

Emergency use of Human Parts as Money Rituals for Instant Riches: A Contradiction to Human Dignity and Cultural Fundamental Principles in South West, Nigeria

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Abstract:- The emergency use of human body parts as money rituals for quick fortune violates both cultural and human dignity in Nigeria. It is an impediment to societal growth. The phrase "money ritual" describes a situation in Nigeria where a person is killed and then their body parts are harvested and allegedly used for ritual purposes. The objectives of the study are to investigate the causes of the hazard in South West, the frequency of emergency use of human parts as money rituals, the public's perception of the use of human parts and money rituals, and the best course of action for eliminating the threat. The study employed a quantitative style of inquiry and questionnaire administration. According to the study, ritual killings consistently occur in the South West against unsuspecting people, girls, children and elderly. Majority of Nigerians believe ritual killing to be real, and not mirage. The menace is considered a serious offense that affected people of all ages. It is recommended that the Nigerian government defend human rights, especially those of victims and a law should be enacted for the purpose.

Keywords:- Contradiction, Human dignity, Money Ritual, Human Parts, Cultural Fundamentals.

I. INTRODUCTION

In South West Nigeria, the emergency usage of body parts as money rituals for fast wealth in this study is regarded as a violation of human dignity, freedom and cultural fundamental norms. Because of the nitty-gritty involved, such as secrecy and phenomenal wonder, the study relies on perception and media reports to describe the significance and implications of illegal activity on human dignity, freedom and cultural values in this phase of the study. In modern society, wealth represents the majority's desire to live a better life. This has encouraged many Nigerians to engage in constructive activities that earn them a living; yet, in today's society, some people prefer criminal activities over the conventional and societally acceptable means of earning a living. This has led to numerous dubious tactics of earning wealth by some individuals in South West, Nigeria, even when the means violate societal standards, human dignity, and cultural fundamental beliefs. The prevalence of this hazard has inspired this investigation. The study is motivated by illegal behavior that is inhumane to humanity. The clarification of essential concepts becomes

critical in grasping the crux of the discussion under this introduction.

People engaged in these activities frequently use human parts as weapons of mass destruction. The body's structural components, including the head, neck, arms, breasts, private parts, eyes, and legs, are referred to as "human parts" in this study. These are the areas that are almost always used by those who have become involved in the ritual making money. They also harvest the livers, intestines, and kidneys from their victims. A "money ritual" in Nigeria is when someone is abducted and killed as a ritual sacrifice in order to generate money. Before having their body parts torn off, female victims are frequently raped. Ritual killers employ a variety of tactics to seize their prey. According to Oluyemo (2020), a child could be lured into this act anywhere, including on the way to or from school, while hawking, on the way to church, on an errand for parents, or while playing with friends. When the mother is not in the vicinity where a baby is sleeping, the baby can be abducted. Adults can be kidnapped and their bodies dismembered; some are raped before the ritual sacrifice begins. According to Obineke (2008), the "one chance bus," as it is popularly known in Lagos, has resulted in the deaths of many people.. The ritualists always pretended to be bus conductors, luring innocent passengers into their vehicles and taking a different route during their journey. The ritualists rob and magically bewitch the passengers, while those who are lucky are thrown out of the bus. Mendicants who are unable to meet their three basic needs are commonly found in Nigerian cities such as Lagos, where they live under bridges. The unbelievable usually happens to them during the night, and the corpses of the beggars are found lying on the ground helplessly the next morning, while some parts of the body such as the eyes, tongues, breasts, and private parts have been harvested by unknown people suspected to be ritualists.

In Nigeria, the victims are allegedly used for ritual purposes, while the perpetrators are from all social classes. Nigerians believe that agents of money ritual sacrifice include some poor people who desperately want to be wealthy, some young and elderly people, some rich people who want to maintain their status in society, some elites intoxicated by power and wealth, and some politicians seeking positions and fame (Oluyemo, 2020). It is also noticeable today that young boys, unemployed youths, and lazy youths have chosen this path of becoming rich quickly. It is worth noting, however, that adult girls and boys in

South West Nigeria have been victims of money ritual sacrifices.

Money ritual, in the context of this study, thus refers to practice and belief in a magical approach, an illusion of making money that involves the killing of another human being as ordered by a traditional spiritualist in order for those who so desire to acquire plenty of money through diabolical custom. It is the devil's command through spiritualists for someone to remain wealthy and powerful. Victims' rights and dignity are taken away by force in these situations. Contradiction occurs when someone's ideas about a particular situation, belief, or attitude are inconsistent and illogical. It's the same as saying something that contradicts or disagrees with a deeply held belief. Thus, for people in South West Nigeria to hold a person's human dignity and rights in high regard and then be involved in destroying the person through violence in order to be rich is to be operating under a double standard and speaking with both sides of the coin, which is contradictory in the context of this study.

Human dignity refers to a person's right to be valued and respected, as well as to be treated morally. It is about taking pride in oneself or consciously sensing one's own worth as a human being living a meaningful life, and it is about being worthy of others' respect. Human dignity entails being valued and respected for one's beliefs. Human dignity, according to Catholic social teaching, refers to the recognition that each person is created in God's image. Nobody has the right to take away a person's inherent human dignity. It is freely given to all people, whether they are saints or sinners, imprisoned or free, powerful or marginalized. The Yoruba ethnic group is based on an extended family system and values communal relationships as well as social responsibility. These influenced their belief in human dignity and rights. As a result, the states of South West Nigeria believe they are related to one another, and they vividly demonstrate this when they meet outside their geographical locations. They consider themselves brothers and sisters because they speak the same Yoruba language outside their domain. As a result of their belief in human dignity and rights, they are expected to be treated with respect and deference. In light of the foregoing, according to Balogun (2017), rights have value, and if rights have value, then the person who has the right must be fundamentally valuable.

According to Igbafen (2014), human dignity encompasses the entire human person. Human dignity is important in defining the components of a person in the Yoruba context. In other words, all human parts are cherished and held in high regard in society. However, in today's South West states of Nigeria, human dignity and rights are being forcibly taken away from them due to the greed of becoming rich quickly by the killing for money ritual. In today's society, the bond that exists in families and extended families is gradually eroding as a result of wanting to get rich quickly, which has informed the ritual of using one's father, mother, sibling, friend, wife, and stranger for money. In this context, cultural fundamental principles refer to cultural values that are central to people's lives in society or that are highly regarded and approved by society. This

study hypothesizes that the emergency use of human parts as money rituals for instant riches is in conflict with the people of the South West region's belief in human dignity and cultural norms.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many people, especially those of the Yoruba ethnic group, are worried about the prevalence of money rituals for instant riches in southwest Nigeria. Although money ritual making are not exclusive to the South Western states, they present a problem for Nigerians on a national scale. The pride of the nation is the respect for human dignity in an ideal society. Thus, respect for and appreciation of human dignity and rights are the desired ideal situation in the southwestern region. Every person has a right to protection from all types of violence, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and lethal, psychological, and emotional assault. The reality, however, is not what was anticipated. Instead of upholding the significance of human dignity and cultural values such as hard work, honesty, morality, and becoming responsible citizens, the opposite is experienced on a daily basis. Some Nigerians, particularly in the southwestern states, have made it a profession to kill people for cash, robbing victims of their human dignity and freedom to live. In the name of accumulating wealth, people of all ages—children, men and women, adults, and elderly—are turned into ritual objects for money. In Nigeria, particularly in the South West, many individuals have been detained for rape and the sale of their victims' body parts.

The killings in Nigeria have increased to alarming levels, and the government is doing little to nothing to reverse the trend. Although religious practices are expanding in Nigeria and Christians and Muslims outnumber those who practice traditional religion, religion has not yet established a stronghold in the lives of some Christians and Muslims. It is depressing to discover that a large portion of those responsible for this evil are Christians or Muslims who go to a haberset (Juju priest) for a ritual involving money. Ironically, Juju priests do not participate in rituals that generate income for personal gain. Victims varies in age, for instance; a four-year-old girl was reportedly found on August 17, 2017, next to a shrine at "Ogbe close" in the Lagos neighborhood of Iwaya. When she was found, her throat had already been slashed.

In addition, the abductor's apartment in Port Harcourt, who was 23 at the time, contained the body of an eight-year-old girl. Before being killed, the girl was not only kidnapped but also raped. After her death, some of her body parts were removed and recovered from the kidnapper (Nigeria News, 2017). A seven-year-old boy was also murdered and had his head buried in a church's sanctuary. The boy was allegedly used for ritual to ensure an increase in the number of churchgoers, which in turn increased the pastor's wealth. Even today, people continue to engage in criminal activity, which is in conflict with the idea that belief in God or Allah should result in moral behavior. In South West Nigeria, the issue has persisted to the point where there is never a day without a mention of ritual killings on social media. According to Vanguard, in 2021, a groom-to-be was killed

by his next-door neighbor for a ritual. After his death, his body parts were removed, and acid was applied to his corpse to speed up decay (Peterside, D. 2021).

Steps have been taken in Nigeria to put an end to this criminal act. According to the Guardian, for example, the House of Representatives has requested that the government declare a national emergency regarding ritual killings in the country. The Inspector General of Police was tasked with increasing surveillance and intelligence gathering in order to identify and prosecute offenders. Legislators also urged the National Orientation Agency, parents, school administrators, religious leaders, and the media to launch a campaign to reverse the negative trend. The house committees on Police Affairs, Information, National Orientation, Ethics, and Values are in charge of seeing that decisions are carried out. Similarly, a number of academics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and others have been at the forefront of raising awareness about the problem of ritual killings, developing theories about it, and proposing solutions through their interventions.

However, given the issue's persistence, little progress has been made. States in South West Nigeria have failed to put an end to the practice of ritual killings for quick riches. Little has been done because of its complexity, the status of those involved in the practice, and their belief in its efficacy. As a result, it remains a stunning type that has not been empirically investigated or explained. The subject of this study is a social problem that needs to be investigated because of how people perceive it and their anxiety about the unusual behavior and this has become one of the research work's guiding principles.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ritual killing for quick money is no longer a closely guarded secret in Nigeria; everyone is aware of the issue because it is widespread throughout the country, particularly in the southwest. This is on everyone's lips in Nigeria because people who perpetrate ritual killings for profit typically confess the truth when captured by authorities. While many kinds of violence involve killing, not all of them involve ritual killings performed for monetary gain. With the advent of industrialization and technology, people's insatiable desire for wealth and power has grown. As a result, humans have developed a desire for material belongings and prosperity in order to dominate and outrank others in society. One would have assumed that in this age of civilization, technological advancement, and religious beliefs and practices, the practice of employing humans in ritual sacrifices as sacrifice to the gods and goddesses would have been abandoned.

The experience of contemporary culture is just the contrary, as ritual killing for quick money is on the rise alarmingly in South West Nigeria. As a result, once-highly regarded cultural and moral values as well as human dignity are gradually, if not completely, disappearing. The family and other social institutions that had an impact on people's socialization and for the development of the individual and

the society as a whole has been watered down for the sake of greed. To further their egoistic and criminal actions, people are ignoring cultural and moral obligations to treat others with respect and with dignity in society. In the southwest, the prevalence of nationwide ritual killings conducted for financial gain has reached horrifying proportions (Daily Trust, 2022). According to reports, residents of Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, and Ekiti are now living in fear because the threat arises on a regular basis.

Two youths, under the age of 17 and the other over the age of 20, were apprehended in Ogun State for beheading a female and putting her head on fire as part of a ceremonial money-making activity, (Oyebade, 2022). Three of the alleged attackers, all 17 years old, were the victim's boyfriends. The Amotekun state security network agency nabbed a 30-year-old man in Ondotown with fresh human parts in the city. A trailer driver with two legs and two hands was also discovered in the city's Sabo district. He stated that he was expected to carry the parts to Lagos and then be paid \$30 million. In the state, a Muslim preacher was also jailed while carrying a human head. In 2021, the Lagos State Police Command nabbed eleven people in Lagos for possessing human body parts. In Osun state, a 400-level student from Osun State University was kidnapped, murdered, slaughtered, and allegedly used in a ritual money ceremony. As part of a traditional money-making act carried out by several youngsters, the victim's head was hacked off and roasted. In another town in the same region, a 400-level student from the same university was slain for a money ritual. In Ekiti state, a 78-year-old grandmother and widow was killed by suspected ritualists (Vanguard, 2020). Likewise, a 73 year-old pensioner was killed and butchered by ritual killers (Punch Newspaper, 2017). Ritualists were allegedly cut-off 94-year-old woman's head in her house in Moba local Government area of Ekiti State (The Guardian, 2022). All these killings in the different states in southwest confirm the agitations of people in this part of the nation.

The aforementioned information reveals that youngsters and some seniors are among the perpetrators of money rituals. When community members and law enforcement officials questioned the people who were arrested with body parts, several of them admitted that they had been ordered by traditional worshipers or herbalists to slaughter and bring the body parts in order to make money. Usman (2017) claims that a 61-year-old landlord confessed to the murder of a woman whose fresh head and other body parts were discovered with him. He insisted that the components were to be utilized by a herbalist named Alfa to create potions. Typically, feminine body parts are in higher demand than their male equivalents. Herbalists and occult organizations want certain portions, such as the victim's breasts and lower private areas. These people are driven to engage in money rituals by their desire for power and wealth.

In Nigeria, there are three types of ritual killings: traditional ritual killing, occult ritual killing, and modern ritual murdering. According to Agbawmu (2020), traditional ritual slaughter was a common occurrence in pre-Christian civilization. It was traditional during this time to kill

someone and offer them as a sacrifice to the gods in order to acquire supernatural favor, triumph over the adversary, power, and protection. This practice became extinct as religion and society advanced. However, in modern life, it has taken on a new dimension. The second type is occult ritual killing, in which a human was traditionally offered as a sacrifice in order to join the occult. This organization consumes the flesh and blood of its victims in order to gain Satan's favor, beckon new demons, and grow stronger (Brown, 2006). Some very powerful Nigerians have been discovered to be involved. Another hazardous group that was once famous in Ikorodu, Lagos State, is the Badoo boys. At night, the criminals released their prisoners and used handkerchiefs to clean the blood and brain from their victims' bodies. These victims are thought to have been brainwashed in order to carry out the attack. When the crooks were captured, they acknowledged that they worked for affluent politicians. They claimed to use the blood and sperm of their victims to construct a spiritual defense for wealthy Nigerians. 2017 (Nwafor).

According to Agbawmu, (2020), there are three main categories of ritual killings in Nigeria: traditional ritual killing, occult ritual killing, and modern ritual murdering. Traditional ritual slaughter was a widespread practice in pre-Christian society, during this period, it was customary to kill someone and offer as sacrifice to the gods in order to obtain supernatural favor, victory over the adversary, power, and protection. With the development of religion and civilization, this practice had vanished. However, it has acquired a new dimension in modern life. The second form is the occult ritual killing, by which a human was offered as a sacrifice in order to join the occult. This organization ingests the flesh and consumes the blood of its victims in order to acquire the favor of Satan, summon new demons, and grow stronger (Brown, 2006). Some very powerful people in Nigeria have been discovered to be involved. The Badoo lads are another dangerous group that was popular at one point in Ikorodu, Lagos State. At night, the perpetrators unleash their captives crush their skulls at night and used handkerchiefs to clean the blood and brain from their victims' bodies. These victims are thought to have been hypnotized to enable perpetrators carry out the diabolical scheme. When the crooks were apprehended, they admitted that wealthy politicians were their employers. They admitted to using their victims' blood and semen to create a spiritual defense for wealthy Nigerians (Nwafor, 2017). There are pertinent questions that need to be answered, these include; is this money ritual real or just a myth? Why is there an increase in the frequency of money rituals in southwest?

There are differing perspectives on the veracity or mythology of the money ritual. The irony of all these murders however, is that no herbalist is involved in this money ritual for their own or their children's benefit because they believe that clients who participate in money rituals will suffer negative consequences. The Aroh deity priest agrees that the money ritual exists, even if those who participate face consequences. Olumba in Vanguard (2022) claimed that if the money ritual is real, the Babalawo (Juju priest) who is paid to perform it would have done it for

himself, be living comfortably, and have his name listed among the world's wealthiest individuals. Similarly, Taofeek, a herbalist, asserted that human sacrifice for money rituals actually occurs and claimed that his colleagues in the southwest region practice such rituals. He added that killing one person is just a preamble for those who engage in money rituals. The perpetrator will continue to renew the evil covenant by sacrificing people as long as he/she wants to be wealthy because the demon in charge of money always demands it (Vanguard, 2022). According to tofa practitioners, they opined that traditional worshippers would rather pray to "Eledumare" (God) for blessings on anyone who sought wealth through them. When appeasement was required, sugarcane, salt, and bananas, among other things, were used rather than human being. Furthermore, it is asserted that neither African nor Yoruba history has ever supported the belief that human sacrifice can result in wealth. Some Christian and Muslim clerics believe that no one in human history has ever used magic to make actual money appear. Such an idea is a mirage in their eyes (Daily Trust, 2022).

Money rituals continue in Nigeria and throughout Africa, according to Adebayo (2021), because most of the continent is still rooted in a pagan and unscientific past. The wealth-generating strategy used on the African continent is based on naive metaphysics. The nine scientific characteristics of objectivity, variability, ethical neutrality, systematic exploration, reliability, precision, accuracy, and abstractness are not met by the African wealth creation metaphysics. According to Hayab (2022), in the Vanguard Newspaper, bad parenting, inadequate education, and poor governance all contribute to the continued involvement of youth in money rituals. Additionally, Nuru (2022) believes that the reason money rituals continue is that people will do whatever it takes to become wealthy. This is because clerics often promote materialism in their sermons. According to the various perspectives presented above, many people believe in the effectiveness of money rituals, as many people suspected of participating in money rituals are wealthy members of society. However, it is difficult to imagine someone being murdered and then used as currency. It is a mystery that has yet to be solved, and due to the secrecy involved, it will take a long time to do so, at least until empirical research is done and herbalists (Juju priests) are willing and ready to disclose the steps involved and how they work. Aside from that, the investigation will only focus more on people's perception of money ritual.

IV. THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

It has been alleged that human organs are frequently used in emergency money rituals in Nigeria to generate quick wealth. It appears to be widespread in Nigerian society even though it violates human rights and dignity. The spread of this cruel behavior, which offends Nigerian principles of human dignity at the national, state, and local government levels as well as in the community, has not been effectively dealt with. More Nigerians are getting involved in the cruel trade in the hopes of making quick money because there is no strict legislation in place to punish those who engaged in it. The threat becomes a social issue as it

impacts society's structures and destabilizes its system. Only those who have a firm belief in how money rituals operate can fully comprehend this complex and nuanced issue because understanding the process of money rituals is such a complicated phenomenon. It is challenging to empirically investigate how it functions because it seems to be a closely-kept secret among participants of money rituals and their herbalists. This informs the application of three theoretical frameworks—social systems' theory, social learning theory, and social disorganization theory—to explain this social issue in Nigerian society, particularly in the southwest.

V. SOCIAL SYSTEMS THEORY

According to Heylighen F. & Joslyn C. (1992), systems theory was proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the 1940s and extended by Ross Ashby. Systems theory is concerned with the investigation of the underlying principles that underpin all complex structures, as well as the numerous models that may be used to describe them. System theory is a framework for understanding and describing any group of variables that interact to produce a result. According to the fundamental idea of systems theory, a complex system is made up of numerous smaller structures that interact to produce a complicated system. The core idea of system theory is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, regardless of the discipline. Social systems theory is a sophisticated arrangement of social science components, including people and their views in relation to the bigger picture. It aims to define and develop concepts based on traits that appear in any one system within the larger context.

In applying the system theory to the subject matter of this study, for example, the central assumption of system theory is that various smaller structures make up a complex system, and these smaller systems interact to create a difficult system. The human body structure for example is a complex system and it is made up of smaller parts. These smaller parts are important to the whole body structure. To be fully human therefore all the parts of the body must be intact without which a person cannot be physically whole. Using the cake analogy for instance, if the ingredients of baking a cake are not complete the cake cannot come to reality that is; there will be no cake. The entire physical system becomes dysfunctional after being kidnapped for a money ritual because of anxiety and psychological trauma. The body structure is no longer whole when the person is slain and a portion of the body is severed for a ceremony involving money. The murdering of the victim is done in an effort to satisfy the individual's ego and belief, which runs counter to the social ideal of respect for human dignity and basic cultural values.

A complex system is composed of multiple smaller components that interact to create a complicated system, according to the central tenet of systems theory. In this scenario, numerous smaller systems interact to produce the so-called excessive quest for money ritual; a belief in magical sacrifices. For example, the desire to be wealthy causes people to seek out herbalist who is said to specialize

in providing people with rapid riches. In consultation with their gods, the herbalist specified what their clients would bring to produce rituals for money. The system contains methods for networking among people who believe the system works for them and encourage others to continue this illegal behavior in society. As a result, criminals put their own selfish interests over societal values. So many future promising people who could have contributed to civilization's growth have been squandered by killing to satisfy personal needs. Despite the fact that systems theory is a framework for evaluating or describing any group of entities that work together to achieve a goal, it is difficult to comprehend how this system of killing and harvesting body parts generates quick profits.

The theory is a complex system that expresses emergent behaviour, a systematic process or idea somebody had either through magical or diabolical means. Understanding the details of money ritual is complex and almost impossible as it remains a top secret among the herbalists specialized in this magical process and the perpetrators of money ritual in Nigeria, particularly in the south west. It is challenging and practically impossible to comprehend the specifics of the phenomenon since herbalists who specialize in this magical process and those who perform money rituals in Nigeria, particularly in the southwest, keep it a top secret.

VI. SOCIAL SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Albert Bandura's social learning theory places a strong emphasis on the value of seeing, modeling, and copying other people's behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses. The interaction of environmental and cognitive influences on human reasoning and behavior is taken into account by the social learning hypothesis. The dominant theory of criminal behavior, known as social learning theory (SLT), contends that persons who associate differently with criminally involved people are more likely to commit crimes themselves since this increases their exposure to delinquent role models. One of the most striking social learning theory examples in daily life is the way that children act when they copy their peers, family members, celebrities, and even fictional characters on television. Children will act out if they believe there would be a significant payoff for doing so.

The social learning hypothesis is appropriate for understanding the money ritual for wealth emergencies. When it comes to fast wealth, teenagers impart each other. For example, the "yahoo boys and girls" approach of scamming people, which is popular among Nigerian youngsters today, is learned by watching others who had been involved in the act. They noticed that obtaining money through scamming others, particularly foreigners, had become a "must do" among the adolescents; similarly, the money ritual for rapid riches had become a "must do." Money ritual perpetrators observe, copy, and replicate the behaviors and attitudes of those who have participated in the act and believe they are successful; they believe there is a meaningful reward and they go for it.

VII. DISORGANIZATION THEORY

The social disorganization theory is also used to describe this societal problem that has been plaguing Nigerian society for decades. Clifford Shaw and Henry D. McKay developed the theory during their studies at the Chicago School of Criminology in 1942. The primary principle of the idea asserts that a person's physical and social settings are mostly responsible for the behavioral choices he or she makes. The basic premise here is that geography is important in forecasting illicit activities. Physical breakdown, poverty, and greater racial and cultural mixing are at least three issues Shaw and McKay found to be present in neighborhoods with the highest crime rates. According to Shaw and McKay, delinquency is a natural response by normal people to abnormal circumstances rather than being produced at the individual level.

The social disorganization theory is frequently employed as a significant predictor of juvenile criminality and violence. Many Nigerians have turned to various criminal acts to make money as a consequence of the disarray in the country's economic system, which prevents individuals from meeting their fundamental requirements. One of these methods is the money ritual, which is popular in Nigeria right now and is most frequently practiced by young people, though some adults who are not young people also engage in the illegal activity because they influence one another to do so. Shaw and McKay's theory that "a person's physical and social settings are essentially responsible for the behavioral choices that a person makes" is supported by this circumstance.

Today's youth and some middle-aged Nigerians want fast wealth more than anything, and they involve in killing to get it. Since there is no clear rule or policy in place to stifle the criminals, the Nigerian environment has accepted this criminal activity for a very long time. As a result, the offenders continue to multiply, especially in southwest Nigeria, and influence others who are struggling economically. Regarding people's participation in money rituals for rapid wealth, the issues of physical breakdown, poverty, and cultural mixing identified by Shaw and McKay apply to the southwest condition. A collapse in family socialization, a weakening of conventional social ties, the dissolution of communal solidarity, an increase in poverty due to unemployment, and a breakdown in family cohesion are all symptoms of a broken society. The high percentage of young involvement in ritual slaughter for instant money has been attributed to the migration of many people from various civilizations.

In this study, the system theory, social learning theory, and disorganization theory are triangulated to explain the emergency usage of body parts as money rituals for rapid wealth, which is regarded as a violation of human dignity and cultural fundamental norms in south-western Nigeria. Though the system theory emphasizes that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," the perpetrators of money ritual lost sight of this fact and were only concerned with their individualistic and selfish interests. People continue to learn illegal behavior from what they witness in society, and many model their life after those who pursue wealth by any means. This menace is promoted in Nigerian society, particularly in the south-west, as a result of disorganization in the system, which encourages unemployment and poverty, ineffective legal sanction against perpetrators of money rituals, disorganization in the family setting, a lack of solidarity among community members, and government inaction, combined with a lack of political will to bring the criminals under control.

VIII. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The study used a descriptive research methodology with a survey, delivering questionnaires to respondents from three states in southwest Nigeria. Because all the states in the southwest are homogeneous, the three states chosen at random to participate in the study were Ogun, Ekiti, and Ondo. The rationale for the choice is based on observation, southwest Nigeria is one of the regions that are highly talked about with the incidence of money rituals. Social change has also had an impact on the states; family and religious institutions have changed, which is likely to have influenced the idealization of money rituals for rapid wealth.

Two hundred (200) respondents were chosen for the study in each of the states, making a total of six hundred (600) studied populations. The questionnaire was given out at random. Educators, health workers, civil servants, illiterates, and students were among the numerous categories of people ranging in age from 18 to 65 above who participated in each state. These were chosen at random for the interview. However, each group was located within its own context, and copies of the questionnaires were distributed by two trained research assistants to the 200 selected respondents in each state that participated in the study. For analysis, all copies of the questionnaire were retrieved with zero non-response rates.

IX. DATA PRESENTATION

• SECTION A:

| Variable | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| | | 600 | 100% |
| Sex | Female | 320 | 53% |
| | Male | 280 | 46% |
| Age | 18 – 25 | 143 | 24% |
| | 26 – 35 | 119 | 19% |
| | 36 – 45 | 109 | 18% |
| | 46 – 55 | 120 | 20% |
| | 56 and above | 109 | 18% |
| Marital Status | Divorced | 22 | 4% |
| | Married | 337 | 56% |
| | Single | 241 | 40% |
| Sample from state | Ogun | 200 | 33% |
| | Ondo | 200 | 33% |
| | Ekiti | 200 | 33% |
| Variable | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
| | | 600 | |
| Education | No Formal | 80 | 11% |
| | Primary | 57 | 8% |
| | Secondary | 163 | 27% |
| | Tertiary | 300 | 50% |
| Variable | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
| | | 600 | 100% |
| Religion | Traditional | 32 | 5% |
| | Christian | 387 | 65% |
| | Muslim | 181 | 30% |
| Variable | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
| | | 600 | |
| Occupation | Employed | 210 | 35% |
| | Self-Employed | 110 | 18% |
| | Unemployed | 100 | 17% |
| | Student | 180 | 30% |

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristic of Respondents

Source: Author’s fieldwork, 2022

The sex ratio indicates that women make up the majority of respondents, accounting for more than half of all respondents. There are 46% men and 53% women in the population. This endeavour accurately represents the ideal sex distribution of the population being studied because there are more females than males in the study locations.

The study group has a diverse age distribution, with the majority of respondents (24%) falling between the ages of 18 and 25, which means that at least one in every four respondents falls within this age range. Between the ages of 46 and 55, 20% of the sample’s respondents fall within this age range. The sample population is made up of 19% and

18% of respondents who are between the ages of 26 and 35, 36 and 45, and 56 and older.

According to the marital distribution, only 4% of respondents reported having been divorced, even though in this group as well, slightly over half (56%) of individuals are married and 40% of people are single. More married individuals participated in the study.

In terms of religion, research suggests that the majority of respondents—65%—are Christians, followed by 30% Muslims and 5% traditional worshipers. More than half of the respondents practice Christianity, this is the majority religion among the respondents. Respondents from different religions are also present. Despite the fact that no other religious group comes close to matching the overall number of Christians, Muslims account for roughly half of all Christians, making them the second-largest group in this

area. People who practice traditional religion make up the final group of respondents, but they account for a very small proportion of all respondents—exactly 5% of all respondents.

According to the table above, 33% of respondents are from each of the three states because the questionnaire was distributed evenly among them. In other words, those who took part were closely monitored during the interview.

The distribution of educational attainment among respondents demonstrates the strong premium placed on education in western Nigeria. As can be seen, 50% of respondents have completed university education, while only 8% have completed primary school. Those with a secondary education had the second-highest percentage of respondents (27%), closely followed by those with no education at all (11% of the population).

• SECTION B: ASSESSING THE HUMAN DIGNITY AND CULTURAL FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN SOUTH WEST NIGERIA.

| Variable | Use of Children (1-14 years) | Use of youth (15-24 years) | Use of adults (25-64 years) | Use of Seniors (65 years and above) |
|--------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| No | 2% | 6% | 10% | 20% |
| Yes | 98% | 94% | 90% | 80% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 2: Shows the age distribution of those who are frequently victims of ritual killings.

Source: Author’s fieldwork, 2022

In table 2, the perpetrators of instant riches categorize their victims by age, from 1 to 65 and above. This implies that money ritual victims can be found at any age. Furthermore, the bulk of ritual killing victims are between the ages of 1 and 14 (98%), followed by 15 to 24 (94%), 25

to 64 (90%), and 65 and older (80%). This lends credence to the notion that in southwest Nigeria, human dignity and culturally significant standards have been eroded by the desire to get rich at any cost, which is clearly linked to ritual victimization.

| Variables | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|---------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| To what extent do you agree that rape, killing, and harvesting body parts are used for rituals? | 164(63%) | 61(23%) | 23(9%) | 10(4%) | 3(1%) |

Table 3: The percentage of respondents who agreed that rape, murder, and body part harvesting are associated with ritualism for instant riches

Table 3 employs a Linkert scale to precisely assess the level of agreement. The table indicates how many individuals agree to rape, murder, and the removing body parts. Harvesting is associated with ritualism in the pursuit of rapid gain. It demonstrates that rape, murder, and body part harvesting are used in money rituals by an overwhelming majority (86%) in both strong and moderate terms. However, 36% of respondents were either undecided or disagreed. This portrays, among other things, people's

attitudes regarding raping, killing, and collecting body parts for cash. On whether rape, killing, and harvesting body parts for ritualism and money earning is a myth or a reality, an overwhelming majority of 89% strongly agreed and agreed that people in southwest Nigeria are used for quick gain. The structure and behaviour of natural, social, and scientific systems are depicted in this section. Individuals and their beliefs in relation to society are analyzed as a complex arrangement of elements in systems theory.

| Variables | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Killing people for money ritual contradicts respect for human dignity and the cultural values of southwest Nigeria. | 305(51%) | 253(42%) | 20(3%) | 9(1%) | 13(2%) |
| The fundamental principles of culture are no longer held in high esteem because of the greed for instant riches among ritualists. | 230(38%) | 329(54%) | 20(3%) | 10(2%) | 11(2%) |
| The cultural value placed on people's lives in southwest Nigeria is no longer meaningful to ritualists and moneymakers due to their insatiable desire for instant riches without working.. | 253(42%) | 308(51%) | 12(2%) | 2(0%) | 25(4%) |
| Due to the desire for instant riches in Nigeria, ritual killers no longer value human life extremely. | 324(54%) | 215(36%) | 35(6%) | 15(3%) | 11(2%) |
| In southwest Nigeria, those who kill people to make money have no regard for cultural or human dignity. | 296(49%) | 247(41%) | 30(5%) | 18(3%) | 9(2%) |
| Money rituals are illusory and unreal in southwest Nigeria. | 12(2%) | 2(0%) | 25(4%) | 291(49%) | 270(45%) |

Table 4: Evaluating the emergency of instant wealth as a violation of human dignity and cultural core principles in southwest Nigeria.

Source: Author’s fieldwork, 2022

Table 4 The table utilizes a Linkert scale to more precisely quantify the degree of agreement and emphasizes the appraisal of the urgency of rapid riches as a violation of human dignity and cultural fundamental norms in southwest Nigeria. Most people in the three states of Ondo, Ekiti, and Ogun agreed, in both strong and mild tones, that killing people for money violates human dignity and traditional southwest Nigerian norms. 93% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that killing people for money violates social norms and human dignity.

Furthermore, 92% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that this group no longer holds the culture's fundamental values in high regard due to their desire for quick riches. With only 3% strongly and somewhat disagreeing, very few respondents are unsure.

Similar to how the insatiable desire for quick cash affects cultural value, the lives of people in the Southwest are no longer important to ritualists' sources of income. 93% of those surveyed said they agreed or strongly agreed with

the postulation, which supports it. Only 12% of those surveyed agreed, and 4% did not.

The vast majority of people who kill to obtain money have no regard for human decency or culture. 90% of those surveyed agreed or strongly agreed. Comparatively, only 5% of people are unsure, 3% disagree, and 2% strongly disagreed. The perpetrators of ritual killings for money have lost all value of solidarity for the common good and have no regard for human life. The responses mentioned above are consistent with the study's assertion that ritual money offenders in southwest Nigeria's behaviour violate both human dignity and fundamental cultural norms.

The vast majority of respondents firmly agreed that the southwest money ritual is real and not a myth. 94% of the population in Ondo, Ekiti, and Ogun declared this. It is possible that traditional beliefs affect how people perceive things. Only 14% of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed, with 4% being unsure.

| Variables | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| The quest for getting rich | 280 (47%) | 260(43%) | 10(2%) | 29(5%) | 21(4%) |
| The belief that it is more profitable to make money. | 267(45%) | 281(47%) | 12(2%) | 23(4%) | 17(3%) |
| The vulnerability of victims | 289(48%) | 262(44%) | 9(2%) | 21(4%) | 19(3%) |
| Lack of control on the part of the criminals and no effective law enforcement to control criminals. | 265(44%) | 287(49%) | 22(4%) | 20(3%) | 6(1%) |
| Mere wickedness of the perpetrator. | 291(49%) | 260(43%) | 10(2%) | 15(3%) | 24(4%) |
| Effect of drug on the perpetrator | 279(47%) | 263(44%) | 15(3%) | 20(3%) | 23(4%) |
| Lack of adequate and effective law enactment. | 277(46%) | 288(48%) | 10(2%) | 20(3%) | 5(1%) |
| Lack of regard for cultural values disrespect to human dignity. | 285(48%) | 252(42%) | 15(3%) | 21(4%) | 27(5%) |
| Community less concern about the perpetrators | 300(50%) | 230(38%) | 18(3%) | 30(5%) | 22(4%) |

Table 5: Determining Factors for the Emergency Use of Human Parts for Money Rituals in Nigeria

Source: Author’s fieldwork, 2022

As previously mentioned, ritual killing violates both basic cultural values in this society and human dignity. Despite this, the widespread public outcry over ritual killings has not been enough to put an end to the practice. The entire purpose of this section of the study is to identify the variables that support these behaviours. It is not surprising that the majority of respondents agreed that all indices used to measure the causes were real factors. Table 5 reveals the various causes of ritual killing for quick riches.

The need for money, victims' propensity for crime, a lack of self-control, drugs, and governments' inability to enact sufficient and effective laws, poor family care, and a lack of civic concern are additional factors that the majority strongly agreed with and supported. The aforementioned explanations are viewed as insufficient by many people because they fail to adequately explain the crisis of ritual killing for financial gain. Given the wide range of causes of ritual killing, it is obvious that the community, family, and government are all involved in these incidents. It is important to stress the need for checks in these areas because awareness does not always translate into preventive action.

X. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study's results add to the body of knowledge on Nigeria's emergency practice of using human organs as currency, particularly in the southwest states. The study showed that the emergency use of body parts as money rituals for quick wealth in the southwest of Nigeria is a violation of human dignity and fundamental cultural values. In answer to the questions about this opinion, 93% of them agreed or strongly agreed that killing people for money goes against societal norms and values of human dignity. As 92% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this idea, it is widely believed that ritual killers do not hold the fundamental values of society in high regard because of their desire for quick riches in the three states under study. There is evidence of killing and raping in an effort to harvest the victim's body parts for profit, despite the difficulties in ascertaining the fundamental truths about ritual murdering for quick wealth and the lack of scientific investigation. An overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents in the three states under investigation agreed in both strong and mild terms that rape, killing, and body part harvesting are used for money rituals.

Additionally, this supports News Paper reports on Nigeria's ritual killing for instant riches. For instance, on August 17, 2017, a four-year-old girl was discovered close to a shrine at "Ogbe Close" in the Iwaya district of Lagos. She had already had her throat slit when she was discovered. Furthermore, an abductor, who was 23 at the time, had a body of an eight-year-old girl in his Port Harcourt apartment. The girl was not only kidnapped but also raped before she was killed and parts of her body were removed by the abductor. Additionally, a seven-year-old boy was killed, and the body was buried with his head inside the church in the sanctuary. The boy was allegedly used in the ritual to ensure an increase in the number of followers, which would increase the pastor's wealth (Nigeria News,

2017). According to Vanguard, a future groom was murdered in 2021 by his neighbor next door as part of a ritual. His body parts were taken out after he passed away, and acid was applied to hasten decay (Peterside, D. 2021). The cultural ideals and core values of human dignity are directly at odds with this criminal behavior. According to Oyebade (2022), under-20 boys were found in Ogun State with a human head belonging to a victim used in money rituals. Since this pattern is still present today, immediate action is needed.

XI. CONCLUSION

It is observable that ritual killings are practiced in Nigeria, particularly in the southwest of the country, for financial gain. The thesis of this study is that most scholars rely on people's perceptions to determine whether the idea of ritual killing for money is real or an illusion because it is impossible to scientifically investigate the ideology of ritual killing for money. However, all the metrics used to gauge respondents' perceptions of money rituals in relation to the study were accepted by the respondents. People think that there are money rituals and that people are abducted and killed for these purposes.

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