September 1981

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

Lawrence A. Adeokun

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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 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.

Keywords
yoruba, Africa, Ikale, 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

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Working Paper No. 8

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

Lawrence A. Adeokun

September 1981
THE NEXT CHILD: SPACING STRATEGIES
IN YORUBALAND

(with translations from taped interviews)

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

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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 expend-
ing 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 com-
parability 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 questions, the very seriousness of the meaning attached to any one translation, and its impact on the reliability of results became apparent. The two translations 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 breast-feeding 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...
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.1

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

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. 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 field-workers 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, nine 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. Conseq-
sequently, 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 re-
veal 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 ethnog-
graphic 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-contra-
cepting societies.

First, whilst the demonstration of voluntarism in matters of child-
sspacing and family building is not a negation of the assumption of natu-
ral 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 Ikale 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 amenorrhea, and the practice of pregnancy prevention after agbon has ended.

The other Ikale 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 Ikale and Ekiti, in spite of the apparent disimilarities 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.

References


l-n1Em one g'etsmarried, it is implied that he wants children. After
the birth of Owolabi, there is a whole two-year gap between Owolabi
and Funmi. Why?

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 betwee~ 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 Ikale 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.

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.
When you had Funmi, was it because of apa that you waited for two years?

Yes, so that my growing child might not be worried by apa.

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?

Thank you. It is not every time you meet a woman that she takes in.

How do you do it?

I know the way to do it.

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?

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.

Is there a method you use?

There is.

What method?

If sperms do not stay in a woman she will not be pregnant.

It means it is the sperms that form a child?

They are the ones that form a child.

The thick and slimy thing.

That is the method you use to effect these two year-differences in the children's ages.

Yes.

When you wanted to have Tomi after Funmi, that was how you did it, wasn't it?

It was.

That is how you always go to your wife as you like and there has been no trouble?

None.

Until you had Bose?

Yes.

Bose is now two years old you know?

Yes.

Why hasn't she got a junior yet?

The mother is expecting now.

Is that so?

Yes.

What disease do you know worries children most, especially as the next child is on the way?

Apa worries the growing child most.

Apa alone?

Yes.

Is there any European medicine for apa you have used before?

I have not used the European one. It's the native one I use.

There are the European ones.

But you haven't used any of them?

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: Ehm! 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.
One thing that worries her is what we call Oyiyi (turn-turn). How is this Oyiyi?

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.

It's in the stomach.

It's permanently there. It stays among the cord from which the baby comes out.

Does its staying there not disturb the woman?

No.

When there is no baby there, where does it stay?

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.

Where does it go when there is no pregnancy?

It enters a nook, in the stomach of women.

Is there a nook there?

Yes.

What medicine do you give to your wife when Oyiyi worries her?

I use many kinds of medicine. The medicine do not cure it yet and I'm still looking for other ways.

But you have had four experiences already and among them, there should be one steady medicine you give her.

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.

When you give her to drink-----

Yes, it will leave her a bit.

You don't have any other that you do?

No, the trouble will cease a bit and she will not be crying out as before.

It goes until it enters the nook eventually?

Yes.

When your wife becomes pregnant, what illness does she normally have?

No other one apart from the fact that she vomits.

When you become pregnant, is it true that you vomit, madam?

It is true.

In that case what do you tell your husband?

I go to him and inform him that I vomit.

What does he do?

He does nothing more than give me any medicine he thinks appropriate.

And it cures?

It often cures it.

Vomiting has now become the sort of disease that you have now?

Yes.

Is it when you become pregnant alone that you vomit? For how many months do you vomit during pregnancy?

Not up to a month. It goes before the second month.

In fact, your vomiting is the main sign of the commencement of your pregnancy.

Not that alone, when my menstruation circle fails, then I realize that I'm pregnant.
So when you start vomiting, you are not surprised.
En helm! It shows that the baby is already planted there.
After that and until your delivery do you experience any other problems?
No.
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?
Not at all. It's only my vomiting.
But when you are pregnant, what medicines do you use since if you were in a hospital town, you would be attending clinic?
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.
What is Igbalode?
It is a big problem in women and to prevent it from killing our women we prepare the medicine for it.
What does it look like in women? Is it in women alone?
Yes it is solely in women. Do men get pregnant?
Men do not get pregnant.
So it's in women.
Is this Igbalode found inside the stomach?
Yes it's in the stomach.
With the coming baby?
Yes.
How does it worry women?
When they deliver, Igbalode can start worrying them and this is why they use the cure during pregnancy.
How does it trouble them after delivery?
It is the women who can explain that because I've never been pregnant.
How is it, madam?
After delivery, my abdomen starts paining, an enlarged experience of some pieces of stone in one's eye. That is how it is.
Is that Igbalode?
Yes.
What is Dipadipa?
It kills children, starting from time they are still unborn. That is why we use the curative even before delivery.
Does that dipadipa worry the baby right from pregnancy time?
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.
What is this dipadipa like?
It is only women who know how their stomach are created. It has been a disease for our new born babies.
How does it worry babies, Madam?
It is very much like Giri (convulsion). We all fear it.
Giri?
Yes
But your children do not suffer from giri.
Wife Ah! It's because we know much about it. Even 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 preg-
nancy 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 be-
fore 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.
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 father-land’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 girl, 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 N80 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. N4 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 apana 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 apana of among all these things?
Resp: In Ogboni.
Tayo: And he does help in delivery?
Resp: Yes.
Tayo: And he does Ayo?
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 apana 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: 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 Ika le man and I married an Ika le 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 plantain 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.
Before going to the farm, knowing fully that you are going for a dirty job.

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.

The water is just like a drug for you.

Yes. The cold water is like a real medicine.

Do you put the water outside in the dew throughout the night?

No. The newly fetched water from the river is the best.

And your body straightens.

Yes. I will be able to work better than the previous day.

Was there no cold water in the olden days, since it's these cold water baths that make your children healthy?

That was very cold water then.

They use it for bath taking?

Yes for bath taking.

Is it that you know or you were told?

My father told me the story.

What kind of food do you give to your children?

I don't have much. I give them cassava, garri, eba, yam, cocoyam. That's all.

How do you think these foods are?

Since they do not worry my children, I take it that they are alright.

Out of all these, which one do you like best?

Cassava.

What is cassava?

Pupuru. We plant it in the farm.

How do you do it? After planting it in the farm?

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.

How many times do you eat it daily? You and your children.

Morning and evening.

What do you eat in the afternoon?

If there is garri, we take it soaked in water. Because I don't want them overfeeding.

It is garri they take in the afternoon.

Yes.

When do you take pounded yam?

Once in a while.

Aren't you a farmer?

I'm a farmer. I have a reason for taking pounded yam rarely. It really makes one lazy. One feels ikefu.

What do you mean?

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.

How?

But if it were cassava, I would have gotten rid of the whole thing by morning. I will be very healthy.
What is Ikefu?

Pounded yam is not like cassava in the body. That is the meaning of Ikefu.

Does it swell in the stomach?

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.

What is lukuluku?

It's in the stomach. It is what the Europeans made a medicine called Nivaquine.

Nivaquine?

Yes, it is for Lukuluku.

It is what we call Agbigbara.

Is that what Ikale call it?

Yes.

If it catches a child, how is it?

The hands and legs will be very cold.

But the other parts?

The stomach can be warm.

What signs do you see before the real agbigbara comes.

When a child looks sullen, feel his palms and soles and you will find that they are cold.

Then we know that this thing is coming.

We then massage the sides of his stomach and under the last ribs.

Then how do you know where the lukuluku is?

When your hand gets to where it is, the child screams.

And so you get its medicine. Did it ever worry any of your 4 children?

Yes, it did. It worries the whole world.

When I was asking you did not say that.

Ah! It worries everyone. I thought it is not strange to you since you are an Ikale.

I haven't been staying at home.

It even worries Europeans.

Does it?

Yes. That is why they made Nivaquine.

Is that what they use?

Yes.

Since you know that Nivaquine is used, do you use European medicine or Yoruba one?

The Yoruba one. I only read about it because I knew some things those days that my father sent me to school.

When Lukuluku worries your child, is it your wife that reports the matter to you. Or how do you know?

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.

What herbs do you use?

I look for popore, I soak it and give the solution to my child.

What tree is popore? Is it the root?

It is a tree.
What does it look like? Is it found only in the bush?
Everywhere but Alahan is not found during the dry season. Not all around here but near the river.
Can you take me there later?
It's very far away.
I want to be preparing it for sale just as the European sells Nivaquine.
If I ask you to pay N20 before taking you there, will you pay?
Yes I'll pay.
Okay let's go.
When we finish our discussion we go. So, it's only lukuluku that worry your children?
Yes.
What food do you and your wife eat often?
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.
What do you eat in the afternoon?
I don't eat anything except if I drink water.
How do you then get enough strength to do your farming work?
The breakfast carries me up to 3 o'clock then I drink cold water.
What does water do to you?
The strength is gives me is much. If I drink water on realizing that I'm getting tired, my strength comes back in full force.
Praise be to the farmer. What soup do you often take?
Vegetable soup, water leaf, iroko, legede, tete. But I don't take bitter leaf.
Do you specify the type of vegetable you want for your wife?
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.
Is it not good then?
It's not good after a month.
Do you ration your food? Or you just take anyone when you like to?
I take anything anytime I want it.
Does your wife add Ogiri (rotten mellon) into your vegetable soup?
Yes.
I see that you have plenty of plantains. How do you eat them?
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.
Do you think that it is mainly in these food items that cleanliness exists to effect the healthy growth of your children?
Yes, I believe that what one eats without any harm is one's saviour.
There are orange trees, cashew trees, mango trees and the rest here. Do you allow your children to take them?
Not into excess. I allow them to take some.
The old people told me that they cause fever.
What about sugarcane?
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.
   Husband: 15 yrs.; Wife: 11 yrs.
   Husband: Teaching; Wife: Teaching
4. Years of education:
   Husband: Nil
   Wife: Nil
5. Occupation
   Husband: Nil
   Wife: Nil
6. Number of living children (age sex): Four (13, 11, 9, 6)
7. Number of deceased children: Nil
8. Number of still births: 3
9. Number of miscarriages: Nil
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.
Was that the result?
Yes.

Do you only meet here during your holidays?
Yes but sometimes I don't even see her because I go to Lagos for my holidays.

Don't you like to spend holidays with your family?
The child was ill at the time.

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.

Is it because of lack of proper care that Dayo falls sick?
I should think so.

Is the sickness permanent or it comes and goes?
It comes and goes.

Did the sickness last up to 2 years?
It lasted a year but has since stopped after my training.

What sort of illness was it?
I could call it convulsion.

Always convulsion?
Lack of food and proper care.

What causes convulsion?
Lack of food and care.

Another disease is jafuje.

What causes jafuje?
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.

When Dayo was having convulsion was he taken to hospital?
Local medicine was used.

Did it work?
It worked well.

For jafuje, was Dayo taken to hospital?
There was never a time when he was taken to hospital. It was always treated at home.

Until he was okay?
Yes.

Why?
Medically, I see that the hospital treatment is hygienic.

Why? In what year was a hospital built in our area?
It was around 1957.

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

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

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

When you were just coming home for that whole year, you did not 'see' your wife at all?
I have to, how can you have a wife and not see her?

Has there been any miscarriage?

No, since I started until I had the 4 issues, there had been none.

Why is there no pregnancy for 2 years and 3 months?

Her case is peculiar to her because after delivery she does not menstruate until another pregnancy and that is a whole year.

Within that year, both of you are free.

Yes, there is no calculation.

After your training, you started living together immediately?

Yes, for some time.

When Dayo was being expected, were you not around?

No, the pregnancy resulted from my visit during one holiday time. I went back for training barely a week after our marriage.

After the delivery of Dayo, it was 3 months before you had a holiday and could see your wife.

Yes.

Before the delivery of Tunde, you had finished your training and was living with your wife.

Yes.

Was it up to 2 weeks after delivery before you 'saw' her?

It was longer than that. Up to 3 months.

Why?

Because, that is how I like it.

You know no pregnancy can occur before a year, why did you not make the best of it?

Because for the first 3 months, a woman has an odor that I don't like.

What causes the odor (agbon)?

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.

So agbon is caused solely by the cold new blood.

The women ought to know the cause better.

Madam please do you know?

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.

Sir, does this agbon apply to all women?

Yes, all.

It's because of the numerous pieces of clothes she uses to cater for the baby's welfare.

Is agbon peculiar to Ikale women alone?

No, to every woman.

So, the agbon keeps you away from your wife for 3 months but after that, you are free.

Yes.

Does your wife not complain that you inconvenience her?

How can she, when I own her?

Madam can't you say it?

If it is not convenient, I will say. But it has not been too frequent.

For 3 months after the return of your wife's menses after the one year lapse after delivery, she did not take in. Why?
There was no 3 month-delay of pregnancy.

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

There was a break during Kole's pregnancy.

What was that?

There was no miscarriage.

Then why?

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

Where were you after training?

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

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

There is no gap between Femi and Tunde.

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

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

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

Supposing we did like that but the government opposed.

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

Our government here, they did not allow that.

So the gap resulted from her having another station?

Yes I think so. It's even so.

Was her station far from yours then?

She might have finished her menstruation on a Monday and so if we meet at the weekend it might not result in pregnancy.

What time do you think is good after menses?

The first five days.

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

What if she did not come home?

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

That is if I knew at all.

He would even have had to cross the river.

Yes because she was at Mahintedo then.

It's not far.

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).

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

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

And you were here then.

Yes.

But she was walking there daily?

No, she lived there.

During pregnancy, do you not visit her bed?

Why not?

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

Yes.

Don't you mind continuing?
No, I visit her bed right from the 3 months after delivery till she delivers again and there is no affect.

But when you are expecting a child, do you believe in giving medicine to the one growing?

Maybe the coming child worries the one growing.

Apa, no apa doesn't worry my children.

You believe there is no apa?

There might be according to people, but I have not experienced it.

Don't you know the cause?

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.

Why is there a small gap between Kole and Ola?

There is no gap - 1970 to '72. Two years.

Plus only 3 months. By Feb. '71 he was one year old.

And pregnancy lasts for only 9 months.

Some are longer than that.

It means that she might even stay longer than a year after delivery before she takes in again.

All I know is that she takes in with the first menstruation.

Okay. It then means that her menses keep away for more than a year.

That might be so.

Is it not regular? Why do you think her menses keep away?

People are different from each other.

What disease is common with your children?

Apart from Dayo's case my children have fever.

When that happens what medicine do they take?

Tablets and native medicines.

Which one do you prefer?

The tablets help my children better than the native medicines and they now suit my blood.

Your children were brought up with the European medicines?

Yes.

Which is the better of the two?

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.

Why can't we get these herbs?

You yourself see how Akintola eradicated the whole lot.

Is it because Akintola acquired all forests that there are no herbs?

Yes. The two are happening. Old people are dying with the knowledge of herbs.

Supposing they transfer their knowledge to younger generation. Would you still think the native medicines are better than the foreign ones?

Yes. They are much better.

Does your wife deliver at home?

Yes, she does and doesn't labour for more than 20 minutes.

And you undergo all the native processes?

Yes.

Is that the best step to take?
That is how I do it, whether it is the best or not does not matter.

She doesn't attend clinic?

No she's never been there.

So your children too have never been there. How then do you treat them?

I get the tablets myself.

What food do you often give to them?

I practice what they call balanced diet.

I know that some doctors don't want their children to take what they cannot take - what about your children?

There is none they can't take.

What can they take?

Eba, cassava, (pounded yam) yam, rice beans and plantain etc.

When they are still very small, what food do they take?

My children do not take baby foods.

You do not feed them at all?

They are given but they refuse.

After 5 months they reject totally.

Some even start rejecting after 2 weeks.

Do you then mix cassava for them?

No, they breastfeed.

Does that last up to 2 years?

A year. Before they are one year old, they start eating what I eat myself.

What do they like best?

Kole, what food do you like best?

Rice, pounded yam.

Rice and pounded yam.

Do you give them these things often?

Why not?

They eat pounded yam very much?

Yes and they eat cassava too.

What food is best for the children?

We eat pounded yam once a week.

Don't you have problems with the food items?

No problem.

Do you have a timetable for food?

No, but we eat what is appropriate.

Since your children like rice and pounded yam, could you give them everything they want, e.g. morning, afternoon and evening?

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.

Do your children walk around 1½ years old?

When they are one year old they walk.

Why is this? I was told I walked at 3 years of age.

It's the lack of balanced diet.

Children do take after their mothers.

Why are your children not being sick?

If one has good blood, there is no disease he cannot combat. And this blood is derived from good food.

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 vomiting 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?
Wife: 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 N200. He said he did not have up to 30 ridges of cassava in the farm, how would he pay N60, 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.
Tayo: 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: none; Wife 1: none; Wife 2: none
   Husband: farming; Wife 1: farming; Wife 2: farming
4. Years of education:
5. Occupation:
6. Number of living children (age, sex):
   Wife 1: 5(13, 10, 8, 5, 2); all male
   Wife 2: 4(8 to 2 yrs., all female)
7. Number of deceased children:
8. Number of still births:
9. Number of miscarriages:
10. Husband:
11. Interviewer: Tayo
12. First Wife:
13. Second Wife:

NAME

Tayo

When a man marries, he wants 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 Oluwemil 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.
Do you know the medicines yourself or some other person prepares them for you?

My dead grandfathers taught me and I know it.

Can you teach me?

I'll have to be paid to teach you - N10.

For each one or for all of them?

N10 for each of them.

That is too much.

It's not too much?

How much did the person that taught you get from you?

My father taught me and told me to get money from any learner so that the medicine might work.

So he told you to get N10?

Yes.

Is it not too much? Do you not have another work? I thought you said you are a farmer?

Yes, I'm a farmer.

Are those 2 the only medicines you give to your wife during pregnancy? What of when she complains of some other things?

She takes her bath with water and soap.

What soap is that, native?

Yes the native black soap.

Do you mix it with medicine?

Yes we add some of the burnt efun. We add different leaves.

Your wife experiences petty illnesses during pregnancy does she?

That's occasional.

Is it not because of the pregnancy?

No, sometimes when she overworks, she gets very weak and so uses the soap for her bath.

Does she deliver at home?

Yes.

Are there no delays and complications?

She returns from the river for delivery. As fast as possible.

After delivery what medicines do you give her?

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.

Which M & B do you give her?

These A P C's (aspirins).

Who told you to apply all those?

Other people told me.

Which is best, native or European medicines?

We were taking the native ones before the European ones came.

Which is best?

The one that belong to me is the best.

Then why do you give M & B to your wife?

It happens like that sometimes. People come to tell you that M & B is the best and immediately a woman hears that, she continues hammering on it until you give her. That's why.

Does she have problems after delivery?

My wife doesn't have problems, sometimes she cooks almost immediately after delivery.

And you eat it?
Yes, isn't she a human being and has delivered a human? The children and I eat the food.

Don't you run away from agbon?

No I don't.

Does she not have it?

No she has never had it at all. I only hear about it but have not seen it and may I not.

Is agbon a disease?

Some people say it is but I don't believe it since I've never seen it?

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.

It is lack of cleanliness they call agbon. If they are clean before delivery there will be nothing of that sort.

Do you have time for cleanliness since you are a farmer?

My wife must be clean.

Isn't she, too, a farmer?

Don't you know that a woman makes herself cleaner than a man?

We know that but a farmer is different from a teacher.

It's true.

How does she have time to make herself clean?

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.

Did you marry her for that kind of thing?

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.

Does your second wife not have agbon?

None of my wives have it. I eat the food they prepare immediately after delivery.

What medicines do you give to your growing children?

The medicine I prepared for the mother during pregnancy is what I give to my child until he walks.

Does he run temperature or have petty illnesses?

If he does, I get different kinds of barks of trees.

Do you just get them and take all sorts indiscriminately?

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.

Is that what you do to every illness that comes their way until they are old and they go to school?

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.

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?

That is how they were created by God.

After delivery do you not visit your wife's bed?

Why not, it's when God wants that she gets pregnant.

How is God's approval so regularly placed?

It's one's fate.
It isn't. How can it be?

Women do menstruate. If then she has her bath and mixes with her husband, God might approve of a child.

Do you go there once?

Numberless times. Anytime I call my wife, she's ready.

Do you have it up to 4 times per night.

No it's once in a night.

Do you go to her in the afternoon?

No, I am busy in my farm then. When I return, I take my bath, eat and lie down. The job starts then.

Isn't it once a night? Why do you say the job starts when it's not up to 2 minutes?

Ah! It's work.

How many times do you do it before knowing that she's pregnant?

I can't say.

Is it up to 10 days?

We don't do it daily because it will prevent pregnancy.

When after menstruation do you do it?

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.

But you yourself cannot know.

At all.

What period, after menses, do you think is fruitful?

The third to the fifth day after menstruation.

What happens between the fifth day and the tenth day?

The whole thing will be scattered.

Does it mean that if it is done twice or thrice they might all turn to babies or is that why people have twins?

They both occur the same way.

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.

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.

How do you do it for one child?

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.

Does the same thing apply to both wives?

Women have menstruation the same way.

There are women who have their menses a month after delivery.

Yes, even 7 days after. But we mustn't go near them because another pregnancy might result.

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.

Not at all. I leave her to rest for about 3 months.

Why?

She's tired and I am tired too. We are both resting.

What work did you do?
The birth of a new baby is work for me. What of the mother who carried the child in her stomach for 9 months continuously?

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. I said, what about the woman that carried the pregnancy for 10 months?

That is why I leave her for 3 or 4 months to rest because both of us worked. I don't know the kind of work you did?

If I didn't go near her, she wouldn't be pregnant at all, much less have a child.

Don't you know there is Ilori! I don't agree and I don't pray to have an Ilori.

Why? You want to test the work of God. Do you not know that God created 2 people?

I know God created man and woman but some women get pregnant without going to bed with any man.

And have a child? Yes. You are a Christian and should remember Jesus Christ. Mary was conceived of the Holy Ghost.

Yes, that time and period is gone. In this modern life, the person that will believe in Jesus must be prepared to try hard.

You cared for all your children in the same way. Yes.

Do your wives fight each other? There is no way they won't fight. We settle it for them later.

Do you fight them too? 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.

Don't you know that the stay-at-homes can beat their wives to death. Yes, we teach each other sense.

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?

Yes, it might be that I was trying to get the money from her and she disagrees then we fight.

You could have allowed her to use that money to buy pants for your child.

I wanted to use it that day but she didn't want to give me.

So you could not borrow from somewhere else or wait till another day?

I tried to borrow but I didn't get it.

And so you make her give it to the whole town. A stay-at-home will definitely beat his wife to death.

That is how it is sometimes.

How do you feel when your wives fight?

If after an attempt to pacify them, I fail, I too become angry.

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 to-
gerther).
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 re-
turned 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 N1,000.
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 plantain 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.
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.
6. Number of living children: 
   Wife 1: Four (10, 8, 5, 2)
   Wife 2: Two (4, 1)
7. Number of deceased children: nil
8. Number of still births: nil
9. Number of miscarriages: nil
10. Husband's response:
11. Interviewer: Tayo
12. First Wife
13. Second Wife

**NAME**

Tayo: When one marries in Ikaleland, 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: Is dipadipa the only disease 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 Ikaleland?
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?
My first wife gets very strong and healthy when she becomes preg- 
nant.

What about your junior wife?

She's a product of a new, modern life. They are weakened at the 
slightest sign of headache.

Is she often ill?

Yes, she starts being sick right from the first month of pregnancy.

Was it long after she came to your house before she became pregnant?

She was pregnant from her parents house.

You are very fast. There are other diseases I hear of in this area 
apart from dipadipa, some are called Oyiyi, Bomoje.

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 any-
thing. 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 
babes come peacefully.

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 un-
til delivery and after her delivery, you pay him?

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 N400 before he's discharged. But at the herbalist's, 
sometimes I don't spend more than 60k throughout my wife's preg-
nancy and she delivers easily.

Don't the herbalists receive money? Is that not their only source 
of income? Or do they do other work?

They get money but most of them have other jobs.

Do you continue to sleep with your wife when she's pregnant?

Right until she delivers.

Isn't it bad?

It strengthens the bones of the coming baby and makes it healthy.

Will it not be disturbing the baby?

No at all.

It is not good.

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.

Does the medicineman continue to look after your wife after deli-
very 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?

Often, there is no cause for continuing medication but if there is 
any trouble, the attention of the herbalist will be called.

What trouble could she get?

Sometimes there is a continuous rush of blood. Then we call the 
elders who apply the medicine to stop it.

So after that is done, the whole thing stops?

Yes.

Do you stay away from your wife for up to a month after a delivery?

It should be longer than that.

Why?
We call it agbon. Immediately a woman delivers a child, she automatically acquires it.

Is it that thing that smells according to people around?

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.

Does it not have a cure?

No. It is not a disease. It's with all newly delivered mothers.

Some elders say that it has a cure.

Many new things come with every new day. My father did not tell me of a cure before he died.

When agbon leaves, you then go?

Often, everyday.

Why then doesn't she get pregnant because each of your children get a junior 3 years after.

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.

Don't you know the particular day within the 10 days?

No.

So after 10 days any 'meeting' is for enjoyment.

When it is time to have the next child and you go to your wife, will she not reject you?

If she rejects me, I will explain to her that the growing child is already healthy and walking and she will agree.

Titilayo, Solape, Morenike & Moyin were all the same way. And for your second wife, the same method is used?

Yes.

And your wives agree to having their children at so wide an interval?

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?

So farmers can't afford any rapid succession of children because of their farms.

It's not because of the farm. I hate feces littering the corridors because of two many tiny children.

What illness worries a growing child whose junior is on the way?

If a child is very young and the mother gets pregnant, apa will worry him.

What is apa in Ikaleland?

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.

Does apa have a cure?

Yes.

But the herbalists help you with it.

When they do it, we hang it on his neck and apa goes away for good.

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 Ikaleland 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 stegun (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 is 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, don't you 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, Aweau and Segun Odegamb to. 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.

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.
Don't you eat rice and beans at all?

Wife: Those are European foods. We don't eat them.

Tayo: When do you eat plantain and cocoyam?

Wife: We eat all those.

Tayo: In the afternoon?

Wife: We eat them in the afternoon. After cooking, we add Ikaun to it.

Tayo: What name do you call it after adding Ikaun?

Wife: 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: They are plenty there.

Tayo: Just ripening plantains are very nice in poun. So you don't eat rice?

Wife: Not at all, it is for the learned.

Tayo: How many times should we eat in a day?

Wife: 3 times is good for a cool headed man.

Tayo: I eat a lot.

Wife: It's not good at all. 3 times is quite nice.

Tayo: Why?

Wife: 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: 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: Yes.

Tayo: Do you come home to eat cassava or do you take it to the farm for the afternoon?

Wife: No, we roast yam again for lunch. And we eat pounded yam for supper.

Tayo: What food do your children like best?

Wife: Cassava.

Tayo: What soup should one eat?

Wife: Okro soup is very good. Waterleaf too is very nice for refreshing the body.

Tayo: What meat is best?

Wife: 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.
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.

It's quite true.

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.

The opportunity is very good.

Mama, does your husband not quarrel with you?

No, we all play together.

I can guess that, but there may be sometimes when the going is not so good.

Co-living people cannot but have some time like that.

Does he refuse food?

Yes, when that happens, we go and beg him.

Both of you?

Yes, if he refuses my food, it means he refuses my co-wife's food, too, and vice versa.

Suppose his refusal is total?

We mustn't eat according to the practices here.

What will you eat?

Suppose we prepared pounded yam for that meal and he refuses to eat, we may take gari. We mustn't eat that pounded yam.

But you sometimes fight with your co-wife?

She has never offended me since she came. She's a good woman.

Madam, are you sometimes offended by the things done by the senior wife?

Not at all.

But you seem to want a separate cooking pot?

We mustn't, except if ordered to do so by our husband.

Even after the order, you can still refuse to separate the cooking.

The senior wife would have consulted him on the issue to tell him of my disagreement.

Sir, are you ready to give a separate pot to your junior wife?

I cannot do that yet because women's behaviour differ and until she asks for it, I won't attempt to tell our husband.

She's had 2 issues, both males and you've had 4 issues all girls. Aren't you affected by this?

Good forbid. I'm not affected when it's time for me to have sons, I'll have them.

You still want more children?

Yes. 2 more to make 6 children. The medicineman told me during my last delivery that the next child will be a boy.

So you often visit native doctors.

It's there I go during pregnancy.

Do you have separate rooms.

Yes.

Which of you does your husband like best?

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.

You mean he likes you better than he likes the junior wife?

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 came 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 'Ogeleyibolelegberun 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. 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 sex): Two (23m, 20m)
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?
The table below shows the relationship between

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of variable</th>
<th>Percentage of participants (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This table is used to illustrate the distribution of participants across different categories. The percentages are calculated based on the total number of participants.

In conclusion, the data collected suggests that there is a strong correlation between the independent and dependent variables. Further research is needed to confirm these findings.
What causes your miscarriages?

I don't know.

Why don't you get a native doctor to help you?

When I got one Urhobo man, that one helped me and I had a child — Mayowa.

Before you had Mayowa, you had had three miscarriages.

Not three but seven miscarriages.

And you didn't go to the hospital?

There was no hospital then.

Did you not ask the Urhobo man who helped you out to teach you?

He did not teach us then.

Was it that he did not want to teach anybody?

Yes he said he wouldn't teach us.

Is he dead now?

Yes.

Don't you know anybody he might have taught?

Maybe he taught his children. His name was Nuya.

Did he live in Ikoya here?

I used to climb that hill to use the medicine.

You climbed the hill?

Yes.

Did he want money before teaching you?

He didn't even teach us.

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.

Don't you know giri?

I don't. Was it up to three months after the late Urhobo man treated you before the medicine worked?

After he did it, none of my pregnancies was ever spoiled again.

What is dipadipa like?

When a child wants to have it he will see something like a lizard and he'll close up his fingers and toes.

An unborn baby or an already born child?

The living child. But that dipadipa is believed to exist in the baby during pregnancy.

How old can a baby be before he can be attacked?

Three months old. And it stays up to 9 months with the child.

What medicine is used for this?

Marks are made all over the body of the child and the medicine is rubbed into the wounds. The marks are called Kaka.

Doesn't anybody know the medicine one rubs into the body?

I know.

If I go to him, will he teach me? They should be teaching people these medicines. How is ilaun?

The medicine?

Yes and how does it affect children?

It is a medicine to make the child cry out immediately it is born.

What about abiwere?

It is to effect easy delivery.

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 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, mellon, 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 achiwere 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?
Resp I don't know.

IKALE FAMILY PROFILE No. 6

1. Type of marriage: Monogamous union
2. Duration of marriage(s): 20 years
4. Years of education: Husband: 8 yrs.; Wife: none
5. Occupation: Husband: farming; Wife: farming
6. Number of living children (sex): Five: (19m, 16f, 13m, 10f, 7f)
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

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 la-
ter 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. Al-
though 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
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 girl, 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 garri.
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 plaintain to cook poun for me.
With what is poun made?
Plantain with potassium and pepper with fresh fish. It's very palatable.

Do you give your children food on time?
Yes, 3 times a day.

How do you eat?
We eat pounded yam in the morning, cassava in the afternoon and yam or poun in the evening.

You like poun very much.
Yes.

I think I will have to move down here now.

Just to eat this rubbish?
They'll make me strong.

Educated people do not eat such things.
Don't say I'm educated. Can you see me carrying a fountain pen?
That one in your hand. Is that not a 'Biro'? Educated people do not do better work.

Why have you not got a next pregnancy since Funke was born?
My wife said it's enough.

Does she order you around or you order her?
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.

Why did you not disagree?
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.

That son is very bad not to be able to educate his juniors.
He says he's broke. Then the father had to go into a lot of trouble to get money to educate his young ones.

Who told you to stop bearing children after having 5, Madam?
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.

I see that you look like a young lady. It's 8 years since you carried a baby last. No trouble.

I work for money.
God will help you to look after them.

Your wife sees her menses the month after delivery but you go to her after 21 months. You must have a mistress.

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.

You should have seen the bust. What day after menses is good for securing a pregnancy?
From the fifth day to the tenth day.
If you visit your wife then you can have another pregnancy?
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. Itapam 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 mod-
er 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.
   Husband: 11 yrs.; Wife: 8 yrs.
   Husband: Cocoa produce buyer;
   Wife: Trader
4. Years of education:
5. Occupation:
6. Number of living children (age sex):
   Three (1m, 8y, 3f)
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 con-
ceived?
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 af-
fect 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 any-
body 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 relation-
ship 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. Al-
though 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 preg-
nancy, 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 ill.

Olu. What were the illnesses?

Wife. She was more than 3 years before she walked.

Wife. We used 'agbe' 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:
4. Years of education:
   - Husband: farming; Wife 1: farming; Wife 2: n.a.
5. Occupation:
   - Husband: farming; Wife 1: farming; Wife 2: n.a.
6. Number of living children (age):
   - Sex: Wife 1: Three (10m, 5m, 2f)
   - Wife 2: Two (5m, 2f)
7. Number of deceased children:
   - Wife 1: Four
8. Number of still births:
   - Nil
9. Number of miscarriages:
   - Nil
10. Interviewer: Olu
11. Husband: Hub

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.
I have not met her before except when she has resumed menstruation.

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?

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.

Between Abib and Nosi, I observe a long gap of five years. Hope there was no problem.

There were two children in between them who are now deceased.

It was the one I told you earlier, measles.

No, one was born single and the other two were twins.

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.

Are Saada and Abib twins?

No, Saada is from another woman, my second wife. Lati and Saada are from the same mother.

I see. Was Lati old enough before he got a sister?

Yes, he was old enough.

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.

When Lati was old enough was that the way his mother told you of her intentions?

Yes.

Pounded yam, moimoi and yam.

He walked after one year and two months. He crawled for three weeks and then walked.

His only complaint is cold and after treatment with A.P.C. tablets, he recovers.

She likes all food in her own case. She never rejects any food. She eats.

She was about seven months.

She suffers from Igbalode, a kind of skin rash.

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 epe-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 Terramycin, 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 melon 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.

Adedeng : a local tree with a red sap.

Adin : locally made palm-nut oil.

Agbadan : 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 to 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.

Apal : 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.

Awobi : any local medicinal soap prepared for aiding easy delivery.

Awo : any secret society.

Babalowo : 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.

Ebà : popular Yoruba dish made from fried, grated cassava in hot water.

Efum : 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

Igbébi: traditional birth attendance

Ikaun: mineral potassium used in small quantities for preparing okro soup.

Ikefù: another local name for flatulence

Ilaun: a medicine used during pregnancy so that the newborn baby may cry at birth

Ilòrí: 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

Irökö: a mahogany tree

Itaye: a local seed featured in many traditional rituals such as weddings, naming ceremonies and fertility festivals.

Itejì: a local vegetable with a strong smell, it is ground before use

Jafujè: pulsating frontal bone believed by most parents to be the result of a malformation rather than a dietary deficiency.

Jambógún: a common vegetable used in an emergency

Kàka: scarification to prevent the death of a convulsing child

Legédé: 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

Móímól: a local dish made from ground black-eyed beans

N1.00: Naira, the Nigerian decimal currency

Ôdùdù: another local term for febrile convulsion

Ôgboní: a male secret fraternity

Ôgedè: incantations employed by traditional medicinemen

Ôgìrí: a seasoning paste prepared from fermented mellon seeds

Ôgogòro: a locally distilled gin

Ôgóflo: an Ikale dish made with ripe plantain.

Olúwáiyé: a Yoruba term for small-pox describing the disease as 'lord' of the earth

Ôpèlé: a traditional method of divination

Drñmílì: another Yoruba method of divination
Oya: a game meat
Oyi'yi: 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.