

TRADITIONAL METHODS OF SOCIAL CONTROL IN AFIKPO NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EBONYI STATE SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

Blessing Nonye Onyima

Abstract

This paper examined the traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA of Ebonyi state, south eastern Nigeria. The rising trend in extraneous crimes and vices like kidnapping, baby factories, drug peddling among others seem to be overwhelming for modern social control mechanisms. This has lent credence to myriads of scholarly suggestions targeted towards making the south eastern Nigerian region a sane society. These suggestions are community policing, use of community vigilante and calls to integrating traditional and modern social control mechanisms. This study employed 186 structured questionnaires and the in-depth interview guide as instruments for data collection anchored on the social bond theory. The researcher made use of descriptive statistics to analyze the questionnaires, the frequency tables and simple percentage was used in presenting and interpreting the quantitative data. The data was also processed using the SPSS, for detailed analysis of the questionnaire. The qualitative data from the in-depth interview was analyzed using the manual thematic content analysis. The study found two groups of effective traditional social control methods (human and non-human traditional social control methods) used to ensure social cohesiveness, order and peaceful inter-human relations in Afikpo North LGA of Ebonyi state. Study respondents expressed preference for human-oriented/managed traditional social control over non-human methods. The study therefore recommends systematic integration of modern and traditional social control methods for holistic effectiveness of both agents of social control in Nigeria.

Key words: social control, traditional social control, deviance, social bond, crimes

Introduction

With the geometric progression of diverse crimes in 21st century Nigeria, a lot has been written on indigenous autochthonous traditional social control mechanisms in Nigeria (Albert, Awe, Herault, & Omitoogun, 1995; Zumve, 2012; Owunmi & Ajayi, 2013; Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). Apart from crimes, another area where traditional social control methods are employed is in the area of conflicts resolution (Albert et al. 1995). A lot has also been written about the Igbo of south eastern Nigeria (Basden, 1921 republished 2006, Ischei, 1976, Isichei, 1977, Ifemesia, 1979, Ekwuru, 1999, Ezenwoko & Osagie, 2014). More recent focus on the Igbo has been centered on harnessing positive and beneficial aspects of the traditional social control mechanisms among the Igbo people particularly with the introduction of extraneous vices and crimes against humanity such as kidnapping, baby factories, drug peddling, and more recently suicide bombing among others (Igbo & Ugwuoke, 2013, Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). Afikpo North LGA remains one Igbo society where traditional social control methods continues to be employed even in contemporary Nigeria in conjunction with modern social control.

There is no consensus definition of social control among scholars as there are notable discrepancies in its conceptualization in literature. For instance, social control refers to the various ways employed by a society to bring its recalcitrant members back into line (Berger, 1963). Also it could mean an arrangement of behaviors, practices and attitudes in which

members of the society based their daily lives. Social control from an institutional perspective is the ‘instrument for the conscious and planned management of socialized human activities’ (Lianos, 2003, p. 415). Social control is a set of mechanisms that create normative compliance in individuals. Social control according to Schaefer (2002) refers to the techniques and strategies for preventing deviant human behaviors in any society. Social control formation is a reflection of strong social bonds/relationships with parents, teachers and other sources of conventional socialization who affects lives positively (Jensen, 2003). When these strong social relationships are absent, then the society would be ridden with social deviants and juvenile delinquents which are potential sources of vices and crimes. Scholars like Cohen when writing on the postindustrial social control, observed that it is the organized ways in which society responds to behavior and people it regards as deviant, problematic, threatening and worrying and undesirable in some ways (Cohen, 1985). Social control might become a self-desire to achieve a goal by a power bloc (International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2010).

Social control mechanisms function in different forms to achieve conformity to the shared values. Nnonyelu (2009) asserts that societies are held together not only by consensus of values but also by force, constraints or the existence of common roles and norms. Social control did not just begin; it is evident and widespread across various human societies. It has always been in existence before the industrialization of nations, which is to say that social control has featured simple societies like bands, tribes, chiefdoms and even it is also paramount in complex societies of industrialized nations. Check on deviance remains one of the roots of social control mechanisms in both simple and modern societies and deviance has been a basic feature of these various societies. This is because deviance undermines credibility and the foundation of social life such as peaceful human relations and co-existence and that is why human groups developed a system of social control. These social controls could be formal and informal and at its end point is prevention of deviance through sanctions. It is noteworthy that social control is as old as the human society in other words social control has been in existence since the first record on human society. It is also seen in the Bible in Genesis but mostly recorded in Exodus 20 when the Israelites were given the Ten Commandments which served as a mechanism for controlling the behavior of the Israelites. Social control mechanisms could further be divided into two, the modern social control mechanisms and the traditional social control mechanisms. The modern mechanisms are associated with the complex developed western/ Europeans world which has been borrowed and diffused across the world and they are manifested in form of commissions of enquiry, police, constitutions and court system made up of lawyers and judges. These European’s social control mechanisms have been extended to Africans as a result of their takeover of Africa through colonialism, and quest to modernize Africans. In contemporary Nigeria, modern social control mechanisms are manifested in those legal bodies instituted by law to enforce laws and punish defaulters which are: the police, the court and prison (CJS), Economic and financial crimes commission (EFCC), Independent corrupt practices commission (ICPC), Traffic Warden among others.

However, this paper concentrates on the traditional social control mechanisms. In the pre-colonial African societies precisely the Igbo society of south eastern Nigeria, social control patterns were, according to scholars, based on no written laws but oral laws that greatly influenced people’s life and attitude towards the society (Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). In Africa, council of elders, kings’ court, people’s assemblies (open), Umu-nna (Kinsmen), Umu-ada/Umu-

okpu (Daughters, wives associations/meetings), age grade associations etc, were used for dispute settlement and justice dispensation (Nwolise, 2004). Biaimah (1998) opined that Tiv people of Nigeria used citizen diplomacy, joking relationships, oaths, blood, feuding, raiding and warfare as social control systems. The above are forms of non-human traditional social control methods among the Tiv effectively utilized to maintain order and to deter potential deviants.

It is well known 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 social control mechanisms in favour of modern social 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). In Nigeria, there have been cases of ritual killings: The Otokoto ritual killing saga (killing) at Imo State 1996 is an example of such killings. There have been a high prevalence of deviance in Nigeria and Afikpo North is not left out.

This is evident in the increasing rates and incidences of crimes in and more specifically Afikpo North LGA. These crimes in Afikpo have led to increasing concerns among residents which often lead to jungle justice. According to Elechi (2003), as of 2001 and 2002 more than ten armed robbery suspects and others suspected of witchcraft in Afikpo were hurriedly arrested and publicly tried, found guilty and burnt to death by the vigilante groups (an informal modern social control mechanism) made up of the youths. The problems of crime and deviance have become a household discussion among the people of Afikpo North LGA. Thus, various scholars have tried understanding the cause of these acts perpetuated by both young and old members of the society. Afikpo like other mid-sized cities in the country have since the late eighties experienced increased wave of crime (Elechi, 2003). At some point economic activities was almost brought to a halt as business men and women were attacked, people in the process got raped and killed, many others were kidnapped and ransom demanded. Below are incidences of recorded crimes in Afikpo town. Royal times recorded a case of a serial rapist and homosexual who was alleged to have raped four children of different parents in Ndibe, Afikpo North (Royal Times, 2014). Rape is one of the most pervasive forms of violence against women (particularly rape of old aged women in rural areas) and on rare occasions males. It is a crime in which assailants uses sex to inflict humiliation on the victim or exert power and control over the victim (Onyejekwe, 2008). Rape is as a result of male bonding and socialized ideas of machismo (Sanday, 1996). Ritual killings are now the order of the day. A professor at the Africana studies and research center at Cornell University opined that ritual murder is a situation where people are killed in order to take their body parts for working magic for personal interests (Refugee Review Tribunal, 2009). In Afikpo, there have been cases of individual killings and their body parts missing. Also, it has been said that individuals engage in these ritual practices due to skewed emphasis on wealth acquisition in recent societies especially in Afikpo North LGA.

Also there have been reported cases of kidnapping and armed robbery attacks on banks like in other parts of Nigeria and not only in Afikpo North LGA. Kidnapping applies to all situations

where persons are forcibly seized and transported to a destination, where they are held against their will in an unlawful confinement (Nseabasi, 2010). Kidnapping may be done for ransom or in furtherance of another crime (Adibe, 2008). Apart from social and economic undertone of kidnapping, it may also have a political reason where political rivals tries to undo each other and in rare cases kidnapping may lead to death/assassination especially when the kidnapper discovers that his victim has recognized his/her identity. Both gender are kidnapped in Afikpo and the potential for one to be kidnapped is when one has a kidnapping value in terms of social status or wealth. On 11th December 2013 at Nguzu Eddah Afikpo Chief Amah Orji was kidnapped but was later freed (Orient newspaper, 2013). Also in June 2013, Lydia Uduma was kidnapped at her residence in Edda, Afikpo (Premium Times, 2013). Kidnapping is fast becoming a lucrative alternative to armed robbery (Inyang and Ubong, 2013). Also there has been armed robbery cases; where armed robbers raid banks in broad daylight, private homes and businesses. A case was reported where armed robbers robbed a bank and escaped through Ndibe beach which served as boundary between Afikpo and Calabar.

Juvenile delinquency is also a major characteristic of Afikpo North LGA. These terms is used to embrace a broad range of behaviors, from that found offensive to respectable values and occasionally serious crimes (Scott and Marshal, 2005). Delinquency adversely affects the economic and social development, strengthens social exclusion and poverty, undermines security and reduces governance (Schaeffer, 2002). These various juvenile delinquencies include drug related crimes, property crimes, violent crimes etc.

The nature of the present day modern social control mechanisms has allowed for weak traditional social control system, thus encouraging negligence/relegation of the traditional values and norms that guided the society. The traditional social control mechanisms had a strong justice system which allowed for immediate sanction to offenders. Thus, it has become a problem to effectively define the extent to which modernization has greatly affected the traditional social control mechanism and their functions.

It is worthy to note that, the breakdown in family structures as a result of modernization has brought about poor socialization, weak social ties and cohesion in the family; Hence, leading to poor orientation and inculcation of norms and values of the society in children and youths by relevant stakeholders. Again, the Christian religion has taken captive the minds of the people of Afikpo, Nigeria and Africa in general; thus, weakening the structure and hold of our African traditional religion on the society. Also one of the problems traditional social control mechanisms have encountered is a result of industrialization, which has led to migration to cities in search of green pastures; thus, weakening the effects and functions of this traditional social control mechanisms and the system. It could then be hypothesized or assumed that, it is the weakness of these social control mechanisms and its ineffectiveness that has led to an upsurge in pervasive insecurity such as kidnapping, organized assassinations and armed robbery, rape and ritual killings in Afikpo North LGA and by extension in Nigeria.

It is against this backdrop that, this paper examines the traditional social control mechanisms/methods in Afikpo North LGA, the roles, functions and effectiveness of these traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA and suggestions on integration/co-existence of traditional and modern social control mechanisms in modern societies in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical underpinning that would serve as explanatory framework is the social bond theory also known as the social control theory which was propounded by Travis Hirschi (1969). It is associated with an American criminologist known for his social control perspective on juvenile delinquency. The main thrust of this theory is that it tries to answer why do people follow the law? Hirschi argued that delinquency can be explained by the absence of social bonds/attachments. What are these attachments (these are the parents, teachers and peers), involvement in conventional activities (these are 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 most likely to prevent delinquency. These attachments may otherwise be referred to as social connections. To Hirschi (1969), the likelihood of one engaging in deviant behaviors increases when the person has no social connections. These controls are fear of punishment, feelings of integrity and desire to be a good person (Hirschi 1969, in Mcshane and Williams, 2007). For instance in the movie “scream” (Craven, 1996) when the two killers were unmasked, one of them laments that “my mom is gonna be so mad at me”. Although, this fictional offenders’ material attachments did not keep him from killing, it does point to the broader issue of how these attachments can control our behavior, not wanting to disappoint those we love and care about. This theory of Hirschi related the understanding of bonds to the informal mechanisms of control (traditional mechanisms of social 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.

In this study on traditional social control mechanisms, it should be noted that the social control patterns used involves attachment to norms, commitment to the social environment, and involvement in the social activities and belief in the values system. These social connections serve as a means by which the traditional social control mechanisms regulate behaviors. In the traditional African setting, the deviant is seen as insane or maybe one who had offended the gods in secret and it could be a group of persons who do not manifest any of the Hirsch’s model. Based on this theory, there can only be a successful traditional social control when the citizens have special bonds with the mechanisms and patterns of control as the case was before the Europeanization of nations. The identified methods of traditional social control in Afikpo reveal an array of social bonds that serve as crime checks in the society and when this is integrated with modern mechanisms, and then we will have a more effective complex social control system in Nigeria.

Study Area

The area for this study is Ebonyi state in south eastern Nigeria. Ebonyi state is known as ‘salt of the nation’ because of its large salt deposition. It was created in 1996 and is made up of thirteen local governments and one of the youngest states in Nigeria. Ebonyi state is made up of thirteen towns of which Afikpo is the second largest (http://wikipedia/afikpo.info_html). Afikpo which is a Europeanized form for the original name ‘Ehugbo’ is located at the southern part of Ebonyi state. Afikpo spans an area approximately 164 square kilometer in size. It is located on 6 degrees north latitude and 8 degrees east longitude. It occupies an area of about 64 square miles (164km²). Afikpo is a hilly area despite occupying a region low in altitude which rises 350feet above sea level (<http://wikileaks/2010.org>). Afikpo civilization according to several

archaeological findings shows it existed as far back as the Neolithic Age (<http://afikpooonline.com/about-afikpo>). The major occupation of the people of Afikpo is farming and handcrafting, they also engage in activities like dancing which has gained both local and international recognition; these cultural dance troupe include; Nkwa Umu-Agbogho, Nkwanwite dance and the Elia dance. Initiation into the Ogo cult was the dream of every son and father; before the coming of the Irish who brought Christianity. Before the exit of the Irish from Afikpo, they established the legendary Mater Misericord Specialist hospital that has one of the best schools of nursing in Nigeria. Including the prestigious Akanu Ibiam federal polytechnic Unwana and later the famous Government College, alongside McGregor secondary school. The establishment of institutions and various organizations by state, federal and private individuals like banks, national Youth Service orientation camp, the Islamic school, federal prison among others brought about increased food production from subsistence farming to commercial farming. Afikpo comprises of the following urban communities (i) Ozizza (ii) Ohaisu (iii) Nkpogoro (iv) Ugwuegu (v) Itim (<http://ebonyionline.com/origin-of-afikpo>). According to the 2006 national population census figure, Afikpo north local government area has a total population of 154,649 persons. This is made up of 80,632 males and 76,017 females (National population commission, 2009). Thus, the population for this study is 156,649. The target population of this study involves the general public aging 18years and above, because everyone is affected by the influences of the social control mechanisms put in place to control and direct behaviors. The various members of Afikpo North LGA partake in social control; this is because they are members of an age set.

Methods of data collection

The basic instruments that were used for data collection in this research involved I86 structured questionnaires and the in-depth interview guide. The questionnaires comprised of both open and closed ended format, but contain more of closed ended questions. It contains questions that sought answers/information regarding the traditional social controls mechanisms in Afikpo North L.G.A. The multi-stage sampling technique was used in this research in selecting the respondents for the questionnaire and this incorporated the cluster sampling techniques. There are five communities in Afikpo North L.G.A and they include; Ozizza, Ohaisu, Nkpogoro, Ugwuegu and Itim. These five communities were clustered into two namely Ohaisu and Ugwuegu. Ohaisu community consists of five (5) villages (Ukpa, Ngodo, Amangbala, Amichara, Amachi) while Ugwuegu consists of four (4) villages (Amaizu, Ikumoro, Ugwuegu elu and Ugwuegu Ali). Then, using simple random sampling technique, Ukpa was selected in Ohaisu while Amaizu was selected in Ugwuegu. Then the streets in the selected villages were numbered also, the houses in the selected streets were equally numbered. Using the random sampling technique, the houses with odd numbers were picked as being the respondents. Thus, 93 questionnaires were administered each in Ukpa and Amaizu respectively and data for this research were gotten making it a total of 186. A complimentary qualitative data collection method that is the In-depth interview (IDI) guide was also employed. The IDI guide was made up of research questions and probes that sought firsthand information regarding the traditional social controls mechanisms in Afikpo North L.G.A.

The data was processed using the SPSS, for detailed analysis of the questionnaire. The researcher made use of descriptive statistics to analyses the questionnaires, the frequency tables and simple percentage was used in presenting and interpreting the quantitative data. The qualitative data

from the in-depth interview was analyzed using the manual thematic content analysis, in regards to its validity. This enabled adequate extrapolations to be made based on the study objectives.

Findings

Traditional social control mechanisms and the traditional methods of social control in Afikpo North LGA

The study found that (19.9%) of the respondents suggest that the mechanisms of social control in Afikpo North LGA is the traditional leaders council, (7.0%) see it as the umunna, (2.2%) agrees it is the family, (23.1%) see it as the age grade, (22.6%) see it as all of the above, (23.6%) says it is none of the above, while (1.6%) does not have any response. Data gathered from the in-depth interview shows that social control is a function for every member of the society. For instance, a respondent observed that: “Onye obula bu onye nche, onye ndozi, ihie buru na odighi onye obu orua iche, ayukota mani onu na ogba uhuhu”. Thus meaning that social control is the responsibility of the Afikpo society (95 years old Chief). The finding therefore shows that traditional social control in Afikpo is human-oriented and it is carried out by every member of the society, although there are officials that oversee general functions.

The study also found that some non-human social control mechanisms such as oath taking, use of Ofo and Ikenga, charms and talisman as captured by (63.4%) of the respondents who are of the view that taking oath is also part of the traditional social control in Afikpo North LGA, (12.4%) believe that it is the use of Ofo and Ikenga, (1.6%) says it is the use of charms and talisman, (17.2%) asserts all of the above is part of the traditional social control mechanism, (2.2%) says it is excommunication, while (3.2%) did not have a response. This also agrees with the findings from the in-depth interview where a 44 years old male asserts that: “Taking oath and excommunication were basic ways of controlling people’s behavior. Na Ehugbo, we send people out of village maka na nwo nweri ike ikoteko ndiozo na ihe ojo now”. These implies that taking oaths and excommunication is a major feature of Afikpo, and this occurs so that deviants will not involve others into their problems and punishment, showing that excommunication is a basic tool for traditional social control in Afikpo.

In terms of which of these traditional social control mechanisms (human and non-human methods) should continue or discontinue, majority (60.2 %) of the study respondents believes the use of umunna (male kinsmen), family and age grade should continue to exist, while (21.0%) asserts that oath taking, ofo, charms, and talisman should continue to exist, (14.5%) believe both should continue to co-exist, while (4.3%) thinks non-human social control mechanisms should be eliminated. The qualitative data shows that the umunna and age grades should continue as traditional social control mechanisms, as captured by this participant: “I believe the umunna, council of elders and the age grades should continue as traditional social control mechanism, because they will carry out their functions in every way humanly possible” (according to a 59years old female respondent).

Again, in ascertaining if traditional social control methods still exist in Afikpo North LGA, majority (80.6%) of the respondents are of the view that traditional social control mechanism still exists in Afikpo North LGA, (6.5%) believes it doesn’t, (8.6%) said may be, (3.2%) choose don’t know, while (1.1%) have no response. The qualitative data and the quantitative data reveal it is still been practiced and useful as captured by an interview carried out on a 39 years old

female observed that: “Yes, it still exist for example whenever one steals he or she is brought to an open place and given some strokes of the Cain called “ntii”, and these also goes for fighting”.

The roles, functions and effectiveness of these traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA

This study found out that kindred/clan association of male kinsmen (Ummuna), age-grade associations, traditional religious institutions, have roles, functions to play in Afikpo as traditional social control mechanisms. In specific details, the study further found that majority (72.0%) of the respondents affirmed that the family and umunna have a role to play in social control, (14.0%) of them maintained that they do not, (9.1%) stated maybe they do, (2.2%) said they don't know, while (2.7%) have no response. Data from the qualitative data shows that both the family and the umunna have a role to play. For instance, in an interview conducted, data shows that the umunna (male kinsmen) and the family are strong agents when it comes to social control: “Umunna is a strong arm of decision making, both at the family and community level” (a 72 years old male, IDI, 2014).

On effectiveness, the study found that (24.2%) of the respondents thinks these roles have been carried out very effectively, (58.7%) think it has not been carried effectively, while (13.4%) believes it has not been very effective. On the other hand the in depth interview respondents believes the roles have been very effective in control of behaviors. A 28 years old female believes that “If the umunna or family members take up your case or issue, then you are in trouble because they will make sure you change whether you like it or not”.

On the roles of age-grade in traditional social control mechanism, it was also found that (24.2%) agrees that the age grades have been performing their roles as social control agents, (58.7%) disagrees (13.4%) of the respondents are skeptical, (.5%) have no knowledge, while (3.2%) did not respond. This data shows that the majority of the study respondents disagreed that the age grade has been performing their duties. The in-depth interview shows that there is a contradiction with the quantitative data “In all my years in Ehugbo, the age grade has always taken care of bad situations like armed robbery, rape and others; as the day passes by they grow in strength” (a 59years old female lecturer, IDI 2014).

Furthermore, the study tried to ascertain the extent of successful effectiveness that traditional social control methods has achieved in Afipko (22.0%) of the respondents affirmed that it has been very successful, (65.6%) aggress it has been successful, (7.5%) disagrees saying that it has not been successful, (2.7%) says it has not been very successful, while (2.2%) did not respond. This shows that there is an agreement between the quantitative data and qualitative data. The qualitative data agrees that traditional religious institutions have performed its social control functions successfully. According to a respondent: “The traditional religious institutions like the Mkpuruke would administer severe punishment on defaulters like banishment and excommunication and these act made people adhere to regulations” (75years old male, from Ukpa, personal interview, 18/7/2014). The study tried to ascertain in what exact ways has traditional social control methods been effectively functional, we found that the traditional religious institutions engage in crime prevention, punishing offenders and ensuring peaceful co-existence as captured by the respondents. For instance, (17.2%) of the respondents agrees that the role of traditional religious institutions are to prevent crime, (41.4%) aggress it is to punish

offenders, (18.3%) see it as maintaining peaceful co-existence, (18.8%) believes its all of the above, (.5%) said others like giving laws, while (3.8%) did not respond. The information from the in-depth shows that they perform all the aforementioned functions as opined by this study participant: *“Ndi na efe chi obodo, na aru oru nke wo kwesiri ini rua, example mgbe mkpuruke diri, onye zuru ohi, raa nwanyi nike, ja za mkpuruke, ma obu ido zi ese ma okwu”* (IDI, according to a 48 years old male farmer).

This means that traditional religious institution ensures that whoever engages in stealing or rapes a woman will answer to the “mkpuruke” (a local shrine), after punishment they can embark on reconciliation. The study also found out that traditional rulers have little role to play as a traditional social control mechanism. It is the Ohanaeze (general assembly) that performs such roles. For instance, (69.9%) of the respondents affirmed that traditional rulers have a role to perform, (10.7%) said they don’t have a role to perform, (15.6%) choose maybe, (1.1%) said don’t know, while (2.7%) does not have a response. It then shows that the traditional rulers have a role to perform in traditional social control. The qualitative information shows that the roles of the traditional rulers are limited. According to a 69 years old female “The rulers are not the ultimate power or decision making body, but they still perform certain roles in the community. The ultimate decision making body in Afikpo North LGA is the Ohaneze (Ohanezi)”. Traditional rulers play minimal roles as expressed by these respondents, (15.1%) of the respondents agree that the roles of the traditional rulers are financing the other agents of social control, (43.5%) says it is to make laws, (13.4%) says it is to monitor the social control mechanisms, (19.9%) agrees that it is all of the above, (4.3%) says its none of the above, (.5%) choose others, while (3.2%) does not have any response. The in-depth interview conducted shows that their functions are to monitor the other social control mechanism. According to a 53 years old female “the traditional rulers have little or no role to perform in Afikpo as the general assembly make and enforce the decisions”. The respondents and study participants presented their opinions on their subjective assessment of above discussed traditional social control mechanisms. For instance, (22.6%) of the study respondents agree that the mechanism of traditional social control have been very successful in carrying out their functions, (62.4%) believes it’s just successful, (9.7%) believes it has not been successful, (3.25) said it’s not very successful, while (2.2%) does not have any response. In line with the quantitative data, the qualitative data shows that the traditional social control mechanisms have been successful in performing their functions. According to a traditional ruler “they have been very successful when it comes to managing the problems that arise in these town; people fear them, because their judgment is binding on every member even me”. This shows that traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA has generally been successful in its functions. Study respondents and participants were asked to answer in specifics Yes or No on the effectiveness of traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA of Ebonyi state Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	118	63.4
No	18	9.7
Maybe	36	19.4
Don’t know	6	3.2
No response	8	4.3
Total	186	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2014

Table 1 indicates that (63.4%) affirms that traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA have been effective in controlling crime, (9.7%) disagree with that, (19.4%) are not certain of their response, (3.2%) says they don't know, while (4.3%) did not have any response. Data from the in-depth interview shows that it has been effective. According to a 29years old student:

It has been effective, for instance even here in school you are careful of your actions because it can be taken to the village and personally I don't like these elders as they don't seem to care who you are (IDI, 2014).

This positive affirmation does not imply that traditional social control mechanisms have remained unchanged.

Changes in Traditional Social Control Mechanisms as a result of modernization and co-existence with modern social control mechanism of Nigeria.

The study also found that urbanization or city life, religion, globalization and modernization are all factors leading to changes in traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA. For, instance, majority of the study respondents (26.9%) see modern religions like Christianity and Islam as factors that brings about poor/weak traditional social control, (39.8%) observed that migration to the cities is also a factor, (14.5%) affirms it is modernization, while (12.4%) accepts it all of the above. In consonance with the replies gotten from the questionnaire, the in-depth interviews are in disagreement as to the major reason for the weak traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA. For example, a participant has this to say "Omenali aburu ihe eji n'eme akaja, ndi church ekwetegi na ihe anyi, and you know that majority of our people are now calling themselves Christians and now, n'eme ihe ojo di iche iche" (IDI, Male respondent, 73 years). This implies that tradition is not something to joke with, church people do not agree with our traditional patterns/practices and you know that majority of our people are now calling themselves Christians, but they go about committing so many crimes. A female in-depth interview participant believes that:

Migrations to the cities have brought about weak traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA. Our People travel out, and when they come back you see that those things they know as a way of life is now changed and they start displaying a new and strange life (IDI, Female 45 years)

Thus, we can see that from the first respondents that religion is now anti-tradition and under the guise of religion people perpetrate evil. And this is against the viewpoint of the second respondent. Respondents were asked to describe the extent to which these factors has resulted to changes in traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North LGA, (17.7%) of the study respondents affirms that the extent these factors have weakened traditional social control in Afikpo North LGA is very high, (66.1%) believes its high, (11.3%) says it's not high, while (2.7%) does not know. The information from the in-depth interview shows that the extent of weakening is very high. For instance, according to a 56 years old female: "The extent to which these factors have weakened traditional social control mechanisms in our town is very much, which could be seen in the way they operate now and it's relegated state and preference for modern social control mechanisms".

The study also identified the problems of poor and weak traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA

Response	Frequency	Percent
Robbery	13	7.0
Sexual assaults	10	5.4
Kidnapping /ritual murder	20	10.8
Deviance	56	30.1
All of the above	80	43.0
None of the above	1	0.5
Don't know	2	1.1
No response	4	2.2
Total	186	100.0

Source: field survey 2014

Table 2 indicates that (7.0%) affirms that robbery is a problem of poor and weak traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA, (5.4%) affirms its sexual assaults, (10.8%) say it is kidnapping/ritual murder, (30.1%) says it is deviance, (43.0%) agrees it is all of the above, (.5%) says it is none of the above, while (1.1%) does not know. Also study respondents observed that the mode of punishment in Afikpo North LGA has change for instance, a qualitative data shows that changes have occurred in mode of punishment, as observed by this respondent:

My friend, there are new ways of doing things and we are not able to deny that. For instance, when one steals from another we don't cut off his hand anymore we just give him fine and some strokes of the cane and if it is a serious case after the flogging and the fine he is handed over to the police (IDI, a 32 male respondent).

The study also found that some factors such modernization, urbanization, industrialization and globalizations instruments like modern crime detection technologies have contributed to changes in traditional social control mechanisms. For instance, (19.9%) of the respondents affirm that globalization influenced these changes, (26.9%) says it is modernization, (75.5%) says it is industrialization, (12.9%) says it is all of the above, while (30.1%) believes it is none of the above. The qualitative data shows that what influenced these changes is the quest to be modernized. For example a 63years old male lecturer:

Our traditional ways have since the colonization of Nigeria been changed because the whites wanted to have their way and these has affected our cultural practices and beliefs. Crime rates like rape have increased because people applaud nudity in the name of modernization. Girls wear skimpy things; they are now allowed to put on men's wear, women marrying men and so on. So why won't sexual assaults increase?

Discussion

It is necessary to state at this point that there is a vast knowledge of traditional social control among the people living in Afikpo North Local government area. This is corroborated by Nwolise (2004) who had earlier argued that more than 70 percent of people in traditional African societies still maintain and practice their traditional means of social control. This is also in agreement with Braimah (1998) in which he argued that in the last century, modern social control was yet to gain acceptance in traditional societies in Africa. However, the validity of

Bramah's assertion remains contestable as our findings show that traditional social mechanism in Afikpo occupies a relegated position, modern social control mechanisms remains the most preferred social mechanism in Nigerian justice system. This arguably is because of modernization and wave of globalization. In spite of the complex nature of modern social control mechanisms, crime rates increases at an overwhelming rate, it is also very expensive to maintain unlike the traditional social control methods. This finding is supported by Ottenberg (1971) who argued that the peace and order which existed in Africa especially in Afikpo village setting was one that cost them nothing and was passed down through tales, fables, and cultural activities. He further stated that members of the society conformed to the ideal of their traditional social mechanisms and not because they were forced, but because it was a part of the everyday lives, which they are willing to live by. For instance, the recent trend in suicide bombing can be curbed by using the traditional rulers, kinsmen and even families of recalcitrant individuals who know their people and share similar worldviews. These social deviants come from families, clans, tribes, and villages; they did not fall from the sky. Deviants and potential deviants can be monitored and checked through their established links/attachments of social bonds. They can caution and sensitize disgruntled youths from participating in crimes because they have developed culturally acceptable ways of deterrence, prevention, conflict resolution and even punishment. This is not a contest between the two social control mechanisms but an advocacy for co-existence and integration of the two methods.

Further findings show that traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North Local government area among others include human traditional social control mechanisms like the traditional rulers/council, the umunna (male kinsmen), the age grade and others. These groups of people before modernization have carried out their functions without fear or favor. These findings are supported by Anyacho and Ugal (2010) in which they argued that traditional social control mechanisms were guided by principles and values during conflict management, which includes fairness, impartiality etc. Non-human traditional social control mechanisms also exist in Afikpo North like the use of oaths, talisman, ofo and ikenga as social control, this to a large extent should be eliminated from the traditional social control mechanisms because they are attached to non-observable forces beyond human control and may not be compatible with modern social control techniques as this paper is advocating for integration of modern and traditional social control mechanisms.

Also it was found that the traditional social control mechanisms prior to modernization era were effectively sustaining peace and order, though it was when the Igbo societies were at the simple stages. We are somewhat skeptical about its effectiveness in preventing, combating, or totally eliminating complex crimes in complex societies. It is not surprising that the chiefs and kings in Afikpo North played minimal role as traditional social control mechanism because the Ohanaeze (General assembly) played such roles. It is important to recall that, the Igbos of south eastern Nigeria were known as acephalous; hence the cliché *igbo enwe eze*. It is in agreement with Onyeozili and Ebbe (2012) who argued that there was absence of chiefs in the pre-colonial era, thus their functions was limited to their kindred and immediate family.

Further revelations in this study show that, during colonization effectiveness of traditional social control mechanisms was affected due to introduction of modern techniques and relegation of the traditional and thus, a corrupt institution of traditional social control emerged. In tandem with the

findings of Adebayo (2013) who argued that traditional social control mechanism has been effective in the pre-colonial era in maintaining order and stability, he found that “taboo” served as a tool for effective and efficient control of crime. To Ogoloma (2013) he argued that fines were used to achieve order, but capitalism brought about bribery to swerve justice, corruption, misappropriation of funds and thus incapacitated the mechanism of traditional social control.

Findings in this study argues that the breakdown of the core of traditional social control mechanism as a result of modernization and globalization which has encouraged the culture of borrowing have resulted in all sorts of deviance like drug trafficking, prostitutions, sexual assault, kidnapping and ritual murder etc. As days goes by these vices are on the increase; In line with the findings of Warner, Leukefeld and Kramen (2003) they argued that increase in deviance is as a result of the breakdown in the conventional values; and this is an absolute indication of a weak traditional social control mechanism. As a result of this breakdown there is a call to improve on the existing traditional social control mechanism and provide the existing traditional social control mechanisms with basic materials for functioning. According to (Nwolise, 2004) we are at loss of reason behind the dwindling security, sky rocketing deviance and criminal activities in the society.

Finally, we suggest that for the achievement of peace, law and order in our society the current relegated status of traditional social control in Afikpo and by extension (Nigeria) should be reviewed. There should also be an integration and co-existence of traditional and modern social control mechanism to ensure a holistic social control system in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper has so far examined the traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North Local Government Area. The study further ascertained the roles and functions of the traditional social control mechanisms. It also probed how effective and efficient traditional social control mechanisms have been in Afikpo North LGA. It tried to ascertain the problems of weak traditional social control, the influence of changes as a result of modernization and globalization on traditional social control and measures to be taken in improving the existing traditional social control mechanisms in Afikpo North L.G.A. It is therefore recommended that there is need for reacceptance and reinvigoration of the existing traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA. It is also suggested that official recognition be given to the existing traditional social control mechanism in Afikpo North LGA and it should be integrated with modern social control mechanisms not relegated for a holistic justice system to be operated in Nigeria.

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