry the second child? Do you think I will not go to my place of work?
- Olu When the child was late in walking what treatment did you give her before going to the hospital?
- Husb We used 'agbo' for her so that her soft bones may become strong.
- Olu How did her late walking affect the decision you took on the next child you had?
- Husb It was more than 3 years before I had anything to do with the mother. If she had walked earlier and we did not have all the trouble of going about for medicine to make her walk, then I would not have waited that long. Normally, it should not be more than a year and three months before any child walks.
- Olu Why did you not send the child to stay with your relatives?
- Husb My wife and I both have living parents, but even if the child is



- (Husb) walking well I do not like to place my children in care of anybody at all. Unless a child is grown up and can go to fetch water, she will be of no use, she will be spoiled and not be responsible.
- Olu What are the differences you have observed in the caring for Ramo and Basi who is a boy?
- Husb He had a different walking habit. He was early and had no illness as such.
- Olu How old was he when he started to walk?
- Husb He was about one year.
- Olu What are his illnesses?
- Husb His major illness is fever. When it starts, his temperature rises quickly and he shivers.
- Olu Apart from this fever, what other disease has he?
- Husb None.
- Olu What type of food does he like?
- Husb When he was young, apart from 'baby food', he liked pine-apple and gari.
- Olu Does he take other foods?
- Husb Yes, those foods that we ourselves eat.
- Olu How was his walking progress compared to his sisters?
- Husb He was not the same as his older sister Ramo but was the same with his younger sister Adija.
- Olu What was his walking and growth like before he had a sister?
- Husb Because he was early to walk, he created no problem like his older sister.
- Olu Before he was old enough to have a sister, what was your relationship with your wife?
- Husb It was when I knew that he was old enough and had been walking for more than a year and was about 2½ years old before I had anything to do with the mother.
- Olu What do you think is the effect of sex on the child?
- Husb I believe that it can affect the child when the child is still breastfeeding.
- Olu What is the effect if the child is no longer breastfeeding?
- Husb I do not think that there is any effect in that case.
- Olu A child may stop breastfeeding at the early age of 6 to 9 months, could the man have sex with the wife then?
- Husb The wife will become pregnant and it will result in trouble. Although one may hope that it will not result in pregnancy, there is no way of making sure.
- Olu Have you placed any of the children with relative before?
- Husb No we have not done so. If their mother goes out, the children happily stay with me.
- Olu Please Madam come nearer. What are your problems during pregnancy, especially that of Ramo?
- Wife I had no problem during the pregnancy, but when I gave birth to her, then the trouble started.
- Olu What were the problems?
- Wife She was always will.
- Olu What were the illnesses?
- Wife She was more than 3 years before she walked.
- Wife We used 'agbo' to wash the child.

- Olu Did her late walking have anything to do with the decision to have another child?
- Wife Yes. I had to endure her late walking before making such a decision.
- Olu You should have had another child by the time she was three years, wouldn't you?
- Wife Yes it is true, but there was no child. She walked before I had another child.
- Olu What are her favourite foods?
- Wife Pounded yam, rice, yam, but she loved rice and vegetables.
- Olu Is it good to have relationship with your husband during pregnancy?
- Wife It is not bad.
- Olu Why do you think so?
- Wife The only thing there is that we don't like to have sex with a man as such because we are heavy.
- Olu How long will the pregnancy be before it is too heavy to have sex?
- Wife It will be about 7 months.
- Olu When you conceived Basi, what were your problems?
- Wife There was no problem.
- Olu How long after the delivery of the child was it before your mind went to the idea of having another child?
- Wife I had no decision at all.
- Olu What would you do if the father said he wanted another child when your child is still young?
- Wife I will tell him that the child is not old enough and wise.
- Olu Did you take different care of the pregnancies?
- Wife I went to the hospital for all of them.
- Olu What are the illnesses you observe in the children?
- Wife Apart from Ramo's late walking, there is no other disease. Ramo was not strong like Basi.
- Olu How would you rate the strength of Basi and Adija?
- Wife Not much difference.
- Olu Where do you place your children when you go on buying trips to Ibadan?
- Wife Their father stays at home until I come back.
- Olu What do you do if the journey lasts two days and the child is still breastfeeding?
- Wife I will take it along.
- Olu What of a child that is no longer breastfeeding but is still taking baby food?
- Wife I will also take it along.
- Olu Does it mean that when your children are small you do not travel away for long periods?
- Wife I travel for long periods, but I take them with me.
- Olu What are the other ways of looking after the health of your children?
- Wife We give them medicine, we give them agbo and we take them to hospital when necessary.
- Olu When you had that first miscarriage, did you have any problem?
- Wife I had no problem.
- Husb There was no problem for her at all.
- Olu But after the miscarriage?



- Wife I went to the hospital and I spent three days there before the child came out.
- Olu Who decides on the next child?
- Wife My husband decides that.
- Olu You can decide too by telling your husband that your friends who had children at the same time as you are now pregnant.
- Wife It is very difficult to call one's husband to bed.
- Husb We should not imitate others.
- Olu What other things can you tell me about your children?
- Husb The first one was the only one that gave us trouble. Once the children grow up, they are no trouble at all. They stay with me willingly when their mother travels.
- Olu Thank you so much for your help and time.

EKITI FAMILY PROFILE No. 8

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Type of marriage:                                | Polygamous union: only Wife 1 in residence   |
| 2. Duration of marriage(s):                         | Wife 1:- 12 yrs.; Wife 2:- n.a.  |
| 3. Ages of spouses:                                 | Husband:- 36 yrs.; Wife 1:- 35 yrs.;<br>Wife 2:- n.a.  |
| 4. Years of education:                              | Husband:- 11 yrs.; Wife 1:- none;<br>Wife 2:- none   |
| 5. Occupation:                                      | Husband: farming; Wife 1: farming;<br>Wife 2: n.a.   |
| 6. Number of living children (age <sup>sex</sup> ): | Wife 1:- Three (10 <sup>m</sup> , 5 <sup>m</sup> , 2 <sup>m</sup> )<br>Wife 2:- Two (5 <sup>m</sup> , 2 <sup>f</sup> ) |
| 7. Number of deceased children:                     | Wife 1:- Four  |
| 8. Number of still births:                          | Nil  |
| 9. Number of miscarriages:                          | Nil  |
| 10. Interviewer                                     | Olu  |
| 11. Husband   | Husb   |

Olu After your marriage, how long was your wife with you before becoming pregnant?

Husb My wife became pregnant in the year I married her, even within a month of marriage.

Olu But there is a great gap between the year you married and the year Nosi was born, 1966 to 1969.

Husb There was a child before him who is no longer living.

Olu I am sorry to hear that. How old was the child when it died?

Husb He was about three years old.

Olu What was his name?

Husb Raji.

Olu What caused his death?

Husb It was measles.

Olu Was Nosi conceived before the child died.

Husb No.

Olu Did the death of Raji have anything directly to do with the decision you made to have the next child?



- Husb Not at all, his death did not influence me.
- Olu What are Nosi's favourite foods?
- Husb He likes boiled or roasted yam. He also likes pounded yam and I like it myself.
- Olu What are the other foods you give Nosi that you feel are good for children?
- Husb He takes beans and rice.
- Olu What are his main health problems?
- Husb Fever is his main disease. I myself know how to prepare agbo and I give it to him, and some Phensic tablets too to cure the fever.
- Olu When Nosi started to walk, was he an early or late walker?
- Husb He was late to walk. He was up to two complete years before walking.
- Olu Did this late walking delay your decision about having another child?
- Husb Yes, it delayed me very much because it would be a problem for the mother. I cannot see myself staying at home with the mother in order to carry the second child. I will need to go to my place of work.
- Olu Did the mother agree with you in this view or was she influenced by her friends who may have had children at the same time she had Nosi?
- Husb Yes, she agreed with me and she cannot envy anybody at all. I am the one who will tell her to come or be ready for the next child. But as long as I do not ask her, she has no option but to wait.
- Olu It is your view then that the late walking caused the delay in deciding on another child?
- Husb Yes.
- Olu When your wife is pregnant, do you have sexual relationship with her?
- Husb Yes, very frequently.
- Olu Why do you do so?
- Husb There are two reasons. First, the child will be enjoying the bath during pregnancy. Second, the mind of my wife will be very close to me and as soon as she realizes that we shall have relationship, she will be pleased and will also be obedient.
- Olu For how long will you continue this activity during the pregnancy?
- Husb When I know that the pregnancy is seven months, I will stop it, because of the consequences for the mother as well as the child.
- Olu What kind of trouble do you think this can create for the expected child?
- Husb Thank you, I believe the child is inside and if I should lie on my wife, it can affect the child.
- Olu When she is nursing a child do you have relationships with her?
- Husb No, I do not.
- Olu Why don't you?
- Husb If I should do so it will result in pregnancy.
- Olu Are you saying that the menstrual cycle of your wife is different from those of others?
- Husb As soon as I have anything to do with her, it will result in pregnancy.
- Olu Even when she has not resumed menstrual activity.

- Husb I have not met her before except when she has resumed menstruation.
- Olu Some women have some months interval after delivery when they do not experience any menstruation, whilst others start as soon as possible. How is it with your wife?
- Husb If it comes very late, it will be about 8 months, but sometimes it lasts less than six months. And if there is sex, it will surely result in pregnancy, and it will become a problem. Our blood is so close.
- Olu Between Abib and Nosi, I observe a long gap of five years. Hope there was no problem.
- Husb There were two children in between them who are now deceased.
- Olu What complaints did they die of?
- Husb It was the one I told you earlier, measles.
- Olu Were they twins?
- Husb No, one was born single and the other two were twins.
- Olu When was this?
- Husb Before Abib, the first child was one and a half years before he died. The twins died mysteriously, it was not of measles. Abib was born after the twins.
- Olu Are Saada and Abib twins?
- Husb No, Saada is from another woman, my second wife. Lati and Saada are from the same mother.
- Olu I see. Was Lati old enough before he got a sister?
- Husb Yes, he was old enough.
- Olu What signs do you take to determine that a child is old enough to have a brother or sister?
- Husb In the first place, women can say to the husband "I and that woman put to bed at the same time". They are dropping hints to make you decide on the next child. In addition, I see that a child is walking and the woman adds her own hints and proverbs, and that means it is alright to have another child.
- Olu When Lati was old enough was that the way his mother told you of her intentions?
- Husb Yes.
- Olu What are Abib's favourite foods?
- Husb Pounded yam, moimoi and yam.
- Olu What was his walking progress like?
- Husb He walked after one year and two months. He crawled for three weeks and then walked.
- Olu What complaints does he have?
- Husb His only complaint is cold and after treatment with A.P.C. tablets, he recovers.
- Olu What is Saada's eating habit like?
- Husb She likes all food in her own case. She never rejects any food. She eats.
- Olu How old was she when she started to grow teeth?
- Husb She was about seven months.
- Olu What are her complaints?
- Husb She suffers from Igbalode, a kind of skin rash.
- Olu What medicine do you use for it?
- Husb I use Calamine Lotion.



- Olu Do you obtain it from the hospital?
- Husb No. I buy it myself. As soon as I apply it, the rash goes off.
- Olu Does it come back?
- Husb It comes back, but not every year. As we are discussing now, the rash is on the child's skin.
- Olu Apart from this complaint, what other diseases does she suffer from?
- Husb As I said earlier, she eats too much and that troubles her. The stomach becomes congested. But once I buy her the appropriate medicine, she stools for some time. At times I use epa-Ijebu called Aporo, and that relieves the constipation.
- Olu What are the points you consider in making your decision on the child after Saada?
- Husb In the first place, she is walking and second, she is old enough to have a brother.
- Olu Do you use walking and age to determine?
- Husb Yes, I use them.
- Olu How many years do you use then?
- Husb I do not use any particular year. I use normal appearance. I said earlier that Nosi was more than three calendar years before I decided on his younger one, but at two years Saada was walking and was talking, although not very clearly, but enough to understand what she is told and to reply and respond.
- Olu Suppose a child walks before ten months and before a year and three months he is walking very well, what would you do?
- Husb It quickens my journey.
- Olu What does that mean?
- Husb That is, I will call my wife for another child.
- Olu It means that walking progress is very important to your decision?
- Husb It is very important.
- Olu Raji is nearly two years old. In August (another two months), he will be two. Is he walking by now?
- Husb Yes he is walking very well.
- Olu What of the mother?
- Husb She has stopped breastfeeding him now.
- Olu Then you believe that he is old enough to have another brother?
- Husb He is old enough.
- Olu I was asking you a while ago if you have sex with your wife when she is nursing. You said no. But you also told me that any time you meet your wife she will become pregnant. What happens when you are having relationship just for pleasure?
- Husb I will not do it at all.
- Olu What else can you tell me about the health of the children?
- Husb Nosi catches fever in the sun. He likes playing football and that can cause fever.
- Olu We have talked about the eating habits of Saada and Nosi. What of Raji?
- Husb He likes yam, bread, moimoi, rice and beans and pounded yam.
- Olu How old was he when he started walking?
- Husb He walked at the age of one year and four months.
- Olu What are his complaints?
- Husb Just recently, he was taken to the hospital because he was stooling and at the same time vomiting.



Olu Was he suffering from cholera?  
 Husb Yes.  
 Olu What else can you tell me about his health?  
 Husb He also has colds and fever during the growing of teeth. I use various medicines, tablets and syrups such as Teramycin, Avomite etc, to treat him.  
 Olu You know so much of these tablets and drugs?  
 Husb Yes I do.  
 Olu I would like to ask Madam a few questions also. What food do you give Nosi?  
 Wife He takes pounded yam and rice.  
 Olu What are his complaints?  
 Wife None at all.  
 Olu What can you tell me about Lati?  
 Wife Lati eats but not as much as Nosi and he eats what I give him.  
 Olu What illness does he suffer from?  
 Wife He has stomach trouble and I give him medicine and that stops it.  
 Olu What of Saada?  
 Wife Saada eats very well but she does not like mellon soup, she likes okro soup.  
 Olu What are her complaints?  
 Wife She only has slight fever.  
 Olu What is your general view of the health of the children as a father?  
 Husb The explanation that I would like to make is that of the hospital which is very far from here. I am not thinking of my own family but of those around us. If any emergency should occur, no doctor is available to take care of us.  
 Olu Do you mean modern or native as well?  
 Husb I mean the modern one. There is no hospital and no dispensary. Some children would not have died if there had been adequate care or even first aid care available.  
 Olu You think that some would have been saved?  
 Husb Yes. Even there is scarcity of water too, which causes diseases of the skin on the children because they are dirty.  
 Olu I thank you both for your time and help.

GLOSSARY

- Abiwere** :any medicine used during pregnancy with the sole aim of aiding easy delivery.
- Adagba** :a local scaly fish very much like an eel in shape.
- Adenden** :a local tree with a red sap
- Adin** :locally made palm-nut oil
- Agbada** :the large upper garment of a Yoruba male dress under which the more smaller and popular 'dansiki' is worn
- Agbigbara** :stomach cramp affecting a child's shoulder and diaphragm
- Agbo** :any brewed herbal medicine used for cure or prevention of disease
- Agbon** :body odor in some postpartum Ikale women; forms the basis of post-partum sexual avoidance among some Ikale males; it is a stronger basis of avoidance than lactation abstinence for some Ikale husbands.
- Ago** :a Yoruba term for small farm settlements varying in size from those offering temporary shelter for a single farm-family to some well established villages of up to 5000 inhabitants
- Alahan** :a local herb found near the riverside and used for the treatment of fatigue and discomfort
- Amukaka** :local name in Ikale for febrile convulsion describing the posture of the child during an attack
- Apa** :Ikale term describing the ill condition of a surviving child of less than one year old when another pregnancy occurs; the same term is also applied to the 'spirit' of the foetus which struggles against the surviving child.
- Apena** :a high ranking title in the Ogboni male secret society
- Aporo** :a local name for a mineral salt used as cure for constipation
- Ategun** :flatulence
- Awebi** :any local medicinal soap prepared for aiding easy delivery.
- Awo** :any secret society
- Babalawo** :a general term for all male traditional medical practitioners.
- Bomoje** :postpartum foreign body sensation in the stomach reported by postpartum women up to 2 weeks after delivery; the feeling is one of a 'ghost' placenta after childbirth.
- Dipadipa** :a condition in neonates resulting in frequent spasms
- Dodo** :fried ripe plantain
- Eba** :popular Yoruba dish made from fried, grated cassava in hot water
- Efun** :a white soft stone added to the medicine for 'dipadipa' or spasms
- Epa-Ijebu** :same as 'aporo' (above)
- Epupu** :a piece of mud wall placed near a postpartum woman's stomach as a symbolic substitute for the baby and placenta which recently occupied the stomach; it is employed in the cure of 'bomoje' (above).

- Eru** :another local name for febrile convulsion literally meaning 'fear'
- Gari** :fried grated cassava used for preparing 'eba' (above)
- Gelete** :a local game meat
- Giri** :another local name for febrile convulsion
- Ibode** :a local medicine used to disentangle the foetus from the umbilical cord
- Igbalode** :according to the Ikale, it is stomach discomfort in post-partum women but in Ekiti, the same term describes a common skin rash in children
- Igbebi** :traditional birth attendance
- Ikaun** :mineral potassium used in small quantities for preparing okro soup.
- Ikefu** :another local name for flatulence
- Ilaun** :a medicine used during pregnancy so that the newborn baby may cry at birth
- Ilori** :a traditional name given to a child born of a pregnancy which occurred when the woman was believed to be amenorrhic
- Iroko** :a local cultivated green vegetable
- Iroko** :a mahogany tree
- Itaye** :a local seed featured in many traditional rituals such as weddings, naming ceremonies and fertility festivals.
- Iteji** :a local vegetable with a strong smell, it is ground before use
- Jafuje** :pulsating frontal bone believed by most parents to be the result of a malformation rather than a dietary deficiency.
- Jambogun** :a common vegetable used in an emergency
- Kaka** :scarification to prevent the death of a convulsing child
- Legede** :a cultivated green vegetable
- Lukuluku** :a state of fatigue in human beings named after a very serious epidemic among poultry fowls.
- Marigbo** :another green vegetable ground before use
- Moimoi** :a local dish made from ground black-eyed beans
- ₦1.00** :Naira, the Nigerian decimal currency
- Odudu** :another local term for febrile convulsion
- Ogboni** :a male secret fraternity
- Ogede** :incantations employed by traditional medicinemen
- Ogiri** :a seasoning paste prepared from fermented mellow seeds
- Ogogoro** :a locally distilled gin
- Ogolo** :an Ikale dish made with ripe plantain.
- Oluwaiye** :a Yoruba term for small-pox describing the disease as 'lord' of the earth
- Opele** :a traditional method of divination
- Orunmila** :another Yoruba method of divination



Oya

: a game meat

Oyiyi

: another Ikale name for 'bomoje' (above)

Popore

: a local tree, the bark is dried and used in small quantities as a laxative for infants

Poun

: an Ikale dish made from ripe plantain

Pupuru

: another Ikale dish made from cassava

Sokoyokoto

: a cultivated green vegetable

Tete

: another cultivated green vegetable

Tete o

(3ce): a Yoruba nursery rhyme sung to encourage a child to walk with assistance.

