



<http://www.casestudiesjournal.com/>

Impact Factor: 4.428

Traditional Tools and Implements Used in Hausa Occupations

Author Details:

Ahmad Muhammad Mika'il

Federal University of Education, Kano

Department of Hausa

ahmadmikojustice@mail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6074-2084>

Abstract

This thesis, titled “Tools for the Implementation of the Traditional Occupations of Hausa people, focus on Farming, Forging and Butchering” has been conducted in an attempt to discover and bring to full attention, the type of occupational tools used by Hausa people in these three traditional occupations. Selected occupations to be discussed in the work are: Farming, Blacksmithing and Butchering. Tools are the bedrock for the development of traditional occupations of Hausa people. It is through using these occupational tools, that the Hausa people are able carry out their daily occupational activities with ease and comfort. This research has been divided into five chapters. The main objective is to expose or bring the type of tools used in traditional occupations on Farming, Blacksmithing and Butchering. The research has been limited to three areas on Hausa traditional occupations. And also the research will contribute by making recommendations on how to preserve and improve the traditional tools for better benefits to the society. Different methods of data collection have been used in conducting this research in order to obtain reliable information related to the subject matter of the research. A few example among these methods are: making use of available libraries, to study books, thesis, journals and other educational documents which have to do with the research. Discussions have also been held with academics who have expert knowledge on these traditional occupations, as well as with experienced persons who are current practitioners of these areas. Practical visits were also made to places where these occupations are physically carried out in order to have a firsthand practical knowledge on how the occupations are conducted. The research has been able to establish the indispensability of the traditional tools as the backbone for the continued implementation, sustainability, growth and development of these traditional occupations of the Hausa people. Finally, full explanations on these traditional occupational tools and how they can be used have been provided under relevant topics as they relate to each individual occupation.

Keywords: Tools, implements, traditions, occupations, Hausa

Introduction

The Hausa people heavily rely on their traditional crafts and nearly all their traditional trades contribute to their economic growth and development. The tools used for these crafts form the backbone of their success, as these tools play a significant role in ensuring the effective execution of these trades.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the essential tools used in some traditional trades, providing an explanation of each tool and its application in the corresponding craft.

This research aims to identify the tools utilized in executing some Hausa trades, particularly in traditional and modern contexts. To achieve this, three trades will be examined, detailing the definitions of each trade

alongside the traditional and modern tools used. These will be presented item by item, along with explanations of their uses and relevance to the trades.

Farming

Farming is one of the oldest human activities and is among the first tasks known to humankind. The Hausa people often praise farming, saying, "Farming, the act of bending down, is an age-old trade everyone encounters upon arriving in this world." This praise reflects the longstanding significance of farming, not just among the Hausa but globally. When discussing the economy of Hausa land, farming is the first subject mentioned, as it is the backbone of the region's economy. This is because farming is a trade practiced by everyone—rich or poor, men or women, young or old—to produce food for consumption and for sale to meet daily needs.

Hausa farmers cultivate food crops such as millet, sorghum, and maize, as well as cash crops like cotton and groundnuts. Additionally, the fertile Hausa land supports the growth of other crops, such as cassava and sweet potatoes (Nadama, 1977:90–92).

Different scholars have provided various definitions of farming:

- Gusau (1983) described farming as tilling the land to extract its benefits through plowing, weeding, and planting, resulting in the production of various plants for consumption, feeding, or making clothes.
- Another definition (C.N.H.N, 2006) describes farming as plowing the soil with hoes and rakes to create planting furrows.
- From my perspective, farming is a trade involving digging or plowing the soil to sow seeds during the rainy or dry seasons.

Traditional Farming Tools

1. Hoe: A curved metal tool with a wooden handle, used for digging and planting.
2. Sickle: A long-handled tool with a sharp blade for harvesting crops.
3. Weeding Knife: A tool for clearing weeds.
4. Traditional Fertilizer: A natural mixture of animal manure, ashes, decayed leaves, and other organic materials used to enhance soil fertility.

Blacksmithing

Blacksmithing is a traditional craft that involves producing essential tools for farming and household use. Blacksmiths among the Hausa are categorized into two groups: black metal smiths and white metal smiths. Black metal smiths produce agricultural tools like hoes, axes, and machetes, while white metal smiths create household utensils and decorative items.

Traditional Blacksmithing Tools

1. Anvil: A flat-topped metal block used for shaping hot metals.
2. Bellows: A leather apparatus used to blow air into the furnace, intensifying the fire.
3. Charcoal: The primary fuel used in blacksmithing fires.
4. Tongs: Metal tools used to handle heated materials.

Butchery

Butchery is an ancient and essential craft in Hausa society. It involves the slaughtering of animals to supply meat for communal consumption. According to Alhaji Danladi, butchery is defined as the buying and slaughtering of animals to provide meat for the people.

Categories of Butchers:

1. Major Butchers: These are wealthy individuals who slaughter large animals such as cattle and camels.
2. Minor Butchers: Individuals with smaller capital who primarily work with borrowed resources, often dealing with smaller animals like sheep and goats.
3. Intermediate Butchers: They mainly slaughter medium-sized animals to cater to local needs.

Traditional Butchery Tools

1. Skinning Knife: Used for removing the hide of slaughtered animals.
2. Butcher's Knife: A sharp blade used to cut meat into portions.
3. Cleaver: A sturdy blade used for breaking animal bones.
4. Cutting Board: A wooden or metal surface for cutting meat.

Conclusion

This research explored the tools used in traditional Hausa crafts, focusing on farming, blacksmithing, and butchery. It provided detailed descriptions of the tools used in these crafts, highlighting their significance in traditional and contemporary contexts.

The findings reveal that traditional Hausa crafts are integral to the economic and cultural identity of the Hausa people, with the tools evolving over time to incorporate modern techniques. However, preserving traditional methods and tools remains essential for maintaining cultural heritage and economic stability.

Reference

- Abdu, M.D. (2006) - *Tasirin Kimiyya da Qere-Qeren Zamani a kan Sana'o'in Hausawa na Gargajiya*. KABS Print Services (Nig).
- Adamu, M. (1978) - *The Hausa Factor in West African History*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Ado, A. (2009) - *Samuwar Sana'o'in Gargajiya da Alaqarsu da Sana'ar Gardanci*. Master's Thesis, Department of Nigerian Languages, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.
- Alhassan, H. et al. (1982) - *Zaman Hausawa*. Lagos: Academy Press Limited.
- Amiru, M. (1991) - *Tasirin Zuwan Turawa a kan Sana'o'in Gargajiya*. Bachelor's Thesis, Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano.
- Auta, A.L. (2006) - *Jima Sana'ar Sarrafa Fata da Mahimmancinta a Qasar Kano*. Bachelor's Thesis, Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano.
- Auta, A.L. (2006) - *Bayanin Tattalin Al'umma: Nazarin Sana'o'i da Kasuwancin Hausawa. Research in Hausa Studies*, No. 4, Vol. 1, Algaita, Kano: Benchmark Publishers Limited.
- C.N.H.N. (2006) - *Qamusun Hausa*. Kano: Bayero University Press.
- Dilijan, B.M. (2012) - *Noma a Ginuwar Tattalin Arzikin Hausawa na Gargajiya*. Master's Thesis, Department of Nigerian Languages, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.
- Fatima, M.A. (2011) - *Gudummawar Turawa A Kan Wasu Sana'o'in Gargajiya na Mata Hausawa*. Master's Thesis, Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano.
- Garba, C.Y. (1991) - *Sana'o'in Gargajiya a Qasar Hausa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.

Goucher, C.L. (1981) - *Iron is Iron: Trade and Ecology in the Decline of West African Iron-smelting*. *Journal of African History*, Vol. 22, pp. 179–189.

Nadama, G (1977) “The Rise and Collapse of Hausa: A social and Political History of Zamfara”. PhD thesis, Dept of History, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University.