

**AN ASSESSMENT OF TRADITIONAL METHODS AND STRUCTURES OF
CRIME CONTROL MECHANISMS IN WUDIL, KANO STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

In spite of the exploits of modern institutions of crime control, traditional mechanisms of security management still find relevance in various quarters in contemporary Nigeria. This paper thus examines the traditional crime control structures and mechanisms in Wudil LGA of Kano state, north western Nigeria. The rising trend in extraneous crimes and vices like kidnapping, banditry, drug peddling, religious radicalism among others seems to be overwhelming for modern crime control mechanisms. This has lent credence to myriads of scholarly suggestions targeted towards making the north western Nigerian region a sane society. Suggestions include community policing, use of community vigilante and calls to integrating traditional and modern social/crime control mechanisms. Findings establishes the functionality and relevance of traditional structures and methods in controlling crime in Wudil LGA of Kano State and its preference over the use of the alien modern crime control structures. And the impact of those methods against prevalence of crime and insecurity in contemporary times. This study therefore recommends the re-introduction of these traditional methods and their systematic integration with modern and traditional crime control methods, for holistic security in Wudil and Nigeria in general.

KEYWORDS: Security, Traditional crime control, Community Policing, Wudil, Radicalism

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, Nigeria has been plagued with frightening crimes and often than not the consequences are devastating and appalling. This unsavoury development has generated a lot of concern amongst scholars, religious clerics, non-governmental organization and government (Iheajemuzu, 1997). This concern also has been expressed in the media (print and electronics), seminars, conferences, and symposia all in attempts to meet a common ground on its control. However, what constitute crime varies not only from society to society but from time to time as well as from strict enforcement to none. Traditional African communities used mechanisms of crime control, reformation, and moral purification that functioned as instruments to rectify and serve justice before the arrival of Western civilization and the criminal system to Africa, including Nigeria. As a result, Hausa society's traditional political system has constructed its security mechanisms and crime control since time immemorial to serve their common goal of socio-economic development as a whole. This is because issues of peace and security affect the entire community.

It is well known fact that before the advent of colonialism, Africa had a system of justice and adjudication hinged on fear of deities which attracts instant sanctions and punishments. Hence, making the people conform to the ethos of the community, but the coming of the Europeans has altered/changed the peoples cognitive mapping of what constitutes social order and control through the introduction of new methods leading to the abandonment of the traditional social control patterns, systems and mechanisms that was instant, efficient and effective.

This relegation of traditional crime control mechanisms in favour of modern crime mechanisms has done more harm than good in Nigeria. For instance, Transparency International ranked Nigeria as “one of the most corrupt nations in the world” (Ajayi, 2012: 1). According to the researcher, armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping, rape, occupational crimes, drug peddling, and other crimes of varying magnitudes are on the rise in Nigeria, particularly in Wudil LGA. Residents in Wudil have been more concerned as a result of these

crimes, which frequently result in jungle justice mostly with occupational crimes. The issues of crime and deviance have become a topic of conversation among today's citizens. The western criminal system, which is currently the primary method of crime control, has done little to solve this cultural divide. Worse, modern technical advancements in communication have assisted crime because it is often impossible to express what is unlawful. The modern methods of crime control are typically lengthy and costly, with judgments and verdicts always being delayed, and with the tendency for justice to be denied and criminals to be released.

This has adversely affected the society, by hampering the quality of life to be lead and threatening human rights to freedom. No community has remained unaffected, by the negative consequences of crime, although the level and intensity of the problem might vary from community to community. The traditional mechanisms of crime control of various cultural groups like the Igbos, the Tivs of Benue, the Yoruba's of the West, the Fulani's of Adamawa amongst others and their positive impact were thoroughly discussed in related literatures. But nothing was written about the traditional crime control mechanisms used and preferred due to its relevancy by Wudilawa (indigenes of Wudil LGA of Kano State) as opposed to the western system, as well as the political structures put in place to compliment the crime control mechanisms. In view of the foregoing, it becomes necessary to investigate traditional methods of crime control, in this case, using Wudil in Kano state. this is carried out using primary, and secondary data.

Conceptual Clarification

Security

It is beyond reasonable doubt, that security is very vital issue in the survival of any society be it small or big and nation at large. This is because without provision of security there could be no protection of life and property, the whole society will be rife with lawlessness, engulfed with enormous social milieu such as conflict, violence, chaos and eventually the state collapse. Security is an enduring yet elusive quest. There is a consensus that it implies freedom from threats to core values (for both individuals and groups) but there is a major disagreement about

whether the main focus of inquiry should be on “individual”, “national”, or “international” security (Baylis and Smith, 2001: 300). Some security experts argued that the concept of security has always been associated with the safety and survival of the state and its citizens from harm or destruction of dangerous threats. This conception generally holds that the state is the only institution with the primary responsibility and power for the safety of its territory and its people (Zabadi, 2005: 3).

As Ozoemena (2009) argues, security is all about national interest and involves "the total of actions and measures, including legislative and operational procedures, adopted to ensure peace, stability and the general well-being of a nation and its citizens". According to Adebayo (2011), security could be referred to as a measure that ensures peaceful co-existence and development at large. It is implied from Adebayo's view that with the existence of security, there is the absence of fear, threat, anxiety, tension, and apprehension over the loss of life, liberty, property, goals, and values, among others. Security has been defined as the degree of protection against danger, damage, loss, and crime (Dwyer and Osher, 2000).

Crime

Crime is inevitable as such has been and will continue to persist to be a crucial momentum in the affairs of human existence. Crime is not a new phenomenon to but has been in existence since the time man began to utilize available resources around for his survival. With the scarcity of these resources, man struggled for his survival leading to social vices which become alarming also threatening to lives and properties. It is beyond disputable reality that when man came into being developed some crimes for his selfish objectives against other goals and it exists till date in all human societies (Adegoke, 2012). Crime has no zone as it penetrates all strata of human existential. It has no known class of status as separate entity which can be noticeably identify. Crime is not only belonging to specific society or group of people, but also has forces within local, national and international variants of operations (Shehu, 2016).

Like most societies, a number of crimes of characteristic prevalent. This is usually a function of many variables including socio-cultural and economic factors. For the people of

Wudil, notable courses of insecurity include: hunters clashes, fishermen intra group conflicts, butchers'/herders clashes, farmer/herders clashes, armed robbery, banditry, rape, early marriages, Almajiri culture, drug peddling, theft, kidnapping, witch craft, marital discord, amongst others.

Crime control mechanisms

Methods used to reduce crime in a society by preventing individuals from engaging in criminal activities/behaviours are referred to as crime control mechanisms. The modern (formal) and traditional (informal) crime control mechanisms can both be used to control crime. To promote lawful behaviour, informal crime control focuses on moral and social structures such as the family and society. Fines and Compensation, Ritual Cleansing, Trial by Ordeals, Ridicules and Gossips, Masquerade institutions, Confinement, Ostracism, Banishment, and Capital Punishment are some examples of classic criminal control techniques that have existed for a long time.

To combat criminal activity, formal or modern crime control relies on government authorities. They are related with the complex developed western/ European world that has been adopted and disseminated around the world, and they take the shape of commissions of inquiry, police, constitutions, and a judicial system comprised of attorneys and judges. As a result of their colonial invasion of Africa and drive to modernize Africans, these European crime control measures have been extended to Africans. Modern crime control mechanisms in Nigeria are manifested in legal bodies established by law to enforce laws and punish violators, such as the police, the court and prison system (CJS), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), and the Traffic Warden, among others.

Traditional crime control methods

The empirical studies of traditional informal mechanisms of crime control have evolved in various terms from scholarly views such as “traditional,” “customary,” “indigenous,” “informal,” “non-state,” “local,” “community,” as well as “popular,” and “participatory,”

often complexity in both discourse and practice. In some cases, they capture the same social phenomenon, while in others perspective their meanings are quite momentum (Adegoke, 2008; 'Yandaki, 2015). The concept has been clarified by Reuben in an attempt to give distinctive differences used the word informal justice system to distinguished the two terms of state-administered formal mechanism systems and that of non-state administrated informal mechanism.” (Reuben, 2001; Richard, 1982). The term informal mechanism is used to refer to its basic attributes. It is defined as unofficial (dissociated from state power) non-coercive (dependent rather than force), non-bureaucratic, decentralized, relatively undifferentiated, and non-professional; its substantive and procedural rules are imprecise, unwritten, democratic, flexible, ad hoc, and particularistic (Richard, 1982).

Traditional crimes control techniques are informal mechanisms or ways used by communities, with particular reference to Wudil Local Government Area of Kano State from time immemorial and are still relevant for crime control and checks and balances. Traditionally, they controlled crime through a variety of means including family members, peer groups, community associations’, elder councils, emir, and village heads, vigilante, among others, whose roles included interpreting the subsisting community's code of conduct and behaviour as passed down from generation to generation. Traditional societies, unlike western society, did not have written rules to regulate behaviour, but they did have well-established systems for managing crime and maintaining social order.

Theoretical Framework

A reasonable explanation of crime control in modern society has always emerged through the synthesis of two or more ideas, two theories are synthesized in this work to capture the substantive difficulties. The first is structural functionalism, which is used in this study since it is widely held that for society to be peaceful and orderly, all of its organs must work together to support the system's structural running. The police force is a crime-fighting organ, and the traditional system is also a part of the crime control system; if they do not work together, the entire system of crime-fighting machinery would be inefficient, if not completely destroyed.

To put it another way, the old system of crime control is extremely beneficial to societies overall peace and order.

The second is the social bond theory also known as the social control theory which was propounded by Travis Hirschi (1969). It's linked to a criminologist in America who's known for his social control approach to adolescent delinquency. The basic theme of this theory is to figure out why people obey the law. Hirschi claimed that delinquency is caused by a lack of social relationships and attachments. Attachments (parents, teachers, and peers), participation in traditional activities (sports, social groups, and many others), acceptance of social norms (such as the norm that criminal acts should be avoided), and recognition of the moral validity of laws are the factors that are most likely to prevent delinquency and crime. These ties are often referred to as social connections. Hirschi (1969) claims that when a person has no social relationships, the risk of participating in aberrant actions increases. These controls are fear of punishment, feelings of integrity and desire to be a good person (Hirschi 1969, in Mcshane and Williams, 2007). This theory of Hirschi related the understanding of bonds to the informal mechanisms of control (traditional mechanisms of crime control). According to the theory the bonds that control our behaviours are typically ones that have been achieved through the traditional process rather than that of formally adopted laws.

Traditional crime control strategies use social links to govern behaviour. In a traditional African setting, a deviant or criminal is seen to be insane or someone who has secretly angered the gods or has been cursed. According to this view, conventional crime control can only be successful when residents have specific relationships with the processes and structures of control, as was the case before to the Europeanization of nations. The traditional crime control methods used in Wudil LGA demonstrate a variety of social relationships that function as criminal checks in the society, and when these are combined with modern mechanisms, we would have a more effective complex crime control system in Nigeria.

Historical Perspective of Traditional Crime Control

In the precolonial African societies precisely the Igbo society of south eastern Nigeria, social/crime control patterns were based on no written laws but oral laws that greatly influenced people's life and attitude towards the society (Onyeozili and Ebbe, 2012). Traditional methods of controlling crime and maintaining security is not of universal acceptance as it is culturally relative. These ways to a great extent have to deal with pattern of organization and belief system of the people (Box, 1987). When people are bound together by strong cohesive bounds of community consciousness, well tribal transaction, crime can be reduced to a barest minimum (Box, 1987: Dambazau, 1994). Traditional crime control, indeed the prevention and control of criminal behaviour in Nigerian communities has its roots in kinship and extended family system. This is significant in understanding crime prevention and control in the traditional Nigerian setting. Control of member of a family was simple, but effective and in most cases, democratic. The family which was the source of stability and social control was united under the control of the oldest person.

However, modernity has affected the kinship and extended family system, and social control is no longer the same. Religion (especially Africa traditional religion) was also regarded as one best way in controlling crime in the society (Africa). Religion has also been seen as a source of strength and consolation, and essential for moral education, moral endeavour and moral achievement (Akiba, 2012). Irrespective of the means used, certain agents and means of crime control have come to be commonly identified by this direction. Among the widely used in Africa (Nigeria) are association like age – grades, social clubs and vigilant groups who act as police in the various communities they subsist. They are watchmen, guards, members of the communities are organized to suppress and punish crime summarily as when the process of law appears inadequate as the case with Nigeria.

Evolution of Traditional Politics and Security Structures in Wudil

Records show that the early beginning of Wudil dates back to the 9th Century AD when Abagayawa from the present-day Gaya, 16 kilometres away from Wudil on their way to the

foot of Dala Hill to excavate iron ore, briefly settled in Wudil near the river bank. Abagayawa settled at the place now referred to as Kukar Dafi, 90 years before Bagauda came to Kano in 1060 AD (Musa and Osi, 2011; Dankawata, and Malamin, 2011; Garba, 2011). This went on to show that for more than 10 centuries inhabitants of Kano province in which Wudil is an integral part were capable of producing riches because of the mastery of skills to technologically invent farm implements, defence arsenals, grow food and extract minerals iron deposits from the soil. Wudil is a flourishing town and a leading commercial centre. Weaving, Embroidery, dyeing, tanning, pottery was improved a great deal. Embroidery and tailoring were remarkably enhanced. Other chief articles in the market were hoes, leather products, mats, hide and skin exported to faraway lands in Bornu (North-Eastern Nigeria), Adamawa province, Cameroon Republic and to the North as far as Tripoli (Musa and Osi, 2011).

As Abagayawa left Wudil for Kano, historical traditions assert that a community of hunters camped at Garin Dau and later on, moved into the present Wudil town. These hunters grouped themselves into communities of farmers, fishermen, and blacksmiths. Hence, the emergence of political structures of Gidan Sarkin Noma (Residence of the head of farmers), Gidan Makera (house of blacksmiths) and later Unguwar Makera (Blacksmiths' Ward) Unguwar Magina (Pottery Ward) (Musa and Osi, 2011). From then on blacksmithing became one of the famous technological expressions of Wudilawa (Wudil people) practised by early residents which continue to date. Fishing is one of the prominent professions in Wudil. These fishermen use local fishing materials such as birgi, yan zube, tanka, gora, kalli, and koma (Musa and Osi, 2011). Fishing is an ancient economic activity that gave rise to remarkable profitable value in the pre-colonial period.

Trade in fish became popular among the people in pre-colonial Wudil, stimulated migration attracting many fishermen from their original settlements for better opportunities. Prominent among the group that permanently settled in Wudil were Daudu, Disai and Kwaiwa. Daudu became an informal leader uniting and integrating the already settled groups within the framework of justice and equality based on shared common traditions in order to prosper and

rise to eminence, making great impact in both political and economic spheres (Musa and Osi, 2011; Dankawata, and Malamin, 2011; Garba, 2011). The Dan Daudu (descendent of Daudu) became a figure evolved by the laws and customs of the people and was, therefore, part of the people's cultural heritage. Leadership practised by traditional Wudil community can be defined as a hereditary system of government in which an individual performed executive, legislative, and judicial roles. The powers exercised by the monarchs were absolute, constrained by the customary or religious institutions, which performed roles such as appointment, removal of office holders, and superintending within the system.

Traditional structures and Agencies of Crime Control in Wudil LGA.

Primary Structures

The Wudil people popularly known as the Wudilawa of the west northern Nigeria, though a traditional society have laws defined in terms of authority and court, such as found in today modern judicial system as it is a centralized society. There existed several agencies and structures that played significant roles in maintaining social order and crime control in their domain at the primary level. These agencies are:

- **Family court:** The kinship and extended family system is the first agency of crime control in all human society. It is presided over by family heads and elders. They mitigate crises, settle rifts, and adjudicate in criminal cases. Wife battery, inheritance disputes within the family and petty theft, among others, are handled within this court. The duties of this court are essential because any event in the family may have direct consequences for the larger society. Within the lineage group (zuriya), the leader of the group, usually the eldest male person led by example as he is the model of conduct. As the head of the family, he has moral and legal rights and obligations for keep the members' crime free. He conducts ceremonies (naming and wedding ceremonies) which affirms the corporations of the whole family and has the power of sanctions against offenders. Each lineage system (zuriya) is made up of a number of territorially kin-based units and each household is headed by a recognized authority mostly the father

(maigida). The compound head has numerous rituals, moral and legal rights and obligation. He offers sacrifices for the welfare of his compound members, whom he helps to extricate from the ritual, social and legal problems (Dambazu, 1994). Control of member of a family was simple, but effective and in most cases, democratic. The family which was the source of stability and social control was united under the control of the oldest person.

- ***Samari (Age-grade)***: Omagu (1979) observed that, age grade organization played very significant role in the socio-cultural life of the people. It performed both social and political functions; and inculcate healthy ideas and objectives in their members and further act as a disciplinary body for erring members. Talboth (1999) buttresses this assertion and noted that age-grades are very essential in the chain of government and without them the administrative function could hardly be carried out. Specifically, age grades are involved roads, other developmental projects, as well as community policing. In Wudil LGA, they play the role of social conformers to the rules, values and cherished traditions of the society. They checked on deviants, non-conformers and juvenile delinquents as punishment for offenders and reward conforming members with recognised positions in their circle. Their leader is called the *Sarkin Samari* (Youth Leader) who is democratically elected and endorsed by the Emir and recognised by the Local Government Council. They also partake in festivals, traditional activities and held periodic meetings where important issues concerning politics, societal progress and most crucial issues on security and peace.
- ***Dattijai (Elders' Council)***: The role of the elders in a traditional Wudilawa family is significant. They are usually the most senior members of the family, and preside over matters within their families. The family unit is the first point of call whenever a conflict arises within the family in Wudil. Issues like domestic or communal conflict situation is first reported to the most senior member of the families or elders, usually a male. They collaborate and assemble the disputing parties where the conflict is resolved amicably.

- ***Malaman Mata (Old Women Councils)***: The Malaman mata were mostly respected of old women of community. Their functions were aimed at sustaining discipline and rejecting immoral acts, irresponsible behaviour and utterances. They control crime especially of marital conflicts by intervening at an initial stage through counselling and mediation between the couples whenever required to do so. They serve to protect the integrity of women by training them in moral and domestic responsibilities and upholding the moral value/virtue of the Wudil people and the society (Hart, 1964). This group does not tolerate crimes against women such as disrespect and abuse, as they report such to the higher authority without delay, when all their efforts to redress such issues failed at family level. They assist in no small measure in crime control in the Wudil traditional society.

Secondary Structures and Agencies of Crime Control in Wudil LGA

These structures and agencies of controlling crime are not universal rather culturally relative based on the political legitimacy and authority of the concern community. These cultural patterns are dynamic because when people are bonded together, by strong cohesion, by bounds community consciousness, well tribal transaction, crime can equally be reduced to a barest minimum (Ayuk, 2013). The traditional Hausa land security during the pre-colonial and post-colonial period was very unique in the sense that, the core values of ruler ship is to provide enabling environment for business to thrive. The rulers had a desire for security of life and protection of peoples' properties from within and external aggression, because that was one of their cardinal principles as a constituted authority to lead their people for peace, security and societal development.

The Wudil people who are part of Hausaland or Qasar Hausa were examined by scholars of history because they have commonality with other Northern states in their cultural practices such as language, norms values, social control mechanisms, political organisations, religion amongst others. The Hausa states were bound to each other by a common language and culture, and linked by trade routes which led from the Sahara Desert in the north to the

forest zone in the south cutting across all boundaries, great caravans moved from place to place and the markets of Kano and Katsina were famous (Shehu, 2018) was of the opinion that Hausaland means traditional land of the Hausa language where it developed and it was being used as mother tongue. The argument based here is that the people of Hausaland were hegemonic society in tradition and culture, as such they share common ancestors in historical epoch, and proximity in their geographical locations. Hausaland comprising of Zaria, Kano, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, among others with Wudil as one of the towns in Kano state.

The Hausawa with particular reference to Wudilawa have various political structures and measures of crime control and these suit the purpose of the time and help in the maintenance of social order and peaceful co-existence in their domains. These measures are culture based with collective efforts of all agents in the political structures in the community. A well-defined and highly-structured political system of security administration was put in place introducing roles and positions to control crime and criminality taking into cognisance the dominancy of occupational crimes in the study area. Few among them are in the form of Sarkin Kogi (head of the river basin); Sarkin Ruwa (head of water resources), Sarkin Kasuwa (Head of Market); Sarkin Fawa (Head of the Butchers); Sarkin Kira (Head of Blacksmiths); Sarkin Aska (Head of Barbers).

These administrators respected each other's function with no interference in duties and responsibilities assigned to any of them (Garba, 2011). They operate as independent entities in controlling or minimising crimes under their respective occupational domains' before alerting the Emir if the criminal act committed supersedes their power. For example, petty and serious crimes committed in the market such as pick pocketing, theft, robbery, burglary, assault, arson, are all reported to the Sarkin Kasuwa (Head of Market) for settlement and prosecution. This is the same with all politically appointed heads of occupational groups in Wudil LGA. Their appointment is by the Emir (Sarki) with the consent of their people through a democratic process, though hereditary. Their roles and mode of operations in crime control are discussed below:

Sarkin Baka (Chief of Hunters)

The function of Sarkin Baka is to look after the affairs of hunting and the hunters (yan farauta) as hunting is one of the prevalent occupations in Wudil LGA. Hunting occupation entails the use of locally made weapons, such as bow and arrow (kwari da baka), curved dagger (barandami), knives (wukake), dane guns (bindiga) to hunt animals from forests as source of food and income. Hunters are regarded as ‘**yanfarauta**’, in Hausa language and live on the edges and within the communities. All hunters irrespective of their categories are under the control and surveillance of ‘Sarkin Baka. He ensures their safety and security as well as serves as their crime/ social controller. Crimes committed by yan farauta among themselves and to other members of the community are reported to Sarkin Baka, who in turn serves the judge, mediator, reconciliators and prosecutor with his lieutenants. Their role is pivotal as in several occasion they engaged serious encounter with arm-robbers, kidnapper and bandits successfully.

Sarkin Daji or Maidaji (The Chief of Forests)

Maidaji played the prominent roles in maintenance of security and safety of the forest, both the fauna and flora, as well as human beings living within the forest or conducting any business in the forest. Maidaji is the custodian of forest resources, their preservation and proper utilization. Both the animals, hunters, bandits in the forest are being under surveillance of Sarkin Daji. In Hausaland and particularly Wudil with its large forestry, whoever wants to inhabit and utilize the forest for whatever reason, a permission must be seek from the chief of forest (Sarkin Daji). Even the hunters seek permission from him before embarking on their hunting activities. For security measures the chief forest guards spiritualized the forest so that it become difficult for invaders or enemies to attack as entrances into the forest have become closed (Yandaki, 2015; Maidaji, 2019).

Thus, any crime committed in the forest is reported to the Mai daji, for example crimes like armed robbery or robbery (fashi da makami) committed by yan fashi, are checkmated by *sarkin daji* either with the use of spiritualism or his volunteers known as yan bangan daji.

Today, these forests have become home to bandits. This is the call for reawakening of indigenous crime control and accepting their relevance to counter crimes and criminality especially those that are culturally relative (Shehu, 2016).

Sarkin Ruwa (Chief of River Basins and resources)

Sarkin Ruwa is the custodian of water ways, rivers, Sea and all the resources in them of Hausa land. One of the major economic activities of Wudil people is fishing as the town borders with Hadejia River. The major river provides water resources for fishing and dry season irrigation activities. All waters were spiritualizing to serve the main purpose of security and safety. It is mandatory for Swimmers, divers, and fishermen to seek permission from the Sarkin Ruwa before they utilize and conduct fishing activities in his domain. Prevailing conflicts here are usually between rival fishermen groups which translate in crimes of manslaughter, corruption, and piracy, drug trafficking and peddling among others. The Sarkin Ruwa controls these crimes by rules and regulation ordained spiritually to be observed by all utilizers of his domain, and attached to their deviations are curses by the water spirits. This serves as a deterrence to future criminals. Additionally, crimes that requires settlement, prosecution, and reconciliation are all handled in his court which is mostly under the tree by the riverside along with his lieutenants.

Sarkin Noma (Head of Farmers)

Farming is vital and backbone of Hausaland economy since time immemorial. This is why the title of Sarkin Noma is found in every community in Hausaland. The duty of Sarkin-noma is to represent farmers' wishes and safeguard their farm and farm produce against external attack, regulate prices of farm produce and when conflict engulf with their counterpart Fulani. Sarkin-Noma, indeed, report any security breach that will course social mayhem in his community to the Sarki or Emir (Sani, 2000). Petty crimes among the farmers or done in the farms like stealing of farm produce, destruction of farm produce by cows among others are settled by him inform of equitable settlement between the farmer and the herder as compensation commensurate to the loss suffered in his palace. But when serious crime is committed as

bloody clashes between herders and farmers leading to death and serious injuries and loss of properties, the Emir would be dually notified.

Sarkin Fawa (Chief Butcher)

The Chief Butcher is the head of all butchers in Wudil LGA with the responsibilities of maintaining peace and order among them and their relationship with herders, who are their partners in trade but with a highly antagonistic relationship due to mistrust in business. Crimes in this instance are bloody due to the implement they use in their daily activities, can be as a result of rivalry among them, also with their economic partners (fulanis) due to stolen cows finding their ways to markets and been purchased illegally by butchers. The Sarki settled most of these conflicts in form of fines and compensations.

Sarkin Fulani (Chief of Herders)

Sarkin Fulani as his counterpart sarkin noma, is in charge of all the herders of Wudil LGA. As their leader, all the clan heads of various Fulani groups residing in the area are under his domain and are accountable to him. His position is bestowed by the Emir after democratic selection among the various clans, thus his power and authority cannot be questioned. Notable crimes in this domain as studied in Wudil LGA are the farmers/herders clashes, banditry, armed robbery, drug addiction, and butchers/herders conflict. The sarki in collaboration with either sarkin noma (if its farmers'/herder clashes) or sarkin pawa in case of herders/butchers clashes, handled reported criminal activities in form of fines and compensation called Burtali, to the affected party for peace to be restored in the area.

Sarkin Barayi (The Chief Thieves)

This is a common phenomenon among Hausa society in traditional epoch. The title plays a pivotal role in checkmating frequent handpicking, stealing and bungling of people belonging and whereabouts. The position of *Sarkin Barayi* is champion by a former popular thief who decided to retired from the professional criminal act. He is well respected among the thieves in the community and has great influence due to his linkage with them in recovery of stolen items. Repenting before traditional constituted authority made him to earned respect as he

made public confession voluntary. *Sarkin-Barayi* serve the function of identifying stolen properties through his vast network of information msharing with the underworld, also apprehend and mandate the culprit to return the stolen goods. Usually what transpire in this process is that once a case of missing item is reported before the *Sarkin Barayi*, without much difficulty and delay, the stolen properties will definitely be returned to the owner, but at compensatory cost usually money, though less than what will be spent in the police station.

Through his informants and by virtue of the spiritual powers he possessed, all criminal case perpetrated in the community example burglary, stealing, robbery amongst others are all known to him as he has knowledge of all the gangs of thieves operating in different areas of the community and their mode of operations, and has the authority to ask them to surrender themselves or their stolen goods. He also settles disputes between the gangs whenever the need arises. There is a kind of incentives given to chief thieves for whoever their stolen belonging is recovered and returned (Maidaji, 2019; Shehu, 2016).

Yan Banga (The Vigilantes Group)

This category of traditional gang of people tagged ‘Yan-Tauri’ are found virtually in every society in Nigeria not only in Hausaland. They have their dogs, a locally made guns, swords, arrow and bow and fortified by charms. They encounter all sorts of criminals whether in the night or during the day, dealt with severely. Their sole functions and duties are to exercise within traditional limit and constitutional power confide on them to arrest and prosecute before the local court or palace court. They engage themselves in spiritualism an aesthetics one against all odds. Vigilantes are found in every city, towns and villages with support of community for greater control of crimes, insecurity menace and social evils. Their role in fighting insecurity and crime control among society is beyond quantifiable considering their active performance in the fight against Boko-Haram, Banditry and Kidnapping among social milieu in the country (‘Yandaki, 2015; Tauri, 2019; Shehu, 2016).

Sarkin Dogarai (Chief Police Officer)

He is the traditional chief security officer (chief of police). He is in charge of all the local police officers (dogarai) in the community. The Dogari (Dogarai in plural) is law enforcement personnel equivalent to contemporary police officer. The functions and duties of Dogari is to maintained internal security by ensuring law and order among people in a community, also between interacting communities. Crime is controlled through intelligence gathering as the Sarki usually send the Dogarai on daily surveillance round the community. They are seeing everywhere checkmating the compliance of people to rules of the land in Wudil LGA such as mosque, market places, sport arenas, social gatherings, amongst others. Criminals and deviants are dealt with severely and swiftly with long and fortified traditional whiplash called bulala, before taken to the Emir palace for prosecution and further punishment. Dogarai (the local police) are stationed at the Sarki palace but exercise their powers throughout the domain (Sani, 2000).

Ward Head (Mai anguwa) is appointed by village head and recognised in the ward as the leader. He assisted in collecting taxes, settlement of disputes and report to the village head any incident of violence or crimes committed by or to the residents for proper action.

Village Head (Dagaci) is in-charge of village leadership and is appointed by the Sarki, thereby, serve the functions of settling disputes and remitting taxes collected to the Sarkin palace. He is the overall overseer of the community, thus his importance in crime control cannot be over emphasised.

District Head (Hakimi)

This is the paramount ruler and final authority in Wudil LGA. The Hakimi serves as both political, religious and spiritual head of the community. He performs the role of the highest executioner and judicial officer to his community in matters relating to crime and criminality assisted by his council of chiefs and the various appointed heads of occupational groups to settle and prosecute relevantly. Only serious crimes that supersede the authority of the aforementioned occupational heads are taken to the Hakimi's palace for settlement. Worthy to note is most of the primary agencies of crime control are at family level.

Traditional mechanisms of crime control in Wudil LGA.

In Hausaland there are various mechanisms used to control crime. These methods are hinged to the cultural and religious practices of the Hausawa, passed on from one generation to another and are very relevant in containing crime to the minimal level. With specific reference to the people of Wudil, the following methods are used.

Islamic religion: Religion to Nigerians with particular reference to Wudilawa who are predominantly Muslims, is one of the best ways of controlling crime and deviant behaviours in the community. Durkheim (1961) viewed religion as unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, (things set apart and forbidden) beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community. While turner (1993) sees religion as the control of men by the establishment of rules which create mutual obligations in order to cement social relationship. The argument that religion is an important tool for the moral well-being of the community has been advanced in many forms. One of such is that, religion is useful as a cohesive factor, holding the society and its morality together in such a way that whoever attacks the society's religion is deemed to have attacked the society.

It was religious ties that created propitious leverage for strong community ties and less crime in Africa traditional societies due to fear of the sacred and hereafter since all religions believe in another life after death, which is more rewarding (heaven) against that of punishment (hell). In relation to criminal behaviour, religion seek to solve these problems, because it legitimizes our values and provide reasons why certain values should be preferred to others (Ayuk, 2012). For instance, Oba (2006) argued that the use of curses to compel people to respect their taboos and laws served as a control. Curses were generally feared because of the belief that defaulters or their generations would be inflicted with protracted sickness, sudden death or other calamities. The use of some Quranic verses like Yasin, invocation of God almighty (Allah ya isa, Allah tsine, Allah wadai), using thunder (kwarankwatsa) by people to swear or lay curse on criminals normally serve as a deterrent to others.

Tara (Fines and Compensation): The imposition of fines on offenders, usually in the forms of compensation to victims and at times as ransom to the entire society. Furthermore, in most traditional African societies, it was a popular method of crime control. According to Bascom (1960), he noted that this method played a key role in the maintenance of order and social control in traditional societies and was essentially necessitated by the fact that social control and behaviours were tied to an individual's sense of reciprocity with the group to which he belonged. In this respect, groups were largely responsible for enforcing restitution orders against offenders in favour of victims. It must be emphasized that apart from serving as an instrument of social control. This method was a veritable tool of conflict resolution especially between offenders and their victims. Unlike formal resolution in criminal courts, this method ensured that offenders and victims lived in peace and harmony after the former had duly compensated the latter.

Sulhu (mediation): Restoration of peace, order and strained harmonious relationship characterized crime control method in traditional African societies. This stance was eked out by the need to keep the society in one union drawing together every individual towards cooperation and compromise. This was aimed at promoting discipline, mutual understanding and the elevation of harmonious living among the people. In Wudil LGA, sulhu is used as a mechanism of crime control, where elders mediate on crimes committed by calling the parties together and give them fair hearing. The process of negotiation and reconciliation are embarked upon applicably to ensure justice is meted out.

Mari (confinement): The idea of confinement or what is today known as "imprisonment" was used as a method of punishment and indeed had become established among many traditional African societies long before the colonial era. Opara (1980) had reported that many traditional Nigerian societies had evidence of the use of places where offenders had to concur to a sentence of confinement (imprisonment) as an admission of guilt. Oral evidence also abounds to suggest that among the Wudilawa of the North Western Nigeria, there is a special house (Gidan Mari) or room (dakin mari) for keeping deviants and suspects for punishment, the rope

used in tying their feet is called Mari, which keeps them in one place. Even incarcerated they are fed but not allow bath and partaken in any social activities until they complete the sentenced period. They are mostly given traditional herbs to drink, believing it will cure them from committing further crimes. The use of confinement as a method of crime control was often restricted to juvenile delinquents to correct social ills for a short period, also dangerous criminals who were often considered as "security risk".

Rantsuwa (oath taking): This is another important and recognized method of social control in traditional African societies. This involves oath taking by swearing with the holy Quran, which is the sacred book of the Muslims faithful. Suspects were made to swear by holding the holy book after performing ritual cleansing called ablution, to ascertain their innocent of guilt of serious offences beyond any reasonable doubt. The swearing was so potent and effective that people were scared to commit crime because of the resultant effect which can be as swift as sudden death, madness and latent negative consequences to the culprit's generation. According to Adewoye (1973) the use of ordeals in the administration of justice in pre-colonial days in Nigeria attracted no moral opprobrium. Because, it was a legitimate (and a swift) means of arriving at the truth.

Murabus (banishment): Banishment is the act of sending an offender away from his/her community either for a short or long period. According to Ugwuoke (2005), this method was also used for getting rid of dangerous criminals in traditional societies. It provided either a permanent or temporary avenue for expelling a miscreant from his community. This method was significant because, it prevented immediate action or retaliation by the victim's family and facilitated their acceptance of an indemnity and peaceful settlement with the family of the offender. Furthermore, offences that attracted short term banishment in most traditional African societies, included: persistent stealing, repeated cases of Adultery, and manslaughter.

Wariya (Ostracism): Ostracism refers to the deliberate decision of isolating an offender in a traditional society. This method was and is still effective because it meant severing social contacts of friends and relatives which entails a lot of social and psychological pains. Every

case of ostracism generally had a fixed period of time and the expiration of such periods was usually accompanied by some fines which were either in cash or in kind in traditional African society. Offences that attracted this type of punishment in Wudil LGA include, adultery, witchcraft and habitual stealing, Clifford (1974) had observed that social ostracism in the African traditional context was usually much worse than any physical punishment or any obligation to compensate the victim.

Conclusion

This research noted the significant role of African Traditional Crime Control among Wudil community in maintain law and order. It however, stated the emphasis and attention should be made towards African Traditional Methods of conflict resolution and crime control mechanisms. African Traditional Methods were not primitive at all. In fact, they acknowledge the importance of culture, values and cherished traditions in solving societal problems and encouraged the public to believe in the positivity of such approaches as they are fair, just, not judgemental or expensive and aimed at restoring peace and harmony in the society. There is need to integrate the modern and traditional methods of crime control with the sophistication of crimes in the present day Wudil LGA, for complimentary purpose.

Recommendations

- There should be a regular public awareness for re acceptance and recognition of useful traditional crime control mechanisms.
- Government should go back to drawing board on integrating traditional mechanism of crime control with the modern one for holistic and effective approach.
- The community leaders should not have relented on their efforts towards preserving culture of peace.
- Other relevant stakeholders like the National Orientation Agency should engage on rigorous campaign on the need for value re-orientation at federal, state and local government levels aimed at respect, recognition and the adaptation of relevant customary and traditional practices by Nigerians to reduce crime in the country.

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