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IPESEI: A Traditional (Informal) Way of Crime Control among Ekiti People of South West Nigeria

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Abstract:

This paper examines how a traditional festival amongst Ekiti people serves as an informal way of crime and deviant control. The study investigates how the festival is been done in other part of Ekiti Communities apart from the study site. The roles performed by the festival in checkmating peoples attitude towards crime was also discussed in the study. Ido Ekiti, Ekiti State Southwest, Nigeria was the study location. The name 'IPESEI' was interpreted as the festival of criminals and deviants among the people of Ekiti though this paper established that different community has their own name to the festival. Purposive sampling method was adopted for the study. In gathering the data, qualitative method was adopted in which participant observation method was used. Five Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were undertaken among the leaders in the study site. In addition two FGDs were conducted among the community youths and the elders in Ido Ekiti. The findings revealed that the yearly festival is one of the way in which crime and deviant behaviour have been controlled in the community. It was established from the study that songs of numerous types, irritating characters were established against the victim(s) during the festival. Also it was revealed from the study that the festival is been attached to a particular festive period in some communities i.e. Ileya period, Easter period, or Xmas/New year; while some designate a particular period for the festival. From the findings it was shown that five to seven days is assigned as a period of celebration of the festival. It was equally established that people respect this method of crime control more than the formal method because it even involved the family members of the victim, and it has a negative impact on both the victim and the family presently and in future. It was established that the festival serves as a direct way by which the societal members get involved in criminal justice of the community as a result of different rites performed during the festival.

Keywords: IPESEI, traditional festival, Ido, Ekiti, festival of criminals and deviants, songs, irritating characters, communities. Festive period, rites, offenders, crime control agencies, criminality

1. Introduction

If crime is rational and people choose to commit crime or found violating rules and regulations of the society, then it follows that crime can be controlled or eradicated through necessary interventions or policies that convince potential criminals to desist from criminal/deviant activities, delay their actions. Or avoid a particular target are guarded securely, the means to commit crime are controlled, and potential offenders are carefully monitored. Desperate people may contemplate crime, but only the truly irrational would attack a well-defined, inaccessible target and risk strict punishment. Crime prevention can be achieved by reducing the opportunities people have to get engage in criminal act or inimical behaviour.

Informal social control, or the reactions of individuals and groups that brings about conformity to norms and laws, includes peer and community pressure, by stander intervention in a crime, and collective response such as citizen patrol groups. According to Conklin (2007) the agents of criminal justice system exercise more control when informal social control is weaker. It is people who knew each other informally controlling each other in subtle ways subconsciously. It is also an internalization of norms and values by a process known as socialization, which is defined as the process by which an individual, born with behavioural potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behaviour which is confined to the narrower range of what is acceptable for him by the group standards.

In any society, it is necessary to have some form of control over the actions of members in order to maintain some form of social order and conformity. Obviously, chaos would result if everyone could do anything that pleases them. Most especially, in a micro society it is relatively easier to attain this conformity to the social norms. This is as a result of the population which gives the opportunity of knowing each other and can find out what others do. Through this individual in the society become a watching dog monitoring the activities of one another. To know that friends and neighbours, whom you live with day after day, would find out if you were to steal something is usually enough to deter a would-be offender. That others might gossip about one who violates the norms or that they would otherwise show disapproval of one's deviant acts are forms of informal social control which to large extent operate effectively in many communities today especially the micro society (Williams, 2008).

Norms and value of every society are the symbolic culture in action. Norms are viewed as the rules and guidelines regarding what kind of behaviour are expectable within the society, while values are the set of shared beliefs about what a group of people consider to be worthwhile for the adequate running of the society. For norms and values to address the regularities and conduct of human behaviour, there must be sanctions to propel the ordinances of human attitude. Sanctions are a means of enforcing norms. They include rewards for conformity and punishments for violations. Positive sanctions and negative sanctions expresses both approval and disapproval in the society, these answered the dictates of the social control in monitoring the behavioural pattern of people in the society.

From a functionalist perspective, sanctions establish social control, ensuring that people behave to some degree in acceptable ways and thus promoting social cohesion. There are many forms of authority in our culture, from the government to social institutions; each has a certain amount of power that they can exercise to get others to follow their rules. So when someone is caught violating a norm, there is usually some prescribed sanction that will then be administered, serving as a deterrent to that behaviour.

Ipesi an instrument of informal social control of vices is viewed and categorized as an effective weapon among the people of Ido Community in Ekiti State of the Southwest Nigeria. It is an informal method of crime control among the people of Ekiti in which criminal attitude is totally rejected in order to haste the smooth running of the society. It is a yearly festival that focuses attention in addressing the victims in the community.

1.1. Research Question

- How the festival has been able control crime in the society?
- What are the different methods or avenue that festival adopted in crime control?
- Has there be a decline in crimes through the festival in the society?
- Is there role conflict between Ipesi as an informal social control method and formal
- Social control method of crime in society?
- What is the perception of people towards the method in crime control?

1.2. Objectives to the Study

- To understand how Ipesi festival has been able to control crime in the society
- To access the various dimension or approach which the festival adopts in crime control
- To understand whether the festival has really control the crime
- To investigate whether the method has conflicted with another method in the process of actualizing it aims and objectives
- To know the perception and attitude of community members towards the festival in crime control.

1.3. Deviance and Informal Social Control

Without conformity and predictability in human behaviour, society could not exist. Order and stability are the cornerstones of social life. All the same, it is obvious that social life includes people who breach norms. Some people violate norms by committing series of atrocities, while some maintained and observed the required norms of a particular society which could have be a violation of norms in another society (Hubert, 1999). Most people tend to fall within a normal range of social expectations. Deviance, behaviour outside this range, may be either positive or negative.

Negative deviance involves behaviour that under conforms to accepted norms. Negative deviants reject the norms, misinterpret the norms, or are aware of the norms. This is the kind of behaviour popularly associated with the idea of deviance. The positive deviance in other way encompasses behaviour that over conforms to social expectation (Heckert 2003). Actually, positive deviants conform to society norms but in an unbalanced way. This type of deviant as stated by Heckert is an idealization of group norms that leads people to extremes of perfectionism. To him, positive deviance can be as disruptive and hard to manage as negative deviance.

According to Lermert (2003), there are two types of deviance in society which include primary and secondary deviance. Primary deviance involves norms violations or crimes that have very little influence on the actor and can be quickly forgotten. Secondary deviance occurs when a deviant event comes to the attention of significant others or social control who apply a negative label. The newly labeled offender then reorganizes his or her behaviour and personality around the consequences of the deviant act. Secondary deviance involves resocialization into deviant role. Secondary deviance produces a deviance amplification effect. Offenders feel isolated from the mainstream of society and become firmly locked within their deviant roles.

Social control is considered to be one of the foundations of order within society. It is also an approved means of promoting conformity to societal norms. There are two broad types of social control: internal (informal) control, which lies within individual, and external (formal) control, which exists outside the individual. Informal social control or the reactions of individuals and groups that bring about conformity to norms and laws, includes peer and community pressure, bystander intervention in a crime, and collective responses such as citizen patrol groups. It is people who knew each other informally controlling each other in subtle ways subconsciously (Conklin, 2007). Informal social control is an internalization of norms and values by a process known as socialization, which is defined as the process by which an individual, born with behavioural potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behaviour which is confined to the narrower range of what is acceptable for him by the group standards.

Informal control coordinate the social value since the social value present in individuals are products of informal control, exercised implicitly by a society through particular customs, norms and mores. Individual internalize the value of

the society, whether conscious or not of the indoctrination. The traditional society relies mostly on informal social control embedded in its customary culture to socialize its members.

There are instruments adopted for the effectiveness of informal social control in the society, which serves as the major concern of this paper. Informal sanctions which include shame, ridicule, sarcasm, criticism, and disapproval, which can cause an individual to stray towards the social norms of the society. In extreme cases sanctions may include social discrimination and exclusion. Informal social control usually has more effect on individuals because the social values become internalized, thus becoming an aspect of the individual personality. Informal sanctions check and control deviant behaviour in every society.

1.3.1. Human and Property Security

The concept of human and property security emanates from the conventional idea of security management which centres on the security of the society. It focusses in individuals and its ultimate end point in the protection of people from traditional and non-traditional threats. Centre to this concept is the belief and human and property security deprivations can undercut peace and stability within and among states. According to Adedoyin (2013), the ability to protect the vital core of all human lives in such a way that it enhances human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from serious and persistent threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.

In similar dimension, Hubert (1999) explained the importance of human, and property security, he maintained that human and property security covers every are of human needs. This is why it serves as the basis of all forms and categories of security. He gave the importance of the concepts and asserts that: in essence, human and property security means safety of people from violent and non-violent threat. It is a condition of being characterized by freedom from pervasive threat. It is an alternative way of seeing the world taking people as its point of reference rather than focusing exclusively on the security of the territory or government. Like other security concept – national security, economic security, and food security – it is all about protection.

Since, human security gives primacy to human beings and their complex social and economic interactions, it derives its convicting quality from the fact that is based on the global concern and threats to human security are no longer secluded issues. It is pertinent to state that threat to human security are very easy to manage if preventive measures are taken at appropriate time before it advances to devastating state.

1.3.2. Societal Security

Members of the society prioritize the safety of their territorial integrity, and resources. This informs the belief that national security is the preservation of independence and sovereignty of a society. In reality, every society has a large number of interests to protect. These interest put together constitute the national interests to protect. These interest put together constitute the national interest which originates from values, good governance and protection of social and economic well-being of the entire citizenry. Based on this, one may describe societal security as the protection and maintenance of society interest of the people. This corresponds with Adedoyin (2013) definition of societal security; he opines that societal security is the ability to preserve the society's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations in such a way that all will be benefit to it, to preserve its nature, institutions and governance from disruption from outside and to control everything concerns the society, majorly to guide the norms and value that necessitate the conduct of behavioural pattern of the people.

Integration and social solidarity served as the major security benefit of any society as a result of adequacy in honouring the value and norms that standardize the culture of the society. The cultural heritage of the society drives the members towards the enhance security. The cultural heritage refers to the ideas, customs, etc. that have been in existence, and these have making and assisting the society to remain in harmony. The cultural heritage consist of the important qualities, customs, beliefs, norms, mores, and traditions that have been the distinguishing mark of a society for a long time and this are part of the society.

In ability for the heritage to work accordingly, deviation and crime will be the result. The optimum regulatory order for the cultural heritage is to spell out the behavioural pattern in which the societal members need to follow for their day to day activities which facilitates the development of the society. Therefore for the cultural heritage to annex its functions there must be a control mechanism to serve as a monitoring apparatus towards human activities in society.

2. Theoretical Concept

The study is underpinned with social control theory that exploiting the process of socialization and social learning in human society. Social control theory proposes that people relationships, commitments, values, norms and beliefs encourage social controls and not to break the law. Thus if moral codes are internalized and individuals are tied into and have a stake in their wider community, they will voluntarily limit their propensity to commit deviant acts.

According to Hirschi (1972), control theory is also based on Durkheim's concept of deviance, which explained that, conformity to social norms depend on a strong bond between individuals and society. If that bond is weak or is broken for some reasons, anomie will be present, and then deviance occurs. In control theory, social bonds control the behaviour of people; it is the social bond that prevents deviance from occurring. Individuals conform because they fear

that deviance will harm the relationships they have to others. They do not want to lose face with family members and friends.

Social control theories maintained that all people have the potential to violate the law and that modern society present many opportunities for illegal activities. Criminal activities are often exiting pastimes that hold the promise of immediate reward and gratification. Considering the attractions of crime, the question control theorist pose is, why do people obey the rules of society? A choice theorists would respond that it is the fear of punishment; the structural theorists would say that obedience is a function of having access to legitimate opportunities, while learning theorists would explained that obedience is acquired through contact with law-abiding parents and peers. In contrast, social control theorists argued that people obey the law because behaviour and passions are being controlled by internal and external forces. Some individuals have self-control, manifested through a strong moral sense, which render them incapable of hunting others and violating social norms. Other people according to Siegel (2007), develop a commitment to conformity, which is adhered to because there is a real, present, and logical reason to obey the rules of society. People may agree that found them with deviant or criminal act may bring disgrace to them and the family/relations or deter their interest in contesting for a political post in their ward or they may lose the face value in their immediate environment if they get in trouble with the law. As a result of this, people's behaviour, including criminal activity is controlled by the concept of attachment and commitment to conventional institutions, in individuals, and processes. Any individual that disallow the commitment in his daily operation could be exposed to violation of law and order of the society and engage in deviant or criminal behaviour (Alemika 2009).

Though the theory seeks to understand the ways in which it is possible to reduce the likelihood of criminality developing in individuals. It does not consider motivational issues, simply stating that human beings may choose to engage in a wide range of activities, unless the range is limited by the processes of socialization and social learning.

3. Method

This study adopted a descriptive research design employing the qualitative method of data collection. Ido Ekiti, Ido/Osi Local Government in Ekiti State Southwest Nigeria was purposively chosen for the research work. The study location is one of the ancient towns in Southwest Nigeria where series of festivals dominates the affairs of the citizens. There various festivals being celebrated in the town stand for different purposes, such as correction of bad behaviour and compensation of good behaviour of the community members, celebration of yam festival, welcoming new rainy season, prayer for the entire sons and daughters of the town, and remembering the gods of the land to send good things to the land. Ido Ekiti on the other hand was chosen due to the importance attached to the festival by the citizens and neighboring communities. The study targeted the victims of the festival, the chiefs, and the entire people of the study location.

The intra-method triangulation of In-depth interview (IDIs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions and Observation (Participant) of qualitative method was employed in collecting data. Twenty- four IDIs were conducted among 5 males (youth), 5 females (youth), 5 males (Adult), 5 Female (Adult), the second in command who served as the Shriner, the town numbers one citizen among the female, Youth leader (Male), and Youth leader Female. One KII was conducted with the King of the town in order to know the significant and important of the festival to the community as a whole. In addition, three FGD session were organized among different categories of persons such as; youth (male and female), adult (male and female), and chief (male and female). Also participant observation method was adopted to have raw information to corroborate other methods of data collection.

Ethical principles guiding social science research were followed including seeking informed consent from respondents/participants, guaranteeing their anonymity and ensuring that they did not suffer any form of harm arising from the study. Data were content analyzed beginning with the translation and transcription of tape-recorded information generated in the course of fieldwork. Thereafter, responses were organized along important themes reflecting the objectives of the research.

4. Results and Analysis

Findings of the study are presented along five specific objectives relating to ways of crime control, various approaches adopted in crime control, whether it actually control crime, conflict between informal method and other methods of crime control, and understanding the community perception and attitude about the festival. Each of these perceptual components has implication for informal method of crime control.

4.1. The Various Approaches Adopted in Crime Control

From the study it was discovered that various methods were used through the festival in controlling crime. These include singing to dishonor the victim(s) being identified mentioning one crime or the others being committed, putting refuses to block the exit and entry of the house as a sign of rejection of the victim(s). The aforementioned approaches are used throughout the seven days of the festival. The participants/respondents opined that the songs were rendered in creating awareness and sensitizing people on what the victim has done. Several songs were identified for different purposes, some were rendered to warn, to correct, to punish the victim. The songs were rendered in native language for all in the community to understand.

Some of the songs include:

Ko mura mura o ha mumodun o

Ajodun olole lanse ajebi o

Ko jawo lole o yo pee ku o

Asewo lewere se kan tobii o
O ti tasiko ki o kuro lasewo o
Aisan idile won lole won jebi o

This could be interpreted as thus:

If you do not careful you will not know the next year
We are celebrating the festival against criminals
If you do not relent in committing crime you will soon die
Your mother was a prostitute before you are born
It is time (name of the victim) for you to quit prostitution, crime, kidnapping, murder and stealing
(name of the victim) is from the family of criminal, he/she is not at fault

This is the type of song sang to warn the victim during the festival

Below song was identified by the respondents as some of the song sang to correct the victim(s).

Oun o se e mon dara o
Iya lagbeyin re ko jawo o
Iwa ko wu yii lapa o o
O ba jawo ninu asewo, ole, ipaniyan ati jibiti kaye re le dara o
Igbeyin ole, apaniyan, onijibiti, ati asewo kii dara o.

Interpreted as thus:

What (the victim name) done is bad (the offence shall be mentioned)
(the victim name) will suffer to death if you do not stop
This crime (type of crime) (victim name) committed will kill (victim name)
(The victim name) better relent from (the committed crime) for your life to be better
The future of thief, kidnapper, murder, fraudster, prostitute is not always good, (the crime committed will be mentioned for people to know)

Another approach adopted in crime control is flogging of the victim/offender by his /her age mates during the festival. The actual hour for the festival is between 7pm – 11.30 pm and lasted for seven days. The flogging aspect served as a punishment for those who have been a victim of the festival once. The victim will be at the center surrounded by crowd in which seven of his/her age mate will be commanded to flog him/her for just 2 minutes.

An interviewee expresses as thus;

'during Ipesi festival flogging serves as a punishment to anyone
Who had been a victim for the second time. This will serve as a final
warning to him/her'.

...A prominent Chief (Male) 76 years old.

Another interviewee maintained that;

'Flogging is not the only punishment for anyone who had committed any crime in the town. during the festival series of refuse would be parked to block the entrance of his/her house throughout the period of the festival, and if the victim could manage to escape out of the house, water shall be fetched to fillup the house of the victim for the period of the festival'.

... Chief from Ido Ekiti (female) 58 years old

4.2. Whether It Actually Control Crime

The interview respondents and FGD participants maintained that the traditional festival really control crime as crime related issues within the town were reduced to a certain level. The belief of the interviewees and respondents shows that everybody in the town is careful of the attitude they put up in the society where they found themselves at any point in time. Even when one commits any inimical behaviour or crime after the celebration of the festival, his/her name will be recorded for the next celebration of the festival. Therefore everybody becomes caution of what he/she does in the town, and everyone become a watching dog to his/her neighbour.

An interviewee opined that:

'this method of crime control is the best in our community
and some towns and villages in Ekiti state are doing the same thing
even more serious than the way we are doing here in our town.
In our community the festival has turned everybody to community police
that reports or arrest and record the name of anybody that commit
crime in the town, so people are just too careful of the way they do
things in the town, it is not a matter of paying fine or jail,
but a ridicule to one's family'

...A 68 years interviewee

The above statement is embedded in an assumption that people are monitoring the behaviour of other members of the society. In other to bring them to book and serve as a deterrent to anyone who has such attitude in mind. This serves as another area in which the method actually controls crime in the study site. An IDI respondent who had been a victim of the festival comments that:

'I as a person and those that are closer to me either by blood or interaction
will never do anything that can spoil or dent our image again in this town

or elsewhere as a result of what Ipesi did in my family when I stole a bra of three hundred naira at Usi Ekiti market, that was what led to the death of my mother as a result of the shame. The irony of the matter was that I did not steal the bra from Ido market, but someone who is a native of Ido who was there then exposed me then, now am ready to expose anyone that I found doing or engage in one criminal act or the other'.

... A 38 years old (Female IDI participant)

Another interviewee maintained that:

'the best way to get rid of criminals in the town is by exposing them and allow them to be a victim of ipesi festival so the disgrace could be extended to his/her friends and family members'

...A 46 years old (Male artisan)

Also to show that this method of crime control has really control the extent of crime in the study location, even for a long period of time, even when the formal method of crime control was not in existence in the community, the festival has only served the purpose of warning and checkmating people from any illicit act. An IDI respondent stated that:

'I can say authoritatively that this method of crime control should be encouraged to have root to stand in Nigeria because it is the only method that is not partial. I know my age in this town, presently this is the second king that am serving as a chief priest, I will not deceive you many people had runaway from the town as a result of the bad attitude in them, and since the festival will deal with them the next thing is to leave the town or conform with the rules and regulations of the town. No matter your position in the town, ipesi will visit you if you are discovered to have committed any crime in the town. It is a great disgrace in the town for any family member to be a victim of the festival, as to this the street chief usually warn their wards against being a deviant or involve in any criminality act.

... A 88 years old (male chief priest)

Another interviewee submits that:

'Even the level of control that ipesi – the ancient of curbing crimes in the town has gone to shows that no matter any government intervention in a criminal case either jailed or freed, the festival must be observed in the house of such person or else he/she leaves the town. The only antidote to this is for who does not want to become a victim to maintain law and order in the town.

... A 63 years old (male interviewee)

4.3. To Understand Whether There Is Conflict Between Informal, And Formal Method Of Crime Control In The Study Location?

Respondents and participants shown their clarifications on whether there is conflict between the orthodox methods (informal) and formal method of crime controls in the study location. This aspect of the study emphasized on the impact assessment of the informal method of crime control, and examines the conflict that occurs between the two methods of crime control in the study location. Also this allowed the traditional leaders from the studylocation to comment on the conflict aspect.

'yes there are a lot of conflict, misunderstanding and argument between the traditionalists and formal security men. I as the leader of my quarter, I will not support obliteration of properties during the festival which always led to arrest of celebrants by the police men after the celebration of the festival yearly'

... 79 year old traditional leader

Another leader who had witnessed a serious conflict confronting the two methods in the research location comments that:

'the police and other security men are not in line with what we are doing in this town especially during Ipesi festival, though they came to work in this town therefore it is not possible for them to change our tradition. I was charged to court only because we celebrated Ipesifestival. Police are the people harboring the criminals, they used to protect the offenders from being dealt with during the festival, and this allows them to go scot-free with their illicit acts. In one way, police and other security agencies in the community are the one killing our tradition that exposed the criminals'.

... 68 years old traditional leader (IDI)

Another interviewee state that:

'Please let government disallow the Police from intervening in what is not their problem in our traditional celebration because our traditional festival dose not delay, while the formal method uses to delay judgement'
... A 79 years old traditionalist (woman)

The youths in their own capacity comments on the issue of conflict between the two methods of crime control in the study site.

The only problem facing us in this town is the way our police used to dislocate us during Ipesi festival celebration. Despite they knew that the festival is to discourage criminals, yet the used to support them for their own benefit.'

... 36 years old Male Youth leader (IDI)

Another interviewed Youth asserts that:

'What we learnt from school is to support the security agencies with information that can wipe away criminals out of the community, but reverse is the case in our community, Ipesi is a festival that good enough to serve as information to them in bringing the criminals/deviants into book but the security agencies are good in arresting those who try to expose the criminals/deviants during the festival. Many of the youths must travelled out of the town immediately after the celebration if not the police will arrest as many who the victim can mentioned to them. Therefore there is no way information could reach them in the area of curbing crime in the community'

...36 years old Community Youth Secretary (IDI)

4.4. Community Perception and Attitude Concerns The Festival

Towards the realization of aims and objectives of the study, the perception and attitude of the respondents towards the study was determined. This shows the notion and belief of the respondents towards the study. This attitude was also reflected in the study. The perception and attitude of the respondents and the interviewees as thus:

'The best method to dislodge criminal and deviant Behaviour in the study site is through this method of disgracing the criminals and deviants through the
...68 years old IDI (Woman Chief)

Another respondent perceived that:

It is not only in this town that this type of festival is being celebrated, the only different there is the name given to it in other communities. The festival is not our making it has been in existence before we were born, so it should continue in order to checkmate the criminal as it has been doing.
.... 63 years old IDI (Male Chief)

Another IDI participant opined that:

Ipesi is a kind of festival that people love to celebrate in the community. There is no town in Ekiti where people do not celebrate a festival of Ipesi but the name given to it and the period of celebration makes it different. Some celebrates their own during Easter period, some during New yam festival, while some during New year period. But in our own town (the research site) we celebrate ours every February. One good thing about the festival is that it helps in bringing reduction to level of criminality in the community.

...44years old IDI interviewee

The surprise in the celebration of the festival is that male and female, old and young used to come out in the of the celebration joining their age mates in dancing round the community. There is no age limitation in the celebration. Those who cannot dance due to one reason or the other do gather at the palace in each day of the seven days to rejoice with others.

...58 years old IDI Interviewee

Another interviewee who was once a victim of the festival comment on the way it was being celebrated. Prayers of the chief priest and the king have been going

a long way in assisting the victims of the festival not to commit crime again in the community. Me as one time victim of the festival allowed the prayers of both to work in my life and for the past 9 years I have not get involved in any crime and I always come for the celebration despite I don't base in the town.

...51 years old (IDI) civil servant

The behaviour and attitude of the people during the festival celebration was commented on; this actually shown the way people of the community acted during and after the festival.

An IDI participant expressed his view on the behaviour and attitude of the community members during and after the celebration of the festival

'Honestly the founder and diets of this community will not support anybody who has other things in mind apart from what supposed to be during the festival. Some people are into destruction, and transfer of aggression upon one another during the festival period and in most cases that is what usually led to arrest of people after the festival'.

...53 years old (Male)

Another Interviewee submitted that;

'Yes sir, I love this question asked on the behaviour of our people during and after the ceremony, during the festival some people took law into their hands while some do it according to the dictates of land. After the festival some turned others to their enemy who do not his/her family to stay in the land, some see the period as the time to revenge a long time fracas between one another

.....68 years old (female high chief)

'Notwithstanding presently as we have good people during the festival we also have bad people who their mission is quite different from what the law of the land says concerning the festival, but anybody who does anything different usually see the repercussion of their action after the festival. Many engaged in stealing, looting, and destruction of other people properties, even those who are not victim of the festival. Especially the youths do engage in humanization and other illicit attitude, that is why many females young school leaver does result in having unwanted and unclaimed pregnancy after the festival.

....53 female IDI participant (Trader)

'The situation now is different from what it used to be in the old, in 15 to 20 years ago Ipesi festival is a well-recognized festival all over the state and the local government, the government even enjoyed how it usually celebrated in a very well-mannered way, then no arrest of anybody could hold but these days, the celebration has involved series of atrocities which later led to the arrest of participants even to an extent of charging people to court of law after the festival as a result of unlawful behaviour demonstrated during the festival'

.....58 years old IDI Participant (Teacher)

However, the various contributions towards people perception in the celebration of festival have really shown how people admired the festival as better way of controlling crime in the land. It proves that indigenous proactive action could be used to curb or limit the unpalatable attitude in the society. This will enable every age grade to be actively participated in monitoring the system and looking for the way in which the society could be smoothly run or moving forward.

5. Discussion

Ipesi festival could be seen as a traditional festival that people from the study location observed as a yearly festival to discourage the illicit and deviant behaviour which people might engage in. It was found from the study that the festival is being celebrated in all Ekiti towns and villages but the time scheduled for the celebration in the different locality is different, also each community has different given to the festival, notwithstanding the way of celebration and the mission towards the celebration is the same.

It was observed from the study that major aims and objective of the festival is to control crime in the community. It was shown from the study that the festival is been celebrated at night when all would have been settled for the day business. The different illicit activities that people engaged in are always exposed during the festival.

It was revealed through the study that the festival do control crime as a result of the activities and the processes of the festival. The study shown that the victim(s) of the festival could be seen as a black sheep of the family in which the

event become a stigma to the victim and the family members, therefore people who do not want their family to be disgraced will definitely run away from engaging in criminal, illicit, and deviant behaviour.

It was also revealed from the study that the celebration of the festival is an ancient thing which has been in existence since. The study reveals that no hiding place for any criminal or deviant in the community as everyone in the community serve as community police by watching the activities of others. It was also revealed from the study that people see the victim of the festival as an alien in the community where no one associates with the victim and the family. The festival has assisted the study site to witness lesser criminal activities in the community.

The study revealed that the festival could be seen as an informal means of crime in the community. Therefore, the study revealed that there is a conflict between the formal and informal method of crime control in the community. It was shown from the study that as a result of the activities involved among the celebrants and the victim(s) during the festival sometimes led to conflict that resulted to arresting of community members after the celebration by law enforcement personnel. It also shown from the study that people of the community and the law enforcement agencies see themselves as enemy during the festival, this at times results to dragging the community members to the law court for redressing of activities of the celebrants during the festival. The study revealed that both informal and formal method of crime control in the communities are doing the same work of crime control irrespective of the activities involved during the festival celebration.

The study reveals the perception and attitude of the community members towards the festival; it was shown from the study that every community member embraced the celebration of the festival including one time victims of the festival. The respondents and interview participants admitted that, such festival is a kind which should be encouraged by the community members and supported by the formal agencies on crime control. It was also shown from the study that the community members want a moderation in the processes and the way things are done during the festival celebration. People perceived from the study that the festival served as a means of control, and monitoring people's activities in the community therefore, it must work in collaboration with formal control agencies of crime in bringing moderation to menace in the community. Therefore, the study shown that modification of activities should be encouraged in the celebration of the festival so the formal crime control agencies could have a supportive action towards the celebration of the festival.

In conclusion the study reveals that Ipesi festival actually controls crime and other forms of illicit behaviours in the land. It was reported that many people do not engage in crime because of how the festival is being celebrated. It shows from the study that, the disgrace is not only on the victim alone but also to his/her family members. It has gotten to a level that no one in the community will like to have anything to do with the family who got themselves involved in criminal deals or illicit act because of the aftermath of the festival. It has shown from the study that everyone in the community served as security watching others activities that contradict the norms and value of the land.

6. References

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