

Impact of Traditional Rulers on Peace Sustenance in Local Communities of Ekiti State

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Abstract

Local communities in Nigeria and other parts of the world still experience one form of conflict or the other despite peace-building techniques to maintain peace. The peaceful cohabitation of the Nigerian people has been repeatedly disrupted by some operations, which have constituted a serious security danger to the people, especially in the local communities. The traditional leaders in the communities frequently exert great effort through various channels to promote dispute resolution and guarantee peaceful coexistence among the tribes in their separate spheres of influence. This study assessed the impact of traditional rulers in sustaining peace in the local governments of Ekiti State. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, gathering data through questionnaire administration and published works. The study revealed that traditional rulers have a significant role in maintaining security for sustainable development in the local communities in Nigeria. It was discovered that traditional rulers played significant roles in maintaining and sustaining peace in Ekiti State Local Governments by settling conflicts among their subjects in their domains. The study concluded that traditional institutions, mainly traditional rulership, remained a reliable force to be reckoned with in maintaining peace. This has been made possible by the Yoruba traditions and spiritualities' immense strength and tenacity, which have significantly impacted their lives and actions.

Keywords: Traditional Rulers, Conflicts, Peace Keeping, Local Communities

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Introduction

Local communities are the closest governmental entities to the populace in Nigeria and other world regions. They function at the third tier of government and are crucial in maintaining public tranquility at the local level. Every citizen wants assurance that their government is responsive to their needs and accountable for its actions (Mansoor, 2021). This is due to the dynamic nature of government, which makes the governance process one of the most essential and fundamental concerns (Beshi & Kaur, 2020). Local governance is a communal effort to enhance the provision of high-quality social services. Additionally, it seeks to increase and improve local leaders' participation in democracy at the local level. Local communities have a significant role in the development of villages due to the value of their resources, unique customs, and culture to village activities (Malelak, Taimens & Plaituka, 2022).

Most African nations still experience localised communal disputes despite using peace-building techniques to maintain peace (Lamidi, 2021). Nigeria has seen an increase in one type of war or another over the last few decades. The peaceful cohabitation of the Nigerian people has been repeatedly disrupted by these operations, which have constituted a serious security danger (Ighoavodha, 2002). Security is crucial to each community since it is a fundamental human need. According to Alemika (2015), security is a contentious notion that signifies many things to various people. It is also a complex technique because what constitutes security for one group may be insecurity for another. As a result, there are ontological discussions concerning the nature and boundaries of security. There are two points of view regarding the ontology or actuality of security. The first point of view says that security describes a fact, a feeling, and a situation. The second point of view says that security is just a name for something someone thinks is true. Ajayi and Buhari (2014) say that man's main concern has always been to stay alive and be safe from nature, natural disasters, bad people, and the wrongdoings of others.

In our culture, the term "traditional rulers" is often used in everyday speech. According to their native laws and customs, the idea relates to native arrangements in which leaders are chosen, appointed, and put in place based on their lineage or track record. The institution's main job is to manage, settle, and solve disputes and conflicts within or between community members using the laws and customs of that community or society. It also helps people keep their traditions and cultural history alive. People usually see and call them the guardians of their people's cultural traditions, norms, and values.

The identities of three groups of traditional title holders are derived from and through the people's customs (Abdulsalam et al., 2020). The laws, though, depending on the depth of a culture's origins, time, and place. According to Akinola (2009), superior traditional rulers bestow honorific titles on them to recognise and value the services they have provided to society. This group is viewed as a reliable informational chain and agent for concretising or mobilising people when necessary, without schedules or specific functions. Holders of titles or positions, due to recent acknowledgement or the formation of such titles, fall into the second group. In contrast to the examples above, they may have executive powers but are still subject to the same legal restrictions as those that established or recognised them. The final category consists of full-time executives with traditional titles who execute their executive functions from primarily rooted, cherished, and recognised traditions.

Conflict will happen in every human community at some point. It usually happens when people try to achieve different goals and have limited status and resources. Nigeria is often said to have many different races and religions, which eventually leads to conflict. The country's diversity makes it vulnerable to manipulation and fosters a culture of mistrust between and among the ethnic and religious groups that make up the polity. This can occasionally result in deadly clashes between these groups, undermining the country's overall stability and the peace and security of the lives and property of its citizens (Lawal, 2017). A unique environment for the manipulation of ethnic and religious identities is provided by the diversity and pluralism that characterise Nigeria's social and political life. In Ekiti State's local governments, conflicts between groups are now frequently recurrent.

Even though violent conflicts often happen in Nigeria, there is no good long-term plan to control them. From the time of the colonial government until now, both at the local and national levels, the fire-brigade method with a short-term plan to stop the violence that comes with a dispute has generally been used (Olufu-Adeoye, 2013). In the same way, one could also say that conflicts keep happening in the region even though the government has tried to stop them in the local governments of Ekiti State, has sent in security personnel, and has set up judicial commissions of inquiry to find out why they keep happening.

Through numerous peacekeeping initiatives at the federal, state, and municipal government levels, non-state players ensure peaceful coexistence across groups (Akinola, 2009). According to the 1976 Guidelines for Local Government Reform, Obas and Chiefs should continue to play a role in helping the government keep the peace as they have in the past (Olasupo & Fayomi, 2012). In Nigeria, most conflicts originate from the traditional rulers' strongholds. The traditional leaders frequently exert great effort through various channels to promote dispute resolution and guarantee peaceful coexistence among the tribes in their separate spheres of influence. Therefore, this study aimed to determine how traditional chiefs affected the maintenance of peace in the local governments of Ekiti State.

Review of Related Literature

Traditional Ruler/Traditional Institution

Before colonialism, the government in some areas of modern-day Nigeria was identified with the traditional institution and their reign for generations. Traditional leaders were seen as the repositories of religious, legislative, executive, and judicial duties and were typically at the centre of local government administration (Afigbo, 2018). Traditional kings and queens are essentially the centres of government. In pre-colonial Nigeria, traditional rulers' geographic sphere of influence and authority was mainly localised, and none ever possessed jurisdiction over the entire geographical territory of contemporary Nigeria (Towns & Osemwota, 2013). According to Garvin and Cox (2001), traditional authority is the type of dominance based on habitual behaviours that have come to be revered as an unbreakable code of conduct since it is believed to have always been. The claim made clear that traditional authority is a type of hegemony that derives legitimacy from a population's norms and traditions. The contemporary state structure no longer recognises this kind of authority. Only the culture and traditions of their people are considered to be under the care of traditional rulers. In this light, the institutions and framework of traditional ruler-ship have existed for a considerable time and merit preservation.

On the other hand, traditional institutions can be thought of as indigenous political structures. In these systems, leaders with a history of success are chosen and put in charge based on the rules of their local laws and customs. By implication, a man who wants to be a traditional king must be a man of honour and be approved by the local law and customs of that community. Due to the appointment of individuals of questionable moral character who syphoned off public wealth after leaving public office as traditional rulers, this definition has not come to pass in modern-day Nigeria. According to Ekong (1985), traditional rulers hold communal political

leadership roles approved by cultural mores and values and have the authority to manage the affairs of specific communities. The current function of traditional rulers, among many others, is to maintain security and peace, according to Odoh (2019).

Conflict

Antagonising contacts or collisions of interests, ideas, policies, programmes, and people or their entities define conflict as a sort of interaction (Olaoba, 2005). It is necessary for human contact. Conflict and collaboration are opposing forces with persistent inclinations in social and political relations. Conflict is, therefore, unavoidable amongst individuals who live, interact, and seek divergent goals due to intrinsic differences. In a broad sense, conflict refers to a situation in which individuals, groups, communities, and nations with opposing aspirations seek opposing objectives. If this conflict is not adequately managed, it may lead to violence and other negative behaviours. Conflict occurs when two or more actors pursue goals that are incompatible but, from their perspective, equally important (Erezene, 2010). Thus, conflict refers to the conflicts, disagreements, fights, battles, quarrels, frustrations, and structural flaws that exist inside, between, and among individuals and organisations in any given society (Ezenwoko & Osagie, 2014). As people interact in a social setting and try to make sure their material well-being and survival in a world with limited resources, they either agree to use production variables and processes to their mutual benefit or they do not. People, groups, and communities are said to cause conflict when they try to reach different goals at the same time. (Olaoba, 2005).

Conflicts in Nigerian society are influenced by various causes, according to Folarin (2008). Inconsistencies in goals, competition over incompatible goals and interests, usurpation of authority and position by another aspect of society, attempts to usurp authority and position by another aspect of society, a growing desire for autonomy or authority on the part of various individuals or groups within the community, and a lack of or insufficiency of resources are a few of these. Various things, including inheritances, boundary conflicts, religious activities, marital problems, and disagreements over land or other property, causes local conflicts. Conflict must be controlled and handled since, if not, it will destroy lives and property. Only if the conflict is handled correctly and used to motivate people to advance in their social and political lives can there be constructive conflict.

Conflict Management

Conflicts frequently have detrimental effects on society. It is essential to take action to be put into effect to lessen the frequency of conflicts in society because they are devastating and impossible to forecast (Abdulsalam et al., 2020). According to Oyedele (2007), conflict is a social phenomenon and a fundamental component of social relationships. Human society will inevitably experience conflict, but there are ways to manage it, if not prevent it from happening in the first place. The point is not to make people angry by trying to change things that cannot be changed but to try to keep fights from getting out of hand. Conflict is inevitable in human interactions resulting from choices and actions that cannot be avoided (Adeyeye, 2013). Conflicts can be reduced or handled better if they are planned, cautious, and methodical. Conflict is often dealt with directly by the culture in which it occurs. Managing conflict should not be a simple, linear, or structured process (Uhunmwangho & Epelle, 2011).

As a result, conflict management could be seen as a more comprehensive notion that includes conflict resolution and change when necessary. It is more of a long-term partnership with institutionalised clauses and governing practices for handling issues whenever they occur (Nwaubani, 2016). Conflict management uses a wide range of actions to treat or stop ongoing conflict's adverse and harmful effects, which can be violent or nonviolent (Uhunmwangho & Epelle, 2011). Additionally, conflict management can be understood as lowering the harmful and destructive potential of conflict using a variety of strategies as well as cooperating with and through the dispute's sides. It encompasses conflict containment, limitation, and litigation and covers the complete spectrum of proactively resolving conflict (Afigbo, 2018).

Keeping the peace, enforcing the peace, and maintaining the peace after a dispute are all included in conflict management (Alagoa, 2001). It is designed to help peace processes by providing capacity maintenance remedies. So, efforts must be made in all areas of life to make space for people to talk across the lines that separate divided communities so that a new way of living together can grow (Nwanegbo, 2009). Rarely are conflicts entirely resolved; instead, they are diminished or contained. Conflict resolution is a continuous process when it is actively practised (Uhunmwangho & Epelle, 2011).

Peace Maintenance

As with many other social science concepts, peace maintenance eluded any agreed-upon definition and was not widely used in practice or vocabulary. Regarding conceptualisation, vocabulary, practice, and strategy, researchers, actors, and agencies have various ideas about peace maintenance. Galtung first proposed this idea in 1976 as an alternative to expressions like "peacekeeping" and "peacemaking." Galtung describes it as the "structure of peace," He restricts his analysis to relations between states (Akinbi, 2015).

In its 2018 report on the Agenda for Peace, the United Nations defined peace maintenance as efforts to

uphold the status quo and prevent a resurgence of hostilities. The 2019 Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, also known as the Brahimi report, defined peace maintenance as actions taken on the other side of the conflict to put the pieces of peace back together and provide the resources for maintaining those pieces, which is more than simply the absence of war. The following conceptual framework for maintaining peace was adopted by the UN Secretary General's Policy Committee in 2018. It will guide UN practise: "Peace maintenance encompasses a variety of targeted actions intended to lower the risk of conflict escalating or de-escalating by bolstering national capacities for conflict management at all levels and establishing the groundwork for lasting peace and development. Intervention to alter or facilitate the path of conflict is the goal of conflict resolution (Nwaubani, 2016). Abdulqadir (2016) asserts that maintaining peace entails actions directly or indirectly related to fostering development and eliminating conflict inside particular societies and the larger international community.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a former UN Secretary-General, brought the idea of "peace maintenance" to the public in 1992 with an Agenda for Peace. Peace maintenance is a post-war activity that aims to find and support mechanisms that tend to keep and solidify peace to stop a return to violence. Since then, the idea of maintaining peace has expanded to include a variety of behaviours and, occasionally, opposing viewpoints and objectives (Albert, 2001). The phrase "peace maintenance" was introduced by Boutros-Ghali to refer to a continuum that included preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and, ultimately, post-conflict peace maintenance. However, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's description is insufficient; his framework is also founded on the conflict's more conventional power politics perspective. He built his continuum on the advent of large-scale violence in war (Nweke, 2012).

Post-conflict peace maintenance focuses on solving the conflict's immediate cause so it does not start up again. This is done through policies and programmes like conflict resolution, prevention, stabilisation, and consolidation of peace. Similarly, peacekeeping involves actions and procedures that deal with the causes of conflict, not just its effects; support the upkeep and rehabilitation of all parts of the war-torn society; encourage and support interaction between all parts of the society; mend broken relationships and start the process of re-establishing dignity and trust; recognise the unique aspects of each post-conflict situation; and encourage and support participation (Omitola, Akinrinde & Omitola, 2021). According to many academic ideas about peacekeeping, peacekeeping is often seen as an outside intervention. This ignores that peacekeeping can be done by the people involved in the conflict.

Traditional Rulers and Peace Maintenance in Local Communities

The word "traditional rulers" refers to those chosen, installed, and governed according to their local laws and customs, who are leaders or people by birth or who have a proven track record (Wadinga, 2013). As old as the institution itself, traditional rulers have played a crucial role in maintaining peace. The pre-colonial social structure of Africa was built on a foundation of reconciliation, relationship maintenance, and social connection improvement. The procedures, laws, and customs are firmly founded in pre-colonial African culture and tradition, which appears to restore a balance to resolve conflicts and end disputes (Ezenwoko & Osagie, 2014). The quick response/intervention of traditional rulers is a notable peace-building strategy to enhance peaceful coexistence in Southwestern Nigeria. Lamidi (2021) confirms that traditional rulers are essential to the people's cultural heritage and help keep regional peace.

The functions and positions of old political institutions altered with the advent of colonial control, and the colonial authorities assumed their dominance. Additionally, the indirect authority afterwards established deployed chiefs and warrant chiefs, where appropriate, to preserve the natural oneness of Nigerian society. Traditional leaders at this time served primarily as the colonial masters' agents, ensuring peace and security and upholding law and order. In the southwest of Nigeria, local chiefs like Obas and his Chiefs were used as middlemen. The Oba and his Chiefs were the colonialists' representatives. They often ran local courts, settled local disputes, and put customary laws into place with the full support of the colonialists (Igwubor, 2020).

Traditional rulers were given duties by the British to infiltrate their followers; these roles differed from early ones in the pre-colonial era when traditional rulers ruled by colonial officials' orders. Through indirect control, traditional leaders' positions were bolstered throughout the colonial era; in Northern Nigeria, Emirs and Chiefs were seen as the only legal representatives of their people. Traditional rulers in the pre-colonial era played a more submissive role as their authority was undercut by the decline in their followers' regard for them (Afigbo, 2018).

With the rise of independence and the educated political elite in Nigeria, traditional rulers' powers were pushed to the background through a series of constitutional changes. Traditional rulers were given advisory roles as members of the peace and security committee in their respective Local Government Areas, but they were not given any official roles. Despite their unofficial role under the constitution, Nigeria's traditional leaders have maintained peace since independence and continue to do so.

Olaoba (2005) believes that traditional rulers may promote harmony in their communities as individuals or

as groups. As such, their role in contemporary Nigeria cannot be neglected when discussing maintaining peace. Traditional leaders work to keep the peace in many different ways, such as by promoting peace and security, gathering information and intelligence for early warning, mediating and resolving conflicts, holding reconciliation dialogues, building trust and confidence, promoting coexistence through peace education, getting rid of poverty, and so on.

However, various responses regarding the function of traditional rulers in maintaining peace were made by academics, policymakers, non-governmental organisations, security services, etc. They contend that despite traditional leaders' lack of official authority under Nigeria's legal system, they have remained a powerful force to be reckoned with. They should maintain group unity within their domains and uphold peace and harmonious coexistence (Igwubor, 2020). Traditional rulers and political institutions in Nigeria have shown and proven to have a longer life span, durability, and importance from the colonial era to the present. Despite the positions of both radicals and liberals who view the systems as little more than institutional relics, communities' persistent efforts to have their Chiefs recognised by the state government, as well as the competition and clamour among elites from these communities to fill open chieftaincy stools, seem to support this claim. Agalamanyi (2019) also emphasised the importance of traditional leaders serving as peacemakers, consoling figures, and judges within their spheres of influence. Moreover, they historically advocate peace, a prerequisite for significant progress.

Given that the fundamental purpose of the traditional institution is to uphold the tradition, customs, and cultural heritage of the people, it makes sense that its primary function is to manage, settle, and resolve conflicts that may arise within or between members of the community using the laws and customs of that particular community or society. Traditional leaders are seen as stewards of their people's customs, traditions, and conventions (Olaoba, 2005). In order to foster and maintain social cohesiveness, peace and order, and peaceful cohabitation in societies, traditional rulership institutions play crucial and proactive responsibilities. Conflict resolution strategies particular to each community and peculiar to pre-colonial African society have existed for ages (Rahim, 2002). Traditional leaders handle conflicts, frequently bringing the parties involved to examine the conflict's origins, find a resolution, and reach an agreement.

Maintaining regular interpersonal interactions is essential to keeping the peace in Ekiti, which calls for settling disputes and asking for forgiveness for past wrongs. Individual home leaders, compound chiefs, village heads, and kings had comparable responsibilities regarding maintaining peace. The title chiefs, who protected the rules and customs of their communities and implemented appropriate sanctions in the event of a violation, were also listed (Egbafo & Aghallino, 2020). In Ekiti, armed conflict is the last resort for resolving conflicts; therefore, concerted efforts were made to prevent it; no war was launched until all peaceful means of averting it had failed, and envoys made up of chiefs, elders, and some captured soldiers were exchanged between feuding communities in order to facilitate the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Through gathering information and intelligence, traditional rulers share and work closely with the intelligence community to share intelligence. Some of this information is very useful in preventing what could have been intolerable ethnic, religious, and political clashes from getting worse (Mohammad, 2019). Another worry is security. Neighbourhood Watch is a programme where traditional leaders organise locals to watch for criminal activity or suspicious behaviour, catch or report suspects to the police, and patrol the neighbourhood at night to keep everyone safe. Communities should offer more meaningful support based on there to help police find crime trends so they can respond to them proactively and close the communication gap that used to exist between the people they serve and the police (Mohammad, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the principle of structural functionalism. Durkheim's concept gives rise to structural functionalism (1858-1917). It was interested in how societies sustain long-term survival and internal stability. It attempted to elucidate social stability and cohesion using the idea of solidarity. As a result, all social and cultural phenomena are seen to have a life of their own and to be functional in the sense of cooperating to reach the state of equilibrium. Therefore, structural-functionalism emphasises the prerequisites for the interdependence of crop producers and cattle herders on utilising specialised areas and shared resources. In interactions between farmers and herders, there is a distinct line separating various conflicts. Farmers and herders are battling to access farms, pastures, water, trees, and range area. (Nwanegbo, 2009).

Methodology

The data for this study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaires. Secondary data were obtained from published and unpublished. The study was carried out in Ekiti State and employed a descriptive survey design method. The study population of 319 consists of the Bureau of Chieftaincy Affairs (40), Ministry of Local Government Affairs (76), Office of Establishment and Service Matters (53), Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (83), Office of the Deputy Governor (52), and Traditional Rulers (15). This study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure. In the first

stage, Ekiti State was divided into 3 senatorial districts. These are Ekiti Central, Ekiti South, and Ekiti North. In the second stage, 2 local governments were randomly selected from the three senatorial districts. These are Ado, Irepodun/Ifelodun, Ekiti South West, Ekiti East, Ido/Osi and Oye Local Governments. In the third stage, the Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents as the sample for this study. Data gathered were analysed using simple percentages and descriptive statistics.

Discussion of Findings

This section evaluates respondents' perceptions of the roles of traditional rulers in sustaining peace in Ekiti State Local Governments. The questionnaire was structured and designed on a four-point Likert scale to elicit responses from the respondents. The quantitative data gathered from the respondents were presented, analysed and interpreted in Table 1 in frequency distribution and percentage.

Table 1 revealed that 83 (55.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that traditional rulers settle disputes through reconciliation between families; this was corroborated by 45 (30%) who agreed with the assertion. On the other hand, 4 (2.7%) and 18 (12%) disagreed and strongly disagreed with the assertion. From the findings of this study, it is evident that traditional rulers in Ekiti state are involved in dispute settlements through family reconciliation, which enhances peace sustainability in Ekiti state. This corroborates the view of Abdulsalam et al. (2020), which states that traditional rulers exist to reconcile and integrate parties in conflict and to maintain law and order in the communities. In the second item in table 1, respondents were asked if traditional rulers settle inter-religious disputes; 88 (58.7%) strongly agreed that traditional rulers settle inter-religious disputes; 62 (41.3%) agreed that traditional rulers settle inter-religious disputes. This assertion was without a contravening view. This implies that traditional rulers in Ekiti State local governments settle inter-religious disputes. On respondents' view on if traditional rulers settle inter-communal disputes, 45 respondents representing 30%, strongly agreed with the assertion, and 75 (50%) of the respondents agreed with the assertion. 15 (10%) disagreed, and another 15 (10%) strongly disagreed with the variable. This finding indicates that traditional rulers settle inter-communal disputes in Ekiti State. Respondents were also asked if traditional rulers are concerned with maintaining peace in their domain, and respondents confirmed that traditional rulers in Ekiti state are concerned with the maintenance of peace in their community, as 75 (50.0%) strongly agreed that their traditional rulers are more concerned with the maintenance of peace in their domain. 54 (36%) agreed that traditional rulers are concerned with peace maintenance, while 11 (7.3%) disagreed that their traditional rulers are concerned with maintaining peace in their domain. Also, 10 respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion. In addition, 74 (49.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed; 46 (30.7%) agreed; 15 (10%) disagreed, and another 15 (10%) strongly disagreed with the fact that traditional rulers settle inter-tribal conflicts in their domain. This data representation confirms that traditional rulers settle inter-tribal conflicts in their domain. Finally, regarding traditional rulers providing institutional safety for their subjects, 94 (62.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they provide institutional safety, and 26 (17.3%) also agreed with this. Meanwhile, 15 (10%) respondents disagreed that traditional rulers provide institutional safety for their subjects. This position was also supported by another 15, representing 10% of the total respondents. However, the data implication for this variable indicates that the traditional rulers in Ekiti state provide institutional safety for their subjects.

From the findings above, it was revealed that the traditional rulers played significant roles in maintaining and sustaining peace in Ekiti State Local Governments by settling conflicts among their subjects in their domains.

Table 1: The roles Traditional Rulers play in Peace Sustainance in Ekiti State Local Governments

S/N	Variables	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
		f (%)	f (%)	F (%)	f (%)
1	Traditional rulers settle disputes through reconciliation between families	83 (55.3%)	45 (30.0%)	4 (2.7%)	18 (12.0%)
2	Traditional rulers settle inter-religious disputes	88 (58.7%)	62 (41.3%)	-	-
3	Traditional rulers settle inter-communal disputes	45 (30.0%)	75 (50.0%)	15 (10.0%)	15 (10.0%)
4	Traditional rulers are concerned with maintaining peace in their domain	75 (50.0%)	54 (36.0%)	11 (7.3%)	10 (6.7%)
5	Traditional rulers settle the inter-tribal conflicts in their domain	74 (49.3%)	46 (30.7%)	15 (10.0%)	15 (10.0%)
6	Traditional rulers provide institutional safety for their subject	94 (62.7%)	26 (17.3%)	15 (10.0%)	15 (10.0%)

Source: Researcher's compilation (2022)

The Way Forward for a Restructured Traditional Institution

Traditional rulers have a significant role in maintaining security for sustainable development in Nigeria. However, for the traditional rulers to play the role effectively, there should be security allocation for the institution, enabling the institution to mobilise the people to maintain security. The government should give the traditional institution constitutional recognition and backing for their actions. This will enable the decisions reached in arbitrations by traditional rulers to be implemented by parties in conflicts, as the outcomes of the traditional institutions will be strictly followed due to their legal backing.

Traditional leaders have always been consulted and employed to resolve crises as they developed. Additionally, succeeding governments realised that working with traditional leaders was the best method to win over the public's support for essential concerns of the day. The justification for a specific position for traditional leaders in our constitution should not be seen as rejecting the democratic form of government. It means that old systems should be made to function alongside modern democracy in a way that allows them to reflect and build upon one another.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In Ekiti State, the traditional institution, particularly the traditional rulership, has remained a reliable force to be reckoned with in maintaining peace. This has been made possible by the Yoruba traditions and spiritualities' immense strength and tenacity, which have significantly impacted their lives and actions.

The following suggestions were made in response to the study's findings to strengthen the roles of traditional chiefs in maintaining peace in the local governments of Ekiti state: The government should provide enough money so that traditional leaders may manage the day-to-day operations of their domain. Additionally, traditional leaders should be given the tools to improve their conflict resolution and peacekeeping skills.

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